



Combined Arms Battalion deploys to the Horn of Africa.....2



Engineer Company hits the ground running.....5



Crisis City provides first-class training site for K-9 units8

PLAINS GUARDIAN

VOLUME 53 No. 3

Serving the Kansas Army and Air National Guard, Kansas Division of Emergency Management, Kansas Homeland Security and Civil Air Patrol

JULY 2010

Tafanelli selected as new Assistant Adjutant General - Army

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Kansas Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, has selected Col. Lee Tafanelli as the next assistant adjutant general – Army and commander of the Kansas Army National Guard. Tafanelli will assume command from Brig. Gen. John Davoren, who is taking command of the 35th Infantry Division, Fort Leavenworth.

“Colonel Tafanelli has the experience and knowledge necessary to do a superb job in this new role,” Bunting said. “He has held many leadership positions in the Kansas Guard, has worked hard on behalf of the Soldiers he leads, and has the right skills to lead the Army Guard through the transformations the future will require.”

Tafanelli has been submitted for promotion to brigadier general. Confirmation is

expected by the U.S. and Kansas Senates later this year.

“General Davoren will do an excellent job leading the 35th Division,” Bunting continued. “His experience as assistant division commander

has already shown his capability as a leader and we know he will do well in this new position.”

A change of command ceremony will take place Saturday, July 10, at 2 p.m. at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard.



Col. Lee Tafanelli

Col. Lee Tafanelli

Tafanelli, commander of the 69th

Troop Command, also has served as the director of operations for the Kansas Guard. He joined the Kansas Army National Guard in 1980 and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers through Pittsburg State University’s ROTC program in 1982.

Tafanelli has served in a wide variety of command and staff positions as a traditional Guardsman, active Guard and Reserve and active duty Soldier at the company, battalion, brigade, state headquarters and Department of the Army level. His battalion and brigade level assignments included reconnaissance officer; equipment platoon leader; supply officer; company commander; and training officer in the 891st Engineer Battalion. He also served as the personnel officer and training officer of the 69th Infantry Brigade, 35th Infantry Division. In 2005, as commander of the 891st Engineer Battalion, he led the battalion during a deployment to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Tafanelli served as the executive as-

sistant to the Adjutant General of Kansas, State Recruiting and Retention manager, mobilization planner; Force Integration and Readiness officer; Education Services officer; and Surface Maintenance Manager at state headquarters. At the Department of the Army level, he served as military assistant to the assistant secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs at the Pentagon in support of Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom.

In 1999, Tafanelli earned a master’s degree in Environmental Planning and Management at Kansas State University. He is a graduate of the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, U.S. Army Command and General Staff Officer Course, Army Force Development and Modernization Course, Army Mobilization and Deployment Course and the Air Command and Staff Officer Course. He is also a graduate of the Army’s Airborne and Air Assault Courses.

His awards and decorations include the

(Continued on Page 11)

Soldiers return from Kosovo

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Twenty-one Soldiers of the Kansas National Guard were honored during a ceremony at the Lawrence armory on May 14 as they returned home from a peace-keeping mission in Kosovo.

The Soldiers are from Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Company A of the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Kansas City, Kan.

“These Soldiers have done a fantas-

tic job and we’re glad to welcome them home,” said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general.

“I can tell you that if I had been gone from my family for eight months probably the last thing I would want to hear is a long speech from a politician,” said Gov. Mark Parkinson, “so I will be very brief.”

“But my brevity doesn’t reflect a lack of appreciation,” he continued. “I will tell you we are extremely appreciative of your service. The military officers have told me that you served with distinction and just did a terrific job.”

“I want to tell you guys how proud I am of your Soldiers. They did an outstanding job in the finest tradition of the Kansas National Guard.”

Capt. Darren Koberlein

Parkinson said that service should always be a point of pride for the Soldiers.

“Whatever it is that you do for the rest of your lives in your civilian careers,” said Parkinson, “you and your families and your kids and grandkids and those that come after them will always know that you served your country with honor and with courage and with great distinction and that’s something that you should always be quite proud of.”

“So on behalf of our 2.8 million Kansans, I want to congratulate you for your service, thank you for your service, let you know how extremely happy we are that you’ve made it back safe and sound. Soldiers, welcome home to Kansas.”

Company commander Capt. Darren Koberlein told the assembled families and friends how much he appreciated the Soldiers who served under his command.

(Continued on Page 3)

Davoren looks forward to new role

By Lt. Col. Rex Johnson
Joint Forces Headquarters Public Affairs

Brig. Gen. John Davoren is returning to the 35th Infantry Division for his fourth tour of service with the Division. Having served in several positions with the 35th, this time he is assuming the role of Division Commander in a ceremony that will be conducted on Saturday, Aug. 28.

“I’m very excited about the opportunity to be the next 35th Division commander,” said Davoren. “When I started with the Kansas National Guard I had not really expected to someday be the 35th Division commander.”

Davoren’s military career began 34 years ago. Growing up near Basehor, Kan., he credits family members as his inspiration for deciding to serve in uniform.

“My uncle and cousin served in World War II,” Davoren explained. “Even as late as now they are just starting to talk about some of the stories. The idea of service to the nation really appealed to me. And early on I thought the Army was a good fit for me.”

“I am old enough that the draft was still in effect when I graduated high school,” continued Davoren, “and my draft number for that year was number 13. I had a cousin who had been a University of Kansas Air Force ROTC

graduate. He talked to me about the programs there. That was the first time that I had considered being an officer. So I transferred to the University of Kansas and then received a regular Army commission upon graduation.”

Davoren received his commission as second lieutenant in the infantry in 1976. During his first seven years, he was on active duty, being stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky.; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and Fort Riley, Kan. About his sixth year of service, he and his wife decided that they should look for an opportunity to come back to Kansas and be near their families. In 1985, then Capt. Davoren transferred to the Kansas Army National Guard.

One of the factors that Davoren enjoys about the Guard is the ability to serve with the same units throughout a career. He has had three different assignments with the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry, and this will be his fourth tour with the 35th Division.

The mission for the National Guard has changed a great deal since 1985. Davoren commented that one of the things he has noticed about the Soldiers in the Kansas National Guard is their ability to adapt.

“We have seen this transition from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve. We have a force that has met all of the missions within Kansas, within the United States, and overseas,” said Davoren. “We have also seen the Kansas Army National Guard transition away from some of the traditional mobilization efforts, whether they are security forces to some of the more unique mis-

(Continued on Page 7)



Brig. Gen. John Davoren

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 S. Topeka Blvd.
Topeka Kansas 66611-1287
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Afghan village using drip irrigation in community garden

By Sgt. Adam Cloyd
Agribusiness Development Team #2

The missions of agri-business development teams are as varied as the civilian backgrounds of the National Guardsmen that make them up. With the paths their missions follow as winding as the goat trails the teams travel on to assess agriculture practices in their provinces.

Adding to the challenge is the fact that successes in agriculture take time. Wheat planted in September isn't harvested until May or June. ADTs often do not get to see the results of their efforts before it's time to return home.

Providing basic agriculture education and services for the people in order to support the legitimacy and effectiveness of the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is the starting point for ADT operations.

In Laghman Province, the Kansas ADT is working alongside their Afghan partners to better manage the provinces water resources as one part of their mission to assist and educate farmers.

Water management is a vital link in the food security chain and a top priority for the government offices the team works hand in hand with every day. Given a reliable water source, Afghan farmers have proven themselves gifted farmers.

"The easiest and the hardest thing I can do is teach them to use their water better," said Staff Sgt. Harold Wespe, the team's agronomist.

When the team walked into a new community garden in the village of Gerdy Kats, lined with trees planted using drip irrigation, they knew they had made the right turn down their path.

"I'm impressed to see the technology from the demonstration site make its way so quickly to the village," said Staff Sgt. Donald Flax, the team's Rural Development Specialist.

Col. Mike Dittamo, the ADT com-

Battalion deploys for year-long mission in the Horn of Africa

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Five hundred seventy-six members of the Kansas Army National Guard, were honored during a ceremony at the Bicentennial Center in Salina, Kan., on May 10, as they prepared to deploy to the Horn of Africa for a year-long mission.

The Soldiers are from the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry, headquartered in Kansas City, with subordinate units in Wichita, Lawrence, Lenexa, Emporia and Manhattan. Lt. Col. Greg Mittman is the commander leading the unit along with Command Sgt. Maj.



Drip irrigation technology allowed the people of Gerday Kats village to plant an orchard in their community garden. Drip irrigation, as opposed to traditional flood irrigation, significantly decreases the amount of water needed, allowing the village to utilize its water supply more efficiently. (Photo by Sgt. Adam Cloyd)

mander, agreed.

"Seeing this technology here means most importantly that they believe in it," said Dittamo.

The technology was taught at the demonstration farm just outside of Forward Operating Base Zio Haq, near Gerdy Kats. Classes were developed and taught by local nationals from the Laghman Director of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock's office, one of the Laghman Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan line director's offices that the ADT is responsible to support.

Drip irrigation can be a key component in a village's overall water management plan and the DAIL has made teaching this technology a priority in the province.

"Drip irrigation can stretch their water out, giving them more bang for their buck,

Troy Hester.

"This is a unique formation," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. "In front of you today are 576 of the finest warriors anywhere—574 Soldiers and two Airmen."

"And people ask me all the time... they say 'Well, general, the Horn of Africa is a hard place. That's not a very good place,'" Bunting continued. "And I say 'I understand that, but they don't send us anywhere other than that.' When the skies are clear and the winds are fair, we're fishing like everybody else. It's to the hell-holes

(Continued on Page 3)

which is always a good thing," said Wespe.

"Drip irrigation is a new method for our people," said Wazir Akhan, an elder in

Kansas Aviation unit will provide aeromedical evacuation support

By Maj. Mike Wallace
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Approximately 55 members of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion), Kansas Army National Guard, were honored during a ceremony on Thursday, May 13, as they deployed for a year-long mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Speakers for the event were Kansas Governor Mark Parkinson, Brig. Gen. John Davoren, assistant adjutant general-Army and commander of the Kansas Army National Guard; Lt. Col. David Leger, the battalion commander for the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation and Capt. Kevin Kennedy, commander, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation.

Parkinson, addressing the nearly full Lee Arena auditorium at Washburn University wished the unit well and acknowledged that the Kansas National Guard carries a much greater mission throughout the country.

"This unit will make an enormous difference," said Parkinson. "There is opportunity here and you all can make a difference in the chaos that is there."

Parkinson had everyone in the auditorium stand and give a standing ovation of thanks to the unit members and said, "You Kansas Guard members, who risk your

Gerday Kats village. "Without it, we could not have planted our new orchard."

"We're very thankful to the coalition forces, especially the ADT," he added.

Teaching the technology is only the first step in the Director of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock's goals. Having the local farmers adapt the technology and employ it in their villages after the training is vital to the director's efforts and, in turn, the ADT's.

