35th Infantry Division change of command....6

3 inducted into National Guard Hall of Fame.....7

10 years of Armenia partnership 8

PLAINS GUARDIAN

VOLUME 57 NO. 6 *Serving the Kansas Army and Air National Guard, Kansas Emergency Management, Kansas Homeland Security and Civil Air Patrol* DECEMBER 2013

Two Soldiers inducted into the Defense Intelligence Patriots Memorial

By Jessica Shumaker
St. Joseph News-Press

Reprinted with permission by the St. Joseph News-Press

Kristy Runde's younger brother would likely be red-faced from the attention he and a fellow Soldier received Nov. 7, as a sea of suits and military uniforms filled the Defense Intelligence Agency's Missile Lobby to recognize their ultimate sacrifice.

"I think my brother would have been embarrassed," Runde, an Amazonia, Mo., resident, said of Sgt. Don Allen Clary. "When he was working, he was all business, he knew what he had to do ... he just did his job."

Sgt. 1st Class Clinton "Clint" Wisdom, an Atchison resident at the time of his death but a St. Joseph native, and Clary, of Troy, were two of four Soldiers who died serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and whose names were added to the agency's Patriots Memorial at their headquarters.

On Nov. 8, 2004, the two men intercepted a suicide bomber's vehicle with their own vehicle on a personal security detail in Baghdad for members of the Iraq Survey Group, which included the group's director, Charles Duelfer. They became the first two Kansas Army National Guardsmen to die since the Vietnam War.

Kristy Runde, sister of Kansas National Guardsman Sgt. Don Allen Clary, unveils the medallion honoring him as a fallen hero at a ceremony at the Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington, D.C., Nov. 7. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jonathon Loveland, DIA Public Affairs)

The Iraq Survey Group was the group tasked with searching for weapons of mass destruction in the country.

When they died, Wisdom was 39 and Clary was 21.

Wisdom and Clary's names, engraved on gold honeycomb-shaped plaques, were unveiled by their family members at the ceremony before DIA employees, ISG members and others who knew the men. The lobby, which gets its name from the Scud missile it houses, was filled with attendees, with many standing to watch.

The agency's director, Lt. Gen. Michael T. Flynn, said the memorial commemorates "profound sacrifice" and that a common thread connects the men honored.

"I believe what we see in those being recognized is a common quality demonstrated in uncommon ways," he said, noting that all four men died in selfless service to others.

Their addition to the wall, which was started in 1988, is a rare honor — the last names to be added followed the deaths of DIA personnel stationed at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, and there are 25 total. All the names listed are individuals who have died in service to the agency, which focuses on military intelligence.

In addition to Runde, Wisdom's older sister, Lisa Wisdom-Strayer, and mother, Diane Wisdom, both of St. Joseph, also made the trip to take part.

(Continued on Page 2)

Wal-Mart gives $50,000 worth of holiday meals to Guardsmen

By Phil Anderson
The Topeka Capital-Journal

Reprinted with permission by the Topeka Capital-Journal

Christmas was a little more festive this year for approximately 400 Kansas National Guard families, thanks to a $50,000 donation from the Wal-Mart Foundation.

On Dec. 19 the world's largest retailer provided the Guard families with boxes of food including a turkey, a ham and all the trimmings, plus a $75 Wal-Mart gift card.

Dignitaries including Gov. Sam Brownback, Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins and Kansas Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli were among those who rolled up their sleeves to help pack the food items during a 9 a.m. event in the produce section of the Wal-Mart Supercenter at 1301 S.W. 37th, Topeka.

The Kansas National Guard nominated 400 of its families to receive the hand-packaged gift bags from Wal-Mart to thank them for their service.

Boxes containing the packaged food items and gift cards were loaded onto a waiting National Guard truck before being delivered to the families later that same day.

Similar events took place the same morning at Wal-Mart stores in Wichita and Salina, as the food items and gift cards were distributed to Guard families across the state.

Tafanelli, as commander of the Kansas Army and Air National Guard, said Wal-Mart's gift was greatly appreciated.

"Four hundred families within the National Guard — Soldiers, Airmen and their families — are going to have a special Christmas because of this generous donation," Tafanelli said. "Thanks to Wal-Mart for making this possible."

Brownback said the gift was a meaningful way to honor those who have served their state and nation through the Guard.

He asked the approximately 50 Soldiers on hand for the ceremony to raise their hands if they had been deployed overseas, and many indicated they had — in some cases two, three or four times.

State Sen. Vicki Schmidt, whose district includes the Wal-Mart where theceremony

(Continued on Page 2)

Distinguished Airman shares spotlight with rescued girl

By Tech. Sgt. Emily F. Alley
190th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Rylee Robinson, a 12-year-old amputee, received a standing ovation Dec. 7 when she used her new leg to walk to the front of the stage to receive a commander's coin.

About six months earlier, Staff Sgt. Matthew Crawford, a member of the 190th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, was driving to work and saw Rylee, who had been hit by a car while riding her bicycle on Topeka Boulevard in Topeka, Kan. Crawford, who had just completed self-aid and buddy-care training the day before, pulled over to help. He grabbed a scarf from his car and improvised a tourniquet for her severed leg.

Crawford treated Rylee for shock and even had the situational awareness to instruct onlookers to direct traffic so an ambulance could arrive.

Several weeks after the accident, he heard the family wanted to meet him.

"Someone told me, 'They're looking for you. They want to meet you,'" said Crawford.

He went to the hospital and, when the nurse realized who he was, she commended him.

"She told me she had seen the pictures from when Rylee got to the operating room," Crawford said. "'You're a life-saver,' she told me. 'You saved her life.'"

When Crawford found out the governor planned to recognize his work, he asked if he could invite Rylee.

"She's doing way more with more difficulty

(Continued on Page 14)

Kansas Governor Sam Brownback (left) commends Staff Sgt. Matthew Crawford (right), 190th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, for saving a 12-year-old girl's life for which he was awarded the Kansas National Guard Distinguished Service Medal during a ceremony at Forbes Field, Topeka, Kan., Dec. 7. (Photo by Master Sgt. Allen Pickert, 190th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs)

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 178
SALEM, OR

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE
NATIONAL GUARD OF KANSAS
Adjutant General of Kansas
2800 Topeka Blvd.
Topeka, Kansas 66611-1287

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty For Private Use, $300

Wal-Mart gives $50,000 worth of holiday meals to Kansas Guard

(Continued from Page 1)

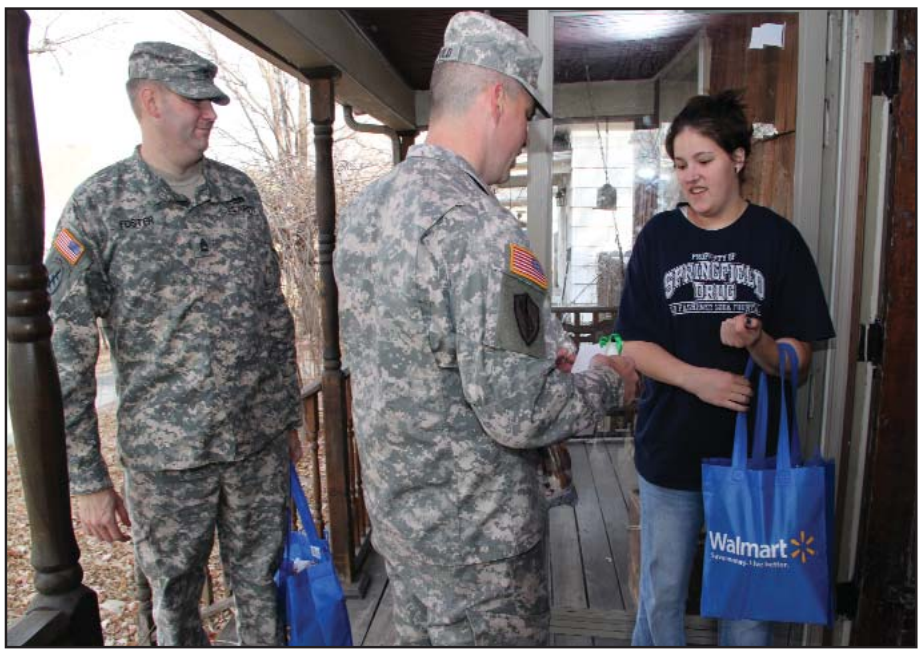
took place, also was on hand to help pack bags with various food items.

State Sen. Vicki Schmidt, whose district includes the Wal-Mart where Thursday's ceremony took place, also was on hand to help pack bags with various food items.

"This is a tremendous event," said Schmidt, who was wearing a red Santa hat. "It shows a lot of generosity on the part of Wal-Mart. I hope it makes a huge difference for our military families. We want them to know how much we care and how thankful we are for them."

Mindy Ellis, Wal-Mart regional general manager, said the decision to assist Kansas National Guard families came in part out of her own "passion" for the military, as her husband, Chief Master Sgt. Bart Ellis, is serving in the Air Force and is based at McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita.

"This is a chance for us to thank the military families," Ellis said. "It makes me feel very special and extremely proud."



(Left to right) Sgt. 1st Class Chris Foster and Maj. Larry Leupold, operations officer of the 235th Regiment, deliver a holiday meal to Siara Kronmiller accepting on behalf of Spc. Shawn Zeedyk in Salina, Kan., Dec. 19. Approximately 400 Guard families were provided meals including a turkey, a ham and all the trimmings, plus a $75 Wal-Mart gift card. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett, Public Affairs Office)

(Left to right) Gov. Sam Brownback; Wal-Mart regional general manager Mindy Ellis; Senator Vicki Schmitt, District 20; Kansas Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli; Tammy Tafanelli, wife of the adjutant general; and Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins, 2nd District of Kansas help pack food bags for Kansas National Guard families Dec. 19 at Wal-Mart on 37th street (Photo by Stephen Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Kansas aeromedical evacuation unit deploys to Afghanistan

By Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett
Public Affairs Office

Approximately 45 Soldiers of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, (General Support Aviation Battalion), Kansas National Guard, were honored Nov. 4 in front of family and friends during a deployment ceremony at the Army Aviation Flight Support Facility #1 located at Forbes Field, Topeka, Kan.

Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer and Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general of Kansas, spoke at the ceremony.

"When a Soldier is injured, getting him proper medical treatment as soon as possible is vital," said Tafanelli. "The work these Kansas Guardsmen do often means the difference between life and death and getting them to the medical care facilities as quick as they possibly can. We are immensely proud of them and the total commitment they give to their mission."

"Not only have they met every standard of the Department of the Army, they have far exceeded them in their preparation," said Colyer, as he spoke to the Soldiers and their families in attendance.

Many of the families understand this is what their Soldiers signed up for but saying goodbye is never easy. One of the unit's crew chiefs and a father of three, Staff Sgt. Ryan Kohlman is on his third deployment.

"It's definitely tougher because we have the baby this time, so it's a little sadder," shared Kohlman's wife, Amanda.

"Being away from the kids is probably the hardest part because you miss so much of their lives and of them growing up," added Kohlman. "When you come home it's like new little bigger people."

The Soldiers departed Nov. 7 in two flights of three Black Hawk helicopters for their mobilization station at Fort Hood, Texas, for additional mission-specific training before deploying to Afghanistan.

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general of Kansas, speaks to the Soldiers of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, during their deployment ceremony at the Army Aviation Flight Support Facility #1 located at Forbes Field, Topeka, Kan., Nov. 4. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett, Public Affiars Office)

The Soldiers were able to return home for the holidays due to a generous donation from the Wal-Mart Foundation to the Kansas National Guard Foundation to pay for bus transportation to and from Texas. At their arrival home each family was provided boxes of food including a turkey, a ham and all the trimmings, plus a $75 Wal-Mart gift card.

The unit's mission will consist of providing aeromedical evacuation support within the division and corps under the command and control of the General Support Aviation Battalion.

They will also be providing the rapid evacuation and movement of patients while providing enroute care to higher echelons of medical treatment, movement of medical personnel and accompanying medical equipment and supplies, consistent with evacuation priorities and operational considerations, to and from points as far forward as possible.

The aeromedical evacuation unit is no stranger to this mission as they deployed with their sister unit out of Colorado to Iraq, May 2010 to May 2011, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We are honored to send the very best men and women in the National Guard to do that work," said Tafanelli.

In closing, Maj. Kevin Kennedy, commander of Co. G, 2nd Bn., 135th Avn. Regt., said "Ready to launch, ready to provide care and ready to help save a life. God speed and dust off."

Soldiers of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, say goodbye to loved ones before departing Forbes Field, Topeka, Kan., for Fort Hood, Texas, Nov. 7 for additional mission-specific training before deploying to Afghanistan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett, Public Affairs Office)

Two Soldiers inducted into the Defense Intelligence Patriots Memorial

(Continued from Page 1)

Runde said it is gratifying to see Clary honored as a hero.

"It's still a concept I'm trying to wrap my head around," she said. " ... He's always going to be my little brother."

Wisdom-Strayer said she was touched by the more permanent nature of the memorial, and that of all the Soldiers who have died in Iraq, he was one of four to have their names on the wall.

"To me that's the ultimate honor," she said, that memory of his sacrifice will live on.

She also said she thought her brother would be touched by having his name on the memorial.

"My brother was older and in the service a lot longer," she said. "I think he would really feel honored and would be talking to people."

"As long as he could talk," Diana Wisdom added.

While this was the ninth anniversary of their deaths, Wisdom-Strayer and Runde said it doesn't feel like it's been nearly that long.

Sgt. Don Allen Clary

"It's been nine years and it feels like yesterday to me," Wisdom-Strayer said.

Runde agreed, saying each year is like reliving the past.

"It's 2004 every first week of November," she said.

Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wisdom

Runde was at her grandmother's home when two uniformed men arrived at the door. She said she immediately knew what news they were bringing.

"In that one moment, the world as I knew it stopped," she said.

Diana Wisdom also said she knew when she was contacted.

"They called me home from work, and I knew," she said.

Both Clary and Wisdom deployed with the Kansas National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery.

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general of Kansas; Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Haworth, command sergeant major of the Kansas National Guard; and their deployment commander Col. Michael Dittamo were among the audience members.

Dittamo said the ceremony was "very nice and very fitting."

He recalled the events that led to their deaths, occasionally pausing to keep his outward emotions in check. He said Wisdom and Clary were good guys who did what they needed to do.

"They did their jobs. Had they not done that, a vehicle (filled with) a director and his staff would have been destroyed," he said.

Combined Arms Battalion trains on latest M1A1SA Gunnery

By Staff Sgt. Kenneth Kumle
Company D, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment

Noncommissioned officers from the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, were trained as instructor/operators for the M1A1SA Advanced Gunnery Training Systems at the Warrior Training Center in Fort Benning, Ga., Nov. 18-22. This training was conducted in preparation for turning in their current M1A1 Heavy Tanks and the fielding of new M1A1 SA Main Combat Tanks that will arrive in the upcoming spring, as well as for the tank gunnery that will follow. This simulator is the most advanced gunnery trainer in the Army's system and will provide Company C and Company D of the battalion the training needed to be proficient on the tank gunnery range.

The AGTS is a family of gunnery training simulators for vehicle commander/gunner teams for M1A2 tanks and related vehicles. It is rapidly transportable and deployable, and features a high-fidelity crew compartment replicating the vehicle's turret and fire control system in both physical and functional aspects.

The AGTS is designed to train tank commanders and gunners on the fire control systems for the new tanks and on tank gunnery range skills in general.

The AGTS presents the vehicle commander and gunner with a full range of simulated engagement situations. The system trains both fully-operational and degraded-mode gunnery techniques under a wide variety of conditions. The pre-programmed, computer-controlled exercises vary in target type and number, range, vehicle and target motion and visibility. The AGTS-based systems are capable of networking to provide section, platoon and

(Continued on Page 11)

Staff Sgt. Michael Hogg (left), a member of Company C, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, receives directions from an instructor on the instructor/operator station at the Warrior Training Center in Fort Benning, Ga., Nov. 8. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Kenneth Kumle, Company D, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment)

Kansas Guardsmen honor veterans at local care homes

(Left to right) Airman 1st Class Jennifer Johnson, 190th Air Crew Life Support; Col. Tony A. DeJesus, commander of the 190th Air Refueling Wing-Maintenance Group; and Airman 1st Class Angela Jepson, 190th Aerial Port, pose for a picture with a veteran at the Presbyterian Manor Assisted Living Cafeteria in Topeka, Kan., Nov. 11. Soldiers and Airmen from the Kansas National Guard visited care home facilities in the Topeka area on Veterans Day to hand out certificates of appreciation to the veterans who reside there.

