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PLAINS GUARDIAN

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Kansas Guardsmen help Colorado in firefighting mission

**By Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett
Public Affairs Office**

One UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and nine Soldiers from the Kansas National Guard's 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment and Company G (-), 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion), headquartered in Topeka, activated to Colorado June 12 for little more than two weeks to help combat wild fires.

The Guardsmen deployed to Colorado at the request of that state's emergency management officials to support ongoing ground firefighting efforts in an area at the High Park in Larimer County, Colo., approximately 15 miles west of Fort Collins.

Prior to conducting their missions, the Kansas Guardsmen were updated on the current situation and mission to familiarize themselves with the terrain, flying conditions and the location of water sources for the Bambi bucket.

"The flight crews and support members were ready and eager to go," said Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general. "They did their job professionally, proudly and with the kind of enthusiasm that's the hallmark of being a Kansas National Guardsman. I'm sure that if Colorado or



A Kansas National Guard aviation crew, made up Soldiers from Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion), release approximately 460 gallons of water from their Bambi bucket in support of firefighting efforts at High Park in Larimer County, Colo., approximately 15 miles west of Fort Collins, June 15, 2012. (Photo by Sgt. Ryan Kohlman, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment)

any other state needs them, these Soldiers would be glad to go again."

The Guardsmen used a 660-gallon Bambi bucket slung beneath their helicopter to release water on the flames at target areas directed by ground personnel.

"We train for Bambi bucket missions on a regular basis," said Sgt. Ryan Kohlman, standardizations instructor with Company G, 2-135th Avn. (GSAB). "The training really pays off when we are called to other states in their hour of need."

"Most of what we did was on the flanks of the fire," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Steve Hood, safety officer, Army Aviation Support Facility #1, Topeka. "We dropped water to keep the fires contained and prevented them from jumping across firebreaks."

"We also did home protection," he continued, "by wetting down areas around homes where firefighters had started backburns."

The crew provided structure protection by delivering more than 15,000 gallons of water, totaling 34 buckets.

The success of the mission was definitely a cooperative effort between military and civilian organizations.

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35th Infantry Division takes part in corps-level exercise

**By Lt. Col. Eric Ford
35th Infantry Division**

The 35th Infantry Division headquarters participated in the III Corps Warfighter Exercise at Fort Hood, Texas, from June 1 to 21. It was the first corps-level full-spectrum unified land operations training exercise in 10 years for the U.S. Army. Designed to exer-

cise III Corps' mission command functions and systems and help set the conditions for the execution of future operations, the computer-based simulation involved Soldiers and civilians from 17 different units from across the U.S. Other divisions participating in the exercise with the III Corps Headquarters were the 101st Airborne Division and the 28th Infantry Division. Soldiers at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., also participated via tactical networks. This was the division's second Warfighter exercise in less than a year.

Because there hasn't been a corps-level exercise like this in a decade, commanders across the Army looked to capture lessons learned from the exercise and its planning that began last September. The exercise, using the Army's Decisive Action Training Environment, is part of the Army's effort to renew its focus on the basics of war fighting.

"The Army has been fully committed to accomplishing our nation's missions around the world and that has impacted our ability to conduct this type of training event," said Maj. Gen. John E. Davoren, commanding general of the 35th Infantry Division. "This Warfighter exercise is very significant since it is the first large-scale training operation done at this level, specifically focused at keeping our forces effective and adaptive for future operations."

After more than 10 years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, where the U.S. Army honed and sharpened its counterinsurgency skills, Soldiers are now beginning to spend time on more comprehensive training to meet a hybrid threat that could span guerilla, insurgent, criminal and conventional forces, all in one environment.

The corps-level Warfighter is designed to

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73rd Civil Support Team supports MLB All-Star events

**By Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett
Public Affairs Office**

The Kansas National Guard's 73rd Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) and three Iowa 71st CST members provided support for the Major League Baseball All-Star weekend at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Mo., July 7 to 10, alongside the Missouri National Guard's 7th Civil Support Team.

Local emergency response authorities asked for the National Guard's assistance when assessing public safety needs for the MLB All-Star game and requested support from the 7th CST. The 7th CST looked to Kansas and Iowa, their partners within their FEMA Region 7, for additional support

under a mutual aid agreement.

"We contacted the Kansas CST and the Iowa CST to see if they were interested in supporting this operation and both teams were very excited to go ahead and support whatever we needed," said 1st. Lt. John Breeden, 7th Civil Support Team, Missouri National Guard. "Each team is taking care of something different and it's really helping by splitting up the workload and not over-tasking any one unit."

The joint team worked directly in support of the Kansas City, Mo., Fire Department and their Hazardous Materials Response Team, as well as other civilian authorities that are providing both safety

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Members of the 73rd Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction), conduct preventive maintenance checks and services on their air monitoring and screening equipment prior to providing active monitoring and reconnaissance of domestic biological, radiological and nuclear chemicals at Kauffman Stadium during the Major League Baseball All-Star Game in Kansas City, Mo., July 10. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett, Kansas Adjutant General's Department Public Affairs Office)

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“Not On My Watch”: Aeromedical company deploys to Afghanistan

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Even though the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan is winding down, U.S. military personnel still face the possibility of injury in accidents or through attack by hostile forces. In such situations, rapid aeromedical support can mean the difference between life and death.

Approximately 20 Kansas National Guardsmen will soon be taking on this vital mission during a year-long deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. These Soldiers, members of Detachment 2, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion), were honored in a deployment ceremony July 15 at the Kansas Regional Training Center, Salina. The UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter unit will provide aeromedical evacuation support; rapid movement of patients, medical personnel and supplies and other support, as needed.

The detachment is commanded by Capt. Ryan Bernard. The Kansas Soldiers will be joining other National Guard units under the command of Company C, 2-211th from Utah.



Capt. Ryan Bernard (right) accepts a Kansas flag from Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general, on behalf of his unit, Detachment 2, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion), during their deployment ceremony in Salina, July 15 . The flag, which was flown over the Kansas Capitol, will be flown at the company’s headquarters in Afghanistan during their deployment. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office).

“(We’re) deploying as a medevac company, part of a three-state combination – Minnesota, Iowa and Kansas,” said Bernard. “This is the first time this unit has ever deployed. In fact, it did not exist a year ago. In the course of 12 months, we’ve stood up the unit, trained them up, and we’re ready to go.”

“It’s definitely been a challenge,” he said. “There’s been a lot of issues they’ve had to work through ... coordinating with the state took a lot of work all the way down through the individual Soldier. Everybody really pulled together. I think we’ve got an excellent team put together for this mission. I look forward to accomplishing it and returning home.”

Bernard said the deployment will present challenges, but will be an excellent learning opportunity for the unit.

“It’s going to be a great experience for them (the younger Soldiers) in getting out of their Basic and Advance Individual Training and coming to a unit that deploys,” Bernard said. “It’s good exposure for the course of that year. They’re going to come back and be masters in their field.”

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73rd Civil Support Team supports MLB All-Star events

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and security for the events.

“We have paired up with the National Guard, so we have some of our team members working the gates in conjunction with the National Guard members,” said Donna Maize, deputy chief of Special Operations, Kansas City, Mo., Fire Department. “We use a lot of the same equipment and have the same training as each other, so it becomes a seamless operation.”

The Soldiers and Airmen from Kansas provided active monitoring, air monitoring and reconnaissance of domestic biological, radiological and nuclear chemicals at each gate for the MLB All-Star Game events, including the Futures and Legends Celebrity Game July 8, the Homerun Derby July 9 and the All-Star Game July 10. The Incident Command by the 7th CST would have covered anything tactical had an incident occurred, such as providing entry teams and conducting decontamination.

The Iowa hazmat technicians provided assistance as needed.

Civil Support Team Guard members worked alongside a representative from the fire department, an FBI agent, one police department task force officer and one Department of Energy representative. This allowed comprehensive coverage at each gate of everyone coming in and out through use of various radiological and chemical monitoring techniques and equipment.

“At each of the gates we have a radiation

detector, where we check the background radiation, which is different at each gate. And then we passively monitor with a radiation detector. We also have radiation pagers and a radiation back pack from the Department of Energy Radiological Assistance Team,” said Lt. Col. Dirk Christian, 73rd CST commander. “We also have a five-gas multiray gas monitor, where we are monitoring the oxygen level, we are monitoring for hydrogen sulfide, carbon monoxide concentrations and lower explosive limits. And if we get any reading there then we know we have something that needs investigating. Not likely, but one of those things that still needs to be passively monitored.”

“This was a great opportunity for us to bring our unique set of skills and capabilities to the All-Star Game,” said Christian. “Plus, it gives us an opportunity to work closely with our civilian counterparts and other National Guard civil support teams, as we do during emergency response situations.”

The Civil Support Team is a small highly trained National Guard organization that supports local, state and federal agencies responding to attacks that could involve weapons of mass destruction. It supports civil authorities at a domestic Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosive incident site by identifying CBRNE agents and substances, assessing current and projected consequences, advising on response measures, and assisting with appropriate requests for state support.



Master Sgt. George McMahon, acting first sergeant of the 73rd Civil Support Team, watches his surrounding as he conducts active monitoring, air monitoring and reconnaissance of domestic biological, radiological and nuclear chemicals inside the VIP entrance of Kauffman Stadium during the Major League Baseball All-Star game in Kansas City, Mo., July 10, 2012. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett, Kansas Adjutant General’s Department Public Affairs Office)

“We have had a great working relationship with civil responders,” said Christian. “When the public sees the National Guard here, assisting civil authorities, it’s the same thing they are used to seeing when there is a fire, flood or tornado in the heartland.”

“I haven’t been to a gate yet that I

haven’t been shaking hands as much as I have been checking out the monitoring equipment,” Staff Sgt. Patrick Gordon, survey team chief for the 73rd CST, of Topeka, Kan. “Hugs and taking pictures with people’s kids, it feels really good to have the support that we do out here.”

35th Infantry Division takes part in corps-level exercise

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train the participants, as well as to allow the Army to assess the effectiveness of its doctrine, force structure and digital systems integration. Last fall, as a buildup to the exercise,



Lt. Gen. Donald M. Campbell Jr. (left), the III Corps commander, and Maj. Gen. John E. Davoren, 35th Infantry Division commander, make final inspections and discuss preparations during the Unified Land Operation Warfighter Exercise at Fort Hood, Texas. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson, 35th Infantry Division Public Affairs)

the 35th Division became the first major unit to conduct a Warfighter exercise utilizing the Army’s new operational collaboration and visualization system, called the Command Post of the Future.

“Our own exercise provided us with very challenging training and has provided us with a good baseline of skills to build on for the III Corps Warfighter Exercise,” said Lt. Col. Dave Johnson, division operations officer. “Participating in the exercise is a natural progression after conducting our division exercise last September. Working for a full corps commander and his staff takes us to the next level.”

In the scenario, the 35th Infantry Division is working with coalition forces to restore power to the government of a country facing invasion.

“It’s a Caspian Sea scenario, using obviously fictional nations, but it focused on a nation that invaded another nation and the nation that was invaded called in for support,” said Lt. Gen. Don Campbell Jr., III Corps commanding general.

The U.S. Army is using this as a prototype for a change in posture for a counterinsurgency type of warfare to a more traditional country-on-country type of warfare. The Army’s focus is to make sure its soldiers can bring back their traditional training along with combat methods that have developed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Soldiers and other servicemembers who all took part

would all be deployed together should a future conflict arise. This training took place within a notional operational environment consisting of five fictional countries and was tailored to meet each unit’s training objectives. Units have information on each country’s political, military, economic, social, infrastructure and physical environments, and how they relate or interact with one another. The idea is to give commanders a foundation upon which to build their training exercises to meet any threat, whether they’re at home station or one of the combat training center.

Retired Col. Mike Suozzo, senior training advisor for the division, said that the Warfighter exercise at Fort Hood was the first time a National Guard division headquarters deployed its entire Standardized Integrated Command Post System for an exercise away from its own training area. The system provides commanders with integrated command post capability in the form of various sized tents and with all supporting equipment. Putting up and taking down the various tents was no simple task and neither was the maintenance of the associated generators that provided electricity to the system, including the air conditioning units. A strong windstorm hit the Fort Hood area about halfway through the exercise, but the new structures held together with remarkable strength. They were tested and performed well, just as the 35th Division has done.

Political activities and social media

By Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett
Public Affairs Office

As servicemembers, Department of Defense civilians and state employees, we always hear about the guidance and restrictions for participating in political activities. But what about our actions on social media? It is important to know what political activities you can engage in, both public and on social media.

The Department of the Army recently published a set of guidelines for military personnel and federal civilian employees outlining what is allowed and what is restricted. Similar guidelines apply to state employees.

The memo states, “Generally, all active duty servicemembers are prohibited from acting in any manner that gives rise to the inference of approval or endorsement of candidates for political office by DoD or the U.S. military.”

An active duty servicemember may generally express his or her own personal views on public issues or political candidates via social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, or personal blogs much the same as they would be permitted to write a letter to the editor of a newspaper, according to 9.4.2 of the 2012 DoD Public Affairs Guidance for Political Campaigns and Elections guidance.

If a social media site/post identifies the member as a U.S military affiliate (or if the member is otherwise reasonably identifiable as an active duty member or DoD civilian), then the entry will clearly and prominently state that the views expressed are those of the individual only and not those of the Department of Defense (or Department of Homeland Security for members of the Coast Guard).

An active duty member may not, however, engage in any partisan political activities. In January, a 28-year-old Army reservist breached military protocol when he took the stage in support of Ron Paul while in uniform. Further, an active duty member may not post or make direct links to a political party, partisan political candidate, campaign, group, or cause because such activity is the equivalent of distributing literature on behalf of those entities or individuals, which is prohibited by reference. Moreover, an active duty servicemember may not post or comment on a social media site such as Facebook or “tweet” the Twitter accounts of a political party or partisan political candidate, campaign, group, or cause, as such activity would be engaging in partisan political activity through a medium sponsored or controlled by said entities.

However, paragraph 9.4.3 of the guidance does state an active duty member may become a “friend” of or “like” the Facebook page, or “follow” the Twitter account of a political party or partisan candidate, campaign, group or cause. However, they will refrain from engaging in activities with respect to those entities’ social media accounts that would constitute political activities. This would include, for example, suggesting that others “like,” “friend,” or “follow” the political party, partisan political candidate, campaign, group or cause, or forwarding an invitation or solicitation from said entities to others.

In addition, active duty members may be subject to additional restrictions based on the Joint Ethics Regulation, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and service-specific rules, to include rules governing the use of government resources and governmental communications systems, such as email and internet usage, according to paragraph 9.4.4.

Members of the Armed Forces not on active duty status are not subject to the social media restrictions listed above so long as the member does not act in a manner that could reasonable create the perception or appearance of official sponsorship, approval or endorsement by the DoD.

The document briefly mentions social media, but the majority of social media and political activities guidance can be found in the Public Affairs Guidance for Political Campaigns and Elections (<http://tinyurl.com/d9ovwxh>).

To read the full DoD guidelines please go to tinyurl.com/c5bshlw.



Know your political rights

By Maj. Diane Bellquist
190th ARW Judge Advocate General Office

With the presidential election and the Kansas legislative elections coming up this fall, it is important to keep in mind what political activities military members are permitted and prohibited from engaging in. Restrictions on military members engaging in certain political activities stems from the notion that the military should remain politically neutral.

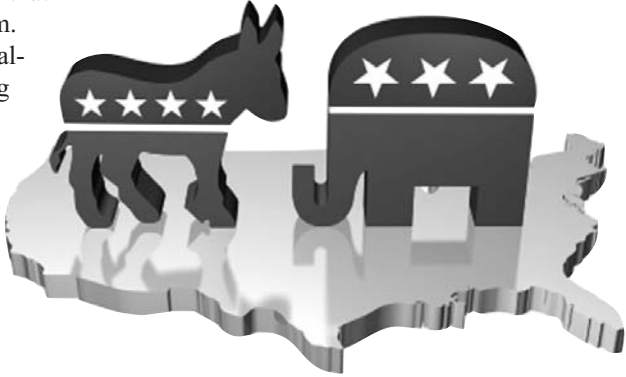
State employees are reminded that similar restrictions apply to them.

National Guard members are allowed to engage in the following private political activities as individual citizens (not as representatives of the military):

- register and vote in elections;
- express personal opinions regarding the candidates or issues;
- make monetary contributions to a political committee or party favoring a candidate (subject to state and federal election laws);
- join political clubs and attend as a spectator political gatherings when not in uniform;
- sign a petition for legislative action;
- display political bumper stickers on private vehicles, wear political badges or buttons when not in uniform; and
- participate in local non-partisan political campaigns.

