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Chapman tornado adds real-world mission to annual training

By Spc. Jessica Rohr, 105th MPAD

On June 11, 2008, at approximately 11:30 p.m. Chapman, Kan., was rocked by a devastating tornado that cut a swath through the town, injuring several people and killing at least one.

Nearby, at Fort Riley, the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery was wrapping up a successful annual training exercise. Once the storm passed and all was calm, the Soldiers of the battalion were called into action to aid the rescue workers headed toward Chapman for the first 48 hours.

The crew of 19 was led by Capt. Dave Quintanar and Capt. Dana Graf Jr. The Soldiers and nine humvees rushed to the scene, where they quickly integrated with local law enforcement, firefighters and emergency personnel. The team was charged with securing the area and not allowing anyone in. Gas and power lines had been severed and the potential hazard of injuring more people was too high to allow anyone into the town. The security team was also keeping looters out of the area and, in turn, protecting the personal belongings and property of the residents.

Quintanar, Graf and their advisor, Sgt. Matthew Weller, with Assistant Chief of Police Paul Wright, created a cordon plan consisting of checkpoints and roadblocks to all of the entrances of the town. Once



From the air, it is easy to follow the path of destruction that cut through the town of Chapman, Kan., the evening of June 11. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

manned and functional, they started a "roving" patrol in the inner impact area, as well as making routine stops at each check point. One of their many duties was to ensure that their Soldiers were equipped

properly to cordon off the area and fully accomplish their mission.

After a few trips around the area Weller said, "The wreckage was pretty intense, especially since it is such a small town.

"Being a National Guard Soldier doesn't just mean that you get called into a combat zone when the big Army is short. You do a lot more here at home than people realize."

Sgt. Matthew Weller

The magnitude seemed higher because it was the entire town pretty much that was gone since it was so small."

Before starting their shift, Wright escorted Quintanar and Weller on a tour of the impacted area. During this informative trip, the crew of three was notified that there was a medical emergency nearby.

Once on the scene, Weller went into action, using his combat lifesaver training to aid a man who had fallen from his ladder and acquired a deep gouge above his right eye. After having assisted the man and stabilizing him, EMT arrived and Weller continued to be of help throughout.

"I am going to put Sergeant Weller in for an award," said Quintanar, "because with the amount of blood that was flowing

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35th Military Police Company receives heroes' welcome

By Jane Welch

On May 23, 2008, approximately 150 Soldiers of the 35th Military Police Company, Kansas National Guard, returned to Kansas in style on four KC-135 Stratotankers flown by the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas National Guard, based out of Topeka.

The unit members arrived at Forbes Field and then got on buses. Escorted by members of the Topeka Police Department and the American Legion Riders/Patriot

Guard, they drove by the Kansas National Guard Museum, where they received a heroes' welcome from National Guard retirees and fellow Guardsmen who were holding a garrison-size U.S. flag. From there, the Soldiers were taken to Lee Arena on the Washburn University campus, where their families and friends waited to welcome them home.

Well-wishers had anxiously been awaiting the arrival of the Soldiers. After what seemed like an eternity, the Soldiers



Members of the 35th Military Police Company disembark from a KC-135 Stratotanker flown by the 190th Air Refueling Wing. The 190th picked up the Soldiers from their demobilization station at Fort Bliss, Texas, and flew them home to Topeka. (Photo by Jane Welch)

marched into the arena and the crowd leapt to their feet and started yelling and cheering. The looks on the faces of the Soldiers showed that they were as happy to see their families as their families were to see them.

Maj. Paul Waters, the master of ceremonies, introduced the official party which consisted of Governor Kathleen Sebelius; Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general; Chaplain (Col.) Don Davidson and State Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Rodina.

Davidson's blessing, while simple, stated everything that needed to be said:

"Thank you, God. They are home. They are safe." He went on to say, "Dear Lord, let us pray for all those who still find themselves in harm's way, protecting, serving and honoring our nation."

Waters gave a brief summary of the 35th MP deployment. The unit was mobilized on June 4, 2007, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They completed their mobilization training at Fort Bliss, Texas. They arrived in Iraq at Camp Bucca on Sept. 16 to conduct a detainee operations mission in the world's largest theater

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G-RAP a great way to get paid for what you're already doing!

By Staff Sgt. Emily F. Alley

Know any broke college students? It's simple to help them pay for college and earn a \$2,000 bonus.

Traditional Army and Air Guardsmen, as well as retirees, are eligible to become Recruiting Assistants (RA), who may receive bonuses for referring potential members, through the Guard Recruiter Assistance Program.

Senior Master Sgt. Troy Kyle, Recruiting and Retention superintendent for the Kansas Air National Guard, describes G-RAP as an ideal recruiting tool. RAs are familiar with the qualifications to be a Guardsman, as well as potential candidates in their own lives.

"When I first started G-RAP they sent me a couple T-shirts that said 'Ask me about the National Guard' and, believe it or not, people would," said 2nd Lt. Scott Weber, Detachment 2, 170th Maintenance Company, who has earned \$13,000 through G-RAP.

The greatest tool for any successful RA is their recruiter. RAs may pick any recruiter and, according to retired Staff Sgt. Allan Bingham, that teamwork is critical. Bingham, who retired from the Army in 2005, has earned \$14,000 through G-RAP.

The top recruiting assistant in the state is Pfc. Joseph Kinsey, Detachment 1, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, who earned \$18,000. He also attributes much of his success in the program to his recruiter.

Sgt. 1st Class Nancy E. White, Recruiting and Retention Detachment, said G-RAP makes her job much easier. After five years in the job, she is grateful for recruiting assistants.

"If you get a good G-RAPer, you keep them happy," said White.

The benefits of a healthy recruiter/ RA relationship are mutual. Pfc. Edward Magana, 287th Sustainment Brigade,

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Embedded Training Team returns from Afghanistan deployment

By Jane Welch

On April 21, 2008, at the Manhattan National Guard Armory, 10 members of Embedded Training Team #3 Team Shocker, Kansas National Guard, were welcomed home after their deployment to Afghanistan.

The official party for the ceremony consisted of Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general; State Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Rodina; Chaplain (Capt.) Michael McCawley, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 97th Military Police Battalion, Fort Riley; Sgt. 1st Class Gordon Lamb, noncommissioned officer in charge of ETT #3; and Maj. Greg Platt, battalion team chief for ETT #3.

Distinguished guests included Congresswoman Nancy Boyda; Col. Vic Braden, commander 69th Troop Command and Command Sgt. Maj. James Moberly, command sergeant major for 69th Troop Command.

"Almighty God we are humbled by those who sit before us and by the actions of these ordinary men who were willing to go into harm's way and do what they were called to do," said McCawley during the invocation. "We know that none of them woke up a year ago and said 'I'm going to be a hero today.' But as they sit and will stand before us they are heroes."

After the playing of the National Anthem, Capt. Adam Johnson, the master of ceremonies gave a brief summary of the accomplishments of ETT #3.

ETT #3 was assigned as transition team mentors to work directly with the Afghanistan National Army. Their mission was to develop and train and guide the efforts of their Afghanistan army counterparts. Team Shocker's focus was to improve Afghan national security and further develop a military which would be capable of autonomous operations.

Upon arrival in Afghanistan, Team



Members of Embedded Training Team #3 wait for their moment to be recognized for their achievements while deployed to Afghanistan. The team spent a year training members of the Afghan National Army. (Photo by Jane Welch)



Capt. Greg Edson receives a Purple Heart medal from Maj Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general, for injuries received while serving in Afghanistan. Edson was one of several Embedded Training Team members who received awards and decorations for their service during the deployment. (Photo by Jane Welch)

Shocker was split and the Soldiers assigned to four separate teams at three different locations. Their assignments ranged from administration to support, new unit development to front line combat. Team Shocker's missions took them through every imaginable environment from cities and urban environments to high deserts and even higher mountains.

Most Soldiers of Team Shocker returned home to their loved ones as heroes of freedom. A few extended their commitments and will remain in Afghanistan for an additional three months.

Johnson concluded by saying "As we watch Old Glory wave on the breeze, it is an honor to welcome these fine Soldiers home."

The volunteers of the Family Readiness Group were also recognized for being the critical link between Soldiers and home.

Platt addressed the group of family, friends and colleagues by saying "You have all heard the narrative of what these

Soldiers did in Afghanistan. We went and trained the Afghan army."

He went on to say "Let me tell you what they really did. These Soldiers went and they trained units that were so good that they were selected as the best unit in the country. They were taken out to be commandos, which were the elite fighting force of the Afghan National Army and then they trained the replacements of those Soldiers. Collectively, they ran over 500 combat service missions throughout the most hostile part of the country. They encountered the Taliban and anti-government elements on 60 different occasions and they are all still here. They all have 10 fingers and 10 toes. Lastly, they encountered 25 IEDs and took six of them head on. And won every single time. Ladies and gentleman, if you ever want to know what real American heroes look like, there are 10 of them sitting right there. You take your pick."

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1st Battalion, 635th Armor garners Superior Unit Award

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

It was during May 2004, at Fort Riley's Tank Gunnery Range 19, that the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor started training for its deployment for its mission to the Province of Kosovo. Now, four years later, the battalion was once again on Range 19 conducting M1 Abrams Tank Gunnery. On May 31, many former and retired members of the battalion came to be with current members as Col. Eric C. Peck, Joint Chief of Staff, Joint Forces Headquarters, attached the Army Superior Unit streamer to the battalion's Colors.

The new streamer joined three others streamers that marked the battalion's past actions in Normandy, Northern France and Central Europe. Peck then presented a framed Army Superior Unit Award certificate to Lt. Col. Howard E. Wheeler, battalion commander, on behalf of the Soldiers of the battalion.

The Manhattan-based Task Force Tornado entered active duty in October 2004. The unit deployed to Fort Lewis, Wash., for mobilization training. Following the Task Force Tornado's Mission Rehearsal Exercise at the Combat Maneuver Training Center in Hohenfels, Germany; the Soldiers deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, in February 2005.

While in Kosovo, Task Force Tornado served as part of Task Force Falcon, the Multi-National Brigade (East). The task force served along with the British Royal Green Jackets, Task Force Hellas (Greece and Armenia), Turkish, Belgium, French and German forces. During its year in the

Vitina Municipality Area of Operations, Task Force Tornado conducted 3,623 mounted and dismounted patrols. The task force conducted medical community assistance programs, bringing physicians, optometrists, dentists and veterinarians to assist the local population. During these five MEDCAPs 1,265 patients and 947 animals were treated. Task Force Tornado concluded its period of service when they conducted the Transfer of Authority to Task Force Alamo on Jan. 10, 2006. The Soldiers returned to Kansas on Jan. 27, 2006.

Following the presentation of the streamer and award, Peck spoke to the guests and the formation of Soldiers who had stood down from training to attend the event. In his address, Peck praised the exemplary manner in which the battalion had performed during the mission. He also told of the high praises offered by the leadership of the 40th Infantry Division.

Col. Matthew A. Raney, 35th Division chief of staff, spoke of the officers and non-commissioned officers that had shaped the battalion and his military career. He also spoke of the exemplary manner in which the battalion conducted itself in Kosovo.

"I am so very proud of these Soldiers," said Raney. "The battalion has always done everything in a superior manner. Leading and serving with them has been the high point of my 27 year military career."

Raney was battalion commander at the time of the Kosovo mission.

Wheeler echoed the sentiments of the previous speakers. He spoke of the proud traditions of the battalion, traditions that every



Col. Eric Peck, chief of the Joint Staff, Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas, attaches the Superior Unit streamer to the battalion colors of the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)

officer, noncommissioned officer and Soldier takes with them wherever they go.

Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy M. Tiemissen, said "God has blessed me with being the command sergeant major of the best battalion in the United States Army and that includes the 35th Military Police Company." Tiemissen served in Kosovo as Company B first sergeant.

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Mike Westfall said "I am very glad to be here. I try to make

every event of this type that I can. I miss the comradeship of being with the unit."

Col. Robert Bloomquist, deputy director of the United States Property and Fiscal Office, said "I am proud of this battalion and my involvement with it. The 635th will always be with me." Bloomquist was a former battalion commander for the 635th and served in Kosovo as part of Task Force Falcon as the deputy commander, Civil Military Operations.

Guardsmen honored as “Living Legend”

By Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD

Braving the soggy conditions and dark skies, residents of Augusta, Kan., attended the annual Memorial Day program at Elmwood Cemetery sponsored by local veteran’s organizations to pay their respects for their fallen heroes and honor one of their own residents. This year’s guest speaker, Kansas Army National Guard member, Maj. Mike Wallace, was named as the 2008 Living Legend.

Augusta Mayor Christie Williams said that Wallace had earned the honor by his willingness to serve the nation in numerous deployments, serving as a city councilman, and serving in numerous organizations, such as the VFW, American Legion and the Optimist Club.

“Councilman Wallace is always ready for the debate during City Council meetings. It shows he carefully researches city issues, cautiously weighs the needs of the individual with the needs of the community, and readily voices his expectations and concerns,” said Williams.

“It shows that he has taken his military training of ‘being prepared for any contingency’ to a new level and applied it to help out the City of Augusta. I enjoy serving alongside Councilman Wallace.”

State Representative for the 77th District, Dr. David Crum, who is a former mayor of Augusta, applauded Wallace as well. Crum has a son, Chris, who is in the Army and is now deployed to Iraq, as well as serving in Kosovo, and he knows the military life is demanding on families.

“I have been Mike’s optometrist for years and have always enjoyed our talks about local, state and federal issues, and how the military and he have progressed



Maj. Mike Wallace, a “living legend” of the Augusta community. (Photo by Belinda Larson, Augusta Gazette)

over the years. I think that Mike deserves the recognition as a ‘Living Legend’ in our community—it’s well deserved because of his time and efforts serving our country in hot spots all over the globe for over 25 years,” said Crum.

Wallace recently returned from a tour in Southwest Asia, where he traveled extensively throughout Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and other countries in performance of his duties. He was elected to City Council during the deployment. In the last 10 years, he has been deployed to Bosnia twice, and has commanded several units throughout the Kansas National Guard. He is now commander for the 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment in Topeka. He is married to Teresa, and they have three children.

The annual event is sponsored by Post 6746, Leonard Whitehall American Legion Post 189, Sons of the American Legion Squadron 189, American Legion Riders Post 189, and American Legion Auxiliary Post 189.

TriWest donates \$12,500

By Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD

During the Kansas National Guard Joint Conference on Saturday, April 12, 2008 in Topeka, TriWest Healthcare Alliance donated \$12,500 to Kansas charities.

The first donation was going to take place during Saturday’s lectures about TRICARE health insurance benefits. One of the attendees to the lecture would turn out to be the millionth customer, and in that mode, TriWest promised to make a named recipient an ‘unsuspecting philanthropist’ and donate one million pennies (\$10,000) to the non-profit military organization of their choice.

Retired Col. Henry Martin, Kansas Army National Guard, was the millionth customer and he chose to donate the money to the Kansas National Guard Foundation.

But the granting of monies was not finished. During the night’s banquet, the company donated an additional \$2,500 to

the Kansas National Guard Foundation for a total of \$12,500.

TriWest President and CEO, David J. McIntyer, Jr., personally presented the large check for the million pennies. “Since June 2004, our representatives have traveled more than one million miles to support the health care needs of 2.9 million members of America’s military family,” he said. “That includes the 21 West region states, to include Kansas. It serves active duty Service members, National Guard and Reserve members, military retirees and their families across the state. Some of the educational briefings we give take place in remote locations so we make sure to do ‘whatever it takes’ to help our Service members and their families to understand and take full advantage of their military health care entitlements.”

TRICARE educational briefings are available online at www.triwest.com.

Soldiers get Indy car ride

By Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Witzke, 105th MPAD

During festivities at the Kansas Motor Speedway on April 24, members of the Kansas Army National Guard were treated to a pit tour, presentations and a back seat ride in an Indy Racing League car as part of their participation in race events.

The Army National Guard, the sole military sponsor in the Indy Racing League series, sponsor car number 4, owned by Panther Racing and driven by Vitor Meira.

“This is something that we do for our Soldiers,” said Sgt. Maj. Tom Holley, National Guard Bureau Accessions. “It’s good for morale and I think they really have a great time. It isn’t often you get a chance to do something like this. It gets them really pumped up and excited about the program and they get to have a lot of fun.”

Soldiers donned the Army National Guard race uniform, part of the safety equipment required, and then climbed into the back seat of a modified Indy Racing

League car for a few fast laps.

Fast, however, is a relative term at the Kansas Motor Speedway. The race record hovers around 188 mph with the top qualifier posting a speed in excess of 200 mph in qualifying runs. This day they would take laps at 140 mph, moderate by IRL standards, but fast enough to give the rider the feel and exhilaration of racing in an open wheel vehicle.

“This might be better than flying,” said Col. Alan Soldan, State Aviation Officer.

“Its incredible,” he beamed after exiting the car. “This is really a once in a lifetime opportunity... it’s just incredible!”