In Topeka, Kansas Guardsmen visited Atria Hearthstone East, Atria Hearthstone West, Brewster Health Care, Clare Bridge, The Legacy (formerly Eventide), Legend at Capitol Ridge, McCrite Health Center, Presbyterian Manor Assisted Living Cafeteria, Presbyterian Manor Health Center, Oakley Place South Building, Rolling Hills Health Center, and Westwood Manor. Facilities outside of Topeka included Alma Manor, Alma; St. Marys Manor, St. Marys; and Good Samaritan Home, Wamego. (Courtesy photo)

Tech Savvy

How does a CAC card work?

By Chief Warrant Officer 3 Scott Sackrider
Cyber Security Officer

The Common Access Card ensures integrity, encryption and sender identity of documents and email, as well as identity verification at Department of Defense websites. But have you ever wondered how they work?

They are mini storage devices, similar to a thumb drive. They contain three certificates. A certificate is a large group of seemingly random characters (keys) tied to your personal information. One certificate is for identification; one for digitally signing email and documents, and the last is for encryption.

The encryption certificate is somewhat confusing due to the use of Public Key Infrastructure. Imagine two shredders with the capability of "unshredding." The catch is they have to work in pairs; one device (or certificate key) can restore the document shredded by the other device. No other certificate or the key that encrypted the item can unencrypt it. People keep one key to themselves (private key), and the other (public key) goes in the lobby (in the case of our shredders); in the digital world they reside on DoD servers.

The "Aha!" moment is when we realize that when we encrypt an email, we're using the public key of the recipient, rather than our own. Our message or document is shredded using the recipient(s) shredder in the lobby, sent to them, and they "unshred" it using their private key. This is why you are unable to send encrypted email to those without a CAC or if someone does not have their certificates published to the DoD Global Address List. This is also why you may have issues or see a notification of an invalid signature if a person receives a new CAC as it may have new certificates.

The signature and identity certificates are not as difficult. When you sign an email or document the program looks to the DoD's root certificate repository to ensure it's valid, then performs math to come up with a value that will change if the email is modified to ensure integrity and authenticity.

Likewise when you access a DoD website, the website will request an identity certificate. Sometimes it will prompt for either your email or identity certificate. If it gives you a choice, use your email certificate. You enter your PIN to unlock your certificate, which the website verifies again to DoD to ensure it is valid.

It is legal to install a CAC reader and software on personally-owned computers. The website www.militarycac.com is a good place for instructions, troubleshooting and configurations. You have to install the DoD "root" certificates to verify those from CACs. The catch is that you cannot have another person's Personally Identifiable Information on your personal computer. This can make personnel actions difficult, but you can be held liable (civil and criminal) if someone's identity is stolen and the act is tracked back to your home PC.

If you lose accountability of your CAC, whether through loss or theft, you must report it immediately to the local Defense Eligibility Enrollment System to revoke the certificates and issue new ones.

Cryptolocker: One bad computer virus

By Chief Warrant Officer 3 Scott Sackrider
Cyber Security Officer

One of the latest threats to you is the malware (evil program) called Cryptolocker. This program, when installed, encrypts your data files and the key to decipher them is kept by the bad guys using Public Key Infrastructure. They will notify you that in 72-100 hours they will destroy the Key unless the ransom is paid; mostly the amount is around $300. Of late they are demanding bitcoins ("digital" currency with a worth of about $175 each), as they are hard to trace. Unfortunately there is no method to decrypt these files without the key. We are blocking the addresses of known malicious computers involved—138 so far, but most likely there are no such defenses for home or public networks. The virus many times comes in an attachment of an email, posing as FedEx and UPS tracking notices. More than 10,000 systems are known to be compromised, including some in Kansas.

Here are some ways to mitigate this predicament for your home computers:

1. Do not use administrative accounts. Establish accounts on your computers (personal) for day-to-day activities. Ensure you set Windows updates to be available to all users so you don't have to change users to install them. Only use the administrative account for installing or updating programs, and other maintenance. It's also good practice to have more than one administrative account (both with strong passwords) in case one is locked out. The logic behind this is that most programs cannot be installed under a normal user, preventing malware from activating.
2. Keep your antivirus and other protection software up to date.
3. Watch out for malicious emails. Many have links that take you to malevolent sites that try to highjack your system (yes, it can be done) or install malware.
4. If you're on a secure site (shopping, bank, etc.) do not set the computer to "remember me," and log off before shutting down your browser completely. This clears any sessions and passwords remnants.
5. Watch out for programs, widgets or updates that are created by an untrusted source.
6. Backup your files, and ensure the backup is good and kept off site, such as a friend's or relative's house. One of the best ways is to use a USB hard drive, as they can handle the storage requirements. Ensure you check the drive though, as some have a lifespan of one to two years. If the drive is connected during a Cryptolocker infection, it will encrypt these as well.

Safe computing!

A look back at 2013 for the Kansas Adjutant General's Department

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli
Adjutant General

This time of year brings us many opportunities, but also many challenges, too. We have a chance to reflect on our accomplishments and to look ahead to a fresh start in a new year. There is the excitement of the holidays, but also the stress that they bring, especially for our military members who are on deployment or may be facing various difficulties, and for our emergency management personnel dealing with more demands during these winter months.

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli

It's easy to get caught up in the busyness and overlook the need to take care of ourselves and to watch out for others who may be struggling this time of year with stress or other difficulties. Sometimes just taking a few minutes to yourself or taking a moment to reach out to someone who needs to know you care will make all the difference in the world for you and them. After all, if we don't take care of ourselves and those most important to us, everything else will quickly diminish in importance.

As we look back at 2013, we clearly have a lot to be proud of in our agency. We've continued to train and conduct exercises both militarily and in our civilian response and support capacity to ensure we are ready for the challenges ahead.

I'm extremely proud of our troops for their continued commitment to serve our state and nation, and very thankful for all of those who support our troops and their families including our Family Programs personnel, chaplains and volunteers. I'm proud of our Family Programs for all the work they have done in 2013 toward becoming accredited from the Council on Accreditation. We're the first National Guard program to go through this process and as such will serve as the pilot program for the rest of the National Guard. This accreditation validates our program's ability to meet the highest standards of reliability and professionalism. Our Kansas National Guard Family Programs provides services to all military branches including active duty and reserves.

I'm also proud of our Kansas Division of Emergency Management staff for all they do throughout the year, and for the hard work to become accredited through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program. Our Kansas Homeland Security staff and Kansas Intelligence Fusion Center personnel also do a tremendous job in sharing critical information with partners and keeping Kansas safer.

> ***I wish all of you the very happiest holiday season and look forward to working with you in the new year!***
>
> ***- Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli***
> ***adjutant general***

I'm grateful for each and every employee in our department. We simply wouldn't be a success without all of the hard work you do. We have a wonderful team of people who truly care about our mission and our organization's role in serving and protecting Kansans. We are also fortunate to work with great partners, including our colleagues in other state agencies, and at cities and counties across Kansas. It is through strong collaboration and team work that we are better able to meet the needs of Kansans.

2014 promises to be an exciting year for our department as we work toward new goals, but it will also be another difficult year from a budget standpoint. Knowing that 2014 holds more budget challenges, we have continued to work on a strategy to minimize the impact on our staff and agency in every way possible and to continue to make plans for improving the way we do business. We recognize these last few years have been more difficult financially and we have asked a lot of you during this time. Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do to make our organization stronger and better.

I wish all of you the very happiest holiday season and look forward to working with you in the new year!

Monitoring trends for safety

By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Marvin Terhune
Safety Officer

Another year has flown by in a blink of the eye. As we hustled around shopping for the last minute Christmas gifts, we likley reflected on the year. It is important to remember if the person was "naughty" or "nice," that we are buying gifts for. We think of how many times the person was mean to us or on the other hand, did something nice for us. The person is developing a "trend" in their behavior of being naughty or nice.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Marvin Terhune

In the safety office we do the same thing with "trends." We look at the accidents for the year and keep track of what the person was doing when they were injured. This helps us prevent the same type of accident in the future.

You can do the same thing at your home and workplace. First, recognize the hazards around your home or workplace. Where is the area where an injury has occurred in the past? How many times was someone injured in that area doing a particular job? If it has occurred more than once then you can develop a trend that it may happen again. If several people slip on a rug at your home and injure their ankle it would probably be best to remove the rug. This is common sense. Most would be surprised at how many times we do the same thing over and over again and expect a different result.

Look around your home and workplace during these winter months. What hazards can you identify and correct to prevent possible injures? Enjoy the holiday season and remember to buckle up! Be safe.

Kansas Warrant Corps update

By Chief Warrant Officer 5 Hector Vasquez
State Chief Warrant Officer

I hope every Soldier and their family had a very Merry Christmas and has a Happy New Year, especially those men and women who are away from their loved ones protecting this great nation of ours. For those of us not deployed, please send an e-mail or card to someone who is away from home and let them know they are not forgotten. The simple gesture will do wonders for their morale. The best gift of all around any Christmas tree is the presence of family. As Soldiers, we inherently have at least two, so let's not forget either and remember to be thankful to both.

Command Chief Warrant Officer 5 Hector Vasquez

As 2013 comes to a close, I would like to thank everyone for your support and assistance improving the Kansas Warrant Officer Corps. This coming year we should continue to see growth in our warrant officer ranks. Currently, the Kansas Army National Guard warrant officer strength sits at 82 percent. We could see those numbers grow to about 90 percent strength if all of our projected warrant officer candidates successfully complete the upcoming course. We still have a lot of work to do though, so thanks again to everyone who brought in leads and suggestions to improve the Kansas Warrant Officer Corps.

Additionally, thanks for your attendance at the "Warrant Officer Calls." Our numbers continue to increase at this social event, and I hope that participation will continue to grow. If you have not been to one yet, please take advantage of the opportunity as this is a great time to meet new or unfamiliar faces and talk about how to resolve issues that cross into each other's lanes.

Now that winter is here, please continue to exercise during the winter because it is easy to gain a few pounds during the holidays. We all know that it's a lot easier to maintain physical fitness than to start an exercise program all over again, so please ensure that you take some time to keep up your physical fitness.

As the New Year approaches, this is always a good time to review and update your military biography and interactive Personnel Records Management System. Every Soldier is responsible for maintaining his or her own records, so if you don't take care of your records, then no one else will either. Now that warrant officer promotion boards no longer require

(Continued on Page 14)

State Chaplain's Corner

Hope: An expectation of good

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

Remember the promises you made to yourself when you were deployed?

"When I get home, I will never take things for granted!"

"When I get home, I am going to spend time, real quality time with my family."

"When I get home, I am going to make the most of each moment."

Chaplain (Col.) William D. Jenkins

I hope that all of those promises have been kept, but if you are like most of us, the promises we make to ourselves are much like New Year's resolutions. I raise this not to make us feel guilty, but to encourage us to reclaim those promises we made to ourselves. A new year brings opportunities for new beginnings and is the perfect time to take action.

A new year can also be a time that brings reminders of failures and disappointments. In my civilian job, I am a bereavement coordinator for a hospice. I spend most of my time counseling those who are broken by their grief and loss. Dr. Alan Wolfelt, Center for Loss and Life Transition, once said, "Hope is an expectation of a good that is yet to be." The people I work with have a hard time finding hope because the center of their world is gone forever. As I walk the long lonely valley of grief with them and we face the "lostness" and despair, eventually hope begins to glimmer. They do not know how, they do not know when, they do not know where…but they begin to believe that there is "a good that is yet to be" as they develop a new self-identity and adapt to their new reality.

You may be going through some really tough times—my prayer is that you can find hope—"an expectation of a good that is yet to be." Benjamin Franklin said, "Those things that hurt, instruct." Pain brings the opportunity to grow, but we often need someone to walk with us on that journey toward healing. Reach out—the community that surrounds us has people who not only care, but have the skills to help you on your journey. If you need help getting started, contact one of our Kansas National Guard chaplains (contact information can be found on page 13) and allow us to help you begin to find "an expectation of a good that is yet to be."

Pro Deo Et Patria…For God and Country.

Kansas NATIONAL GUARD NATIONALGUARD.com

Plains Guardian

The PLAINS GUARDIAN is published under the provisions of AR 360-1 for the personnel of the Kansas National Guard. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of The Adjutant General's Department PA Officer. Contents of the PLAINS GUARDIAN are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of the Army or The Adjutant General's Department. News, features, photographs and art materials are solicited from readers; however, utilization is at the discretion of the editorial staff. All photos must be high resolution and include complete caption information, including photographer's name and rank. No paid advertisement will be accepted, nor will payment be made for contributions.

The deadline for all submission is the first Wednesday of the month: February, April, June, August, October and December. Submissions may be e-mailed to Jane Welch (jane.e.welch1.nfg@mail.mil).

Circulation: Approximately 16,000
Printed under contract with the U.S. Government Printing Office

Commander in Chief
Gov. Sam Brownback

Adjutant General of Kansas
Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli

Editor
Sharon Watson

Production/Graphics/Writer
Stephen D. Larson

Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett

Production Assistant
Jane Welch

Public Affairs Office
Director
Sharon Watson 785-274-1192

Assistant Director
Stephen D. Larson 785-274-1194

Public Information Writer
Jane Welch 785-274-1190
FAX 785-274-1622
e-mail: jane.e.welch1.nfg@mail.mil

Videographer
1st Lt. Matt Lucht 785-274-1195

Staff Writer
Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett 785-274-1191

The Plains Guardian can be read online at
http://www.kansastag.gov
For change of address, contact Jane Welch.

What story are you telling yourself?

By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Sandra Lashley
State Equal Opportunity Officer

One of my favorite George Carlin quotes is "Have you ever noticed anybody going slower than you is an idiot, and anyone going faster than you is a maniac?" Think about it. When you are driving down the highway, don't you do this?

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Sandra Lashley

When we respond to different situations where do the emotions come from? Why do we sometimes react with anger and sometimes we find the situation funny? It comes from the story we tell ourselves about why the other individual acts the way they do.

When we are driving and that other driver is driving slowly we tell ourselves a story. We can react with anger by telling ourselves they must be so stupid they cannot drive any faster. We react with compassion or care when we tell ourselves they are having car trouble. There could be many stories as to why they are driving slowly. They could have an injured pet they are trying to care for as they drive them to the emergency veterinarian. They could have a sick child that is throwing up as they are on their way to the doctor's office. You really don't know. You choose to tell yourself a "story" about their motivation.

What about that maniac who just passed you like you were sitting still? Don't you think about where are the police when there's a maniac like that on the road? You don't know their story. They could be on their way to the hospital with a woman about to give birth in the backseat! They could have just heard their father was rushed to the emergency room with a heart attack and they are rushing to see them for perhaps the last time in their lives. You really don't know, but you call them a "maniac" based on the story you tell yourself.

When we encounter a situation, we tell ourselves a story based on what we see and hear or even perhaps have some knowledge about the situation. We build up an even bigger story because "we know." We start interpreting what we see and hear in support of our story. It is good to be cautious when concluding that the story we come up with is the absolute story.

If we begin our conversation with the intent of proving or disproving the story we have told ourselves we are more open to the possibility that our story could be wrong. We need to gather more information to write a more complete story. Give the other person an opportunity to confirm our story, provide slight corrections, or blow our story out of the water. They could give a completely different version from their point of view. Taking this approach to a potentially difficult conversation can prevent misunderstandings and build stronger relationships.

A conversation that will go much better than if we don't start out "knowing" we are right and that we know the motive of the other person. Misunderstandings lead to arguments, high tension and lack of productivity. Someone may make a comment or take an action with complete opposite intent from what we perceive.

Before you label someone a "toxic leader" or "an incompetent worker," get the rest of the story. You may be surprised at the results and the improved relationship you have with that boss or subordinate.