National Guard members may not engage in the following campaign activities in uniform or use their military affiliation to:

- influence elections;
- solicit votes or contributions for a candidate or issue;
- promote political fundraising events;
- publicly advocate for or endorse a political party, candidate, or position;
- attend partisan political gatherings;



While the above prohibitions are not allowed for Guard members using their official position, they are prohibited for active duty members, whether or not the member’s military affiliation is used. Additionally, members of the National Guard may not use military resources or base facilities to support political campaign activities. As always, a Guard member’s participation in allowable political activities also must not interfere or prejudice the performance of the member’s military duties.

These are not exhaustive lists of all the possible political activities. According to DoDD 1344.10, para E3.4, “In determining whether an activity violates the traditional concept that Service members should not engage in partisan political activities, rules of reason and common sense shall apply. Any activity that may be viewed as associating the Department of Defense ... or any component ... directly or indirectly with a partisan political activity shall be avoided.”

September is Emergency Preparedness Month in Kansas

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Each September, emergency management agencies across the United States observe the month as “Emergency Preparedness Month” to highlight the need for citizens to be prepared for natural and man-made disasters of all kinds.

Gov. Sam Brownback will hold a news conference on Friday, Sept. 7, to sign a proclamation designating September as “Emergency Preparedness Month in Kansas.”

“No one knows what the future has in store for us,” said Brownback. “This year in Kansas, we have seen multiple tornadoes and severe storms. Extreme temperatures and lack of rain has created a drought, increasing the risk of wildfires, which we also have experienced. On the other hand, it was only last year we saw several Kansas rivers above flood stage. Winter is not far away and with it the possibility of ice storms and blizzards.”

“These are only a few of the possible disasters we face in Kansas,” said Brownback, “so making sure you are prepared for them is just the wise thing to do. Take some time this month to think about what you would do if a disaster struck your community. Make an emergency kit for your home or business. Devise an emergency plan and practice it. It’s up to all of us to do our part to be prepared.”

“Our state’s first responders do a heroic job, but they can’t be everywhere at once,” said Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general and director of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. “That’s why it’s important to have a home emergency kit that allows you to cope with a disaster until help arrives.”

Home emergency kits should include a

gallon of water for every person per day, nonperishable foods, flashlights and batteries, a battery-powered radio, a first aid kit, medicines, an alternate heat source, blankets and other necessities to sustain a family for a minimum of three days. Information on building a home emergency kit can be found on line at <http://www.ksready.gov>, <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family> and at <http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>

As part of the month-long observance, the Kansas Division of Emergency Management is sponsoring an “Emergency Preparedness Day” Monday, Sept. 10, at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. During the event, numerous state and local agencies, along with community emergency response organizations, will be providing disaster preparedness and public safety information, as well as displaying emergency response equipment. There will also be drawings for door prizes.

Agencies and organizations participating in the event include the Adjutant General’s Department/Kansas Division of Emergency Management/Kansas National Guard, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Citizen Corps, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Fire Marshall, Kansas Highway Patrol, Hutchinson Fire Department, Hutchinson Police Department, American Red Cross, Community Emergency Response Team, Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association, Reno County Emergency Management, Reno County Sheriff’s Department, Kansas Department of Transportation, National Weather Service and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Sept. 10 is Dillon’s Dollar Day at the Fair; admission is one dollar or free with a Dillon’s card.

Heading home at 5 mph



A retired KC-135 Stratotanker from the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas National Guard, moves down Topeka Blvd. in Topeka toward its new home at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard. The operation was a cooperative effort involving more than 100 people from the Kansas National Guard, Shawnee County Sheriff’s Office, Musuem of the Kansas National Guard, city of Topeka and other groups. (Photo by Jane Welch, Public Affairs Office)

Customer service a critical component of our success

By Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli
The Adjutant General
Customer service is not a department, it's everyone's job -Anonymous

Government agencies aren't always known for great customer service, but in the days of dwindling budgets that simply must change. Our job at the Kansas Adjutant General's Department, whether in Kansas Division of Emergency Management, Kansas Homeland Security or in the Kansas National Guard, is to serve the public and serve them well. Everything we do has the potential to impact the lives of Kansans.

It's easy to become complacent if we've done a job for a while, but we must remem-



Maj. Gen. (KS)
Lee Tafanelli

ber those we're serving each hour we spend at work, whether that job is processing reimbursement forms for local governments hit by disasters, military training to prepare for the next state or federal response, providing information or services for our Guard families and retirees, or coordinating information between partner agencies working closely together to keep Kansans safe. Our jobs deserve to be done with excellence.

As government budgets grow tighter, the question will continually be asked by legislators, government leaders and the public about the value of continuing a specific service, a program, or a task. Government must constantly re-evaluate how we do business, just as the private sector does. Based on financial projections at the state and federal level, we know the funds won't be as abundant as they have been. Just as businesses adjust when profits go down, we are in the process of doing the same.

It is critical we begin to see our jobs in government as customer service jobs, re-

gardless of our role. Businesses have learned this and those that haven't are no longer with us. Management consultant Peter Drucker said, "The single most important thing to remember about any enterprise is that there are no results inside its wall." What we deliver outside of our walls is what makes us valuable to those we serve.

And we must remember perception is reality, so our reputation for being an organization Kansans can rely on is one we must work daily to maintain. Word spreads fast, both about a positive experience and a negative experience. One of the most successful companies today, Amazon, knows this well. "Word of mouth is very powerful," notes CEO Jeff Bezos.

But customer service is more than merely helping those beyond our walls. We must help those within our organization so that we work better together as a team to help Kansans. "Dealing with people is probably the biggest problem you face," notes Dale Carnegie, author of "How to Win Friends and Influence People." In a world where good customer service means the difference

between surviving and failure, we must help one another do our very best. How we treat each other within our organization will be reflected outside our walls as well.

This focus on customer service externally and internally may require a change in the way some of us think about our daily work. The late motivational speaker Stephen

Covey pointed out, "If we keep doing what we're doing, we're going to keep getting what we're getting." I'm certain there is always

room for improvement in our organization. Business management writer Tom Peters states that "Excellent firms don't believe in excellence – only in constant improvement and constant change."

Our organization has a reputation for helping those in need during times of disaster, but our day-to-day efforts during non-emergencies are important, too, and may offer an even better opportunity to improve our customer service efforts.

"Service, in short, is not what you do, but who you are. It is a way of living that you need to bring to everything you do, if you are to bring it to your customer interactions.- Betsy Sanders

"Service, in short, is not what you do, but who you are. It is a way of living that you need to bring to everything you do, if you are to bring it to your customer interactions."

- Betsy Sanders

Think about safety every day

By Chief Warrant Officer 3 Marvin Terhune
Safety Office

What do you really think about safety? As the State Safety Officer, it is my job to think about safety every day. My real job is to get you thinking about safety! Instill a safety climate and attitude, or as I like to put it, a safety culture into your everyday life.

What is a safety culture? I like to think of it as wisdom. You can compare it to people who have made mistakes and then learned lessons from those mistakes. Really wise people learn from other people's mistakes.

The key, though, is basically thinking about what you are going to do before you do it. A simple enough concept. Sometimes we forget something or are in a hurry, so we take shortcuts. We use the wrong tool for the job at hand or do not put on protective equip-



Chief Warrant Officer 4
Marvin Terhune

ment. After all, the job is just going to take us a second. How fast do accidents happen?

Just because you think about everything you need for a particular job does not mean that accidents won't happen. However, it will mean that you have the mindset to complete the job correctly.

Building a safety culture into your everyday life takes a little time, time to slow down and think of the hazards associated with the job. Do you need help completing the job? Do you have the right tools or equipment?

We learn from our experiences and from other people's experiences. How many times have you said to yourself "Man, I won't make that mistake twice?" Hopefully it was a small enough mistake to learn from so we do not repeat it.

Sometimes our mistakes are bad enough that we or someone else is critically injured or worse. That, too, is my job as the State Safety Officer. I investigate accidents so that we may learn what mistakes were made so hopefully they are not repeated.

My safety message to you is simple. Think about what you are going to do before you do it! Pass on your wisdom to others and stop someone if you see they are doing something unsafe.

Warrant Officer Corps grows

By Chief Warrant Officer 5 Hector Vasquez
State Command Chief Warrant Officer

Now that the FY-12 State Warrant Officer Candidate School class has graduated, it is time for any Soldiers interested in becoming a warrant officer to start or finalize their pre-determination packets. Now is the time because it takes about three months on average for a packet to be compiled and approved. The Kansas Warrant Officer Corps has over 40 vacancies and if you are interested in becoming a warrant officer, please contact me or Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sam Bonham, Warrant Officer Strength Manager.

I have held two warrant officer calls so far this year. My last one for 2012 will be held in Wichita. Once a date/time/location is established, I will send notification. I highly encourage all those who can attend to do so. The warrant officer call has been increasing in size. There has been great dialogue among technical and



Command Chief Warrant Officer 5
Hector Vasquez

aviation warrants expressing concerns and sharing ideas. Also, the warrant officer call is a great ice breaker for all Kansas warrant officers to meet and get to know one another. I sincerely hope you all can attend. If you have a warrant officer prospect, please feel free to bring them as well so they can ask questions.

Each publication of the Plains Guardian I try to give out helpful advice to newly appointed and junior warrant officers, so this month, my advice is this: Most of you have been through enlisted life, so please pass on what you've learned throughout your noncommissioned officer career. Keep an eye out for Soldiers who show potential to become future warrant officers. Encourage Soldiers to strive for excellence because we fight as we train. Be honest when counseling and don't be afraid to annotate both strengths and weaknesses, because if you don't rate a Soldier properly you've just hurt the Soldier, weakened the team and added to the problem.

In closing, if you know of any warrant officer news such as promotions, graduations, retirements, or changes that affect warrant officers; and you would like to see them in the Plains Guardian, please send them to me and I will get them added.

Thank you all for everything you do.

Soldier to Soldier NCOs lead in readiness

By Command Sgt. Maj. James Moberly
Joint Forces Headquarters

Welcome home to the warriors of 284th Air Support Operations Squadron, Agribusiness Development Team #4 and the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment. Thank you and your families for your meritorious service. As you come home, I ask that you continue to look out for each other as you transition back into life following your deployments. The citizens of Kansas and the Kansas National Guard are here to assist you with your transitions. All of our Soldiers and Airmen currently deployed remain in our thoughts and prayers and we eagerly await your return to Kansas as well.

In the future, I will work closely with State Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Haworth and Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown to address enlisted issues and con-

cerns. Our command sergeants major and command chief master sergeants who possess a wealth of knowledge will also contribute articles to this column.

The Kansas National Guard has proven over and over that we can successfully deploy our formations and excel at whatever mission is assigned. Our ability to operate as an operational force is not in question and for the Department of Defense to be successful in the future, the Guard must continue to be operationally available, ready and relevant.

I task all noncommissioned officers to get fully engaged in our individual readiness. Team with commanders and staffs at your level and win this fight. The decisive point for this engagement is at the company level and we need and expect the complete involvement of our NCOs. I hold the NCO Corps accountable for individual readiness at your respective levels. This is especially true with managing the "available duty military occupation specialty qualified Soldiers" within your formations. We must continuously work to increase our assigned strength (recruit and retain the best), strive for 100 percent

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Command Sgt. Maj.
James Moberly

PLAINS GUARDIAN

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Education FYI:
Federal tuition assistance
available to Guard members

By Capt. Matt Hapke
State Education Officer

As we get closer to the fall school semester, it is important to remind everyone of their federal tuition assistance benefits. For the Soldiers going to school, there is the Federal Tuition Assistance through GoArmyEd.com. State Tuition Assistance through the Kansas Board of Regents is offered to both Soldiers and Airmen of the Kansas National Guard and will be discussed in our next installment. For more information call the Education Services Office.

Here are some helpful hints to ensure you are paying as little out of pocket as possible when working towards your degrees!

FTA is available to all members of the Army National Guard, provided they are in good standing, have a grade point average of at least 2.0 and are working on a higher education degree. FTA will provide a Soldier with an Associate’s, Bachelor’s and Master’s degree if you do not currently hold the degree. It pays up to \$250 per semester-hour and has an annual cap (by fiscal year) of \$4,500.

The program is administered through www.goarmyed.com. Any Soldier wanting to use the program can register as a new user. There are tutorials and presentations that will guide you through the steps needed to request FTA. You can also contact the Education Services Office to assist you.

One of the key documents you will need is a Statement of Understanding which can be printed from the website and must be signed by you and your company commander if you are a staff sergeant or below. Sergeants first class and above in rank can sign for themselves. This document details the policies and rules governing the program. It is crucial to read and understand this statement.

After you enroll in school, the next step is to request FTA. There are two types of programs: Letter of Instruction and Non-LOI.



Capt. Matt Hapke

LOI programs are built into GoArmyEd. This means that the cost, schedule and documents needed are provided for you. These are online programs that are geared towards military members. Non-LOI programs are typical college programs such as, distance learning or traditional college programs. For these, you must request TA by detailing the course information on an online request form. You will also have to attach the following documents:

- Class Schedule. This document should show the entire course information such as start and end dates, number of credits per class and that you are actually enrolled.
- Degree Plan. This is required for those with more than nine credits of college. It must show all courses needed to receive your degree and must be personal to you (not just copied out of a school catalog). It must also be signed by an academic advisor or school official.
- Cost Verification. This document or series of documents must show the cost of tuition and approved fees that you are being charged by the school. This allows the education office to verify the cost prior to approving the request.

There are a few more pieces of information that you should be aware of when requesting FTA. First, if you are taking more than 12 semester credits at a time, you must request a semester-hour override. This is done by creating a ticket under the “Help” menu. Second, if your request is initially denied, you will be informed of this by email that will detail the changes that need to be made. Simply make the changes and change the status of the request from “Denied” to “Pending” and the FTA manager will process the request with the new information or documentation.

Most importantly, please ensure that you request FTA as soon as possible. The window is from 60 days prior to the class start date to 14 days after. This benefit is subject to the availability of funds and is processed by the date you submitted your FTA request.

For more information please contact Staff Sgt. Christopher Dix at 785.274.1814/ Christopher.dix@us.army.mil or Capt. Matt Hapke at 785.274.1081; matt.hapke@us.army.mil

Officials extend deadline to
apply for ‘Stop Loss’ pay

American Forces Press Service
Courtesy report

Servicemembers and veterans whose military service was involuntarily extended under the “Stop Loss” program between the 9/11 terrorist attacks and Sept. 30, 2009, are eligible for special retroactive pay, and they now have more time to apply for it.

Eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries now have until Oct. 21 to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay, Pentagon officials announced.

“Even with extensive outreach efforts and tremendous support from the president, Congress, the [Veterans Affairs Department], veteran and military service organizations, and friends and family around the world, some qualified individuals have not yet applied,” said Juliet Beyler, the Defense Department’s acting director of officer and enlisted personnel management.

“We highly encourage anyone who may be eligible to apply for this pay. You have

earned it,” she said.

The special pay is compensation for the hardships the involuntary extensions caused, officials said. Eligible members or their beneficiaries may submit a claim to their respective military service to receive \$500 for each full or partial month served in a Stop Loss status.

When the special pay began on Oct. 21, 2009, the services estimated 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries were eligible for this benefit.

Because the majority of those eligible had separated from the military, officials said, the services have engaged in extensive and persistent outreach efforts, such as multiple direct mailings, public service announcements and continuous engagements with military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets.

To apply for the pay, or for more information on submission requirements and service-specific links, go to http://www.defense.gov/stoploss.



Aug. 26: Women’s Equality Day

By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Sandra Lashley
Equal Employment Manager

Aug. 26 is observed annually as the day in 1920 that women were given the right to vote. The 19th amendment gave women a voice in our government proceedings. This observance has been made since a resolution passed in 1971 designating that date as Women’s Equality Day.

This was a hard fought battle to begin the uphill climb in the struggle for women’s equality. The passing of the 19th amendment was not the end of the war, but it was a huge battle that was won.

The United States Army was the first military branch to enlist women during World War II. The Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps bill was made law on May 14, 1942. Recruiting standards for women then were to be over 21 and under 50 years of age; height between five and six feet; weight 105 to 200 pounds and a high school diploma. Women received less pay than men and had a different ranking system. Women saw this as an opportunity for advancement, broadening of skills, and overseas cultural experiences. The Army was the only service branch that offered women overseas tours.

The first graduation class from training was held on July 23, 1942. The address was given by Oveta Culp Hobby, the Corps’s first director. Her words reflected the tone of great change. This quote comes from an article by Sandy Hook, “The Women’s



Chief Warrant Officer 4
Sandra Lashley

Army Corps published by the National Park Service.

