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PLAINS GUARDIAN

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“Terrorist” explosions add realism to disaster exercise

By Sharon Watson

After nearly two years of preparations for a major disaster in downtown Wichita, everything came together on a Friday morning in October. Emergency responders from around Kansas pulled upon the scene of an explosion at a partially collapsed building. It was approximately 9 a.m. Oct. 19, the beginning of a disaster exercise designed to provide a realistic event complete with smoke, fire, and actors portraying victims of explosions set off by terrorists.

The exercise at the northwest corner of Washington and Waterman included more than 800 responders from 19 surrounding counties, including the Kansas Army National Guard which provided a UH-60 Black Hawk to simulate the transportation of victims. The Kansas Air National Guard,

“Every disaster is unique and the more exercises we do, the better we will all work together, and the more efficient and effective we will get in our preparedness and responsiveness.”

Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting

provided its Expeditionary Medical Support System, known as EMEDs, for a mobile hospital at the scene. Kansas Division of Emergency staff also participated.

“Two years ago we had a disaster exercise like this in Richmond, Mo., and we wanted to bring it to Kansas,” said Dale Grube, associate dean of continuing educa-

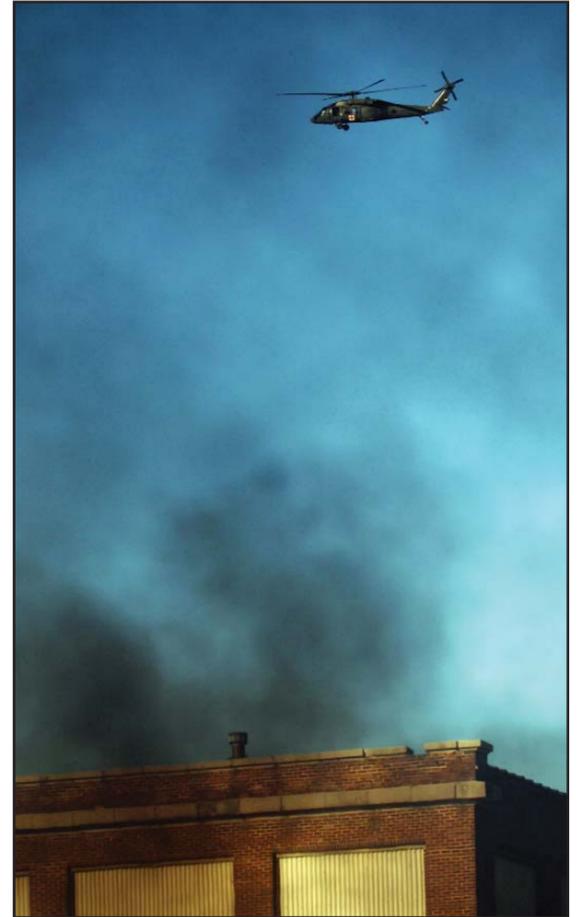
tion with the University of Kansas Medical Center.

The event was funded through the University of Kansas Medical Center with financial support from the South Central Kansas Homeland Security Council.

“This exercise provided south central Kansas emergency responders a tremendous opportunity to work together in what would be a major disaster for the state’s largest city,” said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas Adjutant General and Emergency Management Director. “It was an excellent demonstration of the training our state’s responder’s already have and of the hard work that has been put into community disaster planning and response.”

The planners of the exercise obviously had no idea their exercise would fall in one of the most challenging years that Kansas emergency responders had ever experienced. Three 100-year weather disasters happened from January to July including what may have been the most expensive disaster ever for the state, a snow and ice storm that hit 44 counties on New Year’s Eve. In May, the town of Greensburg was devastated by an EF-5 tornado while other parts of the state sustained flooding, and in June, southeast and northeast Kansas communities were struck with massive flooding.

“Although many of the people involved in this exercise also worked in the response to Greensburg and southeast



A Kansas National Guard helicopter flies over the scene of a “terrorist explosion” during a large-scale emergency response exercise in Wichita Oct. 22. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt McCoy)

Kansas, you can’t have too much training and preparation for these kind of events,” said Bunting. “Every disaster is unique and the more exercises we do, the better we will all work together, and the more efficient and effective we will get in our

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1st Battalion, 108th Aviation returns from Iraq deployment

By Jane Welch

Two commercial airplanes, five buses, one police patrol car, six police motorcycles and 50 riders of the American Legion Riders/Patriot Guard are what it took to get the 200 members of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation home to Kansas from Fort Hood, Texas, and delivered to their welcome home ceremony at the Kansas Expocentre in Topeka on Friday, Sept. 14.

The Soldiers, flown into Forbes Field, were greeted by members of the rear detachment of their unit and members of the American Legion Riders/Patriot Guard. They were then loaded on buses to begin the final leg of their journey home from Iraq to the arms of their awaiting families. The route took them by the Museum of the Kansas National Guard, where Kansas National Guard retirees and their fellow Soldiers held a 20 by 40 foot U.S. flag to welcome them home from their service. Along the route people were stopping their cars and waving at the buses as they went

by. Some were honking their horns and others got out of their cars to wave at the Soldiers and show their appreciation.

The driveway into the Expocentre was lined with U.S. flags, members of the American Legion Riders/Patriot Guard Riders and the friends and families of the returning Soldiers. The crowd roared with excitement as the first bus turned into the driveway.

The buses were parked and quickly emptied of their passengers. The Soldiers lined up in formation and were called to attention. 2nd Lt. Ryan Bernard was told to report to Col. Alan Soldan, the battalion commander, where he was then promoted to first lieutenant. Bernard’s wife, Brenda Jo, stepped out of the crowd to place his new rank on his uniform.

After the promotion was complete, Command Sgt. Maj. Glenn Peterson, the battalion sergeant major, took over the duties of getting the Soldiers ready to

(Continued on Page 2)

Kansas Guardsmen deploy in support of NATO mission

By Staff Sgt. James M. Grosdidier

Twenty-eight Kansas Soldiers preparing to deploy to the Balkans were honored during a ceremony at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., Oct. 12. The Soldiers will deploy in support of NATO peacekeeping missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Serbian province of Kosovo.

The Soldiers will augment or replace Soldiers at three locations: Sarajevo, NATO’s Bosnia headquarters; Pristina, NATO’s headquarters in Kosovo; and Camp Bondsteel, the main U.S. Army base in Kosovo, said the officer-in-charge of the deploying troops, Lt. Col. Danny Thomasson of the 35th Infantry Division.

While in the Balkans, the troops in Sarajevo will support peacekeeping and stabilization missions, help integrate Bosnia-Herzegovina into eventual membership in NATO and assist with efforts to apprehend people indicted for war crimes. The troops in Kosovo will continue to promote peace and security.

“All citizens – despite ethnic differ-

ences – can live in peace if given a chance,” Thomasson said. “We are there to help them get that chance.”

During the deployment ceremony, Maj. Gen. M. Wayne Pierson, 35th Infantry Division commander, noted that many of the Soldiers supporting the NATO mission will be serving with or in close proximity to other 35th Infantry Division Soldiers already in the Balkans.

“Part of the headquarters of the 35th Infantry Division is on its way to Kosovo,” said Pierson. “All indicators are that they are doing an outstanding job. I know you will be equally professional and proficient.”

The deploying Soldiers will first go to Fort Benning, Ga., where they will conduct pre-deployment training. The Soldiers expect to be gone for about a year.

The U.S. Army has had Soldiers in the Balkans since 1995 when the Dayton Peace accords were signed, ending ethnic violence between Serbians, Croats and Bosnian Muslims in the volatile region.



Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation march into the Kansas Expocentre, Topeka, for a welcome home ceremony on Sept. 14. (Photo by Jane Welch)

Kansas team shares Greensburg lessons with Armenians

By Sharon Watson

Three members of the state's disaster response team who served in Greensburg following the EF-5 tornado's devastation, traveled to Yerevan, Armenia, Sept. 23-29 to share lessons learned from the response.

The Kansas National Guard has a State Partnership Program with Armenia. This allows Kansas and Armenia to share military, as well as business, government and civilian practices to benefit each.

The Armenian Rescue Service hosted the Kansas team for the trip, which included traveling to the town of Gyumri to observe a two-day disaster tabletop exercise and a one-day disaster exercise involving a building fire with victims. The Armenian Rescue Service is a government responder that provides the immediate medical support needs of the victims on a disaster scene and also provides medical transport to local hospitals.

The Kansas team included Lt. Col. James Culp, of the 184th Air Refueling Wing, who served as the Kansas National Guard's commander of military operations in Greensburg. Dave Sterbenz, Topeka Deputy Fire Chief (retired Oct. 31) served as the incident commander in Greensburg during the first week of the disaster. Sharon Watson, public affairs director for the Kansas Adjutant General's Department, served as the state's public affairs officer in Greensburg the first week of response, and subsequently in Topeka.

"As we watched the exercise it appeared the response is much like ours here in Kansas," said Lt. Col. Culp. "The military provides support to the civilian responders just as the Kansas National Guard did in Greensburg, so it was a similar response effort and a well-coordinated one."

During the trip, the team toured a fire station in Yerevan, which revealed the challenge the fire departments there have with aging equipment. Many of the fire trucks in operation were from the 1980s.

"We are fortunate in Kansas in that we have newer equipment that is more techno-



Sharon Watson (right), public affairs director for The Adjutant General's Department, answers questions from the Armenian media during an emergency exercise in Gyumri, Armenia. Watson was part of a three-person delegation visiting Armenia under the State Partnership Program. (Photo by Maj. Edward Keller)

logically advanced, but they were managing just fine with what they had and did a great job based on what we observed," said Sterbenz.

The media were invited to watch the exercise and participate in a news conference during the first day's tabletop exercise and again at the disaster site on the final day.

"The reporters were very interested in our feedback related to the disaster exercise, and wanted to know more about our efforts in Greensburg," Watson said. "It was a great opportunity to share our experiences and to commend them for their disaster planning and for conducting such exercises. They clearly see the value of this and indicated they travel to the U.S. to attend training and various planning conferences throughout the country."

Three members of the Armenian Rescue Service visited a disaster exercise held in

Wichita, Kan. Oct. 13 through 19, which included a week of training prior to the event. They attended the training sessions throughout the week to assist in better understanding the Kansas response.

Armenian officials have a particular interest in disaster preparedness as a result of a devastating earthquake that hit the country in December 1988 claiming more than 25,000 lives, injuring 15,000 and leaving a half million people homeless. The city of Spitak was destroyed and damage was severe to Gyumri and Vanadzor. The earthquake measured 6.9 in magnitude.

"This trip was a tremendous experience, and one that benefits both Kansas and Armenia as we share our lessons learned, our experiences, our processes and our cultural differences with one another," said Culp.

"Having seen what the Armenian Rescue Team and others work with and

knowing their risks for disaster are great, I want to see what possibilities might exist for donating fire trucks that are no longer needed here in Kansas to the Armenians," said Sterbenz.

"This State Partnership is an incredible opportunity to share knowledge and resources, and improve relationships between countries," Watson said. "Many friendships have developed between Kansans and Armenians due to this partnership and the information exchange is invaluable and will benefit generations to come."

Maj. Edward Keller, Kansas National Guard, is currently serving in Armenia at the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan to coordinate the efforts of the program. Part of Keller's role is to provide ongoing support for teams traveling to and from Armenia. He will serve there through February 2009, at which time another Guard member will be assigned to take his place. Keller recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq. He works for the Topeka Police Department when not deployed.



Lt. Col. James Culp (left), 184th Air Refueling Wing, is interviewed by an Armenian television crew during a disaster exercise. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

1st Battalion, 108th Aviation returns from Iraq deployment

Continued from Page 1

march to the west side of the ExpoCentre, where they waited to make an entrance into the ceremony.

Lt. Col. Duke Hester, the administrative officer for 69th Troop Command and master of ceremonies for the event, said "We thank you for coming today to welcome these fine American Heroes." Hester introduced the official party which consisted of Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, Brig. Gen. Jonathan Small, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Mark Jensen, State Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Rodina, Command Sgt. Maj. James Moberly and Chaplain (Capt.) John Potter, chaplain for the 108th.

Hester called for the command to be presented. As the Metallica song "Enter Sandman" started playing over the sound system, Soldan, Peterson and Staff Sgt. Curtis Gile, carrying the battalion colors, entered the ExpoCentre. They were followed by the company commanders: Capt. Todd Loughney, Headquarters and Headquarters Company; Capt. Matt Jordon, Company A; Capt. Jack McGrann, Company D; and Capt. Dallas McMullen, Company E.

As the rest of the battalion entered, the cheering and clapping of family members reached a deafening roar.

Potter gave thanks to God for his "hand of protection has kept us safe in training, travel, and mission." He thanked their families and loved ones. "They have endured a double burden in our absence. Bless them with new strength during this time of joy and celebration."

Sebelius said that it was her great honor to welcome home the 200 Citizen-Soldiers of Kansas. "I'm here on behalf of the three



Guard retirees and rear detachment Soldiers of the 108th Aviation unfurl the American flag in welcome along the road leading away from the Forbes Field air terminal. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, UPAR)

million Kansans who aren't in the audience today to say 'Thank you.' Thank you for your service. Thank you for your sacrifice."

But Soldan received the most reaction from the audience when he simply stated "Families, your Soldiers are home."

Soldan listed the many accomplishments of the unit during their deployment. The 108th Aviation completed 100 percent of their post-mobilization training requirements – the only battalion in the brigade that did. They set the stage at Fort Hood for a successful tour in Iraq. Upon arriving in Iraq, they assumed the mission while

simultaneously building a battalion area from scratch without missing a beat. The aviation and ground maintainers enabled 100 percent mission execution. The maintainers ensured that the mission was executed to the tune of nearly 17,000 flying hours in 11 months. They safely and successfully ensured that the aircraft were ready to fly, every day, all day for 11 months. The 108th Aviation completed 1,200 missions and successfully navigated 10 combat engagements. They ensured the safe movement of 73,000 Soldiers, Sailors Airmen and Marines, keeping them off the

roads of Iraq.

Soldan went on to say "Your Soldiers are the finest group of men and women that I have ever served with. It has been my privilege to be their commander; I'm honored to be standing here as their commander."

Soldan concluded his speech with the battalion's motto "Strength and Courage" and was answered in turn with a resounding "Strength and Courage, Sir!" from his Soldiers.

Small took the podium and said "Before you this morning, standing tall and in formation, is the finest aviation battalion in the U.S. Army, the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation. Thank you for your service... And now to the fine Soldiers of the 108th – it is time to go home. Col. Soldan, take charge of your battalion."

