

## Friday ceremony to honor departing Guard members

SVN STAFF

DIXON — A send-off ceremony at 10:30 a.m. Friday will honor 34 National Guard members who are departing to serve in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The event takes place at the Dixon High School football field, which is adjacent to the Dixon National Guard Armory, headquarters for Echo Battery 1-202nd Air Defense Artillery whose members have been called up for active duty.

Guest speakers include Dixon Mayor James Burke, state Rep. Jerry Mitchell, R-Sterling, state Sen. Todd Sieben, R-Geneseo, and retired Gen. Henry Dixon.

For the benefit of family members who might wish to take a group photograph of the soldiers, they will be put into formation on the football field at the farewell ceremony.

A short parade through town will conclude the activities.

Earlier in the day, Guard members and their families will be served a pancake breakfast beginning at 8 a. m. at the American Legion Hall in Dixon.

The public is invited to all ceremonies. In the event of inclement weather, the farewell ceremony will take place inside the Dixon Armory.

The National Guard members will be leaving Saturday for Galva. They will join the unit there and leave for Fort Hood, Texas, on Sunday. From there the members will embark for Iraq.

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