Panther racing managing partner John Barnes feels the same way about the Soldiers that Panther Racing and the National Guard host at each stateside event.

“It is our pleasure to be able to host these Soldiers,” he said. “There is no way we could repay all that they do. This is just one way we can show our appreciation for these true American heroes.”

Diversity course builds leadership and teamwork



A blind-folded “trust walk” was one of the exercises designed to develop mutual trust among participants. (Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Danny Walker)

By Chief Master Sgt. Phil Mahan and Chief Master Sgt. Danny Walker

Members of the Kansas Air National Guard recently participated in a training seminar to look at diversity from a different perspective.

“It’s not your father’s diversity course,” said Col. Chip Mattingly. “There is something to be gained by everyone no matter their age, gender, or position within the organization. I found it to be a rewarding, healing process that will make me a better leader and person.”

The course is indeed a new way to look at what diversity is and what it is not and to build upon leadership and team work. For many people, the word diversity seems to be about race, gender, religious background and ethnicity. Although those are components of diversity, it doesn’t define the whole meaning of diversity. The Diversity Champions course helped the 23 members who took the course to better understand others and themselves, build and work as high performing teams, build upon their leadership skills and understand how all of this relates to retention and recruiting. The three-day course challenged each person to understand diversity and to understand stereotypes, perspectives and belief systems by going through several exercises such as the “Blind Trust Walk,” “The Web,” and “The Stereotype Exercise.” Each exercise was built on trust, helping each other to succeed and building leadership and teamwork skills. It wasn’t just three days of PowerPoint slides; it was three days of interactive learning. It was a life-changing event, and it helped us to understand that we all make a difference, and we all add value.

The course centered around Nine Cornerstones of Diversity:

1. Diversity is about inclusion and engagement – leaving no one behind. It is about bringing ideas forward and to allow

those ideas to be heard and allowing opportunity.

2. Success is the ability to work together. Teamwork will checkmate talent most of the time.

3. The most important issue is always human dignity and total quality respect. These are the two main reasons why people will leave an organization.

4. Prejudice is eliminated by developing high performance teams. It doesn’t matter what you look like, where you come from, social economics or any other item. What matters is that everyone is included and engaged as part of the team and helps one another. If we are going to lead, then we must first be trusted; in order to be trusted, we must be trustworthy.

5. True diversity is ensuring diversity of thought at all levels of the organization. Diversity is innovation of thought and allowing those innovations to be brought forward.

6. Everyone adds talent and value; each must be developed and offered full opportunity to achieve. We must create opportunities for all.

7. Diversity solutions must be situation specific. What works for one person may not work for others.

8. Diversity is a philosophy and is everyone’s responsibility. What am I willing to give of myself for the betterment of the team?

9. You do not have to be one of in order to stand with. Diversity is about building relationships and understanding.

The course took all of those cornerstones and allowed each person to go from dependence and a feeling that we have no control and feeling unsure of responsibility to interdependence in which we began to collaborate, knowing that we were a team. We truly began to trust and accept each other as we are but also challenged each other to be better, to go that extra mile and never give up.

ESGR undergoing transformation

By Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD

Gordon Sumner, Jr., Ph.D., who is the Executive Director of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) announced that the ESGR is under transformation. He spoke at the Joint State Conference held in Topeka from April 11-13, 2008.

“This volunteer organization is transforming to be more relevant, effective and efficient and to be more proactive with the employer outreach program—to re-energize it,” Sumner said.

Sumner serves as advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs on all matters involving employer support pro-

grams for all the Reserve components of the United States Armed Forces. These include the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and the Coast Guard Reserve.

“The most important thing we are doing,” said Sumner, “is taking the military outreach and coupling it with the employer outreach to make a strategic outreach program. This will create an environment so the employer and employee get the same pertinent messages at the same time and help alleviate any confusion with their relationship, and the relationship with their Reserve jobs.”

Overseas and at home, we're making a difference

By Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting

Around the Fourth of July we are quickly reminded of the tremendous sacrifices so many people have made for our nation, and I recently had an opportunity to visit some of the Kansas Guardsmen and women serving in Iraq who are making sacrifices now to help our country. It was an honor to talk with them and encourage them in the tough environment they find themselves in today. They are strong individuals well suited for the difficult job at hand and they are in good spirits, given the daily challenges of war. They are making the most of their circumstances and some are using their down time to pursue online degrees or learn to play guitar, and most importantly to keep in touch with family and friends. Your encouragement to them is critical and I appreciate what the families do to help their Soldiers and airmen through a deployment. We are continuing to work on ways to better assist our Guard members through deployments, but we know it's the families who can make the most difference with their support.

Recently, the Midwest has seen its share of storms including deadly tornadoes that destroyed homes in Chapman and Soldier and also hit Manhattan damaging build-



Maj. Gen.
Tod M. Bunting

ings at Kansas State University as well as several homes. We deployed approximately 40 Guardsmen to help with security following these storms and are working closely with FEMA and the Small Business Administration to secure funding and make available loans to assist the residents and communities as they rebuild.

Our neighbors in Iowa and Missouri have experienced devastating flooding and fortunately we have been in a position to help just as others helped us through the storms of 2007. We sent some members of our incident management teams to help Iowa respond to the rising waters as part of the emergency assistance compact we have with other states. Matt Mercer, Southwest Region Homeland Security Coordinator, deployed to assist in Iowa's State Emergency Operations Center. Alan Radcliffe, Franklin County emergency manager; Marvin Grimes, Anderson County emergency manager; and Don Button, Grant County emergency manager, deployed to Iowa for a two-week rotation along with building inspector Bobbi Strait from Marion County.

We're pleased to be in a position to help and saw what a difference this kind of help makes in a disaster. Throughout the Greensburg disaster we relied on incident management teams to bring their expertise from their own jobs in emergency management and assist the town with response and recovery. It was the first times our state had used the teams and was a tremendous success.

The Adjutant General's Department



Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting met with senior leaders during a visit to Iraq in June. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Lorie Jewell)

recently implemented its strategic implementation plan for 2008 to 2014 and is in the process of closely tracking the initiatives outlined in the plan. We encourage everyone to review the plan posted on the home page of our website at <http://www.Kansas.gov/ksadjutantgeneral/>. We believe you'll be pleased with the ideas presented and the initiatives undertaken.

We also have a new initiative we'll soon

be unveiling to the public in Pittsburg. There, we have built a new armory on the grounds of Pittsburg State University making it the first ever Kansas National Guard armory to be located on a university campus. The Guard will have 39,000 square feet of the 97,000 square foot facility for offices, locker rooms, kitchen and training and support areas, plus an exterior compound and maintenance bay. The university

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Soldier to Soldier

Eat the elephant one bite at a time

By Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Cullen

During my long and fulfilling career with the Kansas Army National Guard, I've seen many Soldiers struggle with the Army Physical Fitness Test. How many of our Soldiers will take the APFT this year without any training between last year's APFT and this year's? I'm surprised we don't have more serious injuries than we do, due to the lack of preparation leading up to this annual event.



Command Sgt. Maj.
Patrick Cullen

After talking to Soldiers who barely pass or even fail, I hear many Soldiers proclaim they're going to get in shape. Immediately after the test, we all have the dedication of a tent revival. Many Soldiers say, "I've seen the light! I'm never going through this pain again!" Then Monday comes around and it's all a Soldier can do to get out of bed and limp to work. He thinks to himself, "The last thing I'm going to do is continue this pain and torture by working out again." And the cycle starts all over.

How do we motivate ourselves to begin a fitness program? I have found many ways to motivate myself to stay in shape. One is my desire to climb mountains, bicycle, raft, canoe, and enjoy evening walks with my wife of 25 years. These reasons, along with the annual Bataan Memorial Death March, The Adjutant General's APFT competition, and that pesky annual APFT, have been personal reasons for me to stay in shape. But beyond these reasons is a fit for life outlook that I want to keep in my life and encourage others to share with me.

Someone once said "You can eat an elephant one bite at a time." Even if you're 40 pounds overweight or 40 points short of passing each event of the APFT, it's not impossible to get in shape. You just have to do it a little bit at a time. Starting a

long-term exercise program requires commitment, discipline, and consistency, but many of us can't see results quickly enough and soon get discouraged. All those good intentions go by the wayside.

Let's break this down by starting with commitment. "Today I'm going to do five pushups and five sit-ups. You may laugh, but that is where you need to start: five and five. Tomorrow morning I'm going to get out of bed, stumble to the coffee pot, pour myself a cup of motivation, and then do my five pushups and five sit-ups. Here is where commitment comes in. I will do my five and five every day for the next week. If you do this every day for a week, will you actually do only five and five? Probably not. Most of us will likely do 10 and 20, or 20 and 30 by the end of the first week. Once we get started, we want to make it a bit more worthwhile. That's the nature of a Soldier; to do a little more than required. Mission first: people always.

At the end of the first week, we're going to get up 15 minutes early (discipline) and use this time to add a 15 minute walk. Notice I didn't say run, just a brisk walk slightly faster than a normal pace. Enjoy the morning and experience something new. Watching and listening to the neighborhood waking up is a nice way to start the day. Continue this program of five and five and 15 for the next week (or however many repetitions you prefer).

When I start the third week, I will have taken my morning routine to 30 pushups, 40 situps, and begin my walk with a two-minute set of stretches. I start out with five minutes of walking, followed by a 30-second run, and alternate running and walking until I finish the 15 minutes. By week four, I have now developed a habit and I am experiencing some of the benefits of my new routine. I'm noticing I'm starting to feel better. If I do skip a day, I notice the difference and start to look forward to my workout the next morning. I might be jogging the whole 15 minutes and feeling pretty proud of the headway I've made.

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Take ownership of your files

Chiefs:

I wanted to take a moment in this issue to encourage each of you to take ownership of your official military file. The documents included in this file and the information contained in your efficiency reports are key in your career progression and promotion.

I have participated for eight years as a member on many of the federal recognition boards for Warrant Officers being considered for promotion and can comfortably tell you that we, as Warrant Officers, seem to take little interest in the currency or content of our files. I'm as guilty as the next person in falling into a comfort zone that tells me I should be okay if I'm doing a good job.

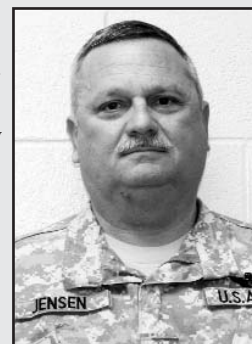
Sometimes simply doing a good job is

less than enough, particularly if that good job is poorly or improperly documented. Each of us must review our personnel file and take a real interest in the content of our officer evaluation reports. We must ensure what is being illustrated to someone evaluating our file is an accurate picture of our performance. We should know our rater and senior raters are saying what they mean to say and conveying the message they wish to relate regarding us as professionals.

I'm certain each of us could benefit from an appointment and a visit to the personnel shop to personally get involved in our files and our future.

Take a moment and read the regulatory requirements for the OER system and determine if the process your accustomed to is the one you find illustrated. If not, engage with your rater and senior rater and do what is required on your part to facilitate the correct process.

It's not only personally advantageous to you as a Warrant Officer; it is your professional obligation. Have a safe and recreational summer.



Command Chief
Warrant Officer 5
Mark Jensen

PLAINS GUARDIAN

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Ask the TAG



Do we have enough equipment?

During the Greensburg tornado response last year, there was a lot of discussion about a shortage of National Guard equipment for state responses to disasters. Has the situation improved for Kansas?

—Anonymous—

We have seen progress, but we are not ready to declare victory yet. The proposal to return National Guard equipment to the desired level for state missions and federal missions is now funded through 2013, however, we are still waiting to see how things go between now and then.

Although better, we are not where we want to be. We are short on Palletized Loading System trailers, equipment to haul engineering equipment, and humvees. The biggest shortage is the Target Acquisition Radars. Typically we have five, but currently we have none of our own. In some cases, these shortfalls are being addressed through returning equipment and partnerships with other states. As a result we are getting more PLS trailers and we now have one Target Acquisition Radar.

Another area where we are short is heavy equipment transportation systems. We once had 96. Today, we have

52, but at one time we had three. With 52, we can keep people trained.

Only about 25 percent of our Black Hawk helicopters are flyable because of post-Iraq repairs. Fortunately, that's enough for most state emergencies and puts us in a better shape than last year when the unit was deployed.

We're not asking for 100 percent new equipment. Before the war, we were at 40 percent of our allocated equipment. We are hoping to get to 70 percent.

We must have enough equipment to be ready to deploy in state and for the War on Terror. We must have enough equipment to train our Soldiers and airmen for deployments and to help our fellow Kansans. If we don't then we'll be unable to fulfill our sacred obligation to protect the lives and property of our families and neighbors.

That's what we don't ever want to see happen.

** ** *

Send your question(s) by email to Tagquestions@us.army.mil or by mail to the Adjutant General's Public Affairs Office, Att: Sharon Watson, 2722 S. Topeka Blvd., Room 108, Topeka KS 66611. Questions may be submitted anonymously.

Stratmann is new J-6 director

By Staff Sgt. Emily F. Alley

Joint Force Headquarters has a new director of command, control, communication and computers.

Air National Guard Col. Chris A. Stratmann was

appointed as a state director, responsible for collecting, transporting, processing, disseminating and protecting information. He manages the Kansas National Guard's computer help desk for the entire state.



Col. Chris Stratmann

Stratmann brings with him perspective from years of communication and leadership experience at the 190th Air Refueling Wing. He originally enlisted as a crew chief, but earned a commission as a navigator at the unit in 1989. Stratmann's positions at the 190th ARW also include the chief of current operations, commander of the 190th Mission Support Group and the 190th Communications Flight commander. He spent five years working with the Communications Flight, where he gained expertise on information technology.

"In the past five years, we've become more dependent on information technolo-

gy," said Stratmann.

His goals are to consolidate and enforce policy to make state communication more efficient and he wants to emphasize customer service. Although Stratmann has witnessed improved joint operations, he will strive to make them seamless.

"This shop has a really good mix of Army, Air, dual status and state employees," Stratmann said. "It's a model for jointness."

Stratmann hopes his Air Force experience will enable him to bridge the Army and Air Force relationships in a joint headquarters.

One tool Stratmann has at his disposal is the Incident Response Vehicle, which demonstrated its effectiveness in Greensburg, Kan., last May in the aftermath of the tornado that devastated the small community. He describes it as a mobile communication center, equipped with work and sleeping areas and a variety of communication options for incident commanders. Because it is so new, one of Stratmann's responsibilities will be to establish a precedent in training and use of the vehicle as he determines Kansas' future informational threats.

"I'm thankful for the opportunity to bring my skills set to this position," said Stratmann. "I'm looking forward to improving the ability of this organization to respond to daily operations and disasters."

We're making a difference

Continued from Page 4

ty's portion will be used for offices for several university departments, the ROTC, and the student recreation center. There will also be joint areas for the Guard and the university including an assembly hall, fitness center and classroom space.

Mark your calendars for a big event at the State Fair in Hutchinson in September. We've been provided an area by the fair-

grounds near the entrance to promote Kansas Preparedness Month on Sept. 8. We will feature state equipment used to respond to emergencies and focus on the importance of individual preparedness kits and plans. It's the first time we've done the event at the fairgrounds and we're very excited to provide this event in central Kansas.

Have a safe summer!

Command chief inspires others to take charge of their careers

By Staff Sgt. Emily F. Alley

Still in his first year as state Command Chief Master Sergeant, David Rodriguez represents the Airmen in the Kansas Air National Guard to the Adjutant General.

Rodriguez's goals as command chief include mentoring, training and assuring promotions and awards are available for those who deserve them. Essentially, Rodriguez empowers his enlisted force to pursue their Air Force careers.



Command Chief Master Sgt. David Rodriguez

Promotion opportunity was one of Rodriguez's challenges when he first joined the National Guard. Although he spent his first four years in the Army, in his first eight years of service he was not promoted beyond the rank of senior airman.

"At that point, I thought there wouldn't be opportunities," said Rodriguez.

Fortunately, he continued to pursue his career. Now in his 24th year of service, he has attained the highest enlisted rank in the Kansas National Guard.

Although Rodriguez asks Airmen to work hard and take ownership of their careers, he believes in recognition. One of his goals, as command chief, is to promote

the awards and decorations program.

"I would love to see it excel," said Rodriguez. "It's important to recognize those who deserve it, especially for morale. It's contagious."

Rodriguez's goals focus largely on junior enlisted members. He wants to take advantage of their ideas and perspective.

"Some of our best ideas come from our young Airmen," he said. "Many of them have important positions in the civilian world and we can benefit from that."

Communication is important to Rodriguez; his background is in recruiting and human resources and he has training in problem solving and conflict resolution.

One thing that was never a problem for Rodriguez was race. The fact he is a minority has never affected his career.

"Race hasn't been an issue," he said.

"Everybody gets the same opportunities. It's not about being a minority. It's about doing the job successfully and improving the mission."

Another tool to make Airmen successful is the mentoring program, which is designed to make Airmen aware of their career choices and grow from the experience of others.

As a promoter of the program, what is Rodriguez's advice to airmen?

"Never give up," he counsels. "Even when you feel like you have no control in your life, other people are watching. If they see you trying, they'll help you."

Henry named intelligence director

By Staff Sgt. Emily Alley

Joint Force Headquarters has appointed a new intelligence director.

Lt. Col. Scott T. Henry is the acting senior intelligence officer for the state of Kansas, but won't officially assume the position until his old job, chief of workforce support, has been filled.

Henry's history as an intelligence officer has prepared him to coordinate with offices throughout the state.

He enlisted in the Army in 1984 and served as a military policeman in Leavenworth. Just before the end of his enlistment, Henry got married. Rather than reenlist, he earned a commission through the Western Illinois University ROTC program.

From the rank of second lieutenant to captain, Henry served as a mission intelligence

officer with the 69th Brigade. He earned a Meritorious Service Ribbon for being the only National Guard division to complete a turnaround.

Henry's future plans for the office include a fusion center, which would combine all available intelligence, determine if it is applicable to Kansas and make it available to all affected offices. He envisions seamless communication; ideally, he said, offices with a need to know could instantly pick up a phone and receive feedback from others. His emphasis on fusion and communication is a reaction to issues highlighted after 9/11.

"Several agencies weren't talking to each other," said Henry.

As the senior intelligence officer, Henry hopes to improve coordination, inspections, training and education on handling classified and unclassified information. He especially wants a focus on improving relations with other intelligence offices.

"We should be customer-service oriented and get back to users as quickly as we can," said Henry. "We have to get information out to them."



Lt. Col. Scott Henry

Watson nominated for YWCA Woman of Excellence award

Sharon Watson, director of the Public Affairs Office for the Adjutant General's Department, was one of 36 "Women of Excellence" nominees honored at the 20th annual YWCA



Sharon Watson

Leadership Luncheon in Topeka. The luncheon, held June 2 at the Ramada Hotel and Convention Center in Topeka, recognized Topeka business women who contribute leadership in the community.

The event also recognized seven high school seniors nominated in the "Future Leaders" category and three businesses in

the "Employers of Excellence" category.

Watson is the spokesperson for the Adjutant General's Department and oversees departmental communications, including the publication of this bimonthly newspaper. She also works closely with reporters across the state and conducts crisis communication planning and training.

Before joining the department in 2006, Watson worked as communications director for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for five years. Prior to working in public affairs, Watson was a broadcast journalist for more than 10 years.

She also worked as a newspaper reporter and in television news. Watson has a bachelor's degree from William Jewell College with a double major in Communications and Public Relations.

Civic leaders get up-close look at training facilities

By Jane Welch

On April 29, 2008, Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small, the assistant adjutant general – Army and commander of the Kansas Army National Guard, took the opportunity to give a handful of civic leaders an inside look at the Kansas Army National Guard.

Small and 13 civic leaders started with a briefing to go over the agenda for the day. The group consisted of representatives from the Kansas Legislature, the Revisor of Statutes office, the Legislative Research office and the Topeka Chamber of Commerce. The day would be spent in Salina, Kan., and the surrounding area getting a firsthand look at Kansas National Guard facilities.

Their journey began by traveling in style. The leaders were flown to Salina on two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation, Topeka. For many, it was their first flight on a helicopter. It was a beautiful sunny day and the helicopter gave them a bird's eye view

of the scenic landscapes of Kansas.

The first stop was the Smoky Hill Range located southwest of Salina. Before landing, the helicopters circled Smoky Hill to give everyone an aerial view of the facilities. Once on the ground, the leaders were bused to the Smoky Hill headquarters, where they received an overview of the Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center, Smoky Hill and the Kansas Regional Training Institute.

Then everyone boarded busses to get a closer look at the things that they had seen from the air. The first stop was at the urban target complex where Soldiers receive training on conducting a house-to-house search in hostile territory.

The civic leaders then got a walking tour of the outdoor M-16 qualification firing range. This range is a fully automated range that is computer operated and scored. It has walk in fox holes or the individual can also fire from either a kneeling or prone position. The new target system was installed in February and has wireless control.



Maj. Dirk Christian briefs members of the Kansas Legislature and other civic leaders on Crisis City which is located at Smoky Hill Range near Salina, Kan. (Photo by Jane Welch)

From the firing range it was a short walk to the Crisis City Rail Venue, which is part of the Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center. The rail venue consists of six railroad cars donated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe to the project. The rail-car venue is the first training feature of Crisis City, which is a hands-on homeland security public safety training area. This rail training venue will allow emergency responders from local, state and federal organizations, including law enforcement, search and rescue teams, medical response teams, public and private industry safety professionals and the National Guard, to train together, conduct exercises and work through realistic disaster scenarios.

Then it was back on the buses for the short drive from Smoky Hill Range to the Kansas Regional Training Center in Salina.

The first stop in Salina was the Indoor Firing Range simulator where they learned all about the Engagement Skills Trainer (ETS) 2000. The ETS 2000 provides Soldiers with realistic marksmanship and

combat scenario training for 12 of the most common small arms and crew served weapons and individual anti-tank weapons in the Army inventory. The ETS 2000 also provides the capability to build and sustain marksmanship skills for squad and team fire distribution.

The civic leaders all got a chance to test their skills with an M16A2 rifle. Although the simulator looked like the ultimate video game it wasn't as easy as it looked.

Then it was around the corner to the Vehicle Convoy Operations Trainer (VCOT). The VCOT gives a virtual sense of being in downtown Baghdad and how to conduct convoy operations. All the streets in the VCOT have been copied directly from Iraq. The VCOT contains scenarios for such things as improvised explosive devices (IEDs), route clearance, etc. During the course of a scenario, items such as obstacles in the road, IEDs, vehicles, and artillery can be inserted at any time.

The civic leaders got a chance to sit
(Continued on Page 17)



State Senator Phil Journey, District 26, gets to experience the turret in a convoy simulator located on the Kansas Regional Training Center at Salina, Kan. (Photo by Jane Welch)

Infantry Soldiers qualify on Bradley Fighting Vehicles

By Staff Sgt. Emily F. Alley

In what could be described as majestic, Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion 137th Infantry lined up in their M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle Systems on the morning of June 18 to prepare for testing during the battalion's annual training at Fort Riley.

The greatest graphics in the world couldn't replace the actual experience, especially the company of heroes who lived in the dust and heat of a deployment.

"Video games just don't have the same effect anymore," said Sgt. Ben R. Johnson, a Bradley commander from the 137th, who spent eight years previously as a gunner.

A ride along illustrates his point. With a decisive clang, the door of the Bradley raises shut like a drawbridge to some medieval fortress, locking in place.

Passengers sit in eerie shadow, lurking in the belly of the Bradley. Scratchy voices crackle through a headset over the engine's rumble and grind. Every round fired is punctuated by an acrid chemical smell and a deep, spine-rattling thud.

On June 18, Johnson's Bradley team, which consists of a Bradley commander, driver and gunner, tested to qualify on the nearly 30-ton beast.

Staff Sgt. James Kipper, Johnson's platoon sergeant from the 137th, assured Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small during his visit to Bradley testing, "We're having a blast, sir. Seriously."

Although his job is intense, Johnson said the work is worth it.

"There are long days, long nights, but it's fun," he said.

At the end of the test, and a race back

across the 15-mile range, the Bradley lumbers to a stop and the crew will learn if they qualified.

"I'm looking for fire commands, target kills and driving techniques," said Sgt. Vince T. Brown, from the 1st Battalion 118th Infantry, South Carolina National Guard.

Brown came to Fort Riley to evaluate Johnson and his crew, as well as the other Bradley teams from the 137th, since grades must be assigned externally. During his critique, Brown shows each crew a black and white video, complete with audio recording, of each test section.

In a detailed analysis, he explains the strengths and weaknesses of the team's engagements. Each attack must take place within a limited exposure time, before the target has an opportunity to retaliate. If the Bradley does not escape before the threat time expires, the crew will not get credit for the engagement.

"Lots of these are new crews," said Brown. "We're mixing them with the more experienced."

Testing benefitted teams with experience, but also provided an opportunity to inspect the vehicles. Since 2004, when the 137th received the Bradleys, they have spent most of the time with limited maintenance and disuse. In fact, for the several dozen Bradleys, there was only one mechanic, or motor sergeant, to maintain them. Fortunately, only one Bradley had maintenance issues during testing.

Although they have not deployed, the Soldiers want to be sure the Bradleys are prepared.



A Bradley Fighting Vehicle of the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry heads down the road toward the firing line at Fort Riley. (Photo by Jane Welch)

"Just because we're not getting deployed doesn't mean the Bradleys won't," said Sgt. 1st Class John M. McLean III, from the 137th.

As important as the machine gun or TOW missile, the Bradley's radio is pivotal to its mission.

Staff Sgt. Terence D. James is a signal support systems specialist. He quotes his section motto: "You can talk about us, but you can't talk without us." James is responsible for assuring the crew inside

the Bradley can communicate with the outside.

Pfc. Suionn Chak, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 169th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, requested additional training with the 137th. He is helping James during training and hopes to get experience in communication. Chak said hands-on training is better than simply studying and reading about his job.

"You could read a thousand travel
(Continued on Page 7)

Kansas Guardsmen get a unique view of the U.S. during Kosovo deployment

By Sharon Watson

The sun sets over Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo on a cool mid-April evening. Kansas National Guardsmen with the 35th Infantry Division make their way to dinner to meet with a distinguished guest from their home state, Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small, assistant adjutant general-Army and the commander of the Kansas Army National Guard.

It's one of many trips Small has made during his 39 years in the Guard to visit some of the more than 6,000 Kansas Army Guard troops whether at annual training in Kansas or deployed to other parts of the world.

But this trip is different. It is Small's last visit to troops outside Kansas before he retires in August 2008.

"It's bittersweet for me because I'm going to miss the Guard family, the entire organization which I'm so proud to be a part of, and the people who are so dedicated to what they do," Small said. "I'm looking forward to retirement though, and will have many great memories of the time I spent with the Kansas Guard."

At dinner, Small greets Brig. Gen. John Davoren, 35th Division, who assumed command of Kosovo Force 9 for the NATO peacekeeping mission. The 35th Division is one of eight divisions in the Army National Guard and is made up of Guardsmen from Kansas, Missouri and Illinois. They deployed in July 2007. In Kosovo, the division is the headquarters unit for Task Force Falcon, a multinational peacekeeping force.

Small spends the evening talking to the troops about their experiences so far in Kosovo.

Spc. Kimberly McCauslin, from Shawnee, Kan., has been in the Guard two years and is completing her degree while

serving in Kosovo. She's pleased to see Small and other visitors from home including Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Haworth, and Chaplain (Col.) Don Davidson.

"It shows us support," McCauslin said of the visit. "We know they care."

Spc. Michael Ford of Leavenworth has been in the Guard seven years, and said the troops in Kosovo get a very positive response from the local residents.

"We're doing great things here," Ford said. "We're helping schools, we're getting windows, and wood stoves, and through donations from the troops here, we have been able to pay for wood for a year."

Spc. Jerry Gregory, of Leavenworth has served in the Kansas Guard five years and works closely with the Albanians while Ford works more closely with the Serbians.

They talk about the differences between each side, and the tension between the Serbians and Albanians the day President George Bush recognized Kosovo as a state. Prior to that, these troops hadn't seen much media attention on Kosovo.

"The media doesn't seem nearly as interested in Kosovo," said Ford.

"The media focus on Iraq is negative, but it's a lot more positive here," Gregory noted.

Gregory, Ford and McCauslin all served in Iraq prior to this deployment.

"There seemed to be a lot of confusion in Iraq about how America was going to help, but here they see how America is going to help," Ford said.

The local support for the U.S. is evident to the KFOR troops.

"If you drive in Kosovo, you see more American flags than you do at home," McCauslin said.

The Kansas team witnessed this love for the U.S. flag as they traveled to Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, and the headquar-



Sgt. Kyle Kolb, Iowa National Guard, briefs Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small (right) and Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Haworth on the operation of a checkpoint on the Kosovo-Serbia border. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

ters of KFOR. Maj. Jeff Totman, is the only Kansas Guardsman stationed at the headquarters.

"It's different being away from the Kansas troops, but I'm getting to know people from all over the world," Totman said.

The diversity is evident in one glance down the street with troops from France, Germany, Italy, Greece just to name a few. During the stop at headquarters, Small visited with other Kansas troops who had stopped there for lunch.

During the trip, members of the KFOR Joint Visitors Bureau take the Kansas team to the border of Kosovo where Serbian troops stand guard at a checkpoint. Staff Sgt. Kyle Kolb is a member of the 1st Battalion, 194th Field Artillery in the Iowa Guard and stands guard on the Kosovo side. This checkpoint serves as the official entry point into Kosovo for commerce.

"Approximately 6,000 cars a day come through these three gates," Kolb said. They search for smuggled weapons and drugs.

When traveling throughout the area, U.S. troops on patrol must stay within the Kosovo border. In one area, troops constructed a road to go around Serbia known as the KFOR Bypass.

The United Nations mission in Kosovo includes training the Kosovo police force which has been in existence for seven years.

"We work very closely with the Kosovo police force," said Col. Richard Hayes. "We have a joint relationship... They are very motivated. They want to be in the lead and we support them."

Hayes spends much of his time in Kosovo in a community relations role and has traveled nearly every road dozens of times. He also knows the area by air and describes it to the Kansas team as they take a Black Hawk tour of the region.

During one stop in Stubëll, Kosovo, a restaurant owner, Luz Jozefi, invites Small and his team in to visit and expresses appreciation for the work the Kansas

(Continued on Page 18)



Restaurant owner Luz Jozefi (left, in dark shirt) proudly flies a U.S. flag and expresses his appreciation to Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small for the work KFOR soldiers are doing in Kosovo. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



Maj. Jeff Totman, of the 35th Infantry Division, shows Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small around the KFOR Headquarters in Pristina, Kosovo. Totman is the only Kansas Guardsman stationed here, while the remainder of the nearly 200 Kansas troops are stationed at Camp Bondsteel. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

Bradley Fighting Vehicles



Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor unpack 120 mm mortar rounds in preparation for a live-fire exercise at Fort Riley during their annual training. (Photo by Jane Welch)

Continued from Page 6

books, but it's not the same as taking a trip," said Chak. "That's the best comparison I can think of."

Pfc. Robert J. Firestone also chose to take advantage of the 137th's training. He is a medic the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor, but chose to train with the 137th to prepare for a possible deployment next year.

"It helps me know what to expect," said

Firestone, who has not been deployed before.

Medics are a necessity during training, said Staff Sgt. Craig W. Lafon, from the 137th, who works with Firestone. He said crushed fingers and burns are both common injuries during training.

"If we don't have medics, we can't train on the Bradleys," said Lafon.

They may not have characters in a video game, but they keep the Bradley rolling.

Education center a "one-stop shop" for homeland security

During a special open house this spring, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, Congresswoman Nancy Boyda and Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, director of Kansas Homeland Security and the adjutant general, announced the opening of a new homeland security education center in Topeka.

The Eisenhower Center for Homeland Security Studies, located on the State Defense Building Complex at 2722 SW Topeka Blvd., Room 166, is a collaborative public/private initiative that will support local and state government and private sector homeland security partners.

Designed as a "one-stop shop" for homeland security activities, initiatives and best practices for all of Kansas, the center serves as a classroom, simulation center, and as a rapid set-up situational awareness facility for assisting with large-scale disaster response.

"Collaboration is the key to successful homeland security efforts," said Sebelius. "This center will help Kansans work together as a team and best leverage our physical and intellectual resources for dealing with future challenges."

Over the next year, a variety of classes, seminars and exercises will be offered exploring subjects such as individual and organizational disaster preparedness, homeland security situational awareness, information sharing and basic homeland security principles. The multi-agency multi-discipline approach will utilize com-



Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting (left) the adjutant general and director of Kansas Homeland Security, and Maj. Dave Young, director, Integrated Initiatives Office, answer questions about the purposes and goals of the Eisenhower Center for Homeland Security Studies during an open house on March 19. (Photo by Steve Larson)

puter-generated simulations to allow public officials, private industry partners, non-governmental organizations and elected

officials to experience and discuss the challenges faced during natural and man-made disasters, including terrorism.

Even before its official opening, the center staff has been busy, building partnerships and teaching a variety of disaster preparedness and response courses to more than 420 students across Kansas.

"This is a place where people come together to share thoughts and ideas," said Bunting. "This is where people come and

G-RAP: a great way to earn money

Continued from Page 1

described his recruiter as essential to his success as an RA.

"Find a good recruiter, someone you can call for any question you or your recruit might have," said Magana, who earned \$16,000 through G-RAP. "My recruiter, Sergeant First Class Frausto, has helped me a lot in finding out answers to my questions and adjusting his schedule to meet my recruits."

Sgt. Maj. Melvin Smith, Recruiting and Retention Detachment, Production Sergeant Major, oversees Army recruiters in Topeka. He said there was an initial surge in recruits when G-RAP began; the numbers have remained consistent.