When Soldan approached the front of the stage and shouted "Dismissed," a roar of approval went through the ExpoCentre as families rushed from their seats into the waiting arms of their Soldiers. And in this instance that old cliché line from The Wizard of Oz "There's no place like home" couldn't have been more true.

The Soldiers deployed in April 2006 to their mobilization station at Fort Hood, Texas. In September 2006, the unit deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In Iraq, their mission was battlefield circulation of troops and supplies, combat air assault and the daily air movement of VIPs and dignitaries.

The 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation, headquartered in Topeka with companies in Topeka; Salina; Austin, Texas and Boone, Iowa, is an air assault helicopter unit, flying UH-60 Black Hawks.

Penrod assumes HHC command 35th Division departs for Kosovo



Capt. Gary Penrod (right) accepts command of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor. (Photo by Spc. Joseph A. Andaverde)

By Spc. Joseph A. Andaverde

Sept. 8, 2007, marked the official change of command of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor. Capt. Jason P. Nelson was succeeded by Capt. Gary Penrod. Penrod is enthusiastic about his upcoming time as commander of the company.

Penrod has been a member the battalion since 1988 and has served in every company of the battalion. Prior to this promotion, he was serving as the HHC executive officer. Penrod is eager to see the company through the upcoming transition to a

Combat Arms Battalion and continue to interact with Soldiers on a personal level.

Nelson is now serving as the battalion operations officer. Throughout his time as HHC commander, he was proud to say that drill strength greatly increased. He believes that Penrod will do an outstanding job as HHC commander.

"He has a lot of knowledge, especially because of his time as company executive officer," said Nelson.

Nelson believes some of the challenges he has faced over the past 14 months will carry over to Penrod's command.

Kyle receives Bronze Star

By Spc. Chris Baker, UPAR

Capt. Abraham L. Kyle received the Bronze Star Medal for Exceptional meritorious service while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Kyle performed as an Embedded Training Team mentor and developed a Kandak (battalion) maintenance program for the Afghan National Army.

Kyle performed beyond the call of duty, accompanying numerous combat operations to assist, mentor, and coach line infantry patrols. While on combat patrol south of Qareh Baghi in Andar District, Kyle came into contact with enemy forces. During the engagement Kyle suffered an injury to the leg by shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade. His performance of duty in a combat zone reflects great credit upon himself, the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, the United States Central Command, and the United States Army.

Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting was in attendance

to present the Bronze Star Medal to Kyle, recognizing him for his valiant service. He has been tracking Kyle's rehabilitation process and is pleased at his progress.

Bunting noted the importance of the National Guard Embedded Training Teams and the essential role they play in strengthening the Afghan National Army and National Police Forces.

Kyle has 22 years of service and has been with Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery since 1995. He deployed with the battalion to Iraq in 2004 to 2005 and Afghanistan in 2006. As a result of his exceptional service, Kyle has received the Purple Heart, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Army Commendation Medal and the Army Achievement Medal.

Kyle currently resides in Liberty, Mo., with his wife, Kimberly and children, Adam, 15; Tyler, 11; Ripley, 4 and Xander, 3. He also has a son, David, 18, who resides in Florida.



Capt. Abraham Kyle receives a Bronze Star medal from Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. (Photo by Spc. Chris Baker, UPAR)

By Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD

Since the end of the war in Kosovo in June 1999, the separate ethnic groups of the region have lived in relative peace, although the NATO continues to rotate peacekeeping forces into Kosovo on a regular basis. The alliance played an extensive role in the war and is credited with helping bring an end to the fighting and peace to the region.

On Sept. 10, 2007, the parade field at Camp Atterbury, Ind., was filled with family members, fellow Soldiers and well-wishers of Task Force Falcon, as they bid farewell to the 35th Infantry Division. Task Force Falcon is a multinational task force comprised of Guard members from 12 states and soldiers from six other nations that will eventually be linked up to form KFOR 9.

"KFOR 9 is a Security Task Force that will help provide security for the region of Kosovo in a peace keeping roll," said Maj. Jeff Totman, Kansas Army National Guard. "Our mission there will be to ensure that the Albanians, Serbians and other ethnic groups in the country will have a peaceful place to work and live."

Task Force Falcon will stop in Germany and link up with the rest of KFOR 9 before deploying into Kosovo. Many of the Soldiers in this group see the mission as a diplomacy tool for the military and volun-

teered for the duty.

Spc. Matthew Williams, Shawnee, said "I thought that the Kosovo mission would be a good learning experience. It is the creation of a country ... and I'll get to witness it."

Task Force Falcon received pre-mobilization training in close quarters combat, crowd control and communication with civilians.

"This task force has met and exceeded every challenge that has been set in front of it," said Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Cochran.

In their peacekeeping role, KFOR 9 will be conducting security operations that will help ensure that the country will remain stable. Kosovo will soon be conducting an election that will help solidify peace in the region.

"The upcoming elections will show how well the factions of Kosovo will continue to move forward in the future," said Brig. Gen. John E. Davoren, commander Multinational Task Force - East.

Task Force Falcon will return home after a 12-month tour of duty in Kosovo. Since the end of the war in Kosovo, the country has held municipal elections in 2000 and 2003 and nationwide elections in 2001 and 2004. Each of these elections were conducted under international supervision with the conclusion that they were fair and free. The next round of elections is expected in November 2007.



Soldiers of the 35th Infantry Division stand in formation at Camp Atterbury, Ind., during a deployment ceremony on Sept. 10. (Photo by Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD)

Soldier receives Purple Heart



Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general, congratulates Spc. Sean P. McCoy after awarding him a Purple Heart medal on Wednesday, Oct. 10, for wounds received in action while serving in Iraq. McCoy was wounded Nov. 28, 2004, while serving in Iraq with the 74th Quartermaster Company, a now-deactivated Kansas National Guard unit. McCoy was medically discharged from the Army following his combat tour. The Department of Defense awarded the honor to McCoy on May 3, 2007. (Photo by Stephen D. Larson)

Veterans and their families deserve honor and support

By **Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting**

This Veteran's Day my thoughts, prayers and gratitude are with the families of the Kansas Guardsmen who gave their lives for us in Iraq and Afghanistan, and with our troops who are currently deployed and those who have previously deployed. Thank you for the tremendous sacrifices you and your families are making to ensure the freedom we have in the United States. I want to assure you I will continue to do everything within my power to make sure you and your families have the support you need.

Our Family Programs Office is working hard for Guardsmen and their families to ensure everyone has the information needed when a loved one deploys. Recent improvements have been made, including modifications to our pre-deployment training and reintegration training and the planned opening of a Family Resource Center at the Dodge City armory, which will mean western Kansas families now have more options.

Our department recently received some



Maj. Gen. Tod M. Bunting

great news regarding help that will come to Kansas Guardsmen via the military emergency relief fund donation. Last year, for the first time, Kansans had the opportunity to donate to this fund by checking a box on their state income tax forms. As of the end of October, more than \$84,000 is available thanks to Kansas taxpayers! The money donated in 2007 will be available in early 2008 to help families.

As you do your taxes this spring, you'll have another opportunity to help Guard members and their families through a difficult time by donating to the military emergency relief fund by simply checking a box on your tax form. Thank you for considering it.

In an effort to prove we can best train ourselves and to provide our troops more time with their families before deploying, we recently implemented the first ever pre-mobilization training of Guardsmen in Salina, and this will mean the 1st Battalion, 161 Field Artillery will have Thanksgiving with their families. We are excited about this new training opportunity, as it is one of many changes in training we are making in the state. We are currently enhancing our civilian training facilities in Salina to provide a place where emergency responders can train together and also along side the military to improve disaster response and recovery.

Despite the disastrous May 4 tornado in Greensburg, the town of 1,500 continues to bounce back. State and federal support are helping the town operate and rebuild. The schools opened this fall with 75 percent of their previous enrollment and are operating in temporary housing. Many students now attending surrounding schools are expected to return.

Discussions are now underway to equip Greensburg with some of the best technology available. In fact, one plan would be to provide wireless internet capabilities to 95 percent of Kiowa County, and to ensure computers are available to many residents.

Unfortunately, within the past couple of months in Greensburg more residents have passed away from injuries suffered in the May tornado. The death toll has risen to 15 from 10 in mid-May. I extend my sympathies to those who have lost loved ones. Our agency spent so much time in Greensburg following the disaster that we feel a strong tie to the community, and we will continue to do whatever we can to provide support as needed to the residents there.

In Coffeyville, programs are in place to buy out some of the homeowners whose properties were flooded and also affected by the oil spill from Coffeyville Resources, Inc.

The state and FEMA continue to work

with other flooded communities as well.

The aftermath of both the flooding and the tornado are reminders of the importance of keeping insurance policies up-to-date. Individual assistance is available to many who have been impacted by the severe storms of 2007; however, in several cases insurance policies did not include flood coverage or had not been updated for higher appraised values. Be sure to check with your insurance agent regarding your policy if you aren't clear about its coverage.

Preparing ourselves and others to respond to disasters is a priority for us and we've been especially busy during the past couple of months. Wichita hosted two events, Kansas Preparedness Day in September, and a large-scale disaster training exercise put on by KU and the South Central Kansas Homeland Security Council in October. Approximately 800 people were involved in the exercise/simulation involving a terrorist truck bomb. It provided emergency responders invaluable hands on training along side other responders. Despite all the actual experience responders have received this year due to floods and tornadoes we will continue to exercise our ability to respond because we can always find room for improvement.

I wish you all a very happy Thanksgiving. Please be safe and thank you again for your service!

Soldier to Soldier

Retiring Guardsman a shining example of a Citizen-Soldier

By **Command Sgt. Maj. Steve Rodina**

Courage, honorable, loyal, dedicated, perseverance, hero, Kansas Citizen-Soldier.

These are just a few words that come to my mind when I think of Spc. Nathan Gray.

In the next few weeks, Nathan will receive his retirement from the Kansas Army National Guard. He has honorably served as a Kansas Citizen-Soldier with

the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery since September 1999.

What many of you don't know about Nathan is that when the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery was mobilized to Iraq he answered the call along with the rest of his unit. The unit's mission in Iraq was to provide force protection. On Nov. 8, 2004, Nathan was the gunner in a vehicle that

was part of a personal security team for Charles Duelfer, the chief U.S. weapons inspector in Iraq. The vehicle he was riding in was hit by a suicide bomber. The attack instantly killed the other two passengers in the vehicle, Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wisdom and Sgt. Don Allen Clary.

Nathan was thrown against and out the back door of the vehicle resulting in a traumatic brain injury, shattering his right ankle, breaking his neck in two places, his back in one place, breaking three ribs on his left side, puncturing his left lung, breaking his right hand in two places and burns over 15 percent of his body. He was blown 100 feet out of vehicle and was almost run over by the humvee that was in the convoy behind him. That driver successfully avoided Nathan as he lay there unconscious from the trauma of the attack. Medics working on Nathan began CPR and had to revive him three times before he could reach the hospital.

Nathan was flown to Germany and then



State Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Rodina

on to Houston, where he spent the next several months in a hospital recovering from his injuries. When his unit was due to return to Kansas in February 2005, Nathan, despite his injuries, insisted that he be at the ceremony to welcome them home.

Nathan suffers from back and neck pain every day. He can't run or lift anything over 40 lbs. But that hasn't stopped him.

Nathan was hired to serve as the Transition Assistance Advisor for The Adjutant General's Department. He served in this job from November 2006 to August 2007, where he helped other Soldiers and Airmen re-integrate into civilian life after deployment. Nathan recently left the agency after accepting a job in law enforcement, which is his first love.

Even though Nathan will be retiring from the Kansas National Guard he should not be forgotten.

Nathan should serve as an inspiration to us all. With his quiet determination and perseverance he has come through, even though it seemed that the odds were stacked against him.

Nathan is just one shining example of the fine Kansas Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen that serve our state and nation every day, without question, without complaint, without falter, without fail.

Welcome them home

My friends and I attended the celebration at the Kansas ExpoCentre for the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment. We didn't know anyone in the group who was returning, but we wanted to go and show support for the Soldiers and their families.

From the very first, our hearts were stirred as we saw families coming to be reunited with their loved ones. When the band began playing the wonderful Sousa marches, I fought back tears that fell later when the Soldiers came marching into the stadium and continued to flow through the speeches right on until after I left the arena.

The speeches by the governor and others were interrupted many times by standing ovations when they gave an accounting of the troops accomplishments in Iraq.

When the signal "Dismissed" was given, the reuniting began. After the people had finally found their family members, I saw three Soldiers standing at the side by themselves. I wondered if their loved ones were too far away to come

and greet them. I wanted to go over and ask if I could give them a welcome home hug as a substitute for their mothers. I just didn't have the nerve.

I watched the news report of the event on one TV station and was disappointed that they only related one positive outcome of the troops stay in Iraq while other outcomes had been listed at the celebration.

Although my friends and I weren't the only ones there who didn't have a loved one returning, I was disappointed the arena wasn't overflowing with well wishers.

No matter how you feel about the war itself, these men and women have sacrificed. As an American, I think we need to show them our respect and support whenever we can.

So I say thank you, men and women, for being willing to give your all for your country. May God bless you and your families as you make the adjustments of being home again.

Evelyn Beem, Ozawkie

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Soldiers compete to represent the 287th Sustainment Brigade

By Sgt. Heather Wright

With their heads buried in their study guides and newspapers, 287th Brigade Soldiers refreshed their memories in the last few minutes before the Best Individual Soldier and Best Noncommissioned Officer Board on Sept. 9 in Wichita. Recently promoted Sgt. Kenneth Raymond Hare, 2nd Battalion, 170th Maintenance Company; Spc. Adam Neeley, 772nd Maintenance Company; and Spc. Symon Lynch, 778th Transportation Company competed for Best Individual Soldier. Sgt. Jennifer Harralson, 778th Transportation Company and Staff Sgt. Jason Oesterreich, 995th Maintenance Company vied for Best Non-Commissioned Officer.

The Soldiers were composed and focused while preparing to meet the Board: Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. John Ryan, Special Troops Command Sgt. Maj. Manuel Rubio, 891st Engineers Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Boring and 169th Corps Support Battalion 1st Sgt. Pat Cullen. Having won boards for their respective units in August and with another month to study for the Brigade Board, they were confident and prepared.

Hare served in the Navy before he joined the Army Guard. "Navy Boards are yearly reviews of skills and job knowledge and take three hours to complete," said Hare, "so I was prepared to study. The Army Board is a whole different skill set and format than what I did in the Navy, so it was challenging."