“You have just made the change from peacetime pursuits to wartime tasks – from the individualism of civilian life to the anonymity of mass military life. You have given up comfortable homes, highly paid positions, leisure. You have taken off silk and put on khaki. And all for essentially the same reason. You have a debt and a date – a debt to democracy and a date with destiny.”

In September 1943, the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps was so successful that the status of “Auxiliary” was dropped and became the Women’s Army Corps. Women were now equal to their male counterparts in rank structure, pay levels and privileges of rank. Women were working support jobs to replace men who were needed for combat service. During World War II, the military occupations that women held went from just clerical jobs to more than 400 of the 625 military occupations that existed at that time.

In 1972 all Military Occupational Specialties, except the combat arms, were opened to women. This decision was made due to the ending of the draft and was necessary to maintain strength requirements throughout the Army. Women were fully integrated in to the Army when by an Act of Congress the WAC was disbanded on Oct. 29, 1978.

The National Defense Authorization Act included a proposal to allow women to fill those combat roles that have been excluded since women were officially recruited into the Army that took effect May 14, 2012. This move opens an estimated 14,000 combat-related jobs by opening six Military Occupational Specialties that were previously closed to women. Historically, the Army has made many advancements providing opportunity for success for all Soldiers.

State Chaplain’s Corner
“Last full measure of devotion”

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) William Jenkins
Kansas National Guard State Chaplain

“...the last full measure of devotion...”

These compelling words from The Gettysburg Address continue to provide guidance.

President Abraham Lincoln delivered 271 words that changed history Nov. 19, 1863, as the cemetery at Gettysburg was dedicated. The main speaker was the honorable Edward Everett; Lincoln had been invited to deliver “a few appropriate remarks.” Lincoln spoke for two minutes and Everett for two hours. In the days following, Lincoln received a letter from Everett that read, “I should be glad if I



Chaplain (Lt. Col.)
William D. Jenkins

could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours, as you did in two minutes.”

The importance of Lincoln’s address at this point in the Civil War cannot be under estimated. Then and now, Lincoln calls us to dedicate ourselves to “the task that remains before us.” He reminds us of the sacrifice made by those who gave “... the last full measure of devotion ...”

Recently, my War College class conducted our staff ride at Gettysburg and I visited Arlington National Cemetery and the Lincoln Memorial. The sobering walk of the battlefield underlines the enormity of every servicemember who has given that “ ... last full measure of devotion.”

Lincoln challenges each of us to dedicate ourselves for “the task that remains...” Challenges today are very different from those in 1863, but they are challenges never the less demanding the best in each of us.

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Kansas Guardsmen help Colorado in firefighting mission

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“We often have opportunities to train with other Guard units, so working with the other states and coming together to help out seemed relatively second nature,” said Capt. Jacqueline Miller, medevac platoon leader, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion). “The new experiences definitely come from working with the civilian entities. I felt that we worked together well and we received several compliments about how well our crew chiefs were able to line up the aircraft and drop the water right where they needed it.”

Despite contending with weather that hindered flying at times, the Kansas Soldiers were satisfied with their mission.

“It makes you feel good to know you have helped with a major disaster and saved people’s homes,” said Kohlman.

“It’s a good feeling hearing the U.S. Forest Service say you did a bang-up job on that hilltop and that they would fly with us any day,” said Sgt. Sheldon Snodgrass, flight instructor, Company G, 2-135th Aviation.

“I know Colorado, before their fires started, were in Nebraska helping them,” said Hood. “We’ve come

to Colorado. So that’s what it’s all about--the National Guard helping its communities. It’s wonderful to come out here and be able to help and have the community tell us ‘Thank you for being here and helping us out.’ ”

The Kansas Guardsmen remained in Colorado for 15 days, returning home June 23. The June 9 lightning-caused fire was 50 percent contained by then and Colorado emergency management officials decided to start releasing assets called in from other states. The fire was 100 percent contained June 30. The fire burned more than 87,000 acres and destroyed approximately 259 homes and other structures. Approximately 1,000 firefighting personnel were involved.

The aircrew worked in conjunction with other National Guard aircrews and support teams from Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming as part of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, a mutual-aid agreement that allows state-to-state assistance during declared states of emergency, including the use of National Guard forces and equipment.

Kansas aviation units have deployed to Oklahoma and Texas in 2006 to help fight grass fires and to California in 2008 to assist with wildfire operations.



Sgt. Sheldon Snodgrass, a flight instructor with Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion), leans out the door of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to observe the wildfire in Larimer County, Colo., while out on a Bambi bucket mission to help provide structure protection and enforce back-burns, June 19. (Photo by Sgt. Ryan Kohlman, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion))

Great Bend unit helps prepare for national nuclear disaster exercise

By Army Sgt. Katherine Dowd and Sgt. 1st Class Christopher DeHart
167th Theater Sustainment Command and U.S. Army North Public Affairs

Nearly 9,000 Soldiers, Marines, Airmen and Department of Defense civilians descended on central Indiana July 24 to Aug. 13 to exercise the Department of Defense ability to respond effectively to a catastrophic nuclear disaster in the homeland.

The Kansas National Guard’s 731st Transportation Company of Great Bend, Kan., was an integral part of this exercise and scenario during Vibrant Response 13, the largest Department of Defense exercise of this type to date.

“The 731st is providing line haul transportation assets to the 167th Theater Sustainment Command in support of Vibrant Response 13,” said Capt. Jay Simecka, commander, 731st Transportation Company.

Line haul transportation support units provide the means of transporting equipment, food, water, ice and other supplies to and from warehouses, distribution points, forward operating bases and other areas in support of the mission.

Vibrant Response 13 is a national-level field training exercise or command post exercise for the Department of Defense’s Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear response enterprise. Led by U.S. Army North based at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, the training event is intended to exer-

cise the ability to deploy, employ and sustain specialized military response forces upon the request of civilian authorities to save lives and relieve human suffering following a catastrophic CBRN incident.

The exercise will take place at various locations in Indiana, including the Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center and Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex, as well as at Fort Knox, Ky. The exercise features realistic venues, fire and smoke effects, mannequins and civilian role-players to simulate a demanding disaster environment.

Units from more than 40 locations throughout the United States will be participating, including U.S. Army North and Task Force 51, Fort Sam Houston, Texas; Joint Task Force – Civil Support, Fort Eustis, Va.; 31st Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Brigade, Alabama National Guard, Northport, Ala.

Federal military forces may be employed if requested by a state and approved by the federal government. These specialized response forces include the 5,200-person defense CBRN response force, which has the initial response capability to provide search and rescue, decontamination, medical, aviation, communications and logistical support.

Two smaller specialized federal military forces of 1,500 personnel each are designed to provide an initial response and accept additional forces to save and sustain lives. The event marks the first confirmation exercise for the third re-

sponse force. The force consists of National Guard units that would be federalized if called upon for a catastrophic response.

The three federal military forces are part of the Department of Defense’s tiered CBRN response structure that provides the nation with a dedicated, trained, ready, scalable and tailorable response capability. The tiered response structure also includes state-based civil support teams and regionally based CBRN enhanced response force packages and homeland response forces. A number of these units will participate in the exercise, as will teams from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Task Force.

The Department of Defense has long had the mission of supporting civilian agencies in responding to disasters. The Department of Homeland Security has developed a series of national planning scenarios for a variety of hazards that provide a baseline of assumptions to be used by agencies at all levels to develop and assess their readiness and response plans. The Vibrant Response scenario is based on one of those national planning scenarios.

“The Soldiers are training on exactly what our mission would be in a deployed environment,” said 1st Sgt. Tim McClure, first sergeant for the 731st Transportation Company. “Our job is transporting supplies out to disaster areas. This is a real-world training mission.”

“Not On My Watch”: Aeromedical company deploys to Afghanistan

Continued from Page 2

The unit functions much like a ground ambulance staffed with emergency medical technicians, but with the advantage of being able to fly their patients directly from the site to the hospital, cutting delay between the time of injury and arrival at the hospital.

“When they’re out on a mission and somebody gets hurt, they call in on a ‘nine-line,’ which is like calling 9-1-1,” explained Sgt. Zach Hertz, medic, who was with the Kansas National Guard Medical Detachment prior to joining the aviation unit. “We’ll fly down, we’ll pick up the injured, we’ll treat them in-air and we’ll arrive at a treatment facility, where we’ll drop off the patient and the doctors and surgeons will take care of them.”

The job is one that Hertz and his fellow Soldiers are proud to perform.

“I really feel a good connection to it because there’s a lot of honor involved in it; it’s a very compassionate job,” said Hertz. “Everybody in our company feels very seriously about (making) sure we take care of the Soldiers downrange to make sure they come home to their loved ones.”

Featured speakers for the deployment ceremony included Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general, and U.S. Senator Jerry Moran.

“We all know this day did not come without difficulty and sacrifice and challenges and, more importantly, a lot of hard work on your part,” Tafanelli told the Soldiers and guests. “And it wasn’t all that long ago

that this unit was formed and staffed and now you stand here trained and ready for the next part of this deployment.”

“Captain Bernard, (Staff Sergeant Shaun Carter), you have been working ever so diligently to prepare these Soldiers for this mission and I know that you are ready,” he continued. “And to all the men and women of this unit, you have a lot to be proud of. You can be very, very proud of what you have done to get ready for this day. Be proud of the hard work of your fellow Soldiers who’ll be there for you for this next year and be proud of your families for their continued love and support.”

Tafanelli thanked the families for that support and reminded them that services and support were available to them through the Family Support Office, Family Assistance Centers and the Family Readiness Groups. “They are just a phone call away if you need assistance while your Soldiers are deployed.”

“It’s amazing to me that throughout the history of our country that we have had citizens that answered the call to duty,” said Moran. “From the Revolutionary War to today, citizens put something above themselves to make certain that we have the opportunity as Americans, as citizens of this country to live in a country with freedom and liberty and that we have the chance for every American to pursue the American dream.”

“As these Soldiers, these members of the Kansas National Guard, deploy today we are here to express our gratitude and our appreciation,” said Moran. He told the Soldiers he would soon be returning to Wash-



Soldiers of Detachment 2, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion) stand in formation during a deployment ceremony in Salina, Kan., July 15. The unit mobilized to Fort Hood, Texas, for mission-specific training before beginning their one-year deployment to Afghanistan. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

ington D.C., where he would “... tell my colleagues in the United States Senate that we have a lot to learn from the people of Kansas, from the folks here today.”

The unit will mobilize to Fort Hood, Texas, for additional training before going to Afghanistan to begin their one-year mission, a mission they take very seriously.

After the ceremony, Hertz spoke briefly about the company’s motto, “Not On My

Watch,” and its importance to the Soldiers of Company C.

“All the families out there who have their husbands, their brothers, their dads overseas, we want to let them know that there’s no way we’re not going to give them the best care possible,” said Hertz. “If there’s any harm that happens to that Soldier, we will be there. We’re going to bring everybody home back to their families.”

Foster takes command of 287th Sustainment Brigade

By Sgt. 1st Class Bill McGinnis
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The Kansas Army National Guard’s 287th Sustainment Brigade held a change of command ceremony at South Riverside Park in Wichita, Kan., July 15. The brigade is headquartered in Wichita with subordinate battalions headquartered in Hays, Iola and Olathe.

During the ceremony, outgoing commander Col. Barry K. Taylor turned over command of the 287th to Lt. Col. Thomas J. Foster.

“Having deployed with the brigade to Iraq in 2008, it holds a special place in my heart and I look forward to handing over command to an officer of Lieutenant Colonel Foster’s caliber,” said Taylor.

Taylor deployed as the deputy commander with the brigade in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008

Foster served as the deputy commander of the 287th over the past two years and is familiar with the professionalism and dedication of every Soldier in this brigade.

“Colonel Taylor has a done a tremendous job during his command and I am grateful for the opportunity,” said Foster.

Foster said that his focus will be on readiness, strength and career management to remain relevant in an Army where draw-downs are a possibility.

Foster lives in Overland Park, Kan., with his wife, Lucy, and their children Jennifer, Matthew and Timothy. He is employed by General Dynamics Information Technology

in Kansas City, Mo. Foster was commissioned through Reserve Officers’ Training Corps at the University of Kansas in 1986. He started his career in the Kansas Army National Guard as a mortar platoon leader in the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry.

In 1988, he transferred to the Michigan Army National Guard, where his assignments included mortar platoon leader, company executive officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment commander for 225th Quartermaster Battalion (Petroleum), company commander and battalion personnel officer. In 1996, he moved back to Kansas and served as the transportation officer, supply and services, and operations officer in the 169th Corps Support Battalion.

In 1999, he transferred to Headquarters, 35th Infantry Division, where he served as the assistant logistics officer, deputy logistics officer, and assistant chief of staff logistics officer. Foster deployed as the deputy logistics officer/planner for Multinational Division North, Stabilization Force 13, Bosnia-Herzegovina. He also deployed to Iraq from September 2005 to January 2006, where he was embedded with the 3rd Infantry Division for the Center for the Army Lessons Learned. He was the commander of the 169th Combat Sustainment Battalion from July 2008 until December 2010.

Foster received a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science from the University of Kansas and a Master of Business



Brig. Gen. Eric Peck (center), commander of the Kansas Army National Guard and assistant adjutant general-Army, officially passes the brigade’s flag and command of the 287th Sustainment Brigade from Col. Barry K. Taylor (right) to Lt. Col. Thomas J. Foster (left), incoming commander, during the 287th Sust. Bde.’s change of command ceremony at South Riverside Park in Wichita, Kan., July 15, 2012. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Angie M. Mooneyham, 287th Sustainment Brigade)

Administration degree from Keller School of Management. His military education includes Infantry Officer Basic and Quartermaster Advance Courses, Combined Arms and Services Staff School and Command and General Staff College. He is currently enrolled in the U.S. Army War College.

His awards and decorations include the

Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, NATO Non-Article 5 Service Medal, Army Humanitarian Award and Iraq Campaign Medal.

Kansas Airmen hit the road for tactical convoy training

By 2nd Lt. Mathew Lucht
184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

As the personnel of the Kansas National Guard’s 134th Air Control Squadron prepared to leave for their annual training at Fort Carson, Colo., they understood that they would be setting up a site and ensuring that their training was sharp and their equipment was functional. But were themselves surprised at a new training exercise during this year’s annual training, a tactical convoy training.

“If we get deployed we may have to secure the convoy,” said Tech. Sgt. Ben Massad, 184th Security Forces attached to the 134th ACS. “The biggest thing that (Lt. Col. Chris Mills, commander of the 134th ACS) was concerned about was wanting them to have training within our unit so we can defend ourselves enroute.”

Massad and several other members of his security team used the ranges available at Fort Carson to add some possible scenarios that convoys might have to face. A rotation of five humvees with approximately 20 134th ACS personnel each maneuvered through road blocks, village and ambushes.

“They had a lot thrown at them and they don’t have a lot of experience. So for them to get out here and train has been an excel-

lent experience. They were engaged by IEDs, ambushes, suicide bombers, anything that we would see in country,” said Massad.

Approximately 30 percent of the 134th ACS are new Airman directly out of technical school. This training gave the new additions a chance to see how tactical convoy training can be applied to their missions overseas.

“One of our missions in the ACS is getting from point A to point B with large amounts of equipment. You have a lot of guys that are new to this unit,” said Massad. “The biggest thing was working through the issues of trying to get this training to these people that haven’t had any experience in this whatsoever.”

For many members, having this convoy training gave them the opportunity to see their successes as well as things they need to work on.

“We are a tactical squadron and we might have to take our equipment somewhere and it’s a good idea to get the training with fake bullets instead of real ones,” said Staff Sgt. Ryan Andress, radio/frequency technician for the 134th ACS.

Capt. Brett Cleveland, chief of training for the 134th ACS, participated as a convoy commander during one of the scenarios.

“Communication is one of the keys. You also have to make sure that your spacing is good between the vehicles and driving at a constant speed. It is important to maintain that speed and communication throughout the scenario,” said Cleveland. “I have a whole new respect for Security Forces and what tactical convoys actually do.”

A surprise addition to the convoy training, the 134th ACS members had the opportunity to participate in a village scenario with an Army Reserve unit, the 1st Battalion, 104th Military Police.

“We were set up in the village as an opposing force and we were going to have this Army unit go ahead and try to secure the buildings and get to a mayor that was being held hostage at the very end,” said Massad.

Lt. Col.Eric McGraw, battalion commander of the 1-104 MPs, felt that both sides benefitted from this training.

