

Fort Riley Sports

May 2, 2003

America's Warfighting Center

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Military police detachment wins post volleyball championship

By William Biles
Staff Writer

The 523rd Military Police Detachment beat the 101st Forward Support Battalion in a two-out-of-three series to win the Fort Riley Volleyball Tournament Monday at King Field House.

It was only fitting the two teams played each other in the tournament since they were the post's top two teams throughout the season.

"The tournament bracket worked out just right, because the two best teams are playing against each other," said Chris Shipley,

team advisor, 101st FSB. To win the championship, the team that scored 25 points first would win. Also, to claim the win, the team needs to win by a minimum of two points. To win the match, a team must defeat their opponent in the two-out-of-three series, according to league rules.

Since the FSB team had lost in an earlier tournament game, they needed to win two matches, for a total of four games, in order to win the tournament.

"The odds are stacked against them due to that loss they took," said Shipley.

"But, they have a lot of heart and will try to overcome the task of winning those four games."

After losing a close game to the MP team, 26-24, the FSB team had their work cut out for them, needing to win four straight games.

During that first loss of the championship game, the FSB team had the MP

team down, 24-19. However, the MPs were able to rally together to quickly tie the game at 24-24, and ultimately win by the score of 26-24.

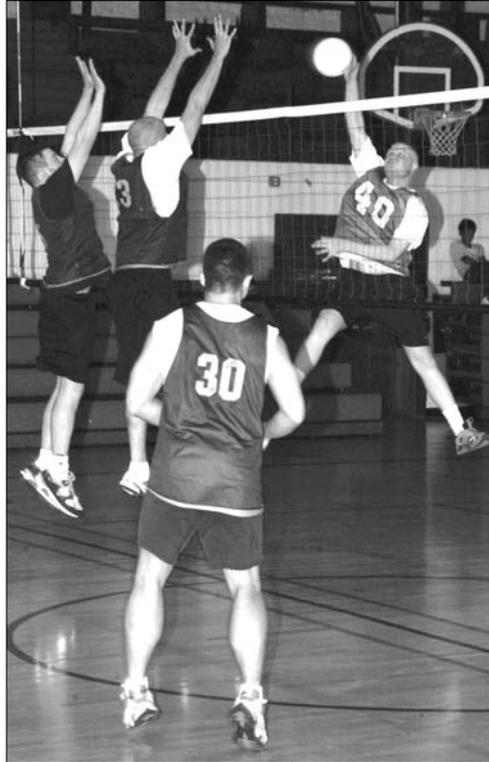
The second game was as hard a fought game as the first, where the difference in the score never exceeded five points. The game came down to the wire, with the score in favor of the FSB team.

The MPs never relented, and were constantly nipping at the heels of the FSB team.

In the end, the MP team was able to tie the game, and eventually win it and the tournament.

"The key to our victory was our constant communication on the floor. The other team started to break down when things started turning on them," said Corey McDonald, 523rd MP Det.

"They're, by far, the best competition we've faced all season. However, they're still only the second best team on post," he concluded.



James Lowry, 101st Forward Support Battalion, drives a spike between two defenders from the 523rd MP detachment in the final game of the post volleyball tournament championships. The 523rd won the best of three series, 2-0.



Jose Gomez of the 101st Forward Support Battalion elevates to send a laser into the stonewall defense of Eric Blewett and Joshua Fleming of the 523rd MP Det.

Major improvements made to Fort Riley softball complex

Ryan D. Wood
Staff Writer

The softball complex near Camp Funston is nearing the end of a \$93,000 renovation to improve the playing fields and equipment.

Improvements include laying a new playing surface down on the infields of the softball diamonds, placing new safety rails on the bleachers, installing new backstops and repairing the perimeter fencing complex wide.

Infields are being replaced with aglime, a finely ground rock which promotes drainage. Over 250 softball games and four tournaments were lost last season due to rainouts. With the current playing surface of red clay, not only were games lost on days when it actually rained, but fields remained unplayable for up to a week, according to Billy Mack,

supervisory sports specialist.

The aglime process takes about two and a half weeks per field. The fields are dug down eight inches and leveled. Two inches of aglime is then laid and compacted repeatedly until the surface reaches the desired height. When complete, the surface can take a major rainfall and be playable within two hours, said Mack.

Other improvements were made for the safety of the fans, said Mack. New chain link safety fencing has been installed around all of the bleachers to prevent falls. New backstops with overhangs have also been installed to cut down on foul balls hit into the crowd.

