



The Kansas National Guard’s global reach 2-3



James Brown assumes senior enlisted leader role . . 5

PLAINS GUARDIAN

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2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery displays long-range capabilities

First unit in Army to qualify on High Mobility Artillery Rocket System using long-range radio

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
Public Affairs Office

Soldiers with the Kansas Army National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, achieved a milestone during their annual training at Fort Riley, Kansas.

The Soldiers fired 36 reduced-range practice rockets from three High Mobility Artillery Rocket System rocket launchers June 14. Their fire direction orders came from the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina, Kansas, over 65 miles away, via a newly-implemented, high-frequency radio system.

“We’re the first state to certify and qualify our sections (communicating) from this distance,” said Capt. Adam Peacock, battalion fire direction officer, 2-130 FA. “We’re taking technology that’s used in Afghanistan and Iraq and we’re bringing it back stateside so we can train with it here.”

Typically, when qualifying on the HIMARS, fire-direction orders come from a tactical operations center (TOC) located in nearby geographic proximity to the firing battery.

“We’ve never been more than five minutes away from where the battery is firing,” said Maj. Chuck Leivan, executive officer, 2-130 FA. “Now, we’re over an hour away and that is a very big step for this battalion.”

As indicated by its name, the HIMARS is highly mobile and Leivan expressed the importance of communicating over vast distances.

“This radio capability is one step more than what we’ve done in the past,” he said. “We’re commanding and con-

“We’re commanding and controlling elements over 120 kilometers away. We’re really excited about that kind of capability.”
Maj. Chuck Leivan, executive officer
2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery



Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, Kansas Army National Guard, fire a practice round from a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System launcher at the artillery range at Fort Riley June 14. The fire direction orders for the launch were issued from the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina, 65 miles to the west. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

trolling elements over 120 kilometers away. We’re really excited about that kind of capability.”

The extended Soldier-to-Soldier communication range also means that the operations center doesn’t have to relocate and move along with the firing batteries, which can lead to logistical savings.

“This proves that we can fight with unified land operations in a combined-arms maneuver while the TOC is pulled back,” Peacock said. “Traditionally the TOC has to ‘jump’ and move forward to stay in communication. Now, the TOCs don’t have to jump as much, and they can focus on mission command of the battle.

“Soldier-to-Soldier communication means we can do this anywhere now. We don’t have to send a full battalion forward to a training area. We can just send firing batteries autonomously. It’s going to save the Kansas Guard a lot of money and it proves that the National Guard can compete with the active Army.”

According to Sgt. 1st Class Gerald Gibson, section chief, 2-130 FA, the firing mission was extremely realistic.

“You don’t get much better than this,” said Gibson. “With these new long range radios, we can be even farther apart. We could send a battalion to California and we could send the launchers to upstate New York and shoot, if need be.”

190th Air Refueling Wing fuels fight against Islamic State group

By Maj. Joe Blubaugh
190th Air Refueling Wing
Public Affairs Office

Members of Topeka’s 190th Air Refueling Wing recently returned home from a four-month deployment supporting contingency operations against ISIS. Throughout the deployment, aircrews provided critical aerial refueling with the wing’s KC-135R Stratotankers, an in-flight refueling aircraft. The personnel were based at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. Forbes Field Air National Guard Base is the home of the Kansas Air National Guard’s 190th ARW and nearly 1,000 full- and part-time military members.

Throughout the deployment – which started in February and ended in June – the wing flew more than 500 combat sorties and provided coalition aircraft with more than 3.5 million gallons of fuel, enough to fill approximately 230,000 cars. Aircrews logged more than 3,600 flight hours in that time as well, more flight hours in the four months than the unit normally flies in a year.

“The United States is providing 95 percent of the aerial refueling missions supporting Operation Inherent Resolve and has formed the logistical backbone of the entire operation,” said 190th ARW commander Col. Jarrod Frantz. “The men and women of the 190th Air Refueling Wing have proven time and time again that we do it



A KC-135 Stratotanker piloted by Airmen of the 190th Refueling Wing refuels an A-10 Warthog. (Archive photo)

better than anyone else and I’m extremely proud of them.”

Many of the wing members deployed are traditional Guardsmen who hold full-time jobs outside their military commitment.

“For the wing to be successful and for our Airmen to focus on their mission, we ask a lot of the companies who employ our members,” Frantz said. “We have such tremendous support from the business community and the community at-large. I could not be any more grateful for their support.”

Many of the same Airmen will deploy again within the year to support flying op-

erations in the Pacific and Southwest Asia theatres. The forecast for this record pace of operations will likely continue for the next several years, underscoring the challenge to manage an operational force while maintaining the integrity of a historically reserve force.

The 190th provides global reach for the United States Air Force through the in-flight refueling of fighters, bombers and other aircraft using its 12 KC-135 Stratotankers. It is one of the largest employers in Topeka and Shawnee County with an annual payroll of more than \$32 million.

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The International Influence of the Kansas National Guard



Soldiers and Airmen with the Kansas National Guard unload a KC-135 in Yerevan, Armenia, where they spent Aug. 1-15 renovating aging Armenian facilities as part of a Humanitarian and Civil Assistance mission.



Staff Sgt. Cody Howard, structures technician, 184th Civil Engineer Squadron, installs tile flooring at Ashtarak Hospital during an Army/Air Force Humanitarian and Civil Assistance mission in the Republic of Armenia, Aug. 1-15.

Kansas National Guard Engineers improve facilities in Armenia

Photos and story by 1st Lt. Matt Lucht
184th Intelligence Wing

As Kansas Army and Air National Guard engineers loaded a KC-135 at Forbes Field in Topeka Aug. 1, they were wearing different uniforms, but all had the same mission ahead of them.

Approximately 40 KSNG Soldiers and Airmen with the 891st Engineer Battalion, 184th Intelligence Wing and 190th Air Refueling Wing, respectively, spent 15 days on three separate projects updating bathrooms, hospital facilities and common living areas in the Republic of Armenia.

“I think that it has been a great opportunity for me, but also for the Airmen and the Soldiers to experience,” said Senior Master Sgt. Homer King, noncommissioned officer in charge of the Armenian project. “It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for them and, from what I have heard, they would come back in a heartbeat. They are all asking ‘When can we come back again?’”

The project teams were divided among three locations: an elderly institute in Yerevan, a hospital in Ashtarak and the emergency operations center for the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations. Each site had different scopes of work that the engineers had to adjust to.

“We did a lot of tile work,” said Capt. Andrew Steuterman, officer in charge of the Armenian project. “They do a lot of block and mortar repair, so that is a little different than what we are used to in the United States, with drywall and such, but we were able to adapt and overcome.”

The transformation at each facility was noticeable to the Soldiers and Airmen, but the Armenians who work and live in the areas knew that it meant more than just appearance. The upgrades for the hospital in Ashtarak, which employs 266 workers, and served 20,000 people and helped 319

new parents with births just last year, meant a better medical experience for the community.

“A couple of nurses have come in here and seen what we are doing to (the facility),” said Spc. James Fernandez, heavy equipment operator, 242nd Engineer Company. “They were almost in tears. They were so grateful to see what we are doing to their floors. It is really nice to see that kind of happiness in people.”

With just two weeks and lots of work to be done, the Soldiers and Airmen worked with one goal – complete the project.

“I think that these Soldiers and Airmen will be able to treasure this experience for the rest of their lives and the rest of their military career.”

Capt. Andrew Steuterman
Officer in charge of the Armenian renovation projects

“They enjoy working and I see it in every one of them,” said 1st Lt. Justin Briggs, officer in charge of the elderly institute project. “They are here working hard and even working late, if need be. Last night, we worked a little late, but the morale is high today. We give them the opportunity, we get the material here, give them a little bit of guidance and they are on it.”

This mission involved both Army and Air Force engineers working shoulder to shoulder – a testament to the

joint operating force that is the Kansas National Guard.

“With the Army and the Air mixing together, it was a 60/40 mix, it has been a great opportunity,” said King. “I think that there has been a lot more learning than just the hands-on training side-by-side.”

“We are all Soldiers here, we are working together great,” said Briggs. “There hasn’t been a lot of cliques. You might think that the Air Force would be hanging out with Air Force and Army would be hanging out with Army. It’s not the way that it is.”

“It is really nice getting to work with some of the Army guys,” said Airman 1st Class Bryce Schroeder, structures technician, 184th Civil Engineer Squadron. “They brought a lot to the table and a lot of them are very capable in their job and we are getting a lot done. A couple of them are teaching me new stuff every day. It is really nice to stretch that boundary and get to work with another branch. It is nice to take a step back and look at what we have accomplished even in this short amount of time already.”

The two weeks spent upgrading facilities in the Republic of Armenia will be an experience that the engineers can share with others.

“I think that it is going to be a trip that they are going to be talking about for the next two years,” said King. “I also think that it is going to be one that they are going to be telling their grandkids about. They are going to say, ‘I remember when I went to Armenia many years ago.’”

“I feel like coming over here, so new in my career, has been a huge benefit to me,” said Schroeder. “I have seen a lot of stuff that we don’t have back home, the way that things are set up and built. I have learned a couple new ways of doing things that I already knew how to do. I have just broadened my horizons so much being able to come here.”



Staff Sgt. Luke Groom prepares material for Davit Tonoyan, Armenia’s Deputy Ministry of Defense, as he places a tile on the wall in the bathroom at the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations work project. Tonoyan visited with Kansas National Guard Soldiers and Airmen while they renovated bathrooms, hospital facilities and common living areas at three separate worksites.



Spc. Jonathon Schulz, 35th Military Police, and Tech. Sgt. Melissa Hildago Mendez, 190th Medical Group, lay new flooring at the Elderly Institute in Yerevan, Armenia, Aug. 5. The joint Army and Air Force mission involved three separate construction projects in Armenia improving facilities and amenities for the local Armenians.



Kansas Guard and Armenia Peacekeeping forces prep for NATO evaluation

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
Public Affairs Office

The stark landscape of the Zar Mountain Training Center, near Yerevan, Armenia, provided the ideal proving ground for Armenian Peacekeeping soldiers to prepare for an upcoming NATO evaluation with assistance from nine counterparts with the Kansas National Guard July 27-Aug. 7.

The soldiers are preparing for level two of the combat readiness evaluation, which will take place in September 2015. It is the culminating event of a lengthy process that will validate Armenia as a NATO partner and will put Armenia on equal footing with other NATO partner nations.

“Instead of being a subordinate unit during NATO peacekeeping operations, they could actually run bases and be partner nation at the same level as the other NATO countries,” said Kansas Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. Greg Kober, NATO Operational Capabilities Concept evaluator.

To prepare, the soldiers rehearsed medical techniques and field procedures; infantry movements and drills; convoy operations; crowd and riot control; civil-military co-operation. The staff refined logistical practices and perfected documentation and doctrine.

“Tactically and technically, they’ve got skills and they can do a lot of the stuff we would expect them to do,” said Maj. Rodney Seaba, who served as a subject matter expert on infantry and intelligence operations. “But the certification just gives them credibility worldwide.”

Kober said that Armenia has come a long way in a relatively short amount of time.

“Part of the NATO criteria is they must speak English,” Kober said. “I’ve been doing this about 10-12 years now. In our first visits there was limited English used, but now most of the officers and noncommissioned officers and some of the junior soldiers speak English.”

The NATO event is just a small part of the decade-plus relationship Kansas and Armenia have enjoyed as part of the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program.

As partners, lessons learned go both ways.

“As much information, knowledge and military experience we gain from them,” said Armenian Capt. Tigran Hunanyan, “we also have things that they are interested in and would like to know about us as a different culture and military.”

Those differences can be an essential reminder of what’s truly important.

“When I look at the (Armenian) soldiers out here and see how motivated they are and how hard they’re working, it makes me want to go home and do the same stuff,” said Seaba. “It’s a reminder that training really is the most important thing.”

Working side by side, there is more to the Kansas-Armenia partnership than just training.

“It’s not just about military, it’s also about personal relationships that we’re establishing for the future and for now too,” said Hunanyan. “It’s a great opportunity for us and our (Kansas) counterparts to work together and to learn from each other. If we keep sharing with each other, that will enhance our cultural imagination of one another and will also make us better soldiers.”



Maj. Tom Warth, right, observes soldiers with the Armenian Peacekeeping Brigade as they rehearse moving in a wedge formation at the Zar Mountain Training Center, Zar, Armenia, Aug. 6. Warth was one of nine Kansas National Guardsmen who traveled to Armenia to assist the Armenian Peacekeeping forces prepare for a major NATO evaluation in September 2015. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)



Master Sgt. Jason Schell takes time after his work day to play with children at an orphanage in Daugavpils, Latvia. The 190th Civil Engineering Squadron, Forbes Field, Topeka, renovated the orphanage in partnership with the Latvian government and Latvian Army engineers.

Orphanage construction builds friendships in Latvia

Coyotes engineer a better life for Latvian children

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Allen Pickert
190th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs Office

The 190th Air Refueling Wing’s Civil Engineering Squadron spent most of June in Daugavpils, Latvia, working with Latvian military engineers renovating an orphanage.

Funded by European Command, this humanitarian civic assistance project is designed to improve relations with the host country while practicing military cooperation. In this instance, it also happens to improve the facilities and lives of 53 Latvian orphans.

The project included major improvements to the building from the foundation to the roof, and everything in between. The more than 40 member team also included eight Latvian Army engineers.

“The different systems and language posed a real challenge the first couple of days,” said Staff Sgt. Aaron Rowley, a first time deployer. “But we made it work.”

They truly made it work because after the first few days, the local Latvian contractors began thinking of extra projects for our engineers because they did not expect the Americans to be so proficient in their construction skills.

