



**Incident
Response
Vehicle2**



**Expeditionary
Emergency
Medical
System9**



**Black Hawk
goes “shark
hunting” . .12**

PLAINS GUARDIAN

VOLUME 50 No. 5 *Serving the Kansas Army and Air National Guard, Kansas Emergency Management, Kansas Homeland Security and Civil Air Patrol* JUNE 2007

Adjutant General’s Department responds to F-5 tornado



The town of Greensburg, Kan., was almost totally destroyed by an F-5 tornado that ripped through several counties the night of May 4. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

Town destroyed; Governor declares State of Disaster Emergency for Greensburg

State and local agencies and volunteer organizations responded to the devastation in Greensburg, Kan., caused by a tornado that struck the community at approximately 10 p.m. on Friday, May 4, damaging or destroying 95 percent of the buildings in the town of approximately 1,500. Governor Kathleen Sebelius declared a State of Disaster Emergency for Kiowa County.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with those who are dealing with the devastating loss this storm has brought,” said Sebelius.

The tornado was tracked through Comanche, Kiowa, Edwards, Stafford, Pratt and Barton Counties.

Eight people were killed by the storm in Greensburg and two others died later from storm-related injuries. The storm also killed one person in Stafford county and one in Pratt County. Numerous injuries were reported.

The American Red Cross established two shelters in Haviland and one in Mullinville. The Salvation Army set up a

donations center, a social services center and a distribution center in Haviland. The Salvation Army also established three can- teens in Greensburg to feed storm victims and rescue workers.

The Kansas Division of Emergency Management coordinated the response and recovery operations of various state and local agencies. Soldiers and Airmen from the Kansas National Guard assisted with security, communications, debris removal and shelter missions. Guard units respond- ing were: the 287th Sustainment Brigade; 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery; 891st Engineer Battalion; 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation; 137th Transportation Company; 731st Transportation Company; 778th Transportation Company; 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment; 190th Civil Engineering Squadron; 184th Civil Engineering Squadron and 184th Security Forces.

The 134th Air Control Squadron sup-

(Continued on Page 2)

President Bush tours scenes of destruction

By 1st Lt. Sean T. Linn, UPAR

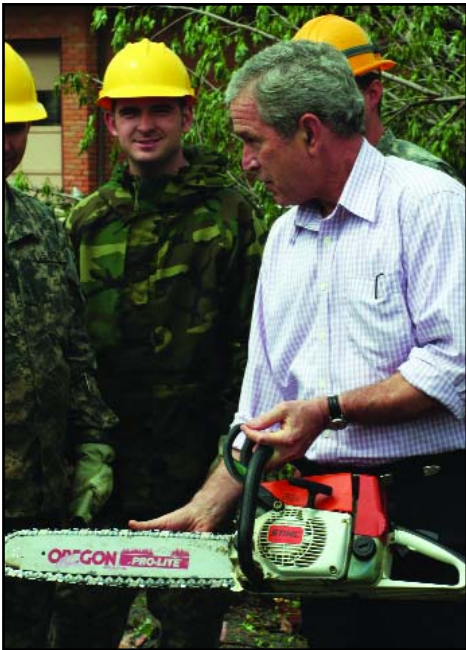
President George W. Bush spent several hours in Greensburg on Wednesday, May 9, arriving by helicopter to assess the damage. The President’s first stop was the John Deere dealership to view the smashed and overturned combines, tractors and imple- ments. Several of these heavy machines had been picked up by the massive tornado and thrown across Highway 54.

The president’s inspection tour included the south end of town, where he saw Soldiers of the 891st Engineer Battalion in action. Soldiers of the 242nd Engineer Company, Coffeyville and Winfield, were busy clearing debris from the easements when the president’s motorcade pulled up. Bush stepped out of his car to visit with the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Barry Manley, and thank the Soldiers working at this location.

“Manley, show me what your Soldiers are doing,” said Bush.

Manley explained that the Soldiers were removing the debris from easements to

(Continued on Page 3)



President George Bush tests a chain saw while visiting Soldiers of the 891st Engineer Battalion on state active duty in Greensburg. (Photo by 1st Lt. Sean Linn)

New Incident Response Vehicle proves itself in Greensburg

By 1st Sgt. Carl Mar, 105th MPAD

Greensburg, Kan. -- In the first morning after a deadly tornado leveled Greensburg, Kan., on the night of May 4, around 50 Kansas National Guard troops had already arrived at ground zero to provide security and aid. By the second day the number of troops had doubled and by the third day the number had doubled again. On the fourth day, over 500 Kansas Guard Soldiers and Airmen were at the scene assisting with recovery efforts.

Helping to coordinate the large-scale mobilization of troops, their equipment, and other state resources was the ACU-1000, a hybrid piece of electronics about the size of a small refrigerator. Housed in a trailer-sized van known as the C2V Mobile Incident Response Vehicle, the equipment was also among the first Kansas Guard assets to arrive the morning after the disaster.

“This was the first time that the C2V has been fielded,” said Sgt. John Staiert, Network Operations noncommissioned officer for the vehicle. Adding to that distinction is the fact that Kansas was also the first state to have one, he explained.

“After Katrina with its host of problems the lost cell phone connections and incompatible radio equipment, the federal government mandated that every state should

Town destroyed; Governor declares Disaster Emergency

Continued from Page 1

plied two 120 kW generators to assist in search and rescue operations and 1,500 gallons of water. The Pratt Kansas National Guard armory has opened as a staging area for logistic support.

The 911 emergency system was out, so the Kansas Department of Transportation communications on wheels vehicle was sent to Greensburg in the hours immediately following the storm. KDOT also provided roadblocks and signage and was involved in clearing debris from highways so rescue vehicles could get into the affected areas. The State Fire Marshal investigated hazardous materials reports.

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger contacted all major property insurance companies in Kansas.

Power outages were reported throughout Kiowa and surrounding counties. Cell phones and land line communications were also severely impacted. The Kansas National Guard mobile incident command vehicle was deployed to Greensburg, and the Kansas Highway Patrol also sent its command and communications vehicle to assist in restoration of communication systems.



The Adjutant General’s Department’s Command and Control Mobile Incident Response Vehicle is deployed for the first time, May 5, to provide communications capabilities in Greensburg after the city was destroyed by a deadly F5 tornado. (Photo by 1st Sgt. Carl Mar, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

have something like this,” said Staiert. “The Kansas National Guard took delivery of its C2V in early April. About four

Wichita Search and Rescue dispatched several teams to assist with search and rescue operations and Sedgwick County Public Health Emergency Team sent staff, consumable supplies and durable equipment, including two generators.

Sedgwick County sent a search and rescue crew to the city to assist in evacuation efforts at the local hospital, which was damaged by the tornado. Approximately 30 people were rescued from the hospital with minor injuries. Emergency crews from surrounding counties also assisted with medical response.

The Urban Search and Rescue Team from Nebraska also searched for victims throughout Greensburg and numerous local agencies responded with a variety of assistance.

The Civil Air Patrol conducted several air reconnaissance flights to survey damages in coordination with flights by the Kansas Highway Patrol.

“The outpouring of emergency response from state and local agencies and volunteers is just tremendous,” said Sebelius. “We, as Kansans, are pulling together, as we always do in times of crisis and adversity and that’s something we should all be proud of.”

weeks ago, we did our first joint-operation simulation exercise with it at Pratt and coordinated disaster response with the 184th Air Refueling Wing at McConnell AFB in Wichita.”

It was propitious that the five-person team assigned to the C2V had the training and was prepared.

“We all got called at three o’clock in the morning and by four o’clock we were in the van and on the road,” said Staiert. Charged with establishing network communications on the ACU-1000, he said “I had the system up and running 10 minutes after we arrived.”

Parked in front of the Greensburg courthouse, which was one of the few structures to remain standing in the city, the C2V was among the first of many such vehicles to arrive. It was distinguished by the large presence of personnel, both military and civilian. Parked next to it is the FEMA command post with its own trailers and alongside in a tent is the Incident Manager Command Post. Stretching outward from them and surrounding two sides of the courthouse is a host of other support agencies.

Altogether the various entities form the Emergency Operations Center in Greensburg. In Topeka, the EOC is mirrored at the State Defense Building where these same agencies have representatives eyeing video feeds, news broadcasts,

weather reports and the latest real-time information coming from Greensburg.

“Everything that anyone sees in the Joint Operations Center in the Topeka EOC comes from here,” said Sgt. First Class Anita Istas, the C2V noncommissioned officer in charge. “The ACU-1000 is state-of-the-art equipment. It utilizes satellite to give us wireless internet capability, video transmission and conferencing. It allows us to convert different radio band frequencies so that hand-held communication devices can talk with one another. It enables us to set up a phone system.”

Completely self-contained, the C2V draws power from a set of four generators; if one stops working, there is a back-up. There are computers and wall monitors to also receive information from anywhere in the world. Divided into several compartments, the van has a work area with several workstations built around the ACU-1000, a briefing/conference room, sleeping and storage areas for the team members. Stocked on board are dozens of cell phones, wi-fi notebook computers, hand-held radios and over 2,000 feet of LAN cable for creating a secure communication network in the field.

The multiple generators proved themselves handy on the first day. One began failing during the first evening and Staiert was able to keep the van’s equipment working continuously by switching on another one. He also used one of the spare generators to provide power to the general area of the EOC when one used by the Incident Manager Command Post stopped working.

“Having the C2V next to the Incident Commander’s command post was very beneficial,” said Capt. Joe Dessenberger, Wichita Police Department and operations commander for the law enforcement entity in Greensburg. “We used it to keep in touch with Wichita and stay abreast of the situation on the ground here. It was especially handy on Saturday night when the lights went out. They were the only people to have power and shared it.”

The C2V and its ACU-1000 has proven itself as a reliable system, one that has benefited not only the citizens of Greensburg in the first days after their calamity, but also for similar Guard missions in the future.

“The C2V and its equipment have performed up to – maybe exceeded -- its expectations,” said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. “We expected some bumps and design tweaks in its deployment, but it’s proven itself here in Greensburg.



Governor Kathleen Sebelius inspected the damage in Greensburg in the company of Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. (Photo by Master Sgt. Angel Acosta)



Pfc. Georgia Schafer performs an adjustment on the ACU-1000 as she explains its communication capabilities to Tech. Sgt. Matt McCoy, a photographer with the 184th Air Refueling Wing. (Photo by 1st Sgt. Carl Mar, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

Greensburg tornado changes life for Kansas Guard family

By 1st Sgt. Carl Mar, 105th MPAD

It had taken almost two days of work by a dozen people to clear the debris of what was once a garage away from the pickup truck buried underneath. To the joy of onlookers, Rodney A. Prosser turned the key in the ignition, pressed steeply on the gas pedal and gunned the vehicle over more debris while kicking up a cloud of dust.

Bought new less than three weeks ago, the mangled truck's return to life seemed to symbolize the hopes of the Prosser family to rebuild their own lives after experiencing the devastation of the Greensburg tornado. The category F5 tornado, measuring 1.7 miles in diameter, cut a trail of destruction 22 miles long, flattened the town of Greensburg, population 1,500, and killed 10 people.

Four days earlier, Rodney Prosser, who is first sergeant of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, from Dodge City, was at Fort Riley with his unit participating in a field exercise amid heavy winds and rains. He knew from weather updates that severe storms were peppering the western two-thirds of Kansas and that tornadoes had been spotted in the vicinity of his hometown, located 200 miles to the southwest. His wife, Laura, had called him earlier in the evening to reassure him that she and their two children Keith, 13, and Heidi, 11, were safe.

Around 9 p.m. that evening, another Soldier told Prosser the news media were broadcasting that Greensburg had been hit by a tornado. Apprehensive, he phoned his wife – and got no answer.

“When the sirens sounded,” said Laura, “I immediately herded the kids down into the basement and we huddled together in the corner. The sirens continued for long time it seemed and then they stopped. Then the lights went out and we could hear glass breaking all around us.”

When the clatter stopped, Laura and the children tried to get back upstairs, but found that the basement stairs were

blocked by fallen lumber. Returning to the other side of the basement they found a broken window, and one by one crawled out onto the lawn. They found that the neighborhood they once knew no longer existed, but was piled into a jagged, unrecognizable landscape.

“I saw a flashlight,” said Laura. “The neighbor from across the street had also come out about that time and came over to see if we were all right. Thankfully, she had a cell phone which I used to call Rodney.”

Unaware to her, help was already on the way.

“I was worried,” said Rodney. “I called my friend Don in Pratt and asked him to check on my family. He was already on the outskirts of Greensburg when Laura called.”

“When I spoke with her -- knew that she and the kids were safe -- I was okay.”

Leaving Fort Riley at midnight, Rodney arrived in Pratt at 3:30 a.m., where his friend Don Voss had brought Laura and the children for shelter.

“We cried in each other's arms for awhile, talked for a long time,” said Laura. “We laid down for maybe a half hour, but couldn't sleep. At dawn, after there was light outside, Rodney and I drove back to Greensburg.”

At the edge of town, the couple found that Battery E, 161st Field Artillery, Great Bend, had mobilized overnight and established security checkpoints into the city. Still in uniform, Prosser volunteered for state active duty to help lead search and rescue efforts in the countryside north of the town. While he was gone, Laura slept in their truck, parked across the street from the checkpoint.

“My team cleared four farm homes and found light damage, but no injuries,” said Rodney. “But there was terrific damage to the pasture fencing. Cattle were scattered in groups everywhere and one farmer, who had 600 head of cattle, couldn't find any of his own nearby.”

By midday, however, the extent of the



Laura and Rodney Prosser with their daughter Heidi, 11, and son Keith, 13, sit in front of what remains of their Greensburg, Kan., home after it was destroyed by a category F5 tornado, May 4, 2007. (Photo by 1st Sgt. Carl Mar)

disaster weighed heavily on Rodney's mind and he asked to be relieved from duty and focus on the damage to his own home. Leaving the checkpoint, he and his wife tried to find their way back home.

“The city wasn't anything we remembered. Most of the familiar landmarks were swiped clean. We couldn't tell what street we were on. Only a few buildings had enough structure left to know what they used to be. Using them, we counted the blocks to determine where we needed to go,” he said.

Eventually the two found their home again, but it didn't look like the home they remembered. Except for a few feet of interior wall sticking out above the first level, everything else had vanished above the foundation. The front stoop of the house, formed of concrete, was the only part of the house which appeared unchanged. Everything else had been demolished by the tornado or ruined by three feet of rain water which had accumulated in the basement. Exhausted they returned to Pratt.

Two days later, after the street debris had been pushed aside and it was safe enough for citizens to travel through the town, Rodney and Laura returned with

family and friends to sift through the rubble for personal belongings and mementos. Their new truck, dug out from the debris – although heavily damaged – was a happy find. Other neighbors' vehicles were totally mangled. Another happy find for Laura was a watch pendant necklace, found lying out in the open on the cleanly swept flooring.

“This was a gift I received when the kids were babies. I'd hold them in my arms while humming lullabies and clinch the pendant between my teeth,” she said.

With their home totally destroyed and their lives turned upside down, the Prossers have come to a crossroad in their lives. Laura says they'll remain in Greensburg and rebuild.

“Our lives are here, our jobs are here,” she said. She teaches first-grade at the local elementary school and Rodney works as a mechanic environmentalist for Panhandle Eastern Oil Company, located in Greensburg.

“Yes, we'll rebuild,” said Rodney. “I don't know what, or when. But one thing is for sure. We made a pact with our neighbors – Rob and Wanda Booth – that no matter what, we'd remain neighbors.”



