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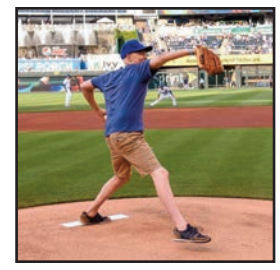

190th Airman throws first pitch at Royals game 7

PLAINS GUARDIAN

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KSNG partners with Garden City Community College

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Students at Garden City Community College will see some new faces when they start classes this August – Soldiers of the Kansas National Guard. Their presence on campus will be the result of a new mutually beneficial partnership between the Guard and the college.

"They're looking at an opportunity to increase their appeal to students in the area and potentially increase admissions and we're looking at an opportunity to get into a diverse community that we got out when we left Garden City (in February 2010)," explained Col. Roger Murdock, chief of the Joint Staff, Kansas National Guard. "Garden City seems to be a very diverse and growing community and so we're trying to get our foot back into that area."

"From the Army side, we have two different things going on here," explained Murdock. "The recruiters, instead of having an office front on the north side of town, we're going to have a storefront, if you will, in the student activity center on campus, which is also where the cafeteria is located. Our recruiters think that is a great opportunity to reach

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2-137 CAB part of large exercise at Fort Hood

Soldiers with Company A, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, Kansas Army National Guard, conduct defensive operations during a Multi-Echelon Integrated Brigade Training at Fort Hood, Texas, June 12. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Wheeler, Division West Public Affairs)

By Staff Sgt. Nazaly Confesor
First Army Public Affairs and
Sgt. Mikayla Gentine
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

In the summer sun of Fort Hood, Texas, Soldiers of the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, participated in a Multi-Echelon Integrated Training Exercise sponsored by First Army – another step in the 2-137 CAB's journey to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, next year.

These Soldiers clocked out of their civilian jobs and left their families for nearly a month to train at Fort Hood, ensuring the 2-137 CAB will be at their highest state of readiness in the event the nation calls on them to deploy.

Soldiers participated in several facets of training throughout the exercise. Infantrymen ran patrols in a hostile environment simulation, and heavy armor crewmen conducted dynamic live-fire exercises with M1A2 Abrams tanks and M2A2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles. Medics, mechanics, and administrative personnel ensured any setbacks were fixed. All of these Soldiers lived in remote training areas under the 100+ degree sun throughout the month of June.

This is just the beginning of a larger picture for Soldiers of the 2-137 CAB, and next year's training at the National Training Center will be a culmination of the elements that were executed this summer.

Lt. Col. Jason Nelson, battalion commander of the 2-137 CAB, said the battalion's training at Fort Hood is a valuable warm-up for future training exercises, and noted the hard work that has gone into the preparation.

"The op-tempo is high," said Nelson. "Soldiers need to come into (the 2-137 CAB) with their eyes wide open. They need to know what they're getting into. We are not one weekend a month, two weeks in the summer. We are doing (four and five-day drill periods) and we'll have a 30-day (annual training) next summer."

On the ground, these Soldiers kept busy with hip-pocket training in the field and battle simulations when they weren't sending rounds downrange. No matter their job, many shared a passion that kept them motivated in the summer heat.

"We've run patrols, we see the bigger picture, being here in the (operations) section," said Spc. Elijah Robinson, of his experience as an infantryman working around the battalion command center throughout the exercise.

Capt. Michael Hayes, commander of the Company A, 2-137 CAB, said the MIBT helps his unit develop readiness, challenges his Soldiers by training in an unfamiliar environment and prepares them for future deployments.

(Continued on Page 2)

Mohatt named as assistant adjutant general

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general, has announced the selection of Brig. Gen. Anthony V. Mohatt as the new assistant adjutant general – Land Component and commander of the Kansas Army National Guard.

Brig. Gen. Anthony Mohatt

Mohatt will succeed Brig. Gen. Robert Windham, who is retiring.

Mohatt will be invested in his new position in a change of command ceremony Saturday, Aug. 6, 10 a.m., at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard, 125 S.E. Airport E. Dr., Topeka, 66619.

"I am blessed and excited to be taking command of the Kansas Army National Guard," said Mohatt. "I recognize that commanding America's heroic Citizen-Soldiers is a sacred trust and I look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead."

"It has truly been an honor to command the men and women of the Kansas Army National Guard," said Windham. "My time in command has given me a new appreciation for the commitment and professionalism of our soldiers as well as the commitment and sacrifice of their families and friends. It has also reminded me of the true care and affection that the citizens and communities in our state feel for our young men and women in uniform. Our soldiers are well trained and dedicated. It is a privilege to stand alongside them and I am thankful for the opportunity to have been on their team."

> ***"I recognize that commanding America's heroic Citizen-Soldiers is a sacred trust and I look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead."***
> ***Brig. Gen. Anthony Mohatt***

Prior to his current position, Mohatt was assistant division commander of the 35th Infantry Division, Kansas Army National Guard. During his career, Mohatt has also served as brigade commander, 69th Troop Command; operations officer, 69th Troop Command; administrative officer and operations officer, and commander of the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment; and assistant training officer and plans officer, 35th Infantry Division, in addition to various command and staff positions. Mohatt has deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

He is a 1990 graduate of the Officer Candidate School at the Kansas Military Academy. His military education includes the Armor Basic and Advanced Courses, Combined Arms and Services Staff School and Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. He also attended the U. S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations Criminal Investigator Training Program.

Mohatt's military awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Iraq Campaign Medal, and numerous other awards.

His civilian education includes bachelor's degrees in political science and sociology from the University of Kansas, a

(Continued on Page 2)

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Reaching for the stars

Soldiers from seven-state region battle for Best Warrior title

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
Public Affairs Office

"Ad astra per aspera."

The Kansas state motto means, "to the stars through difficulties," and 14 Army National Guard Soldiers from seven states faced their share of difficulties during the Region V Best Warrior Competition, held in Salina, Kansas, May 17-19.

The competition was a grueling battery of events designed to push Soldiers to their mental and physical limits. The Soldiers competed against each other, and themselves, in the non-commissioned officer category (sergeant and above) and the Soldier category (corporal and below).

"The 'Best Warrior' is someone who is very well rounded," said Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown, state command senior enlisted leader, Kansas National Guard. "Not only their fitness, but education and training. It's the entire package."

"For me," said Brig. Gen. Richard H. Dahlman, assistant adjutant general, Nebraska National Guard, "the Best Warrior is that Soldier who puts forth the effort that all of us attain to."

Among the competition's events were an Army Physical Fitness Test, day and night land navigation, a mystery event featuring an aerial assault on an urban village, a 12-mile ruck march, rifle qualification, an appearance before a board of command sergeants major, a written exam and Army Warrior Tasks along the way, such as searching a detainee and requesting a medical evacuation.

At its heart, the event is designed to determine who is the true embodiment of the Warrior Ethos through competition.

"Competition is good," said Brown. "It builds character and morale. It makes you a better warrior."

But here, it's about being the best, and the two Soldiers who earned that title – Staff Sgt. Gerald Ritter, sniper section leader, 1st Squadron, 180th Cavalry Regiment, Oklahoma Army National Guard, and Sgt. Calvin Koziol, infantryman, 1st Squadron, 134th Cavalry Regiment, Nebraska Army National Guard – move on to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, to compete in the National Guard Best Warrior Competition in June.

"It makes you proud," said Ritter. "It makes you realize that this is kind of bigger than you. You're actually representing an entire populace for your state."

The Region V Soldiers, representing Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas, arrived in Salina by way of winning their respective state-level Best Warrior Competition, with one notable exception.

Spc. Luke Fursman, a horizontal construction engineer with the 242nd Engineer Company, Kansas Army National Guard, crosses the finish line of a 12-mile ruck march May 18 as part of the Region V Best Warrior Competition, held at the Kansas Regional Training Center in Salina, Kansas, May 17-19. Fursman was one of 14 Soldiers from seven states competing. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

Spc. Luke Fursman, horizontal construction engineer, 242nd Engineer Company, Kansas Army National Guard, received short notice that he was needed to fill in for a fellow Kansas Guardsman who could not participate.

Fursman credits his high level of fitness and readiness for being able to endure the exhausting competition with little time to prepare.

"It was a pretty challenging experience," said Fursman. "This was a smoker. Had I not been staying physically ready, this would have probably been one of the toughest things I've ever done."

Brown said that, win or lose, the event is great for esprit de corps and inspiring future leaders.

"I believe that the Soldiers who compete in these events are going to be our future leaders, our future command sergeants major," said Brown. "They're preparing themselves now for what lies ahead."

Koziol went on to win Soldier of the Year at the National Guard Best Warrior Competition and will represent the National Guard at the U.S. Army Best Warrior Competition later this year.

Fourteen Soldiers representing seven states await their turn to board a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter as part of an aerial assault on an urban village May 17 during the Region V Best Warrior Competition. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

Cadet Thomas Meget, Oklahoma National Guard, eyes his target at the M4 zero range of the Kansas Regional Training Center, Salina May 17. (Photo by Pfc. Kathryn Mazos, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

2-137 CAB trains at Fort Hood

(Continued from Page 1)

"It allows us to develop our own technique, build our own leadership styles and traits that can really help them become proficient in their skills," he said.

This type of exercise bonds active- and reserve-component units and allows them to get to know each other and build a stronger force, Hayes added.

MIBT events like this are specifically designed to fully leverage the incorporation of active and reserve components in accordance with the Army's Total Force Policy. First Army is tasked by United States Army Forces Command to implement the ATFP, which directs active-component, National Guard, and United States Army Reserve commanders to integrate their Soldiers and unit capabilities into pre-mobilization collective training events to increase readiness and prepare for deployment as multi-component expeditionary forces.

Nelson said the 2-137 CAB had a relatively safe and valuable experience, but that the experience didn't come without hard work and dedication to the uniform.

"The advice I'd give to these Soldiers is it's awesome, it's fun, it's the best training you'll ever see, but those Soldiers need to come in with their eyes wide open, and understand it's a time commitment," said Nelson. "In the 2-137 CAB, being part of an armored brigade combat team, we now have time commitments that the traditional National Guard doesn't have anymore."

Mohatt to assume ATAG role

(Continued from Page 1)

Master of Arts degree in administration of justice from Wichita State University, a Master of Science in military arts and science from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and a Master of Arts in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

In his civilian job, Mohatt is the special agent in charge, United States Department of Agriculture, Office of the Inspector General Investigations – Midwest Region, Chicago, Illinois.

Windham became assistant adjutant general – Land Component in July 2014. Prior to that time he was assistant division commander of the 35th Infantry Division. Other assignments include commander, 235th Regiment; deputy chief of staff for Logistics, Joint Forces Headquarters; commander, Task Force Hurricane (Operation Iraqi Freedom); deputy commander, 130th Field Artillery Brigade; and deputy commander, Task Force Tornado (Operation Iraqi Freedom). He has also served in various command and staff positions, including command at the battalion and battery level.

Windham's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, with oak leaf cluster, Army Commendation Medal, with oak leaf cluster, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, with four oak leaf clusters, Iraq Campaign Medal, and the 1st Cavalry Division Order of the Combat Spur.