New Tuition Assistance policy for fiscal year 14 effective Jan. 1

By Capt. Matt Hapke
Education Services Officer

Just as we prepare for the holidays, it is important to be proactive in preparing for our education endeavors in 2014. Unfortunately, this comes in the face of changes to the education benefits that are available to the Kansas National Guard.

Capt. Matt Hapke

Over the past year, due to a changing fiscal environment, we have seen some changes to our education benefits. This past spring, Federal Tuition Assistance was cancelled for a few weeks due to sequestration. For the fall semester, the Kansas National Guard Education Assistance Program, known as "State Tuition Assistance," was only able to fund 52 percent of a Soldier's or Airman's request, down from between 85-100 percent levels seen in the previous years. This was due to a rise in requests and no availability for additional funding through the Kansas Board of Regents.

On Dec. 3, the Federal Tuition Assistance Policy for fiscal year 2014 was released, effective Jan. 1, 2014. The changes will have a significant impact on the Soldiers, and as a secondary effect, the Airmen of the Kansas National Guard. These changes are for the Army FTA policy only, which is managed through GoArmyEd.com.

First, Soldiers will not be eligible to receive FTA benefits until they have completed one year of service following their graduation from Advanced Individual Training (or Basic Officer Leaders Course or similar initial entry training). For new Soldiers wishing to use the program for the spring 2014 semester, requests must be approved before Jan. 1, 2014.

Second, Soldiers cannot use FTA for a post-bachelor's degree until they have completed 10 years of service if any portion of an undergraduate degree was funded with FTA. If you did not use FTA for any undergraduate classes, then the 10 years of service requirement does not apply.

Third, Soldiers may only use FTA for 16 semester hours per fiscal year. This will be counted from Oct. 1, 2013, through Sept. 30, 2014. The rate of $250 per semester hour will stay the same.

Other points of the policy, although not changes, should be noted:

- Soldiers can use FTA for up to 130 semester hours towards a bachelor's degree and up to 39 semester hours towards a master's degree.
- The policy allows for the funding of one degree at each level (associate's, bachelor's, master's)
- To be eligible for FTA, Soldiers must meet the Army Physical Fitness Test and height/weight standards, as well as not have an adverse action flag.

In the face of these changes, Soldiers must rely on other funding programs to assist in the financial assistance for their education programs. State Tuition Assitance will continue to be an excellent funding source. However, as the number of Soldiers and Airmen requesting benefits rises, and the amounts being requested also rises, the percentage being paid against those requests will continue to fall. This will significantly impact the Airmen who use this benefit.

If you have served overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn or Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, you may be eligible to request funding through the Kansas Military Service Scholarship. Information for this can be found at the Kansas Board of Regents website www.kansasregents.org/military.

(Continued on Page 11)

Warrior to Warrior

Structured Self-development

By Command Sgt. Maj. James Moberly
Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas

In the last Plains Guardian, we addressed noncommissioned officer leader development, promotions and structured self-development. We are nearing a meltdown with our low percentages of SSD completion. Therefore, I want to take this final opportunity in 2013 to emphasize the importance of SSD completion to your individual career. Our individual Soldiers must take ownership of their career and commit themselves to meet and exceed all standards to maintain their promotable status.

Command Sgt. Maj. James Moberly

Currently only approximately 200 of our staff sergeants through master sergeants and first sergeants will be eligible to be boarded for promotion during the 2014 Enlisted Promotion System boards based on SSD completion. In other words, nearly 300 master sergeants through first sergeants will not be eligible to be boarded for promotion solely because of their failure to complete their respective SSD requirements. If SSD completion numbers don't significantly improve before Feb. 1, 2014, it will be very difficult to fill our NCO vacancies during the 2014 board cycle, which will have a significant detrimental impact on all of the progress we have made with regards to our readiness.

You control your own future. If you don't complete your required SSD, you will not get promoted in the NCO ranks. These SSD requirements, mandated by Army Directive 2013-15, are effective Jan. 1, 2014. With regards to impact on our 2014 EPS boards, which will be conducted in February 2014, the SSD requirements are re-stated below:

- **Specialist/corporal:** Must complete SSD-1 to be promotable to sergeant. Warrior Leader Course graduates are considered SSD-1 complete. Specialist/corporals can be boarded for promotion without SSD-1 completion, but are not eligible for selection or promotion until they have completed SSD-1. Once you're passed over, that opportunity is gone forever regardless of your ranking on the promotion list.
- **Sergeant:** There are no additional SSD requirements for promotion to sergeant. There is no SSD-2 as the Advanced Leader Course Common Core Distance Learning phase serves this purpose. ALC is a Noncommissioned Officer Education System requirement to be considered for promotion to staff sergeant.
- **Staff sergeant:** Must complete SSD-3 by Feb. 1, 2014, to be eligible to be boarded for promotion to sergeant first class. Staff sergeants that fail to complete SSD-3 by this deadline will have to wait until the 2015 board cycle to be considered for promotion. Staff sergeants that have completed all phases of Senior Leader Course/Advanced NCO Course are considered SSD-3 complete.
- **Sergeant first class:** Must complete SSD-4 by Feb. 1, 2014, to be eligible to be boarded for promotion to master sergeant/first sergeant. Sergeants first class that fail to complete SSD-4 by this deadline will have to wait until the 2015 board cycle to be considered for promotion.
- **Master sergeant/first sergeant:** Must complete SSD-4 by Feb. 1, 2014, to be eligible to be boarded for promotion to sergeant major. Master sergeants/first sergeants that fail to complete SSD-4 by this deadline will have to wait until the 2015 board cycle to be considered for promotion. Master sergeants/first sergeants that have completed the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy Sergeants Major Course are considered SSD-4 complete.

It is my policy that master sergeants with a date of rank prior to Jan. 1, 2014, will not be considered for first sergeant assignments if they haven't completed SSD-4. Too many of our current serving first sergeants have not completed SSD-4. This is unacceptable and I will address this individually during the next quarter.

Soldiers and NCOs of the Kansas Army National Guard, you have exceeded the standards on all missions assigned during the last challenging decade. We can, must and will control SSD and not let SSD get the better of us. Take charge of your own careers – control your destiny.

New appointments announced for 35th Infantry Division

Maj. Gen. Michael D. Navrkal, commander of the 35th Infantry Division, has announced Col. Dave Johnson, Lenexa, will replace Col. John Andrew, Topeka, as the next chief of staff for the division. Andrew will be deploying in support of Kosovo Force (KFOR) 18 to Pristina, Kosovo, as the military assistant to the chief of staff.

Navrkal has also announced Col. Russell Richardson, Hamlin, Kan., to be Johnson's replacement as the next assistant chief of staff (operations) for the division.

Johnson's and Richardson's selections were a joint decision of the 35th Division Council made up of the Adjutants General of Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Illinois.

"Colonel Johnson is an outstanding choice for the chief of staff job," said Navrkal. "Dave brings tremendous experience both within and outside the division into this key position. I look forward to working with him as the 35th Infantry Division continues its great legacy of service to our nation."

"I am honored to be selected to serve the professional Soldiers of the 35th Infantry Division," said Johnson. "I am excited about the opportunity to continue the long tradition of service to our state and nation as part of the 35th Infantry Division."

"Colonel Richardson brings a wealth of experience and talent to the division. Richardson will certainly make a positive difference in the future of the division."

"I am honored to be selected to serve the professional Soldiers of the 35th Infantry Division," said Richardson.

Col. Dave Johnson

Col. Dave Johnson received his commission from the Kansas Military Academy (Officer Candidate School) on June 16, 1989. He has served in a number of positions in the Kansas Army National Guard as well as the National Guard Bureau.

Col. Russell Richardson

Col. Russell Richardson received his commission from the Kansas Military Academy (Officer Candidate School) in June 1986. He has served in a number of positions in the Kansas Army National Guard.

The 35th Infantry Division, headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, is comprised of Soldiers from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Illinois.

Maj. Gen. Navrkal assumes command of the 35th Infantry Division

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

Representatives from brigades within the 35th Infantry Division and guests, gathered at Fort Leavenworth's parade field to participate in the 35th Infantry Division's change of command ceremony Nov. 2.

Maj. Gen. Michael D. Navrkal took over command of the 35th Inf. Div., from Maj. Gen. John E. Davoren.

Navrkal most recently served in concurrent roles as assistant adjutant general – Army, Nebraska National Guard and deputy commanding general of the Training Support Division, First United States Army in Fort Hood, Texas.

Maj. Gen. Michael Navrkal (left) accepts command of the 35th Infantry Division by symbolically receiving the unit colors from Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli (right), the adjutant general of Kansas, in a ceremony Nov. 2, at the Fort Leavenworth main parade field. During the ceremony Maj. Gen. John Davoren (far right) relinquished command after more than three years. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Wright, 35th Infantry Division)

"It is a deep honor and privilege to serve with the 35th Infantry Division," said Navrkal. "I'm looking forward to working with our Soldiers and experience the various missions, both in the U.S. and overseas. I believe in our Soldiers, their capability and experience."

Navrkal spoke of a sense of continuation – of being a part of the history of the 35th Inf. Div.

"Really," he said, "the fundamentals of warfare haven't changed. Our technology has changed and our troops are better trained and more experienced. It's an exciting time to lead and serve."

The 35th Infantry Division, headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, is comprised of soldiers from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Illinois.

Maj. Gen. Michael D. Navrkal

Maj. Gen. Michael Navrkal received his commission in 1981 through the Officer Candidate Course at Fort Benning, Ga. After completion of the Infantry Officer Basic Course, he served as rifle platoon leader and executive officer of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 134th Infantry Division, 67th Infantry Brigade in Nebraska City, Neb.

Navrkals's assignments included increasing levels of responsibility and command at the company, battalion and brigade levels in the Nebraska National Guard.

Navrkal received his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the University of Nebraska, a Master of Science degree in security management from Bellevue University and Master of Science in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

As an adjunct professor for American Public University, Navrkal has the flexibility to balance his family and military responsibilities. He and his wife Jeanie live in Omaha, Neb.

Maj. Gen. John E. Davoren

Maj. Gen. John E. Davoren assumed duties as the division commander in August 2010. He was commissioned in 1976 from the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of Kansas. After completing the Infantry Officer Basic Course and Ranger training, he served as a rifle platoon leader, Company A, 503rd Infantry at Fort Campbell, Ky. In July 1979, he was assigned to Troop B, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and in 1982 became the executive officer for the 1st Aviation Battalion at Fort Riley, Kan.

Since joining the Kansas Army National Guard his assignments have included commander, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; intelligence officer, 69th Troop Command; operations officer, 2nd Bn., 137th Inf. Regt.; commander, 2nd Bn., 137th Inf. Regt.; commander, 69th Troop Com mand; assistant division commander, 35th Inf. Div.; commander, Multinational Task Force – East (KFOR 9); and assistant adjutant general, Kansas Army National Guard.

Davoren is retiring with 37 years of military service.

Denney receives command of Combined Arms Battalion

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Lt. Col. Steven W. Denney received command of the Kansas National Guard's 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment during a change of command ceremony Nov. 1 at the Kansas Regional Training Institute, Salina, Kan.

During the ceremony, Lt. Col. Robert A. Wood turned over command to Denney.

The 2nd CAB, 137th Inf. is headquartered in Kansas City with subordinate units located in Emporia, Junction City, Lawrence, Lenexa, Manhattan, Topeka and Wichita.

"I am honored and excited to be taking command of the 2-137th Combined Arms Battalion," said Denney. "I have served in this organization in a variety of positions and look forward to getting back to my family of Soldiers."

"I am honored to have had the opportunity to lead and to serve with such an outstanding group of dedicated professionals," said Wood. "It is my honor to hand over this proud battalion to a friend and colleague."

Lt. Col. Steven W. Denney

Lt. Col. Steven W. Denney was commissioned in the Kansas Army National Guard in July 1993 as an infantry officer. Most recently, Denney served as the State Training Officer, Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas-Land Component.

Denney's past assignments include infantry platoon leader, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; mortar platoon leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; executive officer, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; company commander, Company C, Company B and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; battalion personnel officer, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; battalion executive officer, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor; executive officer, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry; mobilization planner, Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas; and Mobilization and Readiness officer, Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas. His deployments include Operation Enduring Freedom force protection mission in Germany with the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry and Operation Iraqi Freedom with 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry.

Denney earned a bachelor's degree in public administration at Fort Hays State University. He is also a graduate of the resident Army Command and General Staff Officer's College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; Combined Arms Services and Staff School, Infantry Officer Advanced Course; Infantry Officer Basic Course and Primary Leaders Development Course.

Lt. Col. Robert A. Wood

Lt. Col. Robert A. Wood was commissioned in the Kansas Army National Guard in June 1994 as an armor officer. Most recently, Wood served as the logistics officer for the 635th Regional Support Group, Hutchinson.

Wood's past assignments include platoon leader and executive officer, Company A, 1st Battalion, 635th Armor; battalion personnel officer, 635th Armor; company commander, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 137 Infantry; plans officer, 35th Infantry Division; operations training officer/officer strength manager, Recruiting and Retention Battalion; battalion executive officer, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment; commander, Embedded Training Team #4 (Operation Enduring Freedom); and brigade logistics officer, 635th Regional Support Group. He currently serves as the brigade training officer for 69th Troop Command.

His deployments include Desert Shield/Desert Storm with the 1st Infantry Division, Operation Enduring Freedom Force Protection Mission in Germany with 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry and Operation Enduring Freedom Embedded Training Team Mission to Afghanistan.

Wood earned a bachelor's degree in sociology at Kansas State University and a master's degree in business management at North Central University. He is also a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; Combined Armed Services and Staff School; Armor Officer Advanced Course; Armor Officer Basic Course and Primary Leaders Development Course. He has also completed the Reserve Component Tank Commander's Course, M1A1 new equipment field training and M2 Bradley new equipment field training.

Wood is married to the former Amy Marie Zimmerman of Wichita, Kan.

Ward selected as assistant division commander at 35th Division

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Maj. Gen. Michael D. Navrkal, commander of the 35th Infantry Division, has announced the selection of Col. William A. Ward to be promoted to brigadier general and assigned as the new assistant division commander for the 35th Infantry Division. Ward will also serve as the commander of all 35th Division elements that are assigned to the Missouri National Guard. He will succeed Brig. Gen. David Irwin, who is retiring.

Col. William A. Ward

Ward's selection was a joint decision of the 35th Division Council made up of the adjutants general of Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Illinois.

Ward previously served as commander of the Missouri National Guard's 110th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade in Kansas City. During his time in command of the brigade, he was named the commanding officer of Task Force Phoenix, which spearheaded the recovery of southwest Missouri following the devastating May 22, 2011, tornado that struck the area. Ward also stood up the Disaster Recovery Jobs Program following the tornado.

As a combat engineer, Ward has held a number of positions including platoon leader, construction engineer, commander of Company B, 203rd Engineer Battalion; civil engineer, battalion operations officer, battalion executive officer, commander of the 203rd Engineer Battalion; deputy commanding officer, 35th Engineer Brigade; and commander, 110th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

Ward has deployed overseas eight times, including nation building and humanitarian efforts in Honduras, Panama, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. He also deployed for two combat tours in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Ward's military honors include the Bronze Star Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Iraq Campaign Medal with two campaign stars, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Army Engineer Association's Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal, the United States Field Artillery Association's Honorable Order of Saint Barbara, and the Parachutist Badge.

When not serving the Missouri National Guard, Ward is a Department of the Air Force civilian, and serves as the engineering and construction branch chief, 72nd Civil Engineering Directorate, 72nd Air Base Wing, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

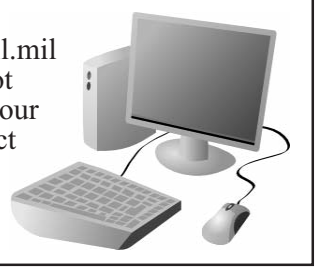
Ward is a licensed engineer in the state of Oklahoma, holds a Master of Science degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College and a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from the University of Missouri.

The 35th Infantry Division, headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, is comprised of National Guard soldiers from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Illinois.