Rodney Prosser (left), first sergeant of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, Dodge City, examines tornado damage to his new truck with his cousin Brad Prosser. (Photo by 1st Sgt. Carl Mar, 105th MPAD)

President tours Greensburg

Continued from Page 1
allow the utilities companies to begin restoring the town's infrastructure – first dragging the debris to the curb, then segregating it into three piles consisting of organics, metal and construction material. At the curbside, Soldiers cut trees into manageable pieces for the hydraulic excavators and loaders to lift into the beds of dump trucks. The dump truck drivers then made trips to one of the two dump sites located near the town.

Bush walked over to the curb where the Soldiers were quickly whittling a large tree

down into manageable pieces and picked up one of the chainsaws. He felt to see if the chain was sharp, gave the cord a quick tug and the chainsaw fired up.

After his visit with the Soldiers of the 891st, he continued to drive through what was left of the town to comfort the citizens still rummaging through the remains of their home looking for mementos and anything of value not destroyed or carried off by the storm.

The Soldiers of the 891st went back to work.

Volunteers abound



There has been no shortage of volunteers in Greensburg, such as these six volunteers, ranging in age from 16 to 18, from the Weaverland Mennonite Church, Memphis, Mo., who helped to clean up a residential neighborhood. (Photo by Gerald Hay)

Editorial

Disasters and deployments keeping Kansas Guard busy

By Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting

As we celebrate our nation’s history this July 4, I want to thank all of the Kansas National Guard troops both deployed and at home, from the bottom of my heart, for the sacrifices you make and are willing to make in the future. You have taken a path less chosen, to serve your country in wartime and peace, at home and abroad, where ever the need. You make tremendous sacrifices to keep our land the home of the free and the brave. May God bless you and your families richly.



Maj. Gen. Tod M. Bunting

Recently, we have welcomed home several of our troops and said goodbye for now to several more. As the war in Iraq and Afghanistan wages on, we never get used to sending troops to war, but we are confident our men and women are ready for the mission at hand. We welcomed home 25 troops from the 3rd Platoon, Battery B, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery on June 9. The remainder of the battery will return in July. The 635th Regional Support Group returns in late June. Meanwhile, we deployed approxi-

mately 170 troops with the 35th Military Police Company on June 12, heading to Iraq. And approximately 200 Soldiers with the 35 Infantry Division will deploy to Kosovo in July.

While more than 1,000 of our Kansas National Guard troops are deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, more than 500 of our troops have been deployed to Greensburg, Kansas during the past two months, helping the town to recover after it was virtually destroyed by a tornado.

Just as we did on New Year’s Eve, when a winter storm overwhelmed the western half of the state, the Kansas National Guard responded within a few hours of the May 4 Greensburg tornado, providing security, generators and eventually significant support for debris removal, and numerous other missions. The 184th Air Refueling Wing in Wichita was commander of the deployment, which grew from approximately 40 troops the first weekend following the tornado, to more than 500 the following week. Both Army and Air Guard personnel have proudly served and continue to do so as needed. We appreciate the work these troops are doing to help this town thrive again, as we know it someday will.

The Kansas Division of Emergency Management led and directed the entire Greensburg response and recovery operations and continues in this effort organizing resources for the town from state and local

Just as we did on New Year’s Eve, when a winter storm overwhelmed the western half of the state, the Kansas National Guard responded within a few hours of the May 4 Greensburg tornado, providing security, generators and eventually significant support for debris removal, and numerous other missions.

government, as well as federal resources. Long after the work appears to be done, KDEM staff will be working to ensure the proper reimbursements have been paid so the town and its people can stand tall again. I am very thankful for the sacrifices of the KDEM staff.

Never before has our state been hit so hard by storms in a single year. In addition to the winter storm and the Greensburg tornado, numerous counties have had severe flooding resulting in the need for additional state and federal support. The state legisla-

ture and federal government have approved additional funds to provide for significant costs associated with the devastation in Kansas as well as the sustainment of operations in Greensburg. I want to thank the legislators and federal leaders for assisting Kansas in some unprecedented ways to help our state recover.

I can’t end my thoughts here without asking, what if Greensburg had been your town and an EF5 tornado had destroyed nearly everything you see each day? Would you have heeded the warning of the siren? And those of you in counties without sirens, what if it had hit at 2 a.m.? Would you have heard the warning on your NOAA weather radio or do you still need to purchase one? Do you have a family plan where everyone knows where to go or how to connect when there is no phone service of any kind and no operational vehicle in sight?

It could have happened anywhere in Kansas. Take the steps you need to protect your family today. Have an emergency preparedness kit with a NOAA weather radio, food, water, flashlights, blankets, a first aid kit and a family plan. It only takes a few minutes now to do what can make the difference to save your life and the life of your loved ones.

We never know when or where the next disaster will strike. Be ready. It’s a great gift to yourself and your family.

Soldier to Soldier

Kansas selects Noncommissioned Officer, Soldier of the Year

By Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Haworth

The Soldier of the Year and the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year are two of the top awards an enlisted soldier could be selected for at not just the state level, but at all levels of the competition.



Command Sgt. Maj. Scott W. Haworth

On the weekend of Jan. 19-21, 2007, we held the Kansas Army National Guard State competition to select both the Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year for the state. Each competitor goes through a selection process starting at the company/battery level through the battalion and then on to a brigade level competition to then be selected to compete at the state level. Each brigade, including the 35th Division and Joint Forces Headquarters, are represented at this level.

The 2007 Kansas Army National Guard’s Non-Commissioned Officer and Soldier of The Year are Sgt. Dustin L. Furrey and Spc. Taylor A. Chase.

Furrey is currently assigned to the 235th Regiment (KSRTI) of Salina, Kan., with five years of service. He attended Infantry Basic course at Fort Benning, Ga. as well as the 42L MOS course at KSRTI where he graduated as an honor graduate for both phases. Furrey’s other military education includes the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (Phase I), the Primary Leadership Development Course and the Standard Army Training Course. Furrey is currently attending Kansas State University. Furrey, his wife, Jennifer, and son, Benjamin, reside in Manhattan, Kan.

Taylor is currently assigned to Company A, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry of Lawrence, Kan. He has two years of service. Taylor attended the Infantry Basic Course at Fort Benning, Ga., graduating with honors and was selected to attend Airborne school as well as receiving an

Army Achievement Award for his achievement. Taylor is currently attending Highland Community College and residing in Topeka, Kan.

Both Furrey and Taylor traveled to Camp Dodge along with their sponsors to compete in the Region 5 level Soldier of the Year/Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competition in April where they performed in an outstanding fashion, representing the state of Kansas exceptionally. There were both Soldiers and noncommissioned officers competing from Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas.

The Soldier of the Year/Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competition (formerly known as the Best Individual Soldier and Best Noncommissioned of the Year) has evolved from what was only once an appearance board (with minimum packet requirements) to now not only the appearance board, but also tests their physical fitness with the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), a test of marksmanship skills with an individual weapons qualification event (first zeroing an unfamiliar weapon), a test on map reading and land navigation skills (both day and night) and a test of knowledge of the warrior tasks by a hands-on test on four randomly selected tasks rounding up the events for the competition with a test of military common core knowledge through a written test.

The competition takes about three days to complete with day one starting with the in-processing and weigh-in followed by an APFT. Day 2 starts with zeroing an unfamiliar weapon and then an individual weapons qualification. Once completing the weapons qualification the competitors move to the land navigation course where they navigate through the course trying to locate five points with a limited time frame. After they have completed the land navigation course they are next tested on four hands-on warrior tasks (randomly selected). Once completing the warrior tasks, Day 2 ends with yet another night land navigation course where the competi-

tors are required to locate three points in a limited time frame. Day 3 starts with the competitors taking a 25 question written examine (common core type questions) followed by a board appearance where each competitor is graded on his/her appearance, how well they conduct themselves in front of the board as well as how well they answer the 20 questions from pre-selected topics taken from the Army Study Guide.

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PLAINS GUARDIAN

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Adjutant General of Kansas Maj. Gen. Tod M. Bunting	Assistant Director Stephen D. Larson	785-274-1194
Editor Sharon Watson	Administrative Assistant Jane Welch	785-274-1190
Production/Graphics/Writer Stephen D. Larson	FAX	785-274-1622
Production Assistant Jane Welch	e-mail: jane.e.welch1@us.army.mil	

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Tornado response a joint Army and Air Guard operation

By Maj. DeAnn Barr

Within four hours of the deadly tornado that struck Greensburg on May 5, Kansas Guardsmen were called to duty to bring relief to their devastated neighbors.

Before the sun rose to clearly see the extent of damage, 15 security forces personnel from the Kansas Air National Guard in Wichita were on the scene providing law enforcement assistance to local authorities.

“We arrived to utter devastation,” said Master Sgt. Frank Cook, one of the first wave responders with the 184th Security Forces Squadron at McConnell Air Force Base. “We worked to make a difference and protect what little property these people have left.”

The Air Guard security forces were joined by roughly 30 military police from Battery E, 161st Field Artillery, Great Bend.

The state’s new C2V Mobile Incident Response Vehicle was mobilized early Saturday morning and placed next to the Greensburg Courthouse, one of the few buildings in the town left standing. Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general and the director of Kansas Emergency Management, was on site in the early hours of Saturday morning setting the stage for timely communication response in support of local authorities.

“We were fully operational within 12 minutes of arriving and had on board computers, phones, satellite internet, UHF, VHF, HF and 800 MHz radios. Emergency management personnel and the highway patrol utilized the vehicle extensively throughout the recovery,” said Sgt. John



Power generation for emergency services was just one of the missions performed by Kansas National Guard personnel in the aftermath of the Greensburg tornado. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. John Vstecka)

Staiert, Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas, Topeka.

Also among the first wave of responders from the Kansas National Guard was the 134th Air Control Squadron, Wichita. Their 15 personnel arrived on the scene during the wee hours following the EF-5 tornado that hit Greensburg at 9:45 p.m. Friday night, bringing with them many mobile communication assets. In short

order, they established a command center complete with power, phones, video and teleconferencing capabilities. Generators, lights, water, fuel, a wrecker and heavy equipment operators were also on site.

“The connection, coordination, and communication between the Air Guard and our Army counterparts have been fantastic,” said Maj. Tim Smith, 134th ACS and on-site commander for the Kansas Guard

“We were fully operational within 12 minutes of arriving and had on board computers, phones, satellite internet, UHF, VHF, HF and 800 MHz radios.”
Sgt. John Staiert
Joint Forces
Headquarters Kansas

resources.

In response to numerous national and local media flocking to the area, the 184th Wing also sent a four-person public affairs team. They assisted with press conferences by Governor Kathleen Sebelius, Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting and other elected officials.

“Kansans are resilient,” the governor said as she toured the area Sunday evening. “I am so thankful for the prayers of not only Kansans, but from people across the nation.”

Senior Airman Shane Clarke, Derby, has been a Security Forces troop for four years, but this was the first disaster he was called to serve in.

“I got the initial phone call at 3 a.m. and, at first, I was nervous because I didn’t know exactly what was going on. Once I went in and learned the full situation, I was eager to lend a hand. I want to help these people who must feel helpless and a little desperate. I want to let them know we care.”

Kansas National Guard engineers pave the way for Greensburg recovery

By Sgt. Heather Wright, 105th MPAD

Fetid humidity and a morass of tree limbs, steel, glass and other debris that used to be the town of Greensburg greeted the Combat Engineers of the 772nd Mobile Augmentation Company of Pittsburg, the 242nd Engineer Company of Coffeyville, engineers from the 184th Air Refueling Wing and the 891st Engineer Battalion from Winfield. Despite the overwhelming scope of the catastrophe, they weren’t deterred. They were on a mission.

On May 4, an F5 tornado hit Greensburg with 200-mile per hour winds and a 1.7 mile diameter funnel that leveled most of the town. After establishing resident safety and an operations center, the Kansas National Guard was tasked to send Soldiers and Airmen to help restore order and begin recovery efforts in Greensburg.

With a disaster of such extent, restoring road access and establishing control of utilities was essential. The engineers’ first mission was to help Greensburg regain control by removing the piles of debris

that cover roadways and utility access buried beneath the easements that border private property. The Kansas Department of Transportation assists by transporting the debris to an established landfill. Once the debris is removed, utility companies can come in to assess and repair the storm damage. This is the first step on the road to recovery.

Sgt. Brian Blandemer, a heavy equipment operator with the 242nd Engineer Company was stunned by the amount of damage, but determined to help with recovery.

“The mission is going very well,” said Blandemer. “We’re getting things moving along. There’s a lot of work to be done yet, but I think we’re doing a good job.”

Staff Sgt. Calvin Hicks, an equipment operator supervisor with the 891st, agrees with the Blandemer’s assessment. He would like to see more heavy equipment in use, but until the soil dries out, he will have to rely on smaller tools.

“The mission is going pretty good.



Engineers from the Kansas Army National Guard and the Kansas Department of Transportation work together to restore order to Greensburg. (Photo by Sgt. Heather Wright, 105th MPAD)

We’re working with what we’ve got,” he said. “Everybody is working together and we’re getting as much done as we can.”

Many of the engineers have experience responding to natural disasters, but hadn’t experienced anything approaching the level of devastation in Greensburg. Spc. Justin Noble Zimmerman, a heavy equipment operator with the 242nd Engineers, first experienced nature’s force with the 1998 flood in Augusta, Kan.

“This is a lot worse than anything I’ve ever seen,” said Noble. “In Augusta, there were actually houses left. Here there’s absolutely nothing.”

Spc. Adam Joseph Beckman, a combat engineer with 772nd, remembers the small structure damage and tree limbs of the ice storm in Chanute, Kan., but wasn’t prepared for Greensburg.

“I was devastated,” he said, “I couldn’t believe that something like this would happen. You know, you don’t realize what you’re going to run into until you get here

and once you get here, you feel terrible.”

Once the shock wears off, determination to help sets in. Spc. James Hensley, a combat engineer with the 772nd expressed a common reaction to the disaster.

“I was shocked,” Hensley said. “After that settled in, I felt really bad for the people and was really motivated to help out any way I could.”

The positive reaction from Greensburg residents helps to shore that determination.

“People are smiling and seem happy that we’re here,” said Beckman. “Everybody waves at us as they go by and gives us water, oranges and stuff. I think we’re doing a good job.”

Sgt. Randall McMillan, a heavy equipment operator with 772nd, smiled as he recalled how happy a resident was to receive the “Welcome” sign that he found among the debris.

Blandemer put it succinctly. “We’re happy to be here to help the people of Greensburg.”



Members of the 184th Civil Engineering Squadron remove debris from Greensburg High School. (Photo by Sgt. Heather Wright, 105th MPAD)

Local, national media tell the Greensburg story to the world

By Sharon Watson

On the night of May 4, 2007 most news reporters outside of western Kansas hadn't heard of Greensburg, unless they were familiar with the town's most popular distinction: home of the world's largest hand dug well. But by 10:30 p.m. news stations around the globe were beginning to learn about this small town of nearly 1,500 people which was almost destroyed by an EF 5 tornado.

Coordination of information started at the Kansas Adjutant General's Department in the State Emergency Operations Center in Topeka. I was contacted by SEOC staff informing me the early reports indicated as much as 75 percent of the town was gone, if not more.

Between 11 p.m. Friday and 3 a.m. Saturday, I received calls from Wichita media and other local reporters requesting live and recorded interviews by phone. Soon national news calls came in from CNN, Fox, ABC, NBC and CBS requesting general information on the tornado damage. At 6 a.m., I traveled to Greensburg with Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas adjutant general and director of Kansas Emergency Management. Our Black Hawk flight into Greensburg showed damage as much as 20 miles north of town and quickly revealed only a small number of buildings and homes were left standing on each side of town in Greensburg.

The SEOC staff had requested an incident management team travel to Greensburg to establish response operations. (The incident commander is in charge of managing all on site disaster

response with a team providing planning, logistics and financial support).