Rowley was also impressed by the CES teamwork, saying it was one of his favorite things about the whole trip.

The entire CES team voluntarily came to the orphanage on one of their days off to give toys and gifts to the orphans, and lend their muscle to some extra clean-up projects the orphanage needed.

The teamwork and relations built at the work site in Daugavpils continued in Medumi, Latvia, where the team stayed in an empty schoolhouse. Much of the relationship building continued through the international language of soccer.

“Maybe you couldn’t talk to each other before playing, but on the soccer field it showed we are all alike, and I liked showing the ethnic Russians that we can work to-



Maj. Noah Diehl makes friends with the children at the orphanage in Daugavpils, Latvia, June 8.

gether and be friends,” said first time deployer Senior Airman Daniel Robinson-Lopez.

Eastern Latvia in the Latgale region, is full of ethnic Russians with Russian being the common language. This deployment and joint operations with the Latvian Army engineers helped to build working relations between the different regions of Latvia and the United States.

“My favorite things have been experiencing a new culture and the food,” said first-time deployer Airman 1st Class Samantha Ghareeb. “The people are friendly. We’ve been received really well here.”

While the excitement of her first overseas deployment topped her list, the teamwork of CES wasn’t far from her mind, “I wouldn’t want to deploy with anyone else. I feel safe with CE,” she added.

Teamwork comes naturally with the 190th CES and that same teamwork grew easily with the Latvian soldiers, civilian contractors and orphanage staff.

As Senior Master Sgt. Casey Batterton, a long time staple of the 190th CES says, “Every aspect of the trip has far exceeded my expectations. The most rewarding, by far, is the impact we are leaving on the 53 orphans. I could not be more proud of the Airmen, noncommissioned officers and Latvian engineers that made this happen. However, I’m always quick to brag on family.”



Latvian Army Pfc. Guntis Stavdzs, Airman 1st Class Fred McDowell, Staff Sgt. Darren Villareal and Latvian Army Pfc. Andris Bukovskis connect new plumbing in Daugavpils, Latvia.

Revisiting operational security

By Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli
The Adjutant General

In response to the increased threat emanating from homegrown violent extremists inspired by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, as well as the recent shootings in Chattanooga, Tennessee, the Kansas National Guard is increasing force protection measures in multiple areas.



Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli

For operational security purposes, additional security practices will not be revealed in detail, but focus areas include access control, increased presence of security personnel, and enhanced incident response. While increased force protection measures help to harden our defenses, they do nothing to better protect Soldiers and Airmen while they are not on duty. This is a more challenging task that can't be solved by simply mandating security practices.

I encourage all Kansas National Guard members to take their personal security seriously. This applies not only to your interaction with the public while in uniform, but also to your civilian life. It's not practical to list here all the security practices necessary to deter, detect, and defeat threats, but the following recommendations should be considered and put in practice, if possible. These measures, when properly implemented, will not only reduce the likelihood of becoming a terrorist target, but will also help protect against typical criminal acts:

- Maintain a nondescript residence whenever possible, including removal of your name from your house and/or mailbox.
- Make contact with trusted neighbors and ask them to watch your home.
- Park cars in garages.

- Conduct frequent checks of your home and outlying buildings; note signs of forced entry and immediately contact law enforcement.
 - If possible, purchase and maintain a home security system.
 - Write and exercise a home emergency response/evacuation plan.
 - Physically enhance your home security by installing solid doors, quality locks, and improving exterior lighting.
 - Vary your routine, including the route you take to work, when you walk your dog, and the stores at which you frequently shop.
 - Limit the number of people who have keys to your house. Change the locks if keys are lost or stolen. Never hide spare keys outside.
 - Lock all entrances at night including your garage. Keep the house locked even if you are at home.
 - View all utility crews with suspicion and contact the company if something seems wrong. Never let peddlers or salesmen into your home.
 - Practice good operational security and limit the amount of personal and sensitive information that you provide to others, especially on social media.
 - Seek additional defensive instruction and training outside of what you receive through the Kansas National Guard.
 - Conduct daily risk assessments and adjust your appearance, mode of transportation, and schedule as appropriate.
- During the next few weeks, as we begin to implement additional force protection measures, personnel who work at our facilities and people who visit us may experience some inconvenience, additional workload, and new job tasks. Although unfortunate, this is a necessary and minor sacrifice required in order to better protect the Soldiers and Airmen who serve and protect the public. I have full confidence our Guardsmen will undertake any difficult task with enthusiasm and understanding.

Not good-bye, just see you later

By Chief Warrant Officer 5
Hector Vasquez
Command Chief Warrant Officer

My time as the command chief warrant officer is coming to an end.

I was selected as the senior field artillery warrant officer for National Guard Bureau and will be moving to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in October.



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Hector Vasquez

This is a new position and something the National Guard Field Artillery has needed for some time. I look forward to this new challenge and will try hard to increase the Field Artillery, Air Defense and Electronic Warfare Warrant Officer Military Occupational Skill for Kansas and nationally.

It's awesome that I started my career as a warrant officer candidate at Fort Sill and what better way to end my career at the field artillery schoolhouse.

I am so honored that I was selected as the command chief warrant officer and the little over five years that I have been in this position have flown by. There are so many people to thank and I wish I could shake hands with everyone that helped me throughout my career.

I wish I could thank everyone from enlisted, noncommissioned officers, officers, warrant officers and civilians that gave me and my warrant officer strength manager leads for Soldiers who were interested in becoming warrant officers. As the com-

mand chief warrant officer, I have been able to increase the warrant officers ranks every year and I couldn't have done it without you all.

During the past five years, I have implemented programs such as the Warrant Officer Senior Advisory council, Mentorship Program, Warrant Officer Strength Program, Warrant Officer Pre-Flight Federal Recognition Board and the "Warrant Officer Calls." I'm proud of these programs and I feel that they helped build the Warrant Officer Cohort up to what it is today.

It's been a privilege and honor to serve as the command chief warrant officer and I hope I can continue to see a lot of you and will be at some of the military functions just to catch up on things. I wish my replacement the best of luck and I know whoever is selected will raise the bar up even higher than I did.

I would like to thank retired Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting for selecting me as the command chief warrant officer and our current adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, for letting me continue. I appreciated your support and confidence in me. I especially would like to thank the Kansas Warrant Officer Cohort for their support, recommendations and advice.

Lastly I would like to thank my family, Gerri, Whitney and Rene Vasquez for your support. I couldn't have done these 37 years without you. I know you made sacrifices and I'll ask you to make some more for a little while longer. I love you all.

Also to my mom and dad, who are not with me physically, but in spirit. I know you watch over me every day and keep me out of harm's way.

May God bless you all, the Kansas National Guard, and this great nation. This is not "good-bye," but see you later.



Security cameras around the State Defense complex in Topeka are just one of the multitude of security measures there. (Archive photo)

Warrior to warrior Relationships and communication, two keys to maximizing success

By Command Chief Master Sgt.
Patrick Moore
190th Air Refueling Wing Command Chief

As I near the conclusion of a 35 year military career, I would like to share with you my perspective on a few of the simple lessons that I believe are important in life and in maximizing success.



Command Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Moore

Two things that I believe are important to success are relationships and communication, and the connection between the two. The success of any relationship is dependent on the frequency and quality of communication. If you are unable or unwilling to make communicating a priority, relationships won't flourish and your potential for success is diminished.

A recent and significant change directly related to communication and relationships within the Air National Guard is the enlisted evaluation system. Until now the Air National Guard was the only U.S. Air Force component that did not have a requirement to formally evaluate its enlisted Airmen.

We must embrace this opportunity. Airmen deserve to be told how they are doing and leaders must be engaged with them. Providing feedback is a tremendous opportunity in building quality relationships and to communicating with our Airmen through direct face-to-face contact.

One of the things that I believe is common among most that have succeeded is that they have been willing to leave their comfort zone. When we come up in an or-

ganization and grow comfortable with our co-workers, our mission, our job and with our leadership, it becomes difficult for some to leave what they know in order to seek another opportunity elsewhere.

Exposure to a new mission, new styles of leadership and mentoring, learning a new career field or working with differing personalities are all potential career broadening experiences, which will make you a more well-rounded and diverse Guardsman able to contribute to the organization with more knowledge and capability then before.

Throughout my career, I have heard from Airmen frustrated because they believe they were overdue for a promotion or passed up for an opportunity to move into a higher level position. In most cases, the Airman was relying on others for the promotion instead of taking control of their own destiny.

Taking control means that you have met all of the gates required to earn yourself an opportunity to compete. Some ways to do this are ensuring that you have completed your career development courses on time or ahead of schedule. Enroll in the appropriate Professional Military Education as soon as you are eligible and going in-residence whenever possible.

Effective on Oct. 1, the ANG will require at least an associate's degree to be considered for selection as first sergeant and to be promoted to E-8 senior master sergeant and E-9 chief master sergeant.

By starting early to meet these requirements you will be improving your personal and professional development, ensuring your relevance in today's environment and maximizing your opportunity in the future.

Each of us has been given extraordinary opportunities to succeed. It is what we do with those opportunities that will determine our success.

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James Brown is new command senior enlisted leader for Kansas National Guard

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown received responsibility as the command senior enlisted leader for the Kansas National Guard in a change of authority ceremony Aug. 1 at Nickell Armory in Topeka.

During the ceremony, Command Sgt. Maj. Scott W. Haworth handed over his ceremonial sword to Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general, signifying he relinquished his authority as the state’s command senior enlisted leader. Tafanelli then presented the sword to Brown, investing that authority in him.

Haworth was honored in a retirement ceremony immediately following the change of authority.

In this position, Brown will manage the enlisted force and represent their interests at all levels of local and state government and to the public and will be the personal advisor to the Kansas adjutant general on issues regarding the nearly 6,500 enlisted members of the Kansas Army and Air National Guard.

“Command Sergeant Major Haworth has been such a valuable advisor to me,” said

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general. “Over the last four and a half years, he and I have had the opportunity to spend a lot of time together as we traveled around the state, this nation and even some interesting places around the world as we visited our troops. At every turn, the sergeant major has always demonstrated his professionalism, his care and concern for the Soldiers and the Airmen that make up our National Guard.

“Scott, thank you for your service, your counsel and the care in which you have demonstrated and executed your duties as command sergeant major of the Kansas National Guard,” said Tafanelli. “The Kansas National Guard is a much better place because of your service, and your sacrifice.”

Tafanelli also welcomed Brown as the new senior enlisted leader.

“Chief Brown has earned this opportunity to serve at a higher level,” said Tafanelli. “Throughout his career, the chief has consistently demonstrated a willingness to put the well-being and interest of others in front of his own. Chief Brown’s knowledge and experience absolutely make him the right person to follow Command Sergeant Major



Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown, right, accepts a ceremonial sword from Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general, signifying his assumption of responsibility as the new command senior enlisted leader of the Kansas National Guard Aug. 1 at Nickell Armory in Topeka. (Photo by Jane Welch, Public Affairs Office)

Haworth turns six-year enlistment into 36-year military career

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

When Scott Haworth joined the Kansas National Guard, he had no thought that the Army would ever be a vocation for him.

“I will tell you that 36 years ago when I joined, back in 1979, I had no intentions of serving longer than my initial six-year term,” said Haworth.

But on Aug. 1 of this year, Haworth was the guest of honor at a retirement ceremony marking a 36-year career with the Kansas Army National Guard.

“But at the end of that first term I had two really, really good strong mentors, two non-commissioned officers, a platoon sergeant and a first sergeant who wouldn’t take ‘No’ for an answer,” Haworth told the family and friends assembled at Nickell Armory in Topeka to honor him. “They wouldn’t let me walk out that door until I finally said ‘All right, I’ll stick around. I’ll give you three more years.’”

Haworth told how that three years turned into another three years and so on until he reached the rank of first sergeant.

“I figured at that particular time if I finished out as a first sergeant, that would be great,” said Haworth. “Everybody knows the ‘top’ is the best position in the Army. Absolutely it is. And I enjoyed it, I really did.”

However, through the mentorship of several fellow NCOs, “I readjusted my goals and decided that maybe I wanted to finish out as a battalion CSM (command sergeant major).”

That goal became a reality for Haworth in 2003.

“I would tell you at that point I was good,” said Haworth. “How many people get to become battalion CSM?”

Then, in 2008, Haworth was selected by then adjutant general Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting to be the state command sergeant major, a role he continued under current adjutant general Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli.

“Scott, you’ve demonstrated that the knowledge that you gain is solely not yours to keep, but it really is yours to take and pass on to the troops of your organization, that what you see and what you learn is what you really teach our troops to make them better,” said Tafanelli. “That is how we train and grow the best noncommissioned officers for the future, and for that, thank you very much.

“It’s been my privilege and my honor to serve alongside you for the last four and a half years. So, on behalf of the Soldiers, the Airmen, the civilians and our families that you have served and served so well, we thank you for making us all better. Good luck and Godspeed to you.”

Following his remarks, Tafanelli presented Haworth with the Legion of Merit medal, a certificate of retirement and an engraved set of silver Jefferson cups. Haworth also received numerous gifts and tokens of appreciation from the many units and organizations he worked with over the years, testaments to the respect and friendships he garnered over his long career.

“There’s no doubt that the retirement pay is going to be good, the benefits are going to be great, but the one thing you get out of this service in the National Guard isn’t monetary,” said Haworth. “It’s the friendships... I’ve got lifelong friends here that you don’t get in any other organization. That’s the big thing for me to walk away from. Those are the things (I’m) going to miss the most.”



Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Haworth exits the stage after speaking at his retirement ceremony at Nickell Armory Aug. 1. (Photo by Jane Welch, Public Affairs Office)

Chaplain’s Corner Suicide is preventable

By Chaplain (Maj.) John Potter
Deputy Command Chaplain

Suicide is a significant problem in the military, claiming the lives of 22 veterans each day.

Suicide also takes a tremendous toll on our society. In 2013, 41,149 suicide deaths were reported in the United States

We could easily read these suicide rates and forget that every number represents not only a life lost, but also a broken family, and a community wounded with pain. Each death leaves behind a group of hurting people.

There is no “one size fits all” solution to suicide. People contemplate suicide for many different reasons: substance abuse, divorce, family separation, financial matters, legal trouble, a major 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...” (Galatians 6:2). Take time to help others through their days of difficulty.
2. Listen. Allow that person to say what is causing the pain. Share the gift of silent listening and then you can guide your friend with wise counsel.
3. Do something. The Bible encourages us to be, “doers of the word, not

hearers only...” (James 1:22). Too often, people at-risk are so overwhelmed with depression, 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 VA hospital. Find a way to connect the person with assistance. Take action.

September is Suicide Prevention Month. Take time to talk with a friend who is down. Share the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255. It is a 24/7 resource with trained professionals ready to help people find encouragement and hope.

Make a difference by addressing the problem of suicide. Demonstrate compassion and concern for those who are hurting. Be available to friends in need and take time to listen.

The time you invest could save a life. Free counseling is available 24/7: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 800.273.TALK (8255) or 800.SUICIDE (784.2433).

Interpreters for other languages are available when needed.

NATIONAL

SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Target Acquisition Battery cases its guidon for the last time

By Dale Hogg
Great Bend Tribune

Story used with permission of the Great Bend Tribune

During a solemn ceremony in the sweltering Kansas National Guard armory July 11, the unit guidon, the banner representing the Great Bend-based Battery E (Target Acquisition), 161st Field Artillery, was “cased” as the unit’s storied 27-year history came to an end with its deactivation.

The bright scarlet and gold flag was lowered, covered in an olive-drab sheath, and raised again, then escorted out of the building for the last time to the salutes of the service personnel present.

“Today is a sad day,” said Brig. Gen. Robert Windham, commander, Kansas National Guard Land Component. “But, in some respects, it is a happy day.”

Battery E will be reorganized into a platoon-size unit and transferred to the command of the newly-formed 130th Field Artillery Brigade, headquartered in Manhattan. The change is part of the Army’s streamlining such assets in light of newer, more advanced technology.

“They become part of our memories and our history,” Windham said. “But what memories and what a history.”

The impact of the battery can be seen across the state, across the nation and around the globe, the general said.

“It’s a happy day because we move to the next chapter,” he said. “While the unit doesn’t exist anymore, its mission, its legacy continues on, more relevant than ever.”

Windham recalled the history of target acquisition, from spotting flashes and listening for shots in the distance to today’s radar. Units like this, he said, help the “king of battle” (artillery) remain the king.

“Time and technology marches forward and with it comes more change,” he said. “That’s what we see today, Today we turn a page in a book called the ‘History of the Army.’”

“You’ve done great things and you should be proud,” he told the globe-hopping soldiers of the battery. “You’ve been here, there and everywhere, really. You were the best and you proved it over and over again.”

The general also had praise for the communities that supported the unit. “You have been there for us and when you need us, we’ll be there for you, always,” said Windham.

“Truly, this is the heart of America,” he said. “You gave us your sons, your daughters, your husbands and your wives. You gave us your key people.”

With that, he said the Kansas National Guard’s presence in Great Bend would continue. The Guard’s 731st Transportation Company is also stationed in Great Bend and will remain based at the armory located across from



The guidon of Battery E (Target Acquisition), 161st Field Artillery is solemnly cased during the inactivation ceremony for the unit at the Great Bend armory July 11. The battery will be reorganized into a platoon-size unit and transferred to the command of the 130th Field Artillery Brigade. (Photo by Dale Hogg, Great Bend Tribune)

the Great Bend Expo Complex west of town.

Of the 44 soldiers attached to Battery E, 24 will transfer to the 130th and the rest to other units, including the 731st. Both units include members from the Great Bend area and elsewhere in Kansas. Those going to a new unit will travel to a different location for their training.

It was also a bittersweet day for Chief Warrant Officer 2 Carol Sprawka, who, up until the inactivation ceremony, had been the 161st commander and will assume command of the new platoon.

“If there is one word that could describe this (target acquisition battery) it would be family,” Sprawka said. “This includes the soldiers, past and present, as well as their family members and the communities from which they came.” As they transition to this smaller unit, they will continue this family concept, said Sprawka.

She acknowledged Great Bend City Council President Joel Jackson and Larned Mayor William Nusser, presenting each of them with a plaque.

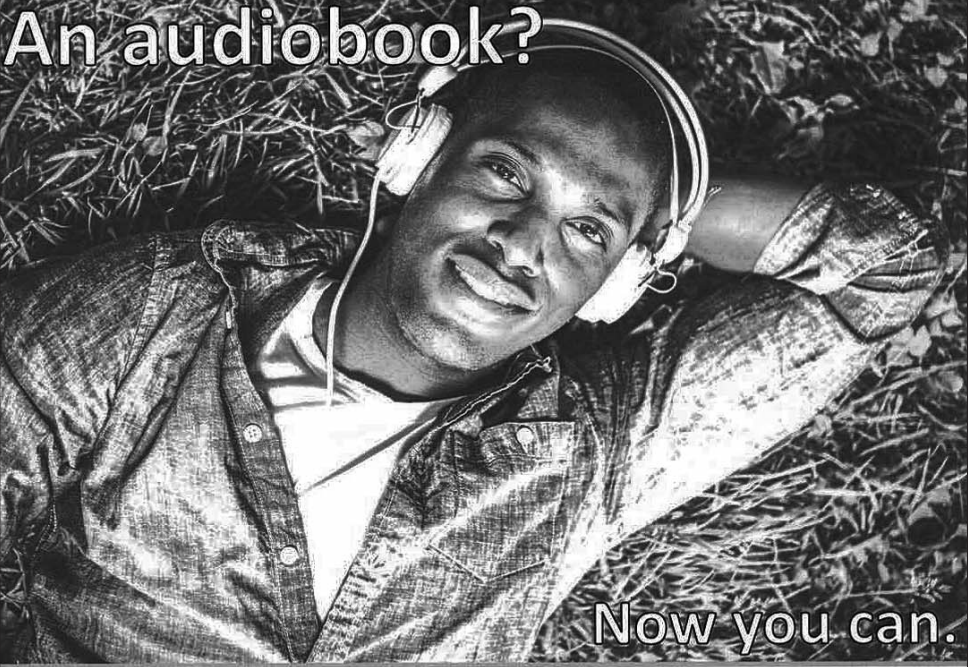
“This will be a challenge,” said Sprawka. “But, like all animals, we shall adapt and overcome.”

Some history

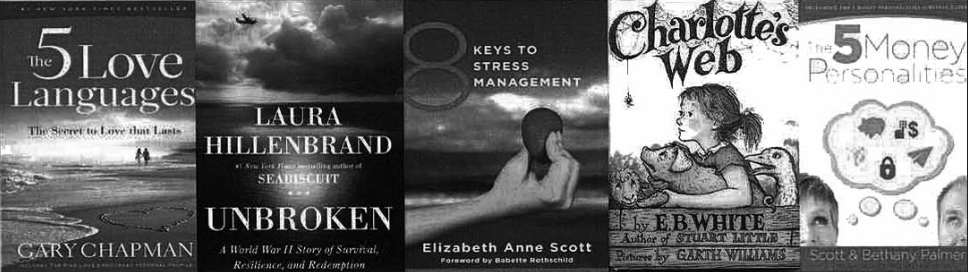
According to information from the Kansas National Guard, Battery E was first activated April 1, 1988, at Larned and Great Bend. From Feb. 21 to Nov. 1, 1995, the battery was mobilized in support of Operation Joint Endeavor, a NATO peacekeeping mission in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Battery E was mobilized again on May 18, 2000, in support of Operation Joint Guardian, a NATO peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, and was demobilized on Dec. 21, 2000. The unit was mobilized for the third time in less than 10 years Sept. 20, 2004, this time in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. One group of 13 Soldiers was attached to a Texas field artillery unit, while a second group of six Soldiers joined with another unit. They returned to Kansas Dec. 3, 2005.

In 2007, Soldiers of Battery E deployed to Iraq again in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The battery next deployed to the Horn of Africa in 2010 with the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery to conduct stability operations to strengthen partner nation and regional security. They returned home in February 2011.

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919A (Engineer Equipment Maint. Tech)	91B, C, D, H, J, L, X



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The venue and format of Teen Camp have changed, but the bonds remain



Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance is a morning ritual at Camp Wood near Elmdale, the site of this year’s Teen Camp, an annual event for teens of Kansas National Guard families. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Every summer, the Child and Youth Program of the Kansas National Guard conducts Teen Camp for teenage members of its military family.

“It brings them together, brings them camaraderie,” explained Liz Dodds, Child and Youth coordinator for the Kansas National Guard. “It lets them get to know other children who are going through the same things that they are.”

For many of the teens, it’s like a family reunion.

“I just love the environment and love seeing all my friends because I don’t get to see all of them all the time,” said Madison Ruthig, a fourth year participant. “And so when I see them it feels like we’re all just a big happy family.”

In past years, Teen Camp was held in Salina over a three-day period. This year’s camp was quite a bit different. This year’s week-long camp was at the YMCA’s Camp Wood near Elmdale, Kansas, where they shared the camp with other non National Guard groups.

“We decided this year to partner with Camp Wood and give the teens a more traditional camp experience that we sometimes can’t give them,” said Dodds. “We do a little bit of everything, from rappelling, climbing towers, paintball, more of the traditional things too like canoeing, swimming, and archery.

“We’ve got counselors from across the world, so they’re learning how to play cricket and they’re learning how to dance –

there are a couple of counselors from Colombia so they’re learning how to dance like they do in South America. It’s a pretty broad experience, but it’s also the traditional camp experience that maybe they haven’t had before.”

At first, the change of format was a little unsettling for experienced Teen Campers.

“This year was kind of bumpy, but we all recovered from it very quickly,” said Ruthig. “As we got used to it and the week went on we all said ‘Okay, this has changed, but it’s a good change and it’s for the better.’”

“I like the fact that we have more activities here,” said Taylor Dunbar, who was into her “fourth or fifth year” of Teen Camp. “But my Teen Camp is somewhere I go to get away from what we deal with at home and it’s where I go to relax and spend time with friends that I don’t normally see. It was more of a retreat before.”

In addition to the change of venue, the teens discovered there were a few changes in the rules.

“I’ve tried to remind our teens this is a very structured camp,” said Dodds. “They have to set up parameters, but they’ve learned that by following the rules, that later on in the week it gets a little easier and the counselors kind of ease up a little bit, let them have a little bit more interaction, a little bit more fun outside of the parameters of the structure.”

One rule in particular seemed to stand out to the teens.

“We’re not allowed to have our phones, which is kind of weird,” said Nola Limon,

a first-year camper, “because I’m usually on it all the time.”

“We usually keep in contact through our phones and social media,” said Mackenly Worley, who was in her second year at Teen Camp. “It’s different. It’s not my favorite part about it, but it’s all right.”

“Not having our phones was the biggest bump,” said Ruthig, “but we’re all like ‘Okay, we can’t have our phones. Oh, well! It’s the memories.’”

Yet despite the changes, Teen Camp participants quickly settled in and found the camp offered a packed schedule with a lot of options.

“Normally we get up a little bit early, by about 7:45 or so, which is early in teen world,” said Dodds. “We start our day off with meeting at the flag pole, do the Pledge of Allegiance, raising the flag for the day, talking about any special announcements for the day, anything that came up that we need to talk about before breakfast. We go in, we have breakfast, we say grace.

“By that point, the campers know what their day looks like activity-wise,” said Dodds. “They picked what they wanted to do each day, whether it’s athletics, whether it’s canoeing, spending their day walking through a nature trail. They usually do two activities in the morning, then they do a big switch and come back to lunch. After lunch they do a couple more activities or they do one big group activity. After that, they go back to their cabin, they rest a little while, they come to dinner. The evenings have been a mix of everything. We’ve had one night where the boys all went out to campsites throughout the camp and slept outside on tarps in sleeping bags under the stars, did the s’mores experience, more of a traditional camping experience.”

“I’m doing archery and I’ll have fishing next,” said Enrique Nusz, a second-year camper.

“For me, it’s athletics,” said Dunbar, “where we go play games, and we play sports. Today we played ultimate Frisbee with a football. That was interesting.

“Down at the lake we do canoeing and we do kayaking,” she continued. “Yesterday we went out through the little streams as deep as we could.

“One day I did the tower. We climbed up 50 feet on a harness. It’s just gorgeous looking out at the hills from up there.”

“I’ve been doing the archery and I’ve been doing a lot of the boating and watching people tip over because that’s just hilarious to watch,” laughed Ruthig.

“I did boating last night,” said Worley, “but I stayed out with another girl because there was going to be an odd number and I didn’t want to leave her out.”

And it’s that inclusive attitude that lies at the heart of Teen Camp.

“I’ve had several campers ask ‘I know this camper in our cabin isn’t part of our military group, but gosh I’d sure love to have him at Teen Camp with us next year. How can we make that happen?’” said Dodds. “They really have come together.”

“Even if it’s your first year, you get brought into the family,” said Ruthig. “It’s just a big happy family.