Our freedoms are a cause for year-round celebration

July Fourth celebrations honor centuries of blood, sweat and sacrifice

By Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli
The Adjutant General

The great British statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke noted that a nation is a partnership of three distinct groups: those who came before, those living, and those yet to be born.

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli

The 4th of July is many Americans' favorite national holiday, and there is a good but little understood reason why. It is the only national holiday that we celebrate all three groups that Burke identified at the same time.

We remember those that came before, like Gen. George Washington and all the brave Americans he commanded during eight hellish and uncertain years of service. We remember the battlefield losses and dark moments he quietly endured as he fought the world's most powerful military with a small band of absurdly under-resourced militia. We remember that somehow he succeeded, and won for us the ultimate gift of freedom, repeatedly defended by generation after generation of Americans, little know or remembered by most.

We also reflect on our brothers and sisters currently serving around the globe. As we enjoy fireworks with our families and friends, part of our hearts and thoughts are silently with them as they stand watch. We think of them and the perilous threats they guard against, feeling a bond and gratitude that defies words.

We look at our children and think of our nation's unknown future, hoping with every ounce of our being that it will be bright and free. And although we have no more idea of what our future holds than Washington did in 1776, we know one thing with absolute certainty. Our supreme responsibility is to defend our collective inheritance of freedom and ensure that it is passed on to future generations.

Without this enduring partnership between the past, present and future, there would be no United States of America. American freedom would never have survived beyond one generation, and we would have no great inheritance to pass on to the future. Without the past and present sacrifices of those that defend liberty, the 4th of July would just be another date on the calendar, void of special meaning.

As you celebrate this great holiday, take a moment to remember that you are a caretaker of a sacred inheritance. You are the unbroken link between those that came before and those yet to be born.

Enjoy and celebrate your freedom, take pride in your role of defending it, and give special thanks for of all those great Americans who made this gift possible.

Warrior to Warrior

My Air National Guard priorities

By Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown
Command Senior Enlisted Leader

The goal of the Command Senior Enlisted Leader office is to operate with proficiency and transparency. Soldiers and Airmen need to know what their senior leaders are doing to take care of them and their families. I am committed, along with the land component command sergeant major and the state command chief master sergeant, to provide the very best leadership to our Soldiers and our Airmen.

Command Chief Master Sgt. James Brown

In the last issue of the Plains Guardian we took a look at the Army Guard side. In this edition, I will provide a sampling that our office will be tracking for the Kansas Air National Guard in 2016.

Recruiting/Retention
- Ensure retention interviews are completed in a timely order
- Establish good communication with your Recruiting/Retention Manager to ensure your forecasts are known.
- Clear facts why Airmen are leaving -- looking for trends
- Know the health and well-being of all Airmen

Enlisted Performance Reports/Airman Comprehensive Assessments
- Current status of overdue Enlisted Performance Reports before Unit Training Assembly
- Complete rating percentage tracking work sheet
- Clear honest communication with Airman Comprehensive Assessments
- Push stratification numbers to the State Command Chief Master Sergeant

Professional Military Education
- Identify next fiscal year candidates for in-residence opportunities
- Professional Military Education completion percentages

Professional Development
- Community College of the Air Force
- Identify future leaders for Senior Enlisted Management Office courses
- Identify future leaders and develop plan
- Every Airmen should have a contingency plan
- State/Active Duty Operational Support tour candidates for future leaders
- All Airmen know and understand the Profession of Arms

Promotions
- Ensure we are promoting the right Airmen at the right time for right reason
- Paper work process to state for senior noncommissioned officer promotions
- Wing command chief should see 100 percent of senior noncommissioned officer promotion packages
- Hiring of key full-time and drill-status guardsman positions
- Identify future drill-status guardsman leaders and start a deliberate development plan
- Develop a force management plan with all leadership positions

Selective Retention
- Are we retaining the right people?
- All squadrons should have a five-year forecast plan.
- Take a close look at senior noncommissioned officers that have not completed Professional Military Education / Community College of the Air Force requirements

First Sergeant
- Hiring process
- Additional duty first sergeant program
- Identify and develop future candidates
- Ensure proper utilization of first sergeants at the squadron level
- Develop future wing first sergeant candidates
- All first sergeants should attend Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Awards/Decorations and Outstanding Airman of the Year
- Airmen should get some type of award every 3-5 years
- Summit deserving Airmen for the quarterly Outstanding Airman of the Year awards

Airmen Issues
- Inform leadership when someone is on the radar
- Are Airmen being released for physical training failures?
- Looking for consistency in action throughout state and both wings
- State teamwork
- Joint Forces Headquarters and both wings working together to ensure we are all on the same path
- We must have clear lines of communication at all levels
- Our status at National Guard Bureau is looked at as a state overall, not by wing
- Always look for new and better ways to take care of business
- The old saying "That's the way we have always done it" will not move the way forward

I am honored to serve as your command senior enlisted leader and always remember, excellence is an attitude. Proud to Serve!

Adjutant general delivers commencement address at Garden City Community College

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general of Kansas, delivers the commencement address during the Garden City Community College Class of 2016 graduation ceremony May 6 at GCCC in Garden City, Kansas. The Kansas National Guard and GCCC have recently formed a partnership that will bring a National Guard presence on campus with the goal of increasing enrollment at the college and informing students of opportunities available in the National Guard. The program, called Task Force Broncbuster, is being used as a test case. The program is designed to allow students to begin their education at GCCC and transfer to another school when the time comes. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

Plains Guardian

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Wichita to West Point

Kansas National Guard Soldier among USMA Class of 2016

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
Public Affairs Office

On May 21, approximately 1,200 U.S. Military Academy cadets tossed their hats into the air, celebrating their graduation from the illustrious institution at West Point, New York, and earning their commission as second lieutenants – future leaders in the U.S. Army.

Each cadet arrived at West Point from a different background, but only one came from the Kansas National Guard.

An active participant in extracurricular activities in high school with a 3.2 GPA and ACT score of 28 would make for a competitive candidate for admission into West Point. Add the discipline, leadership and military experience gained from U.S. Army Basic and Advanced Individual Training and while on deployment, and Aron Ochsner was the ideal candidate.

Ochsner joined the Kansas National Guard to serve close to home and become a commissioned officer through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps while attending college locally.

"My goal had always been to become an officer in the Army," said Ochsner, a native of Wichita. "I chose to enlist in the Kansas Guard to stay in the state around friends and family while I worked on a degree and commission through the Simultaneous Membership Program at Kansas State University."

When he raised his right hand and swore the oath of enlistment in February 2011, he hadn't imagined joining the "Long Gray Line" as a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy a mere five years later, but he graduated in May as a second lieutenant with a Bachelor of Science degree in international affairs.

Ochsner credits his service as a Kansas Army National Guard Soldier for his admission into West Point and his success as a cadet while there.

"I don't know if I would have gotten in (to the USMA) right after high school," he said. "The first thing you do here is go through West Point's version of basic training. Because I already had that foundation, it was easy for me to help other people out. It gave me a head start to help out and refine skills that I had already acquired as a Guard Soldier."

He learned of the USMA's Soldier Admission Program while deployed to the Horn of Africa in Djibouti as a field artillery automated tactical data system specialist with Battery C, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, Newton. At that time, Ochsner had already expressed his intention to become an officer to his leadership.

"I wasn't shy about my goals after the deployment," said Ochsner. "My chain of command came to me to inform me of the opportunity to attend West Point."

Maj. Mike McCoy, former 1-161 FA deployment logistics officer, said West Point encourages Army and reserve-component units to advise Soldiers of the Soldier Admission Program.

Per USMA.edu: "West Point believes Soldiers enhance the Corps of Cadets, and we value the life experiences you have earned as a Soldier. If you want to be an officer in the U.S. Army, West Point will give you an excellent education and the training you need to lead Soldiers as you continue to serve."

"We did a database query on battalion Soldiers who were qualified," said McCoy, who is also West Point graduate, Class of 1997. "They had to be 17-22 years of age with no dependents. Once we had that list, we sent that to the battery commanders to present the opportunity to those who qualified.

"We had a meeting one afternoon and about 15 Soldiers showed up. I told them what West Point was all about as far as the academics, the challenges and what kind of opportunities await a West Point graduate."

2nd Lt. Aron Ochsner (right), swears the oath of office at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, May 21. Ochsner served as an enlisted Soldier in the Kansas Army National Guard and then transitioned to West Point through the Soldier Admission Program. (Photo provided)

Ochsner decided to seize the opportunity and applied for acceptance.

"He took the ball and ran with it," said McCoy. "After those initial two meetings, he did everything on his own. He's a highly motivated young man and he went through the entire process on his own as far as gathering what he needed to apply, all while deployed."

Applying for the USMA entails providing the same documentation that civilian higher education institutions require – including transcripts and test scores – with a major additional requirement: a congressional letter of nomination.

"A lot of the difficulty someone going directly from high school trying to get in is getting that congressional nomination," said McCoy.

For prior service applicants from the Army Reserves, National Guard or active duty, that requirement is a bit different.

"One of the benefits that a Soldier has," said Michael Bedryk, USMA National Guard Admissions liaison, "is that in addition to being eligible for a congressional nomination, like any other applicant, they also can be nominated by their command."

For Ochsner, that endorsement came from Capt. Kyle Bell, former commander of Battery C, 1-161 FA.

"He was already an outstanding candidate with a high ACT score and a strong desire to grow and learn," said Bell. "He stood out as a junior enlisted member of the battery by quickly learning and assisting his noncommissioned officers to achieve organizational objectives. The process to get him into the USMA was

(Continued on Page 10)

Chaplain's Corner

Rediscover prayer

By Chaplain (Col.) Peter Jaramillo
Command Chaplain

"For this reason, I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands." 2 Timothy 1:6 (New American Bible – Revised Edition)

Chaplain (Col.) Peter Jaramillo

The more I engage in ministry as a chaplain, the more I realize how much prayer matters not only for priests, ministers, chaplains, and those given to God as "religious people," but it matters for all of us. God has a plan for all of us to find the joy of our lives in him and to be filled with his spirit and love.

No matter how important and busy our lives may be, we must constantly remember to pray. We must take time to be refreshed and be nourished and renewed.

I am grateful for the time that I have been given to renew my own spiritual needs.

The soul of human beings need to be in communion with the Lord our God who made us for himself. As the great scholar and bishop St. Augustine said, "You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee" (Confessions of St. Augustine). So, God has made us for himself, meaning there is a purpose in our lives that we need to constantly rediscover.

Because our lives change, they grow and mature. We don't remain at the same level that we entered into the ministry; we are expected to bloom and grow. Not only should we stay holy, but grow in holiness. It is simply not good enough to say, "Oh yeah, I'm good, I'm okay, because I was given to God many years ago when I discovered him in a crisis." Thank God I did, but that's not enough. That was just the beginning.

How am I rediscovering the Lord today? What matters now is my life line of prayer is alive and active. If my prayer life is not viable, then I dare say neither am I. This is when I'm probably in most need of God's mercy, because I can easily lose my spiritual sense of direction, my moral compass and my peace of mind. Prayer nourishes me daily and feeds me so that I don't lose myself in myself, but rather that I find myself and rediscover myself in God, in whom alone is my soul at rest.