Initial command operations and media briefings were on the east side of Greensburg near Davis Park along U.S. 54. On Saturday only local media had arrived, but by late afternoon national media began arriving. Local law enforcement, the Greensburg city administrator, Kansas Highway Patrol, Maj. Gen. Bunting and later Congressional staff conducted media interviews on site on a regular basis. Public affairs staff from several state agencies assisted in getting news releases out from the SEOC in Topeka, while on site media demands continued to increase.

National media phone calls came to me consistently from Canada, Britain, Japan, CNN, Fox, ABC, NBC, and CBS networks, as well as from Kansas media and new stations in other states. Associated Press and Reuters news service were my primary contacts for providing updates quickly since they could provide Greensburg information worldwide to many media affiliates. KHP trooper Ron Knoefel assisted local officials with on site media interviews Saturday and Sunday, while I continued phone interviews with local and national media throughout this time.

The incident commander and local officials determined they would allow media to move into town Sunday, but they asked that the media stay in one specific area. Reporters and the numerous satellite trucks were stationed several blocks north of the courthouse where the incident command operations were established.

It was determined the Kansas National



News media from all over the United States and some foreign nations converged on Greensburg, eager to capture a story about the tornado-stricken town. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

Guard would assist with media escorts to ensure reporters were able to tell the town's story while remaining safe and ensuring the residents' privacy. Overall, news media responded very well to the idea of escorts and clearly understood the dangers the town posed to them such as live power lines on the ground, broken glass and hazardous chemicals including a leaking tank containing anhydrous ammonia. (No hazardous levels of anhydrous ammonia were released).

Regular media briefings were held three times daily in the street where the media were stationed for the first week. With no buildings and no power, that meant media briefings were all outside and verbal. News releases were produced in the SEOC in Topeka and sent to media outlets statewide.

The focus of initial media briefings on Sunday and Monday was on damage, search and rescue efforts and residents being allowed back into the area for the first time. Media reports addressed security of the area including a few incidents of looting from a local store, and the collection of resident's guns by local law enforcement to ensure the safekeeping of the weapons.

The 184th Air Refueling Wing in McConnell was directing Guard response operations on site and provided staff for public affairs assistance to support the growing number of news media coming in on Sunday.

Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius addressed the media Sunday and again on Monday, at which time she expressed con-

cerns about National Guard equipment shortages. This resulted in a new focus on Tuesday by both local and national media requesting more interviews on Guard equipment from Maj. Gen. Bunting. He responded to the specific questions about whether the Guard had enough equipment and explained the shortage of trailers to haul heavy equipment to Greensburg had raised concerns, but noted the equipment had arrived after some repeat trips to get it there. (The equipment was needed primarily for debris removal).

On Tuesday, I worked with the Greensburg mayor and the school superintendent to provide new information to the media regarding local response and the future of the town. These were very positive interviews and shifted the focus off of the death toll and Guard equipment, and provided stories of hope for rebuilding the town and schools.

Three members of the 105th Military Public Affairs Detachment arrived Monday and assisted with media needs on site, including gathering information for media, getting information out to the public via a mobile radio transmitter, media escorts and media calls.

National Guard Bureau offered public affairs assistance Tuesday, sending three staff. This came as media interest in Greensburg continued to grow and also just prior to President George W. Bush's planned visit. At this time the focus on Guard equipment shortages grew and eventually resulted in comments from the White House spokesman.

(Continued on Page 7)



Television trucks from a number of Kansas stations, as well as out of state media, broadcast live and taped reports nationwide. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



Technical Trooper Ron Knoefel, Kansas Highway Patrol, was the first of several public affairs spokesmen who rotated duties in Greensburg, providing information for the public. (Photo by Master Sgt. Angel Acosta)



Sharon Watson (left), director of Public Affairs for The Adjutant General's Department, and Maj. DeAnn Barr, 184th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs Office, provide information to a reporter in the early hours after the tornado. (Photo by Master Sgt. Angel Acosta)

Greensburg courthouse a hub for interagency operations



Disaster response operations were established around the Greensburg Courthouse following the May 4 tornado. With no inhabitable buildings available for response use, mobile trailers were initially set up by FEMA, the Kansas Adjutant General's Department and the Kansas Highway Patrol. Eventually the number of trailers needed grew to include additional federal and state government agencies, local law enforcement, county and city government operations and numerous disaster relief organizations. In addition, a base camp was set up on the east side of Greensburg at Davis Park to provide daily food, showers and tents for the thousands of responders in Greensburg. (Photo provided)

226th Engineers use their skills to help restore Greensburg

By 2nd Lt. Ryan Lynch

Soldiers from the 226th Engineer Company of the Kansas Army National Guard were sent to assist the city of Greensburg following the deadly tornado that struck on the evening of May 4. Arriving on the scene shortly after the disaster occurred, the Soldiers immediately began clearing debris and conducting hauling missions in support of the ongoing search and rescue operation. Teams of chainsaw operators were dispatched to reduce fallen trees into manageable portions that could be loaded into their dump trucks and removed from the city. The clearing missions undertaken by approximately 50 Soldiers from the 226th Engineers were accomplished using various dual-use vehicles and equipment from their assigned inventory. Since the beginning of the operation, the Soldiers of the 226th have hauled away more than 2,000 loads of storm-related debris using eight 5-ton series dump trucks. The company also used five 2½-ton and 5-ton cargo vehicles and three Bobcat skid-steer loaders in support of the mission. The magnitude of the disaster provided

the 226th Engineer Company with the opportunity to work in conjunction with various local, state and federal agencies such as the Kansas Department of Transportation, FEMA, and the EPA. The unit also worked with officials from Kiowa County and the City of Greensburg, as well as state and local law enforcement organizations. In the early days of the mission, a joint operation was conducted with Airmen from the Kansas Air National Guard with great success. The combined force worked quickly to clear debris from an area the size of a city block that could be used as a staging area for rescue workers and equipment. “To me, this deployment is what it is all about as a Soldier in the National Guard,” said 1st Sgt. John Short, 226th Engineer Company. “We are what the title says, The National Guard. We are defenders of our nation in all factions,” said Short. “Whether we respond to national disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes and floods or we are protecting the country overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan. We answer the call at home or abroad.” Since a majority of their equipment was



Soldiers from the 226th Engineer Company construct a deck and an access ramp to the temporary buildings that will house the Kiowa County administrators in Greensburg, Kansas. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Ryan Lynn)

in the city and their annual two-week training was to begin in June, the unit had the opportunity to continue their mission in Greensburg rather than transfer the company to the previously scheduled location. This allowed the 226th to apply their construction skills in a real-world setting on a number of projects that would benefit the community during their rebuilding effort. Because most of the city and county agencies were displaced from their offices by the storm, modular buildings were brought in to serve as temporary locations. The entrances to most of these buildings are three feet off of the ground and required stairs and wheelchair-accessible ramps to be constructed before they could be occupied. Soldiers with carpentry training were tasked with constructing a ramp to the offices of the Kiowa County Sheriff and one for the county administrators. The 226th also built ramps for use by gurneys and wheelchairs to the entrances of the Kansas National Guard’s Expeditionary

Medical Support System (EMEDS), which is being used by the Kiowa County Memorial Hospital staff to provide medical services to the community. The gazebo in front of the county courthouse, the site of many community functions and weddings, was reconstructed by the unit’s carpenters with the help of their Soldiers that have been trained as electricians. The plumbers of the 226th also had the opportunity to put their training to work alongside the carpenters when they rebuilt a restroom structure at the Kiowa County State Park. “The bottom line to this deployment is that it is a Soldier’s honor to help the people of Greensburg in their time of tragedy,” said Short. The 226th Engineer Company, with headquarters in Augusta and detachments in Pittsburg and Cherryvale, is the vertical construction component of the 891st Engineer Battalion of the Kansas Army National Guard.

News media tell Greensburg story

Continued from Page 6

By Wednesday, President Bush’s arrival was the main focus of local and national media. The president took only a small number of Greensburg media with him as he toured the town talking to local and state officials and meeting with residents and disaster responders. National media left Greensburg immediately following the president’s departure as did many local media. With the focus of the disaster shifting from search and rescue and response to recovery by mid week, the role of public affairs shifted to community messages the local residents needed, such as what to do with debris, where to get donations and how to claim lost pets. Requests for help from other public affairs staff in county and city governments were made to continue supporting

the information needs of Greensburg and to provide relief to those who had served since the tornado hit. Relief support came from state public information officers including the Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas Department of Corrections/Juvenile Justice Authority and Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Members of the Kansas Association of Public Information Officers (includes city, county and state public information staff) also assisted in supporting the Greensburg media relations needs. This public affairs support continued in Greensburg throughout June. By late June, the incident management teams and public affairs staff working in Greensburg went home as city and county staff began resuming control of these duties. Ongoing state support will continue to be available to the local community as

Annual Training turns into real event for Soldiers of Battery E

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

On the night of April 18, 1775, two lights in a Boston church tower started a midnight ride with a cry to every Middlesex village and farm. By dawn’s light, Citizen-Soldiers responded to the foreign threat to their homes and families. It was 21 minutes past midnight on May 5, a little more than 232 years later, when a signal in the form of a phone call from the Joint Operations Center in Topeka alerted a new generation of Citizen-Soldiers. This time the threat was not a foreign power, but the extremes of nature: a tornado had struck the town of Greensburg, Kan.

For the Soldiers of Battery E, Target Acquisition, (E TAB) 161st Field Artillery, May 4 had been a long training day. The Soldiers had just completed the first day of their scheduled three-day weekend drill. The training scheduled for the weekend was convoy operations. By the time the storms began to move across southwestern Kansas that Friday evening, the unit’s vehicle had been loaded, fueled and ordered for the next day’s training.

Reacting to the recall, Soldiers started assembling in the Great Bend armory around 2 a.m. They readied their gear and equipment until first accountability formation was called at 3:30 a.m. With much of Great Bend still asleep, the first vehicle of E TAB’s convoy rolled out of the armory at 5:08 a.m. The headlights from E TABs trucks cut through the dark as thunderstorms were still raging across the Kansas countryside. They would be plagued by storms through much of their mission.

At 7:45 a.m., just over six hours after notification, the 32 Soldiers of E TAB reached a staging area established by the Kansas Department of Transportation just east of Greensburg. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jerry Sanko, Great Bend, Commander E TAB, continued on to the Greensburg Courthouse to coordinate with other emergency agencies. On his return Sanko said “The unit has two missions: 1) search and



Pvt. 2 Travis Mayer and Sgt. 1st Class Michael Schmidt man a checkpoint on a road into Greensburg. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Joe Shuey)

clear and 2) security, to relieve state and local civilian law enforcement.” E TAB sent two humvees to visit outlying farms to check for people in trouble. Staff Sgt. Joe Shuey, Great Bend, said “KDOT gave us a strip map of the areas we were to check out. 1st Sgt. Ploss, who lives in Greensburg, was in my humvee. His knowledge of the local area was important in our finding the remote homes and farms.” The Soldiers pulled their 5 ton trucks across roads to block access into Greensburg. “Our mission was to only allow emergency personnel into the town,” said Shuey. “Live power lines were down everywhere. There were natural gas leaks and reports of ammonia hydroxide leaking from a damaged railroad tank car. Some of the residents were upset at first, but later they understood it was for their own safety

and thanked us for being there for them.” By late Saturday afternoon, the authorities released E TAB. The unit returned to Great Bend. However, by the time the Soldiers had refueled their trucks and bedded down in the Armory, their absence had been felt and they were directed to return to Greensburg. They were requested back, at first in small numbers, but before

184th Security Forces rushed to help “manage the chaos”

By 1st Lt. Alyson Stockton The sound of tornado sirens was still fresh in Greensburg residents’ ears when Lt. Col. Lin Dehning’s phone rang shortly after 1 a.m. on May 5. Two hours later, after making calls down the chain of command en route, the 184th Security Forces Squadron commander arrived in the tornado-racked town with 15 of his troops close behind. The first thing he did was establish contact with the incident command element and local senior law enforcement officers. The first few hours were spent determining what to do, coming up with a plan and “just trying to manage the chaos,” Dehning said. Senior Master Sgt. Bill Foster, 184th SFS Raven program manager and chief of the Air National Guard’s Raven program, arrived at 6 a.m. with the other 14 security forces personnel. “It was extremely chaotic with numerous public safety agencies on scene, and trying to get everyone coordinated into a joint effort took a little time,” he said. Of the 86 airmen assigned to the 184th SFS, more than half were unavailable due to deployments, temporary duty and federal activation. From a pool of 40 personnel, they organized into two 15-man teams made up of full-time and traditional Guardsmen. They worked 12-hour shifts to provide additional security and assist civil-

Sunday evening the unit was back in Greensburg. With the search and clear mission completed, they resumed conducting their around the clock security mission on the access roads to Greensburg. By Monday, the Soldiers of the 772 Engineering Company, 891st Engineering Battalion, had cleared the Greensburg High School football field. The home of the “Rangers” became the National Guard staging area. Taking the east end zone, E TAB erected their frame tents and continued their security mission. Sanko, an instructor at Pratt Community College, made arrangements for his Soldiers to be shuttled there for showers. When Col. Victor Braden, commander, 69th Troop Command, visited E TAB on May 10, the unit was in good spirits and well into their routine of around the clock operations. Kansas Highway Patrol Trooper John L. Bertram, Troop E, Greensburg, said “The Guard was great in helping the city.”

“I personally did not need the Guard’s help, but I am sure glad they are here for the people who did need it,” said Daryl Ulrich, Greensburg, a former U.S. Navy corpsman. On May 12, E TAB was released from their State Mission. They packed gear and folded tents and loaded their trucks. It was getting dark when they arrived back in Great Bend. The E TAB Soldiers put away their equipment and refueled their vehicles. Only then could they say “Mission Complete.”

ian law enforcement. Although Foster had worked the Haysville tornado recovery in a civilian law enforcement capacity in 2000, he said the destruction was far worse than he had anticipated. One of the biggest challenges, he said, was having no equipment or infrastructure left to work with. “Everything had to be brought in from somewhere else. Equipment-wise, everything was gone,” he said. “It was basically a logistical nightmare.” Even with the initial sense of panic, everyone was on the same page and knew exactly what the priority was on day three: move the debris. Both military and civilian groups worked together to bring in all required equipment, with 184th personnel contributing water, generators, lighting and communications at first, and later, food service and medical support. Overcoming communication problems was the biggest issue since different agencies speak in different languages, and in this case, they spoke them over different radio frequencies. Foster had to carry two radios, one to talk to the military and another to talk to law enforcement. Effective communication was crucial for rumor control and communicating priorities down the chain of command. Foster thinks the lessons learned from this experience will contribute to readiness for the next disaster response.



Staff Sgt. Donald Johnson, Sgt. James Jackson and Spc. John Sims confer with a local resident and two officers of the Kansas Highway Patrol at a checkpoint leading into Greensburg. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Joe Shuey)



Two members of Battery E, 161st Field Artillery, set up a tent on the Greensburg High School football field. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Joe Shuey)

“Royal” visitors bring hope, support to Greensburg

By 1st Lt. Joe Blubaugh The residents of Greensburg were host to some “royal” visitors during their recovery efforts following the May 4 tornado that devastated the majority of the community. A contingent from the Kansas City Royals visited the community on May 15 as a show of support to the residents. The group included General Manager Dayton Moore, former players Frank White and Brian McRae and broadcaster Fred White.

The Royals brought more than goodwill to Greensburg, they were also there to present a \$25,000 check to Heart to Heart International, a relief organization that flies missions all over the world offering medical supplies and services to rescue workers and residents in disaster areas. The money was collected from fans at two Royals games. The Royals’ alumni association plans to continue to raise money to help replace baseball equipment and possibly rehabilitate the baseball facilities in Greensburg.