“By the use and virtue of combining both of the units we were able to achieve something that we couldn’t have achieved on our own,” said McGraw.

177th Information Aggressor Squadron tests security system

By Maj. Deb Balentine and Senior Master Sgt. Mark Angelini, 177th Information Aggressor Squadron

In the world of security and cyberthreats, Red Teams exist to play the role of adversary against their own friendly forces in order to test skills needed to counter the real threats posed by Foreign Intelligence Security Services and others. The Kansas Air National Guard’s 177th Information Aggressor Squadron is one of only two Red Teams that the Air Force has at their disposal to do this critical work.

“Currently, the 177th provides the Air Force with about 60 percent of their Red Team strength. However, the majority of the time the 177th is asked to work on joint exercises,” explained Lt. Col. Jason Knobbe, 177th commander. It was during a joint exercise in 2009 that the 177th first encountered the Department of Defense’s Host Based Security System.

HBSS is a commercial-off-the-shelf software package designed to monitor, detect and counter known cyberthreats to all DoD computer systems. It was procured by the Defense Information Systems Agency on the behalf of the U.S. Strategic Command. The majority of Air Force computers, including the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, already had HBSS installed

on them. The system consists of a configurable Intrusion Prevention System, anti-virus, anti-spyware, and host firewall. All information about threats is gathered from client computers such as desktops and laptops, around DoD and sent to the service’s Computer Emergency Response Team.

One of the key elements of the 2009 joint exercise was to test the HBSS capabilities to see if it performed well enough

to release for use of the Department of Defense. “The

177th was called in to use its network aggressor skills to find ‘holes’ in the HBSS software by using techniques known to be used by our adversaries,” Knobbe said. The Red Team’s outcome concluded that HBSS still

needed some serious refining against outside threats. DISA then got to work on refining the HBSS

product, and requested the 177th to conduct all follow-on testing.

Next, a series of scenarios were designed specifically to test HBSS’s advanced capabilities to detect and defeat adversarial actions on the DoD networks. After each scenario, each side would analyze their performance and adjustments would be made. As the 177th Red Team increased the sophistication of how they did business, the DISA software engineers would adjust

(Continued on Page 13)



Airmen of the 134th Air Control Squadron practice ambush response techniques during their annual training in July in Fort Carson, Colo. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Matt Lucht, 184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs)



Zombies are coming! Be prepared

By Devan Tucking-Strickler, Human Services Officer
Kansas Division of Emergency Management

Kansas is gearing up for zombies! Yes, you heard right. Zombies! The Kansas Division of Emergency Management hosted the first ever Zombie Preparedness Month in 2011 which included events geared toward helping increase public disaster awareness and preparedness throughout the state throughout the month. Prepare for this year’s Zombie Preparedness Month.

“Asking people if they are prepared for zombies opens the door to real conversations about their own preparedness for Kansas disasters,” said Bob Stamey, Kansas Citizen Corps coordinator.

Multiple counties participated in the campaign in 2011 and held events in their counties with Zombie Preparedness Month wrapping up with Zombie Preparedness Day and the Spooktacular Safety Fair in Topeka. This year’s Zombie Preparedness Month will be in October with Zombie Preparedness Day and Spooktacular Safety Fair being held on Oct. 20 at Gage Park in Topeka.

The concept of the campaign focuses on teaching disaster preparedness with a twist. If you are prepared for zombies, then you are prepared for anything! Using this science fiction based, imaginative approach creates an environment for people to think about and discuss building a disaster kit, creating a disaster plan, and being prepared for the unexpected.

A zombie apocalypse, as with other disasters, may create a need to shelter in place or take other emergency precautions. To that end, KDEM suggests creating a disaster kit for your family for a minimum of 72 hours. In addition to making a disaster kit, come up with a family emergency plan to include: Several rendezvous points for your family to meet in case of a zombie attack or other emergency or disaster and select a point inside your home, outside your home, and outside your neighborhood in the event that you are unable to return home to rendezvous. Keep a list of emergency contact numbers for police, fire departments and family members. It is wise to have an out-of-state contacts to call who can let other family members know you are safe. Be knowledgeable of several evacuation routes. Zombies are driven by hunger (for brains) and will not stop until they find a food source. Find multiple routes to get out of town.

This campaign works to meet diverse populations that may have been missed in the past.

“High schools students aren’t always interested in talking about preparedness for storms and other things, but when you bring zombies into the picture it can lead to talks about preparedness,” Stamey explained.

KDEM took advantage of popular culture’s interest in Hollywood’s portrayal of zombies to remind people to take an all-hazards approach to preparing themselves for tornadoes, floods, fires, hurricanes, terrorist attacks and other disasters. As you sit and read of zombies, ask yourself: Are you prepared for the unexpected?

- Disaster kits should include:
- Water (one gallon per person per day)
 - Food (especially nonperishable items you eat regularly)
 - Medications (prescription and nonprescription)
 - Tools and supplies (utility knife, duct tape, battery powered radio)
 - Sanitation and hygiene items
 - Clothing and bedding
 - Important documents (copies of driver’s license, passport, birth certificate)
 - First aid supplies
 - Pet supplies



Zombies of all sizes took to the street in downtown Topeka during Zombie Preparedness Day 2011. This year’s event will be Oct. 20 in Gage Park. (Photo by Devan Tucking-Strickler)

Fifth annual Safe and Prepared Schools conference set for Sept. 24 and 25 in Topeka

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

The Kansas Division of Emergency Management, a division of the Adjutant General’s Department, is inviting educators, administrators, emergency managers, first responders and all others interested in fostering a safe learning environment for Kansas students to the fifth annual Kansas Safe and Prepared Schools Conference Sept. 24 and 25, 2012, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Convention Center, 1717 SW Topeka Boulevard, Topeka.



Dr. C.J. Huff
Joplin School District

Gov. Sam Brownback will sign a proclamation Aug. 24 designating Sept. 17 through 21 as Kansas School Preparedness Week.

The conference is sponsored by the Kansas Center for Safe and Prepared Schools, Kansas Homeland Security, Kansas Attorney General’s Office, Kansas Department of Education and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

“Kansas Center for Safe and Prepared Schools is pleased to be a co-host for the annual Safe and Prepared Schools Conference,” said Dr. Bob Hull, director of the Kansas Center for Safe and Prepared Schools. “We are expecting in excess of 300 participants at the conference,

which draws school personnel, emergency managers and first responders from across the state.”

One of the keynote speakers this year is Dr. C.J. Huff, superintendent of the Joplin School District,” said Hull. “He will share lessons learned from the Joplin tornado.”

Christian Moore, founder of Why Try?, will also give a keynote presentation at the conference.

- Breakouts sessions will include:
- WhyTry? overview
 - Social-emotional character development
 - Emergency operationspPlanning
 - Threat assessment
 - Building parental involvement
 - Reducing sexual and domestic violence in schools
 - Bullying prevention in Kansas
 - Preventing youth suicide
 - Crisis management for nurses
 - Restorative practices in schools
 - Youth sports concussions
 - The Harveyville tornado story
 - Using communities that care survey
 - Strengthening conditions for learning and sustaining community partnerships
- The conference fee is \$25 per person and registration must be done on-line.
- To register, go online to <http://events.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=467>

Drought, wildfires plague the nation

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Unless you’ve been hiding under a rock—a nice, cool rock buried deep under the ground—you know how hot and dry it’s been this summer, not only in Kansas--as of July 31 Topeka marked its hottest year on record, which dates back to 1887--but all across the U.S. These factors led to drought conditions across much of the country, particularly in the Midwest.

“Typically, summer is the time for severe storms and tornadoes,” said Angee Morgan, deputy director of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. “This year, we’ve had relatively few tornadoes or severe storms. Last year, we were dealing with floods in parts of the state. This year, we’re at the other end of the spectrum. But that’s Kansas.”

A drought map produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (http://www.kwo.org/reports_publications/Drought/map_us_drought_secretarial_desig_082212.pdf) lists most of the nation—from Kentucky to California and Colorado to Texas along with most of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama—as suffering from drought, 1,692 counties in all, which includes all 105 Kansas counties. As of this writing, the National Weather Service U.S. Drought Monitor for Kansas (<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/top/?n=drought>) shows almost 67 percent of the state is under Exceptional Drought Conditions, the highest level. At the same time last year, only 14.55 percent of the state was experiencing this level of drought.

On Aug. 10, Gov. Sam Brownback launched a Web site

to provide drought information and resources (<http://governor.ks.gov/kansas-drought-resources>) The site was developed to provide easy access to specific drought information, the site includes links to state and federal resources for farmers and ranchers, small businesses, Kansans, and cities and counties. The governor updated the state’s drought disaster declaration to include all 105 Kansas counties in an emergency status. The Governor’s Drought Response Team will continue to watch the situation closely and work to minimize the effects the drought has on Kansans.

And with drought comes the potential for wildfire, a potential that has turned into reality a number of times this summer. The Colorado forest fires dominated headlines in June and a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and crew from the Kansas Army National Guard was one of many resources requested from other states to combat the blazes.

Yet, even as the Colorado fires were contained, many others have cropped up since. As of this writing, the North American Forest Fire Incident Display System (<http://fires.globalincidentmap.com/home.php>) shows more than 50 wildfires burning in 13 states and Canada.

Kansas has had its share of wildfires, as well, which fortunately have not resulted in any deaths. To combat the start and spread of wildfires, a number of Kansas counties have instituted burn bans. Burn bans are in place until further notice in Allen, Anderson, Atchison, Barber, Barton, Bourbon, Brown, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Clark, Clay, Cloud, Coffey, Cowley, Crawford, Decatur,

(Continued on Page 15)

U.S. Drought Monitor

Kansas

August 21, 2012

Valid 7 a.m. EST

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	96.43	66.93
Last Week (08/14/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	89.84	63.30
3 Months Ago (05/22/2012 map)	15.30	84.70	13.27	2.36	0.03	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	42.48	57.52	47.15	23.21	12.79	0.22
Start of Water Year (09/27/2011 map)	16.39	83.61	66.03	48.78	28.54	17.63
One Year Ago (08/16/2011 map)	26.90	73.10	64.14	44.28	23.60	14.55

Intensity:

D0 Abnormally Dry

D1 Drought - Moderate

D2 Drought - Severe

D3 Drought - Extreme

D4 Drought - Exceptional

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

USDA

National Drought Mitigation Center

Released Thursday, August 23, 2012

Michael Brewer, National Climatic Data Center, NOAA

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

Kansas National Guard stands up signal company

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Can you hear me now? For the first time in almost 30 years, the Kansas National Guard has a signal company as the 369th Brigade Signal Company was activated. The ceremony was held at the Kansas City, Kan., National Guard armory July 14.

As the activation orders were read, 1st Sgt. Richard Heuertz, first sergeant of the 369th Bde. Signal Co., uncased the Company's Signal Corps orange colored guidon. The uncasing of the unit's colors symbolized the birth of the new unit. Heuertz passed the guidon to Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Anderson, command sergeant major of the 287th Sust. Bde., who passed it to Col. Barry Taylor, commander of the 287th Sustainment Brigade. Taylor, then entrusted the guidon to Capt. Gabriel Brockman, commander of the 369th Bde. Signal Co.

The passing of the colors is a centuries old military tradition. It is a physical and visual confirmation that the senior commander has placed his trust in the subordinate commander and that the subordinate commander accepts the authority and responsibilities of command entrusted to him.

"It's really exciting to be the first commander of a new signal company," said Brockman, a resident of Merriam, Kan. "I know that they've been working to bring a signal company to Kansas for several years. It's an honor to be the first commander and I have high aspirations for conducting our support mission for the 287th."

Prior to the activation of the 369th, the

"The company is providing additional assignment and promotion opportunities for the signal Soldiers," said Heuertz, of Valley Falls, Kan. "We will be coming together over the next few months of training. We also have Soldiers still in their training

Not only will this unit provide enhanced communication in our dual missions to the nation and the state, but will provide greater career advancement for the communication Soldier.

*Col. Chris Stratmann
DOIM*

schools that will be joining us soon."

"Not only will this unit provide enhanced communication in our dual missions to the nation and the state, but will provide greater career advancement for the communication Soldier," said Col. Chris Stratmann, director of Information Technology, Joint Forces Headquarters, Kansas National Guard, and resident of Topeka. "The skills that these Soldiers are developing are highly sought in the civilian workforce. Therefore, it is up to us to ensure that we can keep them in the Guard."

Although there has roughly been a 30 year gap, the Kansas National Guard does have a history of signal units.

Retired Col. Russ Conrad provided the following historical information on signal



1st Sgt. Richard Heuertz, first sergeant of the 369th Brigade Signal Company and resident of Valley Falls, Kan., unfurls the company guidon, during the 369th activation ceremony conducted at the Kansas City, Kan., armory on July 14. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

287th Sust. Bde. was lacking key communications personnel and equipment.

"With the activation of the 369th, the 287th Sustainment Brigade is now fully fielded and is in a better position to perform our mission," said Taylor.

The 369th has communication capabilities that no other unit has.

"It is our mission to provide multichannel transmission, satellite communication and network systems to support the 287th and the Kansas National Guard," said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Mounts, noncommissioned officer in charge of 2nd Platoon, 369th Bde. Signal Co. "This is a great chance for all of us who have been working in communications."

"I'm a multichannel transmission operator and maintainer," said Pfc. Travis Warren, Topeka, Kan. "I am just out of my advance individual training, so I am very excited to start working with the equipment."

Beyond providing enhanced communications, the unit provides career and professional development for the signal Soldiers.

units within the Kansas National Guard.

In 1917, the 1st Kansas Field Signal Battalion was stood up. Company A (radio) was in Topeka, Company B (wire) was in Iola, Company C (outpost) was in Wichita and the battalion headquarters was in Wellington. The battalion was redesignated as the 110th Field Signal Battalion, serving in France in support of the 35th Division.

The 35th Division Signal Co. was located in Kansas City from 1923 until the 35th Division mobilized in World War II.

Between 1982 and 1985, the 135th Signal Detachment, 69th Infantry Brigade (Separate) was located in Topeka. In 1985 the detachment was redesignated detachment Company B, 135th Signal Battalion, Missouri Army National Guard. In 1989 the battalion was downsized, resulting in Kansas losing its signal unit.

That has now all changed with the activation of the 369th Brigade Signal Co. For the 21st century, multichannel transmission and satellite communication has replaced vacuum tube radios and miles of copper wire.

Prior Marines join Kansas National Guard's 1161st Forward Support Company



Brig. Gen. Eric Peck, commander of the Kansas Army National Guard and Assistant Adjutant General - Army, swears in three prior service Marines, (left to right) Jordan England, Paul Newton and Malcom Teater, into the Kansas National Guard's 1161st Forward Support Company in Hutchinson, Kan., June 28. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Eric Reichert, Recruiting and Retention Battalion)

Do your part to prevent suicide

By Chaplain (Maj.) John Potter
Full-Time Support Chaplain

Suicide is a monumental problem in our society and in the military. Currently, a member of the Armed Forces dies each day from suicide. We could easily read the suicide rates for 2012 and forget that every suicide statistic represents a life lost and a death that leaves behind scores of hurting people.

There is no "one size fits all" solution to suicide. People contemplate suicide for many different reasons: increased alcohol and drug use, divorce, family dissolution, financial matters, legal trouble, an illness, depression and many other reasons. While the causes vary, we can all show universal concern and support.

Here are some ways to help people at-risk of suicide.

1. **Be present.** Show your concern for people in pain. Make time for the person who is hurting. Scripture shares that we need to "bear one another's burdens." Take time to help through their days of difficulty.
2. **Listen.** Express compassion through

listening and responding. Empathy is a great way to show concern to a person experiencing pain. Hear his or her concerns. Allow that person to say what is causing the pain.

3. Do something about the problem.

Too often, people at-risk are so overwhelmed with depression, grief, stress or anguish that they don't know where to turn next. Give that person guidance. Share resources that can help. Take them to a medic, chaplain, or counselor. Call the Veterans' Affairs hospital. Find a way to connect the person with assistance. The Bible encourages us to be, "doers of the word, not hearers only." Take action, especially when it comes to the important issue of suicide.

Suicide impacts our state, our community and the Kansas National Guard. While causes will vary, we can all make a difference in addressing the problem. Demonstrate compassion and concern for those who are hurting. Take time and be available to friends in need. The time and efforts you make can save a life.

Wings over McConnell

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Annual Teen Camp: a rewarding experience for teens and adults

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

As evidenced by the ubiquitous use of social media among teens – texting, Facebook, Twitter and a host of other forums – keeping connected with their peers is a high priority for many of them.