"This is a package that can be repeated easily in other villages and will be," Dittamo added. The ADT is working on that package already with the DAILs staff and hopes to reproduce the project's success in multiple villages.

"Train the trainer is a great combat multiplier and this project allows us to do just that," said Capt. Dallas McMullen, the agriculture officer in charge.

When villagers told the team that farmers from neighboring villages were asking them about the technology and how it worked the team knew they had a winning formula. With Afghans teaching Afghans and those Afghans passing down the knowledge, not only is the food security chain strengthening in the province but so is the knowledge chain.

lives for the betterment of humanity, are the real heroes."

Davoren identified the sacrifice of the family members and thanked them all while identifying them as part of the Kansas National Guard team.

Today's Soldiers are people who serve during extraordinary circumstances. They know the true meaning of courage and family. This ceremony... is a tribute to their devotion to duty and your support for them.

Brig. Gen. John Davoren

"It is not only the men and women in uniform who support our nation," said Davoren. "Our service is enhanced by the unwavering support of our families and communities who see their loved ones and friends daily answer our nation's call."

"Today's Soldiers are people who serve during extraordinary circumstances. They know the true meaning of courage and family. This ceremony to honor our men and women in uniform is a tribute to their

(Continued on Page 11)



Troops of the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, Kansas National Guard, march into their deployment ceremony in Salina on May 10. (Photo by Jane Welch, Public Affairs Office)



Gov. Mark Parkinson thanks the Soldiers of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion) for their service to the state and nation. The unit deployed in May for a year-long mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Jane Welch, Public Affairs Office)

Ask the TAG

Soldiers may be eligible for leave

I heard on the news that as a Soldier who has been deployed that I might be eligible for additional leave? Do you have any information on this?

Thousands of Army National Guard Soldiers, including those who have retired or separated, have until Oct. 28, 2010, to apply for Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence compensation for serving long, overseas deployments.

The Department of Defense developed PDMRA for servicemembers who were deployed longer than established dwell ratios. For reserve component servicemembers that dwell ratio is one year deployed for every five years at home station. As a stop gap measure the policy was revised and allowed eligible Soldiers to apply those leave days to their next deployment. But for those who left the service or don't deploy again, that effectively meant they couldn't take advantage of the benefit.

If you were part of an involuntary mobilization and were released from active duty between Jan. 19, 2007 and Aug. 18, 2007, you may be eligible for this Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence.

If you were part of an involuntary mobilization and were released from active duty between Jan. 19, 2007 and Aug. 18, 2007, you may be eligible for this Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence.

The Kansas Army National Guard Personnel office has been diligently working this issue. A line-by-line review of deployed Soldier's records is being done.

If you think you might be eligible for this benefit, please contact Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Hall at lawrence.halljr@us.army.mil; phone at 785-274-1084 or Sgt. Kristin Ricard at kristin.ricard@us.army.mil; phone at 785-274-1080.

** ** *

Send your question(s) by email to Tagquestions@us.army.mil or by mail to the Adjutant General's Public Affairs Office, Attn: Sharon Watson, 2722 S. Topeka Blvd., Room 108, Topeka KS 66611. Questions may be submitted anonymously.

731st Truck Company conducts change of command ceremony

After more than two years in command, Capt. Christopher Sanders turned over the reins of the 731st Light/Medium Truck Company June 5 in a brief ceremony at the South Wichita Armory.

The ceremony was the last act for Sanders with the unit, which had returned from a successful annual training mission in support of the South Carolina National Guard on June 4.

Succeeding Sanders was Capt. Peter Euler, who is taking his second consecutive command after transferring to the 731st from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 287th Sustainment Brigade.

Sanders has been with the 731st for almost 15 years, joining the unit in 1996 when he enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard. Euler comes to the 731st with a strong transportation background, but limited line-haul experience, as he

has served with transportation companies performing security forces missions on two deployments.

Sanders, who was presented with the Army Achievement Medal from 287th Special Troops Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Tony D. Divish, addressed the troops, speaking fondly of the accomplishments throughout the unit's history, from stateside missions including annual training and disaster relief to a deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Divish congratulated Sanders and offered Euler advice on the challenges he will face in his new command.

Euler addressed the small contingent of unit Soldiers, congratulating them on their accomplishments despite small numbers, as much of the unit is scheduled to be mobilized with the 778th Transportation Company in preparation for an OIF deployment.

Soldiers return from Kosovo

Continued from Page 1

"I want to tell you guys how proud I am of your Soldiers," said Koberlein. "They did an outstanding job in the finest tradition of the Kansas National Guard."

"I cannot say that I have seen a better mission-ready company. Everybody was

on their game."

The Soldiers deployed in August 2009 to Kosovo, where they were attached to the 231st Brigade Support Battalion, North Dakota National Guard, as the Quick Reaction Force for Task Force Defender, KFOR 12, Multinational Task Force East.



Gov. Mark Parkinson welcomed home 21 Kansas National Guardsmen who returned in May from an eight-month mission to Kosovo. (Photo by Shaton Watson, Public Affairs Office)

Kansas Airman gets up-close look at Gulf Coast oil disaster



Tech. Sgt. Emily Alley, a member of the 190th Air Refueling Wing, stands on a beach on Santa Rosa Island the first day oil washed ashore. Alley volunteered to provide public affairs support for National Guard operations related to the Gulf oil spill. (Photo by Spc. Stephanie Cassinos, Minnesota Army National Guard)

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

Growing up in Kansas, the center of the country, beaches seem so exotic.

Shortly after the BP oil spill, about 15 public affairs taskings opened for the National Guard. I put in for the orders to the Gulf Coast.

On my first day in the command center of the 24/7 cleanup operation—two floors of a sleek black office building in New Orleans—I felt a jittery thrill. It wasn't just because chilled cases of Red Bull stood for the taking every 20 feet. I was so excited to dig into the story, meet the situation in person. It started with a briefing.

New arrivals, mostly Coast Guard, shuffled into the briefing room. A handful of other Airmen and one pilot sat near me. In front, several large diagrams of the oil well and ships were propped against a marker board. A dark haired BP engineer in a white, short-sleeve button down shirt began to explain the technical aspects of the oil spill. He didn't have a British accent, which I found disappointing since it's a British company, but I figured he was still credible enough to answer questions. I raised my hand.

"If you did nothing at this point, how long would it take for the oil well to exhaust itself?" I asked.

"Til' the dinosaurs return!" quipped the pilot with stereotypical bravado.

The room burst into laughter until the engineer began to explain that, because oil sponges through layers of rock, he can't accurately estimate the amount.

After the briefing, my public affairs team of five split off to travel to our assignment destination: Pensacola. The beaches were still perfect. The water was

still swimmable. For the first few days, it was so surreal to finish work and walk out the door of the hotel onto a pristine sugar-white sand beach. Then the oil hit.

That morning, my team had to cover a visit by Coast Guard Rear Admiral James Watson, the commander of containment and cleanup operations. He toured the beaches. As we stepped onto the sand, helicopters flew overhead. Bewildered looking tourists, who had been snapping photos of the oil splotches, turned their camera phones on us. The dozen Coast Guard, Army and Air Force uniforms stood among bikinis. Locals were easy to identify; they were the ones crying.

A little boy walked up to me and, in a thick Southern drawl, asked, "Why'd you poke a hole in the oil?"

His father walked up, took the boy by the hand and told him, "They didn't do it. They're here to help."

Cleanup crews, working in white suits with thick, colorful rubber gloves and shoes were already furiously shoveling the sticky mess into bags. By the next day, the sand was clean again and no longer roped off with yellow tape like a crime scene.

Still, tiny tarballs have been consistently washing ashore, killing most peoples' desire to touch the water. Women snapped at children not to touch them. I went for a barefoot walk through the surf and later regretted it when the sticky brown blobs, with the texture of rubber cement, had to be scraped off my feet.

One local, who waitresses at night and spends her days on the beach, said she was sad to see it happen; however, she added that the community had taken the beaches for granted before the oil arrived. As a Kansan, I was still dazzled to sit and watch the blue water dissolve into sky.

Battalion deploys to Horn of Africa

Continued from Page 2

on Earth and the hard places and where hard things have to be done that we go. And that is why in front of you right now are 576 warriors who stood up and said 'Choose me, send me and we'll go to the Horn of Africa and do a great job'."

"Why this mission? Why Africa?" Mittman posed rhetorically. "Recent history demonstrates that areas of instability throughout the world directly impact American national security. East Africa... has long lacked stable governments capable of providing regional security and long-term prosperity."

"Our mission includes mentoring and assisting East African nations in developing these capacities," said Mittman. "The

warriors of the 1st Kansas battalion are charged with helping shape this outcome, with promoting liberty and thus protecting our own national security."

"Thomas Paine reminds us 'Those who expect to reap the blessings of liberty must also undergo the fatigue of supporting it,'" Mittman continued. "And since that fateful day in September, the warriors that you see before you have served in Iraq, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Germany and Saudi Arabia."

"One day soon," he concluded, "the fatigue we begin experiencing this day will pass. We will look forward to that spring day when we are reunited and to the privilege of living out our remaining days in peace."

Busy months ahead for the Adjutant General's Department

By Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting
The Adjutant General

It often amazes me how fast the year passes and this year is no exception! I hope you all took time to pause from your busy schedules for the recent Independence Day holiday to remember the many troops overseas. Our deployment operational tempo has increased in recent months. In fact, more than 1,300 of our 7,700 Kansas Guardsmen have been in a deployed status in recent months. That's up from an average of 700 on any given day during the past year or so.



Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting

Later this month, we'll welcome home more than 400 Soldiers and Airmen from the Sinai where they've served in the peacekeeping efforts of the Multinational Force Observers. Then, in the months ahead, approximately 500 troops will leave for one of the following locations: Afghanistan, Iraq and another Sinai mission. We don't anticipate this tempo to change anytime soon, so our focus on training our Soldiers and Airmen will continue to be a priority as we prepare for upcoming missions.

Our training site in Salina at Crisis City has had two significant developments, including the completion of our headquarters building and the rubble pile. We recently had a number of K-9 units from Search and Research teams train on the rubble pile and we hope many more emergency responders will take advantage

...more than 1,300 of our 7,700 Kansas Guardsmen have been in a deployed status in recent months. That's up from an average of 700 on any given day during the past year or so.

of this new site. Our third annual Business and Industry Forum was held in the new headquarters building with a record turnout this year. With each forum, we expand our network of businesses interested in partnering with us during disasters.

The Nebraska National Guard will also join us in Salina at Crisis City and the Great Plains Joint Training Center this month for an exercise to certify its Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package. The exercise will include civilian partners, similar to Vigilant Guard 2009, providing a training venue for emergency responders who take part in a real disaster. Several leaders from the Nebraska Guard will visit the site during the exercise. The Nebraska CERFP is relatively new Guard capability, comprised of nearly 200 Soldiers and Airmen who could also assist Kansas, Missouri and Iowa, if necessary.