Expeditionary Medical Support System a boon to Greensburg



The Kansas National Guard’s Expeditionary Medical Support System was set up in Greensburg by the 190th Air Refueling Wing for medical services. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

“It’s been a God-send.”

That is Kiowa County Memorial Hospital administrator Mary Sweet’s opinion of the Kansas National Guard’s Expeditionary Medical Support System hospital sent to the town of Greensburg to provide space and equipment for medical services to the tornado-ravaged town.

The EMEDS opened in Greensburg May 21 to begin treating the first patients. The EMEDS arrived in the town May 12 and was established on Highway 54 across from the Greensburg John Deere dealership.

Sweet said good medical care is vital to the support of a town and she credits the EMEDS facility with providing stability to the community and helping it to rebound so quickly.

“I have 99 employees at the hospital,” said Sweet. “Probably a third of them are medical professionals that would not be able find work elsewhere in the community. This facility allows them to stay in Greensburg.”

In the days following the May 4 tornado, the community leaders and citizens discussed their options – whether to stay and rebuild the town or move on. “How do we go forward?” said Sweet. “That was the question. This (EMEDS) was a big step forward for a lot of people in deciding to stay and rebuild.”

“Kansas is currently the only state in the country to have a homeland security deployable EMEDS facility and when we



The Emergency Room of the Expeditionary Medical Support System, set up in Greensburg, Kan., to replace the Kiowa County Memorial Hospital, which was destroyed by a tornado May 4. (Photo by Maj. Tim Stevens)

saw the needs in Greensburg we determined this was a perfect place to use this tremendous National Guard resource,” said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. “While we never want something like this to happen to any community, it’s gratifying to know that our Guard members

were able to help people in need with the EMEDS as well as debris removal, security, generators and other resources.”

This is the second time the Kansas EMEDS has been used in a U.S. disaster response. It was also deployed to assist in the response and recovery efforts follow-

ing Hurricane Katrina.

“While we always hope that disasters like the Greensburg tornado never happen, the reality is that they do. This is why the 190th’s EMEDS mission is so vitally important to our state and nation,” said Col. Gregg Burden, 190th Air Refueling Wing Commander.

The emergency room is currently the primary section of the hospital that is operational.

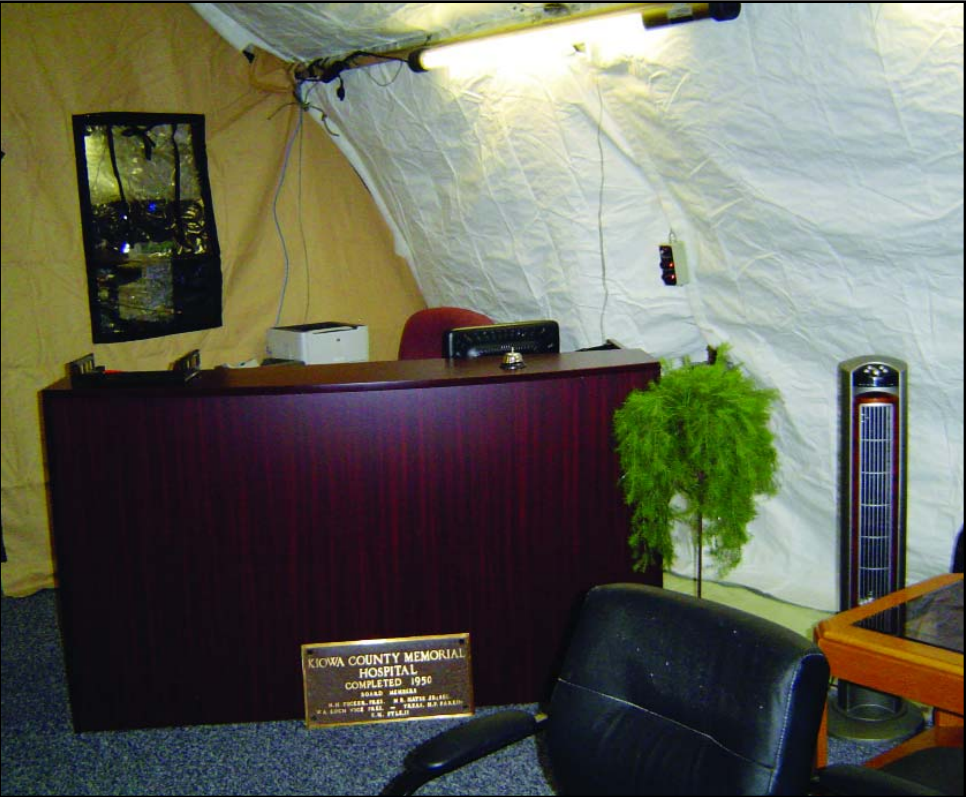
“It’s been about 40 percent work-related injuries,” said Vanessa Kirk, nursing supervisor. “About 40 percent have been in for cough and congestion and about 20 percent have been for major medical reasons, such as heart attacks and accidents.”

Kirk said the hospital’s clinic is scheduled to open July 1 and the laboratory facility is also being prepared.

Because the facility will be used long-term until a new hospital can be built, Sweet said that the hospital employees are “making it their own.”

“We can’t say ‘Thank you’ enough to the National Guard for providing this,” said Sweet.

The EMEDS is based out of the 190th Air Refueling Wing in Topeka. The 190th ARW is the only organization in the country currently with an EMEDS dedicated to homeland security and will be the central location for all EMEDS logistic support throughout the United States.



Hospital staff are making the EMEDS tents more inviting for community members by adding plants, carpeting and other “home-like” touches. (Photo by Maj. Tim Stevens)



Part of the EMEDS facility has been transformed into a day-care center for the children of hospital staff members. (Photo by Jane Welch)

Greensburg: Kansans respond to a



Debris removal from public roads was one of the high priority missions assigned to the Kansas National Guard’s 891st Engineer Battalion. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



Gov. Kathleen Sebelius visited Greensburg May 6 for a first-hand look at the storm damage. (Photo by Master Sgt. Neil Fogg)



Tech. Sgt. Jarrod DeLong, 134th Air Control Squadron, uses a chainsaw to cut a large tree into smaller pieces. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt McCoy)



Sgt. Jeffrey Richardson, Sgt. Robert Wells and Spc. William Smith, 226th Engineer Company, repair the town gazebo in front of the courthouse. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Ryan Lynch)



Members of the 134th Air Control Squadron prepare to tow a vehicle. (Photo by Master Sgt. Neil Fogg)

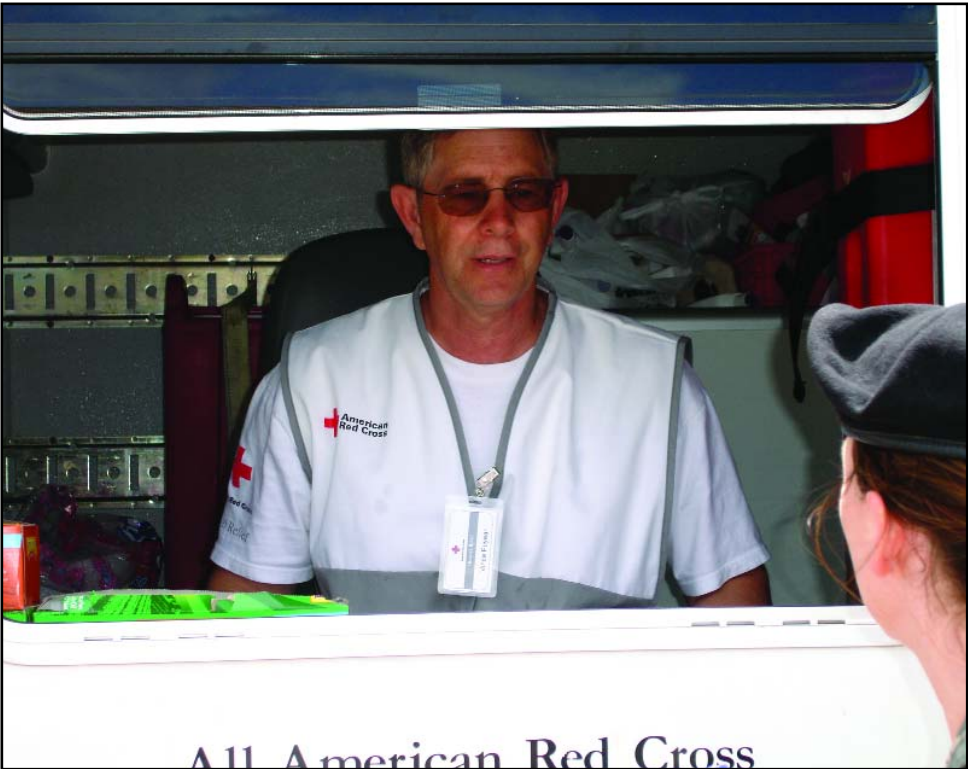
town beaten down, but not defeated



Maj. Rick Peat, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, (center) works with Kansas Highway Patrol troopers to update daily radio messages on the Kansas Department of Transportation's mobile transmitter. (Photo by Cait Purinton, KHP)



Kansas National Guardsmen prepare to tackle the debris at Greensburg's premier tourist attraction, the World's Largest Hand-dug Well. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



The American Red Cross was one of several volunteer organizations helping the residents and emergency responders in Greensburg. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, UPAR)



Even in the midst of the destruction, the people of Greensburg still retained a sense of humor. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, UPAR)



Where was once a quiet Greensburg neighborhood, there is now nothing but twisted trees and rubble. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

Guardsmen use helicopter to go “shark hunting”

By Sgt. Michael Mathewson

Following the heavy rains and flooding of early May, an 800 pound shark went missing from its location on the Smoky Hill River. Gone for over a week, it was discovered 15 miles away in the Kansas River.

On May 16, the Kansas Army National Guard launched a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in an effort to recover the runaway creature.

The bridge shark is a device placed into a river upstream of a bridge to keep debris from building up around the piers during periods of high waters. Looking something like a washing machine agitator, the shark is mounted on a 12 inch shell (round) pile. In the water, it freely spins in the current deflecting debris away from the bridge supports. Howard W. Reece, District Two maintenance superintendent, Kansas Department of Transportation in Salina, called the \$30,000 version of the bridge shark a MOABS – Mother Of All Bridge Sharks.

“The MOAB was placed on the east bound I-70 bridge over the Smoky Hill River,” said Reece. “It was working great until the overwhelming current tilted the pile allowing the flood waters to float the MOAB off of its mounting.”

The lost MOABS was stranded in the

driftwood choked Kansas River between Fort Riley and Manhattan, near Stag Hill Golf Course just south of the Manhattan Airport. It was recovered by a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from Company C, 1st Battalion, 171st General Support Aviation Battalion, Topeka. The helicopter was piloted by Chief Warrant Officer 5 Robert Good, Topeka, and Chief Warrant Officer 4 John Alexander, Topeka, and crewed by Staff Sgt. J. T. Smith, Lebo, and Sgt. Thomas Baker, Burlingame.

The pilots brought the helicopter close enough to allow Smith to step directly onto the MOABS. “It was the only way we could see to get on top of the nine foot, six inch tall MOAB,” Smith explained.

Smith’s job was to rig the MOAB for lifting. He had a great deal of trouble holding onto the plastic sides of the MOAB under the helicopter rotors down wash until it moved away.

“I just hooked it up to the existing eyebolts and hunkered down while the helicopter hovered over me,” said Smith.

Once the MOABS was attached to the cargo hook and Smith was safely back inside the helicopter, the UH-60 lifted the MOABS from the river for the short flight to a nearby road. There, members of KDOT



Staff Sgt. J.T. Smith rigs the MOABS for sling loading. (Photo by Sgt. Kenneth DeWalt)

were waiting with ground handling equipment to take charge of their missing shark. “We will replace its mount and put it

back into the river,” said Reece. “I cannot say enough good things about the Guards’ performance today.”



The MOABS turns in the wind as it rides under the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. (Photo by Sgt. Kenneth DeWalt)

New facility expands training opportunities in Salina

A 1,950-square-foot Range Control Facility and an Engagement Skills Trainer highlight new offerings at the Kansas Training Center in Salina.

The facility for the EST 2000, which is a weapons engagement simulator, is near completion and is slated to be available beginning in June 2007. The EST 2000 provides an indoor, multi-purpose and multi-lane trainer for individual small arms, crew served weapons and individual anti-tank training.

There are three modes of training available with the EST 2000, including marksmanship, collective and shoot/don’t-shoot.

“The EST 2000 allows units to train in a controlled environment without live ammunition or wear and tear on tactical weapons,” said Lt. Col Kevin R. Schenker, Training Site commander.

Weapons simulators available include M2 machine gun, M4 carbine, M9 pistol, M16A2 rifle, MK19 grenade launcher, M203/M4 rifle/grenade launcher, M240B machine gun, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and M1200 shotgun.

“The EST 2000 allows a unit to train more cost effectively with instant feedback to the Soldier, increasing his or her confidence and unit proficiency,” Schenker said

In addition to the EST 2000, the newest improvement to the KSTC is a Range Control Facility. The new Range Control Facility has the capability to conduct 24-hour operations and monitor live weather. In addition, the facility will provide better communication between Range Control and the using unit. A range safety briefing room and garage area for fire fighting equipment also are available.

The Kansas Training Center has ranges available for combat pistol, multi-purpose machine gun, M16 qualification and more. Units training at the Kansas Training Center have the advantage of conducting several types of training in one location.

“When you come to Salina to use our range facilities, take the opportunity to try out the EST 2000, Virtual Convoy Trainer and Simulation Center. You will get more training out of your valuable training time,” said Schenker.

The Kansas Training Center is a collective training center. All training facilities and equipment are available to any Active, Reserve or Guard components.

To schedule training or for more information contact Master Sgt. Thomas Hawks, (785) 822-3297; thomas.hawks@us.army.mil.

MLRS battery competes successful annual training

By Maj. Paul Schneider

Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Service Battery, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, Kansas National Guard, returned to Kansas in June from two weeks of training in Camp Guernsey, Wyo.

The Soldiers made the nearly 1,400 mile round trip to train on the unit’s artillery mission to deliver general support rocket and missile fires accurately, timely and in sufficient volume to ensure that the supported commander is success-

ful in battle.

These Kansas Soldiers undertook a wide variety of training, including Artillery Section Training, Crew Served Weapons firing and Mounted Convoy Live Firing. They culminated their training in safely firing 72 Multiple Launch Rocket System rockets.

The battalion is headquartered in Hiawatha, with units in Abilene, Atchison, Burlington, Concordia, Fort Riley, Horton, Marysville, Ottawa, Sabetha, Salina and Troy.



A Multiple Launch Rocket System crew of the Kansas National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery loads live rockets in preparation for a live fire exercise (below) during annual training at Camp Guernsey, Wyo. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Kevin Abel, Wyoming National Guard)



Training helps Black Hawks load up on the go

By Sgt. Michael Mathewson, UPAR

Whether delivering hay to a snow stranded cattle herd in western Kansas or moving artillery on the battlefield, the job rests on the ability of the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to sling load cargo. This ability not only requires trained pilots and crew members, but an experienced ground crew to rig the load, direct the helicopter and attach the load.

On June 3, three members of Company C, 1-171 General Support Aviation Battalion, conducted ground sling-load training at Forbes Field, Topeka. Standing in the knee high grass of the sling-load training area, Staff Sgt. Douglas Bailey, Lawrence, described the “reach pendant,” the device he would use to connect the load to the Black Hawk. For this day’s training, the load was a concrete filled 55 gallon drum.