“It’s the people. It’s the bonding experience,” Ruthig continued. “It’s a bond that never breaks. You get to meet so many different people from so many different places around Kansas. You get excited to see everyone.”

Dunbar, who has been part of the Kansas National Guard youth camp experience since she first went to Kids’ Camp, agreed.

“(It’s) the lifelong connections and friendships I’ve made here,” said Dunbar. “Some of these kids that are here with me I’ve known since I was eight years old.

“We count down our days until we go,” she said. “This is my home.”



Canoeing and kayaking were just two of the many activities available to participants of Teen Camp 2015, conducted this year at Camp Wood YMCA camp near Elmdale. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Dillon’s donates Twizzlers to Guard



Members of the Kansas National Guard and employees of the Salina Dillon’s store stand with their donated Twizzlers. Dillon’s holds a yearly contest to see who can sell the most Twizzlers in a two-month period. All of the Twizzlers were donated to the military community in Salina, including the 284th Air Support Operation Squadron and Great Plains Joint Training Center. (Photo provided)



Company B,
635th Armor Reunion
Oct. 10, 2015
6-10 p.m.
Pinnacle Place
(West entrance)
2936 Georgia Ave., Salina, Kansas
(Off Schilling Rd.)

Catered Dinner: \$10 per adult,
\$4.50 per child (8 years and younger).
RSVP to retired Sgt. Maj. John Perret at
(785) 376-1846 or by email to
armordaddy@sbcglobal.net no later than Sept. 21.

Hope to see you there!

VIPs visit Guardsmen working and training at Fort Riley

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
Public Affairs Office

Kansas Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer, M.D., Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general of Kansas, and a small group of VIPs toured the Advanced Turbine Engine Army Maintenance facilities and visited Soldiers from the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, Kansas Army National Guard, during annual training at Fort Riley, June 26.

“It’s been an honor to be out here with Kansas Guardsmen to see what they’re doing and how well-trained they really are,” said Colyer.

The group, which included Col. Barry Manley, commander, 635th Regional Support Group, and Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown, Kansas Air National Guard command senior enlisted leader, were flown from Joint Forces Headquarters in Topeka to Fort Riley in a UH 60 Black Hawk helicopter piloted by Soldiers from Army Aviation Facility 1. They first toured the facilities of the A-TEAM, and got an up-close look at the rebuild process of the Air Gas Turbine 1500 M1 tank engines from start to finish.

“The A-TEAM is a special place because of their ability to rebuild our full-up power packs, transmissions and engines of the M1 tank and do it at a very efficient and affordable price,” said Tafanelli.

Colyer said the A-TEAM’s mission is a critical element to military operations. “It’s a great honor to have the A-TEAM here, in the heart of America,” he said.

The group then traveled to the Digital Multi-Purpose Range Complex to meet 2-137th CAB Soldiers and observe their training, which included live-fire battle drills. The VIPs were shown the M2A2 Operation Desert Storm – Situational Awareness Bradley Fighting Vehicle and the Army’s most advanced tank, the M1A2 Abrams, System Enhancement Package version 2.

The VIPs were even offered the chance to fire the weapons system of each, firing several rounds apiece from the Bradley’s 25mm M242 chain gun and the 120mm main



Maj. Luke Foster, shop supervisor (right) explains part of the process the Advanced Turbine Engine Army Maintenance facility goes through to rebuild the 1500 M1 Air Gas Turbine engines used in the U.S. Army’s Abrams tank to Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer, M.D. (left) and Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

gun of the Abrams.

“It’s a young Soldier’s game to be out there on that equipment,” said Tafanelli, “You take away a great respect for the hard work and effort that they do each and every day.”

Colyer said the value of the National Guard to the state and the nation is “obvious.”

“This is a critical piece that our Citizen-Soldiers are trained to be the best in the world,” he said. “It’s also an

opportunity for our state. It’s an opportunity for good jobs, it’s an opportunity for our young people to grow in their personal careers and learn new skill sets.”

“The really special part of coming out here is that our Citizen-Soldiers sacrifice a lot to serve their state and their nation,” said Tafanelli. “We want to take the opportunity to come out and make sure they are getting good quality training and thank them for the sacrifices they make.”



Tank crews with the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment demonstrate their skills on the firing range at Fort Riley for Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer M.D., Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli and other dignitaries June 26 during annual training. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

184th Civil Engineering Squadron renovates Ottawa armory



Tech. Sgt. Billy Smith, pavements and construction equipment supervisor, 184th Civil Engineer Squadron, scrapes and forms cement for a storm drain, during annual training at the Ottawa armory, June 11. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Maria A. Ruiz, 184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs)

By Tech. Sgt. Maria A. Ruiz
184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

Approximately thirty Airmen from the 184th Intelligence Wing Civil Engineer Squadron were sent to Ottawa, Kansas, May 30-June 13 for annual training to renovate the Kansas Army National Guard’s armory there.

The two-week operation included upgrading the gymnasium, patio, outside drainage system, part of the HVAC and lighting, kitchen and mezzanine.

The CES dispatched Airmen from operations management, engineering, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration, electrical power production, electrical systems, and pavements and construction equipment and structures.

Two heavy equipment operators from the Kansas Army National Guard’s 242nd Engineer Company, Coffeyville, worked with the 184th CES Airmen to accomplish the project.

“This is the first time I’ve really worked with the Air Force,” said Staff Sgt. Andrew Scott. “It is different but you become cohesive and they were a good group of Airmen to work with.”

Along with the manpower, the 242nd Company brought a five-yard loader and a grader, allowing the Airmen and Soldiers to gain valuable training on the equipment.

“The armory was not looking so good before the renovations,” said Staff Sgt. Ian Saxton, supply sergeant, 250th Forward Support Company. “Since we are a Forward Support Company, we feed a lot of people and needed the space to improve serving time and food quality. Additionally, the Soldier’s morale will go up since

there will be better food and more space to work out in the gym.”

Approximately 40 to 60 Soldiers of the 250th Forward Support Company drill at the Ottawa armory.

The project was funded by the Directorate of Public Works of the Adjutant General’s Department through a contract for about \$67,500 for materials. Along with these funds, the Air Force was able to provide the labor, vehicles and fuel.

“We estimated that a contract of this size would cost \$300,000,” said Maj. Jeffrey Schmitt, 184th CES logistics officer. “We were able to use our Air National Guard forces to complete the troop-labor project since the 184th CES had annual training days to use for deployment for training. It benefits both sides.”

During the project, the working Airmen and Soldiers were surprised by a visit from Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, Kansas adjutant general.

“I’m very excited about the work that is being done in our facilities,” said Tafanelli. “This provides a great opportunity to bring our engineers from the Army and Air National Guard and train together. It is a great success to be able to do that during our annual training period.

“This provides a cost-affordable way to make many of needed improvements to our facilities. I could see how the Airmen and Soldiers were really excited and engaged about what they were doing,” said Tafanelli.

“I learned a lot about the other CES units and how each Airman plays an important role in the project,” said Airman 1st Class Carl Hayter-Sirls, 184th CES. “I also had a great experience interacting with the local Army unit. It’s a team effort.”

Soldier is part-time bodybuilding champ, full-time Guardsman

By Maj. D. M. Keane
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

“His passion is what separates him from the rest.” That’s the assessment of Staff Sgt. Joshua D. Littlejohn about fitness expert and bodybuilder Sgt. 1st Class Charles “Chip” A. Cunningham for his efforts to motivate him and his fellow Soldiers to attain their physical fitness goals. Littlejohn, who worked as a section sergeant under Cunningham in the 369th Brigade Signal Company, had packed on some extra pounds after getting engaged, so he turned to Cunningham for help.

“He motivated me to better myself,” said an enthusiastic Littlejohn. “I’ve been on Sergeant First Class Cunningham’s program since mid-January and I’m already down 37 pounds. I really believe in his program. “I’ve already seen great improvements in my strength, endurance and agility. But, more importantly, others have noticed my overall improvement as a person.”

Cunningham wasn’t always a bodybuilder and fitness expert. He had always been in decent physical shape since he enlisted in Kansas Army National Guard in August 2000. He was a regular competitor and place finisher in the Adjutant General’s Army Physical Fitness Test Challenge from 2002 to 2005. But it wasn’t until a deployment to Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula with 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery in 2008 that Cunningham elevated his workout hobby into something more.

“I really wanted to learn about the education and nutrition aspects behind fitness,” said Cunningham. So he took advantage of his Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and enrolled in an online program while he was deployed. Cunningham earned a bachelor’s degree in health and fitness in 2013.

“I was always active and into lifting and working out, but in 2013 I really started to zone in and apply all of my knowledge of nutrition to my own eating habits,” said Cunningham.

It was this focus on nutrition that transformed Cunningham from a physically fit Soldier into a competitive bodybuilder. Since turning that nutrition corner in 2013, Cunningham’s fitness accolades have been stacking up like weights on a barbell.

Cunningham captured first place against 20 competitors in the physique division and was the overall physique champion of the Spring Me vs Me bodybuilding competition in Excelsior Springs, Missouri, in March 2014. He again reached the top of the podium in October at the Na-



Kansas National Guardsman Sgt. 1st Class Charles Cunningham has turned his dedication to physical fitness toward competitive bodybuilding and uses what he has learned about fitness to motivate his fellow Soldiers. (Photo courtesy of Blaine Fisher Photography)

tional Physique Committee All Stars bodybuilding competition in the tall physique division in Overland Park. In November, Cunningham successfully defended his title at the Winter Me vs. Me competition against 18 challengers.

Cunningham has received several physical fitness training certifications, but is particularly proud of becoming an Army Master Fitness Trainer. He graduated from the challenging month-long course at Fort Riley in April 2014.

In October 2014, he was chosen out of thousands of contestants to be a brand ambassador for nationally recognized nutrition supplement maker, MusclePharm.

MusclePharm sponsors athletes such as professional golfer Tiger Woods and San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, as well as former bodybuilder and movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger. Cunningham represents the supplement brand on social media and at regional fitness events. While Cunningham is proud of his accomplishments and the mounting recognition he is receiving for his bodybuilding and fitness expertise, he remains dedicated to being a Kansas Army Guardsman first and makes taking care of his Soldiers a top priority.

Cunningham helped stand up the 369th BSC in May 2012 has served as the readiness noncommissioned officer for the unit at the Kansas City armory for almost three years. Since then, he has helped numerous Soldiers like Littlejohn improve their APFT scores and make healthy living a priority. Even though his personal fitness brand is growing, especially on social media, his focus remains on his troops.

“I want to help and motivate Soldiers to live a more sustainable and healthy lifestyle,” said Cunningham. “Many people in the military make nutrition and fitness more complicated than it needs to be.”

One of his priorities was to help his own Soldiers break down their daily routines to find adequate time to squeeze in simple workouts. Cunningham noted the importance of setting personal goals and time management.

“If you put your mind to it and apply yourself, personal fitness goals are definitely attainable,” he said. “Leading by example is the most important thing I can do and as a readiness NCO I really know the impact that poor fitness can have on a unit.”

The 369th had a pass rate of 60 percent on its first unit APFT. After Cunningham began developing personalized workout and diet plans for the company’s Soldiers and spending time with them in the gym, the unit’s APFT pass rate soared to 96 percent.

“Sergeant First Class Cunningham always keeps our Soldiers motivated,” said 1st Lt. Nicholas J. Brownlee, 369th company commander. “He is always looking out for them and even sends them regular motivational texts and Facebook messages to encourage them to work out when we are not at drill.”

While Cunningham acknowledges that he has a passion for competing and improving his own physical fitness, he plans to take a short break from competitive bodybuilding to focus on training others to reach their fitness goals.

“My main passion is trying to help others achieve their goals through the lessons I’ve learned about myself,” said Cunningham.