"I have great respect for a good recruiter," said Weber. "By good, I don't necessarily mean one who puts up good numbers. A good recruiter is always there to help the Soldier and their family, and give them their time even after the recruiter has received credit for the applicant."

Successful RAs also suggest being available to potential candidates and answering their questions when they consider taking advantage of the benefits the Guard has to offer.

"I wish there were some techniques I could tell you I use, but I just use my people skills," said Magana. "I just talk to everyone about what I do for a living and my experiences in the military and they want to do the same."

"The key is networking!" said Weber. Bingham recruited his wife, who is now a major in the Kansas National Guard. His advice to potential RAs is to not be intimidated, and discuss the benefits.

"I ask, 'Don't you want to make more than this? How are you paying for college?'" he suggests.

Kyle describes G-RAP as a tool with advantages everyone involved.

"G-RAPers are a wonderful bridge," said Kyle. "Everybody benefits by it."

collaborate and integrate, to plan for and deal with problems that affect us all."

"Unlike many current initiatives across the nation, the Kansas center is unique in its multi-agency, multi-discipline approach," Bunting said. "Tremendous effort has gone into designing a high-tech facility with the flexibility to help Kansas Homeland Security professionals from all disciplines."

"I'm thrilled that the federal government is able to support the state's only dedicated location where first responders, National Guardsmen, homeland security professionals, agency leaders and elected officials can plan for and respond to a variety of natural and manmade disasters," said Boyda. "These types of efforts are critical in helping us prepare for the future."

Currently, the Eisenhower Center for Homeland Security Studies is partnered with more than 20 government agencies, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations and private industry partners. In addition, the center works closely with the Governor's Commission on Healthy and Prepared Schools to keep Kansas schools safe. The number of partners is expected to significantly expand within and beyond the borders of Kansas during 2008.

The center is a result of several years of work between the Kansas Adjutant General's Department and Defense Microelectronic Activity, a part of the Department of Defense. Initial money came from congressional funding in 2006, with Boyda securing additional financing of \$929,000 for the center for 2008.

The center is named in honor of Kansas Dwight D. Eisenhower, who built an alliance of partners dedicated to overcoming the greatest challenge of the 20th Century.

Topeka business recognized for support of the National Guard



Chuck Bredahl (right), Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, presented certificates of recognition to Tim Pasley and Alan Meyer, co-owners of Hobby Depot in Topeka. (Photo by Jane Welch)

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson

Support of the Kansas National Guard comes in many forms. Most are conducted unselfishly from the heart with no thought of personal gain. On April 30, the owners of Hobby Depot in Topeka were rewarded for their support of the Kansas Army National Guard.

1st Lt. Christopher Coco, commander 35th Military Police Company, recommended the award based on the support Tim Pasley and Alan Meyer, co-owners of Hobby Depot, gave to the company. The company's chain of command was present, including Col. Victor Braden, commander, 69th Troop Command and Lt. Col. Howard Wheeler, commander 1st Battalion 635th Armor. Charles G. "Chuck" Bredahl, executive director of the Kansas Committee for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, also attended the brief ceremony conducted at the Hobby Depot.

Col. David J. "Joe" Wheeler, chief of staff, Kansas Army National Guard, presented Pasley and Meyer the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's Patriot

Award. The Patriot award was presented in recognition of Pasley and Meyer's continued and unwavering support of the Kansas Army National Guard. Their most recent activity was to sponsor a recruiting event for the 35th Military Police Company.

Wheeler said "I appreciate the efforts of the 35th MP Company and employers like this that support our mission, even though they may not have Guard members as employees."

"I want to thank Tim and Alan for their support for our Soldiers," said Braden.

Bredahl echoed the same sentiment. "It is employers like this that make the Guard work," he said.

"We were very proud to host the 35th MP Company whose professionalism in presentation, attitude and behavior were exemplary," said Pasley. "We also would like to thank all of the men and women who unselfishly serve and who proudly defend our nation's freedom. Their efforts and sacrifices will not be forgotten. Thank you for this great honor."

Meyer summed up the entire event by saying "Wow!"

Bingham talks about the Guard, and the good experience he's had, whenever he gets a chance. Occasionally, he sees his recruits after they return from training; to date, none of them have regretted enlisting.

"I have yet to hear of somebody with a bad experience," said Bingham.

Magana found every one of his recruits happy with their decision as well. "Some have said they did regret joining when they were in training, but after the basics they learned it was the best decision they ever made," Magana said.

For Bingham, military service is not just about the money. He describes his time in the Army with reverence; he perceives the service as ultimately selfless.

"Somebody has to step-up," Bingham said, although he understands not everyone is able to serve. "But there aren't very many of them."

Besides the opportunity to serve in the military, the benefit for RAs is the money, \$2,000 per recruit. Half the bonus is paid upon enlistment, and the other half after the recruit ships to basic training or boot camp.

The Kansas Army and Air National Guard programs are the same. Kyle said the Air Force recently opened the program to retirees, who first had access through the Army.

Technicians and Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) members, both Army and Air Force, may not use G-RAP, but the Army has access to a similar program called Every Soldier is A Recruiter (ESAR). Air Force technicians and AGRs do not have an equivalent program.

For those who are eligible for G-RAP, it's an opportunity to share the benefits of the Guard. "I think everyone should get involved," said Magana. "It's great money and easy to pursue."

Although Bingham is retired, he describes G-RAP as an important part of military service: every Soldier is a recruiter.

Freedom Salute honors Soldiers and families of 108th Aviation

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

Soldiers returning from current deployments, unlike many Soldiers returning from previous wars, are recognized for their efforts. The 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation (Assault) spent last year in Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On May 4, the battalion conducted a Freedom Salute for its Soldiers and their families on the drill floor of the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Topeka. On May 3, the battalion's Salina-based elements, Company B; Detachment 2, Headquarters and Headquarters Company; Detachment 2, Company D and Detachment 2, Company E, conducted their Freedom Salute at the Kansas Regional Training Center's Eckert Hall in Salina.

"These events are an illustration of the Army doing something right," said Brig. Gen. Jonathan P. Small, assistant adjutant general – Army and commander of the Kansas Army National Guard. "These Freedom Salutes ceremonies are a grateful nation's way of saying 'thank you' and showing to them that we really do care."

"These Freedom Salutes ceremonies are a grateful nation's way of saying 'thank you' and showing to them that we really do care."

Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small

Their service has been important. In some small way, we are sending the message that we really do care."

For the event, the official party consisted of Small; Col. Victor Braden, commander 69th Troop Command; Lt. Col. David A. Leger, commander 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment (Assault) and Command Sgt. Maj. James Crosby, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation. Also with the official party were Kansas State Representative Ann Mah, 54th District, Topeka and Erica Chapman and Gary Dew representing Frito Lay.



Members of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation color guard gives honors to our nation's flag during a Freedom Salute ceremony on May 4 at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Topeka. The ceremony honored the Soldiers and families of the unit for their service and sacrifices. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)

Iraq assignment difficult, rewarding for Kansas nurse



Capt. Kathryn Watts-Harkness fills out a report at her work station at Balad Air Base, Iraq. (Photo provided)

By Maj. DeAnn Barr

Capt. Kathryn Watts-Harkness, 184th Medical Group, became a nurse practitioner to help people and she joined the Kansas Air National Guard to serve her country. She met both goals on Jan. 2, 2007, when she departed for a 120-day tour to Balad Air Base, Iraq.

Departing Wichita, Kan., where she works as a university nursing instructor, and arriving 14 hours later in the desert provided a stiff culture shock.

"It's like walking through a door," said Watts-Harkness. "It's simply amazing. I try to give a semblance of an idea to people of what it is like. It's like going from black to white."

Immediately upon her arrival, she was thrust into a six-on, one-off 12-hour shift rotation. Mass casualties required all hands and trumped time off. Watts-Harkness never did have much time off.

"I don't recall how many mass casualties I worked, but the most dramatic followed a suicide bombing in a nearby mosque," she said. "Mostly women and children were victims and within three hours we had 100 patients from the disaster."

As the hospital was already full, Watts-Harkness was a leader in moving patients, setting up new beds and even creating a treatment area on the floor. In a hospital that did not boast running water, these improvisations were no small task. Although she deployed as a clinical nurse, in actuality she

worked more as a nurse practitioner. Her average patient load was 10 patients, all with multiple complex wounds like burns, amputations, post-surgical, etc. At one point, she carried 17 patients.

Watts-Harkness will never know precisely how many lives she helped to save, but is very glad she volunteered for her tour.

"I felt it was my duty to volunteer. It was one of the most enlightening and difficult experiences I have ever had," said Watts-Harkness. "I wouldn't trade it for a million dollars."

"By the same token, I won't miss holding the hand of a child or Soldier who is dying. That I won't miss," she said quietly while staving off tears.

A survivor of 125 rocket and mortar attacks, Watts-Harkness adapted quickly to working under deployed conditions. Aside from making do procedurally with whatever tools were available, she overcame other obstacles.

"It was difficult getting used to the overwhelming smell of body odor in intense heat, and blood and burnt flesh."

Despite the hard work and adversity, Watts-Harkness left the desert feeling her job had been well done.

"I can say without bragging, I made a difference. We all worked as a team. On the flight home a Soldier looked at me and said, 'Hi, do you remember me?' I didn't, but then he said, 'You took care of me when I was wounded.' That was soooo cool!"

Following comments from Small, each deployed Soldier was individually recognized and presented with a number of items, including a cased American flag. Soldiers who have served on multiple deployments received additional special recognition in the form of a ring to recognize their service. Family members were also recognized, with those on their first deployment receiving a lapel pin, spouses of Soldiers completing multiple deployments receiving a mantle clock and the children receiving Future Soldier kits, complete with games and a "Top Secret" mission to complete.

Others received recognition for their contributions in supporting the battalion's recent Iraq deployment. Jane Welch from the Adjutant General's Department Public Affairs Office was presented the Unit Center of Influence Award for her support of the battalion during their deployment. The Family Readiness Group presented Chapman and Dew, on behalf of Frito Lay, the Outstanding Employer Award. Frito Lay provided significant support to the Soldiers while the battalion was deployed. Finally, Jodie Soldan, Janelle Hood,

Karman Loughney, Cherry Jordan, Mallory McGrann and Shantal Nickel received the Distinguished Unit Center of Influence Award on behalf of the battalion's Family Readiness Group.

Mah said "We cannot say thank you often or loud enough for these folks and their families for the sacrifices for our country. I am glad to be here this is really cool."

"I am glad to be back, but I am very proud of my wife and the job she did while I was gone," said Spc. Brady Weissbeck.

Pfc. Lonnie Hajney, who did not deploy with the unit, but worked setting up the event, said "It was a lot of work, but it was well worth it."

"It is great to be back and I am proud to have served," said Sgt. 1st Class Paul Johnston.

Sgt. Randal Taylor, who has now completed two tours in Iraq, agreed. "I am glad to be back."

His wife Holli said "We are proud to be here." Son, David, 20, didn't comment, but younger sister Amber, 10, said "I am proud of dad." However, 15 year old Hayley said it all "I love him."

Oldest tanker takes last flight



The oldest KC-135E in the Air Guard inventory took off from the 190th Air Refueling Wing runway on May 28, headed for the Aircraft Maintenance and Reclamation Group in Tucson, Ariz.

The KC-135E, tail number 55-3145, was flown to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. The jet is the oldest KC-135E that is still flying. The jet was manufactured by Boeing Aircraft in Seattle, Wash., and delivered to the United States Air Force on Dec. 18, 1957, as part of the 93rd Bombardment (Heavy) Wing, Strategic Air Command. During its lifetime, this jet has been deployed to Thailand, Spain, Japan and Guam. It was transferred to the 190th Air Refueling Wing in 2002. (Photo by Lt. Col. Tony DeJesus)

Soldiers jump at the chance to help tornado-stricken city

By Spc. Jessica Rohr, 105th MPAD

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor and 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry's scout platoon were called to the scene shortly after the EF4 tornado touched down late Wednesday evening in Manhattan, Kan. At the time, both units had literally just returned from their two-week annual training and many Soldiers were staying the night in Manhattan when the tornado hit.

"I was actually staying with a friend here in town only a few miles away, and it's weird to see that it hit so close," said Spc. Derek Repp, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry.

The troops were still on a two-day recovery period after intensive training at Fort Riley. Nearly 40 Soldiers were staying the night in the Manhattan National Guard Armory when the tornado sirens started.

"They immediately knew to get to the lowest ground possible and to an area without windows," said Lt. Col. Howard Wheeler, battalion commander for the 635th. "What we did worry about was accountability of our Soldiers and as soon as the all-clear was given our command sergeant major came right over and checked on all my Soldiers making sure everyone was okay."

Once daylight broke and the damage was assessed, the Soldiers instantly knew they needed to get ready. Chances would be high that they would soon get orders to assist the city of Manhattan and its resi-



An EF4 tornado skipped through Manhattan, Kan., the evening of June 11, striking business and residential areas alike. The Kansas State University campus sustained an estimated \$27 million in damages. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

dents in this time of need.

With only one night to recover from their annual training, Soldiers from the 635th and from the 137th were tasked to secure areas that had received the most damage. However, as Wheeler explained, there was no need to try to "order" his men into duty.

"Morale was amazing. When I talked to

them and asked some of them to volunteer to assist with the storm, almost to a man, every one of the Soldiers was asking to go out and help," said Wheeler. "I was a part of this battalion when we had the massive floods of 1993 and it's interesting to see the emotional effect on the Soldiers when it's their own town. A lot of them want to get out there and help because they're touched, personally, by the damage."

Local law enforcement and Riley County firefighters were among the first to respond to the tornado's impact areas. Capt. Jason Hutson, a scout from the 137th, who is also a Riley County firefighter, was sent to coordinate efforts with the Riley County Emergency Operations Center.

"He went down and fed us with the initial information," said Wheeler. "The benefit of the scout program is that the scouts are able to tell what they are planning and what they are needing. From all that, we were able to posture, and we were out the door and on the ground less than an hour after the official request for forces came through," Wheeler continued.

Staff Sgt. Tom Elliot, a 20 year veteran in the 137th scout platoon, was shocked at the damage caused only miles away from their armory.

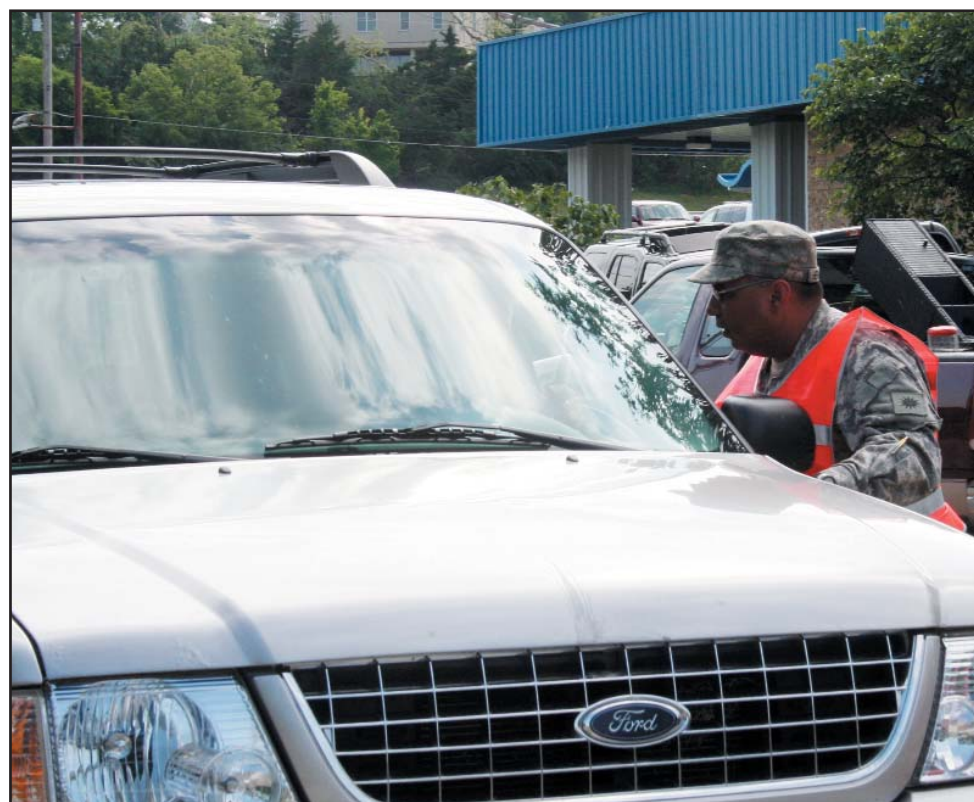
"I didn't see it at first, but later when we were doing some patrolling, I was looking around going, 'Oh my gosh.' House after house just swept away, tree branches everywhere, cars sitting up in trees. It was appalling."

Despite all the damage and risks, the Army National Guard Soldiers did what they were tasked to do. "We gave them security, keeping the sightseers out, while allowing the rescuers, clean up crews and homeowners in," said Elliot. Once the Soldiers were setup in full force, the local police department was able to stand down a lot of their security efforts and focus on other areas of concern.