Our State Partnership Program, which partners Kansas with Armenia, will host a trip involving Kansas State University leaders in mid-July to further our agricultural initiatives begun in 2009. The team includes Dr. Marty Vanier, who leads the university's National Agricultural Bio-security Center, and retired Lt. COL.

Craig Beardsley, program administrator of NABC. Earlier this year, a team of Armenian leaders came to Kansas to observe a tabletop exercise on foreign animal disease. They will carry out a similar exercise in Armenia when K-State staff arrives. Last month, the State Partnership Program sent three Soldiers, an Airman and our public affairs director to assist the U.S. Corp of Engineers as it hosted a tabletop exercise, which involved an earthquake, flooding and other natural disasters, to test response capabilities.

A number of people are taking on new commands and leadership roles in the Kansas Guard, including Brig. Gen. John Davoren, who will replace the 35th Division commander, Maj. Gen. Wayne Pierson, in August. On July 10, Col. Lee Tafanelli stepped in as the new assistant adjutant general - Army. He also serves simultaneously as the commander of the Kansas Army National Guard. Also, Col. John J. Hernandez recently took command of the 184th Intelligence Wing. Congratulations to all of you!

Recently, in an effort to improve our communication efforts, we revamped our agency Web site, and invite you to take a look around the site at <http://kansastag.ks.gov/>. From the home page of this site, you may click on the Facebook and Twitter icons and access our social media sites. We encourage you to follow us on Twitter and join us on Facebook as we use these tools to reach more people.

And finally, I want to bring up a topic that I proposed in my role as chairman of the National Guard Association of the U.S., — the merger of the Army Reserves and Air Reserves forces into the National Guard. As you know, state and federal budgets continue to be reduced, so this measure would improve the Department of Defense reserve forces' financial picture by consolidating troops, facilities and equipment. This idea involves the integration of two great teams. There is always resistance to change, but this is a concept worth considering as we look for ways to consolidate operations, reduce duplication and think beyond how things have always been done.

Warrior to Warrior Service before self should be the goal of all Kansas Guardsmen

By Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Bullington
190th Maintenance Squadron

I want to take this opportunity to thank those who serve and to provoke some thought into why we serve. Please take a moment to reflect and ask, "Am I serving my country to my fullest abilities?" Do you believe that joining the military means that you are serving? What do the words "service before self" mean to you? Do you uphold this core value? What are you doing to improve your service?



Chief Master Sgt. Kevin Bullington

It is my belief that it is an exception more than rule that we come into the military serving to our fullest extent. If you are a first term Guardsman, please do not take this in a negative light. I have participated in many functions at home station and deployed where first term Guardsman are serving proudly.

If the military is forming into a potential career to you, then odds are you will reach a turning point where the amount you get from our unit is not as important to you as what you can give back. Non-commissioned officers should be imparting the core value of service before self to our first term Guardsman and helping them reach that turning point.

Service before self is the responsibility of all Guardsmen. NCOs should instill, build and nurture this value. As NCOs, we should not complain about how a newly assigned Guardsman is only here at our

unit and in the National Guard for the benefits. I have heard this sentiment more than once.

I challenge our NCOs to ensure they are providing opportunities for our troops to serve, and earn the benefits bestowed on them for serving. A good NCO leads and provides opportunities for troops to grow personally and professionally. Get to know your Soldiers and Airmen, find out their needs and goals and, when possible, guide them into situations that will allow them to grow and serve.

If as NCOs we are not providing opportunities, then we are doing our unit and our country a disservice by not operating at our fullest capacity. The opportunities are as wide and varied as the people we have in the unit. A good place to start is having a clear objective before each drill and during annual training to accomplish specific training goals. Know the opportunities at our unit, communities and state level that fit your troops needs to grow and develop. It takes hard work and planning; none of this happens without foresight.

Yes, these young Guardsmen belong to the military; yes, they raised their right hand to follow the orders of the officers appointed over them. However, to serve is a transition many of us make in our military careers with the help of others.

To paraphrase one of my favorite quotes, serving is a blank check made payable to the United States of America for the amount up to and including your life.

There is not one correct answer to how we serve, but more of a common theme and purpose to ensure we are serving. Be proud that you enjoy the opportunity to serve and help others to serve to their full capacity.

Chief's Corner

"I look forward to this challenge"

By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Hector Vasquez

I would like to take this opportunity to say that I am extremely honored to have been selected as the new command chief warrant officer for this great state. I would like for you to know a little about me.

I'm a 131A Field Artillery Warrant Officer. I have been a warrant

officer since 1991 and I started out my first assignment as a radar technician for Battery E, 161st Field Artillery (Target Acquisition Battery) out of Great Bend, Kan. I deployed with the unit to Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, in 1996.

After returning from this mission, I left Battery E and was assigned to the 130th Field Artillery Brigade. During this period (2004-2005) I was deployed to Mosul, Iraq, with Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 131st Field Artillery (Target Acquisition Battery) from San Antonio, Texas. I was deployed for 14 months as a field artillery targeting and counterfire officer.

After this assignment, I was assigned to the 35th Infantry Division out of Fort Leavenworth as a field artillery intelligence officer. I deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo in 2007-2008 and served in the information operations targeting sec-

tion. I have also been involved with "War Fighters" in Thailand and just recently in Korea with the 35th ID. Since 2006, I have also been a Teaching Advising and Counseling Officer for the Warrant Officer Candidate School in Salina.

I will be leaving my current position as the assistant shop foreman for the Combined Support Maintenance Shop in Topeka, where I've been working since 1981. I'm a graduate from Kansas State University where I received a Bachelor of Science degree in "Interdisciplinary Management." I've been married for 27 years to my lovely wife, Gerri. I have two beautiful daughters, Whitney and Rene. I also have three dogs and a cat. I enjoy the outdoors and play all types of sports.

As your new command chief I would like to continue to improve upon our current strength, Warrant Officer Advisory Council, Mentorship Program and Warrant Officer Development Programs. I plan on conducting meetings for these programs and will be asking for my senior warrants for their assistance and suggestions to improve upon these programs. I look forward to meeting all of my fellow warrant officers as well as enlisted/noncommissioned officers and officers throughout the state. I have lots to offer due to my past experiences and being a former noncommissioned officer, as well as working with officers throughout my career. I look forward to this challenge.

Vasquez may be contacted at (785) 274-1903; email hector.vasquez@us.army.mil



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Hector Vasquez

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 Plains Guardian is published in January, March, May, July, September and November. Deadline for all submissions is the first Wednesday of the month prior to publication month. Submissions may be e-mailed to jane.e.welch1@us.army.mil.

Circulation: Approximately 15,500
Printed under contract with the U.S. Government Printing Office

Commander in Chief
Gov. Mark Parkinson
Adjutant General of Kansas
Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting

Editor
Sharon Watson
Production/Graphics/Writer
Stephen D. Larson
Production Assistant
Jane Welch

Public Affairs Office
Director
Sharon Watson (785) 274-1192

Assistant Director
Stephen D. Larson (785) 274-1194

Administrative Assistant
Jane Welch (785) 274-1190
FAX (785) 274-1622
email: jane.e.welch1@us.army.mil

The Plains Guardian may be read online in PDF format
<http://kansastag.ks.gov/default.asp>. Click the "Publications" link on the home page.
For change of address, contact Jane Welch

226th Engineer Company hits the ground running in Afghanistan

By Staff Sgt. Jeff Richardson and Spc. Celia Prince, UPARs

Arriving in Afghanistan in early February 2010, the 226th Engineer Company's operations went into full swing without a moment's hesitation.

First to arrive at Forward Operating Base Sharana, where they will live and work, was 1st Platoon, who wasted no time in starting their missions. The first project was already assigned, a 16-room Super B-Hut.

The company is composed of nearly 150 personnel and was expecting their detachment, 2nd Platoon, which was stationed at another FOB, to arrive within a month. Living quarters space would be growing slim due to the surge of troops coming in and time was of the essence.

"We have multiple military occupational specialties in our platoon," said Staff Sgt. Jeff Richardson, noncommissioned officer in charge of the jobsite. "This project gave us the chance to cross-train Soldiers to become a more efficient platoon."

Supervising in Afghanistan, though it may be similar to his civilian work back

home, requires a lot more to the overseeing process than what he has been used to. Now, rather than just focusing on one area at a time, there are multiple areas being worked on. Richardson said he was in charge of the organization of teams and the overall safety and hours that each Soldier puts in.

"It was really an empowering experience having been multitasked with organizing each team; knowing who to put where and then knowing where each troop was working, keeping track of the bill of materials used and meeting the timeline of getting the project complete," said Richardson.

While the concrete was being poured, Richardson set the rest of the troops from 1st Platoon to work by organizing the teams with their "one experienced Soldier," who cross-trained their individual teams by putting them to work on prefabricating the interior and exterior walls and doors.

As the walls went up and the sheeting was applied to the exterior walls and roof, outside help came from an electrical team from 3rd Platoon and a sidewalk construction crew from 2nd Platoon, who arrived

at FOB Sharana as an advanced party.

"I have built many items throughout my life, but nothing of this magnitude,"

said Richardson. "I'm really proud of everyone that worked on our site. This

(Continued on Page 6)



Sgt. Matthew Pierson and Spc. Kyler Wellman work on measuring and cutting dimensions needed to help build the 16 room Super B-Hut for their detachment, 2nd Platoon who was expected to arrive within one month's timeframe. (Photo by Spc. Celia Prince, UPAR)



Spc. James Barclay assists Spc. Kevin Murphy III in the mounting of support beams for the 20' by 5' trusses that filled the length of the 18' by 72' frame of the Super B-Hut. (Photo by Spc. Celia Prince, UPAR)



The Super B-Hut was completed in 18 actual work days from start to finish. (Photo by Spc. Celia Prince, UPAR)

Projects make way for junior noncommissioned officers to lead

By Spc. Celia Prince, UPAR
226th Engineer Company

During deployments, many Soldiers are able to let their valuable knowledge and assets shine.

One of the assets a National Guard Soldier can bring to his job is the training they receive on the civilian side. Spc. Kyler Wellman, 1st Platoon, 3rd Squad, 226th Engineer Company didn't start out as a concrete foreman for jobsites, at least not in the Army, but, for Wellman, such work is nothing new.

As a civilian, he works as a contractor, where he has remodeled kitchens and bathrooms, constructed room additions and built garages.

Wellman has had plenty of opportunity to teach and delegate. This knowledge has carried over in his military career, where his opinion and expertise has earned him the position as junior noncommissioned officer in charge of the concrete team.

Within the first couple of days of the project, his concrete crew was able to learn what was expected of them quickly and work efficiently to lay out the foundation.

"This was their first time doing a project like this," Wellman said. "For Spc. Jessica Sifuentes, her dad does it, so she was pretty excited and the guys were fast learners, too. I'm working with a good group. They're now able to arrive to the site and know what to do."