Veterans remembered at annual Heartland Military Day in Topeka

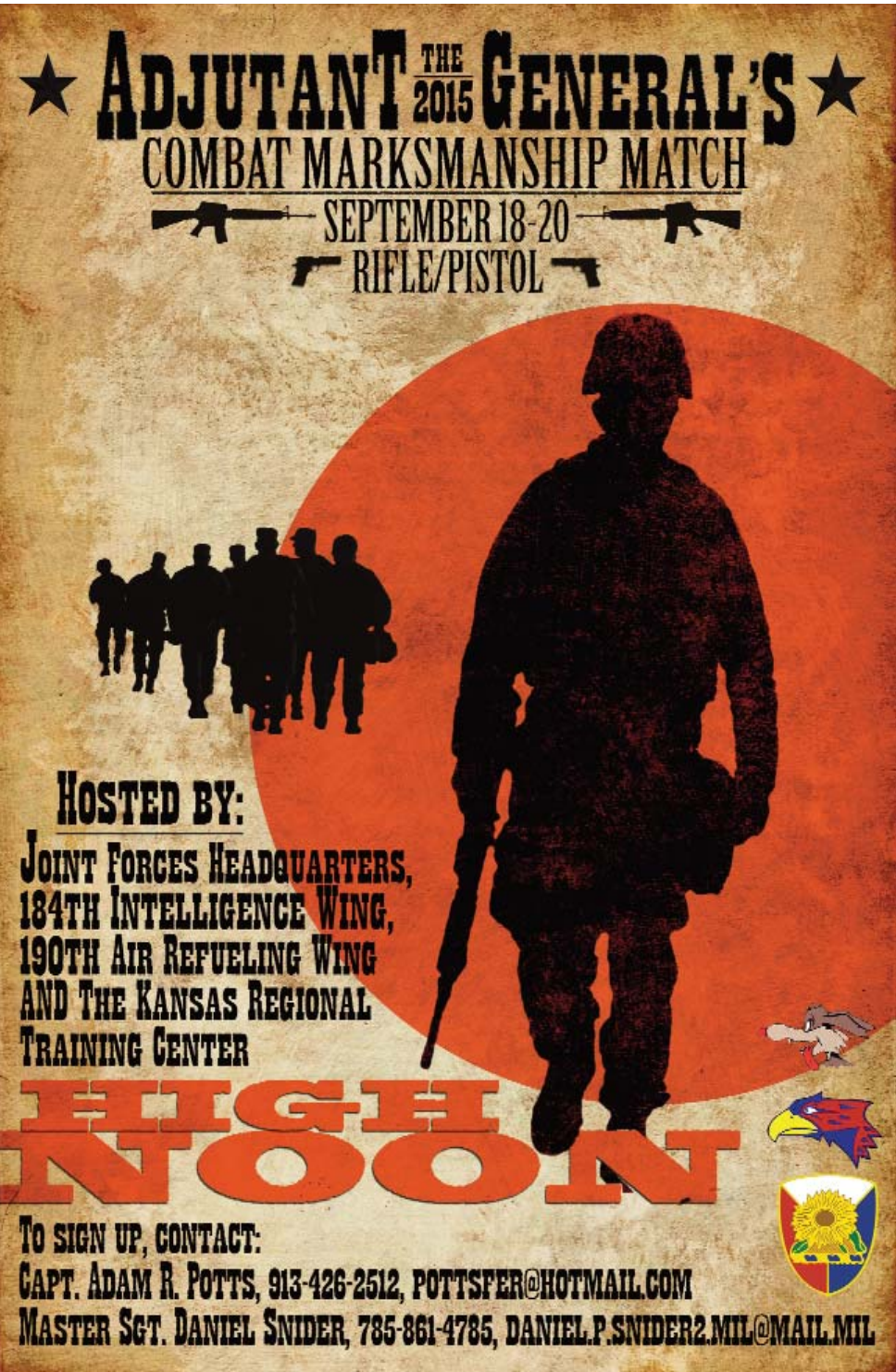
By Luke Ranker
Topeka Capitol Journal
Story used with permission of the Topeka Capitol Journal

With battle reenactments, veteran panels and music June 6, the Museum of the Kansas National Guard honored Kansas Soldiers who have died fighting terrorism. “We really wanted a whole day event

commemorating our fallen,” said retired Army Brig. Gen. Ed Gerhardt, museum board of directors president.

The event, part of the annual Heartland Military Day, kicked off at 7 a.m. with a pancake feed and featured two World War II battle reenactments, a concert and panel discussions featuring veterans from the

(Continued on Page 12)



Modern military equipment was on display at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard June 6 for Heartland Military Day. (Photo by Luke Ranker, Topeka Capitol Journal)



Preparedness Day at the Kansas State Fair is Sept. 14

Are you prepared to react and keep your family safe in an emergency situation? That’s the question the Kansas Division of Emergency Management and first responder agencies across the state will be asking Kansans at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson on Monday, Sept. 14, for Kansas Preparedness Day.

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 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 and drawings for prizes will be held. The displays will be set up near the Administration Building at the south end of the fairgrounds across from Gate #1.

“Preparedness shouldn’t be a once in a while activity,” said Maj. Gen. Lee Tafarielli, the adjutant general and director of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. “It’s something we should think about regularly. Every Kansan should have or create a disaster kit for their home and car, develop a family plan and discuss it, and do their best to stay informed before, during and after emergencies to stay safe. At Kansas Preparedness Day, there will be a number of state and local agencies on hand to give the public valuable advice on just how they can be prepared for emergency situations.”

Sept. 14 is also Dillon’s Dollar Day at the

Fair; admission is \$1 or free with a Dillon’s card.

Agencies and organizations participating in the Kansas Preparedness Day event include the Adjutant General’s Department/Kansas Division of Emergency Management/Kansas National Guard, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas State Fire Marshal, Kansas Citizen Corps, Hutchinson Fire Department, Hutchinson Police Department, Hutchinson Reno County Emergency Communications, South Hutchinson Police Department, Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association, Salvation Army, Community Emergency Response Team, Reno County Emergency Management, Reno County Health Department, Reno County Sheriff’s Department, Reno County Volunteers Organizations Active in Disasters, National Weather Service, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

During Preparedness Month, the Kansas Division of Emergency Management is reminding the public to take part in its monthly online “Preparedness Challenge” at www.ksready.gov.

Additional information on emergency kits and family preparedness can be found at www.ksready.gov and www.ready.gov.

That’s no place to park a car!



The pallet rubble pile at Crisis City has a new look. Included in the new design is a roof collapsed on a vehicle, interior walls that can be repositioned and a residential structure. The new design is larger, more stable and includes more tunneling for search and rescue than the previous pallet pile. With plans for completion by early fall, the final product will more closely simulate a residential disaster site. Crisis City, located southwest of Salina and operated by the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, is a multi-use training facility for law enforcement, fire, EMS, search and rescue, K-9, military and other emergency first responders. (Photo provided)

Kansas receives federal disaster declaration for spring storms

Public Affairs Office

President Barack Obama signed a federal disaster declaration July 20 ordering federal aid to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the areas of Kansas affected by a series of storms between May 4 and June 21.

“These federal funds will go a long way toward helping these communities with their response and recovery efforts,” said Gov. Sam Brownback, who formally requested the assistance on July 1.

The federal assistance will help repair damage to public infrastructure and critical services from a series of storms which included tornadoes, straight-line winds, flooding and flash flooding.

Federal funding is available to state and eligible local governments in the counties

of Atchison, Barton, Brown, Butler, Chase, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Clay, Cloud, Coffey, Cowley, Doniphan, Edwards, Elk, Ellsworth, Franklin, Gray, Greenwood, Harper, Haskell, Hodgeman, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, McPherson, Meade, Miami, Morris, Nemaha, Neosho, Osage, Pottawatomie, Republic, Rice, Stevens, Sumner, Wabaunsee, and Washington.

“Our staff in the Kansas Division of Emergency Management will be working closely with the counties named in the declaration,” said Maj. Gen. Lee Tafarielli, the adjutant general and director of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management.

Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.



A ladder truck from the Hutchinson Fire Department towers above the crowd at the Kansas State Fair during Kansas Preparedness Day 2014. The department will join many other state, local and federal first response agencies again this year on Sept. 14 for Kansas Preparedness Day 2015. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

State employee recognition lunch



Maj. Gen. Lee Tafarielli, left, presents Waldon Wolfe, facilities manager, with a certificate of appreciation for 10 years of service to the state of Kansas July 8 at Nickell Armory in Topeka. Wolfe was one of several state employees recognized at the annual state employee recognition lunch. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Kansas Statehouse hosts military officers representing 90 nations

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

More than 100 officers from 90 nations visited Topeka July 16 to learn about state government and the state judicial system. The international officers, who are students at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, come to Topeka once during their course to learn about state government.

The officers arrived at Memorial Hall across from the Capitol where they were greeted by Brig. Gen. Scott Dold, chief of the joint staff, Kansas Adjutant General’s Department. Dold gave a brief overview of the Kansas National Guard’s history, current structure, and state and federal missions. Dold said that all the officers, from whatever nation and military branches they came from, shared similar heritage with the U.S. military forces by virtue of their service.

“Regardless of world disagreements,” said Dold, “we can all meet each other on the road someday and say we had that in common.”

Dold told the officers that his daughter was planning to study abroad in the fall and looked on that as a positive sign for the world’s future.

“There are kids that go all over the world to go to school,” said Dold. “Their friends aren’t just going to be from their state or their community. Their friends in the future are going to be from all over the world.

“Once our kids start doing that,” said Dold, “maybe someday all of us will be able to hang our uniforms up.”

The officers also heard from Bryan

Caskey, director of elections, Kansas Secretary of State Office, who gave the officers a quick look at the election process in the United States.

Following the presentations, the officers walked to the Kansas Statehouse, where they toured both legislative houses and posed for a picture on the south steps with Kansas Governor Sam Brownback.

Moving across the street to the Kansas Judicial Center, the officers heard a presentation on the Kansas court system given by Chief Judge Thomas E. Malone.

From there, they traveled to the Kansas Museum of History for a catered lunch, followed by a Native American presentation and a tour of the museum before returning to Fort Leavenworth.

This year marks the 121st year International Officers have attended the General Staff and Officer College at Fort Leavenworth. Since 1894, more than 7,500 officers from 162 countries have come for training. Many of the International Officer students have gone on to key positions in their nation. Twenty-six have become heads of state, more than 300 have become ministers, ambassadors or representatives, approximately 2,400 have become general officers in the armies of the world, while more than 300 have become chiefs of staff of their armed forces.

The nations represented this year are Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia,



Kansas Governor Sam Brownback addresses 110 officers representing 90 nations on the south steps of the State Capitol July 16. The international officers, who are students at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, come to Topeka once during the course to learn about state government. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco,

Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania, Togo, Trinidad-Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Vietnam and Yemen.

Religious affairs specialists play valuable role in ministry

By Chaplain (Col.) William Jenkins
State Chaplain

I will celebrate my 60th birthday this November and will retire from the Army at that time. I am deeply grateful for all who have assisted my military career, but I am especially thankful to the many outstanding chaplain assistants that have graced my path.



Chaplain (Col.) William Jenkins

The Military Occupational Specialty of the chaplain assistant was created by the War Department on Dec. 28, 1909, by General Order No. 253, paragraph 1: “One enlisted man will be detailed on special duty, by the commanding officer of any organization to which a chaplain is assigned for duty, for the purpose of assisting the chaplain in the performance of his official duties.” Prior to this, the chaplain assistant was a volunteer who served the chaplain as an additional duty.

In August 1965, chaplain assistants were given the designation 71M and in 1974 they

doctrinally joined the chaplain at the battalion and brigade levels as the Unit Ministry Team. In 2001, the MOS changed and became a separate career management field. On March 20, 2015, the chief of chaplains approved the naming convention from chaplain assistant to religious affairs specialist.

During their almost 106 years of service, chaplain assistants have supported chaplains ensuring the free exercise of religion, providing an enlisted/noncommissioned officer proficiency in religious support and perform/coordinate security requirements for religious support while minimizing the security risks of chaplains, who are non-combatants. During the Boxer Rebellion in China (1899-1901), Pfc. Calvin P. Titus, the volunteer chaplain assistant for the 14th Infantry Regiment, was awarded the Medal of Honor for “Gallant and daring conduct in the presence of his colonel and other officers and enlisted men of his regiment...”

As I near retirement, I want to personally and publically thank each service member who has served or currently serves as a chaplain assistant/religious affairs specialist. I have learned much from each of you and am deeply grateful for the religious support we have been able to provide as a Unit Ministry Team!

Burns assigned to Camp Atterbury

Lt. Col. Brad K. Burns received command of the Operations Group at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, as of June 25.

Burns, a member of the Kansas National Guard, previously served as the Plans and Integration branch chief and lead planner for Beyond the Horizon and New Horizons exercises at the U.S. Southern Command, Doral, Florida. Other assignments have included resource management officer for the Domestic All Hazardous Response Team, 35th Infantry Division, Fort Leavenworth; commander, 731st Transportation Company Security Forces, Convoy Security in Iraq; and Intelligence Operations officer and aide de camp for the 35th Infantry Division during the division’s de-

ployment to Bosnia.

He is a graduate of the Adjutant General Officer Basic Course, Military Intelligence Transition and Advanced Courses, the Military Intelligence Captain’s Career Course, Combined Arms and Services Staff School, Intermediate Level Education, School of Advance Military Studies, Joint and Combined Warfighting School.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Meritorious Unit Citation, Army Superior Unit Award, and the Combat Action Badge.

Governor signs proclamation for Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness

Public Affairs Office

Gov. Sam Brownback signed a proclamation June 18 naming June “Post Traumatic Stress Awareness Month” in Kansas.

“Among the many risks our service men and women face is returning from a deployment with the ongoing struggle with post-traumatic stress,” said Brownback. “It’s our job as a nation and a state to make sure resources are available to help them return to a normal life.”

Hundreds of thousands of service members who served in all of our nation’s conflicts have been clinically diagnosed with post-traumatic stress, a condition affecting an estimated 7.7 million Americans. Post-traumatic injuries occur after a person has experienced combat or other traumatic events. It is characterized by numerous symptoms, including flashbacks, avoidance,

hypervigilance, nightmares, re-experiencing, anxiety, cognitive deficits, irritability, insomnia, fatigue and thoughts of suicide.

“The effects of post-traumatic stress are real and we’re learning more about proper treatment all the time,” said Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general. “The most important thing we want our men and women to know is that it’s okay to admit to your struggles and to seek help.”

PTSD and post-traumatic stress injury can occur after someone goes through a traumatic event like combat, assault or a disaster. Most people have some stress reactions after a trauma. If the reactions don’t go away over time or if they disrupt a person’s life or relationships, that person may have PTSD/PTSI.

For information on PTSD/PTSI go to www.va.gov/healthbenefits/apply/veterans.asp



Gov. Sam Brownback signs a proclamation June 18 designating the month as “Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Month” in Kansas. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

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Spencer assumes first sergeant role at Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery

By Sgt. Jess Bahr
 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery held a change of responsibility ceremony July 11 at the unit’s headquarters in the Hiawatha armory to welcome the unit’s incoming 1st Sgt. Douglas Spencer as he assumes responsibility from 1st Sgt. Jerald Kracht. Kracht leaves the battery to become first sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 130th Field Artillery Brigade.

The first sergeant is the senior enlisted advisor in the unit and the principal advisor to the commander on all facets of the unit’s operation.