Bailey said a helicopter generates a great deal of static electricity and prior to the insulated reach pendant, a ground crew member had to ground the helicopters cargo hook before the load could safely be attached.

“When you get hit with static electricity you really feel it,” said Bailey.

“The loop is rubber covered nylon and the shaft is made of fiberglass,” he continued. “These materials are non conductive and serve as an insulator against the static electricity generated by the helicopter.”

With Staff Sgt. Shawn Perkins, Green Valley, Mo., serving as the ground controller, the Black Hawk made five sling load pickup and drop-off circuits. The controller, along with the crew chief, serves as the eyes for the pilot. The pilots lose sight of the load as the helicopter moves into position. The mission of the controller is safety. He directs the pilots over the load, communicating with the crew through the use of arm and hand signals. If he perceives any possible danger, the controller will abort the attempt and the helicopter will clear the area.

In the loading area the controller positions himself upwind, close enough to see the load and the hook man, yet far enough away that he can easily be seen by the pilots.



Staff Sgt. Doug Bailey hooks a sling load to a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during a training exercise. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, UPAR)

When the Black Hawk is delivering a load, the controller will signal the crew when it is safe to release the load.

In addition to his own training, Bailey was training Spc. Magen Albert, Company D, 108th Aviation, Topeka, on the procedures for hooking up a sling load. Before the Black Hawk arrived, Bailey explained how the pendant is capable of holding up to 11,000 pounds. He also instructed Albert on how the pendant is attached to the helicopter’s hook and

how to brace for the impact of the rotor wash. As the UH-60 Black Hawk approached, Albert put on the flight helmet and gloves Bailey provided. During the missions, Bailey stood behind Albert, bracing her as the helicopter hovered over head. After Albert completed two hookups, she said “You cannot believe how intense it was standing under the helicopter with the wind trying to blow me away.”

Rollover! Guardsmen train for emergency evacuations

By Sgt. Amy R. Bellerive, UPAR

On June 12, the 731st Medium Truck Company participated in the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer program at Fort Carson, Colo., as part of their annual training.

The training is a program developed to teach Soldiers how to exit an up-armored humvee in the event of a rollover. The training involves how to operate the safety mechanisms, such as seat belts and combat door latches when Soldiers are in difficult positions.

Staff Sgt. Kyle Tillery and Staff Sgt. Marlin Hogie received training on how to operate the simulator and conduct training. After a safety briefing and a briefing by their team leaders on what to do in the event of a rollover, Soldiers proceeded in groups to the simulator.

Kevlar helmets and flak vests were worn along with eye protection during the training. Soldiers were given rubber M16 rifle

simulators to carry for the drill. Two safety belts, one across the chest and one lap belt were fastened and the Soldiers were ready to begin. In addition to the safety belts, there was also a panic button located in the center of the vehicle that any occupant could reach in the event that they were hurt or needed to exit the vehicle immediately. Microphones and speakers inside of the humvee and at the control station allowed the trainers and trainees to communicate.

First, the simulator was tilted to 30 degrees, the angle at which a standard humvee will roll over. It was brought back to center and then angled to 25 degrees, which is the angle at which an up-armored humvee will roll. Back to center and the fun began. The simulator was turned upside down. After direction from the trainers, the Soldiers were commanded to “Egress.”

Exiting the upside down simulator began

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Topeka Harley Davidson shows strong support for Kansas Guard



Recent Kansas National Guard recruit Jesse Poe hopes to become a helicopter mechanic. He has worked at Topeka Harley Davidson for more than three years. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

By Sharon Watson

You might not know it by looking, but Topeka Harley-Davidson isn’t just a traditional stop for bikers in the area. It’s definitely that, but it’s also quite a popular spot if you’re in the Kansas National Guard. That’s not just because many local Guardsmen shop there or stop in for lunch. It’s because four of Topeka Harley’s employees have joined the Kansas National Guard. Two work for the Air Guard and two for the Army Guard.

“This is really the first time we’ve had anyone in the Guard in the 10 years I’ve been here,” said Ray Moorhead, general manager. “We support them in any way we can.”

Moorhead understands exactly what it’s like for these four employees. He served in the Kansas Guard in the 3rd Battalion,

“They’re all good kids, hard workers with good morals.”

*Rick Evans,
Shop foreman,
Topeka Harley-Davidson*

137th Infantry, which no longer exists but was under the 69th Infantry Brigade.

Rick Evans, the shop foreman, has worked for Topeka Harley for more than 14 years and doesn’t recall having any Guard employees until recently.

“They’re all good kids, hard workers with good morals.”

Airman First Class Joey Sterbenz has

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Members of the 731st Medium Truck Company exit a rollover simulator at Fort Carson, Colo. (Photo by 1st Lt. Christopher Sanders)

“Hey, were home...”



Capt. Robert Melton passes out hugs and kisses to his family after the return ceremony for Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 130th Field Artillery Brigade. The battery served a one-year tour of duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD)

By Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD
On Saturday, June 9, 50 members of the Kansas Army National Guard’s Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 130th Field Artillery Brigade, returned from a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 130th began its journey overseas on April 2, 2006, with a departure ceremony honoring their call to active duty. The unit reported to Fort McCoy, Wis., for pre-mobilization and familiarization equipment training in preparation for their mission of Force Protection and support of active duty elements.

The familiar, welcome rumble of the Patriot Guard motorcycles escorting the returning troops through the colonnade of American flags marked the final destination of the troop’s long journey home to family and loved ones anxiously awaiting the return of their Soldier. Natalie Windham, daughter of Col. Robert Windham expressed her gratitude that her dad was now home and safe. “School was no distraction, but I became pretty concerned when we lost e-mail contact for a couple of weeks,” said Windham. Sandra Kinzie of the Fort Leavenworth Army and Air Force Exchange Services, was present to hand out gift packs from the AAFES to wives and loved ones of Soldiers in appreciation of their sacrifices and support. Kinzie was also awaiting the return of her husband, Capt. Russ Kinzie. Deneen Pederson, wife of Lt. Col. Kirk Pederson, was glad that 130th’s tour of duty was over, as well, and that her husband was home.



Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 130th Field Artillery Brigade rendered a salute before being dismissed. (Photo by Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD)

“We were married on June 4, 2006 and he left for Iraq on June 9, said Pederson. “It was a long year, but a great experience.” During the 30 minute ceremony Col. Alex Duckworth thanked all the family members for their support. “Hey, were home, were home... 10 toes, 10 fingers, were all whole,” said Duckworth.

He also thanked the Patriot Guard, who received a standing ovation and cheers from the crowd. “Thank you... you guys are great!” Duckworth said.

The 130th FA has a long history of supporting federal active duty assignments from the European theater in 1917, the Aleutian Islands during World War II and in Vietnam. The 130th FA consists of units across the state from Hiawatha to Salina.

“The patch of Task Force Tornado is known to and worn by many sailors, Ugandans and Iraqi generals.” These members of the 130th made up what was known as Task Force Tornado, during their time in Iraq. Its responsibility consisted of supporting 1,600 active duty Soldiers, 380 Ugandan troops and 138 sailors at Camp Victory.

During the closing remarks to the troops, Duckworth reminded everyone that things will be different in returning home and it may present some challenges. “I know it will be different for me to go to church tomorrow without carrying my sidearm,” said Duckworth. “It may take some time to get readjusted, but there is plenty of time and resources for you. If you need help, please get it.”

Field trip a little out of the norm for fifth grade class

By Stephen D. Larson
Field trips. They’re an American end-of-school-year tradition, with students all over the country visiting museums, zoos, state capitals and other educationally “fun” sites. However, the 5th grade classes at West Elementary School in Wamego visited a little different sort of site this year – the Kansas National Guard’s Maneuver and Training Equipment Site at Fort Riley. Instead of dinosaur bones, elephants or marbled halls, they got close-up looks at mechanic’s bays, truck engines, machine guns and rifles, mobile howitzers, tanks and missile launchers.

And they loved it. “The kids just have a blast,” said Mrs. Cathy Woodyard, a fifth grade teacher at the school as she watched students scaling a massive piece of military hardware. In the armory, Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Beougher displayed to a wide-eyed audience a .50 caliber machine gun, automatic grenade launcher and other pieces of military ordnance. Across the compound, Sgt. Jason Jenkins and Sgt. Jason DeWitt gave a brief overview of engine repair. In another area, tour guide Sgt. Rick Christie showed students two Willys jeeps and a half-track that the MATES personnel were restoring to pristinine condition for the Museum of the Kansas National Guard. This was the second year for such a visit by the school. “We’d been trying for a few years to arrange a visit with a school,” said Maj.

Roger Krull, MATES commander. “Maj. Krull’s daughter, Ashley, was a student in my class last year,” said Doris Rauhut, another teacher and organizer of the trip. “We wanted to bring the students to somewhere different, so we hooked up with Major Krull and arranged a trip.” Rauhut said that approximately 96 students and 15 adults took part last year. So successful was the first visit, they arranged a second trip for this year. Rauhut and Woodyard had high praise for the tour and MATES personnel. “We’ve always had such a warm welcome here,” said Rauhut.

In addition to the tour of the MATES facility, the students and their escorts were presented with personalized military ID tags, visited the stables and saw the Fort Riley mounted color guard perform. Rauhut noted that the appeal is different for boys and girls. “The guns,” said Rauhut. “The boys love the guns. I think the girls like the horses. But they all like climbing on the equipment.” A quick glance at the swarms of students surrounding, on top of and inside the various military vehicles confirmed Rauhut’s assessment. Rauhut said that a number of students have family members in the military, some of whom are deployed to Iraq. Rauhut said the tour helps the students have a better understanding of the military, what they do and why their job is

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Fifth grade students from West Elementary in Wamego discover that a Paladin howitzer is better than a jungle gym. (Photo by Stephen D. Larson)



Sgt. Jason Jenkins and Sgt. Jason DeWitt show students an engine they are rebuilding. (Photo by Stephen D. Larson)

Kansas Guardsmen keep convoys rolling in Iraq



Spc. Donald Cunningham of Towanda, Kan., a gunner with 2nd Platoon, 731st Transportation Company, assembles his .50 caliber machine gun with the help of his vehicle commander, Sgt. Gary Wenke of Wichita, Kan (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte)

By Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte

“Rescue me, O Lord, from evil men; protect me from men of violence, who devise evil plans in their hearts and stir up war every day ... who plan to trip my feet.”

- Convoy prayer

LSA ADDER, Iraq – Sgt. Jasmine J. Jaheeb, a chaplain’s assistant with the 11th Transportation Battalion, handed out prayer cards as the Soldiers put on their armor for the long drive ahead. She said some Soldiers stick the card in their windows – a reminder that even if they don’t always have control over a situation, it’s still under control by someone.

“It’s good to know that something as small as a little card can get you through,” Jaheeb said.

The 11th Transportation Battalion from Virginia Beach, Va., officially began its convoy protection mission in March, a newcomer to the desert of southern Iraq and its dangerous roads.

The unit, which has already come under small arms fire and multiple improvised explosive device attacks, is a mix of active duty and National Guard Soldiers from sev-

eral different states. One of those components is the 731st Transportation Company from the Kansas National Guard.

Spc. Donald Cunningham, Towanda, Kan., a gunner with 2nd Platoon, was about a week into the mission when a rock the size of a cement block was thrown from an overpass and struck him in the back of his helmet. Although he was later diagnosed as receiving a concussion, he dismissed it as not being that serious.

“It was a little bit of a wakeup call,” Cunningham said. “Complacency is a big issue for some ... It certainly made me more aware of the environment.”

His vehicle commander, Sgt. Gary Wenke, Wichita, Kan., said one of the differences between his training and his experiences guarding convoys is how fast a situation can change. Wenke said an IED missed on one trip may be used against you the next trip.

“You just have to stay on top of everything,” said Wenke.

The civilian convoys they protect travel to bases throughout southern Iraq, but also go west to places such as Al Taqueddum



At center with notebook, Staff Sgt. Gerold Gibson of Wetmore, Kan., an assistant convoy commander with 3rd Platoon, 731st Transportation Company, shows members of his team alerts and descriptions of suspected insurgents. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte)

Fifth grade field trip to MATES

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so important.

As they boarded buses to return home, Krull and his team presented the teachers and sponsoring parents with bags filled

with mugs, pencils and other goodies, souvenirs of their visit, along with an invitation to come again next year.

“It looks like this is going to be an annual event,” said Woodyard.



Sgt. Jesse Henson stands ready to give assistance as students try out the driver’s seat of an M1A1 Abrams tank. (Photo by Stephen D. Larson)

and north to locations such as Logisitcal Support Area Anaconda. The distances mean long hours on the road.

Wenke, for one, is used to traveling. In civilian life, he works as a transport driver, hauling tractor trailer loads on regular 500-mile round trips. He said one advantage to the convoy security work is how the Soldiers keep each other alert through constant communication, which also helps the time pass more quickly.

“We’ve got a lot of good people we’re working with,” he said.

The Soldiers joked with each other as they prepared their vehicles for the next trip, playing songs such as “I’m a Fobbit” while they assembled and checked their heavy machine guns.

Spc. Christopher Leech of Minneapolis, Kan., who works as the gunner for another vehicle, said the platoon has bonded from the start.

“It makes missions run a lot smoother,” he said.

Lt. Col. Tammie J. Pettit, the commander of the 11th Trans. Bn., said many of her Soldiers have shown themselves to be natural leaders, regardless of their rank and what they were doing prior to the deployment.

“I’m pleasantly surprised at how well the units are doing,” she said. “They’re all just pulling together.”

Pettit noted that the companies’ record

of finding improvised explosive devices is already on par with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, the battalion’s higher command.

She said she has also pushed her staff members to ride with the convoys, since the experience will result in better service for the Soldiers who regularly handle security escort duties.

“The battalion isn’t just sitting back in their air conditioned offices,” Pettit said. “It’s important for them to understand what these guys are going through.”

Maj. Ralph A. Lounsborough, the battalion executive officer, said he’s been impressed by the network of organizations out on the roads supporting the convoy mission – personnel ranging from route clearance units to Iraqi Police securing checkpoints.

“It’s pretty impressive. You’re never alone,” Lounsborough said. “There’s always someone else out there helping you do your job. It’s nice to know you aren’t out there all by yourself trying to find this stuff.”

The battalion, which is trained to run cargo transfer operations by air, sea, land and rail, found out its mission would be exclusively convoy protection in June 2006.

“We had plenty of time to change gears,” Lounsborough said. “It really wasn’t that big of a transition for us.”