Funds for the improvement were obtained from Moral, Welfare and Recreation and Appropriated Funds.

Work should be completed about the second week of May according to Mack.



The softball field on the left has the old playing surface, while the field on the right has a finished aglime surface.

Privately owned weapons brought on post must be registered

By Ryan D. Wood
Staff Writer

As summer approaches, several hunting and sport shooting seasons will begin. This makes Spring is a great time to review weapons related regulations and safety rules.

Fort Riley regulation 190-1 requires that all weapons that are capable of firing a projectile, using either an explosive or compressed charge, need to be registered on post. This includes shotguns, rifles, handguns, BB and pellet guns and even paintball guns.

Soldiers can register their weapons through their unit commander, and civilians can register their weapons through

the Provost Marshal's Office. FR 190-1 should be posted on unit bulletin boards and is also available at the Outdoor Recreation Office or the Physical Security Office in the Provost Marshal's Office.

Check with your unit armorer and company commander for assistance before buying or bringing a privately owned firearm onto Fort Riley. For civilians, assistance can be obtained from Outdoor Recreation during normal duty hours or from the Military Police Desk Sergeant, building 221, after duty hours.

Forms for military members or civilians should be available at the unit arms room and Outdoor Recreation, building



Registration forms are always available at PMO Physical Security Office and additional assistance can be obtained by calling 239-6343.

There are some weapons prohibited on post, according to David Hubbard, PMO. These weapons are also illegal in the state of Kansas including: switchblades, gravity blades or butterfly knives, throwing stars, brass knuckles, knucks, blackjacks, slappers, spring-loaded or folding batons, or any device fitting in or over the hand to be used in striking another individual other than equipment designed for legal sporting events, such as boxing gloves.

It is also illegal to carry concealed or display in a threatening manner, any numchucks or other martial arts weapons; possess or carry any stun gun

or other device designed to deliver an electrical shock or to carry any weapon concealed on one's person.

Target practice with privately owned weapons, bows or paintball guns is allowed only at designated ranges. Contact Outdoor Recreation for a schedule and to reserve times.

Fort Riley does have special regulations concerning hunting, in addition to those set by Kansas, if the hunter wishes to hunt on post.

Hunters must obtain both a Kansas state license and a post license. Big game, waterfowl or other licenses may also be needed.

Contact Outdoor Recreation, 239-2363 for further information.

ITR

The Information, Ticketing and Registration Office is located in building 6918 (across from the PX). The hours of operation are Monday - Friday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. The office is closed on federal holidays. For further information call ITR at (785)239-5614 or 239-4415. Check out the Department of Army Leisure Travel website at www.offidatyttravel.com for more great deals on travel. ITR services and discount attractions tickets available to active duty military, retirees, National Guard, Reservists, Department of Army Civilians and family members.

Operation Salute

Anheuser-Busch announced that it will give single-day admission to SeaWorld, Busch Gardens and Sesame Place parks to active duty military, active reservists, U.S. Coast Guardsmen and as many as four of their direct family members, beginning the Friday of Memorial Day weekend and concluding Veterans Day, Nov. 11. "Operation Salute" will give free admission at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, Busch Gardens Williamsburg, SeaWorld Orlando, SeaWorld San Diego, SeaWorld San Antonio and Sesame Place, Langhorne, Pa. Tickets are available at gates only. Let ITR put together a vacation package to

include other attractions and hotel accommodations.

Vacation Planning?

Discount military attraction tickets are available to Walt Disney World, Disneyland and Universal properties. Stop by and pick up brochures and let ITR assist you with your dream vacation. Many tickets are not dated, so it's easy to set up a payment savings plan.

Heartland Park Topeka

Welcome to the most intense, earth-shattering sport on the planet! Nowhere else can you actually see your favorite drivers as you stroll through the pits, hear the thrum of mega-horsepower machines and get a taste of what it's like living life in the fast lane. O'Reilly Summer Nationals is coming to Topeka May 22 - 25. Hurry, discount tickets are only available through May 16 at ITR.

Kansas Cosmospere and Space Center

They lost it. They found it. We restored it. Now it's in your hands. In this interactive exhibit for the whole family, you'll go on a virtual ride with Mercury astronaut Gus Grissom 118 miles into space and then go three miles

below the ocean's surface to rescue Liberty Bell 7, untouched for decades. You'll get to pilot a Mercury capsule, take a ride in a centrifuge, operate a deep-sea ROV and much more. See it. Live it. Just don't lose it. At the Kansas Cosmospere and Space Center in Hutchinson through May 26. Discounts are available through ITR.