Spencer’s career started with the 1st Battalion, 127th Field Artillery and 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery in Holton and served as platoon sergeant with the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery in Liberal and Dodge City for the last three years. His goals are to meet the standard as Kracht did for the past six years and raise the bar even higher for the state of Kansas to follow.

Kracht began his military career in 1977 when he joined the U.S. Navy. He continued his military career in the Kansas Army National Guard, where he served in all three batteries of the 2-130th FA.

190th Mobility Exercise a success

By 190th Air Refueling Wing Inspector General’s Office

The 190th Air Refueling Wing Inspector General’s office collaborated with units to complete a mobility exercise May 5 and 6 at Forbes Field. The IG office collaborated with the 190th Logistics Readiness Squadron and other base agencies to conduct a personnel deployment line and cargo inspection while several unit members prepped for a real-world deployment in the area of responsibility.

Capt. Eric Tincher, 190th LRS, inspected the Small Passenger terminal function. LRS members were responsible for loading cargo and deployers’ bags onto pallets the day before the crew departed Forbes Field.

“They were very thorough and professional,” said Tincher. “An A plus effort.”

A personnel deployment line was also set up to inspect base agencies’ capabilities. Adrienne Dickey, Airmen and Family Readiness Program coordinator, ensured






all deploying members had Red Cross notification requirements and offered special assistance to their families. Senior Airman Routh Taylor, 190th Force Support Sustainment, helped man the Installation Personnel Readiness office.

“I was responsible for ensuring each deploying member had the appropriate out processing checklist,” said Taylor. “In addition to reviewing the checklist, our section provides the member with their contingency and exercise deployment orders and North Atlantic Treaty Organization orders.”

The IG office and Wing Inspection Team members scrutinized the personnel line as well as highlighted recommended improvement areas. Taylor recapped an important lesson from the deployment line.

“Every deployment line has a lot of moving parts and requires a lot of effort from each area of responsibility to ensure it is completed efficiently and effectively.”

Awards and Decorations

<p>KANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD</p> <p>Legion of Merit</p>  <p>Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Haworth, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka</p> <p>Meritorious Service Medal</p>  <p>Col. Michael Erwin, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster Maj. David Burk, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Maj. Gleb Gluhovsky, Det 1, HHB, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha, with two oak leaf clusters Sgt. Maj. Tony Bennett, HHB, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha Master Sgt. Mickey Tener, 2nd Bn, 235th Rgmt, Salina, with oak leaf cluster Master Sgt. Eric Thompson, HHB, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha, with oak leaf cluster Sgt. 1st Class Jason Ekeland, Btry C, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Newton Sgt. 1st Class Donald Flax, HHD, 635th RSG, Topeka Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Hewitt, 170th Maint Co, Norton Sgt. 1st Class James Pyatt, 69th TC, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster Staff Sgt. Howard Adams, Det 1, 778th Trans Co, Manhattan Staff Sgt. Michael Collins, 287th STB, Hays Staff Sgt. Annette Ross, 778th Trans Co, Kansas City, with oak leaf cluster</p> <p>Army Commendation Medal</p>  <p>Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Allen, Rec & Ret Bn, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster Sgt. 1st Class Joshua McCullough, Rec & Ret Bn, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster</p> <p>KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD</p> <p>Meritorious Service Medal</p>  <p>Lt. Col. Joe Dessenberger, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Maj. Deborah Balentine, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters Maj. Keith Hickman, 184th IW, Wichita</p>	<p>Maj. Richard Moon, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters Chief Master Sgt. Terry Clain, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters Chief Master Sgt. Carolyn Crabb, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Senior Master Sgt. Michael Beason, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters Senior Master Sgt. Larry Coffman, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Crowell, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Senior Master Sgt. Ricky Durham, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters Senior Master Sgt. Curtis Kolb, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Master Sgt. Kenneth Barnes, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Master Sgt. Jimmy Evans, 184th IW, Wichita Master Sgt. Troy Evans, 184th IW, Wichita Master Sgt. John Ives, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Master Sgt. John Maly, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Master Sgt. Brison Palmer, 184th IW, Wichita Tech. Sgt. Jodee Dalton, 184th IW, Wichita Tech. Sgt. Steven Haley, 184th IW, Wichita Staff Sgt. Ronald Pierpoint, 184th IW, Wichita</p> <p>Air Force Achievement Medal</p>  <p>Tech. Sgt. Stacey Cook, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Tech. Sgt. Lewis Perkins, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Tech. Sgt. Aaron Rausch, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Tech. Sgt. Aaron Santry, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Tech. Sgt. Wilbur Scott, 184th IW, Wichita Tech. Sgt. Anisa Shinkle, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Tech. Sgt. Jacob Smith, 184th IW, Wichita Tech. Sgt. Craig Wilson, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Staff Sgt. Jeremy Bissell, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster Staff Sgt. Tristan Davis, 184th IW, Wichita Staff Sgt. Daniel Kleve, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters Senior Airman Lindsay Fawcett, 184th IW, Wichita</p>
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OPSEC: Not only for work

By Chief Warrant Officer 3 Scott Sackrider
 IT Security Analyst

Operations Security, or OPSEC, is the process by which we protect unclassified information that can be used against us. For the workplace, this means protecting our strength and readiness in personnel, equipment and training. We must also protect our movements, communications, and any other information which may aid those who wish us harm.



Chief Warrant Officer 3
 Scott Sackrider

For home, back in the old days when we had the mail stopped or a neighbor picking up our papers when we were on vacation, those were forms of OPSEC. We did not want burglars (or nosy neighbors) to know we were out of town or how long we would be gone.

Today’s OPSEC is a bit more involved, especially with smart phones and social media. One can glean enough information from Facebook, Twitter and other social media to paint an accurate picture of someone’s life, past, present, and future. Facebook has an entire section dedicated to family safety at <https://www.facebook.com/safety>.

Here are a few good practices to keep your family and/or co-workers and home/workplace safe while you’re away.

- Don’t post any information about your trip until you return.
- On your smartphone, be very cautious about geotagging pictures. This allows you to embed information in the

picture file about location, time, accuracy, and place names.

- Ensure your friends know not to mention your absence.
- Don’t accept any friend requests without knowing them personally first. You can ask their intentions without accepting them.
- When you return, if you find your house unsecure, do not enter. Call the authorities and have them do a walkthrough. This not only protects you, but preserves the crime scene if there is an issue.
- Don’t post about future deployments, training or business trips.
- Don’t post full names of those who don’t use them on social media.
- Don’t list your specific job. This is not only to protect sensitive positions, but a target can be obtained through business acquaintances.
- Don’t “Check in” on social media.
- Do not have your profile picture in uniform, whether it be military, emergency services, or a fast food business.
- Have someone check on your home frequently, inside and out.
- You can use social media to your advantage, many attractions and hotels have specials online. Just be careful of what information they require of you and if you need to make any arrangements public.

It’s quite the balancing act; sharing your memories and activities with loved ones while denying the same information to everyone else. It’s not difficult. It just takes awareness, a healthy sense of caution, and knowing what is out there.

Footnote: If you wish to have your family members or others in your civilian jobs take the Cyber Awareness training, and many folks do, you can take it without registering at <http://iatraining.disa.mil/eta/cyberchallenge/launchpage.htm>

731st Transportation Company receives COMET Award

By Spc. Melissa Herren,
 Unit Public Affairs Representative
 731st Transportation Company

The 731st Transportation Company received the James Rueger COMET Award for earning a 99.3 percent on their Command Evaluation Inspection Team assessment in October 2014.

“On behalf of the adjutant general, it is my pleasure to make this presentation to the 731st Truck Company for their hard work and commitment by achieving at least 90 percent in all rated areas of their evaluation,” said Master Sgt. Jeff Aumen, COMET manager. “The 731st is among the 10 percent of the units that receive this award annually. I hope to make this presentation again in two years after your next evaluation.”

“The 731st Transportation Company has definitely turned around their unit maintenance program,” observed Maj. Jose Torres, deputy maintenance management officer at Joint Force Headquarters. “By taking ownership of their equipment and ensuring they follow basic operator level maintenance procedures straight out of their technical manuals, they were able to achieve a passing score on a COMET evaluation.”

“This award demonstrates the hard work and dedication of the soldiers of the 731st Transportation Company,” said Lt. Col. Carla Hale, commander of 169th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. “I’m very proud of what they accomplished with the James Rueger Award.”

The award was established in the mid-1990s by retired Col. Ralph Runnebaum, who at the time was the Kansas Army National Guard surface maintenance manager, to recognize the contributions of the late Maj. Gen. James Rueger to the maintenance community. Rueger, Kansas adjutant general from December 1990 to February 1999, began his officer career as a platoon leader with the 250th Ordnance Company in 1962.

Heartland Military Day

Continued from Page 9

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The day honored the 79 Kansans who died in conflicts related to the war on terrorism.

Karen Morrow, volunteer coordinator, said she felt like the modern conflict with terrorism contrasts with past wars because the United States no longer utilizes the draft.

“These kids volunteered to be over there,” she said. “They weren’t forced to go.”

Outside at the aircraft display, Tim Richards from Carlton, Missouri, said his family was in town for a YMCA swim meet this weekend when they heard about

the museum.

“I’m retired Air Force, so of course I wanted to check it out,” he said.

In his 20 years of service, Richards spent time in Turkey, Thailand and England as a mechanic. He retired just before the September 2001 terrorist attacks, and said he was glad his family could visit the museum on a day honoring the soldiers who have died since then.

Modern vehicles from stations in Topeka, the Kansas City area and Salina were on display next to older equipment.

Staff Sgt. Jessie Lake was one of several Kansas National Guardsmen at the event.

“It’s fun to let people see the past with the future,” he said.

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

2nd Lt. William Hamilton, Det 1, 731st Trans Co, Liberal
Master Sgt. Mickey Tener, 2nd Bn, 235th Rgmt (MTB), Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Hewitt, Det 1, 170th Maint Co, Norton
Staff Sgt. Robert Newman, 250th FSC (-), Ottawa

Kansas Air National Guard

Col. Ron Krueger, 190th ARW, Topeka
Lt. Col. Jeff Maddex, 184th IW, Wichita
Chief Master Sgt. Terry Clain 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Steven Holderman, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Jeff Brown, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Pedro Gonsalves, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Steven Munn 184th IW, Wichita

‘Screw-up’ NCO highlights history of Midwest’s storied 35th Infantry Division

By Jonathan (Jay) Koester
NCO Journal

The history of every Army division is filled with stories of sacrifice and heroism. These stories are filled with top-notch noncommissioned officers who led their Soldiers through missions with seemingly impossible odds, but great leadership made them possible. The history of the 35th Infantry Division, a National Guard division headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is no different.

But the story of one of the 35th ID’s most decorated non-commissioned officers is a little divergent. Staff Sgt. Junior James Spurrier was the only 35th ID Soldier to be awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during World War II. He also received a Distinguished Service Cross earlier in the war.

But Spurrier wasn’t always known to “lead from the front” or to be “on point.” To be blunt, said retired Brig. Gen. Ed Gerhardt, president of the 35th Infantry Division Museum’s board of directors, Spurrier was a screw-up. But that same quality, plus a heart full of bravery, led Spurrier to receive the Medal of Honor for his actions on Nov. 13, 1944.

“Spurrier was always in trouble, and they were about ready to bust him,” Gerhardt said. “One morning, he stole a can of peaches from the mess hall, and while he was eating those, he missed formation. His unit moved out without him, and they were going to go around and take this town (Achain, France) from the other side. Spurrier suddenly realized they had moved out without him, so he grabbed his gun and he headed into town from the opposite direction.”

Whether Spurrier meant to attack from the opposite side or just didn’t know where the rest of his unit was or understand the direction of the attack is not known, but his move led to the famous order from Lt. Col. Frederick Roecker: “Attack Achain! Company G from the east, and Spurrier from the west!”

“Spurrier shot the first three Nazis with his M-1,” reads a description of the battle in “Attack: The Story of the 35th Infantry Division,” published in 1945. “Then, picking up BARs, (Browning Automatic Rifles) Yank and German bazookas and grenades wherever he found them, he systematically began to clean out the town. He crumbled one stronghold with bazooka shells, killed three more Nazis with a BAR, and captured a garrison commander, a lieutenant and 14 men. Another defense point was silenced when he killed its two occupants. Out of ammunition and under fire from four Nazis, Spurrier hurled a Nazi grenade into the house, killing the four Germans.

“That night, the one-man army had charge of an outpost. While checking security, he heard four Germans talking in a barn. He set fire to a supply of oil and hay, captured the four as they ran out. Later, he spotted a (German) crawling toward a sentry, killed him when there was no reply to his challenge.

“According to 25-year-old Lt. Col. Frederick Roecker, his battalion commanding officer, Spurrier killed 25 Germans, captured 20 others. In March 1945, Spurrier was awarded the division’s first Medal of Honor.”

Earlier in the war, Spurrier received the Distinguished Service Cross for capturing a hill near Nancy, France. Riding on the top of a tank, firing from the rear with a Browning Automatic Rifle, he moved through German lines, killing an estimated 25 Germans, with another 22 Germans surrendering. Later in the war, Spurrier was awarded his second Purple Heart during the Battle of the Bulge after he was knocked unconscious in the snow by a mortar shell. A display in the 35th Infantry Division Museum states, “His actions repeatedly reflected the motto of his unit, the 134th Infantry, ‘All Hell Can’t Stop Us.’”

35th Infantry Division beginnings

The history of the 35th Infantry Division began in World War I with Soldiers from Kansas and Missouri National Guard units. Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Newton, the command sergeant major of the 35th ID, said the storied history of the division is something its leaders try to teach newcomers right away.