The Soldiers continue to pick up lessons

(Continued on Page 19)

Awards and Decorations

Kansas Army National Guard

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

Maj. Gen. Lloyd “Gene” Krase, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth

LEGION OF MERIT

Col. Henry Martin Jr., JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
 Col. Gregg L. Riley, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Curtis R. Burns, HQ, 235th Rgt, Salina
 Lt. Col. Michael G. Davison, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Jane I. Harris JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Darrell D. Loyd, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Michael A. Thornbro, 69th TC, Wichita
 Lt. Col. Stanley D. Wagstaff, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Steven D. Evans, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Cal D. McDole, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ronald E. Mullinax, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael W. Shipman, HHS, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha
 Command Sgt. Maj. Jana L. Harrison, HHD, 169th CSB, Olathe
 Command Sgt. Maj. Dale L. Putman, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Command Sgt. Maj. George E. Stevens, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita
 Command Sgt. Maj. David L. Wright, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Maj. Norman R. Joy, HHB, 35th Div Arty, Hutchinson
 Sgt. Maj. Jerry D. Nichols, R&R Cmd, Topeka
 Sgt. Maj. Bradford W. Stauffer, HHB, 130th FA Bde, Topeka
 Master Sgt. William L. Beeman, R&R Cmd, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Ralph D. Figgers, BCTC, Fort Leavenworth
 Master Sgt. Johnnie A. McGee, R&R Cmd, Topeka
 Master Sgt. James J. Zeller, R&R Cmd, Topeka

BRONZE STAR MEDAL

Lt. Col. Mike Slusher, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Maj. Andy Price, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Capt. Troy Danderson, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Command Sgt. Maj. Dale Putman, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 1st Sgt. Gregory Kober, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Spc. Dale Hansen, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

Maj. Steven Blount, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Maj. Jeffrey Mataruso, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Capt. Timothy Burkett, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Capt. Dean Knauss, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. John Cunningham, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Sgt. Johnnie K. Franks, Det 1, 24th Med Co (AA), Topeka
 Sgt. Douglas Plummer, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

Maj. Norman D. Childs, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Maj. Scott Davis, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Maj. Steven H. Ferrell, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Maj. Ronald Peery, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Maj. Daniel P. Ruiz, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Capt. Kyle T. Chansler, 73rd CST, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Capt. Thomas Dysinger, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
 Capt. John Hemingway, 73rd CST, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 1st Lt. David Stuever, 102nd MHD, Topeka
 2nd Lt. Todd M. Lavery, 73rd CST, Topeka
 1st Sgt. Clayton L. Staton, Co D, 1st Bn, 114th Avn, Salina, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 1st Sgt. Carlo Vassalle, 731st Trans Co, Larned, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Master Sgt. Lyle E. Babcock, HHD, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Master Sgt. Willie F. Carter, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class James A. Brown, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class John M. Burns, 73rd CST, Topeka, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class David L. Chance, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson
 Sgt. 1st Class Ralph A. Coy, R&R Cmd, Topeka, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Billie J. Hancock, R&R Cmd, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Cathy D. Johnson, HSC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Gregory L. Johnson, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Craig J. Rohleder, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Herbert C. Wischnack, 73rd CST, Topeka, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Samuel C. Bonham, R&R Cmd, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Martin E. Byrne, R&R Cmd, Topeka, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Jerry E. Daniels, HSC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola

Staff Sgt. Samuel H. Day 73rd CST, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Francisca Jimenez, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Edwin A. Johnson, Det 1, 24th Med Co (AA), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Jeffrey R. Joiner, 137th Trans Co (PLS), Olathe, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Christopher S. Lucas, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Daniel L. Nelson, Det 1, Co B, 40th FSB, Clay Center
 Staff Sgt. David A. Newacheck, 287th STB, Hays
 Staff Sgt. Paul A. Purdham, 137th Trans Co (PLS), Olathe, 1st Silver Oak Leaf
 Staff Sgt. John G. Sheehan, Det 1, HSC, 891st Eng Bn, Garnett, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Craig J. Wellnitz, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Staff Sgt. Thomas J. West, HQ, 235th Rgt, Salina, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. John D. Alderson, 35th MP, Topeka
 Sgt. Charles A. Barger, HSC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Melinda S. Barnes, 287th BTB, Hays
 Sgt. Danielle Burke, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Sgt. Timmy D. Farmer, HSC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Jeremy L. Gray, 995th Maint Co, Smith Center
 Sgt. Ronald D. Green, HSC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Lyndell D. Hanson, 995th Maint Co, Smith Center
 Sgt. Christopher G. Jones, 995th Maint Co, Smith Center
 Sgt. Myra D. Kennedy, Det 2, 170th Maint Co, Colby
 Sgt. Benjamin M. Lewellyn, 137th Trans Co (PLS), Olathe, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Joseph O. Nave, 102nd MHD, Topeka
 Sgt. James M. Peterson, Btry F, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Salina
 Sgt. James M. Schriever, Det 1, 995th Maint Co., Mankato
 Spc. Gordon L. Clark, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Spc. Eric Clay, Co A, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Emporia
 Spc. John M. Doty, HHB, 1st Bn, 127th FA, Ottawa
 Spc. Chadley Kuker, Btry B, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Dodge City
 Spc. Larry F. Nigh, HHB, 130th FA Bde, Topeka
 Spc. Christopher A. Riggs, Co A, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Emporia
 Spc. Justin P. Shreve, Det 1, 24th Med Co (AA), Topeka

ARMY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

Staff Sgt. Broderick Johnson Udohnkana, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Preston Blackburn, Btry B, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Dodge City, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Jose D. Carrillo, Svc Btry, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Hutchinson
 Sgt. John Kilpatrick, R&R Cmd, Topeka
 Spc. Ray Baker, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Spc. Javier Cabral, Svc Btry, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Hutchinson
 Spc. Anthony R. Herman, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Spc. Robert Ortiz, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Spc. Hendrick J. Rijfkogel, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Spc. Matthew Schmitt, Btry B, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Dodge City, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Pfc. Maxwell J. Goodman, Svc Btry, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Hutchinson, with Silver Device
 Pfc. Keith McMillan, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City

AIR FORCE ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

1st Lt. Charles E. Jones, HHD, 169th CSSB, Topeka

ARMY GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

Master Sgt. William D. Buck, HHC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class James P. Fenton, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Sean T. Linn, HQ, 891st Eng Bn, Iola, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Richard H. Wheeler, HHC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Patrick E. Hewitt, 170th Maint Co, Norton, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. William P. Neff, 170th Maint Co, Norton, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Thomas N. Sprague, 226th Eng Co, Augusta
 Staff Sgt. Tracy L. Thompson, HQ, 891st Eng Bn, Iola, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Ross Hawk II, HHB(-), 35th DivArty, Hutchinson
 Sgt. Meredith V. Vaughn, 242nd Eng Co, Wichita, 5th Oak Leaf Cluster

RESERVE COMPONENTS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

Sgt. 1st Class James P. Fenton, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Gerry C. Morse, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Perry A. Reed, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Jason E. Withrich, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Sgt. Brian L. DeWitt, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

Sgt. Michael D. Hunsaker, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Sgt. Mark W. Mulkey, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Steven B. Rhodd, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Sgt. Timothy W. Stock, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Spc. Alvin J. Avila, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Spc. Willie L. Braden Jr., Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Spc. John T. Carlson, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Spc. David M. Kollstedt, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Spc. Terrance A. Lovchik, Det 1, HHB, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka

MILITARY OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL

Maj. Kyle G. Ferlemann, HHD, STARC, Topeka
 Capt. Cheryl L. Whelan, Det 6, KSARNG, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class John W. Birdsong Jr., R&R Cmd, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Francis R. Gay, R&R Cmd, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Carline D. Long Jr., Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Staff Sgt. Bradley M. Bretton, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Staff Sgt. James A. Brown, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Staff Sgt. Aniello J. Burr, 35th MP Co, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. William L. Witzke, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Sgt. Travis S. Bachman, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Sgt. Leon Stegman, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Spc. Joseph D. Hopkins, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
 Spc. Daniel J. McNasby, Btry B, 1st Bn, 127th FA, Lenexa
 Spc. Aaron J. Seal, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City

ARMED FORCES RESERVE MEDAL

Capt. Troy M. Price, HHB, 35th DivArty, Hutchinson, Bronze Hourglass Device

RESERVE COMPONENTS OVERSEAS TRAINING RIBBON

Maj. Karla O. Langland, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Master Sgt. Merrill G. Rowell, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Spc. Adam L. Whitling, HQ, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

Maj. Gen. James R. Mason, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Lt. Col. Kyle Ferlemann, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Sgt. 1st James P. Fenton, 1st Bn, 144th FA, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Harrison W. McWhorter, Jr., HQ, 235th Rgt (KSRTI), Salina

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD MERITORIOUS SERVICE RIBBON

Lt. Col. Laura J. McKnight, HQ, 235th Rgt (RTI), Salina
 Maj. Kyle Ferlemann, HHC, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth
 Maj. Eric McGraw, HQ, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Maj. Anthony Mohatt, HHC, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Breaden, HQ, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Jones, HHC, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD COMMENDATION RIBBON

Lt. Col. Tony D. Divish, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita
 Maj. Craig M. Brenton, 287th Sustainment Bde, Hays
 Maj. Brian Garbee, HQ, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth
 Capt. Erica M. Christie, 287th Sustainment Bde, Hays
 Capt. Daniel E. Evasco, HQ, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth
 Capt. Darby T. Prine, 287th Sustainment Bde, Hays
 Chief Warrant Officer 5 William Harris, HQ, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth
 Sgt. 1st Class Bernard C. Hennis, HQ, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth
 Staff Sgt. Melissa Stupka, 287th Sustainment Bde, Hays
 Spc. Thomas L. Buskirk, Co B, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Wichita

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD STRENGTH MANAGEMENT RIBBON

Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin J. Herrman, 287th BTB, Hays

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD ACHIEVEMENT RIBBON

Maj. Russell Richardson, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Capt. Stephen J. Shank, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Jones, HHC, 35th ID (Mech), Fort Leavenworth
 Staff Sgt. James F. Finneran, HHB, 35th DivArty, Hutchinson

Sgt. Timothy A. Hedman, 35th MP Co, Topeka
 Spc. Steven R.Grueb, 35th MP Co, Topeka
 Pvt. 2 Joseph N. Nicolay, 35th MP Co, Topeka
 Pvt. Glenn J. Carter, 35th MP Co, Topeka

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD SERVICE MEDAL

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Terry D. Patton, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Sgt. 1st Class Donald E. Gilmore, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Staff Sgt. Jimmy L. Jarvis, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Staff Sgt. Rolando C. Nabua, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Sgt. Duane S. Griffin, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Sgt. Dale L. Harwood, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Sgt. Ronald C. Osborn, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Spc. Primitivo L. Fuentes, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Spc. Amanda S. Gruber, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell
 Spc. Wayne A. Rohleder, Det 3, 170th Maint Co, Russell

COMBAT INFANTRY BADGE

Lt. Col. Mike Slusher, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 1st Sgt. Gregory Kober, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Sgt. Douglas Plummer, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka

COMBAT MEDICAL BADGE

Maj. Andy Price, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Capt. Brian Komar, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka

COMBAT ACTION BADGE

Maj. Ronald Peery, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Capt. Timothy Burkett, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. John Cunningham, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka
 Spc. Duston Hansen, ETT #1, JFHQKS, Topeka

AVIATION BADGE

Master Sgt. Keith J. Price II, HHB(-), 35th DivArty, Fort Leavenworth

Kansas Air National Guard Awards

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

Col. William Parsel Jr., 190th ARW, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Scott Dold, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Robert Morse, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Derek Rogers, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Lt. Col. Christopher Stratmann, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Lt. Col. Michael J. Tokarz, 184th ARW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Maj. Jarrod Frantz, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Maj. Shon A. Gerber, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Maj. Lincoln D. Schroeder, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Chief Master Sgt. Larry Aldridge, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Montgomery, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Chief Master Sgt. Ronald H. Sageser, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Chief Master Sgt. Robert Shows, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Master Sgt. Dennis Graves, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Master Sgt. Johnnie Johnson, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Master Sgt. Donald G. Lee, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Paul McCartney, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Curtiss L. Nagel, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Twonett Alexander, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Susan M. Ballard, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Michael Chandler, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Donald Coash, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Jeffrey R. Durocher, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Gary Filkins, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Clark Hansen, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Bernard Kaiser, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Steven Lewis, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Dennis Miller, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. James C. Miller, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Thomas J. Nestor, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Master Sgt. Robert D. Noland, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. James L. Pence, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. William Putnam, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Debra K. Quade, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Phillip Ramirez, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. John Sanders, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Grayling Vine, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Jessie L. Wolfe, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Tech. Sgt. Joseph A. Bullard, 73rd CST, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. Robert Campos, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. Kristine A. Henderson, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Tech. Sgt. Michael Molter, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. Lawrence Rye, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. Michael L. Thurston, 184th ARW, Wichita
 Tech. Sgt. Robin P. Willson, 184th ARW, Wichita

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

Col. Adam King, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Albert R. Bandy, 190th ARW, Topeka

(Continued on Page 17)

We Remember...

Retired Sgt. 1st Class

Robert E. Bellinder

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Robert E. Bellinder, 71, Topeka, died May 28, 2007.

He was born April 28, 1936, at Wamego.

Bellinder was a member of the Kansas Army National Guard where he was an administrative specialist and a journalist assigned to Headquarters Detachment State Area Command (-), Topeka.

He retired with over 32 years of service.

Retired 1st Sgt. Dennis Bunker

Retired 1st Sgt. Dennis Bunker, 69, died May 13, 2007.

He was born Jan. 30, 1938.

Bunker was a member of the Kansas Army National Guard where he was a field artillery senior sergeant assigned to Battery E (TA), 161st Field Artillery, Larned.

He retired with 27 years of service.

Retired Brig. Gen. Raymond V. Palmer

Retired Brig. Gen. Raymond V. Palmer, 85, Wichita, died April 22, 2007.

He was born Aug. 2, 1921.

Palmer was a member of the Kansas Air National Guard where he was a general officer assigned to Headquarters, Kansas Air National Guard, Topeka.

He retired with over 39 years of service.

Spc. William ‘Bill’ James Fullerton

Spc. William ‘Bill’ James Fullerton, 27, Mankato, died April 3, 2007.

He was born Sept. 28, 1979.

Fullerton was a member of the Kansas Army National Guard where he was a wheeled vehicle mechanic assigned to Detachment 1, 995th Maintenance Company, Mankato.

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Gary Ray Jaquis

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Gary Ray Jaquis, 43, died April 1, 2007.

He was born Sept. 13, 1963.

Jaquis was a member of Kansas Army National Guard where he was a special purpose equipment repairer assigned to

the Regional Training Site-Maintenance, Salina.

He retired with over 20 years of service.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj.

Ross Knitter

Topeka Harley Davidson shows strong support for Kansas Guard

Continued from Page 13
worked for Topeka Harley since May 2005 and joined the Air Guard Nov. 22, 2005. He was influenced by his grandfather, retired Senior Master Sgt. Lowell Seymour, who was in the Air National Guard for 20 years.

“I’ve always been interested in planes,” Sterbenz said. “What I really want to do is eventually get into boom school and become a boomer.”

The 190th Air Refueling Wing could provide him just such an opportunity as the KC-135 refueling planes require an operator to connect the fuel boom to another plane for refueling.

Airman Logan Glenn has worked for Topeka Harley for a year and a half and joined the Air Guard in February 2007.

“I wanted to join a branch of the military, but wanted to stay here in Topeka, so I joined the Air Guard.”

The newest Guard recruit working on bikes at the Harley shop is Stevie Lynn Apple, the first woman to work in the shop. Apple had been working as a mechanic at an automotive shop in town until April, but had a desire to work on motorcycles.

“I’ve always been into bikes and I was talking with a friend and heard they needed



The Topeka Harley Davidson dealership employs four members of the Kansas National Guard. From left to right are: Ray Moorhead, general manager, Topeka Harley Davidson; Sgt. Maj. John Birdsong, KSNG Recruitment and Retention Office; Airman 1st Class Joey Sterbenz, Kansas Air National Guard; Jesse Poe, Kansas Army National Guard; Staff Sgt. Justinn Doby, KSNG recruiter; Logan Glenn, Kansas Air National Guard; Stevie Lynn Apple, Kansas Army National Guard; Staff Sgt. Amos Bazil, recruiter; and Rick Evans, shop foreman, Topeka Harley Davidson. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

some help, so I applied and got the job.”

And she doesn’t mind being the only

woman working in the shop.

“It’s really good actually, that I can do something different. The guys are all really nice and really helpful.”

She knows some may second-guess a woman being in this role, but says no one has made an issue of it.

Apple is considering diesel mechanic

school in the Army Guard. And she wants to get her own motorcycle in the near future.

Jesse Poe also joined the Army Guard earlier this year. He has worked for Topeka Harley for more than three years. Poe drove past the Guard recruiting office frequently to and from work and one day decided to check into it.

“I’ve always wanted to join the military. It’s a chance to experience something different from the same thing everyday,” he said. “Once I learned about (the opportunity to) work on helicopters in the Army Guard, it increased my interest.”

“The bike shop is easy to work with on schedules,” Poe added. “I like my job here so I figured that way I could still stay here in town, have my work here, my family.”

And for Topeka Harley, keeping work and family together is important. In fact, the business has been in the same family for more than 50 years. Henry “Pat” Patterson purchased the shop in 1949 and his son Dennis joined the business in the 1970s. Then Mike, Pat’s grandson, and Dennis’ nephew joined the family business in the 1980s. All three celebrated the store’s 50-year anniversary in 1999 and recently the family opened a new location in Lawrence.

Although it’s certainly not a requirement to have a motorcycle while working at Topeka Harley, most of the employees do.

Poe and Glenn both own bikes, and Sterbenz decided he had to have one, too.

“I’ve always liked motorcycles. My new one is showing up today,” he said smiling.

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

Maj. Paul Graves, JFHQKS-LC, Topeka
Chief Warrant Officer 4 John Pearce, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th AVN, Topeka
1st Sgt. Michael Petersen, HHC(-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Master Sgt. Lonny Greer, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita
Master Sgt. Jimmie Kirby, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson
Master Sgt. Travis Rudd, R&R Cmd, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Ahrens, HHS (-), 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha
Sgt. 1st Class James Bauer, Det 1, Co A, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Sgt. 1st Class Samuel Gantner, HHC, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Manhattan
Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hulgan, HHC(-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Sgt. 1st Class Eric Meyer, Btry C (-), 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Abilene
Sgt. 1st Class Claude Paulsen, FSC(-), 891st Eng Bn, Iola
Sgt. 1st Class JoAnn Roberts, BCTS, Fort Leavenworth
Sgt. 1st Class Craig Rohleder, Det 1, 287th Sustainment Bde, Hays
Sgt. 1st Class Michael Tupa, R&R Cmd, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Charles Bryant II, HHC(-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Staff Sgt. Dan Carl, 137th Chaplain Det, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Charlie Dean III, Co A(-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Lawrence
Staff Sgt. Merritt Essig, FSC(-), 891st Eng Bn, Iola
Staff Sgt. Richard Grant, 772nd Eng Co, Pittsburg
Staff Sgt. Robert Gregory, HHC(-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Staff Sgt. Daniel Jones, 137th Trans Co (-), Olathe
Staff Sgt. Evelyn Kimbrough, HHD, 169th CSB Bn, Olathe
Staff Sgt. Ryon Knop, 242nd Eng Co, Coffeyville
Staff Sgt. Daniel Ledesma, HQ, 235th Rgt (RTI), Salina
Staff Sgt. John Sheehan, Det 1, HSC, 891st Eng Bn, Garnett
Staff Sgt. James Strandberg, Det 2, 778th Trans Co, Wichita
Sgt. Robert Armour, Det 1, 170th Maint Co, Norton
Sgt. Jimmy Campion, HHD, 169th CSB Bn, Olathe
Sgt. Roy Ekstein Jr., Det 1, HHC, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Wichita

Sgt. Daniel Mathias, HHB, 1st Bn, 127th FA, Ottawa
Sgt. Michael Reeve, Co B, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Junction City
Spc. Edward Fringer, 995th Maint Co. (-), Smith Center
Spc. Terry Triplett, Det 1, 242nd Engr Co, Coffeyville

Kansas Air National Guard

Brig. Gen. Edward McIlhenny, 190th ARW, Topeka
Col. Dennis Lawlor, 190th ARW, Topeka
Lt. Col. Michael C. Hall, 184th ARW, Wichita
Lt. Col. Frank R. Molnar Jr., 184th ARW, Wichita
Lt. Col. Dean F. Taylor, 184th ARW, Wichita
Lt. Col. Mark S. Welte, 184th ARW, Wichita
Lt. Col. Jeffrey A. Young, 184th ARW, Wichita
Maj. James A. Price, 184th ARW, Wichita
Maj. Michelle Sweeney, 190th ARW, Topeka
1st Lt. Kyle J. Dill, 184th ARW, Wichita
Chief Master Sgt. Robert Wilhelm, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. Donald Coash, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. Tammy R. Duncan, 184th ARW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Dennis A. Mosier, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Christopher Bertels, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Larry Breuninger, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Bart Brown, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Robert L. Davis, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Kenneth E. Mauler, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. John F. Runyan, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Harry T. Stamps, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Kelly A. Turner, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. John V. Welsby, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. John M. Bishop Jr., 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Philip R. Catlett, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Christyna C. Durham, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Timothy P. Fergus, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Kristine Henderson, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. David J. Lopez, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Russell A. Shane, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Montese S. Sonnier, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. David G. Weide, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Michael S. Cahill, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Devon J. Edwards, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Donald P. Johnson, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Brian K. Sauer, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Christopher Schmidt, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Mark W. Sokolski, 184th ARW, Wichita

Awards and Decorations

Continued from Page 16

Lt. Col. Scott A. Dold, 73rd CST, Topeka
Lt. Col. Joe A. Knowles, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka
Maj. Kimberly L. Smith, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka
Capt. Shelly L. Bausch, 73rd CST, Topeka
Chief Master Sgt. David C. Purling, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Zach L. Bottenberg, 73rd CST, Topeka
Master Sgt. Lee Buttel, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Mark M. Moulden, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka
Master Sgt. Marvin M. Stadler, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Zachary L. Bottenberg, 73rd CST, Topeka
Staff Sgt. David Costales, 73rd CST, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Anthony Morehead, 190th ARW, Topeka

AIR FORCE COMMENDATION MEDAL

Lt. Col. Ruston Curtis, 190th ARW, Topeka
Lt. Col. Jeffery Miller, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Stephen Burk, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Lee Grunberger, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Robin Hicks, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Bradley Hinkle, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Robert Williams, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Terry L. Williams, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Capt. Joe A. Dessenberger, 184th ARW, Wichita
Capt. Toby Foster, 190th ARW, Topeka
Capt. Kevin D. Olson, 184th ARW, Wichita
Capt. Phillip Stadler, 190th ARW, Topeka
Capt. Bret Ulrich, 190th ARW, Topeka
1st Lt. Craig M. Cooper, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
1st Lt. Michael L. Ehrstein, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
2nd Lt. Brandon J. Rozario, 184th ARW, Wichita
Chief Master Sgt. Howard Steanson, 190th ARW, Topeka,

4th Oak Leaf Cluster
Chief Master Sgt. Paul Wirtz Jr., 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Master Sgt. Mark A. Angelini, 184th ARW, Wichita, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Master Sgt. Johnnie Johnson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. John Thomason, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Angel D. Acosta, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Charles W. Ballard, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Neil H. Fogg, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Robert G. Frey, 184th ARW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Brad Murray, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Robert Tomko, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Christina Wickline, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Stanly Wilch, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Jeremy T. Cook, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Ernest Kahle Jr., 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Thomas E. Link, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Matthew M. McCoy, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. John E. Vsetecka, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Steven P. Blowers, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Westely Broxterman, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Chad A. Daniels, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Kareem L. Grim, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Matthew J. Hulse, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Justin L. Nichols, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. David A. Olds, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Pamela Y. Russell, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Brandie R. Schulte, 184th ARW, Wichita
Senior Airman John M. Molstad, 184th ARW, Wichita
Senior Airman Orlando Saucedo, 190th ARW, Topeka

ARMY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

Maj. Mark Green, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Timothy Stevens, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka

Capt. David R. Young, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. John E. Dock, 184th ARW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Lynn M. McConnell, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka
Master Sgt. David S. Gogian, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Jean Hager, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Scott M. Moser, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Mark M. Moulden, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. John W. Willey IV, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Chad J. Bellquist, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Steven B. Henderson, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Tammy L. Wells, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. David Costales, 73rd CST, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Jose H. Salcido, 184th ARW, Wichita
Senior Airman Josh A. Falk, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Jacob King, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Jamie K. McGill, 73rd CST, Topeka

AIR FORCE ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

Maj. Peter G. Bailey, 184th ARW, Wichita
Capt. Trenton Shepherd, 190th ARW, Topeka, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
1st Lt. Wendi Mason, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Casey Batterton, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Sherry Hertlein, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Kelly Innes, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Meghan Dickinson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Brian Geske, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Sean Hall, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Janet Peterson, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Mark Peterson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Rabb, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Brian Williams, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Melanie Chavez, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Christopher L. Coonts, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Jeffery Corlis, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Michael J. Eilert, 184th ARW, Wichita

Staff Sgt. Francis Heiman, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Brett Higginbotham, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Justin P. Jacobs, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Sean Kesler, 190th ARW, Topeka, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Jacob King, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Evan T. Mahoney, 184th ARW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Scott C. Ragan, 184th ARW, WichitaStaff Sgt. Christopher Reese, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Michelle Stewart, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Edison F. Zorn, 184th ARW, Wichita
Senior Airman James Elliott III, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Jared Falk, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Airman Ashley A. Fournier, 184th ARW, Wichita
Senior Airman Patrick Heptinstall, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Sarah Mendez, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Gary Williams, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD

MEDAL OF EXCELLENCE
Col. Don S. Jackson Jr., 184th ARW, Wichita

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD

MERITORIOUS SERVICE RIBBON
Lt. Col. Claude L. Lovell III, JFHQKS-AC, Topeka
Janet Wisdom, JFHQKS, Topeka

KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD

RECRUITING RIBBON
Master Sgt. Mark E. Post, 184th ARW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey A. Johansen, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Archie H. Johnson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Steven A. Juhl, 184th ARW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Device
Tech. Sgt. William C. Smith, 184th ARW, Wichita

Tradition keeps families going while their Soldiers are deployed

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

Traditions are an important part of military life. Dating back thousands of years, the hand salute is rendered countless times per day. Family traditions are equally important. These traditions create a structure that binds family members together in times of stress or joy, even if separated by time and distance. Maintaining a tradition is what the military family of the 1st Battalion 108th Aviation Regiment achieved on June 23.

A long standing tradition with the 108th is to host a picnic for the members of the unit and their families on the final day of annual training. In 2006, the unit had just deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom, removing the desire of the collective military family to celebrate.

A year has now gone by and the Family Readiness Group worked hard to build a sense of togetherness among the families on the home front. This included the spouses, children, parents, good friends and other Guard members. They realized the traditional picnic at the end of this year's two weeks of training would be a good tool to help strengthen the families until their loved ones return. Janet Kristiant, wife of Sgt. James Kristiant, Company A, volunteered to be the event organizer.

"The event just started to take on a life of its own," said Kristiant. "As so many of our events have been for the adults, we wanted this to be about the kids. When the idea of a carnival came up, we decided to go with it. We especially wanted to do something for the Double Digit Midgets."



Amanda Weissbeck entertains 15-month-old Kaily while sister Page, 4, gets her face painted at the 108th Family Readiness Group annual picnic. (Photo by Jane Welch)

“The Great Air Race” becomes a reality for Kansas Guardsman

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

In 1965, Twentieth Century-Fox released the movie “Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines.” This fall, viewers will be able to watch “The Great Air Race,” a reality television show in which 100 pilots from the 50 states will fly 10,000 miles. Spc. Billy Summers, Company E, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation, has been selected as one of the hundred.

Summers is a licensed pilot, commercial pilot with single and multi engine (land), certified flight instructor, certified flight instrument instructor, in addition to being a certified ground and instrument ground instructor. Out of uniform, Summers is the manager of Fort Leavenworth’s Morale, Recreation and Welfare Flying Club, where he is also a flight instructor. Through the flying club, Summers received a fax recruiting pilots for “The Great Air Race” television show. Summers and Jim Getty, Parkville, Mo., his co-pilot and owner of the airplane they will be flying, submitted their application. Somewhat to their surprise, they were selected.

The plane Summers and Getty will be

By Double Digit Midgets, explained Kristiant, are the young teenagers who were assuming responsibility within the group and assisting with a wide range activities.

This year’s picnic was larger than past events. Beginning at 9 a.m. to take advantage of the cool of the morning, one of the unit aircraft hangers had been turned into a carnival. There was a rock climbing wall, a moon bounce, bungee run, cup cake walk, fishing pond, putting green, face painting and several other activities.

“This is so great; the girls are loving it,” said Amanda Weissbeck, wife of Spc. Bradley Weissbeck, as she watched her daughters Page, 4, and Kailey 15 months, running from event to event.

Along the flight line, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter was open for exploration by would-be pilots, crew chiefs and in-flight medics. Next to the helicopter, Guard members helped visitors try on flight crew equipment. At 11 a.m., 20 Guard members divided into five teams and ran a relay obstacle course devised by the FRG.

At noon, traditional fare of hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, potato salad and lemonade was served with cookies and cup cakes for dessert.

“I liked the helicopter,” said 2-year-old Anthony Joye, son of Spc. Max Joye, Company E, between bites of his cupcake.

All the food was prepared by Sgt. 1st Class Brad Puff and Spc. James Davis of the battalion’s mess section.

The rock climbing wall was provided by



The annual 108th Aviation’s Family Readiness Group picnic included a hamburger/hot dog lunch with all the fixings. (Photo by Jane Welch)

the Kansas National Guard Recruiting and Retention Detachment. Carnival items were provided by the American Cancer Society in exchange for the FRG volunteering to help during the Society’s Relay For Life.

Operating many of the carnival events were 12 cadets from Topeka West’s Army JROTC program headed by Maj. Charles Wright. The cadets allowed all the members of the Readiness Group to enjoy themselves. Two of the volunteers were

Heather Parrack, 17 and Amber Lewis, 14. Parrack, who attends Washburn Rural, will be joining the Kansas Army National Guard this summer. She will attend weekend drills during her senior year and, following her graduation, will attend Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training as a medical technician. As a fully qualified member of the Guard, she will then be able to use her educational benefits for her college education.



No picnic/carnival would be complete without its share of competitive events. (Photo by Jane Welch)



Kansas National Guardsmen Spc. Billy Summers has been selected to take part in a new reality program called “The Great Air Race.” (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson)

flying is a Citabria built by Bellanca Aircraft. The Citabria is a high wing, two-person, single engine general aviation aircraft certified for aerobatics.

“We will need to be in Atlanta by August 3rd,” said Summers. “On the 5th we will take off, heading southwest along the southern border until we reach the Pacific. From there will fly north to the Canadian border.”

“From Washington state, we head east along the northern tier of States to Bangor, Maine,” he continued. “Then we head south along the Atlantic coast, ending in Melbourne, Fla. Weather permitting, that should take 12 days. On the 13th and final day, no one will know the final leg until just before takeoff.”

Summers went on to explain, “Each airplane will be handicapped; that way it will be the skill of the pilots and not the speed of the airplane that will be the deciding factor. The pilots must find the right altitude for the best air speed and fuel consumption. Hitting the check points on time is going to win the race.”

“All flights will also be under Visual

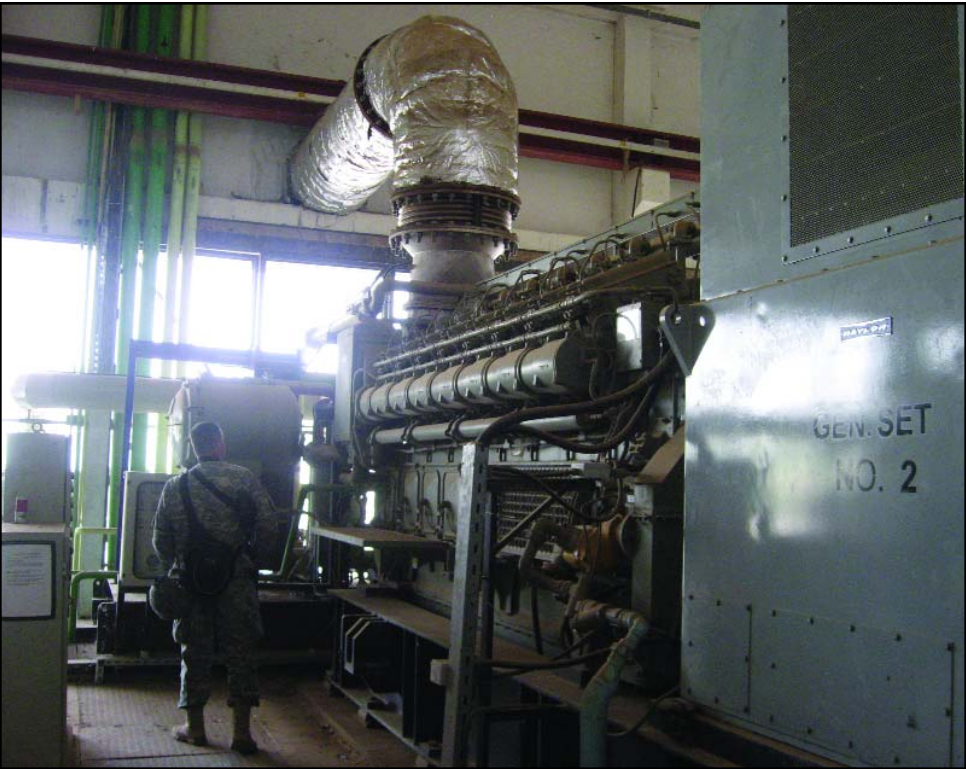
(Continued on Page 19)

Guardsmen facilitate repairs to airport power plant

By 1st Lt. Shannon Terry

Throughout the course of their one-year deployment, the 130th Field Artillery Brigade has made strides in the economic development of local Iraqi communities. Recently, members of this Topeka-based Kansas National Guard unit have been facilitating repairs to the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) Power Plant. The brigade, lead by Civil Affairs Officer Lt. Col Kirk Pederson, has been working concurrently with Iraqi contractors, BIAP power plant staff and airport management to help facilitate and design a “way ahead” that is not just about money. Instead, the goal is addressing and correcting the deficiencies of the power plant, training employees to conduct equipment maintenance and ensuring sustainment of the power plant independent of the U.S. military. “In the past, money and equipment have been provided for upgrading capacity for

the Airport back-up power,” said Pederson, “We are now taking a position of training the Iraqis that will empower them to own the upkeep and management of the equipment. They are very much interested in learning the systems and how to repair the systems in place.” This project could have significant implications. “Exploitation of this plan will place the ownership of maintenance and sustainability on the government of Iraq,” said Pederson. “The Iraq airport having a reliable power source will be a great asset to the country’s international commerce,” Pederson continued. “This project is just another positive step in the way ahead for the country of Iraq.” Current assessments have indicated a need for minor repairs to the existing back up generators, operator training, and synchronization of three separate systems.



A Soldier of the 130th Field Artillery Brigade conducts an assessment of the power plant at Baghdad International Airport. (Photo by 1st Lt. Shannon Terry)

“The Great Air Race”

Continued from Page 18

Flight Rules,” said Summers, “taking away any advantage of the larger planes with better equipped instrument packages. No one will be voted off the island, but there are bound to be crews with mechanical problems that will not make the take off time.” There will be rewards for good performance and penalties for poor performance. For a good leg, the crew might win a new car. For a bad leg, the crew might end up spending the night on a cot in the back of a Fixed Base Operator’s hanger. “There is over \$1,000,000 in prizes,” said Summers, “and I am planning on coming home on a new plane or at least a Lincoln Navigator.” Summers first joined the Guard in 1987 to help pay his way through Kansas State

“I am planning on coming home on a new plane or at least a Lincoln Navigator.”
Spc. Bill Summers

University, Salina flight program. He left the Guard after his graduation. “As a new instructor I was flying with students every weekend,” Summers said. “That did not leave much time for the Guard. Now that I am the boss, I can schedule free weekends, allowing time for the Guard. Also, the bonus the Guard offered helped make my decision.” Following the race, Summers is planning to apply for the Army National Guard warrant officer flight training program.

Kansas Guardsmen keep convoys rolling in Iraq

Continued from Page 15

with every mission they conduct. During one recent pre-mission briefing for the 731st Transportation Company, Staff Sgt. Gerold Gibson of Wetmore, Kan., assistant convoy commander, gave members of 3rd Platoon the most recent intelligence information, ranging from locations of IED attacks the night before to suspect vehicles they should be on the lookout for. He noted the importance of communication checks, proper escalation of force procedures, and added a warning for them to

remember. “There are no safe zones,” Gibson said. Afterwards, Spc. Marce N. Collier of Sandusky, Ohio, who is a driver with 3rd Platoon, shrugged her individual body armor on. She was reactivated from the Individual Ready Reserve for this deployment and is still getting used to the weight of her protective gear. The convoy preparing to leave would be her second mission outside the wire. “It’s still fresh and new,” she said. “I’m trying to learn all I can.”

Access Control Operations – the first layer of base defense

By 1st Lt. Shannon Terry

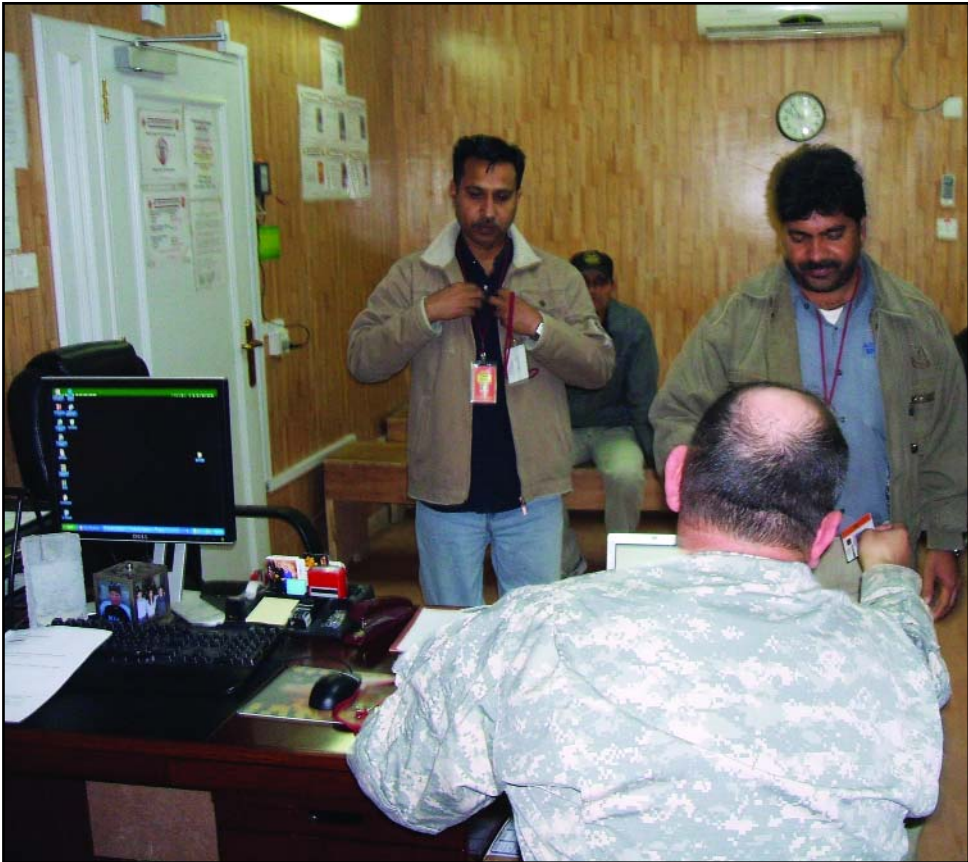
“Security is not a convenience,” said Sgt. 1st Class Randy Rice, enrollment non-commissioned officer in charge. Access control is one of the many layers of the multi-faceted base defense operations on Victory Base Complex in Iraq. The access control office, otherwise known as badging, authorizes entry to VBC for thousands of people per month, providing the first line of defense against potential insurgent infiltration. This operation is a Force Protection entity operated by the 130th Field Artillery Brigade. Badging operations are a collective effort of civilian and military entities. A seven-Soldier military team, lead by 2nd Lt. Jason Ragsdale and Master Sgt. Brian Anderson, work with eight civilian contractor enrollers. Together, they badge an average of 100 people per day. “Landmarks in the deployment seem long in the past because we’re so busy,” said Rice.

Organization is a critical part of the access control operation. Sgt. 1st Class Terry Townsend is responsible for managing a database of more than 18,000 entries, a tedious, but effective way to manage the massive amount of information of the life-network of VBC. Another organizational feature of the Badging Office is the daily count of the hard-copy applications. “Applications serve multiple purposes – criminal investigations, intelligence reports and military police included,” said Ragsdale. Sgt. First Class Ray Ott has done a stellar job reorganizing the operations. The whole office has made a lasting impact of the success of their follow-on unit by almost single handedly digitizing the entire operation. Challenges include correct information on paperwork. In the local area, many applicants have similar sounding names. This presents a lesson in cultural understanding for the members of the badging office. If an enroller, for example, makes a small error entering a fairly common local name, the result could change that person’s entire identity. “You get the opportunity down here to learn a lot about the local populace,” said Spc. Jonathan Hopkins. The badgers give careful attention to detail when processing applications. “Individuals trying to gain access into the VBC are getting smarter in their methods,” said Rice, accustomed to careful inspection of Ginseas (Iraqi identification

“Security is not a convenience.”
Sgt. 1st Class Randy Rice

cards) and passports looking for fakes. Personal interaction with locals and contracted employees from other nations, such as India and the Philippines, is an integral part of the job. “It’s great to meet the locals,” said Master Sgt. Brian Anderson. “We have a good relationship.” “One of the highlights of this operation for me personally was getting to badge one of the authors of the Iraqi Constitution,” said Rice. Over the course of the deployment the Badging Office has met several high-ranking international officials, former prisoners of war and a countless number of Iraqi citizens that will be the future success of this country.

Compliance checks are another component of the access control operation. Certain privileges, such as dining facilities, gym and Post Exchange access, exist only for the benefit of Soldiers and selected individuals. “Dining facility privileges, for example, cost around \$36,000 a year per individual,” said Ragsdale, “Fiscal responsibility is part of the contract.” Guards at the High Occupancy Facilities and PXs are on their A-game: Sharp at picking out individuals that don’t belong. But after long shifts of checking several hundred badges, the smallest details can be overlooked. That is where the badgers come in. They frequently monitor High Occupancy Facilities looking for expired badges, etc. “Breaking the rules for access is the same as taking away from the Soldiers and individuals who have earned those,” said Sgt. First Class Randy Rice. The access control office is located at one of the entry control points, an eventful place to work. As the largest access point for Iraqi local nationals, it is a hub of activity. It is not uncommon for this entry control point to see enemy activity, as well. Incoming small arms rounds have left the office trailers littered with bullet holes. Indirect fire attacks impacting the area also have left the Soldiers with a lasting impression. “With this job comes a large sense of responsibility,” said Spc. Jonathan Hopkins. “I get to learn a lot from experience.”



Sgt. 1st Class Ray Ott issues ID badges to two Iraqi civilians. (Photo by 1st Lt. Shannon Terry)

PLAINS GUARDIAN

Artist brings beauty to Iraq

By 1st Lt. Shannon Terry

It's not often that the landscape of the Victory Base Complex (VBC) in Baghdad, Iraq, is associated with beauty. The muted desert terrain coupled with the harsh climate and putrid air makes the overall impression of the VBC desolate and depressing. The once desert oasis now serves as a bleak reminder of the current wartime conditions: Massive concrete barriers have replaced groves of palm trees. These concrete walls are used as blast protection and as separation barriers from the small arms fire echoing in the background.

One Soldier is doing her part to bring aesthetic pleasure to the Victory Base Complex by decorating these barriers with massive colorful murals. Sgt. Carol Sprawka, Manhattan, Kan., has been deployed in Iraq for almost a year. A multi-faceted artist, Sprawka has been enhancing the backdrop of the living areas, inspiring both Soldiers and contractors with her work.

"It's uplifting to see color in a place that seems so dark," said Sprawka.

She began painting in Iraq early on in her deployment.

"I noticed that people would walk with their head hanging because there is no reason to look up," said Sprawka, "I wanted to give them something to begin their day on a positive note."

"It is a rare occurrence in this place,

when you see something beautiful (in such ugly conditions) you can forget where you are for a split second and just enjoy the scenery," continued Sprawka elaborating on her motivation to undertake this project.

Her collection presently consists of five paintings, all about four by six feet.

"The paintings extend as far as you can reach," said Sprawka. "Large scale painting gives more room and more excuse to be messy."

The paintings capture a sense of artistic expression absent from a regular photo. They are all thematically connected by bright colors and artist's signature style. There's always a little extra humor added in such as a flower where it doesn't belong, which gives the viewer that little something extra.

"Painting doesn't have to be correct," said Sprawka.

Her appreciation for art began at a young age, but flourished while attending Kansas State University.

"In college I started metal sculpture too. I tried every medium that was made available and liked them all."

She was also the president of the painting society formed in 2002.

"My favorite challenge is marrying the different mediums together."

"I do this for the people here now and the people that will be here afterward," said Sprawka



Sgt. Carol Sprawka, 130th Field Artillery Brigade, Kansas Army National Guard, paints a mural on concrete barriers at the Victory Base Complex in Baghdad, Iraq. (Photo by Sgt. Justin Rogers)



"Gone to Iraq" painting both humors and inspires spectators in Baghdad, Iraq. (Photo by Sgt. Carol Sprawka)

Shipman receives Legion of Merit



Lt. Col. John Rueger presents retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Shipman with the Legion of Merit for over 39 meritorious years of service during the Annual St. Barbara's Dining Out of the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery. Shipman was a long-standing member of the battalion, serving in positions of increasing responsibility, culminating as battalion maintenance officer. Shipman provided experience and leadership that developed the long term excellence of the battalion and led the battalion successfully through two separate wartime deployments. Shipman resides in Sabetha with his wife, Peggy. (Photo provided)

Kansas Army National Guard Soldier selected for trip to Washington D.C.

By Sgt. Kevin Farlow, UPAR

Staff Sgt. Mark Young, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry proudly represented the Kansas Army National Guard in Washington D.C. April 9-12. Young was selected from hundreds of Soldiers to receive the honor of meeting with Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau; Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Gipe and various senators.

Young attended a Senate subcommittee hearing on the National Guard budget with Blum. Following the hearing Young met Sen. Patrick Lahey (Democrat-Vermont) and with Medal of Honor recipient Sen. Daniel Inouey (Democrat-Hawaii) for a question and answer session on the state of family readiness and morale in the Kansas Army National Guard. Young was also given a private tour of the Pentagon and Senate.

Young is a full-time Guard member and serves as the training noncommissioned officer for Company C, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry, in Wichita. Young recently returned from a deployment to the Middle East, where he served as platoon sergeant for an operational security team in Iraq.

Throughout his 21 years of military service, Young has been awarded numerous awards, citations and decorations including the Bronze Star, the Combat Infantry Badge, two Combat Action ribbons from the United States Marine Corps and an Arctic Service Medal.

Young resides in Wichita. Young's wife, Kimberly, is a first lieutenant in the Kansas Army National Guard and serves as an instructor at the Regional Training Institute in Salina. Young also has one son, Nicholas, 16 and one daughter Zoie, 15.

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