Neeley studied the online guide and "picked the brains of his squad and NCOs." Lynch recently completed Warrior Leader School, so much of the information

was fresh in his mind. He found the first board relatively simple, but didn't become complacent, studying diligently.

Harralson has participated in five boards, so she knew what to expect. She read over the study guide and stayed on top of current events. Oesterreich studied the online guide and downloaded relevant audio clips. His time at the Joint Visitors Bureau in Camp Victory, Iraq, helped prepare him for the board. Oesterreich interacted regularly with senior noncommissioned officers, officers and dignitaries in Iraq.

One by one, the candidates entered the room and faced the board. About five hours later, Ryan and the board had an informal after action review with the candidates and their sponsors before announcing the winners. They discussed areas in which the candidates excelled, areas they could improve and answered any questions the candidates had.

At the AAR's conclusion, Ryan complimented the participants.

"You all did an outstanding job. It was a close call; you were all within a few points of each other." Oesterreich won Best Non-Commissioned Officer and Hare won Best Individual Soldier and will represent the 287th Sustainment Brigade at the State Board this November in Salina.

The State Board is a four-day event. The Soldiers will be additionally challenged with a physical training test, range qualifications with only three rounds to zero their weapon, Warrior Task practicum and the Board itself.

As Ryan said, "We have the best Soldiers in the state. That's a little pride from your command sergeant major."

Guardsmen attend Career Fair

By Sgt. 1st Class David Miles

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor were faced with some difficult decisions. October's drill was designated as the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor and 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Combined Arms Battalion Career Fair.

Saturday, Oct. 13 was the beginning of the unit reorganization process. Proximity/Military Occupational Skill booths were set up to facilitate the decision process for the Soldiers. Each booth signified a unit from the Combined Arms Battalion and provided lists of the available Military Occupational Skills with rank structure.

Representatives at each booth included infantry battalion staff, fire support team trainer, Joint Forces Headquarters repre-

sentatives and the armor battalion staff. Each booth was staffed by the command section of the company and a subject matter expert to assist Soldiers in understanding the Combined Arms Battalion transformation and restructuring. The Career Fair offered an answer to Soldiers' questions related to their Military Occupational Skill or location choices.

Concerns included bonus eligibility, technician and Active Guard and Reserve related slots, and Military Occupational Skill conversions within the Combined Arms Battalion. Some Soldiers were worried about being close to home and chose jobs accordingly. Soldiers who had specific questions regarding Military Occupational Skill duties were answered by booth operators.



Lt. Col. Anthony Mohatt, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry, discusses transformation to a Combined Arms Battalion with Kansas National Guardsmen attending a Career Fair on Oct. 13. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class David Miles)

1077th ASMD Soldiers qualify on shooting range

By Spc. Stacy Burns

Every year, every Kansas National Guard unit goes to the weapons qualification range. During the August drill, the 1077th Area Support Medical Detachment joined with Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 169th Corps Support Sustainment Battalion and traveled to Salina. An advance party from the HHD, 169th CSB set-up camouflage netting over the bleachers to aid in heat injury control. Additionally, they were able to get the weapons ready for the main body to arrive.

The main body arrived Friday night in Salina and was up bright and early Saturday morning to check out weapons and load the bus. The 1077th ASMD and HHD, 169th CSB arrived at the range for the safety briefing prior to going onto the range. The weather was breezy and tolerable, but by that afternoon the temperatures almost hit a record high. The 778th

Transportation Company arrived just as the heat set in at 101 degrees.

The 1077th ASMD commander, Capt. Jeremy Brandt said, "I was very pleased with our 100 percent participation rate and 71 percent individual weapons qualification rate. Though I expect no less, I was impressed with the positive attitudes of all of our Soldiers despite the high temperatures. Leaders with the HHD and the 778th Transportation Company commander did a great job taking the lead in planning the event and making adjustments to allow training to continue safely in the heat."

The 1077th ASMD was able to support the medical needs of all Soldiers on the range. The medics realized the potential to encounter heat casualties due to the high temperatures. Only one minor heat casualty was treated, which was a tribute to the safety controls. Every Soldier did a wonderful job of staying hydrated in the environment given to them.



Soldiers of the 1077th Area Support Medical Detachment qualify on the shooting range. (Photo by Spc. Stacy Burns)

Christie receives medal



Col. Robert Schmitt, commander, 287th Sustainment Brigade (left) and Lt. Col. Tony Divish, commander, 287th Special Troops Battalion (right), present Maj. Erica Christie with a Meritorious Service Medal. Christie, 287th Sustainment Brigade staff adjutant, was recognized for the contributions she made during her 10 years of service to the 287th Special Troops Battalion, formerly the 174th Supply and Services Battalion, Hays, and its subordinate units. Her first command was of the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment of the 174th. Her second command was with the 323rd Ordnance Company, a unit she "stood up." They were known as the "Rocket Docs" in recognition of their mission of performing maintenance on missile systems. Additionally, she held all three primary staff officer positions within the battalion. Her exemplary leadership, tireless dedication to mission accomplishment and dedication to excellence is in keeping with the finest traditions of the military, reflecting great credit upon herself, the Kansas Army National Guard, and the United States Army. Christie lives in Wamego with her husband Rick, who is also in the National Guard and her son, Jacob. She is employed by Three Rivers Independent Living Center as a department manager. (Photo provided)

Battery C Soldiers “tackle” Army combatives training

By Sgt. 1st Class Steve Ahlstedt

Soldiers of Battery C, 2nd Battalion 130th Field Artillery are learning what the Modern Army Combatives Program is all about. Combatives is comprised of mixed martial arts, similar to that seen on the Ultimate Fighting Championship. It combines Brazilian jiu-jitsu, muay tai and kali and is designed to enhance physical and mental toughness.

“We’re in the crawl phase at this point,” said Sgt. 1st Class Steve Ahlstedt, operations sergeant for Battery C. “I would really like to see this program take off over the next training year.”

“Excellent team building exercise,” said Staff Sgt. Chip Cunningham, primary combatives instructor. “About half the unit consists of Iraqi Freedom veterans and the other half consists of new Soldiers and attached maintenance personnel. This

training brings all the groups together to share a common bond,” he said.

“We finally have the home station drill time, the motivation and most importantly, the support of our Battery leadership to make this thing work. The commander and first sergeant get right down on the mat and roll with us,” said Cunningham. “Rank has no place on the mat. Specialists go up against the commander just like any other Soldier. If your technique is not up to par, you’re going to tap out. It’s that simple. It just makes you want to improve that much more,” he said.

In addition to the crucial life-saving skills learned, combatives also proves to be a great motivator and another method of physical fitness training. It combines strength, flexibility, cardiovascular stamina and mental and physical toughness all into one event.



Staff Sgt. Cunningham shows Sgt. Kenneth Mateer the finer points of the rear naked choke. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steve Ahlstedt)

Army National Guard flies more than just helicopters

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

What do you think about when Army Aviation is mentioned? Most people think about rotary wing aircraft, or more commonly, helicopters. Which helicopter depends on the person’s age. To some, visions of the bubble canopied Korean War vintage OH-13 Sioux comes to mind, carrying wounded from the battle field. Others will never forget the distinctive wop-wop sound of the UH-1 (HUEY) Iroquois rotor blades. Of course today, thanks to news coverage, everyone knows UH-60 Black Hawks, CH-47 Chinooks, AH-64 Apaches, and OH-58 Kiowa’s. The United States Army names its aircraft in honor of Native American Tribes.

In addition to these aircraft the Kansas Army National Guard has a fixed wing unit based at Forbes Field, Topeka. The Kansas State Flight Detachment 37, of the Operational Support Airlift Command (OSACOM) flies the C-12 Huron. The C-12 is the military version of the twin-engine turboprop Beachcraft King Air. With a wing span of over 43 feet, the C-12 can cruise over 300 miles per hour for more than 2,000 miles at altitudes reaching 35,000 feet. With a crew of two pilots, the C-12’s normal mission is carrying up to eight high priority passengers. However, the versatile aircraft can be used for embassy support, medical evacuation, and light cargo and surveillance missions.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Wayne Spry, detachment commander, said the detachment’s six pilots, two full time and four traditional Guard members, are dual-rated. That means they are all qualified to fly both helicopters, such as the Black Hawk, in addition to the C-12.

With thousands of pilots within the aviation branch, the fraternity of fixed wing pilots is very exclusive. Spry said they have flown all over the continental United States. Outside of the United States, the detachment has flown to much of Central America and parts of South America. They have also flown to many of the Caribbean islands. Spry said that this year the unit has had some interesting missions.

“We flew a couple of four star generals, normally an Air Force mission, and then we picked up a classified courier,” said Spry. “The young private first class spent the flight just sitting in the back of the aircraft.”

As with many units in the Kansas Army National Guard, the unit is currently deployed as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They are providing important mission support in a manner far greater than the detachment’s small numbers would indicate. While they are gone, the Soldiers will be missed not only by their families and friends, but the entire Kansas Army National Guard Aviation community.

108th Aviation returns to resurfaced apron in Salina

By Laura Robertson, Salina Airport Authority

When the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment returned from Iraq to their facility at the Salina Airport, they were excited to see that they were getting a newly refinished apron in front of their hangar. The new apron surface will reduce maintenance and operating costs for the Kansas Army National Guard Aviation Support Facility.

The apron resurfacing should be finished in time for the five Black Hawk UH-60s to return to the facility in mid-November.

“The new apron surface will be safer for personnel and reduce foreign object damage on our aircraft and others using the airport,” said Lt. Col. Dave Leger, Army Aviation Support Facility commander.

“It will be good to have the aircraft and personnel back in Kansas because we have been shorthanded during Kansas natural disasters,” said Leger. “It was been a long and interesting year and half with the blizzards, tornadoes and floods.”

The unit deployed in April 2006 to their mobilization in Fort Hood, Texas, and then deployed to Iraq in September 2006 to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. It returned to Kansas in September 2007. The will be returning to duty at the Aviation Support Facility in November.

“The work this unit has performed has been critical in Iraq and they and their families can be proud of their service and sacrifice,” said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas Adjutant General.



The Kansas National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation will enjoy a newly resurfaced apron at the Salina Airport when it returns to duty there in November. (Photo by Lt. Col. Dave Leger)

Marysville unit draws crowd

By Sgt. 1st Class Chris Foster

Despite high winds and scattered rain, approximately 450 people attended an open house at Rueger Memorial Armory in Marysville hosted by Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery on Oct. 13.

Open house events included paintball contests, shooting van, vehicle and weapon displays and the Kansas National Guard mobile museum. The most popular event was the paintball contest. Teams participated in “capture the flag” games, using straw bales for obstacles and cover. The teams were comprised of a mixture of civilians and unit Soldiers, allowing the civilians to learn small-unit tactics from the Soldiers.

Vehicle displays featured all of the unit’s basic vehicles, including the M1068A3 Command Post Carrier, M985 HEMTT, M998 HMMWV, and M270 Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS). The highlight was the MLRS, the most powerful surface-to-surface weapon in the Kansas National Guard’s inventory. Unit Soldiers

showed the capabilities and explained the uses of the vehicles to visitors.

Crew-served weapons were also displayed, including the M2 .50-caliber machine gun, MK-19 40mm grenade launcher and M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. The weapons displays were conducted by the unit armorer and the Fire Direction platoon.

The shooting van allowed younger children to engage in shooting exercises without risking their safety in the paintball contest. The shooting van was conducted by the unit’s First Platoon.

The Kansas National Guard Mobile Museum featured artifacts from the rich Kansas military heritage, ranging from World War I all the way to Operation Iraqi Freedom. This was the Mobile Museum’s second visit to Marysville.

The Battery A Family Readiness Group hosted a concession stand, selling hot dogs, chili and soda to benefit the unit’s families.



The M270 MLRS and M1068A3 Command Post Carrier are displayed by Battery A Soldiers Pfc. Curtis Stubbeman (right) and Pfc. Derick Maschmeier. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Foster)

Kansas team vies for honors in 2007 Cavalry Competition

By Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD

On Sept. 20, 2007, the Kansas National Guard Mounted Color Guard competed in the Annual Bivouac and Cavalry Competition at Fort Riley. This three-day event incorporates a combination of class competitions from mounted sabers and pistol marksmanship to field jumping and platoon drills. The U.S. Cavalry Association sponsors this event each year and this is the second time that the event was held at Fort Riley.

The U.S. Cavalry Association was created in 1976 by former cavalymen who were concerned that the culture and heritage of the cavalry was beginning to diminish. As the modern day cavalryman continues to evolve to keep pace with the ever changing landscape of warfare and technology, these men decided they needed to safeguard the history of the cavalryman.

"We are not re-enactors," said retired Brig. Gen. Phillip Bolte, president of the U.S.C.A. "We are real cavalymen who did not want to see the old tactics disappear."

"Our major job here is to ensure the high level of skills of the cavalryman and his horse are not forgotten," Bolte continued. "It takes a highly trained Soldier to get his horse to react in the conditions that cavalymen operated in, as these individuals are demonstrating here."

The Kansas National Guard Team is comprised of Soldiers from the 287th Sustainment Brigade and 1161st Forward Support Company and Airmen from the 190th Air Refueling Wing, as well as



Members of the Kansas National Guard Mounted Color Guard present arms during the 2007 Annual Bivouac and Cavalry Competition at Fort Riley, sponsored by the U.S. Cavalry Association. (Photo by Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD)

members from the Montana and Colorado National Guard and a Kansas reservist.

Over the three days of competition each contestant is judged as an individual as well as how they work with the team as a whole. Some of the categories in which riders are judged are the ability to negotiate and engage targets in close quarters, military horsemanship, where judges grade the horse management skills of the rider as prescribed by U.S. military regulations and

Military Field jumping which involves a rider's ability to negotiate and jump over obstacles.

Every team is judged on horsemanship, fitness of the rider, horse and authenticity and presentation of their uniform. During the Platoon Drill competition a minimum of eight entrants, under the direction of a mounted team leader, must demonstrate proper execution of commands and the ability to work in formation, maintain

order and execute evolutions in accordance with cavalry drill regulations. The teams are also judged on the ability to interpret, follow and execute directions given by the team leader while maneuvering their horses in a tight formation.

"Operating a horse in such close quarters is difficult to do because the horse must be comfortable in those conditions," said retired Lt. Col. Edwin Ramsey. "Therefore, the horse must actually trust the rider."

Ramsey is a former member of the 26th Cavalry Scouts, which saw action in the Philippines during World War II. Ramsey led the last horse-mounted cavalry charge in U.S. history against the Japanese, then organized the resistance and fought Japanese forces in guerrilla warfare until Gen. Douglas MacArthur returned with forces to liberate the region in 1944.

The culmination of this three-day affair is the Director's Cup competition. Once the scores have all been calculated, the top performers are selected to compete at this event. One member of the KSMCG team had amassed enough points to compete in the "Best of the Best" competition, as it is known by the participants.

1st Sgt. Howard Williams of the 1161st FSC in Hutchinson placed seventh in the Director's Cup Competition from which the National Champion is chosen. Overall, KSMCG team performed well. This was the first time that the team has competed in the National Cavalry Competition and are looking forward to competing again in years to come.



The Kansas team executes a mounted maneuver during the competition. (Photo by Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD)



Retired Brig. Gen. Phillip Bolte, president of the U.S. Cavalry Association, talks to the Kansas team. (Photo by Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD)

Soldiers provide medical services for people of Kosovo

By Lt. Col. Rex Johnson and Spc. Tegan Jucera, 35th Division Public Affairs

The people of Kosovo gathered in Cernice on Saturday, Oct. 20, to receive medical care provided by deployed National Guard health care Soldiers. These are the Soldiers of Task Force Med and are part of Kosovo Force 9 (KFOR 9), the most recent deployment to Kosovo led by the 35th Infantry Division, Kansas National Guard. There are about 204 personnel from the Kansas National Guard on this deployment, including those from the 35th, as well as others who came from other Kansas Guard units.

This was the first Medical Civil Assistance Program (MED CAP) that KFOR 9 was able to run with members of KFOR 8 watching from the sidelines. KFOR 9 officially relieves KFOR 8, led by the 29th Infantry Division, on Nov. 2.

"We are building stability and rebuilding the medical infrastructure for the people of Kosovo," said Sgt. Michael Mayhew, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the

MED CAP.

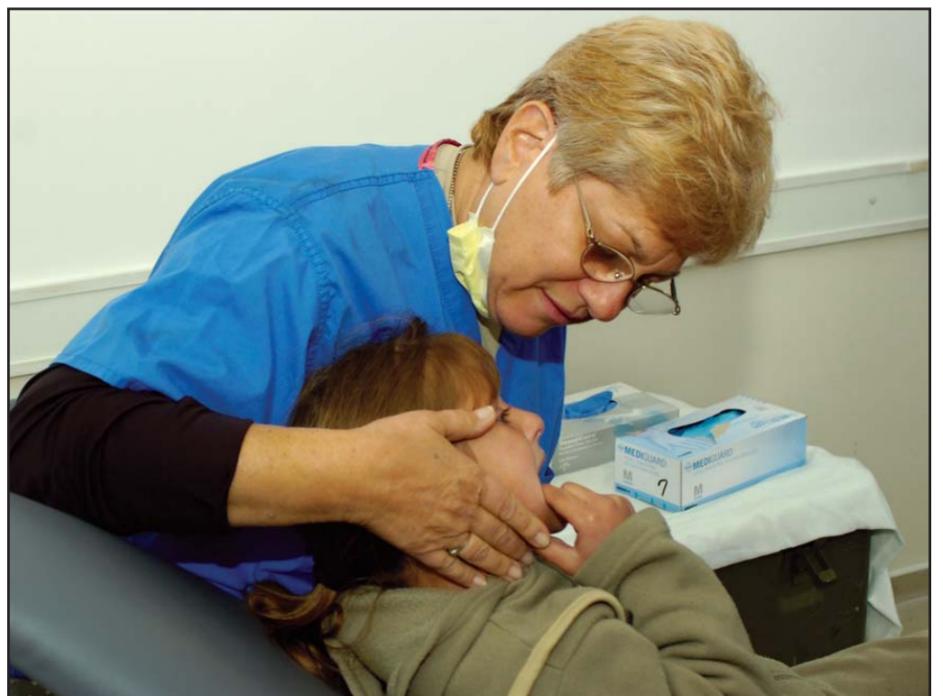
Mayhew said that the MED CAP is a way to help build community trust. A MED CAP is one of the ways that the National Guard is providing a safe and secure environment and helping the people of Kosovo.

"I am overwhelmed by the response from the community; how grateful they are that we are here and that we are helping them," Mayhew said. "They really look forward to seeing us out here and getting anything they can from us."

Mayhew said Task Force Med performed a number of services for the community, such as medical, dental, pharmaceutical and optometric. They also gave out gift bags filled with soap, toothbrush, toothpaste and other hygienic items. Children also received coloring books. More than 300 people attended the MED CAP.

"It's been great," said Mayhew. "This is part of why I joined the Army and specifically the medical core. It was to be able to

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Dr. (Lt. Col.) Elaine Berkowitz, Pittsburgh, Penn., Army dentist, examines the teeth of an 8-year old Kosovo girl during the Oct. 20 MED CAP. (Photo provided)

Kansas Guardsmen rehearse emergency response measures



Soldiers of the 35th Military Police Company place a humvee at a checkpoint during an emergency response exercise. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson)

By Sgt. Michael Mathewson, UPAR

The Wolf Creek Generating Station, a nuclear power plant near Burlington, is a major supplier of electrical power to the region. In November, the facility will be evaluated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Emergency Management Agency on Wolf Creek's and the State's ability to respond to a release of radiation to the environment. The 35th Military Police Company, Kansas Army National Guard is an integral part of the State's response to such an emergency.

Two emergency preparedness exercises were conducted in October to prepare for the evaluation. The Topeka-based military

police Soldiers provided security at the State Defense Building in Topeka and for the Kansas Emergency Management Division's Forward Staging Area in Coffey County. 1st Lt. Christopher Coco, the officer in charge of the MP Rear Detachment, said "The 35th MP Company is now under administrative control of the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor. By requesting Soldiers from the battalion, we give the battalion's Soldiers a chance to understand the MP mission. At the same time, it gives the MPs a chance to learn from the combat arms Soldiers. It was a real chance for the Soldiers to share their experiences"

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Appreciation award presented to Cabela's of Kansas City

In appreciation of its support of the Kansas National Guard, sporting goods retailer Cabela's received special recognition from the Kansas Adjutant General's Department on Wednesday, Oct. 3.

During a 3 p.m. ceremony in the Cabela's store in Kansas City, Kan., Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general, presented Dave Lueth, general manager, and Jimmy Lopez, public relations director, with a framed 150th Anniversary Limited Edition commemorative print, commissioned by the Kansas National Guard in 2005 to celebrate its 150th anniversary. The print, by noted military history artist Dale Gallon, depicts the 8th Kansas Volunteers at the Battle of Missionary Ridge during the American Civil War. The presentation will also

include a framed narrative of the battle.

Col. Jim Trafton, deputy chief of staff for Strength Management, and State Command Sgt. Maj. Steve Rodina, were also in attendance at the ceremony.

Cabela's was nominated for the presentation by Trafton, who said the company has always been very supportive of the Kansas National Guard, particularly in its recruiting efforts.

"It started out small back in 2004 and has just sort of grown," said Trafton. "On race weekends, they allow us to use a part of their parking lot and we set up a huge military display. They have military appreciation days, where anyone in the military can get a discount at the store."

"They've been really good to us," Trafton said.



Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general, comments on the commemorative print he presented to Cabela's of Kansas City for the retailers on-going support of the Kansas National Guard. (Photo by Sharon Watson)

Unmanned aerial vehicles demonstrated at symposium

The Kansas National Guard, the Salina Airport Authority and the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce hosted the second annual Kansas Unmanned Aerial System Symposium Oct. 2-4 at the Kansas Regional Training Institute in Salina. Academia, military and business professionals with an aviation interest were invited to share ideas and products and learn about potential applications for unmanned aerial systems in their fields of expertise.

A wide cross section of speakers representing the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, U.S. Air Force Unmanned Aircraft Program Office, Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, U. S. Army Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Systems Redstone Arsenal, Drexel University,

University of South Florida and others spoke on the topic "Joint Operations in Constrained Airspace."

Symposium participants also were able to see the advantages of the Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center. The goal of the center is to provide integrated training involving air and ground assets. The center is ideal for organizations requiring a co-located air/ground testing and evaluation center. The benefit to both governmental agencies and private industries is the ability to evaluate the results of an exercise/flight test with all the players present.

The Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center includes Smoky Hill Weapons Range, Kansas Regional Training Institute, Fort Riley and the Salina Municipal Airport.



An Unmanned Aerial Vehicle is launched during a demonstration at the 2nd annual Kansas Unmanned Aerial System Symposium held Oct. 2-4 at the Kansas Regional Training Institute in Salina. (Photo provided)

Medical services in Kosovo

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get out all over the world and help people with whatever they need. This area is in such need of good medical care that it's great to be able to be out here to help in any way that I can."

Mayhew said Task Force Med was there to provide support for the new medical center that opened. The people were able to go there and see the American doctors, but also see the local national doctors, as well.

"We're trying to build ethnic unity by bringing people of different groups into the MED CAP and showing them that they can get good medical care from an Albanian doctor as well as a Serbian, trying to just generally build the community."

Mayhew said he was really impressed with how KFOR 8 performed their duties and that it would be difficult to fill their shoes. He said the MED CAP was only a small operation and was limited in what they were able to do.

"It's overwhelming they come to us with such major problems and we're just a little clinic," said Capt. Elizabeth Waterman a nurse for Task Force Med.

She said she was seeing some of the patients and that a lot of the people coming would be admitted to the hospital if they were in America. Even though they were only able to do so much, Waterman felt the task force did more than enough.

"I think the people appreciate us being here because we're addressing a small need that they have, even though they've come with bigger problems. No one has gone away without a little bit, even if it's just some Tylenol[®]," Waterman said. "I think they feel that we think their problems

"No one has gone away without a little bit, even if it's just some Tylenol. I think they feel that we think their problems are real, no matter how small they are."

Capt. Elizabeth Waterman

are real, no matter how small they are."

Waterman said she noticed the best result coming from the optometrist because people would go in barely able to see and come out with glasses and seeing everything. She said the optometrist was handing out old army glasses that were no longer of use.

"I know that I'm going to go back and take all those military glasses that I've received and bring them to be donated so that they can use them," Waterman said.

She said that members of her church were going to send some of their old glasses. When they arrive, she will take pictures of their glasses being given away to send back to her church. She said the experience has been awesome and taught her not to take for granted what she has at home.

"I take away from this the knowledge of how much we're really needed here," Waterman said. "I didn't really feel that we were needed when we first came; I didn't think that we could do anything. Just the fact that we are doing an event like this, it shows that we are needed and there's a reason to be here."

Opportunities abound to spread the news about the Guard

By Maj. Rick Peat

"The pen is mightier than the sword."

This quote is commonly known by people world-wide and is rarely disputed. However, in an Army where bravado is bred into every man and woman during basic training and further molded throughout their careers, the "pen" has often been an afterthought when we plan our operations. We are historically obsessed with the "sword" — the tanks, the artillery, the machine guns, the bayonet. After all, the "sword" is fundamental to our warrior ethos.

Yet our experiences in Vietnam, Somalia, Iraq, and other countries has shown us that mastery of the sword and expertly performed maneuvers against our enemies do not assure accomplishment of our campaign objectives. Time and again we have learned that it is public opinion, both at home and abroad, that dictates our success.

Our enemies use well-conceived information operations, in coordination with terrorism and guerrilla warfare events, to effectively shape public opinion and accomplish their strategic objectives. While military public affairs cannot lie or use propaganda like our enemies can, there is much more we can do using truth to help the public make more informed opinions and decisions.

Our Soldiers in combat are doing everything asked of them to win the ground war. We must step up our efforts to tell their



105th MPAD Soldiers Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson, Sgt. Heather Wright, and 1st Sgt. Carl Mar, work public affairs during the opening ceremony for the Rescuer '06 exercise in Armenia. (Photo by Maj. Rick Peat, 105th MPAD)

story, to describe their experiences, and to communicate their achievements, so that their sacrifices are not in vain.

The military needs men and women who know how to use "the pen" as expertly as a sniper knows how to use his "sword."

The public affairs career field is desperately short of qualified personnel. In the Kansas Army Guard, there are 34 public affairs officers and enlisted personnel authorized. Yet according to a recent personnel system query, only seven Soldiers have the public affairs Military Occupational Specialty designation.

The public affairs career field offers Soldiers a tremendous opportunity to grow and advance, but more importantly offers them an opportunity to make a positive impact in an area of great strategic importance. Public Affairs professionals, officers and enlisted, are trained to deal with the media, and to create video or print news stories for publication.

Soldiers often ask why we bother working with the civilian media. A 2005 international survey designed to gauge how people decide what information to trust, The Edelman Trust Barometer, revealed that people don't believe information unless they see or hear it from multiple sources. The military cannot count on writing our own news stories to get its story out. Public affairs personnel also engage media to inform the public, using meaningful and honest dialogue. This approach establishes our credibility and increases the likelihood that the media will choose to use our information in their stories in addition to, or in lieu of, information from other sources.

Kansas Army Guard units authorized public affairs Soldiers include the 35th Division, the 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, the 287th Sustainment Brigade, the 102nd Military History Detachment, and the Joint Forces Headquarters. These are all traditional guard members.

Additionally, each company-size unit in the Army is required to have a Unit Public Affairs Representative (UPAR) designated as an additional duty. UPARs play a key role in a unit's community relations and also in getting the word out on the capabilities and accomplishments of their unit and individual personnel — both within the Guard and to the community, politicians, and other policy and decision makers that impact the Guard.

Some recent operations where Kansas National Guard public affairs personnel have served include: the 35th Division to Hurricane Katrina and numerous training exercises, the 102nd Military History Detachment to Iraq, and the 184th Air Wing to Greensburg. The 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment has been called upon frequently for deployments including Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, Yama Sakura exercise in Japan, Rescuer exercise in Armenia, and emergency response to Greensburg and for the flooding in eastern Kansas. The 287th Sustainment Brigade and 35th Division public affairs personnel have deployments scheduled for Iraq and Kosovo, respectively.

Opportunity abounds for Soldiers sincerely interested in public affairs and having the drive to complete the schools. For enlisted there are two public affairs MOS's. 46Q is a Print Journalist and 46R is a Broadcast (video) Journalist. The minimum qualification for both MOS's is a GT score of 110 or above, and completion of the DINFOS qualification course.

For army officers, public affairs is a career field. While the officers retain their branch, qualification for the public affairs career field (46A) is required.

Qualification is obtained by either completing the eight-week resident course at the Defense Information School (DINFOS), located at Fort Meade, Md., or by completing distance learning and a two-week session at DINFOS. DINFOS is a joint public affairs school—troops from all military services go to the same school.