“One of the things we do at division headquarters is when someone new comes to the division, we go over the division history,” Newton said. “We explain, the 35th ID was founded (at Camp Doniphan, Oklahoma) in August 1917, and we went over to World War I (in May 1918). The division only served about a month and a half in combat during World War I, but the combat losses that they had in that short amount of time were just astronomical, over 5,000.” (During World War I, the 35th had 1,298 Soldiers killed in action and 5,988 wounded.)

Capt. Harry S. Truman, who went on to become the 33rd president of the United States, served as a commander for Battery D, 129th Field Artillery Regiment, 35th Infantry Division during World War I.

Forces of the 35th ID took Vauquois Hill, France, on their first day of action in World War I, followed by Varennes, Cheppy and Very. The next day they seized Valmy, then soon after Montrebeau Woods. In a short period of time, the 35th ID had made major contributions to the final defeat of Germany’s army.

Taken out of active service at Camp Funston, Kansas, in May 1919, the 35th again became a National Guard division, consisting of regiments from Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri.

World War II

On Dec. 23, 1940, the 35th ID was mobilized for World War II and began training at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. In 1941, the division participated in the Louisiana Maneuvers and, after the Pearl Harbor attack, performed coastal defense duties near San Luis Obispo, California. In April 1943, the division moved to Camp Rucker, Alabama, for advanced training. In May 1944, the division sailed to England where it prepared for invasion.

By July 7, the 35th Infantry Division had landed on Omaha Beach, Normandy, France, and began combat operations soon thereafter amid the hedgerows north of St. Lo. After fierce battles with the Germans, the 35th entered St. Lo on July 18.

According to “The 35th Infantry Division in World War II, 1941-1945:” “Three weeks before, the 35th had been made up of green troops still in an English training camp,” reads the history book “Now, scarred, but battle-wise, they were the veterans of their first bitter campaign of World War II. Unheralded, they had entered a situation that ranked with the beachhead landings and had emerged the victors.”

Continuing the advance, the 35th took town after town, including Mortain, Orleans and Sens, finally reaching Nancy, France, by mid-September. During that three-month push, the 35th covered more miles than any other front-line division. The division continued to push its way across France, until, at last, on Dec. 11, 1944, Soldiers reached the Blies River, the last barrier to German soil.

“This ended a period in which the division had fought continuously for 162 days,” reads the 35th history book. “The artillery battalions had maintained fire direction centers 24 hours a day. Staff sections had not ceased operations except to move – 3,888 consecutive hours of operation. This was a record that few, if any, division surpassed in World War II.”

After those difficult 162 days, the 35th withdrew to



Staff Sgt. Junior James Spurrier, the only Soldier of the 35th Infantry Division to receive the Medal of Honor during World War II. (Archive photo)

Metz, France, for a rest. But the Battle of the Bulge quickly interrupted that rest, and the division was rushed 80 miles to the Ardennes forest. From Dec. 27 to Jan. 21, the division successfully held off the German armored columns. One of the 35th’s battalions was among the first units to pierce the ring around Bastogne, Belgium, where the 101st Airborne Division was besieged.

By March 11, the 35th was at the Rhine River. The division began crossing the Rhine on March 26, during a powerful Allied air attack. After crossing the river, the division conquered city after city, rounding up 3,770 prisoners in 18 days. The divisions sped all the way to the Elbe River, making them the American troops nearest Berlin. On Victory in Europe Day, May 8, 1945, the division command post was at Dohren, Germany.

In 10 months, the 35th had fought almost continuously over 1,600 combat miles and had suffered more than 15,000 casualties. The war over, the division’s Soldiers moved to Hanover, Germany, for occupation duty.

An article in the July 3, 1945, edition of the Kansas City Star regaled readers with the tales of a well-fought war. Maj. Gen. Paul W. Baade, the commanding general of the 35th, told the newspaper that the division’s Soldiers had much to be proud of.

“You can tell the mothers and fathers, sweethearts and wives of the 35th Division boys that no outfit did a better job in bringing Germany to her knees,” Baade said. “There were many divisions just as good as ours, but none any better.

“The fighting spirit of the Midwestern lad never faltered

(Continued on Page 15)

Kansas RTS-M celebrates 203rd anniversary of U.S. Army Ordnance Corps

By Sgt. 1st Class Harrison McWhorter
Regional Training Site-Maintenance, Salina

The Regional Training Site-Maintenance, Salina, celebrated the 203rd anniversary of the United States Army Ordnance Corps on May 14 with the induction of select instructors and staff members into the “Ordnance Order of Samuel Sharpe.”

Inducted into the Order were Maj. Mark Mullinax, commander of the RTS-M; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brent Campbell, senior instructor and full-time officer-in-charge; Master Sgt. John Duerr, chief instructor; and instructors Sgt. 1st Class Morton Griggs, Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Russell, Sgt. 1st Class Ranie Ruthig and Sgt. 1st Class Jay Strickland.

Induction into the order recognizes those individuals who have served the United States Army Ordnance Corps with demonstrated integrity, moral character and professional competence over a sustained period and whose selfless contributions to the corps stand out in the eyes of their seniors, peers and subordinates.

The RTS-M also recognized two spouses by presenting them the Ordnance Corps Association’s Keeper of the Flame award to Amy Campbell, wife of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brent Campbell and the late Debra McIntyre, wife of Sgt. 1st Class Morton Griggs. This award recognizes the valuable service ordnance spouses provide to the Ordnance Corps.

The RTS-M celebrated the Ordnance Corps anniversary with an unveiling of multiple items for the units’ Ordnance Corps History Wall Project which will chronicle the history of the RTS-M in Salina. The wall displays the history and progression of the Ordnance Corps from the early design of the “Shell and Flame” to its current design. The wall also has numerous framed images which include the Ordnance Corps Shield, Flag, Crest, Creed, Prayer, Song and the Corps Association Awards.

“The wall will document our history by identifying all of our previous unit members and serve as a learning tool for all students who attend training (here),” said Campbell.



Retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ron Mullinax, right, a former ordnance warrant officer, presents his son Maj. Mark Mullinax, current RTS-M commander, with the Ordnance Order of Samuel Sharpe. (Photo provided)

Iola events celebrate the life of Kansas hero Frederick Funston

By Bob Johnson
The Iola Register

Story used with permission of
The Iola Register

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli was born in Frontenac and grew up in the Little Balkans, the name variously given to that part of south-east Kansas where Europeans flocked more than a century ago to extract ore from strip mines. Since then, he has accomplished much militarily, to the point today. Tafanelli is adjutant general of Kansas.

Tafanelli was among the guest speakers at a July 25 ceremony in Iola honoring Kansas native Gen. Frederick Funston.

“As a southeast Kansas boy who grew up hearing stories about the incredible man we celebrate today, this is a great honor for me,” Tafanelli said at a downtown wreath-laying ceremony to honor Funston.

A goodly crowd attending the event heard Tafanelli recall major events in Funston’s life before attention turned to wreaths being placed at the base of a life-sized statue of Funston, who a century ago was a national hero several times over. The commemoration was for his 150th birthday anniversary, officially Nov. 9.

Tafanelli chronicled Funston’s achievements without an ounce of syrup—none was needed—and it read as chapter after chapter of American history:

A Medal of Honor recipient, Funston fought with Cuban rebels against Spain; heroically captured Filipino insurrection leader Emilio Aguinaldo, essentially closing that chapter of U.S. warfare; explored Death Valley and the Yukon River, including two years by himself; was credited with saving San Francisco after the devastating 1906 earthquake that killed 300 and left 300,000 homeless, and was the a commander of future World War II generals Douglas MacArthur, George Patton and Dwight Eisenhower.

Philippines Insurrection

Tafanelli related how Emilio Aguinaldo was a thorn in U.S. efforts to quell the Filipino insurgency in the afterglow of the Spanish-American war.

“A brilliant rebel leader ... (Aguinaldo) was simply impossible to catch in the cover of the thick Philippine jungle ... senior (U.S.) leaders honestly thought that no man could catch him,” said Tafanelli.

After intercepting secret messages, which some historians think came from a double agent, Funston learned of his whereabouts and devised a “dangerous plan and sent it to his boss, Gen. Arthur MacArthur (father of Douglas).” MacArthur deemed it “a desperate undertaking. I fear that I shall never see you again.”

Funston posed as a prisoner and disguised 90 loyal Filipinos as rebels.

“Funston and his team fought through 100 torturous miles of dense jungle” to Aguinaldo’s headquarters, where a forged document claimed the loyalists were bringing high-value prisoners.,” said Tafanelli.

The ruse worked, Aguinaldo was captured and Funston was hailed a hero.

San Francisco Earthquake

In 1906, Funston was cast in another role, one that propelled him into the national spotlight. After a massive earthquake leveled 80 percent of San Francisco and set ablaze standing building and rubble, Funston, commanding the Department of California, acted quickly and decisively to save the city without authorization from higher authorities.

“... just four days after the initial quake, Funston’s quick thinking and unorthodox strategy contained the vast fire, keeping it from spreading,” Tafanelli related. “He set up efficient local refugee camps, excellent ration systems and a plan for recovery.”

Tafanelli urged the audience to remember Funston, and “... when you drive past this statue, take a moment and remember the life of this great man and his incredible tenacity. Remember what he can teach all of us about a life of service, a life that matters and a life well-lived.”

After lunch, several speakers, including Iola attorney and local historian Clyde Toland, spoke at the Gen. Frederick Funston Memorial Armory on North State Street.

Tom Rives, deputy director and archivist of the Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, touched on how the Philippines helped shape Eisenhower’s military career. He was charged in the 1930s with building a national Filipino army, which led him to understand only a passive defense system was possible for the chain of islands that make up the country—a bird that came home to roost in World War II. But the exercise did give him a firm grasp of the complexities of



Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, Kansas adjutant general, spoke prior to a wreath-laying at Gen. Frederick Funston’s statue in Iola July 25. Funston’s granddaughter, Martine Funston, laid the family wreath. The event celebrated the 150th anniversary of Funston’s birth, on Nov. 9, 1865. (Photo by Bob Johnson, Iola Register)

putting together ground and air forces from scratch.

Retired Lt. Col. Mark Calhoun, from Fort Leavenworth and author of a book on Lt. Gen. Lesley McNair, told how, as a logistics and ordinance expert, he served as Funston’s supply officer during the Mexican-American conflict, shortly after McNair’s 1904 graduation from West Point. McNair died during the World War II Normandy invasion in 1944.

Charles Hewitt, a historian from St. Louis, delved into fascinating details of Funston’s capture of Aguinaldo, whom he described as “not a nobody, but a somebody in the Philippines.” That made his capture significant and highly important to U.S. efforts to win the minds and bodies of the native population he said.

The day’s capstone was a panel discussion, moderated by Bob Hawk, who grew up a few miles from Funston’s home north of Iola, with comments from Toland and Jarrett Robinson, a Tennessean who for 25 years has mined the story of Funston. Robinson’s personal Funston trove has been accumulated from visits to the National Archives, many other public sources and personal memorabilia and letters of families with a connection to the general.

Toland reviewed in detail Funston’s arrival

and early years in Allen County including attending Maple Grove School half a mile south of his home north of Iola and teaching at Stony Lonesome School. He also dove headlong into Funston’s days exploring Death Valley and the Yukon under auspices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, an aside being when he and his horse toppled off a narrow mountain path in Death Valley. Funston lived by grabbing a tree limb, but his horse, lacking prehensile abilities, tumbled to its death. His 3,500-mile journey of exploration alone in the Yukon was remarkable to say the very least, Toland observed.

He also discussed Funston’s failed effort with a 5,000 acre coffee plantation in Mexico; how he was a filibuster (name given Americans fighting for Cuba against Spain); and how he lost 19 horses while posing as a journalist, but fighting for Cuba; two horses were shot from under Funston.

Robinson illuminated Funston’s border-war involvement, and how he commanded 150,000 National Guard troops. A seldom-reported phase of Funston’s life occurred in 1913 when he went to Hawaii to help develop coastal defenses, and came home to be among those prominent in communicating Hawaii’s vulnerability, stoked by fears of a Japanese invasion after its successes over Russia in 1905.

Course teaches Soldiers military convoys

By Capt. Bryan Woods
997th Brigade Support Battalion
and Capt. Jerry Monasmith
287th Sustainment Brigade

Thousands of Kansas National Guard Soldiers have deployed to serve their country and many of those Soldiers have travelled in convoys up and down dangerous roads in theaters of war, moving vehicles and equipment into and out of the country. The leader of these convoys, regardless of rank, assumed the title of convoy commander. The CC is responsible for every aspect of the convoy and through their leadership, planning and decision making skills, bear the weight for the mission’s success and the safety of the entire convoy.

As the 287th Sustainment Brigade and subordinate units arrived at Fort Riley for 2015’s annual training, the first day of training started with a one day Convoy Commander Course to teach the basics of planning and leading a convoy. Forty-eight Soldiers participated in the training.

The CCC was the vision of Col. Thomas Foster, 287th Sustainment Brigade commander, to promote a common framework for preparing and leading convoys to the truck drivers from the 137th, 778th and 731st truck companies. Historically over a career, a Soldier may transition several times between these truck companies, whether for promotions or deployments. Developing a common template across all three transportation companies is critical to driving familiarity, safety and Soldier expertise when leading a convoy,

regardless of the type of vehicle. Additionally, the CCC provided an orientation to the critical elements of leading a convoy for the next generation of convoy commanders.

In the morning, the CCC started with the duties of the convoy commander and assistant convoy commander, planning a convoy, giving a convoy brief, running a convoy and closing out the mission. In the afternoon the Soldiers were divided in small groups and were given scenarios to develop a convoy brief. The scenarios provided general information about the mission and critical times the convoy must achieve. After the groups worked through developing their mission plan, the teams then gave a convoy brief to the class.