As chaplains, we have so much on our shoulders. If we are expected to be a support to others, then so we must go to the wellspring of our souls, to God himself, and receive our portion of nourishment so that we may not go dry, but as we grow older may still be green and bear fruit in due season.

"For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord." 2 Timothy 1: 7-8 (New American Bible – Revised Edition)

Former adjutant general Finley honored during funeral and burial

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general of Kansas, presents Jeff Finley, son of retired Maj. Gen. Philip Finley, former Kansas adjutant general, a U.S. flag during a burial ceremony in Colby, Kansas, April 22. Finley, who served as the 31st adjutant general from 1987-1990, died April 17, 2016. (Photo by Capt. Matt Lucht, Public Affairs Office)

Interoperability is goal of active duty, National Guard training exercise

By Sgt. Zach Sheely
Public Affairs Office

Active-duty aviation Soldiers working with special operations personnel on a National Guard weapons range.

Just another day at Smoky Hill Air National Guard Range near Salina, Kansas.

Soldiers with the 3rd Helicopter Assault Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, partnered with a special operations forces unit and the Kansas National Guard to conduct a combat aviation exercise during the first week of May.

The 3-1 CAB sent approximately 200 Soldiers and eight helicopters including Black Hawks, Chinooks and Apaches to the exercise. The Soldiers used the facilities of the Kansas Regional Training Center for logistical needs, and Salina Airport to stage the helicopters, in addition to Smoky Hill.

According to Lt. Col. Jennifer Reynolds, 3-1 CAB Task Force commander, Salina and Smoky Hill offer the perfect training venue for this realistic training scenario.

"The facilities in Salina are outstanding," said Reynolds. "I really couldn't ask for a better partnership than we've had with our National Guard brethren here."

The Soldiers used the massive land space and mock urban villages of Smoky Hill to conduct air assault, aerial maneuvering and gunnery missions as part of the exercise.

A Kansas National Guard facility operated by the 184th Intelligence Wing, Kansas Air National Guard, Smoky Hill is no stranger to frequent active-duty users.

"The time to figure out how to work together isn't downrange, it's here," said Maj. Todd Kavouras, operations officer, Smoky Hill. "Hopefully we can provide a realistic training atmosphere for them to come together and figure out their tactics, techniques and procedures."

Reynolds said that Smoky Hill is well tailored for her units' needs for many reasons.

"One, being that it's so big," said Reynolds. "Two, the Air Force trains here. If we go anywhere, it's not just the Army, we train and go to combat together. Using Smoky Hill is just enhancing what we have at Fort Riley and I absolutely hope (the partnership) continues."

Spc. Daulton Wallace, UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter maintainer, 3-1 CAB, said the unfamiliar territory accentuated the realism.

Active-duty special operations Soldiers move through the urban village venue at the Smoky Hill Air National Guard Range near Salina May 4. The Soldiers partnered with 3rd Helicopter Assault Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley to use the National Guard facility for a joint training exercise. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

Their ground mission complete, special operations forces Soldiers run toward waiting Black Hawk helicopters flown by the 3rd Helicopter Assault Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 1st Infantry Division. The Soldiers and helicopter unit were engaged in a joint exercise at the Kansas Air National Guard's Smoky Hill Range near Salina. (Photo by Sgt. Zach Sheely, Public Affairs Office)

"Being away from our normal training area gives you more realistic training," said Wallace. "The ranges (at Smoky Hill) are good for what we need to do. Their tower is perfect for us and there's plenty of space there to maneuver."

The Soldiers were tested day and night to prepare them for what they might face on a deployment.

"We start hitting them with different scenarios without the regulation and they realize they can handle it, it just builds their competence and their confidence at the same time," said Reynolds.

A booming partnership

By Sgt. Anna Laurin
130th Field Artillery Brigade

The ability to work side by side with active-duty Army Soldiers is an important capability for the leadership of the 130th Field Artillery Brigade. To meet this goal, the 130th FAB is developing a partnership with the 1st Infantry Division Artillery. On May 14 the two organizations tested that partnership.

As part of the combined training, Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery Brigade joined with the 1st Infantry Division Artillery and the 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team to light up the afternoon skies over Fort Riley with high mobility artillery rocket systems. Conducting live fire with the HIMARS was a rare opportunity for the Kansas Army National Guard that demonstrated the importance of training to the same standard.

"We want to be modular with our active-duty counterparts, the same with other National Guard organizations," said Command Sgt. Maj. Harold Whitley, 130th FAB. "We all should interplay with each other and it should look the same. It's standardization and we are trying to ensure we do that."

The training exercise gave Soldiers the opportunity to practice those standards across all components and helped advance their mutually beneficial relationship. The exercise also marked a milestone for the 130th FAB.

"This is the first time we have been able to go out and shoot the HIMARS with cannon," said Col. John Rueger, 130th FAB commander, "but we also will be able to do it with the active component. It hit some firsts on quite a few different levels. It's a great experience for our Soldiers and the leadership get to see the total partnership, total first Army engagements in action."

Rueger and Whitley acknowledge that it will be a lot of work to continue to develop and grow the cooperation.

"We want to be able to take a look at our long-range calendars and sync up with what the organizations that are up here at Fort Riley are doing and be able to look for initial opportunities," said Rueger.

"This is really just the start of a long-lasting partnership that we are developing to allow us to grow and actually be able to leverage the 1st Infantry Division," Rueger said. "This is a big event in the grand scheme of things."

A live rocket is sent downrange at Fort Riley May 14 during a joint exercise by the 130th Field Artillery Brigade, Kansas Army National Guard, and the 1st Infantry Division Artillery. The exercise was a rare opportunity for those involved and demonstrated the organizations' capability to work side by side with their counterparts. (Photo by Sgt. Anna Laurin, 130th Field Artillery Brigade)

May 1 ceremony marks inactivation of 287th Sustainment Brigade

After more than 10 years of service to the state and nation, the Kansas National Guard's 287th Sustainment Brigade furled and cased its flag for the last time during an inactivation ceremony May 1 at the unit's headquarters in Wichita. The brigade will be officially inactivated Aug. 31.

"The Army is in transition and the Kansas Army National Guard had to make decisions on force structure to meet the needs of the total force," said Col. Thomas J. Foster, brigade commander. "It is unfortunate that a superior organization such as the 287th Sustainment Brigade will case its colors. It has a proud and rich set of accomplishments and will be missed."

Activated in September 2005, the brigade provided mission control of all assigned, attached and operational control units. It also provided sustainment planning, guidance and support to forces in an area of operation and, on order, conducted stability operations in support of federal missions and provided military assistance to civil authorities for state and local missions.

The brigade deployed to Iraq in 2008-2009, where they provided logistical support for U.S. and Coalition forces in their assigned area of operations. The unit received campaign participation credit for the War on Terrorism, and was decorated with a Meritorious Unit Commendation for participation in Iraq in 2008-2009.

At its peak, prior to inactivation, 287th Sustainment Brigade was largest major subordinate command in the Kansas Army National Guard with 309 Soldiers authorized in the unit and 2,160 Soldiers authorized in subordinate formations with authority for the 169th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, the 287th Special Troops Battalion, and the 891st Engineer Battalion with all their subordinate companies. With ongoing changes in the United States Army and the Kansas Army National Guard, these units were realigned to the 130th Field Artillery Brigade, 635th Regional Support Group, and the 69th Troop Command.

Lt. Col. Dana Duggins (left), commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Steve Harmon, senior enlisted leader, 287th Special Troops Battalion, furl the colors of the 287th Sustainment Brigade during the brigade's inactivation ceremony May 1 in Wichita. (Photo provided)

This unit was originally constituted in the Kansas Army National Guard March 1, 1953, as the 287th Infantry Battalion. It was officially organized and federally recognized July 8, 1954, with headquarters at Norton, Kansas; it was converted and redesignated as the 728th Field Artillery Battalion in 1956.

On May 1, 1959, the battalion was broken up and its primary element reorganized and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 110th Ordnance Battalion. The battalion disbanded Jan. 1, 1979, at Norton.

On June 1, 1980, the unit was reconstituted in the Kansas Army National Guard and organized at Norton as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 287th Maintenance Battalion. The unit was reorganized and redesignated Sept. 1, 1991, in Norton as the 170th Maintenance Company with detachments at Goodland, Colby, and Hays.

The 287th Sustainment Brigade was activated Sept. 1, 2005, and the honors and lineage of the original 287th units were transferred to it from the 170th Maintenance Company. The brigade's headquarters was located in Wichita and its 287th Special Troops Battalion was headquartered in Hays.

Spring Clays Shoot Out

NGAKS event offers veterans an opportunity to bond

By Capt. Margaret Ziffer
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The annual Spring Clays Shoot Out event returned to the Ravenwood Lodge in Topeka April 22 as part of the 2016 Kansas National Guard Joint Conference. Open to all active and retired Army and Air National Guardsmen, veterans and family members, this year's competition drew a diverse crowd of new and returning competitors.

In that crowd was Master Sgt. Roger Brooker of the 190th Air Refueling Wing and his son, Dalton. The duo has attended the event for the past several years.

"It's kind of a father-son thing," said Brooker. "We try to do this every year."

Booker said aside from the shooting, he enjoys "Just getting together with the guys - spending time with veterans."

That sentiment was expressed by many of this year's participants, including Chief Master Sgt. Jim Weldy, who recently retired from the 184th Intelligence Wing out of Smoky Hill Weapons Range in Salina after 26 years of service.

"I'm going to stay active as a retiree," said Weldy. "It's been an awesome career. I loved it. Why would I just give it up?"

Although it was his first time participating in the event, he plans to come back again next year and to keep in touch with his former coworkers.

"Once a Jayhawk, always a Jayhawk," said Weldy, referencing the 184th Jayhawks.

Active-duty Vietnam veteran Ed Middleton and his wife Dyan were surprised when their names were called for finishing as the second-place team.

"This is the first competition we've ever been in!" said Ed.

He and Dyan also plan to participate in the competition again next year.

Awards were given out in a variety categories, including first, second, and third place for individual and team awards, top female and top junior shooter.

Master Sgt. Roger Brooker, 190th Air Refueling Wing in Topeka, takes aim at two clay targets during the 2016 Sporting Clays Shoot Out held at Ravenwood Lodge in Topeka on April 22. The annual event is held in conjunction with the joint state conference of the National Guard Association of Kansas, Enlisted Association of the Kansas National Guard and State Family Programs. (Photo by Capt. Margaret Ziffer, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

RTS-M conducts ASIH8 class

By Sgt. 1st Class Jason Oesterreich
Senior Instructor, RTSM-Salina

On May 3, 16 Soldiers from Army, Reserve and National Guard units nationwide completed the ASIH8 Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Operations Course at the Regional Training Site-Maintenance in Salina. This class was the first ASIH8 class at Salina to learn Catastrophic Wheeled Vehicle Recovery since the U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command implemented the courseware change.

In addition to the traditional tasks of oxy-acetylene cutting operations, rigging methods and techniques, and wrecker operations; Soldiers received instruction and performed practical exercises involving multiple winch, multiple vehicle and complex recovery situations. The additional courseware is designed to test recovery specialists and prepare them for the complex situations they can expect to encounter in the current operating environment.

Initial feedback from the students has been very positive. In the past, students could only discuss the complexities of catastrophic recovery concepts during the course. Now they can apply basic recovery principles in a training environment during practical exercises that closely mirror the real-world situations they may see in their units. The additional lessons and practical exercises made a tremendous difference in giving the students more confidence in both their abilities as recovery specialists, and the capabilities of their equipment.

Waist deep in a soupy muck of water and mud, students in the ASIH8 Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Operations Course at the Regional Training Site-Maintenance in Salina assemble the rigging necessary to recover a mired wheeled vehicle. (Photo provided)

The 891st Engineer Battalion
cordially invites you to the
2016 Engineer Dining Out

Saturday, Sept. 17, 2016
Social Hour 5 p.m.; Banquet 6 p.m.
Capital Plaza Hotel
1717 SW Topeka Blvd
Topeka, Kansas 66612

This year's guest speaker will be
Brigadier General James Raymer
Commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood.

UNIFORM: *Army Service Uniform with Black Bow Tie,*
Air Force Service Dress Uniform, or Mess Dress
CIVILIAN ATTIRE: *Formal*

RSVP Maj. Justin Nusz, 785-646-4021, justin.t.nusz.mil@mail.mil

Ryan's Race: Topeka native Ramshaw battling cancer, throws out first pitch at Royals game

By Todd Fertig
Photo and story used with permission of Topeka Capital-Journal

Ryan Ramshaw stood where he'd always dreamed of being — in front of more than 30,000 cheering fans on the field of Kauffman Stadium Saturday, June 18. He fingered the baseball in his hand and, after pausing briefly to savor the moment, let the ball fly with all the strength he could muster.

Just like he'd done so many times in his life, the left-hander drilled the glove of the catcher — only this time the catcher was Drew Butera, backup catcher for the Kansas City Royals. This time, Ryan didn't have the whip-like arm and powerful legs he'd had just a few years before when he played for the state champion Hayden Wildcats.

Ryan, who serves as a senior airman in the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard, has spent the past half-year fighting a harrowing battle against cancer that has sapped his youthful strength, but it hasn't sapped his infectious smile, his faith or his fighting spirit. Those qualities were what drew 133 friends and family to fill a cheering section — tickets purchased by his mother and quickly resold — Saturday night to celebrate his fight for life.

Along the way, the Royals have joined Ryan's cheering section, and have played an integral role in keeping the 21-year-old Topeka native from giving up.

"I feel really honored and blessed to be the one to catch Ryan," Butera said. "Honestly, words can't describe what it means to me to share that with him."

Ryan spent the afternoon of June 18 flanked by his grandfather and uncle, touring the bowels of Kauffman Stadium, meeting Hall of Fame manager Tommy Lasorda, and receiving encouragement from everyone he encountered.

"I never could have imagined that I would get to do something like this," Ryan said after throwing out the first pitch. "Growing up a Royals fan I always wanted to be a pitcher for the Royals, so this was just a dream come true."

Ryan's Race has been intertwined with the Royals from its beginning.

After graduating from Hayden, Ryan enrolled at the University of Kansas with a goal of becoming a physical therapist and immersed himself in the other interests in his life.

Senior Airman Ryan Ramshaw, accounting specialist with the 190th Air Refueling Wing, throws out the first pitch of the June 18 Kansas City Royals game at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, Missouri. (Photo by Chris Vleisides, Topeka Capital-Journal)

He joined the 190th, volunteered with Young Life in Lawrence and spent what little time he had left assisting the Doxazo ministry to low-income areas of Topeka. He followed the Royals passionately as they slowly went from cellar dwellers to world champions.

"Ryan was a baseball guy ever since he was little, and more than that, he was a Royals guy," said Ryan's mother Cathy. "Ever since he was little, he knew all the players, and he knew all about them. Nothing made him happier than the Royals."

> ***"Growing up a Royals fan I always wanted to be a pitcher for the Royals, so this was just a dream come true."***
>
> ***Senior Airman Ryan Ramshaw***

But in the throng of thousands who mobbed Kansas City to celebrate the World Series title, Ryan knew something was wrong. Standing for several hours at the celebration, the back pain Ryan had been battling for months grew intense. His family had assumed he had inherited a hereditary back problem and treated it with physical therapy, prescription steroids and pain relievers. Ryan spent what was an unforgettably happy day for Royals fans in excruciating pain.

Behind the scenes, not everything was perfect for the Ramshaw family. An adopted younger sister, who had been with the family for eight years, struggled with mental illness and attachment issues. In an effort to get her the treatment she needed, the Ramshaws decided to enroll their only daughter in a program in Colorado that specializes in helping children with such issues.

Cathy and her husband Richard made the heart-wrenching drive to Colorado to place their daughter in the program, and returned shortly thereafter learn the true cause of Ryan's pain.

"Being the oldest boy, and being so concerned for his sister, Ryan just toughed it out," Richard said. "He was not sleeping and losing tons of weight, but he just kept quiet and kept going."

Last Thanksgiving, Ryan's parents observed Ryan's health drastically deteriorating and took him for some initial medical tests. The next week Ryan's pain was such that the Ramshaws took him to the emergency room.

An MRI revealed a tumor on Ryan's spine the size of a tennis ball. Further tests revealed that Ryan had a rare form of cancer called Ewing's Pediatric Sarcoma.

"It wasn't something I ever expected," Ryan recalled of the moment he was told he had cancer. "I thought I might need back surgery, and I was pretty freaked out by that. But then when they told me I had cancer, that day just went into a blur. But my friends really supported me from then on. I couldn't ask for anything better."

Friends from across Topeka rallied to support the Ramshaws. Friends in the medical community devoted their personal time to help find the best treatment options. In the midst of fear and disbelief, the Ramshaws clung to their faith.

Cathy had one idea she thought might help encourage Ryan. Ryan loved the Royals players, but he had a special affection for Rex Hudler, the folksy announcer who never played for the Royals but had the plucky spirit the team embodied. Cathy asked family friend and former major leaguer Ken Berry to see if he could connect Ryan to the Royals broadcaster.

The day Ryan began chemotherapy, he received a phone message from Hudler. The former big leaguer told Ryan to be strong and keep fighting, and to know that the Royals were pulling for him.

"Be a light for others. And Ryan, isn't that what (God) wants for all of us?" Hudler asked on the message, which the Ramshaws posted on social media.

"I didn't realize that he put it on Facebook and all," Hudler said later. "I don't take myself that seriously. But if it meant that much to him, I'm glad that he did, because I know that he can be an encouragement to others through his fight."

After several chemotherapy treatments, Ryan contracted a cold that, due to his compromised immunity, sent him to intensive care. Unprompted, Hudler picked up the phone to check in on Ryan and the two spoke

(Continued on Page 11)

134th ACS participates in national exercise "Cascadia Rising"

By Tech. Sgt. Justin Jacobs
184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

Although the city of Olympia, Washington, lies more than 1,800 miles from Wichita, Kansas, home of the Kansas National Guard's 134th Air Control Squadron, a number of the squadron's Airmen packed up their Joint Incident Site Communications Capability equipment and headed to Olympia in early June to take part in a large-scale mass casualty exercise called Cascadia Rising.

The Cascadia subduction zone sits off the coast of Oregon and Washington, stretching 600 miles from northern California to British Columbia. Scientists have predicted that the CSZ could erupt at any time and when it does, it will be the nation's largest calamity ever. More than 8 million people live along the area in the Pacific Northwest, which includes the cities of Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon.

"When the Cascadia Subduction Zone does rupture, it will result in a catastrophe like nothing we have ever seen," said Maj. Gen. Bret Daugherty, commander, Washington National Guard. "It's expected to be the worst natural disaster ever in the United States."

The Cascadia Rising exercise simulated an earth rattling 9.0 magnitude earthquake centered several miles off the coast followed by a four story tsunami and aftershocks in that leveled buildings, collapsed bridges, damaged roads and cut off communications. This year's exercise, which ran from June 7-10, involved more than 20,000 people from various federal agencies, including the U.S. military, state and local emergency responders from the Pacific Northwest, Native American tribes and emergency management officials from British Columbia.

One of the main goals of the exercise was to test how well the different agencies work together following a catastrophic event. Part of that test involved the ability to communicate when all Internet and telephone services are lost due to a disaster. The primary function of the 134th ACS's JISCC is to provide expeditionary communications capabilities, including radio communications, phone service, internet service and video teleconferencing.

The 134th ACS was located at the Washington Department of Transportation Aviation Division in Olympia. The primary role of the WSDOT Aviation Division was to manage more than 100 airports they controlled and the assets that were using them.

Within any exercise there are always difficulties and the 134th ACS encountered some during their time in Washington.

"The main difficulty we had here was that we arrived a lot sooner than we normally would," said Chief Master Sgt. James Helms, cyber systems manager, 134th ACS. "We had to limit the services we provided in the beginning to HF [high frequency] radio and satellite phone capabilities."

Throughout the exercise, the capabilities were increased from just radios and satellite phones, to computers, Local Area Network line phones and video teleconferencing to enhance their infrastructure and communications with the outlying areas. The capabilities the JISCC provided helped the WDTAT communicate with the other emergency operations centers placed throughout the state.

One of the biggest difficulties the 134th ACS had with the JISCC was one of unfamiliarity; the JISCC is an Army system ran by Air Force personnel. But the 134th Airmen took it as a chance to improve themselves.

"It's been great to work with the Army guys out of West Virginia to learn more about the radio system and how it operates," said Staff Sgt. Ryan Wolf, radio frequency transmission technician, 134th ACS.

Whether it was running a phone line to their big conference room or putting up a tent for mission briefs, the 134th accomplished everything asked of them.

"Having the JISCC in our building was great because if we needed anything, from a phone to a computer, we could just go in the next room and they would be there ready to help us," said Lizz Slabaugh, tactical operations officer, WDTAD. "For this exercise, the JISCC achieved all of the objectives we set out for you guys [134th Air Control Squadron]. We were really impressed."

Senior Airman Sean Titterington, radio frequency transmission specialist, 134th Air Control Squadron, sets up communications equipment at the Washington Department of Transportation complex in Olympia, Washington, during Cascadia Rising, an exercise that tested disaster response on a national level, June 7. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Justin Jacobs, 184th IW Public Affairs)

Beat the Heat and stay safe this summer season

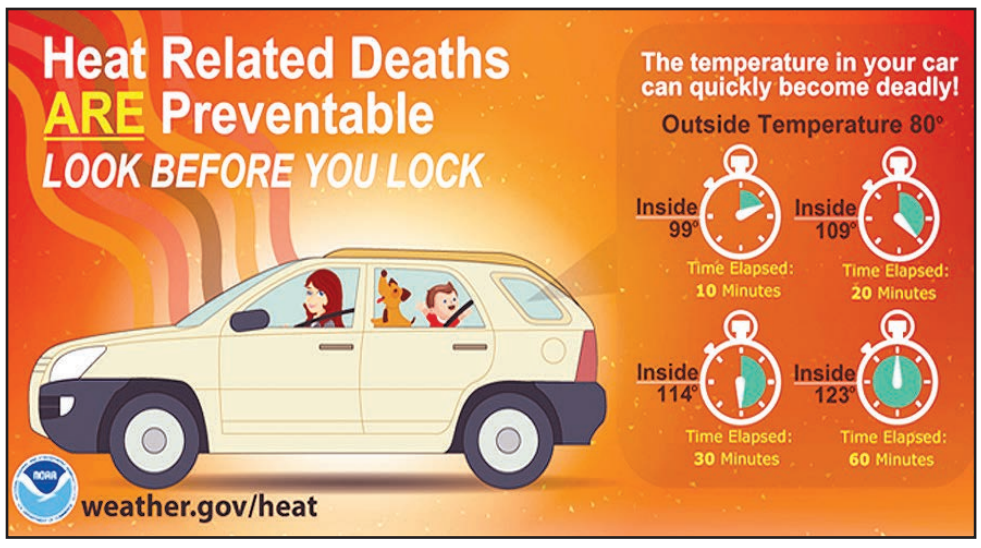
By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

"Sumer Is Icumen In." Translated from the Old English medieval round, it means "Summer has arrived." This year, summer officially came on June 20, although temperatures were already hitting the 90s -- and higher-- well before then.