Maj. Rick Peat has worked in military public affairs for nine years. He can be reached for further information about opportunities in public affairs via email at rick.peat@us.army.mil.



Maj. Rick Peat works with an interpreter to interview the first class of cadets to attend Afghanistan's National Military Academy in Kabul during the 105th MPAD's deployment for Operation Enduring Freedom V. (Photo by Lt. Col. Susan Meisner, Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan)

Technology gives 35th Division world-wide communications

By Master Sgt. Michael L. Pomes

Standing outside the 35th Infantry Division Headquarters building at Fort Leavenworth, Spc. Amy Voorhees logged on to the Army Knowledge Online Web site without cables or phone lines connecting her to the World Wide Web. Instead, she is able to access the Internet using technology new to the Division's logistics (G-4) section.

The Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) satellite recently acquired by the division headquarters will allow the logistics section to deploy in support of civil support and other missions while maintaining communications anywhere they need to work.

"Use of the VSAT allows the G4 section to have worldwide unclassified voice and data communications anywhere in the world once you have satellite coverage and a power source," said Chief Warrant Officer Patrick Hyatt. "The VSAT will allow the G4 to do a better job by giving communications capability where we don't have it."

In civil support operations, the G4 section could deploy to the site of a disaster and have voice and data communications

where none exists.

Three Soldiers can set up the VSAT in about 20 minutes. The major components of the VSAT include an indoor case, an antenna controller unit and the satellite antenna. The indoor case is normally set up in a sheltered environment. This case consists of the power supply, telephone, laptop computer, and a satellite communications platform.

The antenna controller unit directs the antenna to the VSAT satellite orbiting above the earth causing the antenna to literally dance around on its mount until it locks on the satellite. Up to 100 feet of cable can extend between the satellite antenna and the indoor case.

"The very small aperture in VSAT takes its name from the fact that the antenna is 1.2 meters in diameter," said Hyatt. Larger antennas are six meters in diameter.

As the division trains and plans to support potential local and regional disasters like the tornado that hit Greensburg, Kan., in the spring of 2006, the VSAT system will bring additional capabilities to ensure the division can provide the necessary support to local law enforcement officials.



Spc. Amy Voorhees connects cables to the antenna mount of the very small aperture terminal satellite voice and data communications system. Voorhees is a member of the logistics section of the 35th Infantry Division Headquarters at Fort Leavenworth. (Photo by Master Sgt. Michael L. Pomes, 35th ID PAO)

Kansas Guardsmen bring medical help to Armenians

By Lt. Col. Tim Stevens

A joint Kansas Army and Air National Guard medical team consisting of a Kansas Army National Guard dentist along with five 190th Medical Group members deployed from Sept. 15-22 to provide basic dental, optometric, and public health care to rural residents in the Republic of Armenia. Armenia and Kansas have participated in more than 45 State Partnership Program exchange events over the past four years, but this was the first ever humanitarian assistance visit.

During the humanitarian mission, the team visited three rural villages in southern Armenia. The remote villages of Darbis, Shamb, and Tatev in Sisian Marz (District) have populations of between 700 to 1,400 people and medical services are limited.

Kansas participants included Lt. Col. William Hefner, optometrist, 190th Medical Group; Lt. Col. Martin Powell, dentist, Kansas Army National Guard; Capt Ingrid Trevino, public health officer, 190th Medical Group; Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Norling, health technician, 190th Medical Group; Tech. Sgt. Michael Riblett, dental technician, 190th Medical Group; and

Senior Airman Olivia Hof, optometry specialist, 190th Medical Group. The Kansas team was joined by two doctors and several nurses from the Armenian Ministry of Defense. Peace Corps volunteers and a local doctor provided additional assistance.

The humanitarian assistance mission was an incredible experience for the team. "It was a great way to utilize our military training and resources by providing professional health care services to those in critical need. The people we served during this mission were truly thankful for our visit," said Trevino.

During the three day visit, the team treated 80 dental patients, ranging from pediatric to geriatric cases, and extracted 105 teeth. Referrals and recommendations were provided for services that could not be administered on the spot.

The team also examined 223 optometry patients and distributed 225 pairs of glasses. According to Hefner, "Follow-on care for those patients requiring cataract surgery was arranged with USAID's Mobile Eye Hospital that will visit the villages in the spring of 2008."

Hof said that it was wonderful to be able

(Continued on Page 14)



Tech. Sgt. Mike Riblett; 190th Medical Group (left) and Lt. Col. Martin Powell, Kansas Army National Guard (right) perform a dental exam with the assistance of an Armenian soldier. (Photo provided)

Kansas Guardsmen rehearse

Continued from Page 8

The Armor Battalion Soldiers, wearing MP armbands, were given quick instruction in military police operations before joining the mission.

The Soldiers were divided into two groups. The first group went to the State Defense Building. Although the State Defense Building, Nickell Armory and grounds are secured by members of the National Guard Facilities Police Force, the MPs secured the entrances to Nickell Armory. The controlled access was for the news media briefing room in Nickell. There, the media would be briefed by state, Coffey County and Wolf Creek officials on the current status of the event. Space was also provided on the Armory's drill floor for the media to set up their equipment. The MPs checked everyone's identification against a master list to ensure that only approved persons were allowed into the building.

In the SDB the MPs provided security for the Joint Operations Center, which is the heart of the state's reaction to the event. Here, the state leadership will coordinate the federal, state and county response to the incident. This year, the Joint Operations Center has been busy with the Greensburg tornado and the Coffeyville flood. The MPs also provided escort of officials between the SDB and

the briefing room in Nickell Armory when they need to meet with the media.

The second group traveled South on US 75 in humvees, along with the Mobile Command Post and its support vehicles, to a location on the edge of the contaminated area. There, they provided security for the Forward Staging Area. The Kansas Highway Patrol and other state agencies also operated out of the FSA. The FSA coordinated security in and around Burlington. The Mobile Command Post also serves as the backup command center in the event of a loss of communication with the SDB. The MPs established local security and operated the vehicle check point at the site's only entrance. There, the MPs had to deal with possible radiation contamination and evacuees seeking assistance.

After the exercise, Spc. Krystal Jolley said of her training at the FSA, "I am glad that I am doing this training now so that I will be ready if it should ever be for real."

Sgt. Danny Cheatham, also at the FSA, said, "I know about running traffic control points, but I am learning a lot about radiation exposure."

"This was great training for the MP's and cross training for the Armor Battalion Soldiers," said Coco. "We are ready not only for the graded evaluation, but we are ready in the event of a real emergency."

731st Medium Truck Company continuing their mission at home

While the troops in Iraq are fighting the War on Terror, the mission at home still has to be done. Equipment still needs to be hauled and maintained. Troops still need supplies or equipment hauled across the state or across the country to prepare for deployment and the 731st Medium Truck Company is continuing to meet that need.

Most of the 731st is running missions in Iraq. What amounts to approximately one platoon of Soldiers is still in Kansas as the 731st Medium Truck Company Rear Detachment. Convoys from Detachment 3, Hays, and Detachment 2, Wichita, ran missions to Belleville and Kansas City on Sept. 13 and 14.

"The Soldiers overseas are doing their job, but we are continuing the mission here at home," said 1st Lt. Christopher Sanders, rear detachment commander of the 731st.

The convoys included the tasks of picking up equipment from Kansas City and hauling it to Topeka and picking up

equipment in Belleville and hauling it to Salina. The purpose for the convoys varied from hauling equipment that needed repaired to moving equipment across the state to meet a need in another area. Although the convoys weren't long, they involved a lot of good training for the Soldiers.

Most of the Soldiers remaining here want to continue to do the jobs that they were trained for. "I would rather be out driving," said Pfc. Krista Knight.

"Even short missions give us the opportunity to do driver's training and get some of the new people out on the road getting windshield time. Every mile helps improve the skills that they have," said Staff Sgt. Tim Stoner

Driver's training and staying mission ready are priority tasks for the Soldiers at home. New Soldiers are coming into units all the time. Getting them mission ready and refining the skills that they learned while at Advanced Individual Training are an important part of the mission here at home.

Guardsmen make history with pre-mobilization training in Salina

Approximately 430 Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, Kansas National Guard, headed to the Great Plains Joint Regional Training Center in Salina Oct. 16 to begin pre-mobilization training for their deployment to Iraq in 2008. The Soldiers are from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, Wichita; Battery A, Dodge City; Battery C, Kingman; and the 1161st Forward Support Company, Hutchinson.

This will be the first time that a Kansas National Guard unit has conducted pre-mobilization training at the Salina facility prior to overseas deployment.

"We are ready to demonstrate our ability to train our Soldiers here in Kansas," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas Adjutant General. "Support from our state leaders has made the center in Salina capable of increased training and this translates to more time here at our homes in Kansas and more readiness for the nation. This is historic and something we have worked hard to establish and are very proud of our

self reliance. Future deployments will follow the lead of the 161st."

The Guardsmen will deploy in late November to Fort Bliss, Texas, for additional training prior to going to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in early 2008. Their mission will include work with the prison system, providing security, force protection and other duties.

"Once again, we see the flexibility of the Kansas Guard," Bunting said. "Here we have artillery Soldiers who have been called to carry out duties other than their primary mission. However, I have every confidence that these Soldiers accomplish these tasks with the same professionalism and dedication as they would if they were operating their Paladin howitzers. I wish them well and God speed."

A deployment ceremony will be held Nov. 21 at the Bicentennial Center in Salina. The Soldiers were able to spend the Thanksgiving holiday with their families before leaving for the additional pre-mobilization training in Texas.

Hannah selected as Health and Benefits Support Specialist

David C. "DC" Hannah has been selected as the Kansas National Guard's Health and Benefits Support Specialist.

In this position, Hannah will assist Guardsmen, Reservists and their families in learning about the benefits to which they are entitled, put them in contact with the appropriate agencies, as well as assist them in obtaining benefits. These benefits may include vocational rehabilitation, home improvement or structural alterations, mental health services and educational benefits. In addition, there are benefits available to Soldiers and Airmen who have not been deployed, such as Department of Veterans Affairs home loans.

"As the Guard's Health and Benefits Support Specialist, I'll have the opportunity to help Kansas National Guardsmen, and ensure they have the resources, programs and information they need," Hannah



David C. Hannah

said. "Guard members typically have a full time job and family, and some may be going to college at the same time, so I'll be able to bridge the gap in their busy schedules and connect them to help they may not have known was available to them," he added. "This will be a rewarding opportunity."

Hannah, of Oskaloosa, is a former Nebraska National Guardsman and long-time supporter of the National Guard. He is a member of the American Legion, American Legion Riders and Patriot Guard Riders. Prior to accepting this position, Hannah was a Medicare Benefit Integrity Investigator for IntegriGuard LLC in Topeka.

He attended the University of Nebraska and graduated from the Creighton University School of Medicine Paramedic Training Program in 1990. In addition, Hannah completed course work at the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center, St. Joseph (Mo.) Police Academy, and the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration.

Hannah replaces Nathan Gray, who recently took a position in law enforcement.

Preparedness Day event urges Kansans to take action



Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, backed by Kansas National Guardsmen and first responders from a variety of local and state agencies and private organizations, addresses the crowd at a news conference for Kansas Preparedness Day, held in Wichita on Sept. 10. (Photo by 1st Lt. Alyson Stockton)

By Sharon Watson

Unfortunately, it sometimes takes a disaster close to home to remind us of the importance of being prepared for the worst. Residents of Greensburg are just a few of the Kansans who have seen some of the worst conditions disrupt their lives in 2007. Tornadoes, floods, ice and snow storms have changed lives and claimed lives this year, and serve as a solemn reminder of what can happen to forever impact our lives.

While some Kansans were prepared to be self-sustaining for a few days following the disasters this year, not everyone was. That's why Kansas Preparedness Day and Month in September serve as another reminder of what everyone needs to do to protect themselves and their loved ones: make a home disaster kit and a home emergency plan for the family.

This year, the city of Wichita hosted Kansas Preparedness Day for the first time, featuring state and local disaster response vehicles and equipment along Main Street. The Sept. 10 event included displays of vehicles used in Greensburg, the southeast Kansas flooding and the winter storms in western Kansas. Previously, Kansas Preparedness Day has been held in Topeka on the Capitol lawn.

"We wanted other parts of the state to

have an opportunity to see what the state and local authorities can bring to them in a disaster," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting. "And we want to tell everyone about the importance of being prepared to sustain themselves, their families and their pets for at least three days following a disaster."

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius was among those at the Wichita event reminding Kansans to prepare.

"One of the few certainties we have in this world is that emergency situations will arise for all of us at one time or another, and we have certainly seen evidence of that this year in Kansas," said Sebelius. "If we make plans now to meet those situations like the Greensburg tornado, the ice storm out west and the flooding throughout the state, and to practice our plans, we can lessen the impact these kinds of events have on lives."

"The three major Kansas disasters this year left record-breaking destruction in several of our communities, and reminds us all of the need to be ready for any disaster by having emergency supplies on hand and by talking to our families about where to go for help if home is not an option," said Bunting.

For additional information on preparing a home kit and emergency family plan, go to www.ready.gov or www.ksready.gov.

VA Eastern Kansas Health Care Systems honored for support

Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas adjutant general, presented awards of appreciation to representatives of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System for its exemplary work in helping to reintegrate Guardsmen into their homes and communities following long-term deployments and for outstanding support of the Kansas National Guard.

Bunting made the presentations Oct. 23, at the State Defense Building in Topeka. Receiving the awards were Dr. Peter Almenoff, Director of Veterans Integrated Service Network 15; Marie Weldon, director, VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System; Warren Hill, associate director, VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System; Dr. Rick Selig, program director of Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom Outreach Team, and Kathy Zima with Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom Outreach Team.

"Even though they may not show it, readjusting to home, family and community can be a difficult and stressful transition for some Guardsmen who have

been away in a combat zone," said Bunting. "In those areas, the troops have had to adjust their mindset to one way of dealing with the world and now they have to make a readjustment to home life again. The readjustments can be challenging for the family, too. Spouses have had to adjust to new responsibilities and roles, and children have had many experiences since they last saw their deployed family member and learned to rely on one parent."

"The members of the VA Eastern Kansas Health Care System have been very proactive in helping Guardsmen and their families make the adjustments when they return home," Bunting continued. "This is the only system in the country that sends staff out to the military posts that the Soldiers come home to, be it in Kansas or another state, so they can get an early start on this process of readjustment and reintegration. This award is just a small token of our thanks for concern they demonstrate for the welfare of our Soldiers and their families."

New program pairs children with Big Brothers and Sisters

By Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD

On Oct. 12, the Kansas National Guard began working in conjunction with Big Brothers/Big Sisters to create the Guard Big/Guard Little program. This program is geared toward the children of National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who are deployed overseas. The kick-off for this program was held at Nickell Armory in Topeka and involved organizers of various other programs within the Guard.

Guard Big/Guard Little is a concept that teams up Family Readiness Groups with Big Brothers and Big Sisters and the National Guard. Together, these and other organizations provide a "mentor" that might help fill a void that children may feel with the absence of the deployed parent. Kansas is one of the first states in the country to participate in this program.

"Having a family member deployed can impact a number of issues at home," said Lt. Col. Scott Henry, chief of Workforce Support for the Kansas National Guard.

"Having only one person to handle the everyday trials and tribulations of a household, like paying bills, making soccer practices or other social functions on time, as well as caring for the well-being of the family, becomes a very trying task for the parent left here," Henry continued. "This program gives the kids a friend to talk to who is in uniform, as the deployed parent would be, to show the child and the parent that the Guard is still there for them both."

Each mentor takes on a commitment that

lasts one year or the length of the deployment. The Guard Big/Guard Little program is also available to children of Guard members who are preparing for or have recently returned from deployment. During their commitment, the mentor coordinates three to four activities a month with the child.

"The idea is to put Guard kids with Guard members to be there for them," said Dezaree Harding, Kansas National Guard State Youth Coordinator.

The program was conceptualized by Harding and is starting in the Topeka and surrounding areas of the state's capitol, then is expected to branch off into other communities and states around the country.

"We are starting off in a small area to get the program off the ground, then we want to go statewide once we have it all ironed out," said Harding.

As Guard units continue to answer the call to active duty in support of the war on terror, programs of this nature will offer help to the families of Guard members in an effort to put some concerns of deployed Soldiers and Airmen at ease.

To get started in the Guard Big/Guard Little program, once a family member has been ordered to active duty, the family should contact Dezaree Harding, Kansas National Guard Youth Organizer (785) 364-3544. Guard members who would like to be considered as mentors for the children of this program should contact Harding or their local Family Readiness Group organizers.



Children of deployed Guard members enjoyed an evening of activities at Topeka's Nickell Armory with volunteer Big Brothers and Big Sisters during a kick-off for the "Guard Big, Guard Littles" program. (Photo by Sgt. Gilbert Gonzales, 105th MPAD)

Family Assistance Center opening in Dodge City

The Kansas National Guard Family Program is expanding its reach into western Kansas to provide additional support to Guard families there. A Family Assistance Center will open at the Kansas National Guard Armory in Dodge City, Kan., making it the seventh FAC in the state.

Family Assistance Centers and Wing Family Program Coordinators handle a wide variety of crisis situations for Guard members and their families as well as key essential services such as identification cards, TRICARE (healthcare) information, financial and legal information, as well as referral to community services.

"It's important to point out that Family Assistance Centers serve all military families regardless of branch of service, whether active duty, Reserve or National Guard, so in addition to bringing more

support to our Guard families in the Dodge City area, any military member may seek help there," said Lt. Col. Scott Henry, Chief of Workforce Support for the Kansas National Guard.

"This addition of the Family Assistance Center is another recent change that the Kansas National Guard Family Program Office has made to enhance support for military families throughout the state of Kansas," said Tonya VanSickle, State Family Program Director. "We recently launched the Guard Bigs and Guard Littles program, a partnership with Big Brothers and Big Sisters to provide mentors to children who have parents deployed. And the Family Program Office has also expanded support and training to the family volunteers who work to support each other and the deployed units."

Awards and Decorations

Kansas Army National Guard

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Robert Hammon, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Assault Bn, Topeka

BRONZE STAR MEDAL



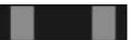
Col. Alan Soldan, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Maj. Kurt Bruggemeyer, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Maj. Steven O'Neil, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Maj. Mark Wisner, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. Patrik Goss, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. Jeffrey Howell, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. Matthew Jordan, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. Todd Loughney, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. John McGrann, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. Dallas McMullen, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. John Potter, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Capt. Joseph Toepke, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Lt. Jesse Thomas, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Lt. Joshua Urban, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Robert Coleman, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Eric Maxwell, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Armon Pollack, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Larry Werneke, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 3 Steven Hood, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kristopher LeMaster, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brandy Nichols, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Clayton Staton, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Command Sgt. Maj. Glenn Peterson, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Sgt. Jeffrey Arnold, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Sgt. John Degand, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Sgt. Edward Monteith, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Sgt. Craig Posch, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Master Sgt. Mark Seats, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Master Sgt. Mickie Watts, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Ricky Baldwin, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class David Edington, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Paul Johnston, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class John Miller, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Nelson, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class James Nixon, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class James Peeler, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Smith, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Edmond Thorne, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Todd Willbanks, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Lance Bedore, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Brian Dale, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Derron Lindsey, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Michael Ritchey, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Joshua Latham, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

PURPLE HEART



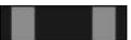
Sgt. 1st Class David Edington, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Shonda Reed, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Shelly Nixon, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

AIR MEDAL FOR VALOR



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kristopher LeMaster, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

AIR MEDAL



Col. Alan Soldan, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Maj. Kurt Bruggemeyer, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Maj. Steven O'Neil, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
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 1st Lt. Kevin Lee, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

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 1st Lt. Jeffrey Wilson, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
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 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Joel Gaston, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Eric Maxwell, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Armon Pollack, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mark Shaw, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Larry Werneke, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 3 Timothy Brundage, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #3
 Chief Warrant Officer 3 Steven Hood, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 3 Douglas Hoover, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Robert Hammon, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #3
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brandy Nichols, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Justin Powers, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Patrick Reynolds, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, second award, with #2
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Courtney Rowe, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Samuel Sutton, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Richard Vickers, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Warrant Officer 1 Daniel Fogarty, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Warrant Officer 1 Christopher Willer, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Sgt. Edward Monteith, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Smith, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Russell Cote, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Brian Dale, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. David James, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Derron Lindsey, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Keith Smith, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Ricky Williams, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Albert Davis, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. William Gilbert, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Justin Kaub, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #3
 Sgt. Shane Keene, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. James Kristanin, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Sgt. David Lebbin, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Heath Martin, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Sgt. Terry Ralston, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Warren Scott, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Arlen Sybert, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #3
 Spc. Thomas Bean, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Stephen Connelly, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. David Coon, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Spc. Randall Earley, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Spc. Gaberial Figueroa, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Spc. Brandy Hager, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Troy Hallauer, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Ryan Kohlman, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Seth Miller, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Bobbie Ontiverous, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Brent Schmidt, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with #2
 Spc. Brady Weissbeck, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR VALOR



Sgt. Shonda Reed, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Benjamin Taylor, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL



1st Lt. Randy Klingbeil, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Lt. Kevin Lee, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 1st Lt. Jeffrey Wilson, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 3 William Perry, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brandy Nichols, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Justin Powers, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Patrick Reynolds, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Richard Vickers, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Master Sgt. Larry Dew, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Cochran, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Goheen, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Mark Adams, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Darrell Anthony, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

(AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Dane Baker, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Lance Bedore, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Shane Black, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Barry Boswell, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Richard Bowman, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Derrick Bunch, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Tammy Garner, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Curtis Gile, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Larry Gilmore, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Brandon Inman, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Kenneth Johnson, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Harold Kinnaman, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Leo Nickel, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Timothy Sullivan, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Shawn Walker, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Leo Woosley, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Clinton Barnett, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Robert Benson, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. William Bisbee, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Curtis Bowman, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Jennifer Butler, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Victor Cabrera, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Albert Davis, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Benjamin Droge, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. George Dunaway, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Emmanuel Farrar, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Thomas Fluellyn, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Russel Gentry, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Kenrick Hausler, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Jacob Higgins, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Gary Hinnant, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Vincent Hobbs, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Lisa Kennington, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Dennis Lawas, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Michael Lipp, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Wade Madden, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Debra Maxey, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Richard McGuire, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Danylee Mersch, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Walter Miller, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Daniel Morgan, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Shandi Penland, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Shonda Reed, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Charles Shores, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. James Silsby, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Dana Smith, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. William Stanley, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. David Tabon, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Benjamin Taylor, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Maurice Thomas, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Phillip Vanelsdorf, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Joshua Ward, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Amanda Zishka, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Joseph Boeckner, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Anthony Bowers, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Stephen Burpee, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Joshua Bush, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Joleen Davis, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jason Drayer, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Spc. Dave Fisher, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Eric Gilbert, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Michael Gilbert, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Brandy Hager, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Tracey Hall, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Tyler Higgs, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Shon Jackson, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. David Kearney, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Aaron Keehn, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Leland Larsen, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jerry Lint, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

Spc. Jacob MacDougall, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Charles Malloy, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Paul Mason, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jason Mathis, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Ashley McClammy, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Thomas Miller, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Sean Mullis, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Shelly Nixon, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Heather Raposa, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Christopher Reynolds, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jessica Rohr, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Ricardo Ruiz, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Matthew Sharpton, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jeddadiah Smith, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Rocky Summers, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Derrick Taussig, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Ronald Taylor, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Richard Tuskiewicz, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Sipriano Vega, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Michael Vondracek, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Mark West, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Eric Williams, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Ricardo Bonilla, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Kevin Dean, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Justin Humphrey, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Brandon Malone, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Justin Schrick, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Richard Segura, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Ralph Smith, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Mathew Svovoda, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Gregory Wagner, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

ARMY ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL



Sgt. 1st Class David Bravi, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Lonnie LaCroix, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Wazir Mohammad, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Michelle Bowman, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Benjamin Cash, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Daniel Corkran, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Damon Guyett, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Kenrick Hausler, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Debra Maxey, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Shandi Penland, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. James Silsby, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Sgt. Amanda Zishka, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Joshua Blasi, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Melanie Bohn, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Stephen Brucken, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Joleen Davis, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Brent Kammen, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jeremy Lawrenz, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jerry Mitchell, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Jessica Rohr, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Christopher Sheaffer, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Duane Snelling, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Derrick Taussig, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Spc. Cody Taylor, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pfc. Richard Faith, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Pvt. 2 Shane Henderson, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

COMBAT ACTION BADGE



1st Lt. Joshua Urban, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Robert Coleman, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Armon Pollack, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 3 Timothy Brundage, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Robert Hammon, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kristopher LeMaster, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Justin Powers, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 2 Patrick Reynolds, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

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Kansas Air Guard hosts Armenians for disaster response training

By 1st Lt. Alyson Stockton

As the ground shook from a training explosion in Wichita Oct. 19, both Kansans and Armenians put their training into action.

Kansas Air Guardsmen hosted four Armenian military members and two interpreters for the University of Kansas disaster preparedness training exercise from Oct. 13 to Oct. 21.

The training was one of 17 events the Kansas National Guard will conduct with the Armenians this year through the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Maj. Brent Salmans, State Partnership Program coordinator at Joint Forces

Headquarters Kansas, brings the Armenians here for specific training events that are hard to replicate or simulate in Armenia. Training focuses on helping them to develop their disaster response, firefighting and Expeditionary Medical Support System (EMEDS) capability and also on providing military expertise to make the Armenian military more integrated and interoperable with their NATO allies. They even partner to help develop the Armenian Noncommissioned Officers Corps.

"The KU training exercise was a unique opportunity because it showed how the United States and Kansas would respond to an emergency and demonstrated how to use EMEDS in a civilian environment, even

though it's a military asset," Salmans said.

The Armenians attended the emergency operations center, command and disaster medicine tracks at the exercise. Armenian Rescue Service Col. Arman Avagyan said the training supplements regular courses they attend at an Armenian training center organized through NATO.

"Any experience we take from here will be very useful, particularly new procedures we learned at the 911 emergency call center," Avagyan said.

Avagyan hopes to return to the United States for training on more modern equipment and because new questions are always arising. He extended gratitude on behalf of his group for the hospitality Kansas Guardsmen have shown.

The State Partnership Program developed in 1993 in response to the dissolve of the United Soviet Socialist Republics. The partnership centered on military to military relationships, moving on to civilian partnerships. The goal for the future is to provide interface between Kansas and Armenian industry.

"Any partnership involves exchange of experience, knowledge and skills and the application of best practices learned from somewhere else, in this case, here," said



Capt. Tigran Tunyan, the Armenian army's EMEDS officer, familiarizes himself with how the Kansas Air Guard sets up the facility. (Photo by 1st Lt. Alyson Stockton)

Armenian Army 1st Lt. Armen Nazaryan. "We will apply our training not only in the Armenian military, but in emergency response to disasters."

184th Intelligence Wing blazes the cyber frontier

By 1st Lt. Alyson Stockton

"It all starts and ends with intel."

Those were the words of Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting at the newly-designated 184th Intelligence Wing's commander's call in Wichita Oct. 14.

The 184th is entering into the cyber domain after 70 years of flying more than 13 different airframes.

"The Air Force has announced cyber as a main mission area," said Col. Glenn Zimmerman, a 184th member who serves on the Air Force's Cyber Task Force. "Cyber is not going to be a little gee-whiz mission function. This is another place we fly, fight and win."

Why is cyberspace a war fighting domain? Some of our greatest vulnerabilities and our ability to communicate and operate reside within it. And, according to the commander of the Air Force's Air Combat Command, the terrorists already know it.

"The terrorists are using cyberspace to remotely detonate roadside bombs. Terrorists use global positioning satellites and satellite communications and use the Internet for financial transactions, radar and navigation jamming, blogs, and finally, overt and covert attacks on our servers," said Gen. Ron Keys, ACC commander.

The intelligence mission will increase to three squadrons made up of about 400 personnel when fully manned.

Both military and elected leaders are excited about the new war fighting capability this brings to Kansas. Now 184th Guardsmen are able to directly contribute to winning the war on terror from Wichita.

"This important new mission expansion is recognition by the Pentagon that the 184th plays a significant role in our national defense. In this day and time in which we live, it is imperative that our intelligence units are functioning at the highest capacity," said Congressman Todd Tiaht.

"It all starts and ends with intel."

Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general

"The 184th Wing looks forward to becoming the largest Intelligence Wing in the Air National Guard," Wing Commander Col. Randy Roebuck said. And he's pleased to see his wing lead other Air Guard units into new missions, just as they've been doing for 70 years.

"I want to thank you up front for being the most adaptable unit in the Air Force and the Air National Guard," Bunting told 184th members at a recent commander's call.

The intelligence analysis mission will impact every phase of operations from planning air strikes to reducing and assessing collateral damage and enhancing force protection.

In addition to the new intelligence mission area, the wing will also be beefing up its already existing cyber missions. The wing has hosted the Air National Guard's Network Operations Security Center for more than five years, but will add more communications and information technology specialists to its workforce in the information protection area. The plan is to recruit information technology professionals from the local community to fill these vacancies.

"We can bring—through our traditional workforce—an expertise that simply doesn't exist anywhere else," Zimmerman said.

Intelligence is at the beginning and end of every military operation, and for the 184th Intelligence Wing, this is an exciting new beginning.

Awards and Decorations

Continued from Page 12

- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Samuel Sutton, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Richard Vickers, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Staff Sgt. Brian Dale, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Staff Sgt. Derron Lindsey, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Sgt. Albert Davis, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Sgt. Justin Kaub, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Sgt. James Kristinant, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Sgt. Heath Martin, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Sgt. Arlen Sybert, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Spc. Randall Earley, Co D, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Spc. Gaberial Figueroa, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka
- Spc. Brent Schmidt, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn Rgt (AHB), Topeka

Kansas Air National Guard

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL



- Col. Dennis Lawlor, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Col. Deborah Rose, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Lt. Col. Kenneth Folger, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Lt. Col. Jeffrey Hedges, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Lt. Col. David Olsen, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Lt. Col. Charles Vansloten, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Lt. Col. Jeffrey Zillinger, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Maj. Mark Green, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Maj. Shellie Harmon, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Maj. Michelle Sweeney, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Maj. John Walthebill, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Capt. Marcus Adinolfi, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Chief Master Sgt. Teresa Blanchard, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Chief Master Sgt. Hugh Buchtel, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Chief Master Sgt. Michael Luck, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Chief Master Sgt. Les Money, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Chief Master Sgt. Gary Wadley, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Chief Master Sgt. Robert Wilhelm, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Appenfeller, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Bullington, 190th ARW, Topeka

AIR FORCE COMMENDATION MEDAL



- Capt. Julie Burns, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Capt. Michelle Nuegent, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Chief Master Sgt. Brandon Aldridge, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Senior Master Sgt. Keith Fulton, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Janet Dunn, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Teresa Fulton, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. William Gilliland, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Jean Hager, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Gina Hastings, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Marvin Hittle, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Terry Martin, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Richard Smith, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Tracy Vanstony, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Tech. Sgt. Deanna Davis, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Tech. Sgt. William Haug, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Tech. Sgt. Patrick Sampson, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Tech. Sgt. Anthony Snyder, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Staff Sgt. David Benton, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Staff Sgt. Casy Lang, 190th ARW, Topeka

AIR FORCE ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL



- Lt. Col. Jarrod Frantz, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Maj. Daniel Skoda, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Capt. Ryan Strong, 190th ARW, Topeka
- 1st Lt. Kevin Cline, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Senior Master Sgt. Steven Nelson, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Peggy Becker, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Jeff Johansen, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Mark Moulden, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Dustin Nichols, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. David Tomczek, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Staff Sgt. Heather Copeland, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Staff Sgt. Benjamin Webb, 190th ARW, Topeka

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

- Col. Robert Staiert, HHD, 635th Support Group, Hutchinson
- Maj. Jeffrey Heinrich, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
- Capt. Darryl Duncan, HHD, 169th CSSB, Olathe
- Capt. Steven Grisham, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
- Chief Warrant Officer 3 Newton Webber, HQ, 235th Rgt (RTI), Salina
- Master Sgt. Donald Marchant, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Kimberly Wendel, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
- Sgt. 1st Class Robert Coble, 226th Eng Co, Augusta
- Sgt. 1st Class Shane Garner, Reg Trng Site-Maint, Salina
- Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Jones, R&R Cmd, Topeka
- Sgt. 1st Class Martin Martinson, HHS (-), 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha
- Staff Sgt. Leon Everhart Jr., Btry E (TA), 161st FA, Great Bend
- Staff Sgt. Daren Johnson, Det 1, Btry A, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Concordia
- Staff Sgt. Robert Kern Jr., 1161st FSC, Hutchinson
- Staff Sgt. Richard Mason, Det 1, 250th FSC, Burlington
- Staff Sgt. Ronald McMechan, Det 1, HHS, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Ottawa
- Staff Sgt. Kim Stroud, Det 4, 170th Maint Co, Clay Center
- Sgt. Michael Ligon, Det 2, 778th Trans Co, Wichita
- Sgt. Dale Mills, Det 2, 250th FSC, Topeka
- Spe. Dennis Green, Det 1, Btry C, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Salina

- Pfc. Michael Hull, 137th Trans Co (-), Olathe
- Pvt. 1 Loren Mead III, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka

Kansas Air National Guard

- Lt. Col. Jeffrey Hedges, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Lt. Col. Anthony J. Mahoney, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Maj. Dale A. Cope, 184th ARW, Wichita
- 1st Lt. Adam J. Steichen, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Chief Master Sgt. Hugh Buchtel, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Senior Master Sgt. Robert D. Anderson, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Angel D. Acosta, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Chris A. Bernhardt, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Patrick D. Engstrom, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Clay Hickman, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Jennifer L. Kaup, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Brian Kinderknecht, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Daniel L. Lovell, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Leslie D. Mayeux, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Donald J. Nolen, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Carlos R. Ortiz, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Jay Seaman, 190th ARW, Topeka
- Master Sgt. Steve C. Swiercinsky, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Marcus L. Thompson, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Master Sgt. Dean S. Tuinstra, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Tech. Sgt. Alan B. Arsenault, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Tech. Sgt. Kevin A. Boddy, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Tech. Sgt. Thomas R. Dawson, 184th ARW, Wichita
- Tech. Sgt. Stephen J. Navrotsky, 184th ARW, Wichita

We Remember...

Staff Sgt. Cory D. Sanchez
Staff Sgt. Cory D. Sanchez, 26, Garden City, died June 12, 2007. He was born March 3, 1981.

Sanchez was a member of the Kansas Army National Guard, where he was a training noncommissioned officer and fire direction section chief assigned to Detachment 1, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, Garden City.

Retired Maj. Rayford D. Blevins
Retired Maj. Rayford D. Blevins, 72, Pittsburg, died Aug. 19, 2007.

He was born Sept. 9, 1934, at Sweetwater, Okla.

Blevins was a member of the

Kansas Army National Guard, where he was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 127th Field Artillery, Ottawa.

He retired with over 20 years of service.

Retired 1st Sgt. William A. Fleming
Retired 1st Sgt. William A. Fleming, 70, LaCygne, died Aug. 19, 2007.

He was born April 5, 1937 at Amoret, Mo.

Fleming was a member of the Kansas Army National Guard where he was a field artillery senior sergeant assigned to Battery B (-), 1st Battalion, 127th Field Artillery, Pleasanton.

He retired with over 26 years of service.

184th's Flying Jayhawks make final squadron sortie



Tech. Sgt. Mike Shields, 184th Air Refueling Wing Maintenance Squadron, watches in the foreground with other Kansas Air National Guardsmen as the final KC-135 sortie departs McConnell Air Force Base. (Photo by Master Sgt. Conrad Youngblom)

By Maj. DeAnn Barr

After 66 years of supporting a flying mission, the Kansas Air National Guard 184th Air Refueling Wing, the Flying Jayhawks, celebrated their final squadron sortie in early September.

In a ceremony heavily attended by past and present unit members, Brig. Gen. Edward Flora, commander of the Kansas Air Guard and former 184th Wing commander, spoke of the sentiments that were on the hearts of the assembled Jayhawks.

"It's a tough day today for Jayhawks," said Flora, "but also a day of promise, because the people in this room will make the future of the 184th bright."

Change is not new to this unit, which as recently as 2002 underwent a unit conversion from the B-1 bomber to the KC-135 Stratotanker. The 184th has been an operational flying unit since 1941, and regardless of the airframe flown at the time, has won seven Outstanding Unit awards and a host of Air National Guard awards for excellence.

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Bernie Carbon, a former Jayhawk as well as former Senior Enlisted Advisor for the Air National Guard, thought the occasion worthy of celebration.

"I think the changes in the missions are in keeping with the times," said the 1987 retiree with 44 years of total service. "If you don't keep up, you're going to fall

way behind, deteriorate and vanish. So much is happening that is high tech, we need to keep up with that."

The final sortie was flown by senior squadron members, many of whom were flying their final flights in the military. Chief Master Sgt. Bill Stacey, chief boom operator, has over 3,000 hours in the KC-135, and was reflective as he prepared for his final flight.

"Today is kind of a sad day. Being a boom operator is one of the best enlisted jobs – if you can get – and I'm going to miss the whole mission."

Master Sgt. Steve Albers was also a boom operator on the final flight, and will continue flying with an overseas deployment before moving onto his next job.

"This last flight with the 184th is the end of an exciting era. I'm looking forward to writing the next chapter in my life," said Albers.

While the unit lost its flying mission due to the last Base Realignment and Closure Commission, its overall strength is growing in the area of intelligence and other new mission areas related to the war on terror. 184th Wing Commander Col. Randy Roebuck is certain the Jayhawks are up to the challenge.

"We continue to train a new generation of Fighting Jayhawks to be the best and push the envelope," said Roebuck.

Nominations open for Employer Support Freedom Award

The Department of Defense has opened nominations for the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of military employees. Nominations will be accepted at www.esgr.mil until Jan. 21, 2008. The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the U.S. government's highest recognition given to outstanding employers.

The 2008 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. at the 13th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony on Sept. 18, 2008.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve. The Department of Defense

shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. Past recipients of the Freedom Award have provided full salary, continuation of benefits, care packages and even home and lawn care to families of employees fulfilling their military obligation.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) to recognize exceptional support from the employer community.

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency established to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts through informal mediation.

184th, civilian partnership ramps up medics' training

By 1st Lt. Alyson Stockton

Thanks to a partnership with Wichita's Galichia Heart Hospital, the 184th Medical Group has become a shining example of the Wing's vision: Airmen prepared to serve their state and country at a moment's notice.

Their training has helped them to improve readiness, develop professionally and exceed standards within the military medical profession.

Lt. Col. Joel Erskin, 184th MDG commander, said the squadron partnership will continue indefinitely, as long as Galichia is willing to support it. His goal is for all 72 members of his squadron to participate in the training.

Senior Airman Ashley Carpenter received training at Galichia before her deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. She is one of five 184th medical technicians serving in Iraq, assigned to the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group's "Tuskegee Medics." She's found that the Galichia training was a helpful supplement to her three years' experience as a medical technician.

"Galichia definitely refreshed me on patient care needed in a hospital, but nothing can emotionally prepare you for what you really do here," she said.

Carpenter granted an e-mail interview from Iraq to elaborate on some of the benefits of this supplemental training.

Jayhawk Flyer: What did your training at Galichia involve, and how did it compare with the Air Force training you'd gotten?

Carpenter: Galichia involved the training I needed to do one-on-one patient care and complete my assigned mission. Before coming to Iraq, I had not worked in a hospital for about three years. Galichia gave me the opportunity to refresh the skills I needed to take care of the American troops and Iraqi people. I performed IVs, Foleys (catheters), subcutaneous shots, helped with feeding tubes, blood transfusions, vital signs, basic care and communication with the patients.

While I have been in Iraq I have used all that I was refreshed on at Galichia and more. For only working at Galichia for

less than two weeks I benefited greatly. It prepared me and gave me the confidence to jump in and volunteer on tasks needed around the hospital here.

The military training we do every drill has definitely played a role here. The importance of military training is something I will stress on because it involves war-time injuries, sensitivity to patients' emotions and Geneva Conventions, in addition to understanding triage. Both training opportunities work hand in hand over here.

Jayhawk Flyer: What do your daily duties include?

Carpenter: My daily duties varied on a day-to-day basis, depending on the patients' injuries. I would do daily care to patients, from bed baths to helping patients turn in bed. I also do vein punctures, lab draws, glucose checks, and IVs. I help out with feeding tubes, nasogastric tubes, measuring wound vacs, measuring chest tubes, measuring JP drains and taking isolation precautions. I help patients with gunshot wounds and improvised explosive device blasts to lower extremities move around and walk again.

Also, I help pack wounds, irrigate wounds, do dressing changes, burn care, pin care and ileostomy care.

Jayhawk Flyer: Do you have a medical civilian job that also helped prepare you for this deployment?

Carpenter: No, the only medical schooling I have is through the Air Force tech school.

Jayhawk Flyer: Are you there with other 184th members?

Carpenter: I am here with other 184th members. They were here before me and I met them here. They are Master Sgt. Russell Sims, Tech Sgt. Joshua Wisner, Staff Sgt. Derick Tibbetts, and Tech. Sgt. James Gregg.

Jayhawk Flyer: Do you feel that the partnership with civilian hospitals could be beneficial to other military members?

Carpenter: Absolutely, because although the hospitals in the civilian and military sectors are on different levels, they definitely play a role together.

Medical help to Armenians

Continued from Page 10

to help and have such a significant impact on some of the villagers.

"It was great to see the older folks and younger children, who have never had glasses, try on a pair and get this surprised look and smile on their face, because now they were finally able to see," said Hof.

Contact with Americans in the region is limited, especially visits by U.S. military personnel. "We were informed that in some of the areas where we would be working, we might be the first Americans that these people would meet," said Trevino. "So it was vital to leave them with a good impression. When patients first began arriving at the clinic, they were quiet and a little unsure. By the end of the day, they were smiling and wishing us well as they left without a toothache or with a new pair of eyeglasses."

Military involvement in a humanitarian medical mission was an unexpected role for some people. A Peace Corps volunteer assisting the team as a translator was surprised to see the military in her remote village of Tatev.

"She was even more surprised to learn that we were in the Guard. She had no idea the active duty military performs humanitarian missions, let alone the Air National Guard," said Trevino.

In addition to providing needed basic medical care, the Armenian and American participants exchanged information and learned from each other, increasing under-

standing and interoperability.

"Working in concert together provided an opportunity for comparing standards of care, treatment models, and a discussion of differences," said Riblett.

There was time during the mission to visit and experience the Armenian people, land, and culture.

"I have been fortunate to have traveled to many places all over the world and Armenia was one of the most beautiful countries I have ever been to," Trevino said.

Kansas was officially matched with Armenia during the fall of 2002 through the State Partnership Program (SPP). Key areas of cooperation between Kansas and Armenia include peacekeeping operations, medical, disaster response, and education. Although the foundation of the program is based on military-to-military cooperation, the partnership includes military-to-civilian, and civilian-to-civilian exchanges.

The State Partnership Program links National Guard states and territories with partner countries for the purpose of fostering mutual interests and establishing long-term relationships across all levels of society. Development of economic, political, and military ties between the states and partner nations is encouraged by the program. The National Guard functions as a role model in demonstrating how a military organization can interact with the citizens and their government while reinforcing the concept that the military force of a nation is subordinate to that nation's civil authorities.

Motorcycle safety classes serve Army and Air riders

By Staff Sgt. Emily Alley

As motorcycles become more popular Kansas National Guard members need to be aware that there are requirements that must be met to ride.

On Oct. 10, the 190th Air Refueling Wing safety office held an additional motorcycle safety class on base to accommodate several Kansas Army Guardsmen.

Motorcycle safety training, certified by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, is required for all riders on military installations. Over the past year, the 190th ARW has trained 29 Army Guardsmen, said Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen C. Rodina.

"We do it because it's directed," said Chief Master Sgt. Dena Swisher, 190th ARW ground safety manager.

The training has been mandatory since 1996, when the amount of motorcycle accidents spiked, she said. Before that, it was only recommended.

The directive was emphasized this year, when Maj. Gen. Tod M. Bunting, the adjutant general, sent a memorandum to Kansas National Guard units. The memorandum clarified the Kansas National Guard motorcycle policies, including the mandatory motorcycle safety course and riding gear.

Lt. Col. Christopher Gnagi, 190th ARW chief of safety, said the 190th ARW has maintained an outstanding motorcycle safety program, even before the directive.

"We've gone above and beyond the requirements by becoming certified by the state," said Swisher.

What makes the 190th ARW's program unique is its direct affiliation with the Kansas Division of Motor Vehicles, she said. Students who complete the motor safety program with the 190th ARW are eligible for a Class M driver's license and are certified through the Motorcycle Safety

Foundation.

"We're the only military installation that I know of that gives motorcycle driver's licenses for going through the class," said Master Sgt. Jeff Johansen, who is a Motorcycle Safety Foundation certified riding coach. Johansen taught the class with Master Sgt. William Mick.

The Kansas Army National Guard has begun work to emulate the 190th ARW's motorcycle safety program.

"We are in the process of recruiting Army National Guard personnel to take the Motorcycle Safety Foundation Rider Coach course," said Rodina. "We intend on adding these instructors to the 190th ARW motorcycle safety program to make this a truly joint enterprise and to take some of the strain off the Wing instructors."

Johansen and Mick are eager to work with the additional instructors in a joint program. They suggest it would also be beneficial for the Army to provide additional training facilities in other areas of the state. Although Topeka is an easily accessible location, instructors would be able to come to the class, instead of requiring all members to commute. Mick suggests Army Guard units open facilities in Salina or Hutchinson for the convenience of military members from those areas.

"The Army is spread across the state, while the Air Force is concentrated in Topeka and Wichita," Mick said.

"The bottom line is they have to get this training, regardless of who teaches it," said Johansen.

Anyone who holds a military ID, including retirees and dependents, are eligible for the class.

"Everybody in that class is there to ride," said Johansen. "It's not about rank or branch."



Master Sgt. Jeff Johansen demonstrates safety techniques during a motorcycle safety class recently held at Forbes Field. (Photo provided)

Explosions add realism

Continued from Page 1
preparedness and responsiveness."

A unique aspect of this exercise involved several days of classroom and hands on training starting Sat. Oct. 13, preparing participants for the Friday disaster drill which went on through the night and into Saturday to provide a more realistic training. Training included ten profession-specific tracks such as emergency operations center, incident command, law enforcement, fire, public health, and public information.

Unlike real events this year in Kansas, the scenario provided an opportunity for responders to be involved in a disaster caused by terrorists. Rescue Training Associates, a Florida-based company that

designed the exercise, incorporated this aspect to teach first responders the importance of looking for signs of additional explosions when they arrive on the scene of such an event.

"We're really proud of how everyone worked together to make this event possible including the city of Wichita and Sedgwick County," Grube said. "We'll be looking for grants and other funding opportunities to provide additional exercises like this in the future."

The University of Kansas is working with the Kansas National Guard on a possible disaster exercise in Topeka in 2008 which could incorporate aspects of the disaster exercise in Wichita.

190th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group returns from Iraq

By 1st Lt. Joe Blubaugh

Eleven members of the 190th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group recently deployed to Balad, Iraq, to provide patient care in the Expeditionary Medical System hospital located there. Nine Coyotes have returned, while two remain in Iraq.

The deployment, originally scheduled for 41 days, turned into 60 days when the 190th was asked to deploy early to provide overlap for the team they were replacing. The Airmen were also asked to stay longer than scheduled to facilitate moving the hospital from tents to a hardened facility.

While deployed, 190th members were assigned to the intensive care unit, lab and patient wards. There were three ICUs and wards in the hospital — one for American personnel, one for Iraqi military and one for Iraqi nationals, which included detainees in need of medical care.

According to Lt. Col. Janet Hanson, detainees in the hospital presented a unique set of challenges.

"The whole time the detainees were in the facility, they had to be blindfolded and restrained and they always had to have a guard with them," she said. "This was not only for the safety of the medical teams, but also for the safety of the Iraqi nationals that were receiving treatment at the hospital."

In addition to the fast pace of the facility and working in and around detainees,

190th members also had the almost daily reminders of the violence prevalent in Iraq. Hanson said the base the hospital was located at was shelled by mortars approximately twice a week. "In the time we were there, there were also three stray bullets that entered the hospital," she said.

Despite the dangers, Capt. Phil Stadler, 190th Medical Services Corps Officer, said "the base was relatively safe."

Master Sgt. Scott Mick, who served in the ICU ward, was a firsthand witness to the violence of the war. During one of his shifts, an American service member that had been injured by an IED passed away in the ICU. After a prayer by the chaplain, Mick and other medical staff members carefully draped an American flag over the Soldier. As the Soldier was wheeled out of the ICU, the room was called to attention and the order of present arms was given.

"As time permitted, each member of the staff sat down and dealt with it in their own way," said Mick. "I was not prepared to do that particular task when I deployed. It was an honor to be a part of it, even though the circumstance was heart-wrenching."

In all, Hanson said the deployment was as positive an experience as it could be, given the situation. Stadler added that it was "a million dollar experience you wouldn't pay a dime for."



Eleven members of the 190th Air Refueling Wing Medical Group worked out of this Expeditionary Medical Support System hospital in Balad, Iraq, during a 60 day deployment earlier this year. (Photo by provided)

Fitness trail opens at Forbes

By 1st Lt. Joe Blubaugh

190th members looking for a safe place to run or walk on base now have a new option. The 190th Civil Engineering (CE) Squadron is putting the finishing touches on a fitness trail, located south-east of the headquarters building.

The fitness trail, which was designed and built exclusively by CE, is made of recycled concrete and asphalt and covered by a limestone surface. "We adopted a limestone screening process that is being used on a large number of new civilian trails," said Maj. Mark Green, 190th Engineering Officer and Project Engineer for the trail. "It is a more forgiving surface for your body and easier on your knees."

The trail is the result of a 190th Facility User Board recommendation and Base Safety's long-standing desire for a safer place for members to walk and run. "One of the first issues brought to my attention as Chief of Safety by those who exercise regularly was the need and desire for a dedicated and safe walking track," said Lt. Col. Chris Gnagi, Chief of Safety for the 190th ARW.

Because the trail was designed and constructed by 190th members with a large sum of recycled materials, the total

cost of the trail is estimated to be less than \$10,000 when finished. "We were also able to get some very valuable training for our engineering and design teams," said Green.

The project also provided another opportunity to build relationships with our Army counterparts. "The 891st (Engineer Battalion) let us borrow a 10-ton vibrating drum roller, which helped keep our costs down, as well," said Green.

Maj. Doug Chase, 190th Environmental Officer, was able to secure a \$5,500 National Public Lands Day grant to plant native grasses and wildflowers along the trail. "This is first and foremost a fitness trail," said Chase, "but we also want it to be a demonstration of native plants in Kansas." The 190th was one of just 39 locations to receive the grant this year.

There is more work planned in the future for the trail, including a concrete trail that will be constructed to connect the trail to the fitness center as well as distance markers so folks can keep track of their miles.

"Eventually, we also want to include physical fitness stations and a stretching location," said Green. "We think people are really going to like it."

35th Division honored at Kansas Speedway event

By Master Sgt. Michael L. Pomes

The National Guard Racing Team arrived in a big way at the Kansas Speedway in Kansas City, Kan., Sept. 29 as race car driver Casey Mears, the 35th Infantry Division patch featured prominently on his jumpsuit, drove the National Guard GMAC Chevrolet Monte Carlo #24 in the Yellow Transportation 300 Busch Series race.

Thirty-three Soldiers from the 35th ID gathered at the National Guard Bureau GMAC tour bus parked amongst a display of Kansas National Guard vehicles, including a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, in the parking lot of Cabela's, east of the Speedway. The display also included Mears' National Guard Chevrolet #25 car, Mears' Nextel Cup Series car.

Soldiers participating in the day's events were able to sit in the NGB tent in the Hospitality Village, where they could see the entire raceway. Soldiers also received a souvenir bag that included a 35th ID ball cap, a red T-shirt emblazoned with a picture of the National Guard GMAC #24 Chevrolet above the 35th ID insignia and a die-cast National Guard GMAC #24 decorated to honor the 35th ID.

"I've never been to a NASCAR race before," said Spc. Robert Gilmore before the race. "It's awesome and should be a good experience. I expect to take plenty of pictures. I'm looking forward to going to the pit lane, definitely one for the photo album."

Gilmore is a member of the Detachment 1, Company A of the 35th Special Troops

Brigade (STB) in Blue Springs, Mo.

Qualifying rounds for the Yellow Transportation 300 lasted until 1 p.m. The National Guard car started the race in the ninth position.

Maj. Gen. M. Wayne Pierson, division commander; Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Taylor, division sergeant major; Spc. Christopher Harris and Spc. Amy Pelsor toured the inside of the car transport trailer. Harris is with the 35th STB in St. Joseph, Mo. Pelsor is with the Intelligence Section of the 35th ID in Kansas City, Mo.

Mears spoke to Soldiers from the 35th ID and then autographed the die cast cars for the Soldiers.

Master Sgt. David Miller, 35th ID plans section, was excited for the opportunity to take part in the race day events. "This is my first time doing something like this. I'm a huge NASCAR fan," Miller said.

Pierson and Taylor presented Mears with a commanding general's coin and Mears reciprocated by presenting one of his coins to Pierson.

"This race is a great opportunity for the National Guard, for Soldiers to be seen in uniform," Pierson said during lunch at the hospitality village.

"There are plenty of down home American folks at this event who appreciate what we do," Taylor said. "They appreciate our service. I have never had so many people thank us for our service."

Following lunch, Pfc. Amber Barber and Pfc. Alan Foster, from the judge advocate general's section of the 35th ID headquar-



The 35th Infantry Division patch marked the hood of the National Guard GMAC Chevrolet #24 for the Sept. 29 Yellow Transportation 300 Busch Series race at the Kansas Speedway. (Photograph by Master Sgt. Michael L. Pomes)

ters, watched the finish of the Nextel Cup Series final practice for drivers participating in the LifeLock 400 the next day.

"This is my first race. I'm not a huge fan, but I'll watch it on TV. I'm thrilled to be here," said Foster. "I did not realize [the race] was so big of a spectacle."

"I married into it [NASCAR]," said Barber. "I watch the races with my husband and his family."

The Soldiers had pit passes and were able to line up with the National Guard Racing Team for the National Anthem before the 3:30 p.m. start of the Yellow Transportation 300.

Mears in the 35th ID National Guard GMAC Chevrolet #24 finished third behind drivers Matt Kenseth in the Arby's Ford #17 and the winner Kyle Busch in the Spectricide/Lowes Chevrolet #5.

Despite the third place finish, it was a good day at a good race for new and old NASCAR fans in the 35th ID.

Three 35th ID Soldiers were treated to a repeat experience the following day for the Nextel Race. Armed with pit passes, Foster, Harris, and Pelsor watched Mears race to a fourth place finish in the National Guard GMAC Chevrolet #25 at the Lifelock 400.



Casey Mears autographs a die-cast model of his racing car for Master Sgt. David Miller. Mears drives the National Guard GMAC Chevrolet #24. Miller is with the plans section of the 35th Infantry Division at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. (Photograph by Master Sgt. Michael L. Pomes)

Parents contribute to guidebook

By Sgt. 1st Class Tommie Cleveland, UPAR

The parents of several members of the 731st Medium Truck Company contributed to a guidebook for parents of deployed Soldiers.

The guidebook, "Our Sons Our Daughters A National Guard Parent's Guide to Deployment," by Paula Sumrall, is a new resource available to Guardsmen and their families. The book covers numerous topics, from a predeployment checklist to humorous stories from their children overseas. There are chapters on emergency notification, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Sumrall is the Transition Assistance Advisor at the National Guard Bureau and wife of Maj. Gen. Michael H. Sumrall, Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff for National Guard Matters.

Stacy Sanders, 731st Family Readiness Group coordinator, says that she has been in communication with Sumrall since March. Sumrall asked for names and email addresses of parents of Guardsmen who would be

interested in contributing to the book.

"The response from the families of the 731st was great," said Sanders. "There are pictures on the front of the guidebook of two Soldiers from the 731st with their parents. And inside are quotes from numerous parents of Soldiers from the 731st. My families were really excited about this. I am very proud of the participation that the families of the 731st showed in helping make this nationally published guidebook a reality. It will be a great resource for Soldiers' parents for many years to come."

Quoted in the book are Regena Hommertzhaim, mother of Pfc. Ashlee Hommertzhaim; retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ronald Mullinax, father of 1st Lt. Mark Mullinax; Bonita Mead, mother of Sgt. Terry Mead and Sgt. Jerry Mead and grandmother of Spc. Cassie Mead (Arkansas National Guard), and Anita Rhodes, mother of Sgt. Brian Dear.

The guidebook is available on the National Guard Web site. Sumrall is also planning an updated version and is looking for contributions from families of Guardsmen.

Joint State Conference in April

Three National Guard organizations will team up in April to present the Joint State Conference in Topeka, April 11-13 at the Ramada Inn downtown.

The National Guard Association of Kansas, Kansas National Guard Family Program's Office and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve office will all participate in the conference. National Guard officers may attend Officer Professional Development during the conference.

Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting will deliver a State of the Guard presentation on Saturday, April 11. On Sunday, a Memorial Service and Family Awards breakfast will be held. A golf tournament and clay shoot are planned for Friday. Childcare will be provided during the conference in conjunction with youth program activities.

More information will be available at www.kansas.gov/ksadjutantgeneral and <http://ngaks.org/>.

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