Yet as popular as these cyberspace venues are, they are no substitute for personal, face-to-face interaction, particularly when you are a teen whose father, mother or sometimes both is a member of the Kansas National Guard who is deployed or has been deployed. Such separations, often occurring during the “big moments” in a

young person’s life, generate feelings that teens may find difficult to talk about except to someone who’s “been there.”

Getting these teens together to share those experiences is one of the benefits of attending the annual Teen Camp, sponsored by the Family Programs Office of the Kansas National Guard and held annually at Camp Webster in Salina.

“The most important thing about Teen Camp is simply getting them in one location,” said Darcy Seitz, lead Child and Youth program coordinator for the Kansas National Guard. “Truly, there’s a bond that kids get here with their military connections, things that they’re not able to share or have that understanding that a “normal” personal would have.”

Seitz said Teen Camp is geared for youth ages 13 to 17 to find friendships with other military youth throughout Kansas.

“We have youth from all the way in Western Kansas to Kansas City and everywhere in between,” said Seitz. “It’s a great opportunity for them to come out, meet each other, bond through their military connections and have a little bit of fun.”

And there is plenty of fun to be had. In addition to typical camp activities such as swimming, water balloon fights and ball games, one day each year is devoted to letting the teens pit themselves against the Challenge Course. Throughout the day, teens climb poles, walk the high wire, swing, and speed along zip lines to test themselves not only physically, but mentally and emotionally, as well,

all the while supported and encouraged by their fellow teens.

“I’m not sure what it’s called, but it’s scary,” said Alison White, Valley Center, looking back at the high wire she had just walked across.

White, a member of the Kansas National Guard Teen Youth Council, had been to Kids Camp when she was younger, but had not tried Teen Camp before.

“All the people in Council had inside jokes about Teen Camp and made camp sound so fun I decide that I wanted to come,” said White.

In addition to the fun, however, White found new friends.

“Putting yourself in a new environment teaches you how to make new friends in any circumstances,” she said, “It’s a new experience but I don’t feel alone.”

“At normal camps, not a lot of people have parents that are deployed,” said White. “Here it’s just one of the questions that you can ask while you’re eating lunch with someone new.”

Seitz said this was her third year of involvement with Teen Camp and she has seen positive changes in many of the repeat campers.

“They have stepped up, they’ve grown up,” said Seitz. “You can tell that, once they understand how to do something, like the Challenge Course, they’re the ones helping them get their harness on, or they’re ones that are really helping them, the new ones,



Sawyer Green reaches his way across the High Ropes at the Challenge Course during Kansas National Guard’s Teen Camp at Camp Webster in Salina, Kan., June 18. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)



Dylan Camper soars into the sky on the Ready to Fly obstacle as his team hoists him up at the Challenge Course during Kansas National Guard’s Teen Camp at Camp Webster in Salina, Kan., June 18. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

come out their shell a little bit and getting them involved and making sure they’re not having a bad time at Teen Camp.”

For Lt. Col. Cody Jacobs, a first-time volunteer at Teen Camp, the experience was rewarding.

“I heard about it from some fliers that were on the base,” said Jacobs, director of operations for the 161st Intelligence Squadron. “My son’s actually attending this year and I thought it was a good opportunity to give back since my son’s going to participate.”

“I didn’t know a lot about it until I got here, but what I have seen since I’ve been here is absolutely amazing.”

Jacobs role as a team leader put him in charge of a group of 13 teens, an experience that was “a bit of a shock” when he realized he would be rooming with six of them. Still, Jacobs said it’s “kind of fun at night. We’re having a good time.”

“The thing that I’ve been absolutely proud of is that these kids are very accepting of each other,” said Jacobs. “They work together, they’re encouraging. I haven’t seen anybody left out on their own, not being included. It’s very refreshing.”

Operation Kids Camp: where military children create bonds

By Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett
Public Affairs Office

Squads of more than 120 military children invaded the Great Plains Joint Training Center July 9 to 13 as part of Kansas National Guard’s Operation Kids Camp.

Operation Kids Camp 2012, sponsored by The Child and Youth Programs office in the Family Programs office, was held in Salina, Kan., for children of Kansas National Guard members. The camps give kids eight to 12-years-old a small taste of military life with some fun mixed in.

“We help them see what life is like as a servicemember as far as allowing them to eat at the chow hall, sleep in the barracks and come to the training center here in Salina and watch the servicemembers walk around here and see what they do on a day-to-day basis,” said Darcy Seitz, Operation Kids Camp director.

One of the many military activities the kids got to experience was the weapons simulators, such as the Engagement Skills Trainer 2000 and Virtual Convoy Operations Trainer.

During the weeklong camp, the kids were separated into squads by age and gender. Each squad received an assigned servicemember as their leader. The first night, each squad created their guidon. They were able to earn streamers for the guidon for attention to detail, best cadence, etc.

The kids were exposed to different activities, such as tug-of-war, stack of balloons and the spider web, which helped build teamwork and communication.

“I have been three times and I’ve always loved it,” said Seth

Nelson, Kids Camp participant. “It’s a blast.”

Field trips to the pool, zoo and bowling alley are also part of the program paid for by monetary donations of the Kansas National Guard Foundation. Meteorologist Tom Hagen from Kansas First News on channel 27 KSNT TV visited the kids during camp to talk about the science of weather.

For 13 years Operation Kids Camp has been getting military kids together and creating bonds of friendship.

“One of my best friends here is Ryan. He and I have a lot

in common because his dad was stationed overseas the same time mine was. We’re just best friends,” shared Nelson.

“It’s fun because I know that I have friends that know what I am going through when my parents are gone,” said Kennedy Carper, Kids Camp participant.

Ultimately, the goal of Operation Kids Camp is for military children to get connected and have friends to talk with who understand their situation.

The fun isn’t just for kids though. “You get to see the smiling face on everybody,” said

Jahna Yuhn, Kids Camp volunteer and Teen Council member, “and it’s just really cool to see them smile, have fun and enjoy themselves.”

Much of the operation’s success is due to the many volunteer servicemembers and the Kansas National Guard’s Teen Council kids. This year’s Kids Camp had approximately 75 volunteers.

“We have servicemembers from both the Army and the Air that come from all over the state of Kansas,” said Seitz. “Truly, without the volunteers and servicemembers coming out here, Kids Camp wouldn’t be able to grow and expand without them and wouldn’t be in existence without them.”

Lessons learned at Kids camp may surprise many parents.

“They definitely walk away learning cadences,” said Seitz. “That’s one of the things that we can guarantee parents at graduation that they will be hearing them for several days afterwards.”

“I’m going to show my parents that I can do push-ups,” said Carper. “The right way!”



The purple boy’s squad tries their hand at the Spider Web, a team building exercise where everyone must cross from one side to the other without touching the web during Operations Kids Camp at the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina, Kan., July 12. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett, Public Affairs Office)

Combined Arms Battalion, conducts annual training

By 1st Lt. Edwin Stremel
2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment

The 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment hosted 19 representatives from businesses across the state during their annual training at Fort Riley, Kan., this year. In conjunction with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, the 2nd CAB, 137th Inf. Regt. gave the representatives a glimpse of the skills and dedication of Kansas Army National Guard Soldiers. The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve brings chief executive officers and business owners of Kansas to training sites to encourage them to give consideration to National Guard Soldiers when making hiring decisions. For its part, the battalion incorporated several demonstrations for the guests into its annual training plan. The potential employers were flown to Fort Riley on a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, courtesy of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, where they had a bird’s-eye view of the 2nd CAB’s Company B conducting an assault on a simulated compound that kicked off with the arrival of the Black Hawks. Company B made use of simulations, grenade simulators and coordinated air support. After the guests were dropped, off they were led to a static display set up by the regiment. At the display, the employers received briefings and an up-close look at some of the equipment used by the battalion, including the M1-A1 main battle tank, briefed by Sgt. Dominic Cantu from Company C; the M2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle, briefed by Staff Sgt. Jay Yeager Company B; and the M88 recovery vehicle, briefed by Sgt. Kirton Mears, 2137th Forward Support Company.

After the display, the visitors were prepped for the next stage of their day, a ride in the back of a Bradley. Four Bradley Fighting Vehicles transported the employers to a sniper range, where the guests received a briefing on the capabilities of the battalion sniper section and had the opportunity to shoot the M110 and M107 sniper rifles. When they were not on the firing line, the guests had the chance to examine the Talon Explosive Ordnance Disposal robot and the Packbot. To finish off the day, the employers where transported to the Combined Arms Collective Training Facility to watch a video and receive an after-action review of the entire assault, conducted by Company B. Overall, the day was a great success with the employers gaining a greater appreciation for the Soldiers serving their state and the 2nd CAB, 137th Inf. Regt. taking full advantage of the opportunity to stretch their logistical and planning muscles.

Company C, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment
For most Kansans, June is a time for river festivals and trips to the lake, but for Company C, 2nd Combined Armed Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment it’s time for their annual training, which means a trip to Fort Riley, Kan., and a motor pool full of 67-ton war machines. Before anyone took the M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks for a tactical road march, they spent two days completing preventive maintenance checks services to make sure they were road ready. “I’d rather spend a couple days making sure my tank will work than [get] out to the field and have something break,” said Spc. Craig Brown, an armor crewman with Company C. Once the company got out to the training area, they conducted maneuver and combat drills. During day time operations, the company worked to train new drivers on the forma-



Soldiers of the Company C, 2nd Combined Armed Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment receive behind-the-wheel training in an M1A1 Abrams main battle tank during their annual training, June 8. (Photo by 1st Lt. Edwin Stremel, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment)



Kansas employers receive coaching from 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment Soldiers on the M110 and M107 sniper rifles at a Fort Riley range as part of their Boss Lift, sponsored by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to observe the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment during their annual training, June 7. (Photo by 1st Lt. Edwin Stremel, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment)



Employers from across the state of Kansas depart a UH-60 Black Hawk flown by the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment for a Boss Lift sponsored by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve at Fort Riley, Kan., to observe the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment during their annual training, June 7. (Photo by 1st Lt. Edwin Stremel, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment)



Kansas employers from across the state were treated to a static display and briefing by the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment on an M1-A1 main battle tank, M2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle and M88 recovery vehicle at Fort Riley, Kan., during a Boss Lift sponsored by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, June 7. (Photo by 1st Lt. Edwin Stremel, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment)

tions they would use in combat. “I’m getting paid to drive the deadliest land vehicle in the world,” said Pfc. Zachery Wiedner, an armor crewman with Company C. “I love my job.” During night operations, the training consisted of familiarizing Soldiers with the use of night vision optics and convoy tactics. During one of the missions, one of the platoons was joined by an OH-58D Kiowa helicopter from Fort Riley, which scouted out and reconned designated areas. “This is the type of training I love,” said said Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Clark, an armor crewman with Company C. “The new privates get valuable experience on the tank and the older guys get a refresher course.”
2137th Forward Support Company
The 2137th Forward Support Company began their annual training with movement from the Manhattan Armory to Fort Riley, Kan., June 3. Working out of Camp Funston, the FSC was able to efficiently support and supply more than 550 Soldiers of the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment throughout training. Concurrently, the FSC completed multiple operations, such as convoys, medical evacuation and numerous Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, which reinforced the company’s overall readiness level and gave Soldiers an opportunity to put their skills to work. Preparing and feeding the battalion, operating the refueling station, and supplying ammo to the line companies were several tasks that 2nd Platoon performed while at Fort Riley. 3rd Platoon was tasked with recovery operations, maintenance and repairs on the M1A1 Abrams and the M2 Bradleys, as well as other vehicles while working out of the Mobilization and Training Equipment Site. Aside from the primary mission of providing forward support to the battalion, the FSC had more than 40 Soldiers trained in the Medevac 101 class. Soon after, these Soldiers took their training to the next level by participating in Convoy Operations, responding to simulated Improvised Explosive Devices and conducting tasks and drills. The FSC also worked jointly with the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment to conduct live medical evacuation airlifts, culminating their overall training objective. Several members of the FSC were able to get some trigger time with the Barrett sniper rifle, while others were able to attend the Explosive Ordnance Disposal robot familiarization class, or observe the VIP combat exercise. While successfully accomplishing their primary mission and receiving additional training paving the road for future achievements, the 2137th FSC is excited for what the future has to offer.

170th Soldiers participate in Divers 250 Challenge

By Sgt. 1st Class Pat Hewitt
170th Support Maintenance Company
Just before sunrise July 14, more than 80 servicemembers met on a beach at the Persian Gulf. But this was no ordinary day at the beach for six Soldiers of the 170th Support Maintenance Company (Forward) getting ready to participate in the Divers 250 Challenge Kuwait.

The competition was sponsored by 596th Engineer Detachment (Dive). Teams of six or seven servicemembers from multiple services participated in the competition, which involved a 250-meter inflatable raft row, two 250-meter track pulls, 250 pull-ups, 250 squat thrusts (pull-ups and squat thrusts were cumulative for the team in 45 minutes or less), a 2.5 mile run and a mystery event. The mystery event had the teams jump into a pool that was more than 12-feet-deep while trying to recover the team brick from the bottom so it could be carried to the finish line.

The 170th team consisted of six members of the 170th and one Soldier from their battalion headquarters. Team members were 1st Lt. Justin Briggs, Sgt. Cody Breon, Sgt. John Chaffee (Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion), Cpl. Joseph Far-

rell (New York Army National Guard assigned to the 170th), Spc. Roberto Fernandez, Spc. Shane Haberlein and Spc. Brady Rietscheck.

Divers of the 596th Eng. Det. led the way in the first heat, completing the course in 51 minutes. That team was not in the competition, which allowed the 170th to complete the course first in their heat with a time of 63 minutes. Overall, the 170th team finished in sixth place.

“There were some tough teams in the second heat,” said Capt. Scott Weber, commander of the 170th FSC. “I’m very proud of our Soldiers’ effort and their abilities. This was a tough competition and the first extreme type challenge these Soldiers had competed in.”

The 170th is deployed to Kuwait, assigned to the 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 27th Brigade Infantry Combat Team, New York Army National Guard. It consists of Soldiers from Kansas, New York and California. They are serving as a security force company providing seaport security.

Back in Kansas, the 170th Maintenance Company is a subordinate unit of the 287th Special Troop Battalion, Hays. They are headquartered in Norton, Kan., with a subordinate unit in Colby, Kan.



The 170th Support Maintenance Company (Forward) security force, part of the Kansas and New York Army National Guard, prepares to make the run for the finish line after retrieving their brick during the mystery event of the Diver 250 Challenge in Kuwait, July 14. The mystery event involved jumping into a pool that was over 12-feet-deep to recover the team’s numbered brick from the bottom. (Photo by Sgt. Peter Berardi, 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command)

Army updates physical fitness test, creates new program

By Pfc. Brandon Jacobs
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
It’s a marathon in two-minute sections that all Soldiers know so well. Troops complete as many push-ups as possible in two minutes, sit ups for another two and top it off by running for a brisk two miles. Since 1980, Soldiers have been training for and taking the physical fitness test known as the “PT test.”

To adapt to a changing battlefield, Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, former U.S. Army deputy commanding general for Initial Military Training, worked in collaboration with Frank Palkoska, director of the Army Physical Fitness School, creating two revised PT tests, according to Kelly Schloesser, of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

To prepare for the revised Army Physical Fitness Test, the Army Physical Readiness Training program was created. The APRT went through a pilot phase that started March 2011 at eight installations. Soldiers at

these installations still found themselves doing push-ups, sit ups, and running. Added to daily PT were shuttle runs and exercises designed to build and stretch the body’s core muscles, as well as increase flexibility and coordination.

“The new fitness program and PT test will be dramatically healthier for the body,” said Staff Sgt. Veronica Bartley, drill sergeant of Company A, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, of Topeka, Kan.

In addition to being healthier for the body, the new standard will help Soldiers adapt to a different style of combat on a changing battlefield by testing each Soldier for strength, endurance and mobility. The goal of the APRT is to allow the training to drive the test rather than Soldiers training for the assessment, said Palkoska.

Standards for the APFT were developed in places like Fort Jackson, S.C., and focus on anaerobic exercise. Anaerobic exercise has long been used by athletes and body builders to promote strength, speed and greater performance in short duration and high-intensity activities.

During anaerobic exercise, the body’s fast twitch muscles are developed and allow for a greater expenditure of energy and strength for a shorter time. Anaerobic exercises also train muscles to recover

faster for the next burst of energy. As with any change, some Soldiers disapproved, citing the old adage “If it isn’t broke, don’t fix it.”

“Another unpopular decision was no more authorized rest positions,” said Bartley. “With the time cut in half you really don’t have time to stop and rest anyway.”

Much like the previous training method, each section of the APRT works a different set of muscles and body strength.

The 60-yard shuttle run, graded pass/fail, works the lower body, including muscular strength and anaerobic power, as well as assessing speed, agility and coordination.

The rower, a variation of the sit-up, strengthens the body’s total muscular endurance and coordination. The standing long jump, graded pass/fail, uses lower body muscular strength and power.

Running for 2 miles increases lower body endurance and speed stability. The initial plan was to cut the run to a mile and a half, which is considered the best measure

of cardiovascular fitness. But the extra half-mile measures the heart.

As always, the push-up stays with the Army’s PT program and

continues to work upper body muscular endurance and trunk stability.

The APRT adds several stretches and exercises to strengthen the abdominal and lower back muscles, improving overall core strength and flexibility.

This new mix of stretches and exercises works with the more familiar aspects of daily PT to help Soldiers create and maintain the strength, endurance and mobility to succeed at the upcoming APFT.

“Just like any physical fitness program, the new one will make Soldiers who are willing to put forth the effort succeed,” said Bartley.

Troops will be seeing the new program in practice within the year with a goal of Army-wide implementation by October 2012.

For more information on the new APRT, read Training Circular 3-22.20, which contains the guidelines, as well as exercises and drills designed to increase the Soldier’s overall fitness.

“Keep in mind, it’s still the same mindset,” said Bartley. “Either you’ll do excellent or you’ll fail. You’re still going to have to prepare for different aspects.”

Annual Adjutant General’s physical fitness competition

The Kansas National Guard will conduct the 17th Annual Adjutant General’s Physical Fitness competition Sept. 22, 2012, at the 235th Regional Training Institute, located in Building 365 at 2929 Scanlan Ave., Salina, Kan. Check-in for the Adjutant General’s Physical Fitness competition will be from 7 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. with the competition starting at 9 a.m. and an awards ceremony at 12:30 p.m.

The Adjutant General’s Physical Fitness competition will consist of the three events that are in the Army Physical Fitness Test. Competitors will have two minutes to complete as many push-ups as possible, as well as two minutes to complete as many sit-ups as possible. Competitors will also do a timed two-mile run.

“This competition is a great way to promote community involvement in military activities and enables citizens to test their

fitness level against Kansas National Guard Soldiers using Army standards,” said Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general.

The event is open and free to both military and civilian participants. Military members who compete will be required to wear their issued physical fitness uniform. Each company, battalion or squadron in the Kansas National Guard is authorized three teams that must consist of four members.

To participate, please fill out a registration form online at www.facebook.com/pages/235th-Regiment-Fitness-Challenge and drop it off in person in Ekert Hall or mail it in by Aug. 25 to: 235th Regiment, ATTN: Fitness Challenge, 2804 Arnold Ave., Salina, KS 67401.

Point of contact for the competition is Sgt. 1st Class Chad Pittman. He may be reached at chad.dene.pittman@us.army.mil or by phone (785) 822-6646 or (785) 643-0491.



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Crewmembers guide the way

By Staff Sgt. Megan Grauer
1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment

It’s not often crew chiefs get to fly helicopters. While not exactly behind the controls during sling load operations, crew chiefs are the eyes for the pilots, directing where to move the bird in order to link up with crews on the ground. Flying the aircraft from the back was just what two crews from the Kansas National Guard’s Company A, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment did July 13.

Two Black Hawks with a four-man crews hooked up and moved empty containers from one point to another several miles apart on the Udairi Range Complex near Camp Buehring, Kuwait, during a joint exercise with Marines from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Being able to fly the aircraft from the back seat takes trust and well-practiced aircrew coordination. The pilots’ views are severely restricted; they are unable to see anything but the ground marshals. The crew chiefs are the sole eyes for the load under the helicopter.

“You can tell just by how the aircraft is flying if they’re following your directions or not,” said Sgt. Gabriel Figueroa, crew chief.

Through a lot of commands and careful anticipation of pilots’ movements, the crew chiefs direct the Black Hawk to the proper angle, height and distance from the load so the ground crew can hook up the sling.

Once the load is hooked up, the pilots have to be acutely aware of how the weight of the load and the direction of the wind affect flying. Moving too fast will cause the load to oscillate and swing, pulling the aircraft dangerously out of the bounds of safety.

Every member of the Black Hawk team

has a job to do in tandem with his team mates. There’s the ground crew that are on the load to be picked up, grounding it electrically and hooking it up, which include the crews around the load and one who remains within sight of the pilots to be the middle-man between the ground and aircrews. On the helicopter, the crew members in the back are harnessed to the Black Hawk, but allowed more free movement, while those on the ground must remain vigilant and quick to move, if needed.

Before any real missions can be accomplished, however, such as taking hay bales to blizzard isolated cattle out in the plains of Kansas or using Bambi buckets full of water for fire control, a lot of time must be spent in practice, hovering over loads while communicating with crew members in the helicopter and with crews on the ground, usually nonverbally.

Even before take-off, there is a lot of work to do, such as planning the flight route and mission on hand, familiarizing all crew members with the necessary commands and actions, and many briefings so crew members understand what is involved in the mission. Just before take-off, weather conditions must be verified. On the day of the exercise, a sandstorm moved in a few short hours after training started, but no one was surprised to see it.

Then comes the moment of truth, “seeing all the pieces working together,” says 1st Lt. Casey Atkins, one of four pilots flying that day.

And so, after all the planning, preparation and coordination between air and ground crews, the Black Hawk carries away an almost 9,000 pound container out of a cloud of thick, blinding dust across the desert. Mission accomplished.



Company A, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment pilots and crew chiefs hover over an empty connex as Marines from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit electronically ground and hook up the container to the bottom side of the aircraft for sling load training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, July 13, 2012. (Photo by By Staff Sgt. Megan Grauer, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment)

177th Information Aggressor Squadron tests security system

Continued from Page 7
the HBSS system in hopes of making it impenetrable by the Red Team.
In 2010, the 177th Red Team participated in several HBSS tabletop lab events and one operational evaluation at U.S. Strategic Command. In January 2011, DISA again requested the 177th to test HBSS against networking anomalies to see if the software would appropriately alert administrators to any intruders/issues. This time the results were briefed to Congress by the director, Operational Test and Evaluation of the Secretary of Defense in their annual report.
This cooperative interaction resulted in the publishing of an advanced set of tactics, techniques and procedures by the DISA Field Security Operations which were then released to the field by U.S. Cyber Command.
“HBSS is a force multiplier for the

DoD’s network defense,” 177th Red Team member Capt. Brian Pacchelli said. “It’s a great opportunity for a Guard unit in Kansas to affect the security posture of the entire DoD enterprise.”
DISA and commercial software engineer teams participated with 177th members in another series of tests in October, November and December 2011. Results from this latest round of tests have not been released. However, DISA has already requested 177th support in 2012 and beyond.
“This type of vetting process does not happen overnight, but it is important work because the threat to DoD cyberassets is a real and present threat,” Knobbe said. Successfully replicating and applying adversarial tactics in order to ensure a better network security for the entire DoD community is just part of the job for Kansas’ 177th Information Aggressor Squadron Red Team, and it is certainly one they do well.

Generals land at Normandy

By Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington,
29th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

Top officers from Kansas, Rhode Island and Maryland saw excellence in action recently while visiting Task Force Normandy Soldiers in the hot Kuwaiti sun.
Maj. Gen. Lee Tafarielli, the adjutant general of Kansas; Maj. Gen. Kevin McBride, the adjutant general of Rhode Island; and Maj. Gen. James Adkins, the adjutant general of Maryland, saw Task Force Normandy’s hard work and dedication first hand July 11-12, 2012.
The general officers and their senior enlisted leaders met with Soldiers from their respective states in order to gauge morale and preparedness.

“Because of the strategic importance of this region and the resources that are here, we never know what mission-set this unit (Kansas-based 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment) is going to have to be called upon to do,” said Tafarielli. “When you can put years worth of training opportunities in an 11-month period, that’s phenomenal from a unit readiness standpoint.”

Many of the brigade’s battalions consist of units from multiple states, so the generals saw the wide range of operations their Soldiers conduct.
The Joint Monthly Access to Reserve Components program is a U.S. Central Command-sponsored program. It serves as the primary mechanism for the Reserve Components, both Reserve and National Guard, General/Flag Officers and their senior enlisted leaders to visit Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines serving in Afghanistan and Kuwait.

The JMARC’s primary goal is to enable leaders to see, first hand, the contributions of their men and women who are serving on the cutting edge of freedom. This allows a senior officer perspective of the challenges and progress of not only their warriors serving in uniform, but also the progress of the coalition effort.



Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafarielli, the adjutant general, talks with troops from Company E, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, working at the motor pool during his visit to Camp Buehring, Kuwait, July 11-12, 2012. (Photo Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington, 29th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs)

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Adjutant general visits Class 57 at Officer Candidate School

By **Spc. Kevin Stuart,**
242nd Engineer Company UPAR

The sun was coming up over the Plains as the officer candidates in Class 57, Officer Candidate School, 235th Training Regiment finished their five-mile road march, anticipating some breakfast and a chance to rest their tired feet. They got more than they expected, though, when Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general of Kansas, arrived. The candidates, from eight different states including Arkansas, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas, stood in company formation as the general addressed them.

“(The Cadre) are going to push you this week and next week they’re going to make sure the training of commanding is done, but as I said it is all about training future leaders,” said Tafanelli.

Tafanelli was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Engineer Corps Dec. 17, 1982, through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Pittsburg State University.

“I still remember today the NCOs we had as our trainers and the leadership we had at the university, and really what an impact they had on my career,” said Tafanelli.

“I think the key importance of being a second lieutenant is that it is the entry point on the officer side as a commissioned officer,” he said. “That is really where we grow our future leaders as our first assignment as a platoon leader ... as we transition individuals from the NCO side of the house into becoming commissioned officers in the Army.”

Tafanelli said the candidates need to remember that “everybody in the class is in it together.”

“Focus on the team work aspect of it, take care of their buddies in their company, to dig deep, because it is going to be very challenging, very demanding,” said Tafanelli. “Between what the TACs (Teach Assess Counsel instructors) are putting out, the stress that they are putting on, it is nothing compared to the kinds of things they are going to be expected to do once they become lieutenants and work their way up the officer side.”

Tafanelli said the candidates need to take advantage of the experience the school will give them, despite the rigors of the school.

“Each and every day, as hard as it gets, they can get through it,” said Tafanelli. “In the end they are going to be entrusted with our nation’s most precious resources, our sons and daughters, and they need to take that to heart.”



Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general, speaks with officers of the 235th Regiment along side Lt. Col. John Clark, commander of the 1st Battalion, 235th Regiment, after offering words of encouragement to Phase I officer candidates during his tour of the Kansas Officer Candidate School in Salina, Kan., June 10, 2012. (Photo by Officer Candidate Michael Byerly, Kansas Officer Candidate School)

Citizen Soldiers come to Kansas on the hunt for the gold bar

By **Officer Candidate Michael Byerly**
Kansas Officer Candidate School

Summertime, for most people, means relaxing by the pool or perhaps a cool family vacation to the mountains. But there is that breed of Citizen-Soldier who opts to do something less traditional with their summer vacation. These are Army National Guard Soldiers from Arkansas, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. You can be assured they are going on no family picnic.

One hundred thirty Soldiers from eight states arrived in Salina, Kan., June 8 to attend Phase 1 of Kansas Officer Candidate School.

Each state arrives by bus. Officer candidates file off dressed in civilian clothes, rushing to find their equipment and fall into formation. Orders are barked out from their platoon trainers. It’s a chaotic scene. Anxiety is apparent on many faces as they wait for the unexpected.

“Come prepared and be prepared for anything,” advised Officer Candidate Dennis Hatfield, York, Neb.

“I expect a lot of yelling, but a lot of coming together,” anticipated Officer Candidate Bess Wilson, Morrilton, Ark.

Officer candidates begin the Phase 1 training with an opening ceremony, each state representing itself proudly by displaying their respective state flag and



Master Sgt. Will Doggett, a Teach Assess Counsel officer at the Kansas Officer Candidate School, from Vinita, Okla., provides purpose, direction and motivation to officer candidates as they officially begin their mentally and physically challenging 15 days of Phase I at Officer Candidate School in Salina, Kan., June 8, 2012. (Photo by Officer Candidate Michael Byerly, Kansas Officer Candidate School)

shouting their state motto. Upon conclusion of the ceremony, officer candidates

are split into platoons, ending the state integrity. Texas mixes with Illinois and

Arkansas shares billets with Missouri. No longer is it Husker versus Sooner. They will begin to work together for a common purpose: completing OCS Phase 1 requirements and eventually earning their second lieutenant gold bar.

During Phase 1, candidates need to pass several requirements. Halfway through the 15-day course, candidates have completed a five-mile road march and successfully passed several written exams. Later they conduct field operation training for day and night land navigation exams. All candidates will complete a leadership cycle where they are expected to lead a squad, platoon or company and each must teach a warrior task battle drill.

Candidates will be pushed to their limits. It will take resilience, courage and teamwork.

We will “work together to make it through,” said Officer Candidate Brittini McCoy, Little Rock, Ark.

OCS instructors hope to develop Soldiers into assertive, confident and knowledgeable leaders who can successfully take charge of a platoon and lead them in combat. It is the beginning of a process that will take many candidates a year or longer. But the end is closer than it feels and soon each candidate will become a member of a select group, that of a U.S. Army Officer.

FEMA debuts new course for Emergency Response Communicators

By **Sharon Watson**
Public Affairs Office

Twenty-one public information officers from across the nation took part in the first ever Master Public Information Officer course offered by FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute Aug. 6-10. The course has been two years in the making and is designed for public information officers and external affairs officers involved in the critical role of communicating to the public in an emergency.

Phil Politano, EMI training specialist and course manager, managed the design of the five-day course along with a team of experts in instructional design, crisis communication and management techniques. The course goal is to help public information officers involved in large-scale responses better understand the needs of the many audiences with which they must work and the strategies needed to be successful in such difficult environments.

The course evolved from discussions with public information officers who continued to request more training after participating in a Basic PIO course in their states and EMI’s Advanced PIO course.

“This is what’s next. It is different, it is intense, it is high-level training and educa-

tion for today’s external affairs officer,” said Politano.

Students attending this first course offering included city, county and state public information officers from a variety of fields, such as law enforcement, police, health and emergency management.

“Participating in the Master Public Information Officer training enabled me to think of my public information program from a more strategic level, rather than merely focusing on the day-to-day tasks of issuing media releases and responding to interview requests,” said David Gervino, emergency management coordinator, DuPage County (Ill.) Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. “This ‘big picture’ thinking will make it possible for me to implement changes that will significantly improve my overall program.”

Politano hopes this course will help the emergency response community see the critical role of public information officers, a role he believes is often undervalued until a disaster or crisis occurs.

“Public information is a critical function, directly attached to incident commanders in the incident command system, yet we consistently find jurisdictions that do not understand the critical nature of the public

information function until something bad happens,” he said.

His hope is to see highly trained public

information officers become advocates for the importance of their roles so they can

(Continued on Page 16)



More than 20 public information officers from across the nation took part in the first ever Master Public Information Officer course offered by FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Md., Aug. 6-10. (Photo by Sharon Watson, Public Affairs Office)

635th Regional Support Group leads multinational exercise

By Michael H. Mathewson
635th Regional Support Group UPAR

Golden Coyote is a long-running National Guard, Reserve and Multinational exercise conducted at Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D. The 635th Regional Support Group, out of Hutchinson, Kan., served as the command element for Golden Coyote 2012 during the first portion of the exercise June 3-11. The 635th RSG’s administrative section operated the Reception Staging Onward-Movement and Integration site. Operating out of the James Kjerstad Event Center, the administrative section processed more than 2,000 National Guard Soldiers from Arizona, Connecticut, Kentucky, Nebraska and South Dakota National Guard; Naval and Army reservists; Department of the Army civilians and soldiers from Australia, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, Suriname and the United Kingdom.

Training with the Kansans was Canadian Master Cpl. Trayton Turner. Turner is the senior administrative/finance clerk assigned to 40 Canadian Brigade Group Headquarters, Calgary, Alberta. During his time with Golden Coyote 2012, Turner will celebrate his 19th year of military service, 12 years in infantry and seven in administrative/finance.

“I am here to observe the exercise to see how the units

are being received and how we could aid in future exercise integration,” said Turner.

While at the RSOI site, Turner conducted hands-on training of every part of the RSOI process, from checking in arriving units, scanning ID cards of individual servicemembers, to safety briefing and finally insuring that all the personnel accountability reports were correct at the end of the shift.

“It was a good experience working with the master corporal,” said Staff Sgt. George Villarreal, RSOI noncommissioned officer in charge. “I learned a few things about the Canadian way of doing business.”

“I hope that he is able to take back knowledge that will help with the next group of Canadians next year,” said Villarreal.

“It is exciting to be able to share knowledge and experience,” said Capt. Courtney Langley, officer in charge of the administrative section of the 635th RSG, “Whether if it is with the Master Corporal Larsen working with the RSOI or with Danish Lieutenant Johnny Larsen in the Tactical Operating Center.”

“It was a great pleasure to have had the chance to work with these professional Soldiers from Kansas,” said Turner. “I am sure that what I have learned will be beneficial to our future close interaction.”



Staff Sgt. George Villarreal, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Reception Staging Onward-Movement and Integration site and member of the 635th Regional Support Group, explains the working of the Tactical Personnel System to Master Cpl. Trayton Turner, 41 Canadian Brigade Group. Turner is the senior administration/finance clerk for the 41 CBG. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, 635th Regional Support Group UPAR)

635th RSG provides Tactical Operations Center at Golden Coyote

By Staff Sgt. Cheryl Larson, Sgt. Iris Marston,
Sgt. Michael Mathewson
635th Regional Support Group UPARs

For the first two weeks in June, the 635th Regional Support Group, based out of Hutchinson, Kan., served as the brigade level support element for Golden Coyote 2012. Golden Coyote is a long-running National Guard, Reserve and multinational forces exercise conducted at Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D.

Golden Coyote 2012 had participants from Arizona, Connecticut, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska and South Dakota National Guards; Naval and Army reservists; Department of the Army civilians and soldiers from Australia, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, Suriname and the United Kingdom.

Although the exercise training mission involved counterinsurgency and humanitarian aid to a fictional country, in the real world the individual units developed their own scenario-driven training. Selected elements, such as engineering units, while training to build roads or constriction levees for flood control, helped improved the infrastructure of local Black Hills communities.

Col. John Campbell, commander of the 635th RSG, and resident of Hutchinson, established the Tactical Operations Center to ensure that each unit had what they needed to support their training. The TOC was around-the-clock operation with working stations for over 30 staff and noncommissioned officers and a briefing area for the brigade commander.

“Getting Soldiers here a place to sleep and out to their training sites is our primary mission,” said Campbell. “There has been great cooperation between the 635th, the Joint Forces Headquarters-South Dakota and the 109th Regional Support Group. In most aspects, everything is going well.”

The Kansans in the TOC worked closely with foreign nationals.

“I enjoy working with the coalition forces. The [intelli-

gence] officer is Maj. Jan Fisher, from Denmark,” said Sgt. 1st Class David Reece, noncommissioned officer in charge of the intelligence section of the 635th RSG. “We get along very well, sharing notes on how each country would handle different situations.”

Maj. Sheree Holmes, New Zealand Army Reserve, observed the ongoing training for possible use by the New Zealand Army Reserve, while working in the TOC’s logistics section.

“The signal squadron has not had a chance to set up their (communications equipment),” explained Holmes. “With only one brigade to support, there is no need to do so.

Drought, wildfires plague the nation

Continued from Page 8


Doniphan, Douglas, Edwards, Ellis, Ellsworth, Ford, Franklin, Gove, Graham, Grant, Greenwood, Hamilton, Hodgeman, Jackson, Johnson, Kearny, Labette, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Logan, Lyon, Marion, McPherson, Meade, Miami, Montgomery, Morton, Neosho, Ness, Norton, Osborne, Pawnee, Phillips, Pottawatomie, Rawlins, Rooks, Rush, Russell, Saline, Sheridan, Sherman, Smith, Stanton, Stevens, Thomas, Trego, Washington, Woodson and Wyandotte Counties.

Several counties and cities are operating under a burn permit system where open burning is allowed with the proper permit. Permits are only issued if an inspection is conducted first and the county fire marshal deems it is safe. Several cities are operating under the same permit system.

The Kansas Division of Emergency Management is urging all Kansans to use common sense during these conditions. Do not leave barbecue pits and other open flames unattended. Keep a hose or water bucket handy. Make sure all smoking materials are completely extinguished.

“It only takes a little spark to set off a wildfire,” said Morgan. “Make sure you don’t provide that spark.”

For up to date information of burn pabans please go to <http://kansastag.gov/KDE M.asp?PageID=460>.



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These resources are for all KSNG Service Members and their families regardless of their duty status.

Aviation legend has advice for cadets

By Technical Flight Officer Marah Carney
77th Composite Squadron Civil Air Patrol Public Affairs

During the 2012 Civil Air Patrol Kansas Wing Conference, held over Memorial Day weekend at Kansas Wing Headquarters, Civil Air Patrol cadets met with other members and World War II aviation legend, Civil Air Patrol Col. Mary Feik.

Feik made an appearance early morning May 26 at the conference’s general session. Surrounded by cadets, Feik showed pictures of her working on various aircraft and shared stories of her as a seven-year-old girl working with her father in his mechanic shop.

Feik turned to aircraft engines and military aircraft at the age of 18 and taught aircraft maintenance to crew chiefs and mechanics for the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1942. During World War II, Feik became an expert on many military aircraft and is credited with becoming the first woman engineer in research and development in the Air Technical Service Command’s Engineering Division at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio.

Feik has flown more than 6,000 hours as pilot in fighter, attack, bomber, cargo and training aircraft. She qualified as a B-29 flight engineer and was an engineering analyst in test aircraft for flight and maintenance requirements.

After the general session, Feik handed out certificates to cadets who have achieved the Feik Award. The award is presented to a cadet for achieving the third level of the cadet program and the rank of Cadet/Senior Airman.

“Aim high and follow your dreams,” Feik said to the cadets.

Feik referred to herself as a “wrench-bender” with a firm handshake and urged the cadets to develop a firm handshake to insure a good first impression.

At the conference’s formal banquet, Feik presented a slideshow of pictures, beginning with her time as a mechanic for the Army Air Corps during World War II.

She also discussed her introduction to Civil Air Patrol and her encounter with former World War II Civil Air Patrol coastal patroller Jack Mosley, who also was the writer of the Smiling Jack comic strip. On greeting her, Mosley would say the acronym, CAVU, which stands for clear air, visibility unlimited.

Feik ended her presentation discussing her involvement in restoring aircraft for various aviation museums. She retired from the National Air and Space Museum’s Paul E. Garber Restoration Facility as a restoration specialist. She restores and teaches the restoration of antique and classic aircraft and has participated in the construction of reproduction World War I aircraft. At the Garber Facility, she was a member of the restoration teams that restored National Air and Space Museum’s 1910 Wiseman-Cook aircraft, the World War I Spad XIII fighter and the 1930 Northrop “Alpha” mail plane.



Veteran aviator Civil Air Patrol Col. Mary Feik (center) shares her experiences through photographs with Civil Air Patrol cadets following the end of the general session of the Kansas Wing annual conference in Salina, Kan., May 26. (Photo by Civil Air Patrol Capt. Michael Mathewson, Kansas Wing Public Affairs Officer)

Join the Civil Air Patrol

The Kansas Wing of the Civil Air Patrol is looking for teens 12 to 18 years of age and adults to join our current volunteers in our important missions. The Civil Air Patrol is an auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force.

Go to www.kswg.cap.gov for a Civil Air Patrol Squadron near you



Col. Rick Franz assumes command of the Civil Air Patrol’s Kansas Wing

By Capt. Michael H. Mathewson
Kansas Wing Civil Air Patrol

The Kansas Wing of the Civil Air Patrol changed its leadership over the Memorial Day weekend. Civil Air Patrol Col. Rick Franz, incoming commander and resident of Salina, Kan., assumed command of the Kansas Wing from Civil Air Patrol Col. Regena Aye, outgoing commander and resident of Osage City, Kan., in a ceremony May 26, at the Courtyard by Marriott, Salina, Kan.

The ceremony was conducted during a banquet following a full day of activities. The morning was spent with the annual wing conference. More than 100 Wing senior members and cadets were in attendance. The key speaker for the morning was Civil Air Patrol Maj. Gen. Charles L. “Chuck” Carr, Jr. the national commander of Civil Air Patrol. He leads more than 61,000 volunteers in fulfillment of the organization’s three congressionally chartered missions: emergency services, cadet programs and aerospace education, as well as Civil Air Patrol steadily increasing role in America’s homeland security. He gave an overview of the current status of the Civil Air Patrol and plans for its future.

Follow the business portion of the conference, Col. Mary Feik, an aviation legend, met with all the cadets present. The third cadet achievement level is named for Feik. She showed pictures of her working on various aircraft and shared stories of her as a seven-year-old girl working with her father in his mechanic shop. Feik was also the keynote speaker during the evening banquet.

After the change of command ceremony, the new commander expressed his feelings on taking command.

“As our wing continues in its journey, we are building on the foundation that has been laid by those who have gone before us,” said Franz, “following the course that has been set by our national commander and looking for-



Civil Air Patrol Maj. Gen. Charles L. “Chuck” Carr Jr. (left), the national commander of Civil Air Patrol, administers the oath of office to Civil Air Patrol Col. Rick Franz, incoming Kansas Wing commander, at the Courtyard by Marriott, Salina, Kan. May 26. (Courtesy photo)

ward to challenges ahead.”

“Serving as wing commander was a wonderful experience,” said Aye. “The hardworking, dedicated members of Kansas Wing are among the finest in the nation. I am honored to have served with them and I can’t tell you how much I learned from the experience.”

“I have many fond memories from my term as wing commander she continued. I wish Col. Franz the best as he embarks on a similar journey. When a like-minded group of dynamic people put their mind to it, there is little that cannot be accomplished.”

Franz began his Civil Air Patrol career as cadet from Concord, Calif., in 1968. He remained a cadet after moving to Hobbs, N.M., until he joined the U.S. Air Force in January 1974. Even while in the Air Force, Franz was a CAP senior member, active in the Missouri, Tennessee, Texas and South Dakota wings. Prior to assuming command, he was serving as the wing chief of staff and director of logistics.

Franz, and his wife, Civil Air Patrol Maj. Theda Franz, have three chil-

dren: Civil Air Patrol Maj. Carolyn Franz; Civil Air Patrol Capt. David Franz; and Seaman First Class Daniel Franz, U.S. Navy.

Aye joined the Civil Air Patrol in 1989 as a cadet in the Capital City Composite Squadron in Topeka, Kan. As a cadet, she participated in the cadet advisory council, numerous encampments and national cadet special activities. She earned the Spaatz Award, the cadet program’s highest achievement award, in November 1992. She then became a senior member and later served as commander of Emporia Composite Squadron. She served as North Central Region director of Cadet Programs and Drug Demand Reduction Coordinator before becoming the Kansas Wing commander in May 2008. She is now responsible for managing the Kansas Wing’s resources and leading its volunteers.

In her professional life, she serves as the Dean for Online Learning at Allen Community College. She has also served as an Exemplary Course reviewer and as a member of the Blackboard Idea Exchange, a client advisory council.

FEMA debuts new course for Emergency Response Communicators

Continued from Page 14
more effectively prepare their community before and during an emergency.

“The role of a public information officer, like all public safety folks, needs to be looked at from all the different phases of emergency management,” Politano added. “We can save as many lives through prevention as we can when an emergency occurs.”

A team of five instructors, who have all worked large-scale disasters or crisis communication issues, facilitated discussions throughout the week-long training. Topics included managing a Joint Information Center where messages are coordinated for multiple jurisdictions, communicating with various stakeholders and vulnerable populations, and developing communication strategies and training for public information issues.

Instructors emphasized the sphere of influence public information officers have in their community as the face of a disaster response and the voice of an issue and they encouraged students to continue to educate their organizations about their critical role.

“The Master PIO class was an outstanding opportunity to help develop the next generation of forward strategic thinking public information officers, especially when it comes to disaster preparedness,” said Thomas Iovino, an instructor who serves as the public information specialist for Pinellas County, Fla.

Students in the class reflected on the benefits of the course and what they would take with them when they returned to work.

“The significance of this course will be measured on a daily basis for years to come,” said Gale Blumenkamp, public information officer, Boone County Fire Protection District, Columbia, Mo. “In the event of a major disaster

or crisis event, it will pay dividends tenfold back to my community.”

“The level of training offered in this course has provided me with a new perspective and commitment to communicate with our stakeholders, whether it’s for a city program or a life-saving message,” said Annie DeChance, City of Scottsdale (Ariz.) Water Department public information officer.

But the course isn’t over for the first group of Master PIO participants. They must each complete a research paper on an issue in public information that can be implemented in their own jurisdictions.

“This program is providing an opportunity for public information officers to not only demonstrate their skills, but serve as role models for others through development of a base of knowledge that can be accessed by others,” said Scott Barthelmass, public information officer for the Eureka Fire Protection District, St. Louis, Mo.

“With today’s public demand for instant communication, it’s reassuring that our federal partners are recognizing the value of emergency public information and external affairs,” said Dan Kochensparger, public information officer for Upper Arlington (Ohio) Fire Division.

“There is really no significant body of knowledge for emergency management public information officers, telling them what they need to know to face the challenges, and we believe we can provide that by the research students in this class do,” Politano explained. “This is modeled after the National Fire Academy’s very successful Executive Fire Officer Program, which really looks for cutting edge information for a body of knowledge for that audience.”

Politano hopes the sharing of ideas and circumstances, both in the class and the research project, will provide a new level of resources for public information officers not previously available.

Over \$30,000 raised in 2011 Combined Federal Campaign

Courtesy Story

Heartland Combined Federal Campaign

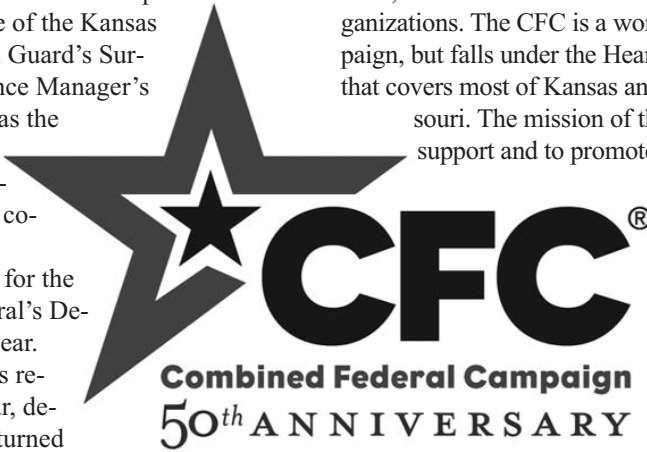
The 2011 Heartland Combined Federal Campaign, which ran from Sept. 28 to Nov. 10, 2011, successfully raised over \$30,000. Lt. Col. Tony Divish and Capt. Aleshia Bedore of the Kansas Army National Guard’s Surface Maintenance Manager’s Office, served as the Heartland Combined Federal Campaign co-ordinator and co-coordinator for the Adjutant General’s Department this year.

The generous response this year, despite the downturned economy, was overwhelming. An increase of \$17,000 over last year’s donation of \$13,880 earned the Adjutant General’s Department special recognition in the CFC award category “Achieving the Highest Dollar Growth over 2010 in the 50-499 Employees Category.” Additionally this year, 12 federal employees received recognition at the Eagle Award level for donating more than \$1,000. For their generosity they received an eagle statue engraved with their

name.

The CFC, celebrating its 50th year in 2011, is an annual fundraising drive that provides an opportunity for federal civilian, postal and military employees to donate to local, national and international nonprofit organizations. The CFC is a world-wide campaign, but falls under the Heartland Chapter that covers most of Kansas and western Missouri. The mission of the CFC is to support and to promote philanthropy through a program that is employee-focused, cost efficient and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. State employees run a parallel campaign with this year’s representative headed by Leah Babcock.

Federal employees can choose from 3001 organizations to benefit from their contribution. Employees are encouraged to participate again during the 2012 campaign, which will begin soon. For more information about the CFC, visit their website www.heartlandcfc.org.



Regional Training Site- Maintenance receives awards

By Sgt. 1st Class Harrison McWhorter Jr.
Regional Training Site – Maintenance UPAR

The Regional Training Site – Maintenance in Salina, Kan., celebrated the 200th Anniversary of the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps May 17, by recognizing several of its instructors with the Lt. Gen. Levin Hicks Campbell Jr. Award of Merit.

In March 2012, units from Fort Riley, Kan., contacted Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brent Campbell, senior instructor, and Master Sgt. John Duerr, chief instructor at the RTS-M in Salina, Kan., with a request to conduct a Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Course in April 2012 for Soldiers that were identified as needing the “H8” Additional Skill Identifier in preparation for supporting upcoming deployments. The RTS-M instructors were excited about the opportunity to conduct this requested training for the active duty Soldiers.

After this request was approved through the Army National Guard, Individual Training Branch, the training was conducted April 2-12, at the Kansas RTS-M school house location. These instructors worked tirelessly to prepare vehicles, classrooms and the recovery training site in order to meet Fort Riley’s request. These instructors conducted this training alongside each student through undesirable weather conditions and sacrificed spending time with their families to continue training through the Easter weekend in order to meet their objectives. The Soldiers are now properly trained and prepared to conduct Wheel Vehicle Recovery operations no matter what environment they find themselves in.

These instructors have displayed and projected constant professionalism and placed other Soldier’s needs above their own. Their selfless actions and commitment to training are true attributes of what “Ordnance” Soldiers provide to the United States Army and the Department of Defense.



(Front row) Sgt. 1st Class Jay Strickland, Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Russell, (back row) Sgt. 1st Class Morton Griggs, Staff Sgt. Jack Jackson and Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Eller, instructors of the Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Course at the Regional Training Site – Maintenance in Salina, Kan., were recognized and awarded the Lt. Gen. Levin Hicks Campbell Jr. Award of Merit. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Harrison McWhorter Jr., Regional Training Site – Maintenance UPAR)

What Your Contribution to CFC Can Provide to Our Community

\$2.00 per pay period provides:

- Handbooks to train volunteers to speak up for abused and neglected children in court
- Food for two shelter dogs for a month



\$4.00 a pay period provides:

- 100 hours of activities for seniors at Guadeloupe Center
- 136 meals to low-income individuals
- 72 meals delivered to homebound elderly
- Helps a veteran's child attend college

\$5.00 a pay period provides:

- A complete platelet count for two children going through cancer treatment

\$6.00 a pay period provides:

- Send a child to camp for four days
- Five nights of shelter for a homeless person
- Provide noon meals for 90 seniors
- 10 winter coats for kids to know them
- 497 meals delivered to low-income elderly people
- Provide a standard size wheelchair for a disabled individual
- Back to school supplies for four children
- 2.5 children's physical exams and immunizations
- 2.5 hours physical therapy at a child with Cerebral Palsy
- 720 meals to emergency food recipients from a food pantry
- A month's worth of medications for an elderly client at the Salvation Army
- 150 trees planted by volunteers



\$8.00 per pay period provides:

- Help protect an entire “prairie pothole” wetland home for ducklings, songbirds, endangered species and other wildlife.



\$18.00 per pay period provides:

- Clothing for three homeless children

\$20.00 a pay period provides:

- A ten month supply of nutritional supplements to help a patient fighting cancer
- Hot meals five days a week for six months through the Meals on Wheels program



\$25.00 per pay period provides:

- A school uniform for 12 children

Third time’s a charm for 108th’s James Peeler



Many Soldiers stood in formation to show their support for a long-awaited promotion for Sgt. 1st Class James Peeler, a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, during their deployment to Kuwait, May 18.

After the deployment, Peeler will take his place with the newly activated 369th Brigade Signal Company in Kansas City, Kan. There he will be the company’s noncommissioned officer in charge for the communications shop.

Peeler and his wife have long waited for his place among the E-8 ranks.

“I couldn’t believe it,” said his wife, Bettina Peeler, who had seen him almost promoted a few times before. There had been a few times that whispers along the grapevine spoke of a possible first sergeant slot opening in the communication field in the Kansas National Guard. Unfortunately, none of those rumors ever came to fruition. In fact, his wife didn’t believe he was finally promoted until she saw a picture of it posted on the unit’s Facebook page.

Peeler waited 31 years for his promotion to master sergeant, resting for nine years as a sergeant first class. But this promotion isn’t going to mean something new and foreign. For seven of those years as a sergeant first class he was the noncommissioned officer in charge of the communications shop in the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment. During that time he also filled in as an acting first sergeant in his unit for a little more than a year. And for three years before that, during any and all field exercises, he was doing everything a field first sergeant would do to support and lead his unit and his troops.

When a first sergeant slot ever opens, in his own new unit or across Kansas, Peeler is positive he will then be the next one to step up and finally wear that diamond with pride and confidence. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Megan Grauer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment UPAR)

Jones named distinguished graduate

By Maj. Alma Whitelaw
Judge Advocate

1st Lt. Allen R. Jones II was named the 186th distinguished graduate of the Judge Advocate Officer Basic Course. Jones is currently assigned as a trial defense counselor in the 287th Sustainment Brigade, surpassed 130 Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard judge advocates in the 186th JAOBC with his selection as the distinguished graduate by demonstrating an overall academic excellence in his course of study. The Judge Advocate General Legal Center and School annotated that “First Lieutenant Jones’ professional performance is considered outstanding,” further noting that Jones received separate academic honors for exceeding course standards regarding the criminal law block of instruction.

Lt. Col. Kenneth Gully, Kansas Army National Guard Staff Judge Advocate, stated “We congratulate First Lieutenant Jones for being honored as the distinguished gradu-

ate for the 186th JAOBC.” Each JAOBC names only one student as the “Distinguished Graduate.” The student with the highest overall average normally will be designated as the distinguished graduate. That student must have demonstrated not only academic superiority, but also excelled in research and writing, oral communication skills and successfully mastered all general military related standards.

Jones received a direct commissioned into the Kansas Army National Guard in 2010. In his civilian law practice, he is an associate with Bryan Cave LLP in Kansas City where he practices in the area of commercial litigation. While attending law school at the University of Kansas, Jones served as copy editor for the University of Kansas Law Review.

Jones resides in Liberty, Mo., with his wife, Kristine, and their five children, Allen, Abby, Caleb, Eliza and Joshua.



1st Lt. Allen Jones II, a trial defense counselor with Trail Defense Services, 287th Sustainment Brigade, confers with his supervisor Maj. Kimberly Bishop, senior defense counselor with Trail Defense Services, 287th Sust. Bde., over a legal issue, July 8, 2012. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

American Legion welcomes home Battery A, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery

Courtesy Story
American Legion Post 47

Soldiers from Battery A, 1st Battalion,161st Field Artillery received a warm welcome home at the Dodge City American Legion June 2, 2012. The battalion, headquartered in Wichita, Kan., consists of three firing batteries, including Battery A in Dodge City. The battalion mobilized



Charles Sellens, American Legion adjutant for Post 47, addresses Soldiers and supporters of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery during a Welcome Home dinner sponsored by the American Legion at the Dodge City American Legion June 2, 2012. (Photo by Margaret Butcher)

in February 2011 for deployment to Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti. It returned to the U.S. in February 2012.

The event was organized by Dan Stacy, American Legion Rider director, with many Legion Riders participating. Members from Dodge City Legion Post 47, Legion Post 47 Auxiliary and the Patriot Guard also participated in the event. Members from the general public signed a banner at the armory parking lot prior to the Legion Riders and the Patriot Guard escorting Guard members to the American Legion building on South 14th Avenue. Supporters lined the parade route to show their appreciation to the Soldiers for their service to their country.

Charles Sellens, American Legion adjutant, was the keynote speaker at the reception. Sellens paraphrased Shakespeare by saying, “We come here today not to just welcome you home, but to praise you. Words of praise are scant payment for the service that each of you have rendered for your country and state.”

Sellens described concrete examples of recognition of their service.

“There is legislation that ensures your job was waiting for you when you returned,” said Sellens. “There are college education benefits for you to consider. State statutes give you preference for employment opportunities with the state of Kansas and cities and counties in Kansas. This small reception is only the latest effort to show appreciation for your service.”

Special guests included Phillip Thompson, sergeant at arms of the Legion Riders, a Legion member and a specialist in Btry. A, 1-161st FA; Capt. Lance Fowler, battery commander; 1st Lt. Ryan Strokamp, executive officer; 1st Lt. Nicholas Carlson, platoon leader; and 1st Sgt. Brent Wallace, first sergeant of Btry. A, 1-161st FA.

Those present enjoyed a delicious dinner that featured roast beef donated by Cargill. After the meal, Fowler spoke to the assembly focusing his remarks of appreciation to those who organized and participated in the reception.

“I especially appreciate all of those who helped make this event a success,” said Stacy. “I’m sure I speak for everyone when I say that we recognize and appreciate the sacrifices these brave Soldiers make to defend our Constitution and keep us free.”

170th Maintenance Company puts boots on ground

By Sgt. Jason Lee
170th Maintenance Company UPAR

To the Soldiers of the 170th Maintenance Company, January seemed like a long time ago. It was during that time that the 170th initially came together as a company in Salina, Kan., to start their premobilization training for their mission to Kuwait.

The company trained for three weeks in Salina, working on individual weapons qualifications, and squad and team movements, as well as other training requirements, before going to Camp Shelby, Miss., for the remainder of their premobilization process. While at Camp Shelby, the company’s mission was set and the Soldiers began to focus on the mission at hand, the security of the Sea Port of Debarkation/Embarkation just south of Kuwait City.

“The mission had changed a few times before finally being set,” said Capt. Scott Weber, commander of the 170th Maintenance Company. “It had been quite a journey and experience.”

To complete this mission, the 170th Maintenance Company received 77 additional Soldiers from the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New York National Guard and California National Guard.

“I have been most pleased by the cohesion and bonding of the company as a whole, but especially at the platoon and squad level,” said Weber. “The troops have dug in and settled into their new mission and their new life in Kuwait.”

The 170th Soldiers arrived on ground in Kuwait in April and began to conduct the mission to relieve the outgoing 125th Field Artillery, a Minnesota National Guard unit that was in charge of the Sea Port of Debarkation/Embarkation security mission.

“Several difficulties lay ahead before we catch that awaited flight home, but the Soldiers are resilient, determined and well prepared to meet all challenges head on,” said Weber. “We will prevail with flying colors.”

The 170th Maintenance Company provides around-the-clock security for the Sea Port of Debarkation/Embarkation. The Soldiers check everyone entering the Sea Port for proper identification, as well as provide the port with a Quick Reaction Force to ensure that the safety of the equipment and personnel are protected.

“Our Soldiers understand the importance of the mission at hand and work hard to maintain the standard that the Kansas National Guard is very capable of doing,” said 1st Sgt. Scott Williamson, the 170th Maintenance Company’s senior noncommissioned officer. “We are becoming a well-oiled machine and we are ready to see our mission through to the end.”



Sgt. John Quintal, Junction City, Kan., a small arms/artillery repairer with the 170th Support Maintenance Company (Forward), looks at the identification of personnel preparing to enter the pier at the Sea Port of Debarkation/Embarkation, a port just south of Kuwait City, May 23. (Photo by Sgt. Jason Lee, 170th Maintenance Company UPAR)

Kansas National Guard aids International Officers' visit

By Staff Sgt. Heather Wright
35th Infantry Division Public Affairs

More than 65 officers from over 60 different countries spent July 19 in the state capital learning about Kansas state government and meeting state officials. Lt. Col. Brent Salmans, International Affairs officer, facilitated the International Military Education Training program's class meeting with Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback and Brig. Gen. Eric Peck, commander of the Kansas Army National Guard and Assistant Adjutant General - Army. The visit was part of a broader effort of the IMET Field Studies Program at Fort Leavenworth to expose international military students to the American way of governing.

"This is one small part of an overall effort to provide a good experience for the future leaders of their countries," said Salmans. "They get a chance to see the interaction of the state government and the National Guard. Perhaps they can use what they learn here today to positively impact their countries in the future."

After an informal breakfast at Memorial Hall, the group was greeted by Peck, who gave a brief presentation on the Kansas National Guard and how the state military organizations differ from federal military organizations. After the presentation, students were given the chance to ask questions. Most were curious about the differences in funding and interaction between the two organizations.

Following Peck's presentation, Kansas Deputy Secretary of State Ryan Kriegshauser gave the group an overview of the differences and similarities between the state and federal government systems. An example is the difference between the office of the Federal Secretary of State which focuses on foreign policy and the Kansas Secretary of State's office which acts as a public forum and focuses on state elections and business filings.

The group was then treated to a tour of the Judicial Building, the Capitol and a meeting with Brownback.

"Welcome to Kansas. For those of you from the Middle East and Africa, it's not so hot," joked Brownback, referring to the recent heat wave in the Midwest. He explained the significance of the John Brown mural before posing with the group for a photo in front of the famous piece. The governor and the group then traveled to the Kansas State History Museum for lunch.

Immediately following lunch, and before heading back to Fort Leavenworth, the class was given a Native American presentation and time to explore the museum.

"This is the first time I get to know how other countries think, make decisions and plans," said Israel representative Lt. Col. Uzi Klieger, referring to both the state government visit and the military school.

Over the years, many of the International Officer students have gone on to key positions in their nations. Twenty-six have become heads of state, 300 have become ministers, ambassadors or representatives, more than 2,300 have become general officers in the armies of the world, while more than 300 have become chiefs of staff of their armed forces.

The tradition of International Officers attending the General Staff Officer College began in 1894. This year marks the 117th year International Officers have attended Fort Leavenworth. Since 1894, more than 7,000 officers from 153 countries have come for training.



International officers of the current International Military Education Training class pose for a picture with Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback in front of the John Brown mural after their tour of the Capitol in Topeka, Kan., July 19, 2012. (Photo by Sgt. Mike Mathewson, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

190th Air Refueling Wing dedicates new facility



Maj. Gen. Lee Tafarielli, the adjutanat general, and Col. Ron Krueger, commander of the 190th Air Refueling Wing, cut the ribbon to the wing's newest facility, the Squadron Operations Building, during an official dedication ceremony at Forbes Field, Topeka, Kan., April 14. The facility will house the 190th Operations Group, 190th Operations Support Flight, the 117th Air Refueling Squadron and several airfield support functions.

Construction on the \$8.6 million renovation project began in October 2010 and was completed in January 2012. Seene and Company of Topeka, served as the general contractor of the project.

"This state of the art facility is a much needed upgrade from the Cold War era building that formerly housed our Operations Group," said Col. Ronald Krueger, 190th ARW commander. "This project and other recent construction will serve the wing and the Air National Guard well into the future."

The facility was open for tours following the dedication and ribbon cutting. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mandy Johnson, 190th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs)

Kansas Guard siblings re-enlist in front of Mount Rushmore

By Staff Sgt. Cherly Larson, Sgt. Iris Marston, Sgt. Michael Mathewson
635th Regional Support Group UPAR

What better way to end two weeks of National Guard Annual training in the Black Hills of South Dakota than to extend your enlistment. What location in the Black Hills is better to do that than at Mount Rushmore? Who better to administer the oath than your younger sister?

Spc. Jason D. Nece, an information technology specialist with the 635th Regional Support Group, and resident of Hutchinson, Kan., extended his service June 14 in a ceremony at Mount Rushmore, S. D. 2nd Lt. Kathleen Nece, the intelligence officer of the 635th RSG, and resident of Hutchinson, administered the oath of re-enlistment to her brother in front of the majestic carvings of Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln.

Growing up in Houston, Texas, the family moved to Hutchinson and now both are members of the 635th Regional Support Group.

Maj. Gen. (KS) Lee Tafarielli, the adju-

tant general, was briefed on the planned extension during the command group's visit to the 635th Regional Support Group at the Golden Coyote Training Exercise and training sites associated with Camp Rapids, S.D.

"I told the TAG, that I wanted my sister to do my extension," said Spc. Nece.

Spc. Nece was a recruiter for the 635th RSG when his sister was at the end of her enlistment as an enlisted member in the active Army. He recruited her into the Kansas Army National Guard's Officer Candidate Program three years ago. Now, as an officer, it was her turn to repay the favor.

"Working toward the success of the Golden Coyote mission and being able to utilize my skill set as an (information technology specialist) was a huge contributor to my decision to stay in the Guard," said Spc. Nece. "Nothing beats working with my sister. I am very proud of my sister and her accomplishments here at the 635th."

"I am proud of my brother's decision to continue his service in the National Guard and pleased that we will be working together at the 635th Regional Support Group," said 2nd Lt. Nece.



2nd Lt. Kathleen Nece, an intelligence officer of the 635th Regional Support Group, and resident of Hutchinson, Kan., administers the oath of re-enlistment to her brother Spc. Jason D. Nece, an information technology specialist with the 635th RSG, and resident of Hutchinson, in front of Mount Rushmore, S.D., June 14. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, 635th Regional Support Group UPAR)

Kansas City Armory Reunion

Friday, Nov. 9, 2012

100 S 20th Street, Kansas City, Kan.

Doors open at 6 p.m.

RSVP to retired Sgt. Maj. Steve Gfeller
Stephen.Gfeller@att.net
or leave a message at 816-729-0247