And with those soaring temperatures came the potential for a variety of heat-related injuries. Heat is one of the leading causes of weather-related deaths in the United States, according to the National Weather Service. Heat injuries include heat cramps, heat syncope (fainting), heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat stroke is a failure of the body's temperature control system resulting from prolonged exposure to high temperatures, often in combination with dehydration. The medical definition of heat stroke is a core body temperature greater than 105 degrees Fahrenheit, with complications involving the central nervous system that occur after exposure to high temperatures.

Common symptoms of heat stroke include a throbbing headache; dizziness and light-headedness; lack of sweating; red, hot, and dry skin; muscle weakness or cramps; nausea and vomiting; rapid heartbeat, either strong or weak; rapid, shallow breathing; behavior changes such as confusion, disorientation, or staggering; seizures and unconsciousness. Untreated, heat stroke can be fatal.



Heat injuries may strike anyone, although children, older adults and pets are particularly susceptible to them.

Annually, dozens of children and untold numbers of pets die when left unattended in parked vehicles. Studies have shown that the temperature inside a parked car may rise rapidly to dangerous levels for children, pets and even adults. Leaving the windows slightly open does not significantly decrease the heating rate. The effects can be more severe on children because their bodies have not developed the ability to efficiently regulate its internal temperature.

And it does not take long for a car's internal temperature to reach danger levels. Studies have shown a car's interior may go from 80 degrees to 99 degrees Fahrenheit in as little as 10 minutes. In 20 minutes, it can hit 109 degrees. After an hour, it's at 123 degrees!

Be prepared

As with any weather season, preparedness is essential to avoid injuries. To avoid heat-related injuries this summer, the Kansas Division of Emergency Management advises following these safety tips:

- Be weather-aware. Local offices of the National Weather Service collaborate with local partners to determine when a heat-related alert should be issued for an area.
  - **Excessive Heat Outlooks** are issued when the potential exists for an excessive heat event in the next 3-7 days. An outlook provides information to those who need considerable lead-time to prepare for the event.
  - **Excessive Heat Watches**—Be Prepared! Heat watches are issued when conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event in the next 24 to 72 hours. A watch is used when the risk of a heat wave has increased, but its occurrence and timing is still uncertain.
  - **Heat Advisory**—Take Action! A Heat Advisory is issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions. The general rule of thumb for this advisory is when the maximum heat index temperature is expected to be 100 degrees or higher for at least two days, and night time air temperatures will not drop below 75 degrees.
  - **Excessive Heat Warning**—Take Action! An Excessive Heat Warning is issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions. The general rule of thumb for this warning is when the maximum heat index temperature is expected to be 105 degrees or higher for at least two days and night time air temperatures will not drop below 75 degrees.
- Stay out of the heat as much as possible. Limit outdoor activities until the cooler part of the day.
- Dress for summer. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing to reflect heat and sunlight.
- If you must work outside for an extended period, use sunscreen. Sunburn reduces your body's ability to dissipate heat. Take frequent breaks and do not take salt tablets unless specified by a physician. Make sure there is someone available to check on you.

KDEM officials also suggest having a plan for where your family can go if there is a power outage. Many communities offer cooling centers or you can go to public areas such as a library or a shopping mall.

Keep a close eye on children and check on elderly neighbors. Watch for signs of heat-related illness:

- Sunburn: Redness and pain.
- Heat Cramps: Painful spasms usually in the muscles of legs and abdomen.
- Heat exhaustion: Heavy sweating; weakness; cold, pale, clammy skin; fainting and vomiting but may have normal temperature.
- Heat stroke (or sunstroke): High body temperature (106° F or higher), hot dry skin, rapid and strong pulse, possible unconsciousness. Summon emergency medical assistance or get the victim to a hospital immediately. Delay can be fatal. While waiting for emergency assistance, move the victim to a cooler environment, reduce body temperature with cold bath. Remove clothing, use fan/air conditioners. Do not give fluids.

Heat safety for Pets

- Ensure pets have water and shade.
- Check on pets frequently to ensure they aren't suffering from the heat.
- Don't leave pets in an enclosed vehicle.

Additional information on what to do regarding extreme heat conditions may be found online at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment website.

Lightning Myths and Facts

Each June, during the height of severe storm season, the National Weather Service emphasizes lightning safety. Here are a few myths and facts about this electrifying weather phenomenon:

Myth: If you're caught outside during a thunderstorm, you should crouch down to reduce your risk of being struck.

Fact: Crouching doesn't make you any safer outdoors. Run to a substantial building or hard topped vehicle.

Myth: Lightning never strikes the same place twice.

Fact: Lightning often strikes the same place repeatedly, especially if it's a tall, pointy, isolated object. The Empire State Building is hit nearly 100 times a year.

Myth: If it's not raining or there aren't clouds overhead, you're safe from lightning.

Fact: Lightning often strikes more than three miles from the center of the thunderstorm, far outside the rain or thunderstorm cloud. "Bolts from the blue" can strike 10-15 miles from the thunderstorm.

Myth: Rubber tires on a car protect you from lightning by insulating you from the ground.

Fact: Most cars are safe from lightning, but it is the metal roof and metal sides that protect you, not the rubber tires. When lightning strikes a vehicle, it goes through the metal frame into the ground. Don't lean on doors during a thunderstorm.

Myth: If outside in a thunderstorm, seek shelter under a tree to stay dry.

Fact: Being underneath a tree is the second leading cause of lightning deaths.

Myth: If you are in a house, you are 100 percent safe from lightning.

Fact: A house is a safe place to be during a thunderstorm as long as you avoid anything that conducts electricity. This means staying off corded phones, electrical appliances, wires, TV cables, computers, plumbing, and metal doors. Windows are hazardous for two reasons: wind generated during a thunderstorm can blow objects into the window, breaking it and causing glass to shatter and second, in older homes, in rare instances, lightning can come in cracks in the sides of windows.

Myth: Structures with metal, or metal on the body (jewelry, cell phones, mp3 players, watches, etc.), attract lightning.

Fact: Height, pointy shape, and isolation are the dominant factors controlling where a lightning bolt will strike. The presence of metal makes absolutely no difference on where lightning strikes. While metal does not attract lightning, it does conduct it, so stay away from metal fences, railing, bleachers, etc.

Myth: If trapped outside and lightning is about to strike, I should lie flat on the ground.

Fact: Lying flat increases your chance of being affected by potentially deadly ground current. If you are caught outside in a thunderstorm, keep moving toward a safe shelter.

NOAA's National Weather Service
Heat Index
Temperature (°F)

Relative Humidity (%)	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110
40	80	81	83	85	88	91	94	97	101	105	109	114	119	124	130	136
45	80	82	84	87	89	93	96	100	104	109	114	119	124	130	137	
50	81	83	85	88	91	95	99	103	108	113	118	124	131	137		
55	81	84	86	89	93	97	101	106	112	117	124	130	137			
60	82	84	88	91	95	100	105	110	116	123	129	137				
65	82	85	89	93	98	103	108	114	121	128	136					
70	83	86	90	95	100	105	112	119	126	134						
75	84	88	92	97	103	109	116	124	132							
80	84	89	94	100	106	113	121	129								
85	85	90	96	102	110	117	126	135								
90	86	91	98	105	113	122	131									
95	86	93	100	108	117	127										
100	87	95	103	112	121	132										

Likelihood of Heat Disorders with Prolonged Exposure or Strenuous Activity
Caution · Extreme Caution · Danger · Extreme Danger

That's HOT!

Although there is some disagreement among weather experts, the highest reliably recorded temperature on Earth is 129°F, recorded at Death Valley, California. The highest temperature recorded in Kansas is 121°F, which occured in July 1936 at Alton; the second highest Kansas temperature was 119°F, recorded in August the same year in Wellington.

Terrorism scenario drives first responder exercise at Crisis City

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

When a disaster strikes, whether of natural origins or of human design, a diversity of first responders rush to the scene – search and rescue crews, emergency medical technicians, law enforcement, and a host of others – each well-trained and with a job to do.

To ensure that each agency can do its job without interfering with the tasks of other agencies, they must train together so they can see how each agency operates. Such was the idea behind a full-scale emergency exercise conducted at Crisis City April 5 and 6. Sponsored by the Kansas Homeland Security Grant Program, the exercise drew civilian and military participants from across the state to train side by side in a terror-based scenario over the course of 30 hours.

"The exercise this year is a little more law enforcement-driven," said Joe Pruitt, manager of Crisis City. "In the past, we've seen a lot of natural disasters, whether it be a tornado or floods. This year we have more of a law enforcement element with domestic terrorism, so we see a lot more law enforcement agencies on the ground."

Crisis City is a multidisciplinary training facility near Salina operated by the Kansas Division of Emergency Management. Pruitt said the facility is ideal for such real-time, hands-on training.

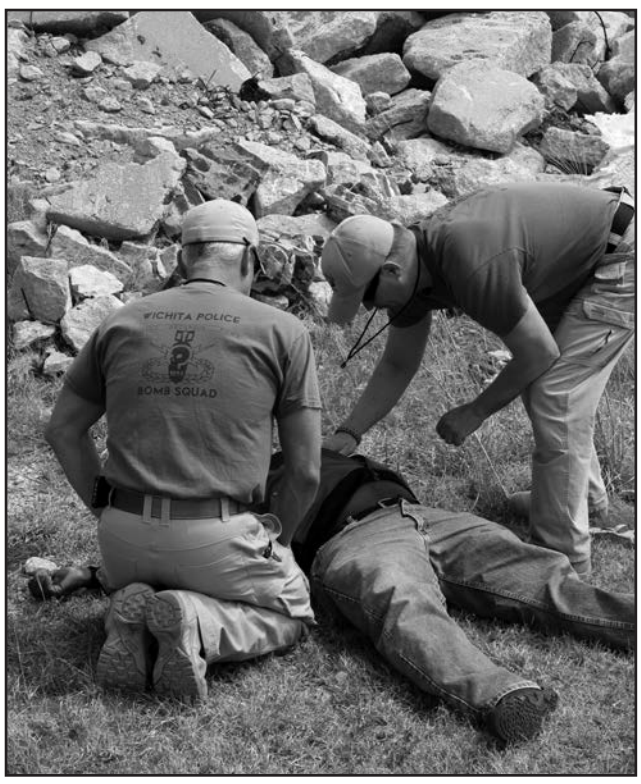
"Crisis City is the best place in the world to be," said Pruitt. "We have the capability to do numerous exercises, whether it be a rubble pile for search and rescue, a shoot venue for law enforcement elements, or a technical rescue tower. We can combine a lot of different facets."