Wellman shares the responsibility of overseeing the mission with Staff Sgt. Eric Brodersen, noncommissioned officer

in charge of the concrete team. Brodersen and his crew—Spc. James Barclay, Spc. Vincent Gonzales, Spc. Jessica Sifuentes and Spc. Kyle Taylor—began their first project on Feb. 20, 2010, on a jobsite that was to become the barracks for 16 Soldiers of the 226th Engineering Company's 2nd Platoon.

The pouring technique is a quick and easy process to learn. With the help of his team, Wellman is able to get a form set and poured in just a couple of days.

The concrete mix is unlike the quality Wellman is accustomed to in Kansas. In Afghanistan, the consistency can vary from very wet to dry, depending on the arrival of the next truck. The consistency is a key factor in the concrete's drying time.

The consistency of the mix determines what tools will be used to smooth out the surface. Wellman said there were days where the power trowel wasn't able to be used and, due to the different consistencies being poured on one pad and the wetness of the mix being used, a screed tool broke one day.

These adjustments weren't setbacks, though. They were ideas emerging for the next project. The concrete team learned what would benefit them in the removal of air bubbles, how large the forms needed to be for the next pour and what other tools to request.

On their second project, they were tasked to lay out four forms running 40 feet by 90 feet long. As they began their second day, a Navy Seabee approached, asking if



The concrete team works with local nationals as they pour the mix for the foundation of the 16 room Super B-Hut project. The team, primarily made up of four members from 1st Platoon, 226th Engineer Company, also received help from other Soldiers working out at the Super B-Hut jobsite. (Photo by Spc. Celia Prince, UPAR)

they would like to have some extra hands helping them, saying that his guys were eager to work and were waiting on tools to arrive, so they'd like to be put to work.

"We ran into a problem where we only had five guys one day," said Wellman. "With concrete, it's always better to have extra people than not enough."

Thus began the collaboration of the Navy Seabees working with the concrete

team, as well as other projects such as the trusses being prepped for the billeting SEA Huts. The time the Seabees spent helping, helped the work day immensely and Wellman said it was "nice having the experience and more hands" on the jobsite.

With five projects under their belts and plenty more ahead, it's foreseeable that with Wellman's expertise and crew of five, the concrete crew will be requested again soon.

Black Hawks give policy makers aerial view of reservoir area



Kansas legislators and policymakers get a bird's eye view of John Redmond Reservoir and the surrounding watershed area, courtesy of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation. (Photo by Sgt. Jason Lee, Public Affairs Office)

By Sgt. Jason Lee
Public Affairs Office

Three UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the Kansas National Guard's 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation provided aerial transport June 2 so policymakers from around Kansas could get a firsthand look at the John Redmond Reservoir near Burlington in Coffey County. Their goal was to see how sediment is affecting the reservoir's ability to produce natural resources.

The Kansas Army National Guard worked in conjunction with the Kansas Geological Survey's Geology Extension program and the Kansas Field Conference to make the trip possible. Kansas National Guard units often provide civic leader orientation flights to community leaders and are responders in emergency response issues related to flooding, other natural disasters and nuclear events.

"We certainly want to thank all of you (Kansas National Guard) for giving us this great opportunity to be here," said District 31 State Senator Carolyn McGinn.

731st Transportation Company provides support for South Carolina Soldiers

By Capt. Peter Euler
731st Transportation Company

With many new Soldiers among their ranks, members of the 731st Transportation Company received valuable experience assisting their fellow National Guard members from South Carolina during the unit's annual training.

Soldiers from the 731st helped secure and transport decommissioned tracked vehicles from Camp McCready, located near Fort Jackson, S.C., more than 120 miles to the Charleston Harbor, where they will eventually be taken out to sea via ship

"(In the legislature) we see a lot of things on paper. Sometimes people try to bring pictures in, but you just don't truly understand until you see the overall picture."

During the two and a half day conference, participants traveled by chartered bus to different locations throughout the state to get a better understanding of how the state uses water to produce energy. The group also looked at how rangeland management practices affect nearby reservoir sedimentation, highway design and potential flood risks.

"It is really geared toward educating legislatures and decision makers on what the issues are and what some of the background is and what the options are," said Earl Lewis, assistant director, Kansas Water Office.

Participants traveled to the Flint Hills, Cross Timbers and the Verdigris River basin and were given a guided tour, which provided them with background information and issues on all the locations they visited.

and dropped into the water to establish an artificial reef.

Many of the 731st Soldiers are either brand new to the National Guard or the truck driver Military Occupational Specialty, which made the trip and the missions extremely worthwhile. Each unit truck logged more than 3,000 miles during the annual training period. Unit members experienced driving in heavy urban traffic in Birmingham, Ala., and Atlanta, Ga. and in adverse weather conditions as the annual training overlapped into the start of the Gulf Coast's hurricane season.



Members of the South Carolina National Guard load an M113 onto one of the 731st Medium Truck Company's M872 trailers in preparation for a mission while members of the 731st perform Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services on their trucks. Soldiers from 731st and South Carolina worked jointly in a mission to use the decommissioned M113s in the establishment of an artificial reef near the Charleston, S.C., harbor. (Photo provided)

Three-day drill puts 35th Infantry Division Soldiers to the test

By 35th Infantry Division Public Affairs

At 5 a.m. on a Saturday morning, 1st Sgt. Antonio Slaughter awakened 35 Infantry Division enlisted Soldiers to his words of, "Get up, damn it, I love ya!"

With that, Soldiers sprang from their beds to the excitement of individual weapons qualification at the Great Plains Joint Training Center at the Salina, Kan., training site.

The first part of the training was with the Fire Arms Training System. Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Sutton noted the system provided realistic weapons simulation training prior to the individual weapons qualification weekend. Fire Arms Training and Preliminary Marksman Instruction in months prior to the three day drill "helped bring more emphasis on weapons training," he said.

"People seemed confident and happy after the zero range... they were not rushed," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Keith Rogers.

Sgt. Maj. John Conover, Division Training and Operations noncommissioned officer in charge said the weekend will "set [Soldiers] up for success, give

them a taste of success and it will carry over into other areas of being a Soldier."

The three-day drill allowed Soldiers to proceed from the zero range on Friday to the qualifying range on Saturday with ample time to accomplish the necessary training and return to home station on the third day.

Roll-Over Training

Once Soldiers qualified with their weapons, they proceeded to High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (humvee) Egress Assistance Training, as well as a short Combat Casualty Care course conducted by 35th ID medical staff.

According to a study conducted by the Operational Survivability Analysis Branch, at Fort Rucker, Ala., there were 789 individuals injured with 1,167 sustained injuries from July 1989 to October 2007 in humvee rollover accidents. The training allows Soldiers to experience a simulated humvee rollover, as well as some tools to survive rollover situations.

Combat Casualty Care helps Soldiers to assess and provide a quick response to problems with bleeding, breathing

(Continued on Page 10)



Soldiers of the 35th Infantry Division practice proper egress techniques from a humvee in a roll-over simulator. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael C. Green, 35th Infantry Division Public Affairs)

226th Engineer Company

Continued from Page 5

was our first job we completed since we arrived in Sharana and I feel we did a tremendous job."

"Eighteen actual work days from start to finish," said Sgt. 1st Class M. Gregg Walls, 1st Platoon leader. "The guys did an outstanding job, I'm looking forward to the next project."

Approximately 30,000 Soldiers will be

arriving in the area in the near future, and with the influx, the Super B-Hut, which measures out to 18 feet by 72 feet, is just one of many housing styles the 226th Engineer Company will be taking part in to help build up the FOB. Richardson said on his next project he will be in charge of two 19 foot by 40 foot long Southeast Asia Huts, which have metal roofs, extended rafters and screened-in areas.

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT RETREAT

Aug. 20-22, 2010

Kansas City Marriott - Country Club Plaza
4445 Main Street
Kansas City, MO 64111

Register both Soldier and spouse for this event at www.strongbonds.org or by calling (785) 274-1514. Registration ends 2 p.m. Aug. 3, 2010!

Lodging, breakfast and lunch are provided. Travel/mileage expenses reimbursed. Married couples only event - No childcare available. Retreat will begin at 7:30 Friday evening and conclude by noon on Sunday.

Limited to the first 45 couples! Soldiers in the 161st Field Artillery will be given first priority. For more information call (785) 274-1514.

Get a fun & free weekend for two.

Along with a ticket to a stronger marriage.

93% of the couples who participated in Strong Bonds showed significantly improved relationship quality!

Whether you've celebrated one anniversary or 20, as an Army couple you can anticipate more excitement - and expect more challenges - than the average civilian couple. Long separations, the stress of military life, deployments, and reintegrating as a couple once your loved one comes home can subject Army marriages to extreme hardship.

The marriage enrichment retreat is designed to strengthen relationships, inspire hope, and rekindle the spark in marriages.

For more information please contact the Joint Support Chaplain Office at 785-274-1514 or mike.mcclellan@us.army.mil

Cannon fire is music to these Guardsmen's ears

By Maj. Mike Wallace
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Mist was falling with the ever looming threat of heavier rains. Yet, the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery was undaunted in performing their mission—firing the 16 rounds required for the Wichita Symphony's annual Riverfest performance of Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's "The Year 1812, Festival Overture in E flat major, Op. 49"—otherwise known to the world as "The 1812 Overture."

The logistics of safety and precision in placement of the shots require either well-drilled military crews using modern cannons or the use of 16 pieces of muzzle-loading artillery. Any reloading schemes to fire the 16 shots in the two minute time span involved makes safety and precision impossible with 1800s artillery.

The battalion uses the M1A6 75-mm pack howitzer, which has been in service with the U.S. military since the years fol-

lowing World War I. It is easy to transport, man, and shoot, and will take the blank cartridges needed for such a performance.

With the logistics of firing the cannons solved, the gun crews worked on their next big challenge—timing!

Sgt. 1st Class Carl Long was the noncommissioned officer in charge of the firing detail. He had the gun crews out drilling every step of their mission during the day so they could perform flawlessly during the night's performance.

"Each gun has three Soldiers on it," said Long. "You have the gun chief (who supervises the gun and ensures safety and proper procedures), the assistant gunner (who loads the charges), and the gunner (who actually fires the weapon)."

"The gunner's the trigger man," explained Long. "He's key when it comes to timing, like the one volley we fired at the end of the national anthem. All four pieces fire in synchronization with each other—all precisely at the same time. You



On cue, Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery fire a cannon shot for a performance of the "1812 Overture," an annual highlight of the Wichita River Festival. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

don't want to have the guns go off one at a time like a bunch of popcorn. This is a very critical mission that we've practiced at least 10 times for."

Synched with the orchestra, guns fire at the exact moment needed. A Wichita Symphony representative is positioned with and is in radio contact—watching the musical score very carefully. He lets the noncommissioned officer in charge know when it is time to signal each gun for firing.

"Get ready," says the symphony representative.

"Gun One, get ready" yells Long, illuminating a signal light in the dark night and raising it over his head.

"Ready," echoes the gun one chief, still watching his crew closely to make sure that all safety precautions have been made.

"Now," says the representative.

"Fire!" says Long as he brings the light down and points it at the gun one section.

The cannon fires precisely at the correct moment and the process is repeated for the other 15 rounds, each gun illuminating the night with its muzzle blast.

Brothers Spc. Tyler Wing and Spc. Sean Wing worked this year's event. Tyler is a cannon crewmember for the fourth gun and has fired the cannons at the Riverfest at least six other times.

Sean works in fire direction control, but will soon be a cannon crewmember.

They both agree that the highlight of the festival is the symphony's performance as the cannons begin to shoot.

"The great part is when you are shooting and the crowd goes wild. The fireworks are bursting over your head and people are cheering with each cannon blast," said both Wing brothers.

Soldier's example inspires respect for nation's flag

By Jane Welch
Public Affairs Office

As parents we teach our growing children many things – how to tie their shoes, how to say their ABCs, and how to write their name. However, as one Kansas National Guard Soldier learned, there are some very important lessons that some children have never been taught.

Sgt. 1st Class Shelly Mann works in the Kansas National Guard Counter Drug Office. As part of her job, she teaches a "Stay on Track" class to the students at Chase Middle School in Topeka, Kan.

Mann was at the school one day when the intercom came on and told students to get ready for the Pledge of Allegiance.

"Of course I stood at attention, faced the flag and followed along with the person on the speaker," said Mann. "In my peripheral vision I could see that none of the students stood."

Mann was in shock. When the Pledge of Allegiance had finished she turned to the classroom and asked "You don't stand for the Pledge of Allegiance?"

She recalls the students shrugged their shoulders and said "We don't have to." The teacher confirmed what the students said and told Mann that she could not require them to stand during the Pledge of Allegiance.

"I had never witnessed anything like this in my life and was totally unprepared

for my reaction," said Mann. "I was not angry, I was heart broke, absolutely pained in my heart. I had to excuse myself from the room to get my emotions in check. I knew this was not the fault of the students and I didn't want to hold it against them."

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Mann excused herself from the room until she could get her composure back. After leaving for the day, she asked herself why it had such an emotional impact on her. She mulled it over and came to the realization that it was because of her love for this country and her patriotism. It had never occurred to her that others would not feel the same way.

"It hurt me to see these students make a statement that they did not understand," said Mann.

The following week, the teacher reported back to Mann that the students

(Continued on Page 9)

Davoren looks forward to new role

Continued from Page 1

sions that we have right now. Fifteen years ago we would have never predicted that we would have the repeated deployments of forces that we have now. Five years ago we would not have predicted that some of the more in-demand operations would be units performing missions like the ground liaison officer, the training teams, or the agri-business development teams."

Davoren served as the Kosovo Force (KFOR) 9 commander during the 2007-2008 deployment. The mission included over 1,300 U.S. Soldiers, several from the 35th Division headquarters as well as various units and individuals from 20 states and two territories. It also included Soldiers from the countries of Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Ukraine and Armenia.

Davoren acknowledges that deployments are not easy, and Soldiers are called to serve in tough areas of the world. He commented that the United States doesn't send the military to nice places that have no problems. "They send us to places to assist in either maintaining the peace or making the peace so that issues can be resolved so that there is no future conflict," Davoren said.

Davoren is impressed with the level of technical ability of today's Soldier in the National Guard. "In the last 10 years we have folks who are more highly trained, more professional than we have had at any other time," Davoren added. "Our level of performance is way up. It is a matter of maintaining that level of performance."

Davoren is inheriting a division that has a number of exciting missions. In addition to KFOR 9, the 35th has carried the two-year Domestic All-Hazards Response Team (DART) mission, and recently completed Operation Key Resolve in Korea.

"Right now we are taking a look at transitioning away from the DART mission," said Davoren. "And as we do that

transition, we will take a look at the future exercises that are coming up. Right now the 35th is signed up to participate in Yama Sakura exercises in January of 2011 and January 2012. In the middle of that will be the first National Guard division to participate in the new full spectrum exercise that will occur mid-2011. There will be opportunities for all members of the 35th Division headquarters to demonstrate their readiness through these exercises. Our relevance to the whole war-fight will be proven as we complete these exercises and validate our capabilities. And then continue to be responsive to calls for any mission that may occur in Kansas, within the region, or internationally to meet the needs of our nation."

One of the key elements of Davoren's command philosophy is to make sure that the Soldier and their families are aware of the upcoming events with the Guard. He supports communication as far in advance as possible so that Soldiers can prepare.

"We, as leaders, owe it to our Soldiers and their families to let them know when we are going to be home and when we are going to be away," said Davoren. "That way the families and the employers will be able to plan for those events. The majority of our folks are managing three competing requirements: Their Guard career, their civilian career, and their family. And it is not always in that order."

Davoren will be transitioning from his role as the Commander of the Army National Guard to become the Commander of the 35th Infantry Division. He lives in Lansing, Kan., with his wife Debra. They have been married for 34 years and have two grown children; a daughter, Jennifer, who lives in Houston, Texas, and a son, Kyle, who lives in Colorado Springs, Colo. In his civilian job, Davoren is a branch chief with the U.S. Army Force Management Support Agency in Fort Leavenworth.



Under the guidance of members of American Legion Post #1, students at Chase Middle School in Topeka conduct a retirement ceremony for a worn U.S. flag. (Photo by Jane Welch, Public Affairs Office)

Annual forum brings business, industry and public sector together

By Senior Airman Matt Lucht
Public Affairs Office

Business leaders from across the state met at the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina May 26-27 for the Third Annual Business and Industry Forum for Disaster Relief, hosted by the Kansas Adjutant General's Department.

The forum is designed to help public and private sectors learn to work together and to better understand how businesses can help each other and communities in need during a state emergency or disaster.

The Business and Industry Forum tries to address gaps and shortfalls that have been identified from past forums. By using a multidisciplinary concept, the Kansas National Guard, businesses, industries and emergency management teams are better able to prepare and coordinate disaster response and recovery efforts.

"I do believe that there are things that we can learn from each other when it comes to response and recovery," said Brig. Gen. Deborah Rose, director of the Kansas National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters staff. "When you think about who would provide food and water, who would provide heavy equipment, who might have a large supply of chain saws, all of these things are from private businesses or private industry."

This year's forum included a half-day's tour and a hands-on exercise at Crisis City, a multiuse, joint training facility at the Great Plains Joint Training Center. The remainder of the forum consisted of panel presentations and discussions about how private businesses have survived past



Brandt Haehn, a planner with the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, presents an overview of "EOC Operations and the Business Community" during the third annual Business and Industry Forum for Disaster Relief. (Photo by Senior Airman Matt Lucht, Public Affairs Office)

disasters and topics related to disaster planning, including public information, logistics and threats to the state's oil and gas industry.

"It is important for us to bring private industry and organizations into emergency management so we can all truly be team Kansas," said Rose.

These forums greatly benefit Kansas communities and help all agencies involved respond to disasters in a timely manner. Jeff Walker, owner of BW Meat Processing Fredonia, Kan., found out how helpful

those forums can be when his plant was flooded in 2007. Once the water receded, Walker was able to get help from a heavy equipment provider to remove product that had been damaged during the flood.

"They dumped it in the dump truck and they took it to the land fill," said Walker. "It saved us a lot of time."

Because mobilization of National

Guard personnel and equipment takes time and can be expensive, it is important to form relationships with private businesses and industries to allow for immediate response when disaster strikes.

"It's better to have those pre-disaster contracts and relationships because you have a better effective response and it's better in most cases because it is cheaper," said Angee Morgan, deputy director, Kansas Division of Emergency Management.

The Kansas National Guard's Geospatial Information System, in conjunction with private businesses and industries, can map areas that have been hit by a disaster or emergency. By mapping these areas, emergency planners and responders can see where resources are located and what kinds of demographics are in these areas.

"Disasters are based on locations and you really have to know what is there, when it's there, what it holds," said Jessica Frye, Geospatial Information System coordinator for the Adjutant General's Department. "All of the detailed information: How do you get a hold of the people that own the facilities? How many people are in the daycare or school facilities at the time of the disaster? How many people are we really looking at?"

In the past forums focused on training and education of disaster response and also on interactions between private business, the emergency management community and state and federal government.

Historical scenario tackled with modern technology and tactics

By Sgt. Jason Lee
Public Affairs Office

The Kansas Division of Emergency Management took part in a "1966 Tornado with a 2010 Spin" exercise coordinated by Shawnee County Emergency Management Topeka, Kan., June 8 and 9, in the county Emergency Operations Center and the Emergency Management classroom located in the basement of the Shawnee County Courthouse.

The exercise replicated events of the June 8, 1966, F5 tornado that cut a path through the middle of Topeka. The tornado was on the ground for nearly 30 minutes, caused 16 deaths and more than 400 injuries. In its fury, the tornado destroyed 600 homes and damaged almost 3,000.

The exercise scenario recreated the size of the tornado and path that it took, but the twist was that the Emergency Management responders utilized modern day equipment, warning systems and response

coordination, including the National Incident Management System and the Incident Command System.

"If we don't exercise them (policies and procedures) we will never know if they are going to work in a real world event," said Michael Paz-Torres, exercise specialist for Kansas Division of Emergency Management. "The time to fix them is before an event actually occurs."

Kansas Division of Emergency Management helped assess and evaluate how well the exercise was coordinated and what areas needed improvement.

"Getting their expertise as evaluators and mentors is invaluable," said Dustin Nichols emergency planner for Shawnee County. "Their role is huge in this."

Many of the areas that the 1966 tornado hit have been developed. Large apartment complexes, home tracks, businesses, public and private industry and schools now stand in the tornado's former path.

Crisis City provides first-class training opportunity for K-9 units



The engineered rubble pile at Crisis City makes an ideal training location for K-9 search and rescue teams. (Photo by Maj. DeAnn Barr)

By Maj. DeAnn Barr
Great Plains Joint Training Center

Ten members from the National Association for Search and Rescue participated in a week-long certification course at Crisis City in June, with members and their search dogs traveling from as far as Alaska and Virginia to attend.

These volunteer K-9 Search and Rescue handlers train and maintain their animals at their own expense, while serving as a resource throughout their county and state for SAR events. As a volunteer-led organization, finding appropriate training venues can prove challenging, which led Annette Gaston, director of the Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association, from Olathe, Kan., to Crisis City. The Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association hosted the certification event.

"We were attracted to the Class-A rubble pile at Crisis City. It's the best I've ever been on," said Gaston after completing a four-hour block of training with the five handlers attending the K-9 certification course. "It's always challenging putting together a well engineered course, but it's got tunnels in there that play well to our scenarios."

Throughout the week-long training at Crisis City, handlers were able to accomplish classroom training and run exercise scenarios that provided initial qualification to five handlers, as well as advanced instructor training. Training was also performed in Live Disaster Recovery and Disaster with Human Remains.

Several class participants were activated during the Greensburg tornado. Vicki Walton, Derby, Kan., was one of them.

"Kansas Search and Rescue Dog Association is a resource available to any emergency agency in the state. Six KSAR-DA handlers and their K-9 partners were on site within the first 48 hours of the Greensburg disaster. Continuing training like this allows us to certify new dogs and to keep the skill level of existing teams in peak condition," said Walton.

Gaston looks forward to planning training events at Crisis City utilizing the Urban Village and portions of the 36,000 acre complex for wide area search training.

To inquire about scheduling any Kansas first responder training event at Crisis City, call Frank Coots at 785-207-0608 or e-mail Frank.Coots@us.army.mil. Facility access is free of charge to Kansas first responders.



Personnel from local and state agencies, including the Kansas Division of Emergency Management, staffed the Shawnee County Emergency Operations Center during an exercise that recreated the events of the June 8, 1966, tornado that tore across Topeka. (Photo by Sgt. Jason Lee, Public Affairs Office)

Guardsmen receive little notice to deploy for Haiti relief mission

By Maj. DeAnn Barr
184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

Flexibility is the key to air power, as the saying goes, and the three Kansas Air National Guardsmen assigned to the Joint Forces Headquarters Detachment 1, Services Command and Control unit lived this adage in the days following the January earthquake in Haiti that leveled the capital city of Port-au-Prince.

"We received a phone call on Friday Jan. 22, that put us all on notice for a possible deployment to support Haiti during the next couple of weeks," said Maj. Trenton Shepherd, officer in charge of the Command and Control unit. Since they were contacted daily with a similar "wait and see message," the group did not anticipate the sudden order Sunday morning to report to Topeka by 8 a.m. the next day, with 120-day orders in-hand.

For Senior Master Sgt. Robert Bledsoe, a middle school teacher in Ulysses, Kan., that meant a departure by Sunday evening in order to make the six-hour drive to Topeka. A 23-year veteran of the 184th Services Flight, at McConnell AFB, Bledsoe was no stranger to deployments, "But that was the first time I've ever deployed with that little notice," said Bledsoe.

Due to the rushed nature of his departure, it wasn't until Bledsoe was halfway to Topeka that he realized the bag of uniforms he keeps ready in his closet, was still hanging in his closet. Too late to turn back, a call to his mother-in-law with a description of the uniform set and a plan to bring them to Topeka that same day was formed.

When the uniforms arrived in Topeka that same day an hour prior to the Kansas City departure (having traveled and passed hands in Hutchinson, Salina and Topeka), Bledsoe was horrified to unzip a garment bag full of blues with Airman 1st Class rank on them.

"I love my mother-in-law, and it was

a "27 Dresses" kinda deal in my closet. I have at least 10 different uniform sets stored in there."

Later that day, a second set of uniforms made the cross-Kansas trek, much to the relief of Bledsoe. Knowing he could not depart without his uniforms, Bledsoe changed his point of departure to Wichita the following day, where at last he met up with the ABUs he had originally prepared.

For Master Sgt. Pete Tavares, who works in Topeka as a corrections officer for the Shawnee Department of Corrections, reporting to Topeka with short notice had fewer logistical obstacles.

"I've never been to a natural disaster and I didn't know what to expect, and what exactly to take," said Tavares. "This was my first time at a bare-base set-up. My girlfriend made fun of me for buying so many wipes and bottles of powder, but I knew we wouldn't have water initially and they told us to be prepared for anything."

While Tavares and Bledsoe eventually met up at Charleston Air Force Base, Shepherd had been told he would not deploy with the rest of his detachment, much to his disappointment.

On Monday afternoon, Shepherd received a phone call while at work in Wichita as an engineer for the Federal Aviation Administration that ordered him to report that same day, with 120-day orders to Puerto Rico as the 35th Expeditionary Airlift Support Squadron. He was to become the services liaison for equipment and supplies carried into Haiti,



Senior Master Sgt. Robert Bledsoe (left) and Master Sgt. Pete Tavares had to pack quickly when they received orders to deploy to Haiti in January. (Photo by Maj. DeAnn Barr)

and to posture the 35 EAS for potential evacuees and refugees.

"I may not have been physically located with my guys, which would have been preferred, but at least I was able to support them," said Shepherd.

Bledsoe arrived in Port-au-Prince six days following the initial order, as part of the Advance Team.

"We landed and there was nobody there to meet us," said Bledsoe. "We loaded our gear onto an airline luggage cart and pushed it down the runway wondering, "Where do we go?"

The mission changed upon their arrival from personnel support to augmentees with the Joint Reception Staging Onward Movement and Integration team.

"We became the joint reception center, chasing planes and taking names," said Tavares.

Assets were arriving in Haiti at such a rapid rate accountability had become a top priority.

The 190th Air Refueling Wing Civil Engineers had arrived several days prior to Bledsoe and had some tents set-up.

"Thank God for our CE team. We arrived to a tent, in the dark where we set up our

cots and ate MREs," said Bledsoe. The average evening temperature was 95 degrees.

The 11 person JRSOMI team that formed from units across the U.S. started working the next day, tracking flight arrivals and passenger information, making do with the resources at hand.

"Our work station consisted of setting one person in a chair on a hill outside the reception tent, on look-out for the lights of an arriving aircraft. That person then shouted, "Da plane, da-plane" to the rest of the team," Tavares said jokingly.

An Airmen would then walk the length of the runway to board the plane and ask if it had passengers, walk back to the reception tent and coordinate the necessary transportation. Tavares' fluency in Spanish had him serving as an interpreter with the contracted bus drivers who were brought in from the Dominican Republic.

"We worked seven days a week, except when we could work search and recovery, which is part of our true services training. Those days were 24 hour days, as it was on our own time," said Bledsoe.

As services personnel with 23 and 11 years of experience, neither Bledsoe nor Tavares had worked a real-world mortuary affairs situation. Both say it was the most satisfying contribution of the deployment.

"It was very rewarding to be part of search and recovery, whenever we would find somebody it felt good to know we could send them home and provide closure for their families," said Tavares. "In the few days I was on that mission, my team found eight bodies, including an Air Force officer who had arrived TDY the day prior to the earthquake."

Both Kansas Airmen were very moved to watch the ceremony for the fallen officer as he was loaded onto the C-17 for transport home.

"I found so much luggage and inventoried the contents," said Bledsoe. "You get to know a person just by what you see. Even though we worked 24 hours, when we arrived at the makeshift cardboard billboard of missing people and saw all the photos of those still lost, it motivated us."

Although they were not assigned to perform any official service duties, it was difficult to see a need and not fulfill it.

(Continued on Page 11)

Students learn respect for flag

Continued from Page 7

had taken time to discuss her reaction. Until that moment, they did not "get" the importance of standing for the Pledge of Allegiance or even what that meant to them and the people who serve in the military. What made Mann the most proud was that the students didn't wait until she was back in the classroom so that she could see them standing during the Pledge of Allegiance. They started doing it the very next day.

To build on that experience Mann decided to educate the class not just on the Pledge of Allegiance but on the proper way to retire a U.S. flag. She enlisted the

help of some members of the American Legion Post #1 in Topeka.

On April 9, students from Chase Middle School, the Kansas National Guard and the American Legion participated in a flag retirement ceremony. The ceremony was done with the honor and respect befitting our nation's flag.

After the ceremony was complete, four members of the student body unfolded the flag, and holding it by each corner approached the fire and respectfully placed it in the fire. The students stood quietly and watched the flames engulf the flag. This was a lesson they would not soon forget.

Kansas National Guard Military Funeral Honors Team

MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS APPLICATION

If you are the BEST and want to work with the BEST, complete this form!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____ Zip Code _____

Cell Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Best time to call _____ am/pm Circle one)

Available to train on weekends Yes _____ No _____

Available to train on weekdays Yes _____ No _____

Would like to talk with a Military Funeral Honors Representative _____

The best time to set up an interview Date _____ Time _____

Mail to: KSARNG Honor Guard, 2800 SW Topeka Blvd., Topeka KS 66611

KSARNG Honor Guard

Phone 785-271-1520

Cell 785-438-9202

Fax 785-274-1687

Email rodney.moyer1@us.army.mil



Air Support Operations Squadron getting off the ground with trained TACPs

By Capt. Alyson Stockton
184th Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

Continuing the tradition of "firsts" in the 184th Intelligence Wing, the 284th Air Support Operations Squadron now boasts the first homegrown Tactical Air Command and Control specialist in the Kansas National Guard.

Airman 1st Class Andrew Jundt completed the 14-and-a-half week Tactical Air Command and Control Course at Hurlburt Field, Fla., where he earned the Commander's Choice award and designation as a Distinguished Graduate.

The course is the first in a training process that takes about one year to complete and each step is rigorous. Of Jundt's 26 classmates at Hurlburt, only six graduated. Students focused on radio operations and communications for the first half of the course, then learned field navigations, night navigation and small unit tactics during the second half. A week-long field exercise evaluated mastery of these tasks and mission planning.

TACP specialists are the only Air Force personnel trained and authorized to control Close Air Support missions in support of ground units, adding to the joint training experience at Smoky Hill Air National Guard Range. According to

Senior Master Sgt. Matthew Foote, 284th ASOS superintendent, TACPs also stand ready to contribute during state emergencies by lending expertise in mobile communications, radio operations and video downlink to aid incident commanders.

After graduation from the TACP course, Jundt went to survival training at Fairchild Air Force Base, Wa., and is currently receiving four months of on-the-job training at Smoky Hill Air National Guard Range near Salina.

The 19-year-old athlete enlisted in the 184th in May 2009, just before graduation from Derby High School.

"I was looking for an active job that involved a lot of teamwork. It's definitely that—it's active and it's a challenge," Jundt said.

This fall, he plans to resume his student career at Kansas State University and serve as a drill status Guardsman.

Once fully trained, TACP's operate in austere environments to support conventional ground forces. They have the ability to act as Air Force liaisons to Army troops in order to plan, integrate and deliver needed air support. The 284th ASOS officially stood up in October 2009 and still needs to recruit and train about 25 more qualified TACPs.

Awards and Decorations

Kansas Army National Guard

Meritorious Service Medal



Col. Robert F. Schmitt, 287th SB, Wichita, with 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Lt. Col. John J. Campbell, HQ, 235th Regt (RTI), Salina, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Lt. Col. Tony D. Divish, 287th SB, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Lt. Col. Steven H. Ferrell, CDP, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Daniel Ruiz, 73rd CST (WMD), Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Maj. Brian L. Schoenhofer, 169th CSSB, Olathe, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Capt. Tony A. Burt, HHD, 635th RSG, Hutchinson
 Capt. David M. Stuever, 73rd CST (WMD), Topeka
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ronald R. Reed, Co C, 2nd Bn, 235th Regt, Salina
 Chief Warrant Officer 4 Lawrence S. Thomas, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Master Sgt. Max L. Wharton, 995th Maint Co, Smith Center
 Sgt. 1st Class Sheree Hicks, Rec & Ret, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Leonard D. McNutt II, 2nd Bn, 235th Regt, Salina
 Sgt. 1st Class Marc S. Plourde, HHC, 169th CSSB, Olathe, with 5th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Drue L. Staatz, 2nd Bn, 235th Regt, Salina, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. 1st Class Robert R. Stanley, Rec & Ret, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Joseph L. Williams, Rec & Ret, Topeka

Army Commendation Medal



Capt. Dana W. Graf Jr., Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Dodge City
 Sgt. 1st Class Brent W. Wallace, Btry C, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Abilene
 Staff Sgt. Jeremy Byers, 250th FSC, Ottawa
 Staff Sgt. Joe E. Shellnut II, 778th Trans Co, Kansas City, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Sgt. Preston S. Blackburn, 1161st FSC, Hutchinson, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

Combat Action Badge



Sgt. Maj. Steven E. Scott, HHC, 35th ID, Fort Leavenworth
 Staff Sgt. Jeremy M. Byers, 250th FSC, Ottawa

Kansas National Guard Commendation Ribbon



Sgt. 1st Class Christopher L. Indermuehle, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Wichita

Kansas Air National Guard

Air Force Achievement Medal



Capt. Daniel A. Rogers, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Master Sgt. Eldon Jackson, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Thomas Doviak, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Tech. Sgt. Dearnly E. Gary, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Tech. Sgt. George Hart, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. Diane R. McNany, 184th IW, Wichita
 Tech. Sgt. Steven Zimmerman, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Holly Baker, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Cortney E. Bartley, 184th IW, Wichita
 Staff Sgt. Timothy J. Campbell, 184th IW, Wichita
 Staff Sgt. Craig Jackson, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Corbin H. Leland, 184th IW, Wichita
 Staff Sgt. William Mesmer, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Jaclyn E. Patterson, 184th IW, Wichita

Staff Sgt. Joshua Stuchlik, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Airman Rudy Belew, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Airman Aaron Boddy, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Airman Douglas Fisher, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Airman Alison Hastings, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Airman Justin McDaniel, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Airman 1st Class Zachary D. Pulkrabek, 184th IW, Wichita

Air Force Commendation Medal



Col. Derek Rogers, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Lt. Col. Christopher Gnagi, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Maj. Tamra Buettgenbach, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Capt. Todd N. Handling, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Capt. Kimberly Rhoden, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Master Sgt. Clifford Archer, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Robert Bledsoe, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Brendan J. Boales, 184th IW, Wichita, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Master Sgt. Darin L. Brun, 184th IW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Daniel Larson, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Peter Tavares, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. David Finemore, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. Jamel Francis, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Tech. Sgt. Michael G. Kingsford, 184th IW, Wichita
 Tech. Sgt. Eric D. Maynor, 184th IW, Wichita, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Tech. Sgt. Jason Murphy, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Staff Sgt. Rachel J. Ringgenberg, 184th IW, Wichita
 Senior Airman Christopher Wolf, 190th ARW, Topeka

Meritorious Service Medal



Col. Joel Darbro, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Col. John J. Hernandez, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Col. Kathryn Hulse, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Col. Bradley Link, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 8th Oak Leaf Cluster
 Col. Leonard H. Mattingly, 184th IW, Wichita, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Col. Martin Sellberg, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Col. Jeffrey Zillinger, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Lt. Col. Brian J. Moore, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Lt. Col. Kent E. Wade, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Maj. Christopher R. Brown, 184th IW, Wichita
 Maj. Christopher Hill, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Chief Master Sgt. Alan W. Connor, 184th IW, Wichita, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Chief Master Sgt. Philip Mahan, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Chief Master Sgt. Howard Steanson, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Chad Bellquist, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Senior Master Sgt. John C. Foster, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Chad T. Johnson, 184th IW, Wichita, with 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Troy Kyle, 190th ARW, Topeka, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Jim A. Marklevits, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Senior Master Sgt. Mark Post, 184th IW, Wichita, with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
 Master Sgt. Alan L. Beat, 184th IW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Teresa Fulton, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Troy Hultgren, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Alphonso A. Ring, 184th IW, Wichita
 Master Sgt. Mark S. Schulke, 184th IW, Wichita
 Tech. Sgt. Debra A. Gaunt, 184th IW, Wichita
 Staff Sgt. Bobby G. Logan, 184th IW, Wichita
 Co. Goodland
 Staff Sgt. Gregory Schmidt, Btry B, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Horton
 Staff Sgt. David Thomas, HHD, 169th CSSB, Olathe
 Sgt. Kent Devault, HHD, 169th CSSB, Olathe
 Sgt. James Dowis, Det 1, 995th Maint Co, Phillipsburg
 Sgt. Gary Wenke Sr., Det 2, 731st Trans Co, Wichita
 Spc. Joseph Boeckner, Co B (-), 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Salina
 Spc. John Doty, HHB, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Wichita
 Spc. Larry Lawhon, HHC, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth

Kansas Air National Guard

Master Sgt. Teresa Fulton, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Joe Seley, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Joanne Weddle, 190th ARW, Topeka
 Staff Sgt. Scott Stansell Sr., 190th ARW, Topeka

Guardsmen vie for top spots

By Spc. Aaron Hughes

Subject matter experts spend countless hours reading and researching one topic to achieve and maintain proficiency in that area. They must spend the time to become confident in presenting the information in a professional manner.

Now imagine the time and dedication it takes to become proficient on not just one topic, but in a multitude of areas. Staff Sgt. Jared Meier and Spc. Stephen Levins chose to take on that task to represent the 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery in the Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year competition.

Their journeys started on South Camp in Sinai, Egypt, competing against other members of their own battery in such areas as Warrior Tasks and military knowledge. Prior to the competition, they spent countless and sometimes continuous hours studying and quizzing each other on various subjects, learning large amounts of information and reciting verbatim scripts such as the Soldiers Creed, Warrior Ethos, and the NCO Creed completely from memory. After winning against the members of Battery B, they then moved on to triumph

over other Soldiers in the battalion.

Meier and Levins moved on to the Task Force Sinai Board on North Camp in Sinai, Egypt. This placed them against the best Soldiers in Egypt. They again out-shined the competition and moved on to the 1st Theater Support Command Boards in Camp Arifjan in Kuwait. There, additional skills were added on to include weapon qualification, land navigation and the Army Physical Fitness Test. Answers to questions were also no longer just verbal and the Soldiers now must be able to clearly communicate their answers in writing in the form of an essay. Levins and Meier again set the standard for not only the 2-130th FA, but the Kansas National Guard by coming home with the gold.

The hard work and sacrifice of these Soldiers are now sending them to Camp Buehring in Kuwait to contend in the Army Central Command board. There the opposition widens to include Soldiers from all over areas of operations in the Middle East. The winners of this will then move on to competitions in Fort Hood, Texas, and then Washington, D.C., for the final round.



Staff Sgt. Jared Meier (left) and Spc. Stephen Levins display some of the awards they have garnered in their quest to be named Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year. (Photo provided)

Soldiers “go for the gold”

By Maj. Michael Howell

35th Infantry Division Logistics Officer

As winter snows faded away and warmer temperatures arrived at Fort Leavenworth, two officers from the 35th Infantry Division, Kansas National Guard, accepted the challenge to train for and take the German Armed Forces Military Proficiency Badge test conducted in early April 2010.

Maj. William “Shep” Woodard, deputy civil military operations officer, and Capt. Robert Sands, assistant operations officer, participated in several challenging physical feats including swimming, marksmanship, track and field events and a 7.5 mile road march with a 35-pound rucksack.

A German sergeant major liaison supervised all of the testing at Fort Leavenworth. The testing lasted for most of the week, culminating with the challenge of the road march. Soldiers who successfully completed the arduous events were awarded their medals during a ceremony

on April 22.

Woodard, 49, would often remind the younger athletes he was the oldest in the group. Although age was a factor, it in no way prevented him from capturing the gold medal, the highest medal that can be awarded to participants.

Sands advised he has wanted to earn the badge for a while, but the opportunity never presented itself. When it did, he immediately asked his supervisor if he could attempt it.

“On paper, the event standards don’t seem that hard,” said Sands, “but anyone wanting to participate should be forewarned. The whole event was much more difficult than I anticipated!”

“Both officers stand as an example to all Kansas Army National Guard Soldiers,” said Maj. Gen. Wayne Pierson, commander of the 35th ID. “The Kansas Army National Guard should be proud to have officers such as this leading our Citizen Soldiers.”

35th Infantry Division drill

Continued from Page 6

and broken bones, as well as training for calling in a nine-line Medical Evacuation. The 35th ID surgeon staff screened Soldiers to ensure they were medically fit to participate in the rigorous drill before it began. Capt. Todd Lavery, commander,

Headquarters and Headquarters Company Detachment, also conducted a risk assessment prior to the training.

Sgt. Kevin Farlow, an assistant trainer noted, “Training can be life-saving, as there is no ‘rear’ in the current combat environment.”

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

Col. Ron Robinson, IG, JFHQ-KS, Topeka
 Master Sgt. Carlo Vassalle, HHD, 635th SB, Hutchinson
 Sgt. 1st Class Lance Bedore, 731st Trans Co (-), Larned
 Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Sparks, 170th Maint Co (-), Norton
 Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stanley, Rec & Ret, Topeka
 Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Taylor, Btry B(-), 1st Bn, 161st FA, Paola
 Staff Sgt. James Burton, 995th Maint Co (-), Smith Center
 Staff Sgt. Kenneth Dougherty, HQ, 235th Regt (RTI), Salina
 Staff Sgt. Ernesto Gonzales, Det 1, 170th Maint

A check for the troops



Six American Legion Riders, representing riders from American Legion Post 414 in Kingman, Kan., presented a check for \$3,000 to Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general, to benefit the Kansas National Guard's Wounded Warrior project. The six -- Kelly Jayne, chapter director; Ronnie Fankhauser, Darrel Goetz; Mike Hyde; Chris Kaufman and Joe Wolfe -- rode from Kingman to Topeka to make the presentation. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

Guardsmen receive little notice to deploy

Continued from Page 9

"There never was a morale tent, and that frustrated us. We knew we should be setting this stuff up," said Bledsoe.

"One guy had brought a hard drive full of movies and we played those for troops on a laptop through a projector, with a little 190th CE ingenuity. We projected the movies on a makeshift screen they rigged up. That was a big improvement on morale," said Tavares.

It took a week before running water was supplied, and a month for hot meals to be in place.

"Eventually Air Force Combat Communications came in and set up an Internet café and that is the first time we had any kind of morale. God bless the Combat Comm from Tinker Air Force Base. We gave them the red carpet treatment," said Tavares.

Tavares and Bledsoe arrived home March 29 after 60 days of service. Shepherds' deployment lasted 120 days and he returned in late May.

Tafanelli selected as new ATAG

Continued from Page 1

Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Combat Action Badge, Parachutist Badge and Air Assault Badge.

Tafanelli is a state representative for the 47th District and a program coordinator for the National Agricultural Biosecurity Center at Kansas State University.

Tafanelli and his wife, Tammy, live in Ozawkie with their children, Nicholas and Francesca.

Brig. Gen. John Davoren

Brig. Gen. John Davoren was commissioned in 1976 through the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of Kansas, Lawrence.

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 executive officer, 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 Brigade; operations officer, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; commander, 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry; commander, 69th Troop Command and, most recently, assistant division

"My most significant contribution I feel is providing the airlift support of equipment, supplies and the means of getting troops in and out of Haiti," said Shepherd. "As a leader I am taking satisfaction knowing that I was the first in leading my troops and last out. Ironically, the training I received specific to my position did not apply for my particular assignment. I called upon my experience and knowledge as a Services Officer and previous Services Commander."

Despite the initial scramble with the tasking, the Kansas team is satisfied with their contribution.

"We had a valuable learning experience," said Bledsoe. "We did most of it right in having our mobility gear packed and ready. We have since purchased large rolling footlocker duffle bags to live out of. Quick response is part of the job, we have always known that. I have always enjoyed my experiences through the Air National Guard, and this was a one-of-a-kind."

commander, 35th Infantry Division.

As assistant division commander, Davoren led the Multi-National Task Force-East, KFOR 9 at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, from Nov. 2, 2007, to July 10, 2008, during the division's deployment.

Davoren's education includes Infantry Officer Basic and Advance Courses, Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. His civilian education includes a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Accounting from the University of Kansas, a master's degree in Personnel Management from Central Michigan University and a master's degree in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

His military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Armed Forces Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Army Reserves Components Overseas Training Ribbon with oak leaf cluster, Nebraska Meritorious Service Medal, Kansas Emergency Service Ribbon, Expert Infantry Badge, Aviation Badge, Parachute Badge, Air Assault Badge and Ranger Tab.

Davoren and his wife, Debra, reside in Lansing, Kan. Their daughter, Jennifer, resides in Houston, Texas, and their son, Kyle, lives in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Youths building skills and friendships at Teen Camp



A cooperative effort takes these teens to the top of the climbing obstacle at Teen Camp 2010, an annual week-long camp that teaches leadership skills to youths from Guard families. (Photo by Sgt. Jason Lee, Public Affairs Office)

By Sgt. Jason Lee
Public Affairs Office

The Kansas National Guard Family Program Office held Teen Camp 2010 at Camp Weber, Salina Kan., June 19-23.

The Teen Camp is open to dependents of Kansas National Guardsmen between ages 13-17. This year Teen Camp 2010 hosted 40 kids from throughout Kansas. During the five day and four night stay at Camp Weber, the teenagers were split into groups that were supervised and assisted by camp counselors.

"These kids are just absolutely the most amazing kids," said Amanda Herlinger, state youth coordinator. "I'm just falling in love with all of them."

Many of the teens' parents have been deployed and away from home. The Teen Camp allows teens with similar backgrounds to come together and talk about their experiences.

"My dad was deployed and other kids parents have been deployed, so they understand. They know how lonely it gets and how you feel about it," said Jahna Yuhn, teen participant. "If I could keep coming here until I was 50, I would."

While at Teen Camp, participants were encouraged to go through a variety of obstacle courses, which included a low ropes course, high ropes course, climbing wall and zip lines. Other activities included canoeing, paddle boating, volleyball, swimming and "the blob," an aired-up water mat that safely launches people into the water.

In one event, the Teen Camp partici-

Aeromedical evacuation support

Continued from Page 2

devotion to duty and your support for them," Davoren said.

Leger had few, but heartfelt words for the Soldiers in his battalion.

"I want to thank you all for your hard work," he said. "Each of you has dedicated much time and effort into making sure this mission is a success. I know that you all will do your best. I wish you well. Dust Off!"

"This unit has the best Soldiers a leader could ask for, each one of them, true professionals in their assigned positions," said Kennedy.

"Your loved ones are in good hands," he assured the family members and friends attending the event, "because they are in each other's hands. They will care for, watch over and look out for one another."

"We will depart for our mission during what will be an historical moment in our nation's history and the War on Terror. The end of one era, Operation Iraqi Freedom,

"My dad was deployed and other kids parents have been deployed, so they understand... If I could keep coming here until I was 50, I would."

Jahna Yuhn
Teen Camp participant

pant groups challenged each other at an obstacle course. The obstacle course started out with competitors jumping over a large log. Then the participants had to climb monkey bars, walk a twisting plank board, navigate a rope course, swing on a rope across a small pit and finish off the course with another log jump before racing to the finish line. The event was timed and the best times from each team raced against each other with the winner receiving a gift certificate to Wal-Mart.

"It's all about working together as a team and they understand that," said Darcy Seitz, state youth coordinator. "They go right at it."

The camp is held annually and many of the teenagers who participate come back every year.

"I have friends here that I've known for five or six years now that keep coming back year after year," said Teen Camp participant Daniel Jensen. "You do meet new friends here that you will have for almost maybe the rest of your life."

and the beginning of a new one, Operation New Dawn," Kennedy continued.

"This is one of the most rewarding and important missions a Soldier could ask for. Every radio transmission received, every wrench turned, every gallon pumped and every hour flown will be for one solitary purpose—to save American lives," he said.

The Topeka unit deployed to Fort Hood, Texas, for additional mission-specific training before going on to Iraq. Their 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 rapid evacuation and movement of patients while giving en-route care to higher levels of medical treatment and 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.

Officer Candidate School rigorous, but rewards those who persevere

By 1st Lt. Kathleen Argonza
PAO, 1st Battalion, 235th Regiment

On June 14, 2010, Soldiers in the Officer Candidate School at Salina, Kan., woke up at 4:30 a.m. to the not-so-soothing sounds of their company platoon trainers cajoling them from their bunks. These Soldiers moved with a purpose, grabbed their M-16 A2 training aid, donned their fully loaded rucksacks and went on a five-mile road march. This was all completed before 8 a.m., when most people were just getting to work, and this is just a small portion of the demands they endured this day.

During an average day, candidates sit through classes on military procedures and leadership and, during their “breaks,” they are “motivated” by their platoon trainers for a session of rigorous physical exercise. These candidates might hope to see their pillows at around 10 p.m., if they’re lucky. This is business as usual for an officer candidate earning the right to become a commissioned officer in the oldest fraternity, a leader of men and women, and defender of the United States Constitution.

Of course, being in the Army is not without its perks. In celebration of the Army’s 235th Birthday, the youngest and oldest candidates will be cutting a cake with military sabers and they’ll partake in this grand old tradition among comrades. Their experiences and lessons learned here will forever alter them; they will stand taller, they will operate better under pressure and become more competent, capable, and confident than their non-military peers. Among their ranks are graduates from major universities including UC Irvine, Texas A&M, Kansas State University, Texas Tech, Sam Houston State University and

“The Army has given me the best professional training and I’d bet that any officer will say the same.”

Capt. Jason Kander

University of New Mexico.

Among the distinguished members of the OCS class is Officer Candidate Andrew Wolfe, a graduate of Washburn University with a degree in bichemistry. He is a prior service Marine infantryman and hopes to use his experience to lead an infantry platoon.

He’s accompanied by fellow alumnus and Officer Candidate Lucas Osborn, who majored in music and education. They’re followed by Officer Candidate Joseph Swann, a senior, who hopes to join the military intelligence community.

Capt. Jason D. Kander is a military intelligence officer in the Missouri National Guard and serving as a platoon trainer. Kander holds a Juris Doctorate from Georgetown University School of Law and works as a trial lawyer and a state representative.

“I was going to school in Washington D.C. during 9/11,” said Kander. “I thought that I would have an ambitious career and, if I had spare time, I would serve. On that day, I decided that I would serve first.”

Officer candidates who successfully complete the entire course will continue as commissioned officers in the Army National Guard, drilling one weekend a month and two weeks a year with a full



Platoon Trainer Chad Richardson looks over officer candidates as they in-process for Officer Candidate School at the 1st Battalion, 235th Regiment in Salina, Kan., in June. (Photo by 1st Lt. Kathleen Argonza)

time civilian employment or they may also find a technician job or be placed Active Guard/Reserve orders as a full time Soldier in their home state.

“There are no regrets,” concludes Kander, “The Army has given me the best professional training and I’d bet that any officer will say the same.”

Graduates of OCS look forward to many leadership opportunities in the Army. Newly-minted lieutenants start off by leading roughly 40 men and women as a platoon leader and may continue on to commanding their first company of over a hundred Soldiers in four years as a captain.

Capt. Keith D. Pangburn graduated from Kansas State University, and earned a Juris Doctorate degree from Washburn University School of Law. He now holds a full-time position as a dual-status technician for the state of Kansas.

“The well had just dried up,” said Pangburn. “They were under-paying lawyers everywhere in this economy. When I see people I graduated with, they just look so haggard and tired. They’re definitely not getting the salary that you’d expect a lawyer to get.”

“I’m glad I had the Army to go to,” concludes Pangburn as he looked over the OCS parade field. “I wouldn’t trade it.”

995th Maintenance Company open house promotes community interaction

By Sgt. Kevin Landers, UPAR
995th Maintenance Company

Approximately 70 people attended two open house events held May 1, 2010, at the Kansas National Guard armories in Smith Center and Concordia. The events were hosted by the 995th Maintenance Company, which recently relocated one detachment to Concordia from Phillipsburg due to armory consolidations.

“We wanted the local community to know that we were new to the area and to let them come out and see what we’re all about,” said Sgt. 1st Class Randy Kohlman, Detachment 1 platoon sergeant.

In Concordia, along with the display of the unit’s Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck wrecker, humvees and other equipment were a climbing wall, jousting pit and mechanical bull. Sgt. 1st Class Claire Hoelsing, the local Kansas National Guard recruiter, was on hand to provide

information for prospective enlistees.

In Smith Center, Staff Sgt. Tim McCammon manned the X-box 360 system and inflatable jousting pit, while the unit displayed their organic equipment. Hamburgers, hotdogs, chips and drinks were served at both locations.

“This event was planned to refresh the relationship with the citizens of Smith Center and introduce ourselves to Concordia,” said Capt. Mark Mullinax 995th Company commander. “We had a variety of guests, from former unit members coming by for a visit to those that had no idea of who we are or what we do.”

“Everyone seemed to have a great time visiting and taking their turn on the recruiters’ equipment. We got several good recruitment leads and even had one person enlist in the unit. I’m extremely happy and couldn’t ask for a better outcome for the event,” Mullinax concluded.



Soldiers of the 995th Maintenance Company, Concordia, hung out the “welcome sign” for the open house sponsored by the unit in May. (Photo by Sgt. Kevin Landers, UPAR)



Staff Sgt. Charles Ramsey and Staff Sgt. George Freyberger test their skills on the climbing wall at the 995th Maintenance Company open house in Concordia. Other attractions included displays of military equipment, a jousting pit and mechanical bull. The unit also hosted a second, simultaneous open house in Smith Center. Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and drips were served at both locations. (Photo by Sgt. Kevin Landers, UPAR)