After the CCC, the remaining training schedule for 287th Sustainment Brigade progressed to real life scenarios where the companies ran the trucks in lanes training to practice how convoys should react to improvised explosive devices, small arms fire, complex attacks, blocked routes and many other scenarios.

Through the CCC and lanes training at Fort Riley, the next generation of convoy commanders are being developed to take on the immense responsibilities of leading convoys, both stateside and overseas.

“The class was a good overview of how to prepare for and run a convoy,” said Staff Sgt. David Rocha, 137th Truck Company, who deployed twice to Iraq and attended the class as a subject matter expert.

105th MPAD change of command



Capt. Michael T. Sullivan, right, takes command of the Kansas Army National Guard’s 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment from Maj. D. Matt Keane, left, during a change of command ceremony July 12 at Nickell Armory, Topeka. Col. Roger Murdock, center, deputy chief of staff, KSARNG, facilitated the change of command ceremony. Sullivan commissioned as a Medical Service Corps officer in the United States Army Reserve, following two stints as an enlisted Soldier from 1992-1999 and again from 2002-2007. With the 105th MPAD since 2011, Sullivan served as executive officer, team leader and editor-in-chief of the Kansas Sentinel, the official publication of the KSARNG. Keane commanded the unit from December 2011. He will now serve as the KSARNG public affairs officer. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Hanson)

Officer candidates rise to new heights during air movement training

By Capt. Kevin Anderson
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Officer candidates from six states descended on the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina, Kansas, to complete Phase 1 Training of Officer Candidate School June 6- 21.

During Phase 1 training, officer candidates are placed in a variety of platoon and squad positions and evaluated on their leadership potential, ability to maintain accountability of equipment and their execution of training missions.

In addition to the required tasks during Phase 1 Training, the Kansas Officer Candidate School leaders wanted to expand the opportunities for the candidates by including an air movement into this year’s training.

To accomplish the air movement event, the Kansas OCS turned to 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, Kansas Army National Guard, which operates UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. Roughly 10 Soldiers, in addition to four crew members, can ride inside a Black Hawk helicopter.

Maj. Adam Pawlosky, commander of 1st Battalion, 235th Regiment Kansas Officer Candidate School and acting operations officer for Phase 1 Training, said an air movement was important because “it gives the officer candidates an orientation to the equipment in the Army National Guard and demonstrates the capabilities of our inventory ... (an air movement) also helps officer candidates function as a team by boarding and exiting the aircraft safely.”

Pawlosky also noted that conducting an air movement was yet another leadership challenge for the Officer Candidates to execute.

Many candidates were excited about the air movement, especially since the event was almost cancelled earlier in the day. The first designated group of Soldiers flew at 7:30

a.m., but later flights were delayed due to rainy weather conditions around Salina.

During the delay the officer candidates were busy preparing for their day and night land navigation tests, conducting movement drills and set up a variety of military equipment and tents. However, as conditions cleared and the weather lifted later in the day, so did many of the gloomy attitudes, particularly when the chopping sound of helicopter blades could be heard in the distance.

Texas Officer Candidate Ward Hohmann was on the first flight when the air movements resumed in the afternoon. The only word he could use to express how he felt after the flight was “Hooah!” Hooah is an Army word used to describe anything from fun to terrifying, but it appeared Hohmann had more fun based on his ear-to-ear grin when he left the helicopter landing zone.

1st Lt. Christopher Schmidt of the New Mexico National Guard added that there is certainly a morale aspect associated with the air movement.

“The officer candidates are going through a right-of-passage right now,” said Schmidt. “We wanted to add something fun for them in addition to their training.”

Sgt. 1st Class John Beckman, Kansas National Guard, made the point that “this may be the only opportunity to ride in a Black Hawk helicopter for some of these candidates, so it was important to give them this opportunity.”

Nebraska Officer Candidates Jonathan Smith and Officer Candidate Amanda Kelso shared Beckman’s sentiment.

“It is something I will never forget,” said Smith. “It has been the highlight of Phase 1 so far.”

Kelso said the views were her favorite part of the flight and seeing all of the wildlife from roughly 150 feet was quite impressive.



Officer Candidates with 1st Battalion, 235th Regiment Officer Candidate School prepare to board a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter as part of their OCS training conducted at the Great Plains Joint Training Center, Salina, Kansas, June 13. (Photo by Capt. Kevin Anderson, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

History of 35th Infantry Division began during first World War

Continued from Page 13

from the day we first went into action in the St. Lo offensive,” he continued. “It was a great privilege for me to lead a division like the 35th. Some of our assignments were the toughest of the war and we suffered many casualties in order that others might be saved. I would like to convey to the relatives of those who will not return the comforting thought that everyone who does not return died a hero’s death, and by so doing, has done his bit to prevent another world war.”

Reorganizations and peacekeeping

The years after World War II led to several inactivations and reactivations for the 35th Infantry Division. On Dec. 7, 1945, the division was inactivated. In late 1946 and early 1947, the division was reorganized as a Kansas and Missouri division. The division continued to recruit and train until 1963, when it was inactivated, along with three other National Guard divisions.

In early 1983, the Army began the process to organize the 35th as a mechanized infantry division from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Colorado and Kentucky National Guard units. The division headquarters was established Sept. 30, 1983, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. On Aug. 25, 1984, the 35th Division reactivation ceremony occurred at Fort Leavenworth.

After being notified in 2001 that the 35th Infantry Division would be tasked with the command of the stabilization force in Bosnia in 2003, the division’s Soldiers began training for the mission. On Jan. 19, 2003, more than 1,000 Soldiers began the mission in Bosnia. On June 13, 2003, they began “Operation Tornado,” an air and ground assault to secure an area near the town of Han Pijesak. During the mission, they found a series of bunkers hiding a large cache of weapons, missiles and mines. The division returned to Kansas in October after completing a six-month deployment.

In the fall of 2007, the 35th Division served as the headquarters unit for Task Force Falcon, a multinational peacekeeping



An exhibit at the 35th Infantry Division Museum in Topeka contains letters from the front written during World War II by Sgt. John Douglas Porter to his wife. Porter, of Headquarters Company, 35th Infantry Division, wrote more than 500 letters to his wife, Helen. The “Love Letters from the Front” were donated to the museum by Porter’s family. (Photos by Jonathan Koester/NCO Journal)

force in Kosovo, where about 200 division Soldiers served for a year. The division also served as a headquarters unit for disaster relief during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 in Louisiana.

“Our division is a pretty busy organization,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Newton, 35th ID command sergeant major. “Our division headquarters is authorized 722 positions. Our organization is different in that we’re split between two states. The flag is here at Fort Leavenworth, and about a third of the personnel here in Kansas, and the other two-thirds are in Missouri. We share a relationship with two states. Our units are in different states, so we are truly just a headquarters command.”

Santa Fe Division’s patch

The history of the 35th Infantry Division is deeply tied to the Santa Fe Trail, which 19th century pioneers used to travel to and develop the West. With the division originally getting many of its Soldiers from states along the trail (Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska), and with their World War I training taking place at Camp Doniphan,

Oklahoma, near the eastern end of the trail, the division quickly became known as the Santa Fe Division.

That historical connection with the Santa Fe Trail is nowhere more clear than at its headquarters at Fort Leavenworth, said Newton.

“There’s a spot on Fort Leavenworth where you can still see the wagon wheel ruts in the ground, where the wagons came off the boats going from Missouri to Kansas,” he said. “You can see where the trail starts.”

The division’s patch, consisting of a white Santa Fe cross on a wagon wheel, also harkens back to that history.

“The patch symbolizes the wagon wheel, and the cross symbolizes the path that they had along the trail,” Newton said. “The crosses guided early settlers across the state and to the west.”

Sgt. 1st Class James Knight, an operations noncommissioned officer for the 35th Infantry Division, said it’s been a special opportunity to serve in the unit he grew up around as a kid in Leavenworth.

“I’m proud that this division, from World

War I to World War II, basically came from the same heart of America type people from Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska,” Knight said. “I grew up right here in Leavenworth, so I remember when this headquarters building was built. I’ve always seen this patch. There’s a ton of history with the 35th. We don’t have the Rock of the Marne or anything like that, but we did do a lot in World War I and World War II.

“It was the first patch I put on when I joined the National Guard,” he said. “I’ve worn a couple of different patches, but mainly I’ve worn this one. Now, my kids, too, have seen it their whole lives, and it means something to them, too.”

Newton said he hopes new Soldiers to the division can appreciate its history and the sacrifices of those who came before.

“What’s important to me is sharing the history and keeping the history of the division alive,” Newton said. “There are some incredible stories. For instance, in the Hall of Fame (at the 35th Infantry Division Museum in Topeka), you’ll see retired Major General Charles Browne. He enlisted in the Kansas National Guard in 1926. He went up through all the NCO ranks, then he was commissioned in 1939, just before the war. He held every single NCO rank and every single officer rank in the division. That’s unheard of. Modern day, you would never have anyone like that. He went from private to commanding general of the division.

“Our history really makes me appreciate what we have today,” said Newton. “When you see what the Soldiers before us went through, the casualty rates during World War I and World War II were astronomical. They faced death every day. But these Soldiers did it because it was their duty. You don’t complain about it, you go out and complete your mission.

“Be proud of the patch you wear on your shoulder, your unit crest. Understand the story behind it. I want to keep the story alive and not forget those who have sacrificed for us. Appreciate what you have today.”

PLAINS GUARDIAN

Soldier sets new women's record in kettlebell sport

By Spc. Jen Bjorgaard
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly Fox has always been athletic. She has been involved in sports from a young age and as an adult she began practicing martial arts Jiu Jitsu and Muay Thai. So when her husband introduced her to kettlebell swinging three years ago, she took to it immediately. Soon after, when a family friend told her that the kettlebell exercise was also a competitive sport, she was hooked.

"I decided to compete really early on," said Fox. "My first competition was after six months of training."

In the three years since making the decision to compete, Fox has been very busy. She became a mother, a full-time readiness noncommissioned officer with Detachment 2, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment (GSAB) in the Kansas Army National Guard and is co-owner of Fox Fitness with her husband in their hometown of Wichita, Kansas.

However, none of that stopped her from setting a new world record for female kettlebell competitors at the Texas Open Kettlebell Sport Championships May 23 in Austin, Texas.

Fox achieved her record-setting performance by completing 38 long cycle repetitions with two 24 kg. kettlebells (52.9 lbs. each) in a 10-minute period. A long-cycle repetition consists of lifting the kettlebells to your chest in a motion called a "clean" and then completing a "jerk" with the kettlebell to an overhead lockout position. This cycle is performed repeatedly without setting the kettlebells down.

What makes Fox's achievement even more remarkable is that until recently, women were not allowed to compete in the two arm long cycle.

"Traditionally, women were only allowed to compete in 'snatch,'" said Fox. "But, they were later allowed to compete in One Arm Long Cycle and only in the

last year or so, Two Arm Long Cycle."

In fact, female participation in the TALC is so new, that a ranking table has not yet been established. So, while Fox's performance set a record for female competitors, she did so by receiving a men's ranking.

"To my knowledge, I am the first woman to receive a men's ranking," said Fox. "It may have set a little bit of a precedent. Currently there are no women's TALC ranking tables. So, until they are created we only have the men's ranking tables to go off of."

"The Army has driven me to always want to be better than the last, to never quit, nor accept defeat. Those words we learn when we first join the Army, when we speak that creed, it changes you!"

*Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly Fox
kettlebell competitor*

Fox received a men's ranking of level 2 with her two 24 kg kettlebell performance. This left her only 30 repetitions short of achieving the men's highest ranking for that class – Master of Sport. Fox says that's her next training goal.

In order to reach Master of Sport for her desired class, Fox has some intense training ahead of her.

"I have to drop a weight class while still maintaining my strength and trying to hit 50 reps," said Fox. "I think I will compete again in five or six months."

Training for this sport requires a lot of strength, but according to Fox, mental toughness is an important part of the equation as well.

"Standing under the weight is a mental struggle," said Fox. "Every moment after the first five minutes, your brain is telling



Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly Fox, a readiness noncommissioned officer with Detachment 2, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion), performs a jerk at the beginning of her set during the kettlebell competition at the Texas Open Kettlebell Sport Championships May 23 in Austin, Texas. (Photo courtesy of Sgt. 1st Class Kimberly Fox)

you to put down the weight. I think the Army has made this task easier. The Army has driven me to always want to be better than the last, to never quit, nor accept defeat. Those words we learn when we first join the Army, when we speak that creed, it changes you!"

While Fox has great plans for herself in the kettlebell world, she says that more than anything she hopes to get more women involved in the sport.

For those considering joining this challenging arena, she offered the following

guidance, "Lift! I don't just mean kettlebells," said Fox. "My best piece of advice is, don't forget, not every set has to be a new personal record to produce results. Love the process!"

#

Some of the information contained in this article was obtained from and used with the permission of www.kbfitbritt.com. A video of Kimberly Fox's performance at the Texas Open Kettlebell Sport Championship can also be viewed there.

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Parting shot



Brig. Gen. Robert E. Windham, assistant adjutant general and commander, Kansas Army National Guard, takes aim with an M110 sniper rifle at the Great Plains Joint Training Center. "It's a classic," said Windham. "It was meaningful to me because they offered to let me shoot. I fired about 10 rounds at targets you can barely see with the naked eye. I have a new appreciation for the skill required. These Soldiers are true artists!" (Photo by Maj. Rob Sands, executive officer, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment)