



## From the Top: 1SG Allen Gabel

I need to apologize for the late posting and hope everyone is well. It is very difficult to explain what happens here and how we accomplish things in a forum that does not expose us to security risks or give our enemies anything to use. So excuse me if I write in generalities, or paint rosier pictures than your Soldiers do. We are starting to see day light at the end of the tunnel now. Leaves are at full strength and we only have two more months before the last leave dates are posted. My last posting of how well the unit has been doing has not changed. Your Soldiers are still making me proud every day and keeping this unit on top. However no matter how well we perform, how easy we make it look, it is not without difficulty that things get accomplished. We have been doing our jobs here long enough that things are almost automatic. We train for that muscle memory, so the Soldier just reacts and the job is done. Now the struggle will be to keep the mind in control of those muscles. With the recent Holiday Season we have come to new cross roads with new challenges ahead of us.

The Holidays have come and gone and we made an attempt to celebrate it is just not the same not being home for them. We did have the unit all together for both Thanksgiving and Christmas with only minimal duties to stay operational. The Thanksgiving meal served at the chow hall was plentiful and good. You had to overlook the mile walk and the hour wait in line but otherwise the meal had all of the fixings. Christmas meal was the same we did get Christmas socks hung and handed out wrapped presents to everyone. There were some barbeques and small group gatherings, but otherwise it was a quite time to reflect. The New Year came and went with a casino night, all the while missions continued to roll.

You will often hear the term Ground Hog day to describe the day to day activities here. Referring to the movie of the same name, were a man is stuck in the same day, day after day. That pretty much describes how things transpire to us. We perform the tasks we were trained to do over and over each day. We get through each day because of each other and knowing each day is one day closer to coming home.

These are the days of complacency that the leadership fears. We preach it constantly to remind the Soldiers the enemy is waiting for a mistake. Every Soldier no matter what position they hold is vulnerable to complacency. The mechanic that forgets to tighten the one nut that is tightened day after day, the Ammunition specialist who issues the bad lot of ammunition, and every other position that can affect mission or a Soldiers life either here or at home. There are many things we do to switch things up to keep them on their toes, some they like, mostly things they don't. It is like taking a bad tasting medication and being told trust it is good for you.

Trust this unit is doing fantastic, accomplishing the mission we were sent here for, and through all of the boredom and danger we will prevail.

Thank you, and God Bless.

1SG Allen Gabel