Planning such an exercise takes time and experience. This exercise was planned by KDEM and Kansas Homeland Security in cooperation with The Blue Cell, LLC, a training exercise consulting firm.

Officers with the Salina Police Department SWAT team move through the Urban Village venue during a full-scale emergency response exercise at Crisis City April 5. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

"We've had the exercise under planning for about eight months," said Todd Manns, owner, The Blue Cell. "The primary gist of this is to do operational coordination and operational communication among various disciplines, which is a little bit unique in terms of a full-scale exercise. One entity's actions are affecting another entity's actions.

"A perfect example would be search and rescue working on a collapsed building coming across a responder that's been injured from a different discipline or a suspect who also has explosives on their body," said Manns. "In that case, search and rescue would effectively need the fire department, the police department, the coroner's office, emergency management, structural engineers and incident managers to really resolve just that one element and we have a multitude of those types of elements in this over the next 30 hours."



Two members of the Wichita Police Bomb Squad assess a simulated casualty near the rubble pile at Crisis City, trying to determine if he is an innocent victim or a terrorist killed by his own explosion. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

An officer with the Riley County Police Department's emergency response team observes the scene of a simulated terrorist attack, looking for signs of danger before sending his team in to investigate. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Manns said the exercise scenario, which involved bombs set off inside a building and a hostage situation at another location, was designed to be as realistic as possible in a training environment and incorporated elements taken from current world news.

"We wrote the scenario and then the attacks in Paris happened about two weeks later," said Manns. "It was uncanny how close our scenario was to that real attack. The additional things that have happened since then – San Bernardino, the Brussels issue and the airport a few weeks ago – we incorporated small elements of even those incidents as recently as two weeks ago into this. We try to be as contemporary to real world events that are happening. The challenges that those responders faced are the same that responders here in Kansas would face."

Just as in real life, exercise participants did not know what was going to occur until the events happened. For the exercise, information injects were provided to them by the simulation cell. Each new piece of information required responders to think on their feet and let their training kick in to react as they would in real life, which in most cases involves close cooperation with other first responders.

And that cooperation involves a balancing act between the goals and requirements of each agency. Sgt. Dustin Weisdbrod, Riley County Police Department, is leader of the department's emergency response unit, hazardous materials response team. Weisdbrod said his team's objective is to preserve evidence and manage the crime scene.

"Which obviously in a situation like this is chaos," said Weisbrod, "but we try to manage it the best we can and to pass on information, especially at this point in the search and rescue operations, to command so they can pass it on to those investigators gathering the intelligence about what we're doing and tracking down leads."

For Capt. Linc Lunsway, task force leader, Task Force Two, Manhattan/Topeka, the priorities are different. The job of his team is to locate disaster victims and get them out as quickly and safely as they can, which makes cooperation with Weisdbrod's unit of vital importance.

"We have to work hand in hand to get priorities for life safety and make sure we keep the investigation going and get the patients that are viable out of the scene safely," said Lunsway.

"The law enforcement brings a whole other part of this together to where we have to work with them to make sure it's safe for us and the patients before we move forward."

Over the course of the exercise, conducted in three 10-hour shifts, there was another element that neither participants nor planners could control: the weather.

"At Crisis City, sometimes the weather can be our biggest crisis," said Pruitt. "Today, we have lovely winds gusting from 25 to 35 mph and a 60 percent chance of rain. Those are elements we have to deal with regardless of what we have going on.

"There's never a dull moment at Crisis City. They have to adjust to all that. It's all part of the game."

A simulated casualty is placed on a gurney to be evaluated for treatment by members of a medical emergency response team during an exercise at Crisis City April 5. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Awards and Decorations

KANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Defense Distinguished Service Medal

Maj. Gen. Michael D. Navrkal, 35th Infantry Division, Fort Leavenworth

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Dana Duggins, 287th SB, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters
Lt. Col. Scott Henry, HQ, 235th Rgmt, Salina, with two oak leaf clusters
Maj. Michael Gast, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Maj. Andy Trager, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita
Capt. Bryan Gregory, HQ, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Capt. Brian Webb, HHC (-), 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ross England, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
1st Sgt. Thomas Becher, KSARNG MTC, Fort Leavenworth, with two oak leaf clusters
1st Sgt. Gregory Johnson, 73rd CST, Topeka
1st Sgt. John Speer, 35th MP Co, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Nicholas Clair, 73rd CST, Topeka
Master Sgt. Larry Dew, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita
Master Sgt. John Duerr, Co C (Ord), 2nd Bn, 235th Rgmt, Salina
Master Sgt. Stephen Finch, HHD, 635th RSG, Topeka, with three oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Brett Fox, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita
Master Sgt. Thomas R. Hawks II, KSARNG Training Center, Salina
Master Sgt. Sheree Hicks, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Darrell Keller, 287th SB, Wichita
Master Sgt. James Ledin, HHB, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Hutchinson, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Tony Parsons, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita
Master Sgt. Kristina Sidwell, HQ, 235th Rgmt, Salina, with oak leaf cluster
Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Bivens, Rec & Ret Cmd, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Darrel Bruner, HQ, 891st Eng Bn, Iola
Sgt. 1st Class Wade Cormier, Btry A, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Holton
Sgt. 1st Class Marc Henry, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Johnston, Co B, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class Craig Ledet, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Sgt. 1st Class Harold Longberg, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class David Palmer, 35th MP Co, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Pugh, Co C, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Lenexa
Sgt. 1st Class Calvin Wilson, HHC, 287th SB, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Daniel Brownell, 170th Maint Co, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Timothy Hoesli, 2nd Bn, 235th Rgmt, Salina
Sgt. Daniel Chambers, 995th Maint Co, Smith Center
Sgt. Joseph Ralston, 35th MP Co, Topeka

Army Commendation Medal

Maj. Dwayne Byerly, Rec & Ret, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Staff Sgt. Patrick Stevens, Co B, Rec & Ret, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters

Kansas Meritorious Service Ribbon

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Susan Brown, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka

Kansas Achievement Ribbon

Sgt. Martin Macias, Det 1, 778th Trans Co, Manhattan
Spc. Alexander Thompson, 35th MP Co, Topeka

Kansas National Guard State Emergency Duty Service Ribbon

Maj. Larry Leupold, 130th FAB, Manhattan
Maj. Daniel Mehlhaff, 997th BSB, Hays
Sgt. 1st Class Lawrence Hart, HSC, 997th BSB, Hays
Staff Sgt. Cody Breon, Det 1, 997th BSB, Colby
Staff Sgt. James Griffin, Det 2, 995th Support Maint Co, Norton
Staff Sgt. Richard Luvender, Det 1, 997th BSB, Colby
Sgt. Schyuler Cook, 170th Support Maint Co, Wichita
Sgt. Joshua Kline, Det 1, 997th BSB, Colby
Sgt. Brandon Williams, Det 2, 995th Support Maint Co, Norton
Spc. Daniel Kerksiek, Det 1, 997th BSB, Colby
Spc. Luke Pechanec, Det 1, 997th BSB, Colby

KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Russell Allen, 184th IW, Wichita, with three oak leaf clusters
Lt. Col. Jared Maag, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Lt. Col. Chris Snyder, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters
Lt. Col. Jeffrey Warrender, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Jerreme Camper, 190th ARW, Topeka
Capt. Casey Montgomery, 190th ARW, Topeka
Chief Master Sgt. Donna Buckman, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Senior Master Sgt. Troy Abel, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Senior Master Sgt. Michael Halsig, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Anthony Garner, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Jonathan Henry, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Barrie Janssen, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Neal Jensen, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Kenneth Kerr, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Jeffrey Lockhart, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. David Mabery, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. William Presson, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Adam Fortner, 184th IW, Wichita

Air Force Commendation Medal

Capt. Cortney Neblett, 190th ARW, Topeka
1st Lt. Cameron Carlson, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
1st Lt. Ana Tavares, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Lucretia Cross, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Angela Drummer, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Shad England, 190th ARW, Topeka, with three oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Gina Hastings, 190th ARW, Topeka, with three oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Neal Jensen, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Randall Tindle, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Jacob Urban, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Joseph Carver, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Tech. Sgt. Marc Cox, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Tech. Sgt. Julie Hoefer, 190th ARW, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Tech. Sgt. Erik Jacobson, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Tech. Sgt. Justin Meier, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Tech. Sgt. Jared Sisson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Christopher Vanfosson, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters
Staff Sgt. Chad Broome, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Erick Dean, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Staff Sgt. Ryan Johnson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Tess Brackemyer, 190th ARW, Topeka

Air Force Achievement Medal

Senior Master Sgt. Scott Moser, 190th ARW, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Preciliano Deleon, 190th ARW, Topeka, with three oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Joann Dingman, 184th IW, Wichita, with three oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Crystal Falk, 190th ARW, Topeka, with three oak leaf clusters
Tech. Sgt. Joseph Carver, 190th ARW, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Tech. Sgt. John Johnston, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Andrew Schmeidler, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters
Staff Sgt. Chad Broome, 190th ARW, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Staff Sgt. Patrick Burton, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Nathan Dahlgren, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Staff Sgt. Ramon Espana, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Staff Sgt. Terence Gallagher, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Staff Sgt. Justin Smith, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Staff Sgt. Bradley Stoudt, 184th IW, Wichita, with two oak leaf clusters
Senior Airman Colten Porter, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Sean Titterington, 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Airman 1st Class Alyssa Gonzalez, 184th IW, Wichita
Airman 1st Class Kristian Needham, 190th ARW, Topeka

Combat Readiness Medal

1st Lt. Cameron Carlson, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Austin, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. James Marlin, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Christopher Schneider, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Brandon Arpan, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Jacob Baldwin, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Shannon Johnston, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Andrew Jundt, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Michael Kohn, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Cody Larson, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Ryan Canaan, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Alec Eller, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Adam Hilbert, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Luke Janzen, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Clayton Jones, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Wesley Kubie, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Jacob Mattern, 184th IW, Wichita
Airman Basic Dustin Steinhilpert, 184th IW, Wichita

Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

Senior Master Sgt. David Butler, 184th IW, Wichita

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Wichita to West Point

(Continued from Page 4)

easier, from a commander's perspective, than getting a Soldier into Officer Candidate School or ROTC."

For most applicants however, gaining admission into West Point is anything but easy. A U.S. News and World Report article notes only 9.5 percent of applicants were accepted in 2014. According to Bedryk, of the approximate 1,200 cadets admitted every year, there are 85 slots reserved specifically for reserve-component prior service applicants, which includes the Army Reserve, National Guard and USMA Preparatory School cadets.

"We want Soldiers to apply," said Bedryk. "We want them to have this information. If someone actually goes through the process – they can certainly be disqualified for a number of reasons including academics, medical, failing the fitness assessment, etc. – and if they are qualified, they stand a really good shot at either a prep school offer or an offer to the academy."

Ochsner received a direct admission offer and bypassed the one-year preparatory school required of less-qualified candidates. Bedryk said that the USMA has three major acceptance factors: academics, fitness and leadership potential, and a great measure of leadership potential can be gleaned by service as an enlisted service member. According to USMA.edu, Soldiers are automatically considered for admission to the USMA Preparatory School, for later consideration for admission to West Point.

"A Soldier has some things that a civilian applicant simply won't have," said Bedryk. "They might have awards like an Army Achievement Medal or Army Commendation Medal. They might have platoon or squad leader experience. Other things that stand out is whether they're an honor graduate from Basic, AIT or leadership schools like Warrior Leader Course."

Ochsner weighed the decision to attend the USMA until he was actually accepted.

"I wavered for a while," he said, "even as I was going through the application process. After high school, my thought process at Basic and AIT was to get through it and go back home and start college and be there for four years and get my degree.

"The thought of coming back from deployment and leaving again for four years to some out-of-the-way area in New York was really tough. But talking to everyone in my chain of command, from my team leaders to squad leader, to Captain Bell and Major McCoy, about the opportunities I decided it would be worthwhile."

USMA cadets go through the "47-Month Experience" which includes academic curriculum and military training. West Point is considered a liberal arts college and Ochsner said that the schooling is academic-focused, with military training mainly reserved for the summertime.

"The coursework during the academic year is very comparable to any public or private school," he said. "Everything from chemistry to physics to calculus to English plus all your major classes. Here, there is a wider base in required general classes. You don't get any of your major classes until your junior year."

The USMA is ranked 22nd in national liberal arts colleges per the U.S. News and World Report, and is a taxpayer-funded institution, so cadet tuition is free. According to USMA.edu, first-year cadets earn $900 per month for personal expenses and cadet expenses including uniforms, books, a computer and activity fees. That amount increases with each year of tenure.

Graduates commission into one of 16 Army branches and earn a starting salary of approximately $44,000 per year as active-duty second lieutenants, with a requirement to serve a minimum of five years. Benefits include military health insurance.

For graduates, opportunities for career progression are immense. Ochsner received his branch assignment as a field artillery officer and will attend the U.S. Army Basic Officer Leader Course prior to going to his first duty station at Schofield Barracks, Honolulu, Hawaii, home of the 25th Infantry Division.

Ochsner said attending the USMA has changed his life.

"I've met some of the greatest people in my life here, friends for life," he said. "I was able to go to Airborne school. I shadowed a platoon leader at the Joint Readiness Training Center. I've had so many unique opportunities here that I would not have had otherwise."

Bell said that it isn't just the Soldier who benefits from the USMA experience.

"I strongly believe that the Army National Guard should continue to make these long term investments in junior enlisted Soldiers," said Bell. "Commanders at all levels should encourage opportunities like the one Aron was fortunate enough to pursue. He will either return to the Guard at some point in his career or continue an active-duty career with a full understanding and appreciation of the junior enlisted (Soldier's) skills, attributes, professionalism and capabilities."

"My time as an enlisted Soldier will and has proven invaluable in my development," said Ochsner. "It helps give me insight into what a junior enlisted soldier expects or wants in a platoon leader and what attributes are undesirable in a platoon leader. It will help me stay grounded and humble as I will move forward in my career and will be a resource I can draw on time and time again."

Ochsner said he encourages any Guard or Reserve Soldier who is considering the USMA to research it and make an informed decision on whether or not it's for them. He said he sees a return to the National Guard as a possibility in his future.

"Returning to the Kansas Guard is something that I've always kept in the back of my mind," he said. "If I want to leave active duty and get into something in the civilian world, I love the military culture and lifestyle, so the Guard is definitely something I would consider returning to in order to continue serving."

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

Col. Thomas Foster, 287th SB, Wichita
Lt. Col. Eric Blankenship, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Maj. Jennifer Orvis, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Chief Warrant Officer 4 Marvin Terhune, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ross England, 287th SB, Wichita
Command Sgt. Maj. James Moberly, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Sgt. Maj. Leanne Kehres, HQ (-), 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
Master Sgt. Thomas Hawks II, KSARNG Training Center, Salina
Master Sgt. Darell Keller, 287th SB, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class Marc Henry, 287th SB, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class Terry Mead, 130th FAB, Manhattan
Sgt. 1st Class Theodore Meyer, 287th SB, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Pugh, Co C, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Lenexa
Staff Sgt. Cheryl Baranow, 137th Trans Co (-), Olathe
Staff Sgt. Daniel Brownell, 170th Maint Co, Wichita
Staff Sgt. David Herbert, HHB, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Hutchinson
Staff Sgt. Timothy Hoesli, 2nd Bn, 235th Rgmt (MTB), Salina
Staff Sgt. Marlin Hogie, Det 1, 731st Trans Co, Liberal
Staff Sgt. Tony Kirk, Det 1, Btry B, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Lenexa
Staff Sgt. John McCoy, HHC, 891st Eng Bn, Iola
Staff Sgt. Bradley McDowell, Det 2, 731st Trans Co, Hutchinson
Staff Sgt. John Mixon Jr., Det 1, 2137th FSC, Kansas City
Staff Sgt. Joshua Rathbun, Det 2, 731st Trans Co, Hutchinson
Staff Sgt. Joseph Wiegman, Det 1, 242nd Eng Co, Wichita
Sgt. Daniel Chambers, 995th Maint Co (-), Smith Center
Sgt. Steven Ehler, Co C, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Lenexa
Sgt. Debra Maxey, KSARNG Med Det, Lenexa

Kansas Air National Guard

Col. Mark Green, JFHQ KS-AC, Topeka
Lt. Col. Jeff Warrender, 190th ARW, Topeka
Chief Master Sgt. Donna Buckman, 184th IW, Wichita
Chief Master Sgt. Jim Weldy, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. David Butler, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Robert Leguillon, 190th ARW, Topeka

GCCC cont.

(Continued from Page 1)

college age individuals looking to get an education and serve their community. They think it's a really great demographic for them. They're excited it will help recruiting.

"The other piece that we're doing is leasing unit space – an orderly room, some office space for the readiness noncommissioned officer that will be out there and for them to meet when they start their drills. As part of this lease agreement we'll have access to other facilities on campus where we could hold formations or conduct training."

Murdock said the agreement allows the National Guard to put a presence in the Garden City community without the expense and time it would take to construct a new armory and the attendant infrastructure.

"By leasing space at the community college, we're able to, at minimal cost, get into their IT backbone, and have access to up-to-date distance learning classrooms," said Murdock. "We just have to coordinate ahead of time with community college personnel on the resources we need to access."

Murdock said the arrangement will also open up new opportunities that may attract new students.

"From a community college perspective, it's going to give their students more options and like everybody else, they're looking to increase their attractiveness to potential students," said Murdock. "So what they're looking at is will this maybe take some prospective students who are on the borderline and get them to say 'You know what? I am going to do that. I'm going to do that at Garden City Community College.'"

Murdock said that after the initial concept was hammered out, a flier went out to current Kansas National Guardsmen about the Garden City initiative.

"We said, 'We've got this opportunity. If you are an E4 (corporal) or below and are looking to go to school, Garden City is an opportunity. We'll set it up so you can drill at Garden City and Garden City is setting it up so you can go to school and drill there.' The first week this went out, we had four soldiers come online and say 'I want to do this.'

"That's the benefit to Garden City, they pick up four students – who were actually from eastern Kansas – that want to go do this. For us, now we've got four soldiers that are getting an education and improving themselves. That's a benefit to us in the long run."

Murdock said the program is designed to allow students to begin their education at Garden City Community College and transfer to another school when the time comes.

"We're working with Pittsburg State to do a 2x2 ROTC program out there," said Murdock, "so now they'll be able to do Military Science 1 and 2 courses, which are like freshman and sophomore year courses, and those cadets will be able to contract with Pitt State, get their associate's degree through Garden City, do the first two years of ROTC, then transfer to Pitt State, move on with their education and get commissioned through Pitt State's ROTC program."

Murdock said that some of the courses offered by the college even line up with several of the career choices available in the Guard.

"They have a food service program, they have a diesel engine mechanic program. There are a lot of programs that Garden City offers that match Military Occupational Specialties that we have."

Murdock said that the college has been very receptive to the program since it was first discussed.

"They've proposed some ideas that will benefit even non-students who are part of the unit that's on their campus," Murdock said. "They will issue student IDs which allows them to have access to sporting events, plays, the gymnasium so they can come and work out on their own."

Murdock said the program, called Task Force Broncbuster, is being used as a test case. If it proves successful, the hope is to expand it to other community colleges across the state.

"Major General (Lee) Tafanelli (the adjutant general) would like to have four or five of these in place next year," said Murdock, who cautioned that any expansion, as with all programs, depends on budget.

"And not every community college is going to be a great option," he continued. "It's not going to be a win-win across the board. We have 19 community colleges across the state plus the tech schools. Not all 19 are going to be a great opportunity for them or us. When you get down to it, if maybe half of those end up being smart places for us to do something like this, that's what we'll look at."

Murdock said a ribbon-cutting is being planned for the new recruiting office on campus for late July or early August.

"That puts us on campus," he said. "We're in uniform, we're visible. They're going to see Soldiers out doing stuff, which might pique their interest. I've got recruiters right there in the student activity center they can come visit after lunch, before lunch.

"We think there are a lot of possibilities in this partnership that can benefit both the college and the National Guard."

For more information on Taskforce Broncbuster contact Sgt. 1st Class Jeromy Fisher office 785-646-8724 or jeromy.e.fisher.mil@mail.mil

Army Warrant Officer corps celebrates 98 years of service

By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Smith

I want to start by thanking the men and women in the Kansas National Guard for their service as well as all of the retirees. Less than one percent of the United States population serves our country today and without you and the support of your families we would not have the freedom that we do.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Smith

I also want to wish a happy birthday to the Warrant Officer Cohort. The official birthday of the Army Warrant Officer Corps is July 9, 1918, when an act of Congress established the Army Mine Planter Service as part of the Coast Artillery Corps.

The Warrant Officer Corps insignia is the "Rising Eagle" which consists of an eagle rising with wings displayed, adopted from the Great Seal of the United States. The eagle is standing on two arrows, which symbolize the military arts and sciences. The eagle rising is enclosed within a wreath. The official color of the Army Warrant Officer Corps is brown which originated from the brown strands of the burlap bags that the Mine Planter Service personnel wore as their insignia of rank.

Since 1918, the Warrant Officer Cohort has gone through many changes from ranks, definitions, education, pay, commissioning, duties and positions, and continues to change as the Army evolves. The Warrant Officer plays a vital role in the Army and will continue to play a vital role for years to come.

I recently had the privilege to visit several units during their annual training periods in Kansas and Texas. For many of the Soldiers, this was their first time to participate in training out in the field where Mother Nature can be less than pleasant. However, everyone I spoke with enjoyed getting back to training in the field. The morale and atmosphere was outstanding and I want to thank all of the Soldiers and leaders for their support and questions concerning becoming a Warrant Officer and I hope to visit other units in the near future.

Warrant Officer Candidate School at the Kansas Regional Training Institute has been up and running since March. The candidates will wrap up their final weekend at the RTI in August by volunteering at the Rebecca Morrison House in Salina. The Rebecca Morrison House is a guest residence for those living outside Salina who have a loved one as a patient at Salina Regional Health Center, Salina Surgical Hospital and patients receiving treatment at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center.

The next step for the WO candidates is to complete Phase III, which is the annual training or "field" phase. This phase will be conducted at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, and consists of warrior tasks and battle drill related activities that provide leadership opportunities while emphasizing lessons relevant to the Operational Environment. These activities culminate in a field leadership exercise that draws heavily on recent lessons learned. The candidates will be evaluated on capstone events which provide expanded opportunities to apply flexible, adaptive leadership principles in stressful, sometimes ambiguous situations to reinforce and build upon previous classroom theory studies and discussion. Upon successful completion of Phase III, candidates will graduate in September in Indianapolis.

Graduating candidates will become officers, and the next step for them will be to attend their Warrant Officer Basic Course where they will receive Warrant Officer MOS specific training. I wish them the best of luck in completing Phase III and the continuation of their basic course.

For those of you interested in pursuing becoming a Warrant Officer – now is the time to start working on your predetermination packet. It takes several months to obtain all the required documents to construct a packet so don't wait or you might miss out on the next available class. We have vacant positions in various WO MOSs so please contact me at (785) 646-1903 if you have further questions.

Ramshaw cont.

(Continued from Page 7)

for the first time, the day before Ryan was rushed to the hospital. In seemingly perfect timing, Hudler provided encouragement the day before Ryan would enter a debilitating battle.

"He's such an encourager," Cathy said. "You listen to him on the broadcasts and he's so positive. That's just how he is. And his first two calls to Ryan came on the day he started chemo, and the day he began an unexpected sickness. The calls from Rex make Ryan light up in the middle of the hardest of situations."

Cathy launched a Facebook page titled Ryan's Race to serve as a way to harness the prayers and encouragement from friends and family. The page reached the many groups — classmates, the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard, Young Life, Doxazo and almost 20,000 people around the world — who were cheering and praying for Ryan. The family's love of the Royals appeared in numerous posts.

The Ramshaws purchased an autographed copy of Hudler's autobiography for Christmas. Then some family friends got Hudler to sign a baseball for Ryan. But those mementos would quickly be overshadowed.

Hudler had been invited to visit the Topeka Air National Guard base in February. The Guard arranged for a private meeting between Hudler and Ryan. Text messages between the two became routine.

The Ramshaws' study of Ewing's Pediatric Sarcoma led them to take Ryan to MD Anderson hospital in Houston for Proton Beam Therapy — an extreme course of treatment — in late March. Perfect timing, the Royals were visiting the Astros from April 11-14. Hudler left tickets at will call for Ryan and Cathy — second row behind the Royals dugout.

Next Hudler invited Ryan and his mother to meet the team at the Astros stadium. An autographed bat, wrangled by Butera, had etched in the sweet spot "Keep Fighting! It's the Royals' Way!" The bat would sit in a place of prominence throughout Ryan's time in Houston.

"We, more than just about anybody, understand the fight," Butera said. "I wanted to do something special for him to try to encourage him and to motivate him for the fight."

"When every player came out of the dugout, they were looking for Ryan, looking to talk to him and encourage him," recalled Hudler. "It was just a display of caring and love that the Royals have for their fans, and especially for someone like Ryan who's fighting an uphill battle."

A conversation with Taiwanese pitcher Chien-Ming Wang was photographed by the ever-present Chinese media that documents Wang's every move. The next day, Ryan was on the cover of the China Times.

"You can't make this stuff up," Cathy said. "There have just been too many coincidences. God is so good. I don't put everything on Facebook. People wouldn't believe it."

Back home with his parents and two brothers, girlfriend and countless friends and supporters, Ryan was in for one more surprise. D.J. Bartels, a former Hayden teammate with a connection to the Royals front office via a fraternity brother, petitioned to have Ryan throw out the first pitch at a game.

The Royals continue to show their concern for Ryan. Pitcher Danny Duffy, for one, had a message for Ryan:

"You're an inspiration to us," Duffy said prior to the game. "Keep fighting. Keep doing what you're doing, and we'll be praying for you."

"They've brought a lot of joy and energy to me during this time," Ryan said of the Royals. "They have been kind and genuine and joyful and willing to reach out and encourage me. I appreciate it so much."

The college student, senior airman, youth minister and former ballplayer is fighting a battle for his life. One stop along the way in Ryan's Race was the pitcher's mound at Kauffman Stadium. Ryan's Race persists. His treatments will continue into September and his battle back will not end there.

But his pitch on that Saturday night was a perfect strike.

Notes from the field desk

Soldiers from the 69th Separate Infantry Brigade load personnel and equipment into a CH-47 Chinook during their mobilization training at Fort Carson, Colorado. Air mobility operations were one of several areas of training emphasis that the Brigade focused on in preparation for a Vietnam deployment in 1968 and 1969. (Photo courtesy of the Museum of the Kansas National Guard)

By Master Sgt. Jeremy Byers
Command historian

The United States is currently in the midst of its 50 year commemoration of the Vietnam War. An unpopular war in an unpopular place during a time when the military was something less than popular, Vietnam veterans are starting to see the recognition for their efforts that they deserve.

Master Sgt. Jeremy Byers

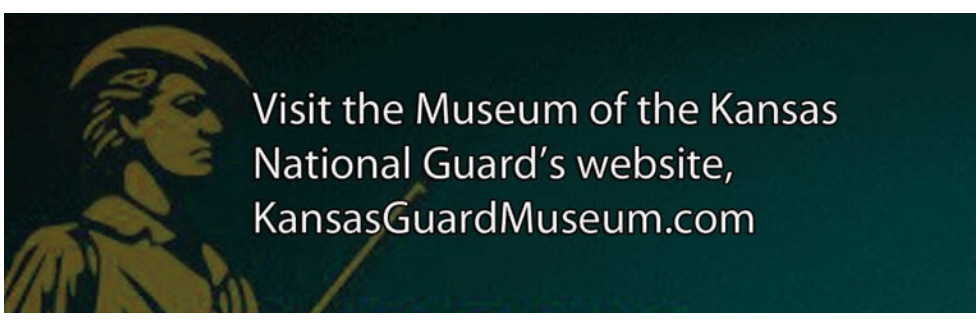
For the Kansas National Guard, Vietnam, and particularly 1968, also heralded the largest mass mobilization of National Guard personnel, post World War II.

As part of the continuing Cold War drama with Korea, in January 1968 a U.S. Navy vessel was attacked and seized by North Korea. In response to what became known as the Pueblo Incident (so named due to the ship that was captured), 800 personnel from the 184th Tactical Fighter Group were mobilized in support of the U.S. response to the crisis. The majority of the group personnel were sent to Korea to bolster the U.S. presence in the region as well as conduct training operations with their active duty Army and Air Force counterparts. While the crisis largely died down by December 1968 (and the captured crewmen were repatriated home), the 184th continued to conduct operations until June when they returned to Kansas.

The Vietnam War was a significant drain on Army manpower. Largely reliant on the draft to keep the strength levels up, the Vietnam War taxed the Army's ability to maintain its strength while manning its Cold War posts in Korea and Western Europe and conducting military operations in Vietnam. One answer to this was to mobilize the National Guard. The 69th Separate Infantry Brigade was mobilized and moved to Fort Carson in May 1968. With a strength of approximately 3,500 soldiers, the Brigade was primarily composed of Kansans, with the exception of the 2-133 Infantry from Iowa. Over the next year the Brigade received new equipment and conducted training in preparation for a possible deployment.

During Vietnam, the U.S. Army relied more on a system of personnel rotation rather than rotating units out of theater. Due to this system, individual levies of personnel to backfill combat losses were required rather than rotating the Brigade into theater. From 1968-1969, 2,397 officers and enlisted were sent from the Brigade to backfill Army units, most of them going to Vietnam. These men were piecemealed out to dozens of Active Army units to bring them up to strength. In this role, the Guardsmen performed well, being awarded 40 Silver Stars and over 200 Bronze Stars. Of these 2,400 men, 40 were killed in action with hundreds more wounded. The 69th Brigade soldiers that were left at Carson returned quietly home to Kansas just prior to Christmas 1969.

The personnel of both the 69th Infantry Brigade and the 184th Tactical Fighter Group have a longer story to tell about the Vietnam War then just these few paragraphs. Visit your Museum of the Kansas National Guard for more information and the next time you see a Kansas veteran with the distinctive yellow and green Vietnam service ribbon thank them for their service. It is quite possible they were a member of the Kansas Guard during that turbulent time.



Nose art graphic honoring the Patriot Guard, designed by Senior Airman Skylar Caldwell, a crew chief with the 190th Air Refueling Wing. The piece was dedicated to the Patriot Guard during an April 29 ceremony at Forbes Field in Topeka.

Nose art honors Patriot Guard

By Tech. Sgt. Jake Meyer
190th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

The sound of roaring motorcycles drowned out the cheers of the crowd as Senior Airman Skylar Caldwell revealed his hard work to the audience April 29 at Forbes Field. The pounding engines calmed as the crowd gave a round of applause for the new nose art dedicated to the Patriot Guard.

The nose art was chosen to show the 190th's appreciation for the Patriot Guard's loyalty to fallen heroes. The Patriot Guard stands firmly with the families of America's fallen military members, firefighters or police officers killed in the line of duty. Caldwell's nose art design is one of very few that has honored both military and civilian efforts under one banner.

Nose art has been around since World War I. It began for practical reasons as a way to identify friendly units, but soon evolved into a way for units to express themselves away from the constraints of military uniformity. It soon became a tradition that is still honored today. The 190th followed this tradition, creating its first nose art, the Iron Eagle, in 1988.

Caldwell's masterpiece wasn't chosen on a whim. Master Sgt. Chris Dubois conceptualized the piece and got input from the Patriot Guard out of American Legion Post 136. The project was handed off to Senior Master Sgt. Mike Chandler, who approached Caldwell about creating the design and painting the mural.

"I have done plenty of designs in the past, and I felt it was best for the younger Airmen to step up and show off their skills," said Chandler. "I noticed that Skylar was always drawing in his free time and felt he would be able to design the nose art that would make the 190th and the Patriot Guard proud."

It started off as a challenge for Caldwell as this was the first time he had ever created a mural, but thanks to the advice of Chandler he was able to create a work of art.

"It is a huge honor to have been able to paint the nose art," said Caldwell. "It has always been a dream of mine to design and have a piece of my work on a plane. It was also a reward to create a portrait honoring the Patriot Guard who represents such a great cause."

Senior Airman Skylar Caldwell pulls back the wrapping on a KC-135R Stratotanker to reveal the nose art that he created to honor the Patriot Guard during a ceremony at Forbes Field Air National Guard Base, Topeka, April 29. The nose art was chosen to show the 190th's appreciation for the Patriot Guard's loyalty to fallen servicemembers. (Photo by Master Sgt. Allen Pickert, 190th ARW Public Affairs Office)