Retired? Keep up with us by email

In an effort to keep our retirees better informed on what is happening in the Adjutant General's Department, the Public Affairs Office has put together an e-mail distribution list. If you would like to be added to the list please e-mail your request to Jane Welch at jane.e.welch1.nfg@mail.mil

Also if you are a retired Guardsmen and are not receiving a free copy of the Plains Guardian at your home or your address has changed, please contact Jane Welch at the Public Affairs Office at 785-274-1190 or jane.e.welch1.nfg@mail.mil to be added to the mailing list.



Three inducted into the Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame

By Spc. Brandon Jacobs
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Three retired members of the Kansas National Guard were inducted into the Hall of Fame in a ceremony held at the Ramada Hotel in Topeka, Kan., Nov. 3.

The honorees were retired Lt. Col. Robert K. Webb, retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Cornelius "Van" Vandermotten and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Jana L. Harrison.

Webb, of Silver Lake, Kan., retired in 1987 after 31 years of service in both active duty and the Kansas National Guard.

During his time in the military, Webb completed assignments at all levels of command, including work for the National Guard Bureau in Washington and a tour of duty in South Korea.

His final position before retiring was the full-time comptroller for the 190th Air Refueling Wing at Forbes Field in Topeka.

Vandermotten a native of Glasgow, Scotland, immigrated to the United States in 1951. Vandermotten, or Van, as he is known to his friends, joined the military before he became a citizen.

"A lot of people got it in their heads, you have to be a citizen to be in the Army," said the 80-year-old Vandermotten with a thick Scottish accent.

After settling in Wichita, Kan., Vandermotten was drafted into the U.S. Army June 1953. After completing basic training, he was sent to Fort Bragg, N.C., to serve in the 505th Airborne Infantry Regiment and later in the 15th Field Hospital.

In 1955, Vandermotten left active duty, returned to Kansas where he "fulfilled his obligation to the government" by signing on with the Kansas Army National Guard.

Four years later, in 1959, he became a naturalized citizen and joined the National Guard on a full-time basis.

In March 1975, Vandermotten became the facility manager of Nickell Barracks Training Center.

Vandermotten said of all his jobs in the National Guard, running the Nickell Barracks was probably his favorite. The men who came through the training center were like sons to him -- especially when his family consisted of a wife, Gig, and three daughters: Linda, Janelle and Connie.

"Even the dogs were female," he said.

During his tenure as facilities manager, Nickell Barracks grew and became the regional training center the National Guard enjoys today.

After his retirement from the military June 1993, Vandermotten continued to work for the state of Kansas military department in different capacities, spending six years in Topeka, six years at Fort Riley and six years back in Salina before completely retiring in 2011.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Jana L. Harrison, of Leavenworth, Kan., addresses the audience after being inducted into the Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame in a cermony held at the Ramada Inn, Topeka, Kan, Nov. 3. Harrison was the first woman to be inducted in to the Hall of Fame, as well as the first woman to obtain the rank of command sergeant major in the Kansas National Guard. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson, 35th Infantry Division Public Affairs)

Harrison, of Leavenworth, Kan., is the first woman to be inducted in to the Hall of Fame, as well as the first woman to obtain the rank of command sergeant major in the Kansas National Guard.

Harrison's story starts off with a bit of trickery. Before enlisting in 1975, she needed her parent's signature to join.

(Continued on Page 14)

Lt. Col. Paul Schneider returns home to field artilley battalion

By Spc. Brandon Jacobs
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery of Hiawatha, Kan., welcomed home a former unit member as the new commander while honoring an outgoing commander during a change of command ceremony held at the Kansas Army National Guard armory in Hiawatha, Kan., Dec. 7.

Taking over for outgoing commander Lt. Col. Christopher A. Burr is Lt. Col. Paul W. Schneider of Hiawatha, Kan. During the week at his full-time job, Schneider serves as the deputy J3/director of Military Support at Joint Force Headquarters, Topeka, Kan.

Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery salute their incoming commander, Lt. Col. Paul Schneider, during a change of command ceremony held at the armory in Hiawatha, Kan., Dec. 7. Lt. Col. Christopher Burr, outgoing commander, stepped down after 37 months of command. (Photo by Spc. Brandon Jacobs, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

"It's good to come home," said Schneider. "I grew up in this unit and look forward to the challenge of command."

After 37 months of command, Burr will drill with the 635th Regional Support Group as the executive officer, which he has held during his full-time job for the last three years.

"These are some fantastic (Soldiers) who do an excellent job," said Burr. "They are what make it worthwhile."

The 2nd Bn., 130th FA is headquartered in Hiawatha with subordinate units located in Abilene, Clay Center, Holton, Marysville and Ottawa.

The battalion, which holds the lineage and honors of the 130th Field Artillery Regiment, traces its heritage to the 1st Kansas Artillery formed in 1879. The unit or Soldiers from the regiment have served in every conflict since the Civil War. The battalion was activated for duty in May 1968 at the time of the Pueblo incident and most recently in July 2009 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The regiment has been awarded streamers for the Muese-Argonne, Alsace, Lorraine, the Aleutian Islands, the European Theatre, Iraq Campaign and Iraq Occupation.

Their current weapons system is the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, which is the newest member of the Multiple Launch Rocket System family. The HIMARS is a highly-mobile artillery rocket system offering the firepower of MLRS on a wheeled chassis. The battalion converted to HIMARS in April 2011.

Lt. Col. Paul Schneider

In March 1987, Lt. Col. Paul Schneider enlisted with the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Bn., 130th FA of Hiawatha, Kan. After completing officer candidate school Jan. 1, 1995, Schneider was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Schneider has completed assignments ranging from the executive officer for the recruiting and retention battalion to battalion personnel officer and operation officer.

Lt. Col. Christopher Burr

Lt. Col. Christopher Burr of Ulysses, and a life-long resident of Kansas, enlisted in March 1984 with Battery C, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, in Liberal, Kan. On June 15, 1989, Burr was commissioned as a second lieutenant.

After receiving his commission, Burr went on to graduate from the Field Artillery Officer Basic and Advanced courses, Combined Arms and Services Staff School, the Command and General Staff College, as well as various other military schools.

During his time in service, Burr has completed various assignments ranging from fire direction officer to battalion operations officer. He will be returning to a previous post as the 635th RSG executive officer.

Four-man maintenance team embarks on a different drill weekend

995th Support Maintenance Company

A four-man team from the 995th Support Maintenance Company embarked on a different sort of drill weekend Nov. 1. Rather than going to their home station at the Smith Center armory, they traveled to Dodge City and Hays for a maintenance mission.

Under the supervision of Sgt. 1st Class Ernest Goetz, Electronics Repair Platoon sergeant, the other three Soldiers were tasked with performing 180-day service on AN/PVS-14 Night Vision Devices. Sgt. Byron Mohammed, Sgt. Justin Prochaska and Spc. Logan Dyke are all Military Occupation Specialty-qualified as computer/detection systems repairers, and their proficiency was tested on this mission.

Mohammed and Goetz are employed as electronics mechanics in the Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site Communications and Electronics shop. Prochaska is an electronics mechanic in the Combined Support Maintenance Shop Communications and Electronics shop, and Dyke is employed by General Electric as a wind turbine technician.

The 180-day service for AN/PVS-14 NVDs consists of: initial inspection for visible defects and mechanical functionality; powering up to test for image-intensifier operation, basic focus adjustments and infrared operation; nitrogen purge; and final focus test. Work orders were generated by the supporting Field Maintenance Shops for servicing of 92 NVDs in Dodge City and 56 NVDs in Hays.

Units supported by this effort were Detachment 1 and Detachment 3 of the 731st Transportation Company; Battery A, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery and 287th Sustainment Battalion.

The team took two nitrogen bottles with purge kits, as well as necessary tools and supplies. The nitrogen purge is the most time-consuming part of the process, so running two purge stations for this mission enabled the small team to successfully complete 148 NVDs during the three-day drill weekend. This feat was more impressive when the commute times and distances were factored in; more than four hundred miles of Kansas highways driven, incident-free, in the three-day period.

995th Support Maintenance Company computer/detection systems repairers Sgt. Byron Mohammed, Sgt. Justin Prochaska and Spc. Logan Dyke perform 180-day services on AN/PVS-14 Night Vision Devices at the Kansas National Guard armory in Hays, Kan., Nov. 1. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Ernest Goetz, 995th Support Maintenance Company)

Celebration marks 10-year anniversary of Kans

By 1st Lt. Matt Lucht
Public Affairs Office

For a nation whose history dates back thousands of years, a decade may not seem like much. However, for the Republic of Armenia, 2013 had a special significance. It marked the 10-year anniversary of its partnership with the Kansas National Guard and the state of Kansas through the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program.

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, adjutant general of Kansas, and the Dr. Jeff Colyer, lieutenant governor of Kansas, traveled to Yerevan, Armenia, Dec. 1-8, to participate in a ceremony commemorating this milestone achievement.

"To have something for 10 years and to have the same people that you are able to familiarize yourself with, develop that friendship and develop that bond," said Tafanelli, "it really helps to build that continuity, that trust and confidence that is so critical for these types of programs."

At the formal ceremony Dec. 5, Seyran Ohanyan, Armenia's minister of defense, stressed the importance of the partnership and the many successes that have been made in the last 10 years.

"The collaboration between Armenia's Minister of Defense and the Kansas National Guard constitutes a crucial part of cooperation," said Ohanyan. "This encompasses essential areas of U.S. and Armenia defense cooperation, namely demining, establishment of noncommissioned officer corps, military medicine and military justice, just to name a few."

"What is clear in areas of defense reform and areas in military justice, is the shared values between the U.S. and Armenia are the basis of a true partnership that we have between our two countries and Armenia and the state of Kansas," said John Heffern, U.S. embassy ambassador.

Following the ceremony, Tafanelli and Colyer were also invited to a formal dinner hosted by the Minister of Defense. The dinner showcased traditional Armenian cuisine and a performance of traditional Armenian folkdance.

The visit allowed Tafanelli and Colyer to celebrate the partnership between Kansas and Armenia, but it also gave them the opportunity to participate and honor the victims and responders at a 25th anniversary of the 1988 earthquake memorial ceremony in the city of Gyumri, where it is estimated 25,000 people perished.

The 25th anniversary was particularly important to Colyer. As a White House fellow, he had led the U.S. medical response to the disaster.

"Imagine a city about the size of Wichita losing a quarter of its population all in a space of a few minutes," said Colyer. "It was such a large earthquake that they actually had to bring in truckloads of caskets and they would just lay them on the street for anyone to pick up. When you think about it, that sent shivers down a lot of rescuers' spines and these were very experienced professionals."

The U.S. aid for the earthquake was especially notable because, despite tensions of the Cold War, Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev formally asked the U.S. for humanitarian aid. One hundred and thirteen countries helped with the response effort and the U.S. plane carrying personnel and supplies landed the first weekend after the earthquake.

"To be able to pay honor and tribute to not only the lost lives, but those who came in to

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli (left), the adjutant general, joins in the applause as Lt. Gov. Jeff Co mations, one in English and one in Armenian, celebrating the 10-year partnership between hosted by Ohanyan, Dec. 5, in Yerevan, Armenia. The banquet featured traditional Armeni

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, Kansas adjutant general, and Maj. Gen. Artur Simonyan, Armenia's Peacekeeping Brigade commander, review the equipment used by Armenia soldiers Dec. 5 in Yerevan, Armenia. Equipment on display included radios, uniforms, weapons and metal detectors for demining. (Photo by 1st Lt. Matthew Lucht, Public Affairs Office)

sas partnership with the Republic of Armenia

olyer (right) presents Seyran Ohanyan, Armenian Minister of Defense, two framed procla- Kansas and the Republic of Armenia. The presentation was made at a recognition banquet a cuisine and folk dancing. (Photo by 1st Lt. Matthew Lucht, Public Affairs Office)

lend aid and assistance in that response effort was a very moving event," said Tafanelli.

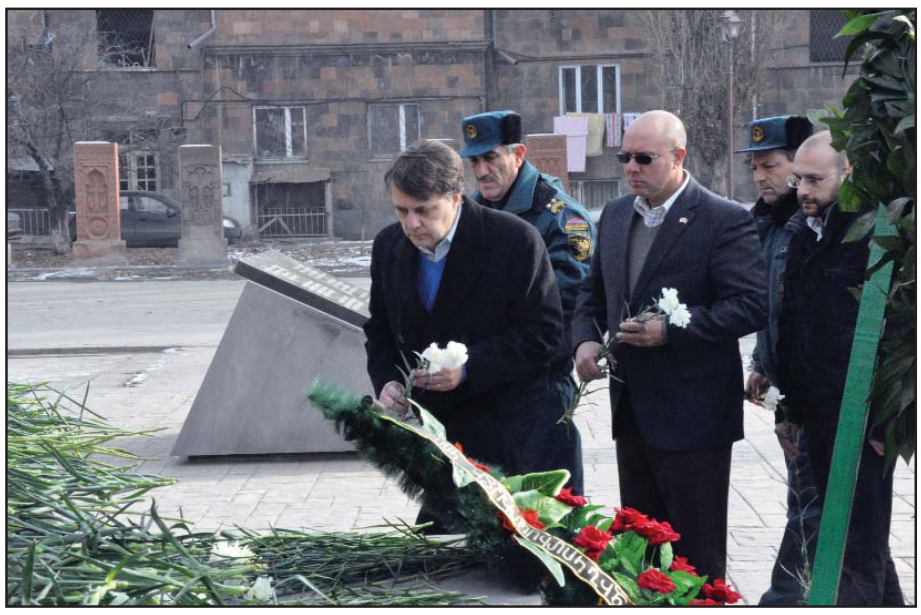
The earthquake response demonstrated to Armenia the need to establish a system or program for emergency response. In 1991, the Ministry of Emergency Situations was set up and with the help of the partnership with Kansas, Armenia has been able to improve their response efforts.

"The Armenians have professionalized their own services and they have made tremendous strides," said Colyer. "They now have world-class rescue systems that have helped in other international disasters. So, out of the ashes rose a phoenix."

The Kansas National Guard has 15-20 events planned for 2014 that will continue to create stronger bonds between Kansas and Armenia.

"I think that if the last 10 years are any indication," said Tafanelli, "our brightest days are ahead in our partnership."

Armenia's Minister of Defense Seyran Ohanyan presents a carved wood vase to Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, Kansas adjutant general, at a recognition banquet hosted by Ohanyan, Dec. 5, in Yerevan, Armenia. Tafanelli and Ohanyan celebrated a 10-year state partnership that started in 2003. (Photo by 1st Lt. Matthew Lucht, Public Affairs Office)



Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer and Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, Kansas adjutant general, place flowers in front of a monument dedicated to the victims and responders of the 1988 earthquake, Dec. 7. Hundreds of people came to pay their respects on the 25th anniversary of the earthquake, where approximately 25,000 people lost their lives. (Photo by 1st Lt. Matthew Lucht, Public Affairs Office)

Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer shows pictures to emergency leaders of the 1988 earthquake damage. As a White House fellow, Colyer led a team of medical and rescue personnel to respond to the disaster. Colyer and Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli were at the 25th anniversary remembrance ceremony Dec. 7 to pay their respects to the victims and responders of the earthquake. (Photo by 1st Lt. Matthew Lucht, Public Affairs Office)

Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, Kansas adjutant general, takes a moment of silence in front of wreaths that were placed for the victims and responders of the 1988 earthquake, at the 25th anniversary Dec. 7 in Gyumri, Armenia. The earthquake killed approximately 25,000 people Dec. 7, 1988. (Photo by 1st Lt. Matthew Lucht, Public Affairs Office)

"I think that if the last 10 years are any indication, our brightest days are ahead in our partnership."

- Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli adjutant general of Kansas

KDEM helps make FEMA graded Wolf Creek exercise a success

By Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett
Public Affairs Office

The Kansas Division of Emergency Management, agencies from the state of Kansas, along with Coffey County participated in a FEMA graded test of their emergency planning and response capabilities Nov. 5-6 in support of the Wolf Creek Generating Station in Burlington, Kan.

Of the routine biannual exercises, every six years the evaluation addresses plume and ingestion pathway. Day 1 evaluates radiological emergency preparedness and response plans. Day 2 addresses the plume and ingestion pathway, which evaluates the ability of the participants to deal with the effects of a radiological incident on agriculture and the environment within a 50-mile radius of the plant. It also addresses the ability to make decisions regarding the relocation or return of residents evacuated during a radiological emergency.

The FEMA Region VII Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program evaluated the ability of the state of Kansas, Coffey County and the plant on its state and local radiological emergency preparedness and response plans to protect the health and safety of the public living and working in the vicinity of the Wolf Creek Generating Station. The on-site performance at the Wolf Creek Generating Station was observed and evaluated by officials from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Stake holders and representatives from the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, Wolf Creek Generating Station and Coffey County come together to make up the Policy Group during a Wolf Creek exercise held Oct. 31 in the State Defense Building, Topeka, Kan. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Barnett, Public Affairs Office)

The initial results from FEMA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission show that the exercise went well and all those involved including the state, the county and the plant demonstrated their objectives successfully.

"This was a very successful exercise but there are always things we can do better," said Cathy Autrey, emergency planning instructor at the Wolf Creek Generating Station. "We demonstrated the criteria that were required. We showed the team work among the agencies and everyone involved and how we can make decisions and do the right thing to protect the health and safety of the public."

The scenario involved the simulated evacuation of the plant and several areas around the plant, as well as testing environmental samples following the simulated release from the plant. FEMA evaluated tthese processes, the timeliness and accuracy of information released to the public, and the use of the broadcast emergency alert system.

The evaluated exercise provides reasonable assurance that the appropriate protective measures can be taken in the event of a radiological emergency.

Wolf Creek Generating Station is Kansas' only nuclear power plant. It is located in Coffey County, Kansas, just northeast of Burlington. The plant is about 55 miles south of Topeka, 90 miles southwest of Kansas City and 120 miles northeast of Wichita.

"This exercise is a perfect example of how the state, county and plant come together and work as one team to protect the citizens of Kansas," said Jonathan York, Response and Recovery Branch Director for KDEM. "The whole point of holding an exercise is so that if a real event happens the response becomes second nature and everyone knows what needs to be done."

Emergency Managers help community prepare for zombies

CAP Capt. Michael H. Mathewson
Civil Air Patrol

The sign proclaimed the stone building as a zombie survival shelter, setting the theme for the Kansas Division of Emergency Management's emergency preparedness fair held at the shelter house in Gage Park, Topeka, Kan., Oct. 25.

"We use the concept of the zombie apocalypse to educate the community on how to prepare for an emergency," said Devan Tucking-Stricker, Kansas Division of Emergency Management. "If you are prepared for the zombie apocalypse, you are prepared for other types of emergencies, such as snow storms or tornadoes."

Prior to entering the shelter house, visitors drew a playing card whose meaning would be explained once they went to visit the exhibits in the back of the shelter house. Exhibitors inside the shelter house included the Shawnee and Douglas County Medical Reserve Corps, Shawnee County Emergency Management, Northeast Kansas Animal Response Team and the Humane Society of the United States.

In the street in front of the shelter house was Fireman John Culbertson and Engine 7 from the Topeka Fire Department. Displays were set up by the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, Shawnee County Citizens Emergency Response Team and the Topeka Eagle Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol behind the shelter.

Jennifer Clark, the technical hazard manager with KDEM, and Benjamin, her five-year-old son, demonstrated the Enviroscope.

"The Enviroscope is a tool for teaching hazards to children," said Clark. "With it, we can show how, for an example, an oil spill can move from the site of the spill into the environment."

Erin McGinnis, training manager with KDEM, and makeup artist Nathan Schroeder provided zombie makeup for anyone wanting to look the part.

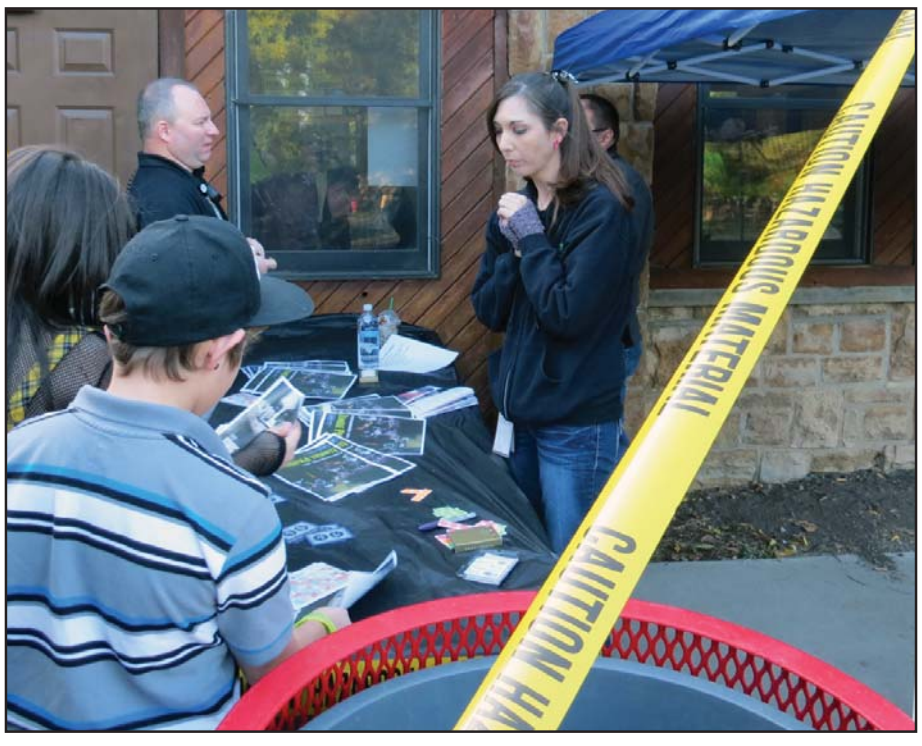
Fred the Preparedness Dog from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Preparedness was present. He and his handler Mike McNulty, roamed about and Mike talked with visitors about how to be prepared for emergencies.

When a visitor exited the back door of the shelter house, KDEM members would ask to see the playing card that they drew when they entered. The card showed if the card holder may have been infected by the zombie virus. If there were signs of infection, they were escorted to a quarantine site by members of the Civil Air Patrol. The CAP cadets asked questions on emergency preparedness to see if the quarantined visitors were infected.

Sydney Frantz, 13-years-old, daughter of Lt. Col. Jarrod Frantz of the 190th Air Refueling Wing, was the first person placed in quarantine. After correctly answering her question on emergency preparedness, she was determined free of infection and was allowed to continue her visit.

The three-hour event was well attended and included a zombie walk. In the zombie walk, people had to avoid being caught by zombies as they moved through a course.

"I am not sure how many people that we had, but we did have 40 to 50 people the first hour," said Tucking-Strickler.



Devan Tucking-Strickler (center), event organizer and employee of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, greets visitors to the Zombie Apocalypse Preparedness Fair held at Gage Park, Topeka, Kan., Oct. 25. The event was to educate the community on how to prepare their homes and families for an emergency. (Photo by CAP Capt. Michael H. Mathewson, Civil Air Patrol)

Winter Weather Awareness Day

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

With the first frosts of the season already behind us, the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, in conjunction with the National Weather Service and local emergency management officials across the state, reminds Kansans to always be ready for weather changes this time of year.

Winter Weather Awareness Day is designated annually to remind Kansans of the potential hazards associated with winter weather and the actions everyone can take to have a safer winter.

"Be aware of weather conditions when you travel," said Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, director of the Kansas Division of Emergency Management and adjutant general. "Make sure your cell phone is charged before you start and have an emergency kit in your vehicle."

Tafanelli said vehicle emergency kits should include blankets, flashlights, batteries, a cell phone charger, hand-warmers, high-energy food snacks, bottled water, necessary medications, a snow shovel, flares and other emergency supplies. Additional vehicle preparations recommended include winterizing your car by checking tires and anti-freeze levels, and never letting your vehicle's gas tank fall below a quarter tank because road conditions may slow down your travel or leave you stranded with no gas and no access to heat.

"Now is also a good time to take stock of your home emergency kit and make sure you're prepared in case you are snowed in without power," said Tafanelli.

Tafanelli advised Kansans to be prepared by assembling a home emergency kit with supplies for every member of the family for a minimum of three days, including bottled water (one gallon per person per day), non-perishable foods, flashlights, batteries, blankets, medications, children's games and pet food.

For a complete list of items for a home or car emergency kit, go to www.ksready.gov. Additional information on preparing for winter weather is available from FEMA at www.fema.gov, the American Red Cross at www.redcross.org, or your county emergency management office.

Winter road conditions are accessible by dialing 5-1-1 from your mobile phone anywhere in Kansas; outside Kansas call 1-866-511-5368 (KDOT). Road conditions many also be viewed on the Kansas Department of Transportation web site at http://www.kandrive.org.

Army Guardsmen profit from new professional development program

By Sgt. Darron Salzer
National Guard Bureau

For Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley, the command sergeant major of the Army National Guard, the Army's new noncommissioned officer professional development program speaks to him not only as a Soldier taking care of troops, but also in his capacity as a former high school chemistry and physics teacher.

Command Sgt. Maj. Brunk Conley

"My whole life I've been a teacher, whether in the military or in the civilian world," Conley said. "In the military we call it training, but if you're … training Soldiers, you're teaching Soldiers."

Conley said he first heard about the "America's Army – Our Profession" program, which included information packets for NCOs to conduct professional development sessions, while attending a conference at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

"I thought, 'Man, this is great.' Any NCO can pick this up and be ready to teach it a half-hour later," he said. "When I saw all of this, I said to myself that I want to teach this; I want to share this with the Soldiers and show them that I think that it's important."

Developed by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, the program is a way to enhance the education, training and pride of service for Army professionals.

Conley said many Army leaders have been concerned with the Army's noncombat skills becoming a little "rusty," which led to the formation of the Army's Center for the Army Profession and Ethic.

"What they've done is try to reinvigorate our Army values-based system and put together products so that we can knock a little bit of the rust off of our training that we do back at home so that we can keep getting better," he said.

The training itself is designed to be easily integrated into the duty day.

"The good thing about these lesson plans is they are executable and easy to do, because, let's face it, we know how busy Soldiers are during a drill weekend and usually the first thing to fall by the wayside is (professional development)," he said. "I believe these lesson plans are very executable, but it has to start at the company level."

This is the program's first year and the topics being covered each quarter form a baseline for the Army to build on with more in-depth and critical thinking skills, said Conley, adding that the first four are the "bread and butter" of the NCO.

At the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., Conley has already conducted the first of the quarterly professional development sessions.

"I believe the program the CAPE has put together at West Point is phenomenal and I wanted to demonstrate and share it with our Soldiers in the Army National Guard," he said. "I've conducted (professional development) my entire career and have been a trainer my entire career."

Conley also said the Army he's always known has been an Army that is training-based.

"Every time I've been in a leadership position and had the opportunity to instill my own personal training values, I've [taken] advantage of that," he said. "I believe that training and education, and life-long learning is important and I wanted to demonstrate it from my position."

It is the hope of Conley that the program and the focus on NCO development from the CAPE continue into the future.

"The product [the Army] has created is phenomenal and if we can't keep this up, it's going to be disappointing," he said. "We can put these incredible products into the hands of NCOs across the Army and it is my hope that they keep it up."

It all comes down to education, said Conley.

"I'm a high school physics and chemistry teacher … so I believe in education," he said. "I encourage Soldiers to get on the Internet, find out what interests you and … start reading into it. There is so much information out there to be gleaned."

For Conley, education is a continual process.

"Keep learning, keep training, and never stop," he said.

Combined Arms Battalion trains on latest M1A1SA Gunnery

Continued from Page 3

company collective gunnery training. An After Action Review capability is provided for exercise management.

"It was fun to get in and learn the new equipment," said Staff Sgt. Richard McKinley, a tank commander from Company D.

"The upgrades to the M1A1 SA are awesome as compared to the M1A1 heavies," said Sgt. 1st Class Terry Rhoads, master gunner for Company D.

"This simulator will allow us to train on a platform identical to what we will be getting fielded in May 2014," said Sgt. 1st Class Eric Kaltenborn, company master gunner for Company C. "Besides the upgraded sights and advancements to the fire control system, it will give our tank commanders the needed skills to be effective with the new stabilized and thermal .50 caliber commanders weapons station."

"I like that I can plug a crew in and do whatever sustainment training they need," said Master Sgt. Barry Vogelbacher, the battalion master gunner. "I also like that I can move a crew's (training) record from one system to another as needed."

"This is one of the most realistic trainers available," said Sgt. Paul Olson, a tank gunner for Company C.

New Tuition Assistance policy for fiscal year 14 effective Jan. 1

Continued from Page 5

Make sure you are filling out a Financial Aid form through your school, as there are many programs available to assist you in pursuing higher education.

There are currently no changes that have been made to the GI Bill programs. In the event that something changes, the education staff will assist and alert you.

Make sure that if you are pursuing higher education that you use the benefits which you have earned. The Education Services Office is available for benefits and educational counseling, and will help you with any questions or concerns you may have. For a complete list of benefits available and contact information for everyone in the office, please see our web page at www.kansastag.gov/NGUARD/asp?PageID=497.

I would like to say goodbye and welcome Capt. Tom Warth as my replacement. Warth has a wealth of experience and knowledge, and he and his exemplary staff in the Education Services Office will continue to serve the members of the Kansas National Guard.

Ground liaison officers support Air Force and Navy operations

Courtesy story

For a number of years, the U.S. Army has provided ground liaison officer teams to work alongside with U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy air wings during combat operations. Army GLOs are typically selected from combat arms branches and have recent on-the-ground combat experience. GLOs brief close air support squadrons on the supported maneuver unit operations and disposition during the planned time CAS aircraft will be on station. GLOs are integral to air wings in their ability to paint the ground picture for the CAS air crews. The operational briefs GLOs provide to close air support squadrons reduce the amount of time it would take for a supported ground unit's Joint Terminal Attack Controller to provide the same operational information to the close air support aircrafts while on station.

In January 2009, the Kansas National Guard deployed three ground liaison officer teams to Iraq, Afghanistan and Qatar in support of U.S. and Coalition Forces ground operations. Their assignment was to integrate maneuver unit ground operations with U.S.A.F. and U.S.N. close air support platform capabilities in Iraq and Afghanistan.

GLO Team #4 was led by Col. Mike Dennis and was made up of Lt. Col. Craig Brenton, Master Sgt. Mike Wilson and Master Sgt. Todd Daniels. This team was assigned to the USAF 455th Air Expeditionary Wing stationed at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

GLO Team #5, assigned to the USAF 332nd AEW "Tuskegee Airmen" at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, was led by Col. Mark Stevens. His team members were Maj. Johnnie Gallegos, Master Sgt. Timothy Staver and Master Sgt. Randy Bole.

Lt. Col. Craig Fox and Sgt. 1st Class Julie Kemple made up GLO Team #6. They were assigned to the USAF 379th AEW at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar.

The Army GLO has an advisory role of providing ground units with close air support aircraft capabilities, limitations, and methods of employing lethal and non-lethal air combat power. GLOs also advise USAF and USN air wings on U.S. and Coalition Forces concepts of operation, schemes of maneuver, and friendly indirect fire support capabilities.

"GLOs have an important role of not only representing the U.S. Army, but also representing the ground commanders that the Navy air wings support," said Gallegos. "The Navy F/A-18 squadrons were real appreciative to have Army GLOs brief ground operations. We updated them daily on battlefield events."

When GLOs aren't briefing air crews, they monitor their assigned air wing's aircraft activities through JTAC and Air Liaison Officer communication channels. GLOs ensure successful air-to-ground communication. When air-to-ground communication between the aircraft and JTAC fail, GLOs are instrumental in notifing the supported unit's command post to resolve the communication issue.

GLOs monitor the close air support aircraft while in flight and serve as a redundant source of information flow to the air wing command when needed. GLOs monitor airborne close air support aircraft and collect data on air wing's aircraft when they are re-tasked to support other ground operations or high priority missions such as troops in contact (TIC) and recovery operations.

"Working with both the Air Force and then aboard aircraft carriers was truly a team and joint effort and a highlight of my military career," said Gallegos. "I was born on an Air Force base and I always enjoyed spending time near military aircraft and runways as a kid. That I was able to brief both Air Force and Navy pilots on ground combat operations, was a remarkable and professional experience."

Maj. Johnnie Gallegos (pictured) deployed with Col. Mark Stevens, Master Sgt. Timothy Staver and Master Sgt. Randy Bole as Kansas National Guard Ground Liaison Officer Team #5. Their assignment was to integrate maneuver unit ground operations with U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy close air support platform capabilities in Iraq and Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

Transportation Security Admin expands Precheck

American Forces Press Service

As part of the ongoing effort to move away from a one size fits all security approach and provide more of the traveling public the ability to participate in expedited screening, the Transportation Security Administration and the Department of Defense announced a partnership Nov. 13 to expand TSA Precheck expedited screening benefits to all U.S. Armed Forces service members, including those serving in the U.S. Coast Guard, Reserves and National Guard.

As a result of the agreement, these individuals will be able to enjoy the benefits of the program at the 100 participating airports across the country, beginning Dec. 20.

Currently, members of the U.S. Armed Forces can utilize TSA Precheck lanes at 10 domestic airports by presenting their Common Access Card (CAC). The partnership expands the program to the military at all 100 airports offering TSA Precheck, allowing service members to keep their footwear on as well as light outerwear, belts, laptop in its case and their 3-1-1 compliant liquids/gels bag in a carry on in select screening lanes.

"Expanding TSA Precheck screening benefits is great news for our service members and is a tangible sign of this nation's gratitude for the men and women who serve this nation bravely each and every day," said Mary Snavely-Dixon, director, Defense Manpower Data Center. "We will continue to work with the Transportation Security Administration to help expand this program further."

"TSA joins with the American people in showing its appreciation for the service and sacrifices of our men and women in the Armed Forces," said TSA Deputy Administrator John W. Halinski, a 25-year Marine Corps veteran. "Providing expedited screening while on travel is the least we can do for these courageous men and women."

The new process being established under this agreement allows all active duty, U.S. Coast Guard, Reserve and National Guard service members to use their DOD identification number when making reservations. That ID number will be used as their Known Traveler Number. When arriving at the airport, service members will then be permitted access to TSA Precheck lanes for official or leisure travel on participating airlines.

More than 18 million passengers have experienced TSA Precheck since it launched in October 2011. TSA has recently expanded this expedited screening program to 60 new airports in addition to the existing 40, bringing the total number of airports with TSA Precheck to 100.

TSA has long recognized our men and women in uniform as nearly a quarter of TSA's workforce is a veteran or currently serves as an active duty service member in the U.S. Armed Forces.

In addition to expanding TSA Precheck to service members, TSA wants to remind the American public about the Wounded Warrior Screening program. This program makes the overall experience for wounded service members as simple as possible. This includes personalized service and expedited screening to move through security checkpoints without having to remove footwear, light outerwear, jackets or head wear. Wounded warriors or their care coordinators can contact TSA Cares toll free at 1-855-787-2227 with details of the itinerary once flight arrangements are made with the airline.

TSA will always incorporate random and unpredictable security measures throughout the airport. No individual will be guaranteed expedited screening. Travelers can check the TSA Precheck Participating Airports page for information on locations and hours of active TSA Precheck lanes at www.tsa.gov.

The Transportation Security Administration and the Department of Defense announced a partnership Nov. 13 to expand TSA Precheck expedited screening benefits to all U.S. Armed Forces service members, including those serving in the U.S. Coast Guard, Reserves and National Guard. (Courtesy photo)

The Affordable Care Act, VA and you

By U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

What is the Affordable Care Act?

The Affordable Care Act, also known as the health care law, was created to expand access to affordable health care coverage to all Americans, lower costs, and improve quality and care coordination. Under the health care law, people will:

- have health coverage that meets a minimum standard (called "minimum essential coverage") by Jan. 1, 2014;
- qualify for an exemption; or
- pay a fee when filing their taxes if they have affordable options but remain uninsured.

If I'm enrolled in a VA health care program, do I meet the requirement for health care coverage?

Yes. If you are enrolled in any of VA's programs below, you have coverage under the standards of the health care law:

- Veteran's health care program
- Civilian Health and Medical program (CHAMPVA)
- Spina bifida health care program

What are the benefits of enrollment in VA health care?

Enrollment in VA health care means you have:

- Medical care rated among the best in the U.S.
- Immediate benefits of health care coverage. Veterans may apply for VA health care enrollment at any time.
- No enrollment fee, monthly premiums, or deductibles. Most Veterans have no out-of-pocket costs. Some Veterans may have to pay small copayments for health care or prescription drugs.
- More than 1,700 places available to get your care. This means your coverage can go with you if you travel or move.
- Meet the new requirement to have health care coverage that meets the minimum standard.

What about Veterans who experience a medical emergency and have to go to a non-VA hospital? Will the VA still pay?

The health care law does not change VA health care eligibility, benefits or out of pocket costs for Veterans. If a Veteran requires non-VA emergency care, the rules in place today are expected to apply on or after Jan. 1, 2014.

How do I enroll for VA health care coverage?

You may apply in one of three convenient ways: visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, call 1-877-222-VETS (8387) or visit your local VA health care facility.

Can I continue to use VA health care with other programs, like private insurance or federal health care programs?

Yes. You can continue to use VA for all your health care needs, or complement your VA care with private health insurance or coverage by other federal health care programs, including Medicare, Medicaid and TRICARE.

I am enrolled in a VA health care program and also use TRICARE. What does the health care law mean for me?

The health care law does not change VA health benefits or your out-of-pocket costs as VA. The law also does not change your ability to continue to use VA health care with your TRICARE coverage as you can still use both your VA coverage and TRICARE coverage.

Most TRICARE health plan options meet the requirements for minimum essential coverage. For additional information about TRICARE and the health care law, visit www.tricare.mil/Home/Welcome/AboutUs/MEC.aspx.

What does the health care law mean for Veterans living in the U.S. Territories?

All legal residents of Puerto Rico and the United States territories are treated by law as having minimum essential coverage. So they don't need to take additional action.

What's the Health Insurance Marketplace?

The marketplace is a new way to shop for and purchase private health insurance (for example, health coverage other than VA health care programs) that fits your budget and meets your needs. People who purchase insurance through the marketplace may be able to lower the costs of health insurance coverage by paying lower monthly premiums.

I am enrolled in a VA health care program. Would I be eligible for assistance to pay health insurance premiums on the marketplace if I choose to purchase health care outside of VA?

Since VA care meets the standard for health care coverage, you wouldn't be eligible for assistance to lower your cost of health insurance premiums if you chose to purchase additional health care coverage outside of VA. However, you may still purchase private health insurance on or off the marketplace to complement your VA health care coverage.

How will I know if I'm eligible for assistance to purchase health insurance outside of VA?

VA can't make this determination. If you use the marketplace, you will find out if you can get lower costs on your monthly premiums for private health insurance plans. Remember, if you are enrolled in a VA health care program, you don't need to take additional steps to meet the health coverage requirements under the health care law.

What does the health care law mean for my family members?

Veterans' family members who already receive health care coverage — through their employers, TRICARE or certain VA programs — do not need to take additional steps to meet the health care law coverage standards. Veterans' family members who do not have coverage that meets the health care law's standard should consider their options through the Health Insurance Marketplace. They may get lower costs on monthly premiums or out-of-pocket costs or be eligible for free or low-cost coverage through Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Starting Oct. 1, they can submit an application for health care coverage through the marketplace and learn the amount of assistance they are eligible for. For more information, visit www.healthcare.gov.

What happens if I do not have health coverage?

You do not have to pay a fee if you have coverage that meets a minimum standard (called "minimum essential coverage"). If you have access to affordable coverage but remain uninsured starting in 2014, you may have to pay a fee when filing your taxes.

- 2014: $95 per adult and $47.50 per child (up to $285 for a family) or 1 percent of family income, whichever is greater.
- 2015: $325 per adult and $162.50 per child (up to $975 for a family) or 2 percent of family income, whichever is greater.
- 2016: $695 per adult and $347.50 per child (up to $2085 for a family) or 2.5 percent of family income, whichever is greater.

Exemptions from the fee will be granted under certain circumstances. For more information on exemptions, visit www.healthcare.gov.

Where can I get more information?

For information on VA health care and the Affordable Care Act, visit VA's website at www.va.gov/aca, or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. or Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., eastern. For information on the marketplace, visit www.healthcare.gov or call 1-800-318-2596.

Commerce announces employer pledge to support hiring veterans

Employers can sign the "Hire a Veteran" pledge on KanVet website

By Kansas Department of Commerce

The Kansas Department of Commerce encourages employers to show their support for hiring veterans by signing the "Hire a Veteran" pledge on the new KanVet website at www.KanVet.ks.gov. Employers who sign the pledge agree to consider qualified military veterans for open positions.

"Kansas is proud of those who have sacrificed to defend our country and freedoms, and we are thankful for their service," Kansas Commerce Secretary Pat George said. "The 'Hire a Veteran' pledge provides employers with a way to show their appreciation and support of our veterans, and it also helps veterans by matching them with job opportunities."

Gov. Sam Brownback and other state officials helped launch the KanVet website on July 1. KanVet connects veterans with higher education information and job searching tools designed specifically for veterans. Employment resources include information about KANSASWORKS, the KanSERVE program, opportunities with the Kansas Army and Air National Guard and descriptions of other employment services. Education tools provide the ability to search for higher education programs for veterans at all Kansas Board of Regents universities, as well as community and technical colleges.

Employers can view the "Hire a Veteran" pledge at www.KanVet.ks.gov. Employers who take the pledge will publicly demonstrate support for hiring veterans. In addition, KANSASWORKS staff will contact businesses and organizations that take the pledge to help link them with qualified veterans seeking jobs.

Employers that sign the pledge will receive a signed certificate acknowledging their support. In addition, businesses will receive KanVet posters and stickers that they can use to demonstrate their support of veterans in Kansas.

In addition to Commerce, other state agencies that helped develop KanVet include the Kansas Adjutant General's Office, the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs, the Department for Children and Families and the Kansas Board of Regents.

To take the employer pledge or learn more about the KanVet initiative, please visit www.KanVet.ks.gov.

Military OneSource resources can help service members with job search

By Military OneSource

If you are looking for work, you should put Military OneSource to work for you. There is no cost and you can use Military OneSource at your convenience.

The Career Transitions library at Military OneSource Online can support every phase of your job search, including transition to a civilian job. You can view jobs announcements, build a resume and cover letter, and participate in an interview simulation.

Career Transitions is designed with military service members in mind. It tells you how best to refer to your military service in your cover letter, and has a tool to map your military experience to civilian positions. If you are not sure what career path to take, Career Transitions can help. You can browse career and industry categories and watch videos about the daily tasks associated with a particular job. You can take a self-assessment to identify your career interests and you can explore school and training programs.

Career Transitions has daily tips and quick and easy-to-view videos from subject matter experts to keep you motivated and to help you plot your job search strategy. Once you register on Career Transitions, you can save your job searches, your resume and cover letter components for later sessions.

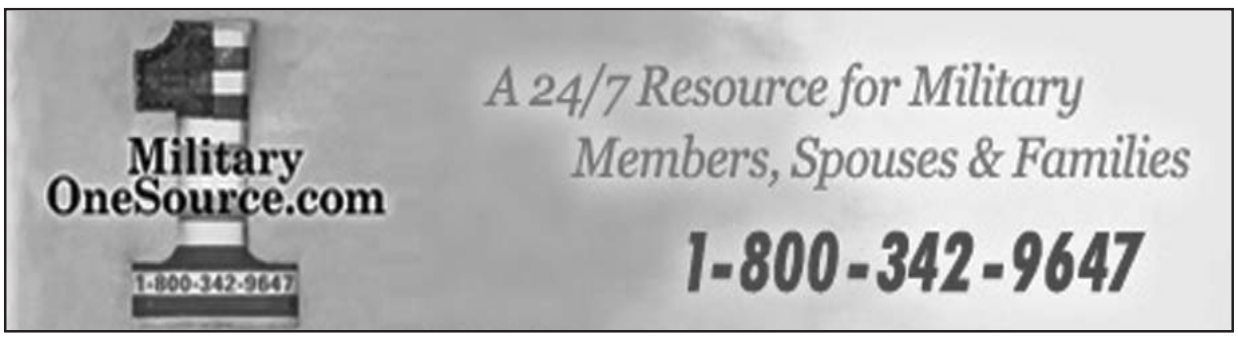
To find Career Transitions, log in to Military OneSource Online at www.militaryonesource.mil, select "DoD MWR Library Resources" under "Quick Links," then scroll to and click on Career Transitions.

The Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program provides education and career guidance to military spouses worldwide. SECO Career Center counselors can help military spouses explore careers, learn about training and education options, and get help with resumes, job interviews and self-marketing skills.

The Military Spouse Employment Partnership connects military spouses with more than 160 military-friendly partner employers who have pledged to recruit, hire, promote and retain military spouses.

My Career Advancement Account Program provides up to $4,000 in financial assistance to eligible military spouses pursuing certifications or associate degrees in portable career fields and occupations. To get started, call 1-800-342-9647 to speak with a SECO counselor.

These Military OneSource resources can augment other programs available to you, such as school counselors and active, Guard, and Reserve transition assistance programs. As part of the network of installation-based, Joint Family Support Assistance Program, Guard/Reserve, and community programs, Military OneSource offers support to you and your family, 24/7, at www.militaryonesource.mil and 1-800-342-9647.



KANSAS NATIONAL GUARD

CURRENT AS OF DEC. 3, 2013

Resources for service members and families in need or in crisis.

MILITARY ONESOURCE

1-800-342-9647 www.militaryonesource.mil

CHAPLAIN

Providing religious, spiritual and general life counseling. 100% confidential.

State Chaplain
Chaplain (Col.) David Jenkins
Office: (785) 274-1515 Cell: (785) 231-4742
Cell #2: (785) 438-9145 william.d.jenkins30.mil@mail.mil

190th Air Refueling Wing Chaplain
Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Oliver Bergeron
Office: (785) 861-4001 Cell: (316) 210-7956
DSN: 720-4001 oliver.bergeron@ang.af.mil

184th Intelligence Wing Chaplain
Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Terry Williams
Office: (316) 652-9601 Cell: (316) 304-2306
terry@rivercc.org or terry.williams@ang.af.mil

Full-time Support Chaplain
Chaplain (Maj.) John Potter
Office: (785) 274-1515 Cell: (785) 220-9480
john.r.potter.mil@mail.mil

Full-time Support Chaplain Assistant
Staff Sgt. Jimmy Boss
Office: (785) 274-1514 Cell: (785) 215-4067
jimmy.d.boss.mil@mail.mil

EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND THE RESERVE

Helping resolve conflict between employers and service members and locate companies who are hiring Guard members and Reservists.
Paul Swanson
Mobile: (785) 217-4828 Office: (785) 274-1559
www.esgr.mil paul.a.swanson10.ctr@mail.mil

FAMILY ASSISTANCE OFFICE

Provides information on and referral to essential services, including: Financial Assistance, Legal Referral, Follow-Up and Outreach

Hiawatha: Cherie Herlinger (Coordinator)
(785) 806-1761 cherie.l.herlinger.ctr@mail.mil

Iola: David Fehr
(785) 806-1756 david.a.fehr4.ctr@mail.mil

Wichita: Renee Henry
(785) 806-1754 renee.m.henry6.ctr@mail.mil

Lenexa: Tammy Alsup
(785) 806-9842 tamatha.d.bullardalsup.ctr@mail.mil

Salina: Kara L Marlow
(785) 991-0706 kara.l.marlow.ctr@mail.mi

Hutchinson: Jennifer Villarreal
(785) 991-0712 Jennifer.l.villarreal10.ctr@mail.mil

SUICIDE HOTLINE

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

MILITARY FAMILY LIFE CONSULTANTS SERVICES

Provides complimentary, confidential consultations to service members and their families. The services covered include but are not limited to: anger management, stress related issues, relationships, finance, children acting out and problems at school.

Adult MFLC
John Kriss
Cell: (785) 289-3386 john.kriss@ahsg.us

Youth, and Child MFLC
John Merritt
Cell: (785) 217-6518 john.merritt@ahsg.us

JFSAP Personal Financial Counselor—Kansas
Debt/credit issues, budget, saving and investing
Brenda Lenz
Cell: (785) 424-8123 ks-jfsap@mflc.zeiders.com

Psychological Health Program
Kansas State director of Psychological Health
VACANT

190th Air Refueling Wing director of Psychological Health
Robert Johnson
Office: (785) 861-4792 Cell: (785) 217-7325
DSN: 720-4792 robert.johnson.8@ang.af.mil

184th Intelligence Wing director of Psychological Health
Jeri Kennedy
Office: (316) 759-8901 DSN: 743-8901
Cell: (316) 617-6401 jeri.kennedy@ang.af.mil

JFHQ—SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE COORDINATOR

1st Lt. Tim Traynor
Office: (785) 274-1578 timothy.p.traynor2.mil@mail.mil
Cell: (Emergency or to report an assault) (785) 438-0017
https://www.safehelpline.org (877) 995-5247

JFHQ-KS Victim Advocate Coordinator (VAC)
Master Sgt. Kristina Perkins
Kristina.s.perkins.mil@mail.mil
(785) 207-8530

TRANSITION ASSISTANCE ADVISOR PROGRAM

Helping service members access Veteran Affairs' health care services, benefits and employment assistance.
Howard Steanson
Mobile: (785) 806-4179 Office: (785) 274-1188
howard.l.steanson.ctr@mail.mil

AIRMAN & FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM MANAGER

190th Air Refueling Wing: Adrienne Dickey
Office: (785) 861-4940 Cell: (785) 806-1252 DSN: 720-4940
adrienne.dickey@ang.af.mil
184th Intelligence Wing: Hilari Delarosa
Office: (316) 759-7092 Cell: (316) 617-804 DSN: 743-7092
hilari.delarosa.civ@ang.af.mil

These resources are for all KSNG service members and their families regardless of their duty status.

Army retirees' AKO accounts to close

By Mark Overberg
Deputy Chief, Army Retirement Services

On Sept. 20, the Army published its plan to modernize Army Knowledge Online. The plan transitions business users to a suite of more secure, interoperable Department of Defense services. The improved security requires users to have Common Access Cards embedded with users' personal digital certificates.

The Army will close all accounts for military and civilian retirees and family members who do not have CACs.

The Army plans to close inactive retiree and family member AKO accounts on Dec. 31, 2013. These are accounts that have not had a password change in over 90 days and are not set to automatically forward email to another government account. The Army will also remove email storage for active retiree and family member accounts on this date.

On March 31, 2014, the Army will close all remaining retiree and family member AKO accounts.

To ease the transition, the Army G-6 recently approved an exception to policy that allows retirees and family members to automatically forward their AKO email to a civilian email address until Dec. 31, 2014. However, retirees must set this up in their AKO account profiles before Dec. 31, 2013.

To avoid disruptions to communications and personal accounts, retirees should take these steps as soon as possible:

- Obtain a personal email address from a civilian provider.
- Replace AKO email addresses in all personal accounts – especially myPay accounts at the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (https://www.mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx.)
- Obtain a premium DS Logon account. This account allows access to personal benefits records and claims on DOD and Department of Veterans Affairs websites.
- Download important emails and files to a personal computer.

The Army has many sources of information that retirees may access in place of AKO. The Army home page (www.army.mil) provides official Army news and information and links to Army social media sites (Army Facebook, Army Twitter, Army YouTube and Army Flickr.) It also includes links to Army images, audio, video, presentations, and Army Live, the official Army blog. The U.S. Army Installation Management Command's home page (www.imcom.army.mil) includes links to individual installations and garrisons that provide local information and services to retirees. The Army's official benefits website is MyArmyBenefits (https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil.)

The Army plan indicated that retirees may share files using free and paid commercial services. The plan also noted retirees may join comment forums at military service organization and commercial websites.

For updated information on the AKO transition, visit http://www.eis.army.mil/ako.

Key AKO transition dates

Dec. 31, 2013
- Inactive AKO accounts closed
- Email storage removed from active accounts
- Retirees complete set up of autoforwarding of AKO email to commercial email

March 31, 2104
- All remaining AKO accounts closed

Dec. 31, 2014
- Autoforwarding of AKO email to commercial email ends

Calling all Kansas OCS Alumni

The Kansas Officer Candidate School Alumni Association is trying to update their OCS alumni records.

If you are a graduate of the Kansas Officer Candidate School, please provide Sgt. 1st Class Christy Allen (contact information below) the following information:

Class #
Rank held and Full Name
Address
City, State, Zip
E-mail address
Phone Number

Sgt. 1st Class Christy M. Allen
OCS BN S-1 NCOIC
2115 Blosser Drive
Concordia, KS 66901-9313
Office: 785-822-6681
christy.m.allen7.mil@mail.mil

The Kansas Officer Candidate School Alumni Association can also be found on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/#!/KansasOCS

Awards and Decorations

KANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Legion of Merit

Sgt. Maj. Darryl McNair, Rec & Ret Bn, Topeka

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Robert Wood, HQ, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Kansas City, with two oak leaf clusters
Maj. Rodney Seaba, HHC, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Kansas City, with two oak leaf clusters
Capt. Jonathan Bjorgaard, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Kansas City
Capt. Amanda Ponn, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Bobby Brumley, 635th RSG, Hutchinson, with two oak leaf clusters
Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Nelson, 2137th FSC, Manhattan
Sgt. 1st Class Sheila Powell, 731st Trans Co, Great Bend
Staff Sgt. Darrell Anthony, HHQ, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Staff Sgt. Jason Phillips, KSARNG Med Det, Lenexa
Sgt. Nathan Blair, 2137th FSC, Manhattan
Sgt. Benjamin Droge, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Sgt. David Dudley, 2137th FSC, Manhattan
Sgt. Benjamin Kearns, 2137th FSC, Manhattan

Army Commendation Medal

Capt. Adam Pawlosky, HHC, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Kansas City, with two oak leaf clusters
1st Lt. Curtis Gile, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka, with four oak leaf clusters
Staff Sgt. Kenneth Isaac, 35th MP Co, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Staff Sgt. Shawn Sinnott, Rec & Ret Bn, Topeka

Army Achievement Medal

Spc. William Reynolds, Jr., JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka

KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Meritorious Service Medal

Lt. Col. Timothy Stevens, 190th ARW, Topeka
Lt. Col. Thomas Turner, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Chief Master Sgt. Mickel Coffin, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Chief Master Sgt. Donald Lee, 190th ARW, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Chief Master Sgt. Christopher Noe, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Chief Master Sgt. Brian Willard, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. John Graber 184th IW, Wichita, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Susan Ballard 184th IW, Wichita, with three oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Angelina Bemis, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. John Miranda 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Cynthia Swazey 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Stephen Wodtke, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Steven Zimmerman, 190th ARW, Topeka

Air Force Commendation Medal

Master Sgt. James Hodson, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Marla Urban, 184th IW, Wichita, with one oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Jack Webber, 184th IW, Wichita, with three oak leaf clusters
Tech. Sgt. Erik Jacobson, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Justin Meier, 184th IW, Wichita

Air Force Achievement Medal

Senior Master Sgt. Shawn Willard, 190th ARW, Topeka, with two oak leaf clusters
Master Sgt. Eric Scurry, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster
Master Sgt. Scott Tanos, 190th ARW, Topeka, with three oak leaf clusters
Staff Sgt. James Behl, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. George Bergen 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Ramon Bortle, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Richard Jarvis, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Joshua Kvas, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Adam Nelson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Branden Thomas, 190th ARW, Topeka, with oak leaf cluster

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

Maj. Gen. John Davoren, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth
Lt. Col. Steven O'Neil, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Maj. Steven Blount, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson
Maj. Theodore Colinear, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth
Chief Warrant Officer 4 James Wilroy, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Sgt. Maj. Tony Bennett, HHB(-), 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Hiawatha
Master Sgt. David Kennedy, KSARNG Training Center, Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Kirk Amtower, KSARNG Training Center, Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Karl Brown, 2137th FSC, Manhattan
Sgt. 1st Class Sharon Dicks, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class William McGinnis, 105th MPAD, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Wayland Saxton, 137th Chaplain Det, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Strouse II, Co C, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Lenexa
Sgt. 1st Class James Surber, Det 1, Rec & Ret Bn, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Darrell Anthony, 137th Chaplain Det, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Cesar Blanco, Co D, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Emporia
Staff Sgt. Scott Brenton, 69th TC, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Leslie Hilton, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson
Staff Sgt. Roger Meier, Det 1, 1161st FSC, Pratt
Staff Sgt. Anthony Rainey, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Sgt. Renard Dubose, HHC, 169th CSSB, Olathe
Sgt. Michael Hanson, Btry C, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Newton
Sgt. Eric Hempel, HHB, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Wichita
Sgt. Bret Johnson, 778th Trans Co (-), Kansas City
Sgt. Iris Marston, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson
Sgt. William McClain, Det 1, Btry B, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Lenexa
Sgt. Russell Smith, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson
Sgt. Jeremy Stover, Det 1, HHB, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Marysville
Sgt. Billy Summers, Det 1, 995th Maint Co, Concordia
Sgt. Christopher Swartz, Det 2, 778th Trans Co, Kansas City
Sgt. Erik Tipsword, Det 1, 778th Trans Co, Manhattan
Sgt. Brian Wilhite, 287th Sustainment Bde, Wichita
Sgt. Richard Wood, 226th (-) Eng Co (Vert), Augusta
Sgt. Gregory Zuercher, 105th MPAD, Topeka
Spc. Shaun Bruggman, 242nd Eng Co (Horz), Coffeyville
Spc. Michael Kreutzer, Det 3, 731st Trans Co, Hays
Spc. Bruce Pease, Btry C, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Newton
Spc. Micheal Whitfield, Co A, 2nd CAB, 137th Inf, Lawrence
Pvt. 2 Kelsey Stephen, 242nd Eng Co (Horz), Coffeyville

Kansas Air National Guard

Chief Master Sgt. Mickel Coffin, 190th ARW, Topeka
Chief Master Sgt. Don Lee, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. David Baker, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. John Graber, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Roosevelt Matthews, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Bill Montgomery, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Susan Ballard, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Steve Wodtke, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt, Steve Zimmerman, 190th ARW, Topeka

Three inducted into Kansas National Guard Hall of Fame

Continued from Page 7

On the way home from the recruiting station, Harrison was involved in a rollover accident. On the stretcher, she told her mother that she had enlisted. With this news her mother's tears of concern turned to frustration that her daughter had made such a decision.

"Thank goodness they took me to the hospital to get me away from her," said Harrison.

Still in need of the signature, she went to her dad and had him sign at the X without telling him what it was for.

"Pop, thanks for signing my enlistment papers when Mom refused," Harrison said to the crowd of several hundred people.

During her career, Harrison served as a traditional Soldier, a technician and finally as an Active Guard and Reserve member. Despite her retirement, Harrison continues to serve on a training team that prepares Active and Reserve units for their deployments overseas, ensuring that another generation of Soldiers is prepared for combat.

"I always thought I was doing something I really loved with people I just absolutely adored," said Harrison, a Leavenworth resident who was described as a proven combat leader and an avid trainer during her more than 30 years in the military. "Soldiers are my favorite people."

The National Guard Association of Kansas established the Hall of Fame in 1979 and inducts two to three honorees per year. Each Hall of Fame member has served in the Kansas National Guard or the Kansas State Militia and has made a significant contribution to National Guard achievements, tradition or history.

"It gives me great hope for the future to know that men and women like these have helped shape our organization and have influenced those around them in such a positive way that we may never even know about," said Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general of Kansas. "You are an example for us all. You remind us all of what it means to wear the uniform and what we should strive for."

Air Guard enlisted performance report program to include technicians and drill-status Guardsmen

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

Changes have been made to the way Air Guardsmen receive feedback through enlisted performance reports.

Over the next few years, the enlisted members of the 184th Intelligence Wing will receive enlisted performance reports, or EPRs.

Throughout the Air National Guard, the EPR program will include technicians and drill-status Guardsmen.

"We were the only reserve component who were not evaluating our drill-status Guardsmen. It now allows us to follow suit with the other branches," said Senior Master Sgt. Randi Hill, superintendent of manpower and personnel, 184th Force Sustainment Squadron, 184th Intelligence Wing. "It allows our members the opportunity to know how they are developing as leaders by getting deserved feedback."

In the past, only Active Guard and Reserve members received EPRs, while technicians and traditional Air Guardsmen were given an annual performance feedback.

"Although we had performance feedback, the evaluation will ensure that supervisors are adhering to the policy," said Hill.

The policy for the new EPR program went into effect in May 2013 with the first evaluations due in 2014. Over the next two years, all enlisted members, senior airman and above, will get an EPR.

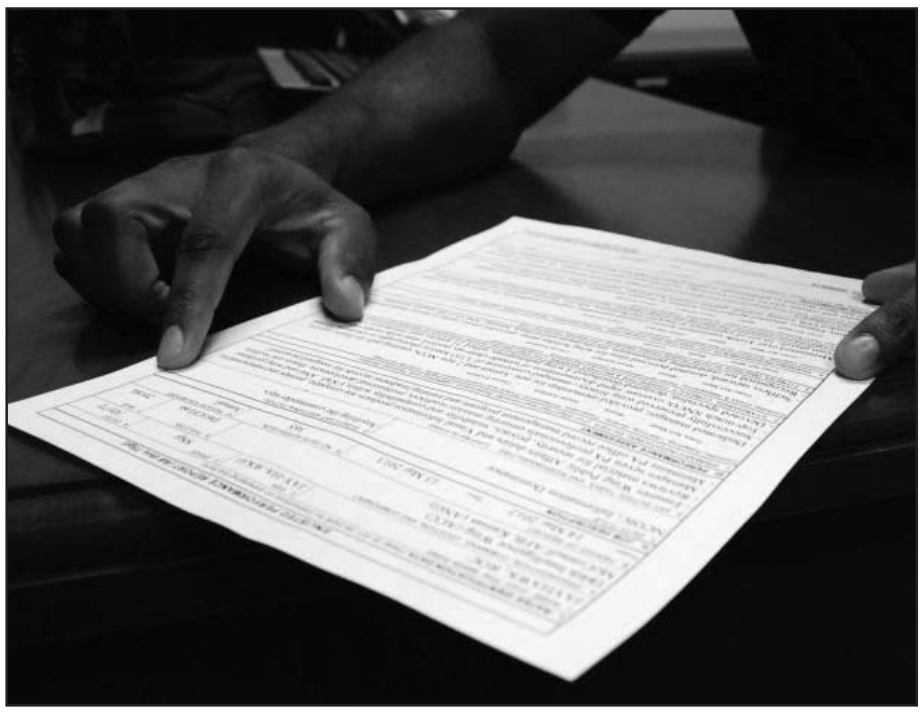
"The primary goal for the new EPR program being pushed out, was so all of our enlisted members had a more permanent and formalized appraisal system to tell them how they are doing in their jobs," said Chief Master Sgt. Russ Brotsky, command chief, 184th Intelligence Wing.

The EPRs will still be written the same way as they are for Active Guard and Reserve members. The difference is that the reporting period will be every two years with the period closing on the rated Airman's birthday.

Traditional Guardsmen will receive performance feedbacks on the years between EPRs.

"The main idea behind the new EPR program is to make sure we are accountable to our Airmen," said Brotsky.

There will be no change to Active Guard and Reserve and officer evaluations.



Traditional Airmen and technicians are now included in receiving enlisted performance reports. (Photo by Master Sgt. Matt McCoy, 184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs)

Distinguished Airman shares spotlight with rescued girl

Continued from Page 1

than I did in two minutes," said Crawford. "I want to honor her abilities to fight on."

Rylee has spent the last six months overcoming her leg injury and brain damage. Kansas Governor Sam Brownback spoke with Rylee after the ceremony. "His attention was where it needed to be. It was pretty special for her," said Crawford, who joked that he'd already met the governor once standing in line for groceries.

Brownback presented Crawford with the Kansas National Guard Distinguished Service Medal and commended Crawford's selflessness.

Since the accident Crawford has been called a hero, but he is hesitant to use the word.

"I would hope I did what anyone else would do," he said.

Kansas Warrant Corps update

Continued from Page 4

Soldiers to appear, it is more important than ever to ensure that your records are correct and up-to-date.

As always, thank you for what you do. All of us who wear warrant officer rank are looked at as subject matter experts within our career fields, so it is important to maintain your skills. I challenge you to continue to progress within your personal and professional education. The warrant officer rank is very difficult to achieve, and many good Soldiers fall short. Making up around two percent of today's modern Army, we are a small but powerful commodity, so let's continue to excel at being leaders, mentors and subject matter experts.

Follow us on the web

www.kansastag.gov
www.twitter.com/KSAdjutantGen
www.twitter.com/KansasGuard
www.twitter.com/KansasEmergency
www.facebook.com/KansasNationalGuard
www.facebook.com/Kansas-Division-of-Emergency-Management

Kansas
Adjutant General

Teen Council creates ornament for White House

By Sydney Monteith
Teen Council Representative

The Kansas National Guard Teen Council works hard to plan events and serve the National Guard in any way they can. Every now and then, they get an opportunity of a lifetime.

The most recent is the chance to decorate and have an ornament hanging on the White House tree. The council collaborated for hours at a meeting to plan and decorate the ornament so that it really showcased what they are all about.

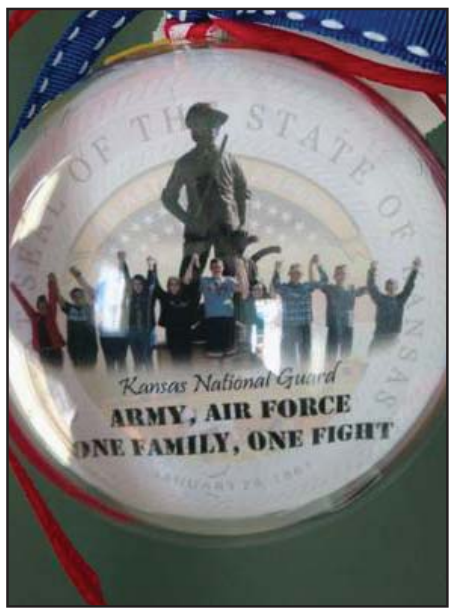
Dr. Jill Biden (far right), wife of Vice President Joe Biden, hosts a National Guard Christmas Tree dedication in her office in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C., Dec. 9. The Teen Council ornament can be found on the bottom center of the tree. (Official White House photo by David Lienemann)

First, they took a glass bulb and put their name on it. The symbol they used for all their publications is right on the tag. The first thing you see is a Kansas sunflower to show the council's Kansas pride with the nation's flag behind wrapped in a yellow ribbon.

Next, they traveled to the Joint Forces Headquarters' State Defense Building to get a picture with the National Guard Minuteman. The Minuteman stands for strong will, bravery and honor. The council felt that he was a perfect addition to their picture. With their hands together and raised signifies their team attitude and pledge to do their best with each other. Below the picture is a chant close to the Teen Council member's hearts "Army, Air Force. One family, one fight." from the Kansas National Guard's annual Operation Military Kids' Kid's Camp. The chant is said every day during camp. With the addition of the word family, the council felt it was perfect to show what they do. Behind our picture is the Kansas State Seal.

Lastly, to really push home the Kansas Kid Pride, we put one more sunflower inside the bulb to top it all off.

The council worked hard to compile this and they hope it truly reflects the love, pride and dedication that they have for what they do and what they stand for. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and the council is proud to say that they will be in the White House.



VFW, Sport Clips help A Hero Scholarship

Sport Clips and the Veterans of Foreign Wars have partnered together since 2007 to help America's heroes connect with their loved ones through free phone calls. As troops are coming home and entering the civilian workforce, Sport Clips is expanding its support for service members, veterans and their families, their way of saying "Thank you for your service."

Consistent with Sport Clips' dedication to helping veterans and their families as they return home, Sport Clips and the VFW have partnered to provide the Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship program. These scholarships for tuition and fees will help provide military members and veterans with the financial assistance they need to complete their educational goals.

- Scholarships up to $5,000 will be awarded
- Limited to one per family
- Applications for the 2014 calendar are currently being accepted
- Scholarships awarded starting Jan. 1, 2014
- Scholarships must be used by the end of the upcoming school year for which you are applying or they will become null and void
- Scholarships will be paid directly to accredited schools

Scholarship applicant must:

1. Be a citizen of the United States;
2. Be active duty, retired or honorably discharged, or a member of the National Guard or Reserve;
3. Have completed Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training, Technical school, etc.;
4. Have a military rank of E5 or below;
5. Demonstrate a need for financial assistance;
6. Participate in, be accepted to or currently enrolled in a VA approved program or school at an accredited postsecondary institution.

891st Engineer Battalion checks Wolf Creek communications

By Spc. Joseph P. Lockwood
Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 891st Engineer Battalion

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 891st Engineer Battalion in Iola, Kan., performed a communications exercise near the Wolf Creek Generating Station near Burlington Nov. 10. In the event of an emergency affecting the nuclear facility, the company can quickly dispatch Soldiers and equipment to provide a secure radio communications network if public communications networks have failed or become congested.

Located 90 miles southwest of Kansas City in rural Coffey County, Kansas' only nuclear power plant generates about 1,200 megawatts of power, enough energy for approximately 800,000 homes. In the event of an emergency affecting Wolf Creek, communications continuity is critical. HHC can provide the equipment and personnel to relay radio communications from checkpoints spread throughout the area back to headquarters.

On the morning of the exercise, 24 Soldiers were briefed on the mission, which included setting up three OE-254/GRC antenna groups, as well as dispatching vehicles to 14 checkpoints to verify radio coverage across a wide swath south and west of Wolf Creek.

During the exercise, Soldiers converged at two relay points and the company headquarters in Iola to assemble and raise the mast-mounted OE-254/GRC antennas. For Soldiers unfamiliar with the broadband, omnidirectional, biconical antenna group, it was a good opportunity to gain hands-on experience with equipment in the armory.

After setup of each antenna was complete, Soldiers went to several predefined checkpoints across Coffey County to verify radio connectivity with the nearest relay point. Radios at relay points automatically retransmitted the signal on a different frequency to either the next relay station or to headquarters. Due to the geographic scope of an emergency affecting Wolf Creek, responsibility for communications in the greater Wolf Creek area would be shared between the 891st Eng. Bn. and other Kansas Army National Guard battalions, each covering their respective sectors.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 891st Engineer Battalion's Pfc. Dillon Hall (left), a combat engineer, and Staff Sgt. John McCoy (right), section sergeant, prepare to raise an OE-254/GRC antenna at a relay station in LeRoy, Kan., in support of a communications exercise Nov. 10. The exercise was in support of providing critical communications around the Wolf Creek Generating Station in Coffey County, Kan., in the event of an emergency. (Photo by Spc. Joseph Lockwood, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 891st Engineer Battalion)

The HHC exercise was ad-hoc and not conducted in conjunction with any ongoing exercise performed by Wolf Creek, county or state agencies. It provided an opportunity for HHC to engage its Soldiers in performing Preventative Maintenance Checks and Services on equipment already on hand and applying a coordinated effort in a realistic scenario.

"While today's exercise wasn't synchronized with Wolf Creek or any other state or federal agency, it provided highly effective, low cost, hands-on training for our Soldiers," said Capt. Jason Hulse, HHC commander. "It gave us a chance to deploy and operate communications equipment in support of the unit's Mission Essential Task List, as well as the opportunity to plan, brief and execute a mission in real time."

Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (operators of Wolf Creek Generating Station) continually updates and tests the radiological emergency preparedness plan, established to provide a progressive response to an escalating range of risks. Evaluated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, this preparedness plan involves hundreds of Wolf Creek, state and county employees.

Plains Guardian

Small group of 35th Division Soldiers deploy to Kosovo

By Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson
35th Infantry Division Public Affairs

Approximately seven Soldiers of the 35th Infantry Division were honored in a departure ceremony Dec. 14 at the 35th Infantry Division Headquarters at Fort Leavenworth. These Soldiers are the first group to augment a larger element in support of the NATO mission in Kosovo.

"We're a small contingency, made up of members from four states, heading over to augment the active duty 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade out of Fort Hood, Texas," said Lt. Col. Joseph Pehlman, who leads the contingent.

The 35th Inf. Div. is one of eight divisions in the Army National Guard and is made up of Guardsmen from Illinois, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska.

"We have great Soldiers in the 35th with tremendously supportive families and employers. I know our Soldiers are well-prepared for this mission," said Maj. Gen Michael D. Navrkal, commander of the 35th Inf. Div. "Many of the Soldiers on this deployment have previous experience in the region as the 35th Infantry Division has deployed twice to the Balkans, in 2003 and 2007."

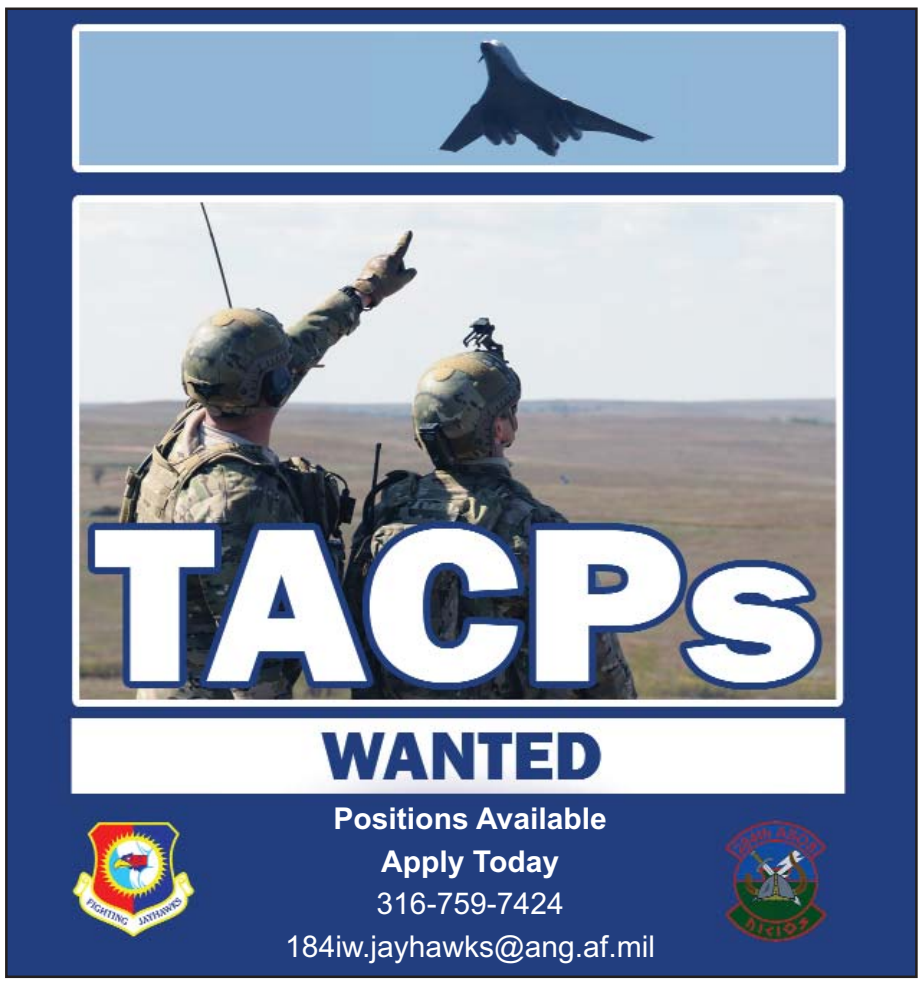
"I was in Kosovo in 2007 to 2008 and going back will be interesting to see how things have changed," said Pehlman. "I think having these types of recurring missions allows us to take what we've learned from past experiences and bring it back to apply to current operations. It also gives us more opportunities to build better and stronger relationships."

Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer, M.D., was also in attendance at the ceremony, where he thanked the families for their continued support.

"On behalf of the state of Kansas and on behalf of Governor Sam Brownback, we appreciate your service and are honored to be a part of the ceremony today," said Colyer. "This is such an important mission for the state of Kansas and it's because of the stability operation that you all have performed that (Kosovo) is starting to grow. If there is anything that the governor or I can do, we would be honored to try and help the Soldiers and families in any way."

The Soldiers of the 35th Inf. Div. are deploying to Fort Hood, Texas, for additional training before deploying to Kosovo for their mission. In Kosovo, the Soldiers will fill key positions in the headquarters for Multi-National Battle Group - East, a multinational peacekeeping force. The Battle Group will be under the command of Col. Charles Hensley, commander of the 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade located in Fort Hood, Texas.

Kansas Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer addresses the Soldiers of the 35th Infantry Division and their families during their departure ceremony at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., Dec. 14. Approximately two dozen Soldiers from the division are deploying to Kosovo to augment the Multi-National Battle Group - East, a multinational peacekeeping force. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson, 35th Infantry Division)



Marshall joins state's Chaplain Corps

(Left to right) Heather Marshall, bows her head in prayer as her husband Chaplain (1st Lt.) Ronald Marshall is blessed by Chaplain (Col.) David Jenkins, chaplain of the Kansas National Guard. Col. Thomas Foster joined in prayer placing his hand upon Marshall.

Marshall became the newest chaplain for the 169th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion during a pinning ceremony receiving his cross from Jenkins Nov. 2.

Marshall joined the Kansas National Guard in 2008 as a sergeant in the 137th Transportation Company, Texas National Guard. Foster, battalion commander of the 169th CSSB during this time, enabled and encouraged Marshall to continue his seminary education at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Marshall went on to become a chaplain candidate mentored and supervised by Chaplain (Maj.) Richard Dunn. While being mentored, Marshall was afforded the opportunity and honor to learn and continue to work with the 169th CSSB, where he would eventually become the battalion chaplain.

Following the pinning ceremony, Marshall thanked the Soldiers of the 169th CSSB for allowing him to grow and develop as a chaplain candidate. He expressed to the Soldiers that he cares deeply for every one of them and their families and reminded them that he is always available. (Photo by Capt. Angela M. Gray, 169th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion)

Airmen serving with honor

By Airman 1st Class Lauren Penney
184th Intelligences Wing Public Affairs

Respect. Honor. Service. These words are sacred to the 184th Intelligence Wing's Honor Guard. The honor guard performs a variety of military honors and services for currently serving or veteran military members, at official military functions and funerals.

"It's tough, but it's so rewarding to know that we provide the honors for these people," said Tech. Sgt. Aaron Rausch, 184th Honor Guard's noncommissioned officer in charge. "You have your Vietnam veterans who never got their welcome home. The World War II vets are also very touching."

A full honors funeral consists of the colors flight, firing party, pallbearers, an armed escort and the U.S. Air Force Band. This service is for retired officers, retired chief master sergeants, active duty repatriation, Soldiers killed in action, an individual chosen by act of Congress, or a Medal of Honor recipient.

A retired military member receives a standard funeral, containing the firing party, pallbearers and a bugler. A veteran's funeral, for all other military separations, consists of a flag-folding and bugler.

Realizing the importance of the duties and wanting to improve, Honor guard members 2nd Lt. Aaron Farris, Tech. Sgt. Maurice Ballance and Tech. Sgt. Ashley Fournier rehearse rifle movements during an honor guard practice. The 184th IW Honor Guard began working with their active-duty counterparts, the 22nd Air Refueling Wing Honor Guard. This partnership resulted in a combined funeral detail in September with two members of the 22nd ARW and five 184th IW members making up the team.

Funerals are an important duty the honor guard performs, but they also serve the community in other ways as well.

Rausch and other team members find it rewarding to carry the colors and participate in approved civilian and military parades.

"We're walking and you see the respect everyone gives to the flag," said Rausch. "They stand up and remove their hats. It's amazing."

The honor guard members share their knowledge and respect for flag with the local community as well. They spend time in community schools and retirement homes in the area doing presentations on flag etiquette and how to properly fold the flag.

"It's great. Not only is it an honor, but the camaraderie is really good, too. We have a good group of people. We're all really close. We hang out, we make it fun," said Rausch. "It's very rewarding and just makes you feel good inside."

(Left to right) Honor guard members 2nd Lt. Aaron Farris, Tech. Sgt. Maurice Ballance and Tech. Sgt. Ashley Fournier rehearse rifle movements during an honor guard practice. (Photo by Airman 1st Class Lauren Penney, 184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs)