



**KSARNG,
Saudis
conduct joint
exercise2**



**GPJTC hosts
"Porkforward"
exercise6**



**Wounded
Warrior
benefit motor-
cycle ride . .12**

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

APRIL 2009

Team will share agribusiness expertise with Afghan people

By Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson

105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard have historically carried dual roles - of Citizen and Soldier. When activated for a deployment, Guardsmen rely on their Soldier skills to carry them through their mission. But for a small Kansas National Guard team, set to deploy to Afghanistan this spring, it will provide an opportunity to emphasize just how civilian knowledge can benefit a military operation.

The Kansas National Guard is deploying a hand-picked team of Soldiers and Airmen to teach the people of Afghanistan something Kansans know a lot about: farming. Over the coming year, the 1-6 Agribusiness Development Team will be working closely with the local Afghan population near the Laghman Province in Eastern Afghanistan. Their mission is straightforward — help rebuild a sustainable agricultural system.

“What Afghanistan needs support in, and what Kansas has to offer, is the ability to help develop an ag system that is not only replicable, but will provide and, hopefully, increase economic stability and an overall sense of well-being for the country,” said Col. Eric Peck, the 1-6 ADT commander.

The team’s year-long mission is to assist in building capabilities for increased agricultural production, training and services and improve the safety of food and other agriculture products produced by and distributed to the Afghan people. The members of the 1-6 believe they have something unique to offer the farming community in Afghanistan.

“There’s actually a lot of similarities between the Laghman Province and parts of Kansas,” said Maj. Dirk Christian the 1-6 ADT Deputy Commander. “Just look at most of Western Kansas and some of the

“We’ve got hydrologists, agronomists, soil scientists and even public health specialists. I mean, Kansas is in the farming belt, so it’s not that surprising to see a team with so much experience.”

*Maj. Blaine Clowser,
Agribusiness Development
Team*

dry-land farming techniques going on. A lot of these methods can be applied in Afghanistan.”

But as Christian explains, the team’s objective is not necessarily to teach farming, nor is it to bombard Afghan farmers with Western techniques and technological advancements. The focus lies on education and collaborating methods in order to find a system that works with their environment and culture.

“They (Afghans) have been farming for centuries,” said Christian. “They know how to farm. We’re just going to assist them and work with them to build a better, more efficient way of doing things.”

The ADT’s 60-person team is made up of volunteers from both the Army and Air Guard. Each volunteer member is bringing their own experience to the table with a wide range of backgrounds in agriculture and agribusiness related fields. Maj. Blaine Clowser, who volunteered from the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard, specializes in livestock and heads



Members of the Kansas National Guard’s first Agribusiness Development Team are applauded by their peers, families and friends at a deployment ceremony for the unit on March 11 at the Great Overland Station in Topeka. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

up the animal research facility at the University of Nebraska.

“We’ve got hydrologists, agronomists, soil scientists and even public health specialists,” says Clowser. “I mean, Kansas is in the farming belt, so it’s not that surprising to see a team with so much experience.”

However, Kansas isn’t the only state contributing to this new humanitarian mission. Volunteers from Guard units in Texas, Missouri, Nebraska, Indiana, Tennessee, Kentucky and Oklahoma are participating in the program. Some of these states have already deployed agricultural teams to vari-

ous provinces throughout Afghanistan.

“It’s nice that we’re finally in the mix,” said Sgt. 1st Class Dwayne Clifford, a volunteer from the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry (Combined Arms). “We come from a state that is very much ag-centered and we’re bringing a lot of intelligent people from the ag world to help a country that literally thrives off agriculture.”

Agriculture makes up roughly 80 percent of the economy in Afghanistan, contributed by the nearly 85 percent of the population that is actively involved in some form of agriculture. Many of the 1-6 ADT members

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Early spring snowstorm had big bark, but less bite

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Response to an early spring snowstorm that dumped up to 24 inches of snow in some parts of Kansas, but failed to materi-

alize as predicted in other areas, was skillfully managed by a variety of local and state first responders and emergency management agencies.

When weather forecasts began indicating

massive amounts of snow were possible for areas of the state the weekend of March 27-29, officials with the Kansas Department of Emergency Management began issuing warnings to citizens to prepare.

“It is absolutely critical to have an emergency kit in your home that allows you to stay safe during power outages,” said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, director of KDEM and Kansas adjutant general. “This needs to include bottled water, non-perishable food, medications, blankets and flashlights.”

“If you plan to travel over the next several days, make sure you have an emergency kit with you and plenty of gas in your vehicle’s gas tank in case you become stranded or delayed,” Bunting said. “If possible, change your travel plans to avoid the storm.”

KDEM staff began monitoring the storm system and staffed the State Emergency Operations Center to respond to requests from county emergency management officials as the storm’s impact began. Other state and social services agencies sent personnel to the SEOC to be ready to respond. These agencies included the Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas National Guard, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the American Red Cross.

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Snow swirled and piled up around the Great Bend armory from a winter storm system that dumped as much as two feet of snow in some areas of the state. (Photo by Lt. Col. Chris Burr)

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Kansas Guardsmen join Royal Saudi forces for joint exercise

By Steve Larson
Public Affairs Office

Approximately 180 soldiers of the Kansas National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment (Combined Arms) deployed to Saudi Arabia in early March to take part in Friendship One, a bilateral exercise with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia military forces.

The Kansas soldiers, under the command of Lt. Col. Anthony Mohatt, provided armor and infantry platoons, along with the commensurate support, to assist in the validation of the Royal Saudi Land Forces 6th Armor Brigade. According to Maj. Steve Denney, battalion executive officer, this was the first time such an exercise has been conducted between the U.S. military and the Royal Saudi Land Forces and the first time since 1991 the U.S. and Saudi military have taken part in a large-scale military exercise together.

"This is a unique training opportunity for our troops who typically find themselves deployed to desert areas for combat, but without training in this specific type of en-

vironment," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas adjutant general. "It's a great mission for the Kansas Guard, the U.S. and the Saudi military."

Denney said the Kansas unit took part in approximately five days of preparation, followed by approximately nine days of the actual "force on force" exercise that pitted the joint U.S./Saudi forces against "hostile" forces played by other Saudi units. The Kansas soldiers used M1 tanks and M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles drawn from U.S. units currently serving in Kuwait.

Denney said the exercise was designed to strengthen military-to-military relations while testing and strengthening interoperability with the Saudi forces. At the same time, it gave U.S. forces exposure to the culture and customs of their Saudi counterparts.

"This is my fourth time over here," said Denney, who is part of an advanced party already in Saudi Arabia. "Working with the Saudis has always been a very pleasant experience. They're very courteous and professional."

The Soldiers returned to Kansas March 17.



Command Sgt. Major Troy Hester, 2nd Battalion, 137th Combined Arms Battalion, salutes Royal Highness Khalid Bander Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia, during the Friendship One 09 training exercise March 1. (Photo by Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton)



Sgt. 1st Class Barry Vogelbacher, left, tank commander, 2nd Battalion, 137th Combined Arms Battalion, uses a Defense Advanced GPS Receiver to navigate while Sgt. Dominic Cantu, gunner, makes a sketch card for the battle. (Photo by Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton)



Royal Saudi Land Force artillery observers, prepare for the training battle during the Friendship One 09 exercise with U.S. Forces in Saudi Arabia, March 1. (Photo by Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton)

73rd Civil Support Team passes External Evaluation exercise

By Capt. Kyle Chansler
73rd Civil Support Team

In helping civil authorities protect the citizens of the United States, a lot of training goes into preparing personnel. The members of the Kansas National Guard's 73rd Civil Support Team have become aware and accustomed to a large amount of training required for this endeavor.

The 73rd Civil Support Team is a small, highly-trained National Guard unit that supports local, state and federal agencies responding to attacks that could involve weapons of mass destruction. The team supports civil authorities at a domestic chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high yield explosive incident site by identifying hazardous agents/substances, assessing current and projected consequences, advising on response measures and assisting with appropriate requests for state support.

On average, each member of the team goes through 538 hours of required training to be a fully qualified CST member which includes hazardous materials technician level training and certification. Some of the more technical positions, such as the nuclear medical science officer, attend more than 800 hours of required CST training.

The 73rd Civil Support Team, one of 55 such teams throughout the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam, goes through a recertification process approximately every 18 months. The 73rd CST went through its most recent External Evaluation in January 2009.

The training scenario occurred at Heartland Park Topeka. According to the scenario, a suicide bomber detonated a

backpack improvised explosive device at HPT during an event on Jan. 13. Six people were injured from the blast and were admitted to a local hospital. Over the course of the following 12-18 hours, 200 people who were at the event went to local hospitals complaining of difficulty breathing, nausea and vomiting. Of these, 36 died. The local first responders discovered a liquid dispersal device in one of the observation suites and elevated radiation readings near the point of the explosion. The CST was requested by local responders to assist after the discovery of the dispersal device and the radiation.

At 5 a.m. on Jan. 14, the 73rd CST received its alert notice. At that time, the temperature was 42 degrees. As the day progressed, the temperature dropped and the wind picked up, leaving the team to deal with single-digit temperatures and sub-zero wind chills by the end of exercise.

"I believe this was the coldest exercise I have attended in my time on the team. I don't think the team was affected by the weather much," said Sgt. Patrick Gordon. "I believe that we pulled together and accomplished the mission in spite of the inclement weather."

"It is hard when it is extremely cold and difficult when it gets hot. Both have their unique challenges," said Sgt. 1st Class, Herb Wischnack. "For example, the threat of heat injuries multiplies dramatically in the summer. In the cold, we have to compromise between mobility and dexterity versus keeping warm."

Once the main body of the CST arrived on site, the team had 90 minutes to set up its equipment and launch the first survey team down range to conduct site characteri-



Sgt. 1st Class Herb Wischnack, Staff Sgt. Dustin Nash, and Sgt. John Tejada conduct planning operations for the survey team members during the 73rd CSTs External Evaluation on Jan. 14, 2009. During the planning process, the survey personnel plan their routes of entry and escape as well as what their mission objectives are based on previously obtained intelligence and photographs from first responders. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Francisca Jimenez)

zation and sample collection. The first downrange team of Sgt. Jacob Durkes and Staff Sgt. Jarrod Smith launched to conduct a site characterization of the observation suite, collect a sample of the material in the dispersal device and to identify the specific isotope of the radioactive substance contaminating the blast area from the suicide bomber. Meanwhile, the operations center and medical personnel collected information from various sources to put the pieces of the puzzle together to attempt to identify the hazardous agents that could be in

the area.

After all was said and done, the 73rd CST passed its exercise with a "trained" on all 12 of its assigned collective tasks.

Sgt. 1st Class Francisca Jimenez said the strength's of the unit are "...everyone's willingness to get the job done and the expertise that is brought to the team by each team member."

"Our people are definitely our strength," said Gordon. "We have the best equipment made, but none of it would matter without

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Ask the TAG



Use of social media under study

With companies and organizations using Facebook and Twitter more and more often, is the Adjutant General's Department going to use them?

Social media can be a valuable and effective resource to our various organizations. Technology is constantly evolving the effective and timely output of information to our Soldiers, Airmen and Kansas Division of Emergency Management staff. These sites can also foster esprit de corps, and highlight upcoming events members may be interested in.

At the same time, those media can be

used as a reconnaissance tool for the enemy. That in mind, we are writing Standard Operating Procedures for social media use within the Adjutant General's Department. As we continue to evaluate the risks, rules and regulations for using social media, more updates are sure to follow.

** ** *

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.

ATEAM, MATES assist with 30th HBCT equipment validation

The Advanced Tank Engine Army Team and Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site from Kansas recently sent 11 Soldiers to support the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team mobilization, Hickory Validation, at Camp Shelby, Miss. The mechanics went to validate the 30th HBCT engines and transmissions to ensure the mobilizing unit has mission-capable equipment to complete their mission.

The National Guard has become responsible for the pre-mobilization process, a key component of the process is the validation of equipment that will go with the Soldiers. In the case of the 30th HBCT, they are taking some of their tanks.

The North Carolina National Guard asked the ATEAM to assist in the validation of the tank power trains. The ATEAM and MATES 96 joined the 3656th Forward Support Company from the Mississippi Army National Guard to complete the equipment validation. The work was completed at the Combined Support Maintenance Shop at

Camp Shelby. The mechanics were tasked with pulling the engines and transmissions out of the tanks and conducting a health test on them. The health test checks the serviceability of the components.

All the equipment was thoroughly inspected and the faults noted. After inspection, work orders were created to order parts. While waiting on parts to come in, mechanics would pull the engines and transmissions and perform the health checks. All maintenance issues were addressed on engines and transmissions prior to reinstalling. Once they were certified and placed back in the tank, the tank was returned to the lot.

This process worked very efficiently, with multiple states working together without a large amount of detailed planning. Each team concentrated on their areas of expertise and the validation went exceptionally well, allowing the 30th HBCT to concentrate on mission and training oriented tasks and less on maintenance.

Flag flies over Topeka school



On March 31, Lt. Col. Tony Randall, 287th Sustainment Brigade, while home on leave from duty in Iraq, presented a U.S. flag that had flown over the brigade's headquarters in Iraq to Williams Magnet School, Topeka, Kan. The school adopted the brigade and has been sending them cards and letters during their deployment. Randall presented the flag to two Topeka High Marine JROTC cadets who raised the flag on the elementary school's flag pole. The flag flew all day on March 31 and was taken down at the end of the day and cased. Randall also presented the school with a certificate authenticating that the flag had flown over Iraq. (Photo by Jane Welch)

35th Division hosts meeting on new Army "redesign"

By Maj. Michael Wallace
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The 35th Division, headquartered at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and the division's commanding general, Maj. Gen. M. Wayne Pierson, recently hosted a seminar and work session with five other Army Division Commanders and their staffs. The reason for this pivotal meeting was that with the new warfighting functions the Army is facing, a "redesign" of how Army Divisions operate brings up key issues that have to be addressed under new manuals.

The Field Manuals FM 5-0 and FM 3-91, currently being completed at Fort Leavenworth's Combined Arms Center, were the focus of attention as the attendees began their input to streamline the evolving roles and responsibilities of the modular division staff. The current Modified Tables of Organization, which defines how divisions are manned and equipped, has undergone several recent revisions. Modified Tables of Organization 9.0 seeks to incorporate the latest thinking in "how a modular division fights" given the lessons learned in the cur-

rent theaters balanced with the strategic needs of the Army.

"Because of these coming changes," said Pierson, "we are facing at least three key issues on how we used to conduct business. One is how modular staff responsibilities change for each of the staffs. The second is how the relationship has been altered with command and control and finally, how task organizations have changed."

Maj. Gen. John Harrel, commanding general of the 40th Infantry Division, said, "I really feel that this meeting was very important. For instance, in this new doctrine, I don't see how the assistant division commander's role can be diminished."

"I agree," said Maj. Gen. Tod J. Carmony, 38th Infantry Division commander. "If you are familiar on how things should work, someone with pull needs to be in the rear to be able to coordinate the needs of the forces at the front. I don't see this happening with this new structure."

Having the discussion over this one point is the reason Pierson wanted to host the

(Continued on Page 9)



Commanding General of the Combined Arms Center, Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell, IV, talks with event hosts, 35th Division Commander, Maj. Gen. M. Wayne Pierson and 35th Division Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Taylor while divisional commanders from other states wait to clarify issues. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

Stop loss program to end for Army Guard in September

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

The Army will phase out use of the "stop-loss" program between now and January, said Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates.

Since becoming defense secretary, Gates has called on the services to eliminate their dependence on the controversial program that allows the involuntary extension of servicemembers' active duty past the scheduled end of their term of service.

The Army currently has 13,000 soldiers whose active duty status was extended through the program so they could deploy with their units. The Army is the only service using the program.

"We have the legal authority to do it," Gates said during a Pentagon news conference. "But ... I felt, particularly in these numbers, that it was breaking faith. It wasn't a violation of the enlistment contract. But I believe that when somebody's end date of service comes up, to hold them

against their will, if you will, is just not the right thing to do."

The secretary said there will always be the need to hold a few people in the service, but it should be a small number.

The secretary's decision will eliminate the use of stop-loss for deploying soldiers.

"Effective this August, the U.S. Army Reserve will no longer mobilize units under stop-loss," Gates said. "The Army National Guard will stop doing so in September, and active Army units will cease employing stop-loss in January."

The goal is to cut the number of soldiers remaining in the Army under stop-loss by 50 percent by June 2010 and to near zero by March 2011. "We will retain the authority to use stop-loss under extraordinary circumstances," Gates said.

Army leaders spoke to the secretary recently on the proposal, and they are putting in place the directives and regulations to make it work.

Battery reunion set for May 30

A reunion/potluck luncheon will be held for all former members of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 127th Artillery, on May 30 in Pleasant, Kan. Everyone with a last name that starts from A to M is being asked to bring a covered dish; N to Z is asked to bring a dessert.

Please RSVP to Kevin Stancer at 620-768-9108 before May 15.

Winter's last gasp; severe weather season and upcoming events

By Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting
The Adjutant General

Winter threw one last punch to some of our South Central and Southwest Kansas counties with ice and heavy snow bringing travel to a halt and claiming two lives. The governor issued a state disaster declaration. In addition, the state and FEMA began conducting preliminary damage assessments to determine the exact extent of the damage.



Maj. Gen.
Tod M. Bunting

While tornadoes had become the focus of many emergency managers in the state, Kansas weather proved once more to be unpredictable. This makes it all that much more important for each of us to have an emergency supply of water and non-perishable foods and an emergency kit in our cars. A trip to the store for these items

now could save your life or that of a family member.

This month important training kicked off in Wichita as part of our Resiliency Center Program, designed to better prepare our troops for the challenges they face before, during and after deployments. Command Sgt. Maj. Steve Rodina, Dr. Rick Selig, and Maj. Paul Gonzales have been instrumental in making this program a reality and I want to thank them in advance for all of their hard work. Some of our Soldiers and Airmen who deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Agribusiness Development Team took part in some of the Resiliency Center training prior to leaving for additional training in Indiana. More details about the Resiliency Program will be announced later this month.

Soon we will send another team to Afghanistan. Sixteen Guardsmen drawn from several units make up the Regional Corps Advisory Group, and will serve as advisors and mentors to corps level staff for the Afghanistan National Army or an Afghanistan police unit. Kansas has already sent several embedded training

teams to Afghanistan to train the Afghan National Army. This team will serve in a leadership capacity for several of the Embedded Training Teams there.

Currently, the 287th Sustainment Brigade is working hard in Iraq where they have been since the fall. They are currently the only Kansas Guard unit in Iraq and will return home in late 2010. Please, keep all of our troops in your thoughts and prayers.

While I am on the subject of deployments, I want you to know how much our Soldiers and Airmen appreciate the support they receive from home. I would also encourage everyone to remember these fine men and women throughout the year, not just at Christmas and other holidays. Packages of little goodies are great, but what our deployed Guardsmen really crave is news from home, any news at all. It doesn't take much time to send a card or a letter of encouragement, so I urge you to drop a Soldier or an Airman a line or send an email now and then. They'll feel better and so will you.

In June, Kansas National Guard and Emergency Management personnel will participate with Iowa and U.S. Northern Command in Vigilant Guard, a significant exercise involving a train derailment and foreign animal disease scenario. To better prepare for this event, the Adjutant General's Department will host the second annual Business and Industry forum on the agricultural and chemical industries. The event is planned for May 20 and 21 in Salina and will provide an opportunity to show off the capabilities of the Great Plains Joint Training Center.

The Great Plains Joint Training Center hosted a joint training exercise with the Kansas Army and Air National Guard, Washington Air National Guard and active duty forces from Army and Air. The train-

ing took place at Smoky Hill Weapons Range. It's the first of many joint exercises we plan to host at the facility over the coming years.

Congratulations are in order for the nearly 200 Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment (Combined Arms) who completed a successful training mission in Saudi Arabia. The three week event in late February and early March called Friendship One was a bilateral exercise and the first one conducted between the U.S. military and the Royal Saudi Land Forces.

I would also like to congratulate our Military Funeral Honors Team. The team ranks third in the nation among the National Guard Honor Guard and has been awarded the privilege of being in charge of all the national cemeteries in Kansas. The Kansas team has been called upon to perform 242 ceremonies, an increase from 191 last year and 14 in 2007. Their ability to perform the ceremonies comes from an increase in membership and their ability to meet training standards required for military funerals.

A word of appreciation to all those who took part in the Wounded Warrior motorcycle ride on March 21. A great time was had by all and the entry fee went to a very worthy cause. (See the story on Page 12 of this issue.)

I also want to express my gratitude, on behalf of all our Kansas Soldiers and Airmen, for the generous donation of tickets we recently received from the Kansas Speedway. In a great show of support for the Kansas National Guard, the Speedway gave us 2,500 tickets to the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series O'Reilly Auto Parts 250 on Saturday, April 25 and the IndyCar Race on Sunday, April 26.

We've had a great first quarter of the year. Let's all keep up the good work as we head into spring.

Soldier to Soldier

Traditions shape who we are

By Command Sgt. Maj. John Ryan

As I reflect over my career in the Kansas Army National Guard, I am reminded of so many times hearing "It's Our Tradition" from my mentors. Researching those traditions, I became aware that many have become written into our regulations, field manuals and other publications, traditions such as passing the unit flag during a change of command ceremony, saluting, the 21-gun salute and countless others.



Command Sgt. Maj.
John Ryan

I wondered most about the origins of those traditions unique to the Noncommissioned Officer Corp. They may go even deeper, but I traced them all the way back to the legionnaires of the Roman Empire. Legionnaires supervised training and performed administrative and logistical support tasks. Sounds like NCO work to me. So successful were they at their profession that standing armies around the world copied the Roman organization.

In the 15th Century a senior NCO was called "corporal" or "lance corporal."

The NCO of the Continental Army was established through a blending of traditions from the British, French and Prussian armies into an effective American institution. A Prussian officer named Baron Friedrich Wilhelm Augustus von Steuben, greatly influenced the NCO Corps in 1778-1779 when he wrote and instituted the Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States, commonly called the "Blue Book." This set the structure of the NCO Corps within the U. S. Army. The following is what he wrote:

"The choice of noncommissioned officers is an object of greatest importance. The order and discipline of a Regiment depends so much upon their behavior, that too much care can not be taken in preferring none to that trust but those who by their merit and good conduct are entitled to it. Honesty, Sobriety, and a remarkable attention to every point of duty, with a neatness in their dress are indispensable requisites. A spirit to command respect and obedience from the men, to teach it, are also absolutely necessary. Nor can a sergeant or corporal be said to be qualified who does not write and read in a tolerable manner."

"It being on the noncommissioned officers that the discipline and order of a company in a great measure depend, they

cannot be too circumspect in their behavior towards the men, be treating them with mildness, and at the same time obliging every one to do his duty. By avoiding too great familiarity with the men, they will not only gain their love and confidence, but be treated with proper respect; where as by a contrary conduct they forfeit all regard, and their authority becomes despised."

"Each Sergeant and Corporal will be in a particular manner answerable for the squad committed to his care. He must pay particular attention to their conduct in every respect; that they keep themselves and their arms always clean; that they have their effects always ready; and put where they can get at them immediately and even in the dark, without confusion; and on every fine day he must oblige them to air their effects.

"When a man of his squad is warned of duty, he must examine him before he carries him to the parade, obliging him to take all his effects with him, unless when specially ordered to the contrary."

"In teaching the recruits, they must exercise all their patience, by no means abusing them, but treating them with mildness, and not expect too much precision in the first lessons, punishing those only who are willfully negligent."

"They must suppress all quarrels in the company; and where other men fail; must use their authority in confusing the offender."

In reading this twice over I was impressed with the wording used to describe NCOs in the formative years. I began to dwell on some of the words and phrases:

"The choice of noncommissioned officers is an object of greatest importance.

"It being on the noncommissioned officers that the discipline and order of a company in a great measure depend"

"...those who by their merit and good conduct are entitled to it."

"Honesty..."

"Sobriety..."

"...a remarkable attention to every point of duty..."

"... obliging every one to do his duty"

WOW!!!

I think about the NCO Corps of today. Are we living up to the traditions established in 1778 by Baron Von Steuben? Do we, as NCOs in today's Army, consider our position with these attributes in mind or do we serve for just monetary gain? Do we consider the importance of selecting NCOs when we sit on the Enlisted Promotion board? Dare we consider that the order and discipline of our Soldier depends on our behavior? Do we have circumspect behav-

(Continued on Page 9)

Retention requires effort

By Command Chief Warrant Officer
Five Mark Jensen

It's spring time and I hope you're all getting out to enjoy the weather. I wanted to share some thoughts I have regarding the recent 20 year quality retention boards held here in Kansas for warrant officers.

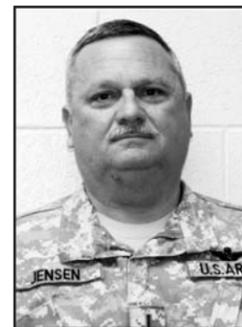
Once again there were a number of warrant officers who found themselves subjected to one year looks because of issues within their files that were entirely correctable by the individual. These administrative type problems, such

as an outdated photo, outdated bio or lack of Officer Evaluation Reports, is something each of us must endeavor to correct prior to these boards. My recommendation would be to make an appointment with the state personnel officer to review your file and make the necessary changes to ensure a favorable action by the board.

If any of you feel you were treated unfairly by the board, please contact me and I will be happy to review your file with you and ensure you understand completely what may have resulted in your non-retention or one year look result.

I speak with the Adjutant General each year regarding these board results. It is his intent that every officer be treated fairly and equitably in this process, but that individual officers have a responsibility to review and do the necessary housekeeping on their individual files.

Have a great spring and summer.



Command Chief
Warrant Officer Five
Mark Jensen

PLAINS GUARDIAN

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Commander-in-Chief
Gov. Kathleen Sebelius
Adjutant General of Kansas
Maj. Gen. Tod M. 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

e-mail: jane.e.welch1@us.army.mil

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For change of address, contact Jane Welch.

Al Ghizi Tribe shaykh hosts luncheon for Sustainment commanders

By Sgt. Heather Wright
287th Sustainment Battalion

Col. Robert Schmitt, 287th Sustainment Brigade, and Lt. Col. David Whaling, 157th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, were invited to a formal luncheon hosted by Shaykh Tayseer Mohammed Al-Marshad of the Al Ghizi tribe at his Al Nasiriyah compound on Jan. 21. It was the first meeting between the two parties and Al-Marshad used the opportunity to ask for Coalition Forces support of Civil Affairs projects in his area of Dhi Qar Province.

Also attending the luncheon was the Fahad Raysan, Head of Ur City Council; Mohammed Tayieh, Al Batha District Councilman; 287th Sustainment Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Newton; 157th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Orlando Santiago and Lt. Col. Clint Moyer, chief of the 287th Sustainment Battalion Civilian Military Operations.

The 287th Sustainment Battalion, a Kansas Army National Guard unit with headquarters in Wichita, recently arrived to take over sustainment operations in southern Iraq. The 157th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion is under the command of the 287th and is an Army Reserve unit from Philadelphia, Pa.

On top of Al-Marshad's request list was

287th Sustainment Brigade trains Post Attack Reconnaissance teams

By Sgt. Heather Wright
287th Sustainment Brigade

Each month, Sgt. 1st Class Fred Jones, 287th Sustainment Brigade Anti-Terrorism and Force Protection non-commissioned officer in charge, conducts force protection training for brigade members of the Post Action Reconnaissance teams on Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

"In many ways," said Jones, "the Post Action Reconnaissance team is a mirror of the Quick Reaction Force. The team looks for danger inside the wire as opposed to the danger outside of the wire."

Jones trains 14 teams consisting of 56 Soldiers from four subordinate battalions—the 287th Special Troops Battalion; 3rd Battalion, 133rd Field Artillery; 167th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and the 157th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

"My job is to make sure our Soldiers conduct post attack measures quickly and accurately when our base receives direct or indirect fire from the enemy," said Jones. After the team goes through the alerts, they clear the base, look for unexploded ordnance, breaches in the wall security and any injured Soldiers that may need medical assistance.

"I set up realistic training for the Soldiers to react to different scenarios," said



Lt. Col. Clint Moyer, chief of 287th Sustainment Brigade Civilian Military Operations, enjoys after-dinner conversation with Al Batha District Councilman Mohammed Tayieh and their host, Shaykh Tayseer Mohammed Al-Marshad of the Al Ghizi Tribe, Jan. 21, 2009. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Carl Mar)

a new pump station house. "The present structure is old and beyond repair," he said. "The pump and generator are exposed to

Jones. "The first thing they do is to look for unexploded ordnance. Once they determine there is no danger to themselves, they alert their PAR team leader for assistance to give first aid and to get the injured to a casualty collection point."

If the team does encounter unexploded ordnance, they cordon off the area to keep everybody out of the blast zone, use binoculars to identify the ordnance and report the information. An Explosive Ordnance unit is mobilized to dispose of the ordnance.

Each company assigns different Soldiers to the teams for various reasons. Some are chosen because they have responsibilities that would not impact normal operations if they were gone and others are chosen because they have certain responsibilities outside the gate. There are alternate plans to ensure the PAR teams are fully manned when individual team members are on leave, sick or away for other reasons.

Jones said the training keeps the Post Action Reconnaissance teams "ready and effective." Until recently, the base hadn't been attacked since last spring. In the days leading up to the Iraqi Provincial elections, a lone mortar round struck the base without causing damage.

"The PAR teams' response to the attack showed them that this training is real and that the training works," said Jones.



At the end of a day's training, 287th Sustainment Brigade (SB) Anti-Terrorism and Force Protection Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge Master Sgt. Fred Jones receives an after-action review from Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Adams and 1st Lt. Kurt Dawson of the 3rd Battalion, 133rd Field Artillery, on their Post Attack Reconnaissance (PAR) team's performance. (Photo by Sgt. Heather Wright, 287th Sustainment Brigade)

"It was a great dinner, a great meeting. We came away with a lot of positive opportunities to assist the Iraqis in the future."

*Col. Robert Schmitt
287th Sustainment Brigade*

dents, computers for the classrooms and repairs to the buildings. Perhaps you can help them, too," asked Raysan.

Tayieh then turned everyone's attention to another institution which he believed "would interest the 287th Civil Affairs."

"There is an orphanage located in my district, not far from my town," said Tayieh. "It has 40 to 45 children who need help with everything — school supplies, clothes, pay for teachers. It would be a good project for you, and I can give you directions to it after the dinner."

At the end of dinner, Al-Marshad was keen on showing his appreciation of the brigade leaders' attendance. He presented each one with a "kaffiyeh" (scarf) and "agal" (plaited cord) — the traditional male Iraqi headdress — and asked that they might favor him to wear it at their next meeting.

"It was a great dinner, a great meeting," said Schmitt. "We came away with a lot of positive opportunities to assist the Iraqis in the future. Shaykh Al-Marshad will keep us busy, and that's what we want to do."

the weather and they stop working often. We would like your help in building a new house which would cover the equipment."

Raysan and Tayieh thanked the Sustainment Soldiers for their continued Civilian Military Operations support of several schools in their district, but identified several more schools which had not been helped before.

"These schools need supplies for the stu-

Iraqis learn about business development, opportunities

By Sgt. Heather Wright
287th Sustainment Brigade

Amidst cell phone rings and conversations, 17 eager Iraqis from Dhi Qar province, Iraq, received micro-grant instruction from Coalition forces at a small-business conference at Contingency Operating Base Adder on Jan. 17.

Ten Iraqi women and seven men attended a joint seminar hosted by the Dhi Qar Provincial Reconstruction Team, finance personnel from the 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division and the members of the Kansas National Guard's 287th Sustainment Brigade Civil Military Operations cell. The purpose of the event was to help stimulate economic growth in southern Iraq by educating potential business owners on ways to start and expand small businesses using micro-grants.

The conference was a streamlined version of a similar micro-grant seminar held by the 7th Sustainment Brigade and the Muthanna Provincial Reconstruction Team on Dec. 6, 2008. Eager to offer a similar opportunity to residents of Dhi Qar province, Lt. Col. Clint Moyer, 287th Sustainment Brigade Civil Military Operations chief, contacted Dhi Qar Provincial Reconstruction Team business leader Rick Schroeder, who coordinated with the Small Business Development Center in Nasiriya to locate potential applicants and make the conference a reality.

Capt. Margoth Flores, 287th Civil Military Operations finance officer, spent a portion of the conference explaining the procedures for completing micro-grants. The \$5,000 grants are primarily awarded for starting a new business or expanding existing businesses.

Wijdan Majid Hasan, a 40-year-old Iraqi woman from Nasiriya, attended the course hoping to develop her women's clothing store. She wants to buy some land to build a house with the profit.

"We'll need to save twenty to thirty thousand for the land," said Hasan.

Tatheer Farsal, a 25-year-old soccer



Tatheer Farsal, a Micro-Grant Conference participant, receives help with filling out his application from Sgt. Heather Wright, 287th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs. (Photo by Master Sgt. Carl Mar)

player and grocery store owner in Nasiriya, hoped he would be one of the grant recipients.

"I would like to expand the building, offer more variety for my customers and hire more employees," Farsal said. "This program will help me grow my business."

Processing the grants is a relatively simple process. After applications are completed, they are translated into English. A pay and procurement officer uses the information to fill out a Memorandum of Agreement that details the applicant's request, either a micro-grant or capital material such as a sewing machine, oven or computer. The original application, translation, Memorandum of Agreement and a letter of recommendation from the Dhi Qar Provincial Reconstruction Team completes a micro-grant. Multinational Division-Central then reviews the application. Once the application is certified, applicants receive the approved amount in Iraqi currency or the requested capital material approximately one month after applying.

Great Plains Joint Training Center hosts “Porkforward” exercise

By Maj. Mike Wallace
105th Public Affairs Detachment

The Great Plains Joint Training Center, located in Salina, Kan., has hosted numerous training exercises to lead the nation with specialized training for military and civilian authorities that work in tandem during state and national emergencies.

“The Great Plains Joint Training Center was created to provide facilities for training for responders in real world situations,” said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. “In emergencies, all branches of the military must be ready to work together and in domestic response, our Guardsmen, along with local, state and federal responders, must work together and, ideally, train together.”

Proving how ideal the facility is, elements of the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, Kansas Army National Guard, Kansas Air National Guard, Washington Air National Guard and the civilian partners at the

Salina Airport recently trained together in a Joint Terminal Attack Controller exercise on Feb. 27 named “Porkforward.” This event had ground personnel training with personnel and equipment in the air to give a “live” feeling of combat situations during the training.

Porkforward is named because of the A-10 Thunderbolt Ground Attack Aircraft, nicknamed the “Warhog,” which were used to attack targets during the exercise. The exercise tests participants in the requirements and procedures to provide close air support for military missions.

Supporting the aircraft from the ground and acting as Joint Forward Observers were elements from the Kansas Army National Guard Pre and Post Mobilization Training Assister Element; 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment; 284th Air Support Operations Squadron, Kansas Air National Guard; forward observers from the

U.S. Army 1st Division Field Artillery, Fort Riley; 10th Air Support Operations Squadron, U.S. Air Force; and Washington Air National Guard’s 116th Air Support Operations Squadrons.

“This training is great,” said Senior Airman Nathan Archambault, 10th Air Support Operations Squadron, Fort Riley. “To have planes coming in and strafing and bombing our identified targets is really awesome.”

“The training here, where enemy action is so well simulated, really helps the military forces here get into the right mindset when they are conducting their training,” said Staff Sgt. Jacob Echols, 10th Air Support Operations Squadron, referring to the numerous artillery and grenade simulators that would explode as they conducted their training.

“I don’t think I’ve ever trained in such a ‘real’ environment before,” said Airman 1st Class Ken Pollock, 10th Air Support Operations Squadron. “I mean, it’s totally wicked to be able to actually dismount a helicopter and tactically rescue hostages from one of these towns (small villages built for training) while our people are calling in air missions.”

“At the same time, the enemy forces are returning fire, moving and doing everything possible to thwart our capabilities—but, it’s all worth it in the end when we’re successful,” said Pollock, as he assisted the “rescued hostages” back onto a Black Hawk helicopter, successfully completing their rescue mission before airlifting back to their home station.



Airmen from the Washington Air National Guard call in targets for the A-10 Ground Support aircraft to destroy. They did this under simulated mortar and sniper attack from surrounding buildings, creating realistic conditions for training. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

35th Infantry Division has new deputy commanding general

By Staff Sgt James. M. Grosdidier
35th Division Public Affairs

The 35th Infantry Division (35th ID) has a new Deputy Commanding General. Brig. Gen. David C. Petersen comes to the division headquarters

in Ft. Leavenworth, Kan., from the Nebraska National Guard, which he has served since 1976.

Since being commissioned an infantry officer by the Nebraska State Officer Candidate School, Petersen has held almost every position available to an infantry officer. Most recently, he has been the commander of the 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade (BFSB).

When Hurricanes Gustav and Ike hit the Gulf Coast in 2008, Petersen took the 67th BFSB—over 1,000 Soldiers and 350 vehicles—to Louisiana in support of disaster relief operations there. This was the largest deployment of Guardsmen outside their home state in Nebraska history, excluding combat and peacekeeping missions.

Before taking over the 67th BFSB, Petersen had spent time overseas in Afghanistan, where he received a Bronze Star and Combat Infantryman’s Badge. Petersen served as the Senior Regional Advisor to a general in the Afghan National Police.



Brig. Gen. David C. Petersen

“I am excited to come back to the 35th.”

Brig. Gen. David C. Petersen

According to Petersen, being assigned to the 35th ID is a homecoming of sorts.

“I am excited to come back to the 35th,” Petersen said. “A major part of my career was with the 2-134th Infantry, where we used to wear the same division patch. I was pleased to see a 2-134th banner in the conference room with the motto: “All Hell can’t stop us.” I think that “Can Do” attitude sums up the 35th and the Army National Guard.”

Petersen has recently retired from his technician job in the Nebraska Guard and has just been named to be the Assistant to the Adjutant General (ATAG) of the Nebraska National Guard.

“We are lucky to have a new one-star [general] who is so talented that he was also picked to be the ATAG in Nebraska,” said Maj. Gen. M. Wayne Pierson, 35th ID commander. “Gen. Petersen is highly qualified and will be a great asset to me and to the division.”

Petersen, a 37-year Army veteran, holds an additional distinction. He is one of the last “draftees” still actively serving. Drafted into the regular Army in 1972, Petersen served three and a half years as a combat engineer. Congress abolished the draft in 1973.

Petersen resides in Lincoln, Neb., with his wife Karen. They have two adult sons and two granddaughters.



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation comes in for a dusty landing during the joint “Porkforward” exercise at the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina Feb. 27. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Senior Airman Nathan Archambault, 10th Air Support Operations Squadron, Fort Riley, provides ground cover and security during the exercise. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Justin Jacobs)

Soldier “excited to go” with Agribusiness Development Team

By Staff Sgt. Diana Starr, UPAR

Staff Sgt. Carolee Tustin, Newton, Kan., is one of the two female Soldiers being deployed with the Agribusiness Development Team, Kansas National Guard, headed to Afghanistan. Tustin will be in charge of preventive medicine inspections, surveys and control operations. Her mission is to help instruct the Afghans on how to safely store their grains and flour. She will also instruct them on proper refuse disposal.

Tustin is a full time technician with the medical section at the Kansas Regional Training Center in Salina, serving as the Line of Duty manager. Tustin said she is excited to go with the ADT because it will allow her to work in a different area of her Military Occupational Specialty.

“I am excited about going with this team of Soldiers because I want to learn

from them about their agricultural knowledge from their civilian lives,” states Tustin. “This whole team seems to have meshed together quickly. I am feeling really good about this deployment.”

The team spent a week with Kansas State University College of Agriculture staff to learn about the different crops and cattle they will be seeing in Afghanistan.

Tustin began her career in the National Guard in the state of New Hampshire in 1994 where she lived for approximately 14 years. During her first deployment with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 197th Field Artillery Brigade, she met Soldiers from the Kansas National Guard. Upon her return, she decided she wanted a change and moved to Kansas remembering how friendly and warm the Kansas soldiers were that she had met.

There's no play time for these Soldiers when they hit the pool

By Sgt. Michael H. Mathewson, UPAR

On March 19, the swimming pool of Topeka's YWCA was the scene of an unusual event. The YWCA patrons shared their pool with members of the Kansas Army National Guard. Why, in Kansas, more than 1,000 miles from any ocean, were UH-60 Black Hawk crewmembers conducting water survival training?

Maj. John McGrann, 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment Operations officer said "Today is part of the battalion's ongoing mission training. This survival training is to build Soldier confidence in their equipment and their ability to use it."

"Today we are training both traditional Soldiers as well as our full time crews," said McGrann. "In the past, we have concentrated on the full time crews." He went on to explain that the water training is a prelude to the battalion's training with the aero firefighting equipment known as a Bambi® bucket.

The Bambi® bucket is sling-loaded under the helicopter and is filled by lowering it into any large body of water. The crew then flies the bucket over the fire, releasing up to 660 gallons of water.

"Working with the Bambi bucket can be hazardous," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gary Lacore, 1st Battalion, 171st General Support Aviation. "We would most likely use the bucket during the heat of the summer when the Black Hawk does not have the lift it would have in the fall and winter when the air is colder and thicker."

"When lifting the bucket, the crew has to be very careful when pulling in the power," said Lacore. "With so much weight, the bucket could pull the aircraft down into the water."

"We do water survival training as part of the Bambi bucket training," said Sgt. Thomas Baker. "This is the second time we have done water survival training since our return from Iraq. Before our deployment, we used to do our training in Pomona Lake. The pool here is much nicer."



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Steve Hood explains the operation of a Sea Mark II air cylinder to Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gary Lacore during a water survival training exercise at the YWCA swimming pool in Topeka. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Mathewson, UPAR)

The training started with crewmembers, dressed in a flight suit with survival vest and helmet, jumping into the deep end of the pool. Using the breast stroke, they had to swim 15 meters, about half the length of the pool, to where Capt. John Urban was serving as one of the safety instructors. This maneuver was to simulate swimming clear of the downed helicopter. Crewmembers also had to show how they would clear an area of burning fuel and floating debris before coming up for air. Swimming back to the edge of the pool, the crewmembers then had to demonstrate the side and back strokes.

When they reached Baker, the second

swim instructor, they had to tread water. In three, one minute events, they treaded water by using their arms without their legs, then using their legs without their arms. Finally, they had to perform the drownproofing technique before exiting the pool.

The next maneuver was to jump back into the pool and deploy the flotation collar attached to their survival vest. While still underwater, the crewmember pulled the cord on the flotation collar. The cord re-

leased the CO₂ cartridge, which almost instantly filled the bright red collar, popping the Soldier to the surface like a cork.

Once on the surface, Baker gave them a few minutes to become comfortable floating with the collar before deflating it. While treading water, they had to reinflate the collar using the mouth tubes, completing the second training station.

"It is amazing how much flotation that the flight helmet provides," said Lacore after he left the water. "This training is for an event that we hope will never happen, but that is the point of this type of training."

Sgt. James Kristinat said "This is good training. It is giving us experience with the equipment."

Back in the pool, they went through the third and last station with Chief Warrant Officer 4 Steve Hood. At this station, Hood demonstrated the Sea Mark II air cylinder. Like the flotation collars, the cylinders are carried on the Air Warrior survival vest for over water operations. Like a mini scuba tank, the cylinders provide about two minutes of breathing time. This gives the crew time to exit from a submerged aircraft.

In the past dozen years, the unit has used the bucket several times to fight fires. In July 1997, the unit responded to a train wreck and fire in Delia, Kan. Then, in May 1998, there was a train wreck and fire near Kingman, Kan.. In 2000, the unit sent crews to Montana to fight wild fires. In 2006, a crew responded to a fire in the Fort Scott, Kan., historical district, dropping water directly on to the burning buildings. And in the fall of 2008, two crews deployed to Klamath Falls, Calif., to fight wildfires.

The next training event will involve flying with the Bambi bucket. The crews will fill the bucket and then practice releasing the water on a target.

Agribusiness Development Team

Continued from Page 1

believe that developing a more robust and economic agricultural system is one of the primary pillars in helping Afghanistan become more self-sufficient.

"I'm looking forward to getting there and making a difference," said Clifford. "Hopefully future missions to that region will need more plows than they will guns."

The agribusiness development team program is a joint effort of several federal government agencies and the National Guard. The concept has been successfully used in Central America for nearly 20 years. The first ADT was deployed from Missouri to Afghanistan in February 2008 and the second was deployed from Texas in June. Four additional teams, including the 1-6 Agribusiness Development Team from the Kansas National Guard, will be deployed over a 12 month period.

For more information on the program and its long-term goals visit http://www.army.mil/aps/08/information_papers/other/ARNG_Agribusiness_Development_Team.html



Agribusiness Development Team commander Col. Eric Peck (right), takes his turn at the podium during a deployment ceremony on March 11. Peck said his team's mission is to help "... provide and, hopefully, increase economic stability and an overall sense of well-being for the country." (Photo by Staff Sgt. Tim Traynor)

External Evaluation exercise

Continued from Page 2

the expertise and experience of the excellent Soldiers and Airmen of the 73rd CST."

Smith said, "We are trained to think outside the box and to not only run our equipment but understand the data and how it fits in the puzzle."

Being on the CST and going through the large amount of training brings a unique perspective to its members. 1st Lt. Xiang Zhang said, "It made me more vigilant of my surroundings not only in a potential WMD environment, but it also allowed me to have a better understanding of hazardous materials and its potential effects in a

household setting."

"With gained experience from previous years' training, this allows us to assist, assess, and advise the emergency responders with great confidence," said Staff Sgt. Michael Ramos.

The CST conducts training exercises on a regular basis with fire departments and law enforcement agencies from across Kansas, federal government agencies such as the Department of Energy, and CSTs in neighboring states. This allows the team to cross train with peers and exchange ideas to continually improve operations and responses to potential WMD events.

Continued from Page 1

"We urge Kansans to avoid traveling today and tomorrow in areas impacted by the storm," said Bunting in a statement made March 27. "Road conditions can deteriorate quickly forcing closures and requiring travelers to find shelter."

KDEM and the Kansas National Guard began prepositioning personnel, generators and other resources in anticipation of needs.

"We're trying to stay ahead of the curve," said Bunting. "We've looked at where the storm is expected to be the worst and pre-positioned some of our National Guard equipment and alerted several Kansas National Guardsmen to be ready to mobilize, if needed."

"We've been in contact with county emergency managers across the state to ensure they know the process to ask for assistance and ensure good communication," said Angee Morgan, deputy director of KDEM.

As blizzard conditions moved into the state March 27, the Kansas Department of Transportation began to close highways as they became impassible due to ice and heavy snow. Numerous slide-offs and other weather-related accidents were reported, including one fatality in Marion County in an accident that injured two other people. A second weather-related death was reported March 29 when a 72-year-old man in Reno County suffered a heart attack while shoveling snow.

White-out conditions hampered efforts by local authorities to locate and assist stranded motorists. Kansas National Guardsmen were called out in Seward, Pratt and Reno Counties to assist in search and rescue operations and transport medical personnel to hospitals. The Kansas Highway Patrol and the Kansas National Guard's 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation both conducted aerial surveillance missions to help locate stranded motorists.

The Kansas National Guard supplied a 30kW generator to the community of Severy in Greenwood County to supply power to a water tower pump. The armories in

Dodge City, Great Bend, Hutchinson, Kingman, Larned, Pratt and the armory in West Wichita were opened to serve as warming stations for stranded motorists who were rescued and as staging areas for emergency response operations.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius signed a State of Disaster Emergency declaration on March 28 for 62 Kansas counties impacted by the storm. Included in the declaration were Barber, Barton, Butler, Chautauqua, Chase, Clark, Clay, Cloud, Comanche, Cowley, Dickinson, Edwards, Ellis, Elk, Ellsworth, Finney, Ford, Geary, Gray, Grant, Greeley, Greenwood, Harvey, Harper, Hamilton, Haskell, Hodgeman, Jewell, Kearney, Kingman, Kiowa, Lane, Lincoln, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, McPherson, Meade, Morton, Morris, Ness, Ottawa, Pawnee, Pottawatomie, Pratt, Reno, Rice, Riley, Rush, Russell, Saline, Sedgwick, Scott, Seward, Sherman, Stanton, Stafford, Stevens, Sumner, Wabaunsee, Wallace, and Wichita Counties.

"It is important that we ensure Kansas counties have the resources they need," said Sebelius. "This storm system has hit parts of our state hard, left many residents without power, forced numerous roads closed and resulted in multiple accidents, including one fatality."

As the storm system passed out of the state, the State Emergency Operations Center in Topeka deactivated at 12:30 p.m. on March 29 and went back to normal operations for weekend hours.

Heavy snows resulted in the collapse of a total of six buildings in Harper, Harvey, Kingman and Reno Counties. Although Westar Energy and a number of rural electric cooperatives reported power outages, total damages relating to the storm are not expected to come anywhere close to the damages sustained from the storms in December 2007, damage thresholds for a federal disaster declaration may be reached in several counties.

Preliminary damage assessments are underway to more fully assess total damage figures.

Neidhardt promoted to full colonel in Kansas Air National Guard

By Jane Welch
Public Affairs Office

Lt. Col. Hans J. Neidhardt was pinned with "eagles" during a special ceremony on Saturday, April 4, signifying his promotion to colonel in the Kansas Air National Guard. The promotion took place at Nickell Armory, Topeka.

Neidhardt serves as the Director of Staff – Air, providing direct support to the two Air National Guard wings (approximately 2,500 personnel) located in Topeka and Wichita.

"I'm proud of Hans for the many achievements he has in the Kansas Guard, and I congratulate him on his well-deserved promotion," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas adjutant general.

Neidhardt has more than 34 years of military service, receiving his commission as second lieutenant in September 1990. He started his military career in 1974 as a private assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 137th Infantry, Maintenance Platoon as the battalion recovery sergeant. In March 1982, Tech. Sgt. Neidhardt transferred to the Intelligence Section, 184th Fighter Group, Kansas Air National Guard. Upon his commission in 1990, Neidhardt continued his service with the Kansas Air National Guard, serving as a Weapons Director with the 134th Air Control Squadron, Chief of Intelligence with the 184th Bomb Wing, Wing Executive Officer for the 184th Bomb Wing/Air Refueling Wing, and as

New kitchen serves up tasty chow

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

Members of the 190th Air Refueling Wing Services Flight got a fresh taste of deployment — chicken, potatoes and corn — during their February Unit Training Assembly, thanks to a new mobile kitchen, known as a Single Pallet Expeditionary Kitchen.

Previously, Services Flight served meals in the field from a Mobile Kitchen Trailer, which was first used in Vietnam. The new kitchen is a highly mobile, temporary kitchen for use in remote and undeveloped areas. The entire kitchen can be set up by a minimum of 12 personnel in less than 2 hours. A staff of three can quickly and safely prepare food for an entire unit. Meals can be prepared within an hour and up to 315 personnel can be served within a meal period.

Tech Sgt. John Williams, Services Flight readiness noncommissioned officer, is pleased with the easy cleanup and extra

space the new equipment provides. Williams said the kitchen arrived about a week before February training and is larger than most of the staff expected. It was so new the freshly painted doors were sealed shut.

"We had to shoulder them open," he recalled.

Cooking in the portable kitchen is fire-free. A large diesel powered boiler heats water, where packaged food can be heated. The cooking method can be compared to a Meals Ready-To-Eat dinner. Senior Airman Brooke Cessna stresses the food is better than an MRE because it's fresher, although the cooking process is the same.

Cans of vegetables or soup could be boiled for a meal, although traditional cooking options are mostly unavailable. For instance, chicken could be baked or steamed, but not fried.

Cessna said she felt more prepared for deployment after the training.

"We can really cook anything," she said.



Newly promoted to colonel, Hans Neidhardt, director of staff – Air, Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas, receives his new rank from his wife, Shari, and Brig. Gen. Ed Flora, assistant adjutant general – Air and commander of the Air National Guard. (Photo by Steve Larson, Public Affairs Office)

the Commander of the 184th Intelligence Support Squadron (184th Intelligence Wing). In June 2008, Neidhardt became the Director of Staff – Air at Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas in Topeka, Kan.

His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Joint Meritorious Unit Award with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with four oak leaf clusters, Combat Readiness Medal, Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster,

and Air Force Recognition Medal.

Neidhardt was born in Niederrodenbach, Germany, and attended high school in Whitewater, Kan. He earned an Associate of Arts degree from Butler Community College, an Associate of Applied Science degree from the Community College of the Air Force, a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial management from Newman University and a master's degree in management from Webster University.

His professional military education also includes Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College.

Neidhardt and his wife, Shari, live in Potwin, Kan., and have two children and five grandchildren.

Airmen enlists 184th teammates to clean up wildlife area

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

On March 21, members of the 184th Intelligence Wing performed a clean-up of the Kaw Wildlife Area near Arkansas City, Kan. Tech. Sgt. John Wall had the idea to clean up the area when he realized that flooding in late September 2007 had cluttered the area with debris.

Wall, a team leader for the 184th Security Forces (Phoenix Ravens), has been a member of the 184th since October 2004. As an avid hunter, the Kaw Wildlife Area is one of the places that Wall enjoys hunting. While he was hunting and walking along the river he noticed that the area was cluttered with debris. With the limited access of the area and only occasional visits from artifact

hunters and fishermen, he realized the chances of the area being cleaned up were slim. Wall figured it would take at least 10 volunteers to help with the clean-up.

Wall enlisted the help of seven unit members: Master Sgt. Melanie Grabber (plus her daughter and a friend), Tech. Sgt. Shawn Knowlton, Tech. Sgt. Diane McNany, Staff Sgt. Terry Adkins, Staff Sgt. Jeff Nicholson and Senior Airman Roger Seward. The land manager of the area donated a flatbed truck and a front-end loader to help with the clean-up. Wall bought trash bags with money out of his own pocket to dispose of the debris.

The trash clean-up produced over 15 bags of trash, an old refrigerator and four washing machines.



Tech. Sgt. Sean Cochran serves lunch to "deployers" from the new Single Pallet Expeditionary Kitchen, or SPEK, during the February Unit Training Assembly. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Emily Alley)

Smith, Moser sweep national awards

By Capt. Joe Blubaugh
190th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Two airmen of the 190th Air Refueling Wing have completed a sweep of the national awards for which they were competing.

Master Sgt. Richard Smith and Master Sgt. Scott Moser were recently named as the Outstanding Unit Career Advisor and Outstanding Retention Office Manager in the Air National Guard.

"It is an exciting, yet humbling experience, to be honored by your peers," said Moser, 190th Retention Office manager. "But this says more about the wing than it does about me. I am blessed by a phenomenal group of unit career advisors and wing leadership that allow me to have success at my job."

"When I reflected on the selection process for all categories, I thought there was a good chance one of us would win," said Smith, 190th budget analyst. "I never

would have thought they would select both of us." The 190th was the only unit that had two award recipients this year out of the nine awards given.

Both Moser and Smith competed against the winners from all 91 Air National Guard units in their respective categories. Each also won at several levels leading up to the national competition, first at the state level, then at one of five regional levels. For Moser, that meant he beat out 91 fellow Retention Office managers to win the award. However, there are several UCAs at each wing, meaning Smith was competing against an original pool of 1,500 advisors.

"I was obviously very pleased and excited to be recognized by my peers," said Smith. "It was very special for me to represent the 190th."

Moser and Smith received their awards at the national Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention Workshop in February.



Tech. Sgt. John Wall and Staff Sgt. Terry Adkins help load an abandoned refrigerator on a truck. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Justin Jacobs)

Combined Federal Campaign champions



During the Adjutant General's Combined Federal Campaign, the Kansas Army National Guard and the Kansas National Guard HQ increased their contributions this year by 55-percent. This year donating \$21,262—up from \$13,760 in 2007. (Left) 2nd Lt. Ellisha Smith is presented the Eagle Award by Kansas Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting for contributing over \$1,000. (Right) Ms. Dottie Clark donated over \$600 and was also recognized by Bunting. (Photos by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD)

Guardsmen help with the Hunt

By Staff Sgt. Mark Hanson
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Over a dozen National Guard members reported for duty April 3 to help support the Governor's Annual Easter Egg Hunt held at the Governor's Mansion in Topeka, Kan. Soldiers from the Recruiting and Retention Command and 35th Military Police were stationed in various locations around the property, guiding traffic, helping security forces and giving tours of an up-armored Humvee.

"It helps give a more human face to go along with the uniform. It reminds people that we're here for the community," said Sgt Sarah Kelly.

Hundreds of children and their parents were bussed in for the event where they were greeted by an assortment of costumed mascots. McGruff the Crime Dog, Chester Cheetah and the Easter Bunny made an ap-

pearance to entertain the children before the egg hunt began. Soldiers were also posted at the bus stop to help the smaller children on and off the buses.

"Kids get excited, especially when they see him (the Easter Bunny), and sometimes don't pay attention to their surroundings. So we're here to ensure that they don't get injured before they can enjoy the activities," said Spc Hannah Watkins, Recruiting Command.

The Guardsmen also set up and provided the necessary equipment to keep many of the activities going.

"We brought in generators to provide power and some other equipment for some of the various activities," said Lt. Col. Dane Childs. "It just goes to show that our missions are extremely diverse and that we're always ready to help where needed."

35th Division hosts meeting

Continued from Page 3

seminar. "As you can see, discussion on key points of the restructure is critical. We have a lot of 'gray' areas. It seems the only thing that hasn't changed is the role of the Chief of Staff. We all need to get on the same sheet of music here. Nothing is worse than having a division commander not verbalizing how he wants things to work in his command," said Pierson.

"I'm very glad that General Pierson hosted this," said Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell, IV. Caldwell is the commanding general of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth. As the commanding general, he has the responsibility for the Command and General Staff College and 17 other schools, centers and training programs throughout the United States. His people are the ones currently writing the new guidelines that address this redesign.

"It's important that these commanders get a chance to look at what we've designed up here (at the Combined Arms Center) and talk about how it would work for them," said Caldwell.

"There will be more conferences with much more input," said Pierson. "We still have to talk about the civil support side of the house, the power of inter-agency work and many other avenues. The input from

the Guard is absolutely essential because the National Guard is a major player in this new design."

This summer, the 35th Infantry Division will complete its fielding of the premier Army Battle Command System 6.4 and the Standard Integrated Command Post System. These two systems, consisting of 11 networked computer information systems and approximately 10,000 square feet of climate controlled tentage, are the most modern command and control systems the Army has to offer and will provide the state of Kansas with unprecedented capability for managing up to six brigades in the event of a major disaster or attack on the homeland. These systems are all part of the Army's plan to reorganize its divisional headquarters into a new modular design.

In addition to the 40th Infantry Division, headquartered in Los Alamitos, Calif., and the 28th Infantry Division, headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, the other attendees were: Brig. Gen. Paul C. Genreux, Jr., commander of the 42nd Infantry Division, Troy, New York; Maj. Gen. Jose S. Mayorga, commander of the 36th Infantry Division, Austin, Texas; and Brig. Gen. Jerry G. Beck, Jr, commander of the 28th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Harrisburg, Pa.

Soldier to Soldier

Traditions shape who we are

Continued from Page 4

ior? Do we really do all we can for the Soldiers placed in our care? From your vantage point you get to chose.

This is the year of the NCO, we are the foundation of the Army, the glue that keeps it together and headed in the right direction. Let us consider the importance of our positions and perform our duties and responsibilities with the knowledge that we

are mentoring the next greatest generation. Let us live the NCO Creed, live by the Army Values, and those traditions that have been set down before us and met by so many before us.

These are but my thoughts, may each of you gain the respect of you peers, subordinates, and those in positions senior to us by the diligent performance of our duties as The Non-Commissioned Officer Corps.

Soldiers find satisfaction in helping other choose drug-free lifestyle

By Spc. Kevin Landers, Spc. Kareena Clarke, Sgt. Jon Hopkins and Spc. Jessica Rohr, UPAR

For Staff Sgt. Jamie Baxter and Staff Sgt. Shelly Mann, 235th Regiment General Studies Battalion, getting other people to think about a drug-free lifestyle is a full time job. Baxter and Mann are part of the Joint Forces Headquarters Kansas Drug Demand Reduction program, which takes a hands-on approach to impact the community on making healthy life choices. They provide drug education and alcohol abuse awareness to all of Kansas.

The DDR program has many programs available to all citizens and armed forces members. "Stay on Track" is one program specifically geared to middle school grades 6, 7 and 8. It is a 12-lesson course that teaches drug education, communication and media influences. In teaching such courses, both Soldiers feel that they've made a big impact and have received rewarding experiences.

Mann recalled a moment when one of the young boys said he didn't care if "you can hug me or not" and proceeded to hug her. Then, the entire class joined in.

"This program has changed my life," said Baxter. "It has fulfilled my desire to be a role model and has allowed me to become more passionate about making healthy choices and influencing youth to do the same."

"This program has changed my life. It has fulfilled my desire to be a role model and has allowed me to become more passionate about making healthy choices and influencing youth to do the same."

Staff Sgt. Jamie Baxter

Some of the other programs are Fatal Vision Goggles, which simulates the effects of alcohol on vision, Mobile Low Ropes, a team building exercise and a conflict resolution tool; Leaders Achievers and Winners, or LAW Camp; Team Action Builds Success, sponsored by KDOT; and Kansas National Guard Operation Kids Camp.

"Drug Free Starts With Me" is not only the motto of the DDR, but also a healthy message that these Soldiers are committed to living day by day.

For more information on how to get this message into your community, contact Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Prine, Drug Demand Reduction administrator at 785-640-1137 or timothy.prine@us.army.mil.



Staff Sgt. Jamie Baxter and Staff Sgt. Shelly Mann of the 235th Regiment General Studies Battalion are both members of the Drug Demand Reduction program of the Kansas National Guard. (Photo provided)

"That was my moment of desperation"

By Sgt. Brandi Williams, Spc. Courtney Laudont, Spc. Celia Prince, Spc. Trisha Cramer and Spc. Patrick Martin, Unit Public Affairs Representatives

"That was my moment of desperation. My heart sank and my ears were glued to the radio," said Sgt. Sarah B. Patterson, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Attachment as she reflected on her recent deployment to Iraq.

On Oct. 6, 2007, Patterson met her future husband Spc. Andrew A. Patterson at the Soldier Readiness Processing in Salina, Kan., as they both prepared for deployment to Iraq.

"We had an instant attraction," she giggled. "From that moment, we were inseparable."

Because they were on active duty, the Pattersons sought permission from their chain of command to go off-post for their wedding during intense scheduled pre-mobilization training. Their chain of command was extremely supportive of the couple. Key leadership within their companies paved a path for the couple's wedding off-post on Jan. 24, 2008.

While in Iraq, the Pattersons found their own way to communicate in a delicate, yet meaningful manner. The hand-

written messages on the desk left inside their living quarters were not only love notes, but also a way to stay informed about each others' whereabouts.

One note from her husband told Sgt. Patterson of a standard security patrol. With that in hand, she reported to her duty station in the Tactical Operations Center. While monitoring the radios she heard her husband's call sign radio in with possible enemy fire.

Intense anxiety set in as she knew there was nothing she could do about the situation. She couldn't leave or tell any one; all she could do was sit, listen and wait for the all clear. Sgt. Patterson said waiting to see if he was OK seemed like a lifetime.

Now, she can joke with her husband about that day. His call sign will forever be a constant reminder of the unique difficulties the Pattersons accept as a part of their dual military status.

"A deployment with your spouse brings you to a whole other level of closeness and trust," said Sgt. Patterson. "The military was there to support it."

Since returning from Iraq, the Pattersons have made their home in Wichita, Kan. They plan to pursue their military career paths before starting a family.

Awards and Decorations

KANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Army Achievement Medal



Spc. Michael L. Brent, CDSOG, Topeka

Army Commendation Medal



Capt. Christopher Carter, 242nd Eng Co, Coffeyville, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Michael L. Ramos, 73rd CST (WMD), Topeka

Meritorious Service Medal



Lt. Col. Charles N. Brown, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Lt. Col. Matthew J. Bedwell, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Maj. Jason P. Nelson, HQ, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Manhattan
Maj. John Clark, HQ, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Manhattan
Capt. Dallas D. McMullen, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Capt. Edward O. Zieminski, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Capt. Jeff Howell, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Capt. Kyle T. Chansler, 73rd CST (WMD), Topeka
Chief Warrant Officer 4 Susan L. Jordan, Det 1, Co C, 1st Bn, 171st Avn, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Sgt. Maj. Timothy M. Tiemissen, HHC, 1st Bn, 635th Ar, Manhattan
1st Sgt. Warren T. Dusseau, HHC, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Wichita
Master Sgt. Daniel L. Spellman, HHC, 169th CSSB, Olathe
Sgt. 1st Class Gary F. Salmans, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Dodge City, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy R. Ten Kley, Btry A, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Marysville
Sgt. 1st Class Paul A. Johnston, HHC, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie R. McWhirt, Training Site Det, Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Sherri L. Jackson, Det 37, KS SFD OSA, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Leo V. Nickel, Co E, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Staff Sgt. William L. Oberst, 250th FSC, Ottawa
Sgt. Everitt R. Dehnert, 778th Trans Co, Kansas City

KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Meritorious Service Medal



Lt. Col. Steven Rexer, 190th ARW, Topeka
Chief Master Sgt. Kenneth S Emerson, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Master Sgt. Jeanie E Emerson, 184th IW, Wichita, 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Ronald Grieve, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Selina G Touhey, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Elizabeth A Coons, 184th IW, Wichita

Air Force Commendation Medal



Lt. Col. Hans Neidhardt, 190th ARW, Topeka
Maj. Johnnie B. Adam, 184th IW, Wichita
Maj. Brock J. Sissell, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
1st Lt. James P. Neely, 184th IW, Wichita
1st Lt. Brian D. Pacchelli, 184th IW, Wichita
Chief Master Sgt. Elmer S. Logue, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Senior Master Sgt. Lucian L. Buttell, 184th IW, Wichita, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Paul F. Grimm, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Robert E. Hauskins, 184th IW, Wichita, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Robert W. Herbig, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Kelly C. Longacre, 184th IW, Wichita, 1st Oak

Leaf Cluster

Master Sgt. Chad E. Nicholas, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Tammy Wellswitzer, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Jose L. Cabral, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Zachary R. Constance, 184th IW, Wichita
Tech. Sgt. Mark A. Rush, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Karey L. Haukom, 184th IW, Wichita
Staff Sgt. Francis T. Nguyen, Jr., 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Airman Ryan A. Constance, 184th IW, Wichita

Air Force Achievement Medal



Lt. Col. James H. Culp, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Lt. Col. Steven Rexer, 190th ARW, Topeka
Capt. Jeffrey L. Schmitt, 190th ARW, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Patrick Cochran, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Harold Cox, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Sean Hall, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Timothy A. Kern, 190th ARW, Topeka, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Brian J. Leabo, 190th ARW, Topeka, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Jeffrey S. Milligan, 190th ARW, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Efrain M. Ruelas, 190th ARW, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Jerry D. Swift, 190th ARW, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Master Sgt. Steven Tremblay, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. John S. Bogart III, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Steven W. Cussins, 190th ARW, Topeka, 4th Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Cheryl L. Dickinson, 190th ARW, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. Scott Gilchrist, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Timothy A. Green, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. George Jeter, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Randall A. Kendall, 190th ARW, Topeka, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster
Tech. Sgt. David Seaba, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Sarah Sell, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Phillip Shelite, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Todd Smith, 190th ARW, Topeka
Tech. Sgt. Leland S. Weathers, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Kameron J. Bissell, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Christopher Bourland, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Robert C. Calhoun, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Michael W. Clark, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Paul Cross, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Brent E. Geschwenter, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Christopher Hawkins, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Matthew Hogan, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Darrin Jones, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Kyle Kaberline, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Curtis J. Klaus, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Charles A. Metzger, 190th ARW, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. Francis T. Nguyen Jr., 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Jody K. Olsen, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Adam Rees, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Billy G. Smith Jr., 190th ARW, Topeka, 3rd Oak Leaf Cluster
Staff Sgt. John Steinert, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Kory Tinsley, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Curtis Anderson, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Brian Beatty, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Kyle Brabb, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Douglas R. Carey, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Kirsten E. Farkas, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Kyle F. Flair, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Jonathan Henry, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Matthew Leonard, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Faith E. Martin, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Brett A. Piene, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Brett A. Shouse, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Ryan Sipes, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Airman Kevin Williams, 190th ARW, Topeka
Airman 1st Class Justin A. Burget, 190th ARW, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Michael Potter, Det 1, 1161st Spt Co, Pratt
Staff Sgt. Gerald Riedel, Det 1, Btry B, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Holton
Staff Sgt. Cynthia Singleton, KSARNG Med Det, Lenexa
Staff Sgt. Sallyann Thomas, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Sgt. Adam Abusaleh, 137th Trans Co (-), Olathe
Sgt. Charles Craig Jr., 2137th FSC (MNV), Manhattan
Sgt. William Harris, Co D, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt (CAB), Emporia
Sgt. Christopher Hart, Training Site Det, Salina
Sgt. Michael Jones, Det 1, Btry B, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Holton
Sgt. Jacqueline Jones-Velez, Co E (-), 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Sgt. Shawn Lehotta, HHC (-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt (CAB), Kansas City
Sgt. Brent Pellett, 35th MP Co., Topeka
Sgt. Michael Petersen, HHC (-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt (CAB), Kansas City
Sgt. Loris Peuker, Det 3, 250th FSC, Sabetha
Sgt. Bruce Pratt, Det 2, HHC, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt, Junction City
Sgt. Thomas Price, HHD, 635th Support Grp, Hutchinson
Sgt. Gerardo Santiagonieves, Det 2, HHC, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt, Junction City
Sgt. Donnie Vestering, Det 1, HHC, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt, Wichita
Sgt. Orval Weber, HHC, 287th Sust Bn, Wichita
Sgt. Richard Weese, 1161st Spt Co (FWD), Hutchinson
Sgt. Larry Widener, Det 2, 731st Trans Co, Wichita
Sgt. Dwayne Willey, Det 2, 250th FSC, Clay Center
Sgt. Jeffrey Wynn, Det 1, 778th Trans Co, Manhattan
Spc. Rex Allen Jr., 1161st Spt Co (FWD), Hutchinson
Spc. Ronald Elstun, 242nd Eng Co, Coffeyville
Spc. Clarence Hallner, 242nd Eng Co, Coffeyville
Spc. Clifford Harris, HHC (-), 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt (CAB), Kansas City
Spc. Ralph Hertzfeldt Jr., Btry B, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Horton
Spc. Peter Mercado, Co E (-), 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Spc. Russell Sullivan, Btry B, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Horton
Spc. Johnny Tickle, 226th Eng Co., Augusta
Pvt. 1 Donald Garst Jr., HHC, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth

Kansas Air National Guard

Lt. Col. William J. Hendricks, 190th ARW, Topeka
Lt. Col. Steven E. Rexer, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. Dennis L. Graves, 190th ARW, Topeka
Senior Master Sgt. Tracy B. Marshall, 184th IW, Wichita
Senior Master Sgt. Scott Kelly Then, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Twonette Alexander, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Zachary Bottenberg, 190th ARW, Topeka
Master Sgt. Jeffrey L. Nice, 184th IW, Wichita
Master Sgt. Jack W. Reynolds, 184th IW, Wichita

Morrow first woman to achieve top warrant officer rank in KSARNG

Pfc. Jessica Zullig 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

As children, young girls dream of fame and fortune. They dream of something that will set them apart from all of the other young girls in the world. Some may dream of being the first female to do something others have not done in the past, while some may want to serve their country.



**Chief Warrant Officer Five
Rosanna Morrow**

On April 3, 2009, Chief Warrant Officer Four Rosanna Lee Morrow achieved both of these goals when she was promoted to chief warrant officer five in the Kansas Army National Guard, making her the first female to hold this rank in Kansas National Guard history.

Morrow, a Dallas, Texas native, who joined the National Guard for a part-time job, is not only the first female chief warrant officer five in Kansas, but she was the first female KSARNG warrant officer.

"I am honored to have the distinction of being the first female warrant officer the KSARNG produced through the Warrant Officer Candidate School – Reserve Component program in 1991," said Morrow. "And now I am privileged and incredibly happy to be promoted, in 2009, as the first female chief warrant officer five in the Kansas Army National Guard."

Morrow, a military personnel technician

and budget officer at Joint Force Headquarters Kansas in Topeka, has steadily worked her way through the ranks of the Army. Morrow joined the Army national Guard in 1975 as a private first class and rose to the rank of sergeant first class in five years. In 1992, Morrow was granted a commission as a warrant officer one when she graduated from the Warrant Officer Entry Course, where she was the Distinguished Honor Graduate of her class.

In 17 years, Morrow steadily climbed the ever-winding stairs to the highest rank for warrant officers.

"The KSARNG provided me with all the right opportunities that allowed me to steadily progress through the warrant officer ranks during my career," said Morrow. "I have been associated with some very professional officers, whom I truly admire, who continuously demonstrated faith in my abilities. It is that kind of support and encouragement, through the benefit of my new position, that I want to provide to others."

Morrow graduated from Washburn in 1997 and earned a Bachelor's of Business Administration at WU in 2002. She serves as an Audit Committee chairperson for the National Guard Association of Kansas and the chapter treasurer for the Topeka Chapter of the Association of the United States Army. In her spare time, Morrow takes care of her WWII veteran father, Frank Tommasi, 92, who served as an Army infantryman in the Panama Canal and earned a Purple Heart in France. Morrow also keeps in touch with her two grandchildren, Michael, 11, and Maddi, 5, of Torrance, Calif.

Program educates Guardsmen and their families on deployment cycle

By Pfc. Lori Hudson, UPAR 250th Forward Support Company

Anyone who has ever been overseas or had a loved one be deployed knows that things can become overwhelming and sometimes confusing both pre and post-deployment. They also understand the importance of reliable, practical advice and information so that family members know what to do in certain situations and what to expect. The more they know, the more questions they can ask to become better informed and more at ease during what can be an emotional, stressful, and sometimes complicated time.

The Kansas Army National Guard has a new program that organizes and coordinates informational events and activities for members of the Kansas Army National Guard, and their families. It was developed to better educate and assist the Soldiers and their families through the deployment cycle process. The Deployment Cycle Support, initially called Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, focuses on informing Soldiers and their families of all aspects of the deployment cycle using subject matter experts and past experiences from the Soldiers and their families.

The Kansas DCS team consists of three team members who are individually assigned units to assist the unit leadership through the mandated training requirements as they prepare to deploy or mobilize. They will assist the unit leadership with coordinating the required training before, during and after the unit deploys or mobilizes.

Lisa Galindo is the DCS supervisor out of Lawrence, Kan., and has been part of the team since Feb. 1, 2009. She has been involved with the National Guard in different capacities, recently transitioning from Family Assistance Center coordinator to her present position on the DCS team.

Bobbie Megonigle is the DCS team member out of Wichita. Prior to joining the DCS team, she was a Navy and Marine Corp Community Services and Family Assistance

Center coordinator in Wichita.

Larry Levindofsky is the third member of the Kansas team in Topeka. He served for 26 years in many different military roles including Special Forces and the Coast Guard. He is also a Ride Captain with the Patriot Guard.

Together, the Kansas team has the understanding and experience to ensure the families have the necessary information to help them deal with the hardships they sometimes experienced due to their Soldier's deployment. Currently, they are focusing their efforts on assisting the Kansas Army and Air National Guard. In time, they plan to incorporate the other reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines that are located throughout Kansas.

"In my opinion, this program allows continuity of service to both our unit commanders and support staff, and to our military families," said Megonigle. "The DCS is a means to streamline the training offered to soldiers and families experiencing a deployment. Unit commanders are assigned a Support Specialist, and together they implement the Deployment Cycle Support."

The training requires the Soldier, and strongly encourages their family, to participate in the programs. The training normally takes place over a drill weekend. In Kansas, family members meet in a central location and accommodations are arranged for the family by the unit and DCS team. While the adults are engaged in classes, there are also age appropriate activities for their kids making this truly an event for the entire family.

The DCS and the State Family Readiness Program are separate entities. DCS training includes and involves the state resources of the State family programs office with a focus on the Family Readiness Groups.

"Because," said Megonigle, "we want our Soldiers, Airmen and families to know about the FRGs and get involved with them. While we work closely with unit command-

(Continued on Page 11)

Retirements

Kansas Army National Guard

Lt. Col. Donald Troth, HHC, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth
Lt. Col. Patrick Weber, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Maj. Brian Garbee, HHC, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth
1st Lt. Bruce Stephenson, 137th Trans Co (-), Olathe
Chief Warrant Officer 4 Richard Cordwell, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Valerie Suddock, FSC (-), 891st Eng Bn, Iola
Sgt. Maj. Terry Medley, HHC, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth
1st Sgt. Warren Dusseau, HHC, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Wichita
Master Sgt. Robert Anno, JFHQ KS-LC, Topeka
Master Sgt. Raymond Babcock, 2nd Bn, 235th Regt (GS), Salina
Master Sgt. Gregory Cochran, 35th MP Co., Topeka
Master Sgt. Wesley Hagan, 350th Support Det, Ottawa
Master Sgt. Robert Sanderson, HQ, 235th Regt (RTI), Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Gene Ake Jr., Det 2, 731st Trans Co, Wichita
Sgt. 1st Class Robert Barber, 2137th FSC (MNV), Manhattan
Sgt. 1st Class Barry Brightwell, Det 2, HHC, 2nd Bn, 137th Inf Regt, Junction City
Sgt. 1st Class Tommie Cleveland, Det 1, 778th Trans Co, Manhattan
Sgt. 1st Class William Ferris, 69th TC, Topeka
Sgt. 1st Class James Larsen, Btry A, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Marysville
Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie McWhirt, Training Site Det, Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Donald Moyer Jr., Det 1, 778th Trans Co, Manhattan
Sgt. 1st Class Gary Salmans, Det 1, Btry A, 1st Bn, 161st FA, Garden City
Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Smith, Co A, 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Salina
Sgt. 1st Class Orville Thompson, HHC, 35th Inf Div, Fort Leavenworth
Staff Sgt. David Adams, Det 3, 778th Trans Co, Council Grove
Staff Sgt. Scott Birk, Det 1, 250th FSC, Burlington
Staff Sgt. Roy Brott, Det 1, 1161st Spt Co, Pratt
Staff Sgt. Matthew Burns, Det 1, Btry B, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Holton
Staff Sgt. Harry Chesney, 2137th FSC (MNV), Manhattan
Staff Sgt. Lawrence Gantos Jr., 137th Trans Co (-), Olathe
Staff Sgt. Larry Gilmore, HHC (-), 1st Bn, 108th Avn, Topeka
Staff Sgt. Gary Kobel, 250 FSC, Ottawa
Staff Sgt. Samuel Kracht, Btry A, 2nd Bn, 130th FA, Marysville
Staff Sgt. Richard Langdon, Det 1, 242nd Engr Co., Winfield

Rexer retires after 39 years

By Pfc. Jessica Zullig

105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Lt. Col. Steven E. Rexer, a 1969 Buhler High School graduate and Hutchinson, Kan., native, stepped down on March 31, 2009, from the Deputy Human Resources Officer for the Joint Force Headquarters in the Kansas National Guard. There was a small luncheon held for him on March 31, but the big retirement function was held at Forbes Field Air National Guard Base, Topeka, Kan., on April 4, 2009, celebrating his Air Force career that spanned 38 years and 11 months of duty. He was awarded the Air Force Meritorious Medal and the Kansas National Guard Medal of Excellence.

Rexer celebrated the culmination of his career in the same place it began 38 years before, at the 190th Air Refueling Wing. In 1970 he began his military career at what was then known as the 190th Tactical Reconnaissance Group at Forbes Air Force Base, Topeka.

During his time with the 190th, the unit's flying mission evolved from the B-57G tactical bombers to the EB-57 electronic warfare aircraft to the still flying KC-135 refueling mission.

Rexer became the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) of the Fuels Section in March 1976 as a technical sergeant, then later earned a promotion to master sergeant. He then decided to apply for a commission, attending the Academy of Military Science at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tenn., and graduated as a second lieutenant on March 19, 1981.

He earned several promotions and held many positions until he was promoted to lieutenant colonel on August 27, 1997. Rexer served as the Wing Comptroller prior to his November 1998 volunteering for an assignment at State Headquarters in the Human Resources Office as the Labor Relations Officer. Serving as the Adjutant General's representative, he assisted in negotiating contracts and advised the Kansas Air and Army National Guard leadership



Brig. Gen. Ed Flora, assistant adjutant general - Air and commander of the Kansas Air National Guard, congratulates Lt. Col. Steve Rexer on his retirement after 39 years of service. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

on labor issues.

In November 2003, Rexer agreed to move to a position supervising the Active Guard and Reserve Management, Technician Staffing and Classification section within the Human Resource Officer (HRO). He was selected to be the Deputy Human Resources Officer after two years at HRO and served over 22 years as a Military Technician in that position.

Rexer has been married to Cyndie Rexer, an Administrative Assistant for the Kansas House of Representatives, for 35 years and together have three children, Chris, 32; Stacey, 29 and Melissa, 27. He earned a Bachelor of Science in printing technology in 1974 from Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kan., and attended in residence the Air War College, Air University in Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. He enjoys working on hot rods and old cars in his spare time, such as Ford Mustangs and a 1964 Chevy Nova II SS, and is looking forward to a part-time job to fund his hobby.

Field Artillery battalion marks Order of Saint Barbara celebration



1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery Commander Lt. Col. Dave Johnson places the Order of St. Barbara medallion around the neck of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Viviano Reveles during the unit's annual St. Barbara's celebration banquet. Other members who received the coveted award were Capt. Kyle Chansler, Capt. Dana Graf, 1st Lt. Lance Fowler, Staff Sgt. Christopher Fletcher, Staff Sgt. Charley J. Finley and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Jack Elliott. The celebration is to honor Soldiers and pay tribute to those who have distinguished themselves in service. To be accepted, each artilleryman must exemplify the finest traditions and high standards of the field artillery. (Photo by Maj. Mike Wallace, 105th MPAD)

Guardsmen honored by Topeka Military Relations Committee

By Maj. Michael Wallace
105th Public Affairs Detachment

Recently, two Kansas National Guard members were honored by the Topeka Military Relations Committee during a Topeka City Council meeting. Sgt. 1st Class Jessica E. Cox of the Kansas Army National Guard and Lt. Col. William F. Hefner of the Kansas Air National Guard were among the six honorees identified to receive the Personnel of the Year Award.

The presentations were made before the council meeting on Feb. 10, 2009, where the chairman of the Topeka Military Relations Committee, Dave Fisher, assisted by former U.S. Marine and current Mayor of Topeka, Bill Bunten, handed out the special presentation plaques.

"The Topeka Military Relations Committee makes the award presentations each year, but the awardees are chosen by their own units," said Fisher. "We do this because the military is a very important part of our Topeka community. Not only do they help to defend and protect our country, our state and our communities; they are outstanding citizens, also."

Cox is the chief of the Pay and Exam Branch at Fort Riley, where she is responsible for accurate and timely military pay and travel for over 5,600 Kansas Army National Guardsmen.

She was introduced to the council by Kansas Army National Guard Chief of

Staff, Col. John Andrew.

"Sergeant First Class Cox is an outstanding individual, personally overseeing to any pay and travel problems that a Soldier may have," said Andrew. "During her last Inspector General inspection, all areas under her supervision received favorable comments, and under special note, the Military Pay and Technician Pay sections were highlighted for commendable performance."

On the Air National Guard side, Col. Janet Hanson, the 190th Medical Group commander, introduced Hefner to the council. "We have a very skilled optometrist in our wing with Lieutenant Colonel Hefner," said Hanson. "He is responsible for overseeing the U.S. Air Force Soft Contact Lens program, the Corneal Refractive Surgery program and care of the more than 900 assigned and attached members of the 190th Air Refueling wing. His drive even bleeds over to his personal life, as he is also a five-time member of the elite National Guard Bureau's National Championship marathon team."

Other recipients of the annual award included Staff Sgt. Glenn A. Hawks, III, of the United States Army Reserve; Gunnery Sgt. Joseph H. Williams of the United States Marine Corps; Petty Officer Daren Poindexter of the United States Coast Guard; and Petty Officer Charlton Day of the United States Coast Guard Reserve.

Deployment Cycle Support team

Continued from Page 10

and many others. They also work with Family Programs, the chaplain's office, the Transition Assistance advisor, ESGR, director of Psychological Health and others.

Although this is a new program, the response has been very positive. During a recent pre-deployment training, the wife of a soon-to-be-deployed Airman approached Megonigle during a break. The woman expressed how happy she was that she was getting so much good information about the services available to her and her family. She added that she would feel lost without the Family Program and the Family Readiness Group at the Wing. These are precisely the types of programs and services DCS sets out to educate the military families about.

When putting together training for a new deployment, the DCS works with unit commanders, First Sergeants, command support staff, FRG from the deploying unit. They then employ subject matter experts from Tri-Care, Veterans Affairs, Military OneSource

Dance team adopts Soldier

Pfc. David Shetley

105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The members of the Labette County High School dance team wanted to do something special for various events throughout the school year, but struggled to find any inspiration. The girls turned to Tera Triebel, head dance coach, who suggested her husband's friend, 1st Lt. Matthew John Gilpin.

Gilpin graduated from LCHS in 1998 and was recently deployed overseas. Before Gilpin was deployed, he met with the dance team and sat down for an interview with its members. They talked to Gilpin for over an hour and learned a lot about the Army, life in the National Guard and service to one's community and country.

The girls of the LCHS dance team "adopted" Gilpin and have been in constant contact via letters, cards and care packages for him and other Soldiers of his unit. To raise awareness for their cause, the dance team wore and sold yellow ribbons at dance events throughout the school year.

All of the dance team's effort and support lead to a military-themed half-time show to honor Gilpin and other Soldiers serving overseas. The show was scheduled for the Feb. 6 LCHS basketball game against the Coffeyville Golden Tornados in Altamont, Kan.

Triebel, the community of Altamont and the Labette County school district spread the word that current and retired Soldiers and veterans would be honored during the night's activities. Any Soldier who attended the game in uniform or presented military ID at the door was admitted to the game for free. Several members of the community took advantage of the

offer, including Spc. Kyle Sandon and Pvt. Shane Harris of the 242nd Engineer Battalion, Coffeyville.

Sandon and Harris participated in the presentation of colors before the varsity game with retired Master Sgt. David Fuqua and Cpl. Bill Chapman of the Marine Corps League of Southeast Kansas.

The half-time show was a military-themed tribute to the American Soldier by the LCHS Grizzly Dance Team. Those in attendance appreciated the thoughtful and poignant routine, especially the parents of Gilpin, John and Mary Gilpin.

The Gilpins said that the outpouring of support from their community has helped them through the tough time of their son's deployment. They also said that Triebel, her husband, Justin, and the girls of the dance team's ongoing efforts were a huge help to their son. They appreciated the letters and especially the care packages sent to their son, which remind him of home and that his community hasn't forgotten him.

"With today's news switching focus to other world and local events, it is easy to forget that we have sons and daughters overseas placing themselves in harm's way to protect us," said John Gilpin. "We need these Adopt-A-Soldier programs and people like those of the Labette community to do something to remind the soldiers that we miss them and want them to come home."

The night played out without a hitch and the LCHS Dance Team was able to raise money to send care packages overseas. All the while, its members were honoring someone who has made a difference to them and opened their eyes to a world outside of their own community.

Soldier honored by Kansas House

By Maj. Michale Wallace
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

“Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce Captain Aaron P. Isaacson of the United States Army and Kansas National Guard to you and to the members of the Kansas House of Representatives,” said Kansas State Representative Elaine S. Bowers (R-113th) from the speaker’s podium on the Kansas House floor. She pointed to Kansas Army National Guardsman Capt. Aaron P. Isaacson standing nearby. He was recognized for Armed Forces Appreciation Day at the Capitol on Feb. 18, 2009.

“Captain Aaron Isaacson has just recently returned home from his third tour to Iraq and Afghanistan,” said Bowers. “As important as we know his job is, he tells me he admires us more for our service in this chamber to the people of Kansas. But I wonder how we can even compare our duties to someone like Aaron who protects our freedom in a way that most of us can’t even fathom.”

Bowers referred to Isaacson’s awards of the Bronze Star and the fact that the paperwork to award him a second Purple Heart had been submitted for his current combat injuries that has left him with a broken leg.

Isaacson has been in the Guard for nearly six years. He joined after the attacks on America because he wanted to make a difference in how America will be shaped in the future. Currently, he is an engineer with the 203rd Corps, 2-2 Kandak Embedded Training Team, Company Mentor, Afghanistan, but he is recovering from his injuries at a medical facility in California.

Isaacson was born in Meade, Kan., to John and Robin Isaacson, who both now live in Concordia. He graduated from Hugoton High School in 1995, then went on to college, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in marketing from Washburn University in Topeka. The avid hunter went to basic training in 2003, then earning his commission at Fort Benning, Ga., in 2004.

“Aaron has always had a sense of duty,” says Robin Isaacson. “From my viewpoint, situations that your children are in can be difficult, but I know him well enough that I



Capt. Aaron Isaacson is congratulated by Kansas State Representative Elaine S. Bowers (R-113th) after she introduced him to the legislative body on Feb. 18, 2009, in honor of Military Appreciation Day. (Photo by Maj. Michael Wallace, 105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

knew he would go forward with his best foot to handle any situation. He’s always had a lot of confidence and pride in everything he’s done. It’s tough to let your children go in harm’s way, but my husband and I had confidence that he would do well and take care of the people he’s with because we know him.”

Isaacson’s father, John, agrees. “Three deployments—it’s a real experience having somebody like a son over in the environment of the war-torn Iraq and Afghanistan. But he did what he was supposed to do, as he’s always done. We’ve always been pretty proud of him and I want to thank Representative Bowers for acknowledging his achievements.”

When Isaacson is released from his military duties, he will be working for a California Law firm, with the intentions to be a legal assistant while attending law school, but the deployments have put those plans on hold for a while.

“I just keep pushing that back,” said Isaacson. “I think it is more important right now to finish what I want to do in the Army.”

Topeka to K.C. motorcycle ride benefits Wounded Warrior Project

By Staff Sgt. Tim Traynor
Public Affairs Office

On March 21, approximately 60 members of the Kansas National Guard participated in a Wounded Warrior Ride, a motorcycle ride, which benefited the Wounded Warrior Project, a nonprofit organization assisting severely injured service members. The ride began in Topeka with breakfast served at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard with riders heading to Kansas City at 11 a.m.

“Everyone had a good time riding, and that fun helped support a good cause, the Wounded Warrior Project,” said D.C. Hannah, transition assistance advisor for the Kansas National Guard, and past national captain of the Patriot Guard.

Participants followed a route through Leavenworth, ending in Kansas City, Mo.,

at The Outlaw Cigar Company.

While many riders left from the Topeka starting point, the American Legion Post 370 in Overland Park, the National Guard armory in Leavenworth and Blue Springs Harley Davidson in Blue Springs also had staging points for others to ride with a different route.

The ride ended at the Outlaw Cigar Company, where owner Kendall Culbertson is no stranger to supporting military members. Along with hosting monthly events to support charities or troops, Culbertson has sent thousands of cigars to service members overseas.

“I encourage everyone to come out and support the Wounded Warrior Project and take care of those who take care of us,” said Culbertson.

Flag raising ceremony benefits Kansas Soldiers memorial

By Master Sgt. Carl Mar
287th Sustainment Brigade

On March 3, the 287th Sustainment Brigade (SB), an Army National Guard unit from Wichita, Kan., held a special U.S. flag raising ceremony on Contingency Operating Base Adder to benefit the Gage Park Memorial, located at 10th Street and Gage Avenue, in Topeka, Kan.

The memorial is dedicated to American soldiers who served in five wars: World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, and Iraq and Afghanistan (Global War on Terrorism).

Participating in the ceremony was Col. Robert Schmitt, 287th Sustainment Brigade commander; Chief Lt. Col. David Lee, 287th Sustainment Brigade Support Operations; Chief Warrant Offi-

cer Two Scott Sackrider, 287th Information Technology Systems Manager; and Sgt. Timothy Shull, 287th Sustainment Brigade Command Administrator. Schmitt personally helped fold the flag and signed its Certificate of Authenticity.

The flag and certificate were sent back to Kansas where, on May 3rd, it will be presented to a World War II veteran as part of a dedication ceremony for the newly completed World War II section of the Gage Park Memorial.

The request for the U.S. flag was made by Sackrider’s brother, Rance Sackrider, Topeka, Kan., who is a member of the Gage Park Memorial board of directors.

The public can go to www.gagepark-memorial.org to learn more about the memorial and the World War II dedication ceremony in May.



On March 3, the 287th Sustainment Brigade, Wichita, Kan., held a special U.S. flag raising ceremony on Contingency Operating Base Adder to benefit the Gage Park Memorial in Topeka, Kan. The flag will be presented to a World War II veteran on May 3 as part of a dedication ceremony for the newly completed World War II section of the memorial. From left to right are Chief Warrant Officer 2 Scott Sackrider, Sgt. Timothy Shull, Col. Robert Schmitt and Lt. Col. David Lee. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Carl Mar)

Guardsmen learn to be Unit Public Affairs Representatives

The seventh annual Unit Public Affairs Representative school was held on March 7-8, 2009, in Salina, Kan. The school was hosted and organized by The Adjutant General’s Department Public Affairs Office. This year, 47 Soldiers and one Airman completed the school.

Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general, and Brig. Gen. John Davoren, the assistant adjutant general-Army and commander of the Kansas Army National Guard, kicked off the school. Bunting urged the UPARs to go out in their com-

munities and help to tell the Guard story.

The two-day school was full of instruction and practical exercises, including the basics of photography, interviewing techniques and writing.

The role of the UPAR is to tell the story of their unit through writing and taking photographs of events such as annual training, promotion and awards ceremonies and community activities in which their unit is involved. Several of the stories produced during the class appear in this issue of the Plains Guardian.



Approximately 60 members of the Kansas National Guard took part in a Wounded Warrior Ride from Topeka to Kansas City, Mo., on March 21. (Photo by Jennifer Traynor)