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1st Lt. Brian Smith (center), 1st Battalion, 635th Armor, briefs his Soldiers about the checkpoints they will be manning near Miller Ranch in Manhattan, Kan. A combined force of Soldiers from the 635th Armor maintenance platoon and the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry scout platoon volunteered for disaster relief efforts after the June 11 tornado. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson, 105th MPAD)



Pvt. 2 Robert Hernandez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor, talks with a motorist at one of several checkpoints set up to maintain security in tornado-stricken areas. (Photo by Stephen D. Larson)



The power of the tornado destroyed this self-storage facility, scattering furniture, clothing, books, toys and other personal belongings. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



Gov. Kathleen Sebelius held a news conference at the Manhattan Airport with city, county and K-State officials to assure the public that the state would help their city recover. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

Tornadoes tack on real-world mission to annual training

Continued from Page 1

and with (the victim), being on the scene I think he did make a difference.”

Quintanar and Weller continued to watch the area carefully and respond to anything that would be considered out of the ordinary at least for this situation during their patrol, while answering any problems that checkpoints might have over the radio.

“The general task was to make sure that we conducted the flow of traffic so that we had control of movement,” said Quintanar.

“Basically, it was that if you left the town you weren’t coming back in until we got the clear from operation center. Then, on the inner perimeter, it was making sure that we got everybody out of the area that got hit the hardest.”

“That was pretty difficult to keep civilian vehicles from moving when emergency vehicles are trying to move, and just trying to get people to leave their homes when they have been traumatized,” he continued. “That was basically our mission.”

For many of the Soldiers this was a major change of direction. It gave them a sense of pride and accomplishment. The majority of them just returned from a wartime mission in Iraq. This gave them a chance to show the humanitarian side by rendering aid to the civilians by providing security and support.

From this disaster came a good collaboration of all the law enforcement agencies from the city on up to state, the fire department, the military and American Red Cross.

“We actually saw the readiness program in effect and it works,” said Quintanar.

“We had a few glitches to iron out, but the system works as long as you work the system. I think that everybody, once we got the ball rolling, understood their part and everybody involved conducted themselves as professionals. They were diligent in their job and at the same time caring to the civilian population. They did an outstanding job. I am proud of them.”

“Being a National Guard Soldier doesn’t just mean that you get called into a combat zone when the big Army is short,” said Weller. “You do a lot more here at home than people realize.”



Kansas National Guardsmen assisted local and state law enforcement officers in manning several checkpoints into Chapman. (Photo by Spc. Jessica Rohr, 105th MPAD)



The Kansas National Guard supported law enforcement personnel by performing roving security patrols. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



The high school parking lot became the command center for local, county and state law enforcement, National Guard, firefighter, EMS and other first responders in Chapman. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general, examines a light pole at the high school football field, bent by the force of the tornado. (Photo by Sharon Watson)



Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting confers with Congressman Jerry Moran. Moran was in Chapman conducting an inspection tour of the damage. (Photo by Spc. Jessica Rohr, 105th MPAD)



Damage estimates will likely run into millions of dollars to rebuild the town. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

In memorium...



A KC-135 Stratotanker from the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard, flies over the Dodge City Cemetery during a Memorial Day service. Several communities requested National Guard fly-overs to honor the fallen veterans of their community. (Photo provided)

World War II battle restaged at Kansas National Guard Museum

By Spc. Jessica Rohr, 105th MPAD

The Museum of the Kansas National Guard held the Eighth Annual World War II Reenactment on June 7, 2008. An overwhelming 150 plus spectators turned out to witness the reenactments, recounts of veterans, restored vehicles, the famous General Patton apology and to support the museum by participating in a cookout.

The event was filled with 30 American and 30 German soldiers in authentic uniforms and weapons played by retired, current and future Soldiers alike. "It's a huge dedication to preserve these elements of war," said co-coordinator retired Command Sgt. Maj. Jack Elliot. Eight years ago, vehicle collector Geary Nicholson of Ottawa, Kan., approached the museum with the idea of this collective event. It started with only six vehicles and

two reenactors to what it is today.

Many of those that have participated in the past are now sharing their enthusiasm with children and grandchildren. "The purpose of the event is really to honor veterans. I think everyone who collects and restores the weapons or the vehicles thinks highly of our veterans and they realize that there are a lot of things we couldn't be doing if it weren't for our military personnel," said museum volunteer Bruce Zimmerman.

The Museum is open to the public from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, located at 6700 S.W. Topeka Blvd., (the main entrance of Forbes Field) Topeka, Kansas. Sunday appointments can be scheduled for special groups at (785) 862-1020. You can also check them out at www.kansasguardmuseum.org.



"Nazi" soldiers take up positions behind an anti-tank barricade during a re-enactment staged at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard June 7. (Photo by Spc. Jessica Rohr)

A big flag for a big welcome

By Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD

Holding the American flag for the returning Soldiers of the 35th Military Police Company that returned from Iraq, volunteers at the Kansas National Guard Museum in Topeka cheered as the Patriot Guard escorted the recent group of heroes back home.

This would normally be an easy task, but this American flag was a garrison flag—measuring 20 feet tall by 38 feet long. The high winds during the day literally lifted the volunteers from the ground at times.

"This is great, it's the least we can do to show our support for our returning troops," said Museum host retired Col. Harley Crull to his wife of 51 years, Carolyn. "I want these boys to know that we are with them and support what they do, and that we're glad they're home."

Crull knows what it's like to be deployed away from home. He joined the 35th Division on his 17th birthday and even was instrumental in bringing the division to Kansas. During that time, he spent some time away from home, too. So he and Carolyn try to attend every return ceremony they can.

Kansas Army National Guard Spc. Brady Weissbeck helped with the flag and reflects how he felt when he first saw it after returning home with the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation last August.

"The museum put the flag out for us and when I first saw it, I got this overwhelming sense of pride," said Weissbeck. "It's great that there are people out here in the States that love and support us on our missions. I sure did miss Kansas when I was overseas and this gave me a sense of finally being home."

Kansas Air National Guard Master Sgt. Brian Fiffe agreed with Weissbeck. "I was once in their shoes," he said, referring to the returning MP company, "and it really swells your patriotism when you see the flag."

Fiffe, who had spent six months in the Horn of Africa, made sure he was positioned as well as he could be to help display the flag. Because of its large size, volunteers had to stand on a display Sherman tank and hold the top, while other volunteers held the bottom. Museum volunteers say that displaying the flag for returning military members and cheering them as they go by is now a tradition with the museum.



On the ground and on top of a Sherman tank, civilian and military volunteers hoist a garrison-sized flag at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard to welcome home members of the 35th Military Police Company from a year-long deployment to Iraq. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD)

35th Military Police Company

Continued from Page 1

internment facility. Initially, they fell under the 705th Military Police Battalion, then became a part of the 400th Military Police Battalion on Feb. 10, 2008. The unit and Soldiers distinguished themselves in every task and mission they were assigned. The unit and its Soldiers were awarded a total of six Bronze Stars, 121 Army Commendation Medals and 17 Army Achievement Medals and was nominated for a Superior Unit Award.

Stinson took the podium and stated, "It is great to be home." He went on to thank the 190th Air Refueling Wing for bringing them home and the Patriot Guard for escorting them to Washburn.

"The last thing I said before I left for this deployment is that the heroes of this deployment were the families," said Stinson. "They were the backbone of the Soldiers to call home and keep in touch with reality. The Family Readiness Group, families, friends and neighbors were as instrumental in our success as these Soldiers right here were. I want to thank the families for lending me such great Soldiers for the last 12 months and now I want to give them back to you."

Stinson then turned to Lt. Col. Howard Wheeler, administrative officer for 69th Troop Command, and said, "Lieutenant Colonel Wheeler, mission complete. All Soldiers present and accounted for."

"Sometimes you wonder how much you know," said Bunting. "I don't know much,

but I knew this today: I knew when I got up today that we were going to go to Fort Bliss and bring home the finest MPs the world has ever known. I knew anytime you have a chance to make 150 MPs happy you had better take it."

"I knew the Patriot Guard would be here," he continued. "I knew that the Topeka Police would lead us in. I knew all the way here there would be flags on the side of the road. I knew that because this is Kansas, this is America."

The governor welcomed the Soldiers and reminded everyone the ceremony was a great opportunity to kick off the Memorial Day weekend.

"And just as you celebrate with your loved ones coming back this weekend, it should be a joyous celebration, but keep in mind those families who aren't able to welcome their loved ones home," said Sebelius, "those who bore the ultimate sacrifice of someone in service. That is what this weekend is about as we welcome home these brave National Guard Soldiers back to Kansas and to the loving arms of their families."

"Welcome home, guys – job well done. And as Maj. Stinson already said, it is great to have you back in Kansas."

To end the ceremony Bunting called Stinson and 1st Sgt. Robert Istas to the podium. Istas called the company to attention. Bunting closed the ceremony by saying "God bless America. Dismissed."

LOYALTY ★ DUTY ★ RESPECT ★ SELFLESS SERVICE ★ HONOR ★ INTEGRITY ★ PERSONAL COURAGE

**NATIONAL
GUARD**

Kansas medical officer makes the most of Afghanistan deployment

Lt. Col. William J. Sullivan deployed to Afghanistan Aug. 25, 2007, where he served as battalion surgeon for Security Forces, 218th Brigade Combat Team-Joint Task Force Phoenix. Sullivan is a medical officer with the Kansas Area Medical Detachment, Lenexa.

During the rotation Sullivan planned and executed two civilian medical assistance missions including the largest in the history of JTF Phoenix.

"We brought much needed medical assistance to over 3,000 civilians in the Hued Khuyel area of Kabul cultivating a great relationship with local Afghan population," said Sullivan.

The operations were executed in conjunction with British NATO coalition forces in the area. Sullivan organized a relief effort via internet with several local entities in the Pittsburg area resulting in over 2,000 items donated to the local residents.

Additionally, Sullivan improved international relations between NATO coalition partners by visiting, inspecting, and establishing a cordial report with the combat support hospitals in the area of operations. Arriving in theatre Sullivan observed there was little open communication between NATO medical providers causing some degree of ambiguity regarding triage, definitive care of U.S. personnel, and international relations. A triage matrix was developed for JTF Phoenix, standard operating procedures for medical care were written and open dialogue developed with the hospital commanders resulting in a warm relationship.

During the rotation Sullivan observed U.S. commanders getting improved access to their hospitalized personnel and a reduction of potentially unnecessary procedures



Lt. Col. William Sullivan supervises a team of Air Force medics providing care to a patient at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan (Photo provided)

and surgeries. During the deployment Sullivan instituted more than 20 fundamental changes to the Troop Medical Clinic operations resulting in more efficient trauma care. He developed a malaria prophylaxis surveillance program and brought the battalion anthrax immunization rate to nearly 100 percent.

All Soldiers in the battalion were required to undergo Post Traumatic Stress Disorder training. All medics were recertified during the rotation using the SAC CAMS-VT program. Extensive didactic and clinical education was provided to the TMC personnel and their performance was noticeably improved as high level trauma

and medical events occurred.

"Many of our young medics and physician's assistant saw their first major trauma events on my rotation," said Sullivan.

EMEDS mission takes 190th Medical Group to South Korea

By 1st Lt. Joe Blubaugh

The 190th Medical Group's Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS) disaster response mission has received a lot of attention with deployments in support of Hurricane Katrina and the Greensburg tornado. However, wartime contingency operations are the main missions of most EMEDS in the Air Force.

The 190th Medical Group recently deployed to Daegu, South Korea, in support of the latter mission. The unit was tasked with setting up and inventorying one of the several prepositioned EMEDS placed throughout the country for combat contingencies, all of which must be set up and inventoried at least once a year. The Medical Group was requested by name by the Pacific Air Force (PACAF) at the suggestion of the National Guard Bureau.

While there have been several ANG Medical Groups that have deployed for the same mission in the past, this deployment marked the first time a Medical Group and a Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility (CASF) have deployed together to support the PACAF mission.

Members of the CASF from the 118th Airlift Wing from Nashville, Tenn., deployed with the 190th. While in theatre, the 118th successfully set up and inventoried a contingency CASF, as well.

According to PACAF, both units performed outstandingly in accomplishing the

"It was quite a shock to them."

Improved on site care resulted in a dust off rate of only one percent, which was much lower than the theatre statistic of four percent. This resulted in decreased exposure to flight crews and fiscal expenditures for medical care.

In the little down time available, Sullivan provided an internet based social studies curriculum to St. Mary's Grade School in Pittsburg, Kan. "The children really enjoyed this program. It helped them to better understand a complicated conflict that affects their lives everyday."

Sullivan returned home safely on Nov. 24, 2007. Ironically, this bittersweet day marked the 40th anniversary of the return of the body of Cpl. Michael Sullivan, Weir, Kan., killed in action in Vietnam. Cpl. Sullivan was the godfather of Sullivan.

For his meritorious achievements Sullivan was nominated for the Army Commendation Medal, with two oak leaf clusters and the Army Achievement Medal, with one oak leaf cluster. He was also presented the South Carolina Adjutant General's Coin of Excellence and was the first recipient of the SECFOR Coin of Excellence presented by Col. Robert Bradshaw, SECFOR commander.

In a letter of appreciation to the Kansas and the Tennessee adjutants general, Maj. Kenneth Burkett, Chief of Expeditionary Medical Ops Training and Exercises for the 13th Air Force, praised the professionalism of both units.

"This exercise was executed without a hitch because of the extra 'hands-on' finesse of your teams coupled with their keen abilities as warrior-medics," said Burkett. "It is certainly no accident that the medics of the 190th MDG and the 118th AES were hand-selected from among a cast of ANG units based on a well-earned reputation as 'top performers' capable of getting the job done."

While the primary mission was set by PACAF, both units were given time to accomplish required readiness skills verification with the EMEDS and CASF equipment.

"We had to be creative with our training at times," said Col. Janet Hanson, commander of the Medical Group. "However, while the EMEDS was set up, we wanted to take the opportunity to complete the majority of our required annual training."

Both units also took the opportunity to conduct a one day, mass casualty exercise together. "This was the first opportunity for many of our members to work this closely with a CASF," said Hanson. "The CASF plays an integral role in EMEDS operations during a combat situation."

Manhattan tornado

Continued from Page 10

1st Lt. Brian Smith, who led one of the patrol teams, was impressed at the response time their unit had on the situation. "A lot of these guys are just coming off of combat tours or peace keeping missions, so quick reaction is not anything unfamiliar. There was a sense of urgency, we got everything together and out the door we went."

The citizens of Manhattan also welcomed the Soldiers' presence as they strategically set up security check points around the damaged areas.

"People have openly expressed their gratitude, saying thanks and shaking our hands," said Smith.

Many organizations, such as the Salvation Army and Manhattan Baptist Church, recognized the Soldiers' hard

efforts by handing out food and water. One little girl in particular delivered popsicles to the troops, which was much appreciated in the mid-June heat.

Residents of one of the communities hit by the tornado personally requested that the Guard Soldiers stay nearby. "They just felt more comfortable, leaving their damaged homes with the Guard standing by on watch," said Wheeler.

The 1st Battalion, 635th Armor has a long history of responding to natural disasters throughout Kansas. They have deployed troops to assist with Coffeyville, Greensburg and countless other blizzards and storms throughout the years. Wheeler recounted an old National Guard commercial that said, "Sleep comfortable the Guard is on duty tonight," a slogan that holds much merit in situations such as this.

Embedded Training Team

Continued from Page 2

Soldiers of ETT #3 received the NATO Service, Afghanistan Campaign and National Defense and Overseas Service medals. In addition Bunting awarded the Meritorious Service Medal to Sgt. 1st Class William Ferris; a Purple Heart was awarded to Maj. Greg Edson; a Bronze Star was awarded to Capt. Charles Lunkwitz and a Combat Infantry Badge was awarded to Capt. Steve Wasko.

"I want to primarily say thank you to the families who have been so stalwart of your support of these Soldiers over the last year," said Bunting. "I remember when we said farewell to Team Shocker. It doesn't seem like a year ago."

"No unit, no group of people has ever served with more distinction in the Kansas Guard history than this team right here," Bunting went on to say. "There may be only a dozen, but it is the best dozen we have ever had."

"On the World War II memorial flagpoles it says 'The Americans came to liber-

ate, not to conquer, to restore liberty and end tyranny'," said Bunting. "In Afghanistan, there are people there that certainly don't have the best interest of the Afghans at heart. They are tyrants in that sense of the word. And it takes Americans and it takes great Soldiers like you to go over there and show the world that that won't be tolerated, that even in the most remote parts of the world, America will go. We are the beacon of light that says nowhere on earth is safe from the fact that our Soldiers will come and right any wrong that has been done. And you have done that. For the rest of your life you can look back and say that is what you did and it made a huge difference."

Bunting concluded his remarks by giving the Soldiers one last safety briefing. He then called Lamb and Platt to the front of the room. Lamb brought Team Shocker to attention. "Team Shocker great job," said Bunting. "I'm proud to serve with each and every one of you." Then in unison both Bunting and Platt shouted "Dismissed!"



A "casualty" is evaluated by 2nd Lt. Mark Dixon (right) and Staff Sgt. Troy Manz (left), members of the 190th Air Refueling Wing's Medical Group. The Airmen were taking part in a skills evaluation exercise. (Photo by 1st Lt. Joe Blubaugh)

Awards presented at Joint State Conference

A number of individuals and organizations were recognized for their achievements during the past year at an awards banquet for the Joint State Conference, held in Topeka April 11-13. Presenting the awards were Maj. Gen. Tod M. Bunting, the adjutant general; Brig Gen. Jonathan P. Small, assistant adjutant general - Air and Brig. Gen. Deborah S. Rose, director of the Joint Force Headquarters, Kansas National Guard with the 35th Division Commander, Maj. Gen. Wayne Pierson assisting.

Army Officer of the Year

1st Lt. Jason Davee, the operations officer of Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, was named the 2008 Army National Guard Company Grade Officer of the Year for Kansas.

Davee is an active member of Big Brothers/Big Sisters in Topeka. He also volunteers at Stormont Vail Hospital Emergency Room where he assists emergency Room personnel in any capacity needed, and attends functions and fundraisers for the Leukemia and Lymphoma foundations.

He is a member of the American Legion and VFW and has attended previous National Conferences. Because of his leadership and devotion to the enlisted force, he inspired four Soldiers to become commissioned officers.

Air Officer of the Year

Capt. Tanya Wehrli, the officer in charge of Readiness Management for the 190th Air Refueling Wing, was named the 2008 Air National Guard Company Grade Officer of the Year for Kansas at the Kansas National Guard Joint Conference on Saturday, April 12, 2008.

Wehrli is a traditional Guardsmen who works for the Veterans Administration in Topeka. She created, from scratch, the now flourishing 190th Student Flight, which educates new enlistees prior to basic training on Air Force Doctrine. This program has resulted in increased honor graduates from the 190th attending basic military training from about two to over a dozen per year.

She volunteers as a soccer and basketball youth coach, is a member of Outdoor Kansas, and is active with the PTA. She is actively engaged with her local civic leaders as well as the National level and she continuously promotes the National Guard wherever she goes and is known for being a good source of information and education about what the Guard does for America.

Military Volunteers of the Year

1st Lt. Scott Allen, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry was named the top Military Volunteer of the year recently, at the Joint State Conference held in Topeka from April 11-13, 2008. Because he is deployed, his wife Delane Allen and his mother, Mrs. Ruthie Adams accepted the award.

This award is for the Kansas National Guard member who has shown the most commitment to support of the Kansas Family Programs and its mission and been exemplary in support and dedication.

The top Volunteer of the Year for the Kansas Army National Guard was Stacy Sanders, the Family Readiness Group Leader for the 731st Maintenance Company.

The top Volunteer of the year for the Kansas Air National Guard was Jessica Turner of the 184th Intelligence Wing. The award was accepted on her behalf by Hilari Delarosa.

The top awards for the Air and Army National Guard Volunteer awards are awards for the non-military volunteers who exceeded all expectations to the Kansas National Guard Family Programs.

The Kansas National Guard Youth Volunteer of the Year was Jessica Schmidt of the 190th Air Refueling Wing. She mentored others and worked countless hours supporting the Kansas National Guard Youth Programs and the Family Programs as a whole.

Families of the Year

Three families were recognized for their dedication and hard work for the Family Support Programs and the Kansas National Guard. This year, the Steve and Janelle Hood family won the top award and won the Kansas National Guard Family of the Year. Steve is a chief warrant officer 4 and member of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation.

This award is for families that dedicate at least 10 years of consistent volunteerism. The Hood family earned it for their work supporting programs of the battalion.

The Family Readiness and Support Award for the Air National Guard was earned by Dottie Westergren and her family of the 190th Air Refueling Wing.

The Sgt. 1st Class Timothy and Stephanie Theis family, of the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, won the Family Readiness and Support Award for the Army National Guard.

These two family awards are presented to families to recognize the family's efforts when they go 'above and beyond' what is expected through volunteerism and support Family Readiness programs.

Family Readiness Group Awards

The Family Readiness Group of 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation was named as the Kansas National Guard Outstanding Unit of the Year.

The group also won in the Scrapbook of the Year category for their outstanding scrapbook activities in which the families have supported the unit. The next award won was the Newsletter of the Year Award for the best newsletter that kept families of their unit the most informed of Family Readiness and Family Program Activities in the form of a newsletter.

Capt. Joe Toepke of the 1-108th was named the Military Liaison of the Year for his consistent display of outstanding leadership in providing liaison between Family programs and Commands.

Janet Kristinat, wife of Sgt. Jim Kristinat of the 1-108th was awarded the Kansas National Guard Unit Youth Liaison Award. She served as the contact point within the unit Family Readiness Group for the Youth Coordinator of the state. The position provided leadership, mentorship and coordinated educational activities.

The 1st Battalion, 635th Armor won the Family Readiness Website of the Year for its 35th Military Police Company website. The website award is given for the unit that supported Family Program Issues and Family Readiness activities in the form of a website, while keeping the families informed of activities in the unit. Accepting the award were Family Readiness Group volunteers, Anita Nelson and Melissa Bethea.

Progress being made on behalf of Guard and Reserve

By Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD

The Honorable Thomas Hall, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, spoke at the Joint State Conference held in Topeka from April 11-13, 2008, and explained how his office has made great progress for the Guard and Reserve in dealing with their status, benefits, and support.

"What is the Pentagon doing for the Guard and Reserve in the next decade?" Sumner asked. "I think it's paramount to prepare a budget to equip the Guard and Reserve, to provide benefits, and structure all of that together to continue the momentum we have."

"So far, 670,000 Guard and Reservists have served in Iraq and Afghanistan; 92,000 are serving today and I expect 50-100,000 will serve before the conflict is over. So, we're preparing the next administration to sustain the goals we have outlined for the Guard and Reserve, and that's transitioning to an operational Guard and Reserve," he said.

"We will publish an instruction this

summer that will be defining the operational Guard and Reserve. It will state, 'Here is what the operational Guard and Reserve is, how we equip it, build it, train it, how we take care of the families and the employers.'"

Hall points out that the threat to the United States isn't going away, and our nation's defenses have to sustain what's been built. In the past six years, the largest legislative changes that benefit the Guard and Reserve have occurred with 164 provisions in the law have positively changed.

"If we're going to use the Guard and Reserve alongside the active duty, then the Guard and Reserve must have the same kind of equipment, the same kind of benefits, and their families taken care of the same way," Hall said. "The benefits are the same for Guard and Reserve as the active duty side when the government is utilizing you the same way as the active duty components. Tremendous progress has been made and my office will keep striving to make even better progress."



Thomas Hall, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, addresses the participants of the Joint State Conference in Topeka, April 11-13. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

Award winning journalist speaks at Joint State Conference

By Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD

Award winning journalist, novelist, radio personality and military spouse, Jacey Eckhart, spoke to a crowd of more than a thousand military personnel, family members and civilian employees at the Joint State Conference in Topeka April 11-13.

Her program, hosted by the Kansas National Guard, was aimed at the military family and how spouses can cope with the problems they face every day when their loved one is deployed.

"There are 10 things that must be addressed for the spouses of the military when dealing with the deployment," Eckhart said, referring to her book, "The Homefront Club: The Hardheaded Woman's Guide to Raising a Military Family."

"You, as a National Guard member, are not normal. It's not normal to give up your loved ones and lifestyle for a year or years at a time, to go to someplace like Iraq or Afghanistan and expose yourself to danger. But that's okay."

"When you are getting ready to deploy, make sure that you and your spouse share, and I mean, you've got to really talk to each other. You've also got to get over your guilt of who you are and what you do."

Eckhart points out that the husband and wife are each members of a team and both team members have to work together to have a successful marriage. "Remember, a deploying military person has to be worth the sacrifices that they are asking from your family. And this is most important of all—each spouse must be faithful to each other, body and mind. Without this, all is lost."

Eckhart also covered other items that



Jacey Eckhart chats with Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting and his wife, Barbara, during a session of the Joint State Conference. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

were important, such as, not letting small issues build up, to go over small points daily, be understanding that your neighbors will have no idea what it's really like to have your spouse gone for so long and in danger, and that it is no disgrace to get help when needed.

"You see," she said, "in our society, we have what we call the sheep, the wolves and the sheepdog. The sheep are the general populace, carrying on with their lives and doing no one harm."

"The wolves are those that threaten us with imminent harm. That's why we have you, the sheepdogs of society. The sheepdogs like to see everyone play fair and nice, and you will do whatever is necessary to protect your sheep from the wolves."

A 48-minute movie was created of her lecture and is available upon request from your Family Support Group leaders.

Safety gear saves motorcyclist's life after crash with deer

By Maj. DeAnn Barr

Sometimes, hidden in the folds of a seemingly really bad day can lurk the best day of your life. For Lt. Col. Hans Neidhardt of the Kansas Air National Guard this day began on April 15, 2008, while riding his motorcycle to work.

Neidhardt left his rural Kansas home at 6:05 a.m. on a two lane, 65 mile-per-hour highway, planning to enjoy his 40-mile ride to McConnell Air Force Base. An avid motorcyclist since 1974, he automatically donned his full face helmet, a heavy leather jacket and chaps and leather gauntlet gloves. The weather was clear and the roads were dry, when four miles from his home a deer darted out of the brush, traveling in a south to north path.

With only seconds to assess the situation, Neidhardt knew he had three options: to hit the animal head on, cut in front of the doe or attempt to maneuver around her backside. Neidhardt was extremely close to the deer when he chose the third option, mindful of the ditch on his right side.

"Everything went silent and I started to see things frame by frame in slow motion," said Neidhardt. The doe must have stopped suddenly at this point, mesmerized by the headlights, because Neidhardt hit her right haunch.

"I could see, feel and hear the impact in very slow motion. Then the bike started to violently shake, and I could no longer control it. I must have blacked out because I do not remember going down."

At approximately 6:20 a.m., a young man heading east on the darkened road came upon the accident, alerted only by the Yamaha 1100 V-Star's headlights in the south ditch. Only after stopping to inspect the scene did the man see Neidhardt unconscious on the pavement, about 200 yards from the initial impact site. Miraculously, he was not run over by oncoming traffic while lying limp in the roadway.

The first emergency responders called for Life Watch, suspecting grave internal injuries when only minor external bleeding was spotted. After further on-scene evaluation, Neidhardt was taken by ambulance to the regional trauma center where he spent nine days recovering from



Lt. Col. Hans Neidhardt displays the helmet he was wearing the morning he hit a deer while riding his motorcycle. Neidhardt has no doubt that the helmet and other safety gear he was wearing saved his life. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Justin Jacobs)

his injuries.

"The only injuries I sustained included broken ribs, a collapsed lung, shattered shoulder bone and broken collar bone. I only have five small spots of road rash on my hands. The minimized injuries were directly related to my safety gear," said Neidhardt.

According to staff members on the Wesley Medical Center Trauma Team in Wichita, Kan., most of their cases involve motor vehicle and motorcycle accidents, with

Neidhardt joins Air Guard Headquarters staff

Lt. Col. Hans Neidhardt has been selected as the new Director of Staff - Air for the Kansas Air National Guard.

Neidhardt comes to the position from the 184th Intelligence Wing where he was the Intelligence Squadron commander. An intelligence and communications officer, Neidhardt has over three decades service in the Kansas National Guard. He served eight years in the Kansas Army National Guard, attaining the rank of staff sergeant and, to date, 25 years in the Kansas Air National Guard, from master sergeant to his current rank.

Neidhardt replaces Col. Scott Dold, who is taking command of the 190th Mission Support Group, Kansas Air National Guard.

motorcycles providing the most severe trauma. More than likely, Neidhardt's protective gear saved his life. The deeply imbedded scratches on the helmet visor indicate he slid for a considerable distance, facedown.

Although the left side of the bike does not have a scratch or dent, the handle bar and footrest are bent to a 90 degree angle. Despite this, Neidhardt plans to get back on a new bike as soon as he's physically able. "I still have a passion to ride. I did everything right and wore protective clothing. It's just one of those things that happen."

Neidhardt took the Beginning Riders Course offered at McConnell AFB in 1983, and has enjoyed years of safe riding since that time. He would encourage any rider to begin this hobby with the proper safety initiatives.

"I encourage every cyclist to ride smart and safe—wear protective gear," said Neidhardt. "You never know if or when you have to react to a dangerous situation. Remember you are on two wheels, not four. If my 'story' can change just one rider's habits, then the pain from my crash has been worth it."

Guardsmen train to keep communications going during emergencies

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

It was a dark and stormy night when a tornado struck a small western Kansas town. The damage was widespread, emergency services were disrupted and the power was out.

At least, that was the training scenario.

From Topeka, the State Emergency Operations Center started to dispatch responders. One of the many vehicles heading to the site is a pickup pulling a nondescript trailer.

Within hours, the Soldiers and Airmen of Kansas National Guard had established the Joint Incident Site Communications Capability. At first, operating out the JISCC tent, the modular facility is serving as a communication link between Topeka and the local responders. The JISCC allows federal, state, local, interstate, civilian and military agencies to communicate directly with each other. This is done without the agencies having to change radios or frequencies. The satellite

"This is a good system. It will allow for greater communication between the various responding elements in the event of a disaster. Its capacities are impressive."

Sgt. 1st Class Edd Savage

uplink allows the incident commander and his staff internet access for telephone and video conferencing. This provides superior communications between the site and the state's civilian and military leadership.

The Joint Incident Site Communications Capability is developed by an equal partnership effort between AGT Federal (Applied Global Technologies) Kennesaw, Ga., and Data Path, of Duluth, Ga. Starting on May 5, Mark Kirkland, AGT,



Working under the supervision of civilian trainers, members of the Joint Incident Site Communications Capability team assemble equipment during a training scenario at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Topeka. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Danielle Lucas)

and Lyle Sloan, Data Path, provided five days of instruction and training on the JISCC to members of both the Kansas Army and Air National Guard. The training conducted at the Armed Forces Reserve Center, Topeka, involved both classroom and hands-on training with the equipment. The goal of the training was for the Soldiers and Airmen to set up and operate the JISCC without direction of Kirkland or Sloan.

The Soldiers and Airmen started each training day by unloading the components and setting up the JISCC. At the end of the training day, the JISCC components were repacked and placed back into the trailer.

"This is a good system," said Sgt. 1st Class Edd Savage, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor. "It will allow for greater communication between the various responding elements in the event of a disaster. Its capacities are impressive."

"Master Sgt. John Ryan and I are here training on the JISCC in the event that we are called out in an emergency," said Tech. Sgt. Cliff Kane, 190th Communications Flight.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Osborne, 69th Troop Command logistics noncommissioned officer in charge, said "The JISCC currently belongs to the 69th Troop Command. This is a cool system, but it will take a lot of continual training to create a large enough pool of trained operators to be able to respond to any emergency. Staff Sgts. Sam Doyle, Danielle Lucas and I will be spending much of our drill weekends taking care of the equipment and training our crew."

The Joint Incident Site Communications Capability will soon be on line and ready to respond to a natural or manmade disaster, a disaster that no one wants, but living in Kansas we must expect will happen and must be trained and ready for it.



Laptops, phones and other communications equipment are given a thorough check-out during set-up. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)

STARBASE program makes math and science fun

By Staff Sgt. Emily F. Alley

Since Kansas STARBASE began in 1993, more than 35,000 students have completed it.

The program focuses on math, science and technology through interactive lessons that allow students to understand, in a tactile way, how those subjects can be applied in a career. Math and science scores increase by 35 percent, according to testing before and after participation, said Jeff Gabriel, executive director of STARBASE.

Fourth, fifth and sixth graders have the opportunity to attend STARBASE. Retired Col. Dennis Parry, Kansas National Guard, who helped found the Kansas program during the early '90s, says children that age are the most intimidated by analytical subjects.

He describes the variety of teaching methods as the most effective part of the lessons. Students get a tactile introduction to the subjects. Also, because they interact with fellow students, the lessons are more meaningful.

A program instructor, Lisa J. Suhr, spent 16 years teaching science and the fourth grade. STARBASE is different from her previous classrooms because it is less for-



Tanner Reed and the members of his STARBASE team explore Newtonian physics through hands-on experimentation. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Emily Alley)

mal, which gives her more freedom to make the lessons memorable.

"These are motivating, through high-

interest activities, which you can't always do," she said.

Pfc. Michelle Blindt, Detachment 2,

"Standing in the tower, watching the fighters take off – I loved it! It was an honor to be there."

*Pfc. Michelle Blindt,
former STARBASE
participant*

Company E, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation, agrees. Now age 20, she attended STARBASE in the sixth grade and cites it as the reason she enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard. She was intrigued by the aircraft, rockets, simulators, helicopters and uniforms.

"Standing in the tower, watching the fighters take off – I loved it!" said Blindt. "It was an honor to be there."

However, Gabriel stresses STARBASE is not a recruiting tool. The program emphasizes math and science and explores teaching methods that make those subjects more appealing.

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"Amelia's Angels" removes participation hindrances for STARBASE girls

By Staff Sgt. Emily F. Alley

Lt. Gen. Ann E. Dunnwoody was recently nominated to the rank of general by

President George W. Bush and the Army. If the Senate approves her nomination, Dunnwoody will be the first female four-

star general, not only in the Army, but the United States military.

To help younger Kansans understand nontraditional female roles, like Dunnwoody's, STARBASE established a girls-only academy called Amelia's Angels. The program emphasizes math, science and technology skills with fun, hands-on activities for elementary and middle school students, but Amelia's Angels is for girls only.

"One reason we do Amelia's Angels is the passive role girls take in a mixed gender setting," explained Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose, the director of the joint staff and STARBASE advisor. "There is a tendency for boys to take over."

Studies indicate that in late elementary school, boys tend to become assertive, which intimidates their female classmates. Girls develop a fear of criticism and are less competitive; they shy away from demanding the same attention as the boys and therefore become relatively ignored.

An instructor in the STARBASE Amelia's Angels academy, Lisa J. Suhr, is quick to clarify that not all girls are affected. Many thrive in an assertive atmos-

phere. However, she has witnessed girls who become overwhelmed.

"What I see that's different is a willingness to participate," said Suhr. "They are hesitant to raise their hands."

Jeff Gabriel, the executive director of STARBASE, said parents and teachers often misinterpret girls' behavior as a lack of interest.

"I had a teacher who taught for 25 years," said Gabriel, "who said 'I never realized I was discriminating. I was making the assumption they didn't care about math and science.'"

Amelia's Angels began through an observation during a robotics lecture in about 2003. The instructor, Dr. Kevin Bacon, challenged several visiting teachers to notice most comments and questions were from boys. Throughout Bacon's lecture, no girl asked a single question, although boys repeatedly raised their hands.

Mia, a 12-year-old student who attended the STARBASE Amelia's Angels academy, understands why.

"We get stuck doing what boys want to do," she said.

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Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose answers questions prior to a graduation ceremony for "Amelia's Angels," a girls-only STARBASE program. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Emily Alley)

Regular maintenance keeps vehicles out of the shop and on the road

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

After the intensity of a deployment, it often takes a Soldier a few months to transition back in to the life of the Citizen Soldier. The same is true with the Soldier's unit. It is necessary for a unit to get back into conducting their tasks to the Army standard. This was the goal of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment during April drill as they conducted vehicle Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services.

Sunday morning, April 6, found Soldiers and their sergeants checking their humvees with the aid of the vehicle's operator manual. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander, Capt. Todd Loughney, emphasized the need to get back to the basic Army standards for conducting routine tasks.

"We have now been back from our deployment for several months," Loughney said. "We are no longer doing tasks on a daily basis and several new Soldiers have joined the unit since we deployed. We need to integrate our new Soldiers into the unit and take this opportunity to train our Soldiers right. That is why our noncommissioned officers are out here conducting training with their Soldiers from the operator's manual."

"When one performs the same tasks every day, as we did in Iraq, things like humvee Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services become second nature," said 1st Sgt. Jeffery Arnold.

Following the vehicle's manual pre-operations checklist, the sergeants explained to the Soldiers proper procedures for each check. In addition to the training, the vehicles were being inspected. The lights were checked, as well as the oil and other fluid levels. The electrical system and fan belts were inspected. The vehicles were started and the instruments were noted for proper indications. Any deficiencies discovered were recorded on inspection sheets.

The sheets were provided to the ground maintenance section of Company E. Company E's maintenance specialists will record the deficiencies and order any necessary repair parts. As the parts come in the vehicles will be repaired.

The humvee that Spc. Heidi Stotler, flight operations, was inspecting would not start. Using the manual, she discovered that the vehicle batteries were dead. With the help of her section sergeant, she learned the correct way of jump starting a vehicle from another using slave cables. She recorded the problem and submitted it to the maintenance section.



Spc. Heidi Stotler, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation, investigates why a humvee belonging to the unit won't start. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)

"This has been a good time to train new Soldiers," said Sgt. Dana Smith, communications section.

Spc. Aaron Kearney, flight operations, said "It is good to get back into the swing

of training."

This training to standards will become the norm for the unit as they move towards their first annual training since returning from their deployment.

Annual fishing tournament honors Kansas' fallen heroes

By 1st Lt. Jonathan Mack, 105th MPAD
The Fourth Annual Kansas Veteran's Memorial Bass Tournament took place on April 26 at the Coffey County Lake near Wolf Creek Generating Station. The tournament, organized and hosted by the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery Family Support Group, is conducted annually in memory of all fallen Kansas service men and women.

Participants had to provide their own boats for the event, and they began to show up at the Coffey County Lake at 6 a.m. the morning of the tournament in hopes to be one of the first to get their boat

in the lake. In the past there have been 10-12 teams competing in the tournament but this year the total reached 19 teams, well exceeding the attendance of any other tournament.

The tournament came to a close at noon and the last of the boats trickled in to have their catch weighed and see who bought in the biggest bass. This year's winning bass were caught by Bill Greenwood and David Wilson. The winners of the Veteran's Memorial Bass Tournament were presented with plaques, T-shirts and gift cards by Maj. Gen. Tod M. Bunting and State Command Sgt. Maj. Steve Rodina.



A fisherman proudly displays the one that didn't get away during the Fourth annual Kansas Veterans Memorial Bass Tournament at Coffey County Lake. (Photo by 1st Lt. Jonathan Mack)

Eat the elephant one bite at a time

Continued from Page 4

Let's jump ahead three months (consistency). By this time, you've discovered a new friend in your life: that sense of feeling better. Maybe you've even lost a few pounds. Overall, you feel more energetic than you have in a long time. You'll discover that the days you don't feel like working out are the very days that are the most beneficial once you get started. You feel better when you work out, almost without exception. At first you'll be tired and sore, but in the long run, you'll feel better. Now you take the APFT and find that you might be a little bit sore, but not in the pain you've been in after last year's test. After the test, you might brag to your fellow Soldiers that you work out harder than this everyday. As a matter of fact, this is your second PT test of the day!

Will you pass the test? It's strictly up to

you. After a couple of weeks, you might decide to get up a half hour earlier or maybe even an hour. But remember: the key thing is to start slow and don't overdo it at the beginning. Don't start out trying to eat the whole elephant: just take one bite at a time. Listen to your body and don't try working through pain. Spend a couple of minutes warming up with calf and thigh stretches at the beginning of the workout, and a couple of minutes at the end.

If you are concerned about your health, your first stop should be an appointment with the family doctor to make sure everything is okay before you start your program. Working out, particularly once you start getting in shape, shouldn't be painful, so be aware of chronic pain and get advice from your doctor.

Good luck on your road to becoming fit for life.

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

Maj. Larry Block, HHD, 635th Sgt, Hutchinson
Maj. Kurt Bruggemeyer, HHC (-), 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Maj. Ronald Peery, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Sallie Easley, HHC, 287th Sust Bde, Wichita
Sgt. Maj. Michael Hager, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Master Sgt. Dennis Mahan, 287th Sust Bde, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class David Hawkins, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Max Miller Jr., HHB, 130th FA Bde, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Nelson, 2nd Bn, 235th Regiment (GS), Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Rick Vanrossun, HHC, 287th Sust Bde, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Stephan Childers, 1161st FSC, Hutchinson
Staff Sgt. Chris English, Det 1, 170th Maint Co, Goodland
Staff Sgt. Sammy Johnson, 778th Trans Co, Kansas City
Staff Sgt. Victor Ketter, Co E (-), 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Kal Robinson, HHC, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Manhattan
Staff Sgt. Mark Schmeltz, Co B, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Wichita
Staff Sgt. David Sherraden, HHB, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Charles Tucker, HHD, 635th Sgt, Hutchinson

Staff Sgt. Paul Williams, Det 2, 170th Maint Co, Colby
Sgt. Davette Cooper, Btry E, (TA), 161st FA, Great Bend
Sgt. Clinton Everman, 772nd Eng Co, Pittsburg
Sgt. Robert Fillpot, Det 1, Btry B, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Lenexa
Sgt. Albert Henskensiefken Jr., HHD, 169th CSSB, Olathe
Spc. Willie Braden Jr., Det 2, HHB, 1st Bn, 178th FA, Topeka
Spc. Timothy Day, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
Pfc. Austin Reece, Co C, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf, Wichita

Kansas Air National Guard

Lt. Col. Francis X. Froncek, 184th IW, Wichita
Maj. Kyle M Smith, 184th IW, Wichita
Chief Master Sgt. Gene A. Mohr, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Jerry L. Atkinson, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Sandra J. Bearden, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Gregory L. Burnetta, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Brian E. Custer, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Janet Dunn, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Kim F. Eck, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Deborah M. Kill, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Orville H. Lanier, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Donald J. Lenk, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Friedrich Maisberger, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Mitchell D. Powell, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Edward E Simpson, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Barry L. Weiner, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Janet Billbe, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Barbara L. King, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Gerald McKinney, 190th ARW, Topeka

Awards and Decorations

Kansas Army National Guard

Legion of Merit

Sgt. Maj. Michael D. Hager, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka

Bronze Star

Maj. Gregory Platt, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Charles Lunkwitz, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka

Purple Heart

Maj. Greg Edson, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka

Meritorious Service Medal

Maj. Paul W. Schneider, HHB (-), 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Maj. Shy Warner, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Randy S. Matthews, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Chief Warrant Officer 2 Johnathan E. Keck, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Ralph D. Figgers, BCTC, Fort Leavenworth
Sgt. 1st Class William Ferris, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Eric D. Mincks, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Kal J. Robinson, HHC, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Manhattan

Army Commendation Medal

Lt. Col. William J. Sullivan, Kansas Area Med Det, Lenexa, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Maj. Greg Edson, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
1st Sgt. Joseph T. Lawyer, 250th FSC, Ottawa
Sgt. 1st Class Doretha E. Bighems, DDR, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Chris A. English, Det 1, 170th Maint Co, Goodland
Staff Sgt. Barrie L. Gnagy, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Sgt. William L. Komma, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

Army Achievement Medal

Lt. Col. William J. Sullivan, Kansas Area Med Det, Lenexa, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

Afghanistan Campaign Medal

Lt. Col. Eric Ford, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Greg Edson, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Johnnie Gallegos, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Gregory Platt, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Shy Warner, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Joseph Ensminger, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Charles Lunkwitz, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Shane Prunte, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Steve Wasko, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Master Sgt. James Fenton, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class William Ferris, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Carl Herring, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Gordon Lamb, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Peter Nino, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Keith Courtin, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka

NATO Service Medal

Lt. Col. Eric Ford, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Greg Edson, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Johnnie Gallegos, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Gregory Platt, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Maj. Shy Warner, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Joseph Ensminger, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Charles Lunkwitz, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Shane Prunte, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Capt. Steve Wasko, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Master Sgt. James Fenton, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class William Ferris, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Carl Herring, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Gordon Lamb, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Peter Nino, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Keith Courtin, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka

Combat Infantry Badge

Capt. Steve Wasko, ETT #3 Team Shocker, Topeka

Kansas National Guard Medal of Excellence

Karen Morrow, JFHQ KS HRO, Topeka

Kansas Air National Guard

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Thomas Ames, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Lt. Col. Brian Moore, 184th IW, Wichita
Maj Jarro Moseley, 184th IW, Wichita
1st Lt. Daniel Rogers, 184th IW, Wichita, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Chief Master Sgt. Howard Koehn, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Chief Master Sgt. Brian Norris, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Akin, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Robert Collins, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Master Sgt. James Scheidel Jr, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Master Sgt. Brian Siefert, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Sandra Bearden, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Charles Garcia, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. James Hunter, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Deborah Kill, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Orville Lanier, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Stephen Mann, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Cynthia Price, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Darin Frazier, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Lilianna Habtemariam, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Lucas Kekel, 184th IW, Wichita

Air Force Commendation Medal

Master Sgt. John Graber, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Nancy Wells, 184th IW, Wichita, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Tyrone Burson, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Michael Hagen, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Christopher Hines, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. John Hollar, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Kent Niebuhr, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Samuel Redden, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Janet Stuhlsatz, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Andrea Fiene, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Luke Gifford, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. James Hadorn, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Christopher Hogan, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. David Le, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. David Roberts, 184th IW, Wichita

Air Force Achievement Medal

Tech. Sgt. Dale Brooks, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Eric Maynor, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Marvin Nice, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Chad Nicholas, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Shane Nulik, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Jason Barker, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Benjamin Clifton, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Teresa Crawford, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Jeff Crees, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. King Dixon, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Melissa Gillenwater, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Christopher Hogan, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Bret Kaul, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Michael Kekel, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Khamkert Khuesy, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Brandin Peasley, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Shawn Rucker, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Theresa Spears, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Clint Stevens, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Morgan Stolp, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Airman John Combs, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Thomas Dater, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Cori Fortner, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Darral Garner, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman John Montgomery, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Abraham Northcutt, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Steven Peyton, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Rachel Ringgenberg, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Heather Stump, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Roger Williams, 184th IW, Wichita

Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

Tech. Sgt. James Guy, 184th IW, Wichita

Training facilities

Continued from Page 6

behind the wheel or in the turret of a HMMWV and experience what it is like being in a convoy. Convoy training isn't just about how to drive a HMMWV, but involves how to react if one of the vehicles gets hit, how to cover a sector of fire, what is the proper interval between vehicles, communication with the convoy commander and many other things. The turret gunners in this simulated convoy wear a virtual halo which gives them a three dimensional look at their surroundings.

To help the civic leaders understand just a fraction of what Soldiers face when overseas a special demonstration was set up. An improvised explosive device (IED) simulator kit was placed next to a

HMMWV and detonated. Everyone jumped when the device went off with a loud boom followed by rolling smoke. Although this IED was harmless it really brought home what a convoy traveling on the roads of Iraq or Afghanistan faces.

Then it was back to the helicopters for the flight home. It had been a day filled with new experiences for the legislators. Junior legislators, like Rep. Elaine Bowers, District 107, "welcomed the opportunity to get to learn more about the Kansas National Guard and its mission." She also felt like the day had opened her eyes to some of the challenges that the Guard faces.

For Small, who has set up dozens of these educational trips for civic leaders, as they say in the military - mission complete.

Combat experience enhances Primate Assault Flight Support

By Pfc. Jessica Rohr

It has not been that long since the Company A, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment returned home from Iraq to Forbes Field in Topeka. Nevertheless, they are already back in full swing, with a few changes here and there to their routine. Each pilot and crew chief has brought back many valuable lessons from their combat mission, with many of these used in training during the battalion's April drill, simulating stressful situations so that the crew may practice working them out.

The entire flight dealt with simulated scenarios very realistic to those experi-

enced in Iraq. Aircrew practiced radio procedures – such as tactical spot reports – sending information to the Tactical Operations Center. A majority of their targets in country were vehicles called “bongo trucks” (half car, half pick-up truck). Today's specialty was green tractors. For every green tractor that was spotted, crew chiefs would call them out and replicate engaging their target. “Blue bongo truck, southeast, 500 meters!” was the call from the crew chief.

Being vigilant and alert of their surroundings is what kept them well ahead of the enemy during the deployment. Chief

Warrant Officer 2 Brandy Nichols said “Enforcing the standards and trying to replicate training closest to combat operations” is important to realism in the training environment.

Crew chiefs, aka “The Guardians of the Aircraft” to the pilots, have some of the most important jobs among the aircrew. Multitasked for just about anything that is thrown their way, from maintaining to staffing the aircraft assigned to them, safety is always the number one consideration. During flights, pilots can concentrate on controlling the aircraft without worries, because the crew chiefs are keeping watch over everything else. Their job never ends,

whether on the ground or in the air.

A great deal of knowledge was gained throughout the mission in Iraq. “We are now more mission focused and train the way we fought in Iraq. We took the lessons learned and are adapting our training so we don't lose the skills we have developed,” voiced Chief Warrant Officer 2 Tim Brundage, the Company A tactical operations officer.

Within the Army National Guard the resounding phrase “Train as we fight” has become more important as time goes on. With this company's new training in place, they will be ready when the state and nation call upon them to help those in need, both here at home and abroad.

Night in town is no night on the town for Military Police Soldiers

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

The 35th Military Police Company conducted Law Enforcement training with the 97th Military Police Battalion during their annual training at Fort Riley, Kan. As part of this training, two members of the 35th MP Company were selected to be part of the Presence Patrol conducted jointly by the Fort Riley Provost Marshall and the Riley County Police Department.

Sgt. 1st Class Chad Tripp, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 97th MP Battalion, said “We, in conjunction with the Riley County Police, have been conducting these presence/courtesy patrols. We want the Soldiers to know the command cares for them. Also, it shows the community that the command is interested and invested in their welfare. It is also good to work with the local authorities.”

On June 4, Pvt. 2 Joseph Bonner conducted a Presence Patrol with Riley County Police Officers Derek Haskin and Bobby Dierks in Aggieville, a roughly six square block area that borders the Manhattan campus of Kansas State University. During the day, it is a place of specialty and college-related shops and unique restaurants. In the evening, the sports bars and clubs come alive with a mixture of college students, locals and Soldiers.

“I was a little nervous as we moved from club to club,” admitted Bonner.

With Bonner following Dierks' lead, the team would quickly enter an establishment. Dierks knew the best position in each club from where he could observe the crowd. Bonner had to be on his toes as Dierks was quick to move out with little warning.

“The whole night was very cool,” said Bonner. “I would like to have done more, but the night was very quiet and uneventful. Sadly we came back early.”

Conditions were a little different when Spc. Cera Sample went out on Friday, June

6. Working with Dierks, Sample started her night observing a drug dog search in an apartment complex parking lot. When Sample entered a club, she drew a lot of attention. It was obvious that the patrons were not used to seeing a female MP.

At the start of their second time through the clubs, Dierks spotted an individual behaving strangely in one of the sports bars. After escorting the individual out of the club and doing a background check, Dierks released the individual to a friend.

However, Dierks would only do so if the two would leave. Dierks and Sample stayed until a taxi arrived and the two drove off.

Sample was also involved in an incident when she backed up Dierks. When two individuals started fighting in one of the clubs she went to Dierks' aid. During the scuffle, Sample was struck on the side of the head.

“He was not trying to hit me,” said Sample. “I got in the way as he was trying to hit the other guy. Officer Dierks put that guy on the ground and handcuffed him.” Dierks ended up releasing the two brawlers.

“Later, we were in a foot pursuit of a vehicle involved in a hit and run,” said Sample. “We ran for about 12 blocks.”

The suspect's car was stopped by a Riley County Police Car.

“I had to watch the driver, who was sitting, handcuffed on the curb, while the officers searched the vehicle,” said Sample.

Her night was not yet over.

“As we were getting ready to call it a night, a car jumped over the median, a curb and ended up in a parking lot,” said Sample. “This happened right in front of us. We had to process the scene before we could go back. The driver was arrested for DUI.”

“This was training that I could have never gotten in a classroom,” Sample said. “It was a real rush. I appreciate the chance to have had the chance to have done it.”



Sgt. Justin Kaub, Company A, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation, gives his gear a pre-flight inspection. (Photo by Spc. Jessica Rohr)

Amelia's Angels removes hindrances

Continued from Page 16

During Amelia's Angels, Mia said she felt more comfortable working on projects and was able to plan and problem solve the activities. She said there was also more time for crafts and tours. In the mixed class, she said the boys were most interested in building rockets, which took more time. Amelia's Angels, by comparison, is better adapted.

“It's awesome,” Mia said. “You do more things that fit you.”

The goals of STARBASE, said Gabriel, are to remove boys from the classroom and to introduce girls to mentors in nontraditional careers.

“The idea is to level the playing field,” said Rose.

Although Rose serves STARBASE through an advisory group to the Adjutant General, she has also volunteered as a mentor to students and regularly speaks at Amelia's Angels graduations. Rose good-naturedly accepts that many of the students have no idea they are learning from the first female colonel and brigadier general in the Kansas National Guard. Rose keeps a humble perspective of her accomplishments.

“Somebody has to be first,” she says of the many glass ceilings she has shattered. “More important is the second, third, fourth and so on.”

Rose finds it rewarding to have set a precedent that allows more women opportunities. The important thing is to empower those around her.

“The people who do it first set the stan-

dard,” observed Mia.

Since earning her commission in 1983, Rose said she very rarely experienced hostility.

“The fact is, we prove ourselves,” she said.

Rose demands personal accountability, even for the smallest situations. Once, while traveling, Rose carried several large bags to an upstairs room. One of her male traveling companions offered to carry the bags, but Rose insisted on taking them herself.

“It was nice of him to ask,” she laughs. “But I should be able to carry my own bags.”

Rose's career advice applies to men or women; the key is mentoring. Rose suggests learning from everyone you meet, even informally.

“Look at people who are successful,” but she also adds “and look at people who are not successful.”

She recommends completing education, training and being prepared when a chance for promotion arrives.

“I've been fortunate,” Rose describes her military experience. “I've had commanders who gave me opportunities, and believed in my capabilities.”

Although women have valid distinctions that separate them from some opportunities available to males, Rose is not deterred. A successful military career is possible: she cites the Army's recent nomination of the first four-star general.

“The only limit we truly have is ourselves,” said Rose.



Spc. Cera Sample, 35th Military Police Company, chats with Riley County Police Officer Bobby Dierks during a patrol of Manhattan's Aggieville area. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)

Kansas Guardsmen in Kosovo

Continued from Page 7

troops are doing and the difference they make in Kosovo.

“We love America!” Jozefi says several times during the visit.

It's a common sentiment heard over and over throughout the visit. Just outside the

restaurant a flag of Kosovo and the U.S. fly next to one another.

The deployment is nearing its end and troops are ready to return home. The 35th Infantry Division will return to Kansas this month after handing over the command to KFOR 10.

Final tank gunnery training bittersweet for armor battalion

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

Tank Gunnery is an important part of a tanker's annual training. This year was important for the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor. It was the first gunnery since the battalion was notified that it was being deployed to Kosovo. This was also the last gunnery the battalion would have before it is inactivated later this year.

Lt. Col. Howard Wheeler, battalion commander, told his tank crews, "We are building memories here."

The task of making the memories a reality was given to the battalion's master gunners. The master gunners were given two months to ready the M1A1 Abrams tank crews for gunnery. The mission had changed from gun truck training back to tank gunnery.

Sgt. 1st Class Edd Savage, master tank gunner, said "The master gunner is the commander's expert on matters related to gunnery."

"The master gunner is also the expert on fire control and turret mechanics," added Master Sgt. Michael Breese, also a master tank gunner. "Normally, gunnery is a year-round process involving at least four hours during a drill using the Abrams Full Integrated Skill Trainer."

The device is a simulator that fits over the vision ports of the tank. Battle scenarios are presented to the crews, who react to the scenarios inside their own tank. "It has been a tough training curve," said Breese.

"Since we have not done gunnery since 2003," said Savage, "that makes this the first gunnery for almost 80 percent of our crews. The record board does not reflect the true nature of what the crews are doing. There has been a drastic improvement in crew speed and cohesiveness."

Sadly, the battalion will be inactivated later this year. Elements of the battalion will join with elements of the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry to form the new 137th Heavy Tactical Combat Force.



The ground shakes and the mud flies when an M1A1 Abrams tank lets loose a round down range. The 1st Battalion, 635th Armor conducted its last tank gunnery training during its annual training at Fort Riley in June. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)

"It is a sad thing that the battalion is going away," said Sgt. Walter Craft, Company C Abrams gunner "I will still be able to tank, but it will never be the same."

At noon on June 10, the last Top Gun crew from the last

tank gunnery fired the last round from the 635th. The next gunnery will be with both Abrams and Bradley Fighting Vehicles of the new 137th HTCF. New battalion traditions will be created, but the 635th will not be forgotten.



Like cavalry troopers of old, tank crews of the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor prepare to "mount up" for the day's activities during annual training. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)



An M1A1 Abrams tank rumbles toward the firing line at Fort Riley during annual training. (Photo by Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR)

Kansas STARBASE program makes math and science fun

Continued from Page 16

Certified elementary school teachers run the classes, but volunteers provide a unique perspective on how to apply math and science in their careers. For instance, a pilot may speak about physics. Students tour military installations and actually sit in the control cabin of aircraft.

"I would say it was a foundation to become something great," said Blindt.

Another graduate of STARBASE, Emily Schmar, came back to intern this summer, before her senior year of high school. She originally experienced the program in the sixth grade. Schmar wants to become an engineer and enjoys STARBASE's emphasis on math and science.

Tanner Reed, age 10 and a summer student at STARBASE, also enjoys math and said he would like to someday fly aircraft.

"To me, it sounds fun, and it would help people get places," he said.

Parry said STARBASE was originally designed for at-risk students, but has since expanded to serve all schools that request it.

Registration is free, because the academies are a function of the Department of Defense, but more schools have applied to the program than are possible to accommodate. Gabriel set up a rotation and lottery system to allow each one an opportunity. Title 1, or at-risk, schools are given priority. Guard units that offer STARBASE also hold funding activities throughout the year, such as golf tournaments. They also sell DVDs of the classes to the families of children who attend.

Four STARBASE locations are offered in Kansas: 190th Air Refueling Wing, Topeka; 184th Air Refueling Wing, Wichita; Headquarters, 235th Regiment, Salina and Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry, Kansas City, Kan. Summer academies are available at several satellite locations to serve schools that can't commute.

During the school year, classes enroll through schools; almost 60 participate annually. Summer academies are available to individual students or groups that enroll though the website www.kansasstarbase.org.

Windham assumes command of Kansas Regional Training Institute

By Sgt. 1st Class Linda Rocha

Command of the 235th Regiment, Kansas Regional Training Institute, passed from Col. Norman E. Steen to Col. Robert E. Windham during a ceremony on June 7.

Windham was commissioned a second lieutenant, Signal Corps, from the Kansas Military Academy Officer Candidate School. Assignments include platoon leader and communications-electronics officer with the 135th Combat Aviation Battalion; Teach Assess Counsel Officer, Kansas Military Academy; signal officer, 35th Division Artillery; communications officer, 130th Field Artillery Brigade; state signal officer; commander, 1st Battalion 235th Regiment; deputy commander, 130th

Field Artillery Brigade and Task Force Tornado; commander, Task Force Hurricane in Baghdad, Iraq.

Windham earned an Associate of Arts degree in business administration at the Kansas City Kansas Community College; a Bachelor of Arts degree in management and human resources from Mid-America Nazarene University; a Master of Arts in telecommunications management from Webster College; and a Master of Strategic Studies from the Army War College. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and Staff College, the Joint Forces Staff College and the U.S. Army War College.

Windham has two daughters, Tara and Natalie and is a resident of Junction City.

Interested in being a SCOUT for your county?
We're looking for Kansas Guard members and retirees of the National Guard to consider this important role, please call 785-274-1117.

One year later, Greensburg is on the road to recovery

By Sharon Watson

Driving on US 54 toward the town of Greensburg today provides little warning you are about to enter a town devastated by a tornado a year ago.

However, once inside the town, the evidence is just as visible as ever despite the tremendous amount of progress Greensburg has made in the past year with the help of the Kansas National Guard, Kansas Division of Emergency Management, FEMA, numerous other state and federal agencies, and many local organizations as well as thousands of volunteers.

On May 4, 2008, Greensburg officials and residents marked the one year anniversary of a deadly EF-5 tornado and celebrated their town's rebuilding effort while anxiously anticipating the arrival of a very special graduation speaker, President George W. Bush.

Members of the Guard's 184th Intelligence Wing in Wichita were among the first to meet Bush as he greeted some of the crowd at McConnell Air Force Base before going on to Greensburg for the high school graduation. Just a year ago, it was the 184th that was among the first to arrive in Greensburg in the early morning hours of May 5th. The Guard stayed for two months to assist, primarily with clean up of debris.

Today evidence of the Guard's work and that of many other state agencies is still present as most blocks are debris free and new homes are beginning to pop up throughout town.

A community church service began the May anniversary day celebrations with songs of faith and hope in a tent in Davis Park on the east end of town. This was an area filled with dozens of tents for weeks

following the tornado. At that time, some tents housed hot meals for the workers and others provided showers. But on this day the scene was much different.

Hundreds of residents and visitors sang the lyrics to a well known hymn, "It Is Well With My Soul," and received a message of hope and encouragement from pastors in the area.

"Tragedy to triumph!" shouted Marvin George, pastor of First Baptist Church in Greensburg.

"It's not a political statement," he said. "It's an attitude. We are triumphant today. What's the difference between last year and this year? Triumph. Maybe not everyone can stand and holler triumph, but that's okay. I'm glad I'm here today to show the rest of the world we are triumphant in tragedy."

News helicopters flew above the service capturing the anniversary events on video for the world. The town, once not very well known, had a population of 1,500. Today it is approximately half of that.

Willard Olinger, pastor of Faith Tabernacle in Greensburg relayed a story to the crowd about a Wichita resident who was speaking to someone outside the U.S. Not being familiar with Kansas, the person asked if Wichita was near Greensburg.

Despite its newfound fame, many residents chose not to rebuild or to delay rebuilding and find another location to live in a nearby town.

Olinger says he knows many who did that, choosing to move closer to work in a different town or to avoid having to build a new home. While its sad for the town, he doesn't fault those who chose to do it.

"All of you who relocated...Greensburg, is still your home," Olinger said trying to



Pres. George W. Bush shakes hands with members of the military at McConnell Air Force Base. The President was in Kansas to deliver the graduation speech in Greensburg on the one-year anniversary of the Greensburg tornado. (Photo provided by the 22nd Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs Office)

reassure those who had left that they are still part of the Greensburg family.

Faith Tabernacle was completely destroyed, but the concrete foundation provided the perfect location for the Kansas Air National Guard to set up a temporary hospital for Greensburg. Today that location remains the site for the Guard's temporary hospital called an Expeditionary Medical Support System while the new Greensburg hospital is being built. This is the Guard's only presence in the town now, unlike a year ago when as many as 500 Guardsmen and their equipment were on nearly every corner of town.

On west of the church service on U.S. 54, there is evidence the town's only grocery store, Dillons, will be rebuilt. Meanwhile, the Kwik Shop employees kept busy trying to keep up with the influx of people coming through the town for the one year anniversary celebration. It's the town's only gas station and has expanded to provide more groceries after the tornado

destroyed Dillons.

Signs expressing thanks welcome visitors and residents along U.S. 54. Some say thanks to the emergency responders, FEMA, EPA, and local groups like the Rotary Club and Elks. Others say thanks to first responders and the National Weather Service, which provided the town some 20 minutes warning as local meteorologists relayed their information regarding a tornado coming toward Greensburg.

Many believe it's that warning, along with the residents' decisions to heed it that saved so many lives. Nine people died the night of the tornado, and three others later died from their injuries sustained that night.

The town's main tourist attraction, the Big Well, the largest hand dug well in the world, has a new gift shop which tourists combed through throughout the day. Tours down into the well aren't yet available, as they once were.

Several new businesses held grand openings and many homeowners spent the day working on their rebuilding efforts.

By mid afternoon all eyes were on the arrival of the president for the graduation. Patriot Guard members lined the streets to ensure the president received a warm welcome. His entry was a quick one and the graduation ceremony was closed except to faculty, students and their designated guests.

Unlike a year ago when local first responders and the Kansas National Guardsmen were plentiful in Greensburg, this time only a few Guard members were in town to greet the president.

Visitors from throughout the region and some from other states took their time driving through Greensburg to see the progress on this anniversary.

Signs expressing hope greeted them. One on the First United Methodist Church reads "Struck down, but not destroyed. Rising from the rubble with Christ."

And the residents' sense of humor is still alive and well in Greensburg, despite the many losses. Just outside the Big Well, a sign reads "get hammered in Greensburg Spring Break 08." The hammer on the picture represents the non-traditional meaning of the expression and indicates the many hammers students picked up to help rebuild their community on their spring break.



Every house that goes up in Greensburg is another sign that the town, once nearly destroyed, is on the road to recovery. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

U.S. humanitarian efforts deliver goods to Armenian orphanage

The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission, Robert Frazier, hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony with Mr. Ruben Markosian, director of the Fridtjof Nansen Orphanage in Gyumri, Armenia, May 21. The event recognized the delivery of more than \$33,000 dollars worth of household furniture and equipment to the orphanage.

This project was coordinated by Maj. Ed Keller, Kansas National Guard, who is assigned to the U.S. Embassy's Office of Defense Cooperation. The Kansas National Guard and Armenia are partnered through the State Partnership Program, which fosters military to military, military to civilian and civilian to civilian relationships.

The furniture for the orphanage was donated by the U.S. European Command based in Stuttgart, Germany. This single project is only part of the ODC's overall Humanitarian Assistance program this

year, which will also provide furniture and equipment to an additional orphanage in Yerevan, provide firefighting gear to the Armenian Rescue Service and renovate aged water systems in three northeastern Armenian villages this summer.

The Fridtjof Nansen Orphanage was founded in 2000 and has had 150 children pass through it since that time. One measure of its success is that 80 children have been returned to families. The delivery of U.S. donated furniture will help sustain the 70 remaining children who currently live at the orphanage. The property that was delivered consists of bunk beds complete with mattresses, sheets, and pillows, as well as night stands, and wardrobe cabinets. Additionally, two stainless steel medicine cabinets, a medical exam table, two pharmaceutical cabinets and an assortment of medical supplies were provided to the orphanage's clinic.

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