Caribbean Celebration

Enjoy the sounds of "Carib Sounds Steel Band," Caribbean food and vendor booths, May 2 - 4 at the Capital Center Inn in Topeka. Discounted tickets are available through ITR. Make it a weekend get-a-way. The Capital Center Inn is offering a special military room rate.

Worlds of Fun

It will leave you screaming for more! Worlds of Fun is now open for the season with Spring Special discounted tickets through ITR. Hurry, the special discount ends June 30. Get ready for another season of your favorite fun-filled rides and attractions at Worlds of Fun.

As you make your way through 175 acres of excitement and family entertainment, you're sure to find that Worlds of Fun will always leave you screaming for more! Those looking for intense

thrills will be sure to head to the world-famous Mamba and Boomerang roller coasters. After going 75 miles-per-hour on one coaster, then riding through another completely backwards, you'll learn the real meaning of "Open up and say AAAAAAGH!" Straight out of the pages of the world-famous comic strip, everybody's favorite beagle and his friends are hosting an exciting collection of family rides and attractions at Camp Snoopy, Worlds of Fun's family play land. Camp Snoopy is over one acre and home to rides and attractions designed especially for families.

Country Stampede

Have you ever attended a party with thousands of friends, national recording artists and four days of non-stop music and fun?

Country Stampede is a weekend country music and camping festival June 26-29 at Tuttle Creek State Park, Manhattan. The weekend is fun filled and action packed with great performers, including: Kenny Chesney, Martina McBride, Chris LeDoux, Sawyer Brown and many more. There will also be fantastic food, colorful crafts and much, much more! Great early bird discounts are still available through ITR until May 1.

Union Station

Kansas City Union Station is now featuring "American Originals and Freedom's Journey" through May 4.

American Originals showcases documents that represent milestones in America history, including the Louisiana Purchase, Thomas Edison's patent application for the electric lamp and John F. Kenney's handwritten notes for his inaugural address. Union Station is just one of eight stops on this national tour bringing some of the rarely seen treasures of the National Archives to people across the nation.

Freedom's Journey traces American history back to its very beginning, using written records, portraits and artifacts to vividly illustrate the revolutionary ideas and actions that laid the foundation for the America we know today. Discounted Science City and Combo tickets are available through ITR.

Kansas State Baseball

Kansas State Baseball "Make the Connections" now offers special military discounted tickets for the remainder of the season. Grab some friends, take the family, for only \$1 per person. Show your Military I.D. at the gate for discounted tickets.

Barlow Theater

Tonight:
7 p.m.
Bringing Down the House (PG-13)

Saturday:
4:30 p.m.
Dreamcatcher (R)
7 p.m.
The Hours (PG-13)

Sunday:
4:30 p.m.
Bringing Down the House (PG-13)
7 p.m.
Dreamcatcher (R)

Thursday:
7 p.m.
The Hours (PG-13)

Ticket prices:
Adults - \$3
Children - \$1.50

Student participates in National Geographic Bee

By **Michael Watson**
Staff writer

A Fort Riley Middle School seventh grader competed in the state-level National Geographic Bee as one of the Kansas' top 100 students on April 4.

The day before the competition at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Phillip Cunningham said he had butterflies fluttering in his stomach — he had never been more nervous.

However, he said he was ready to compete against other students throughout the state with the same knack for geography, politics, cultures and religions in the competition.

"I feel excited and happy about competing, because I really like geography," Cunningham said. "I have been looking over everything I come across that would help me prepare for the competition. Sometimes I even look at atlases and maps at home."

His family has also helped him to prepare, said Bob Forman, seventh grade social studies teacher.

"Phillip's mom stopped by the school one day and grilled him on the maps he had been studying. She is very active on the site council and his education," he said.

Cunningham said his goal from the beginning was to make it to the state-level competition. To do that, he had to win the school competition and place in the top 100 scores on the written state-qualifying test.

"After finishing the state qualifier, I felt confident that I would be in the top 100," Cunningham said. "Some parts were more difficult than others, and I had to guess on certain questions. But I knew the answers for the others, and they were not a challenge."

When the test was finished, he

said he held his head a little higher because he knew he had achieved his goal of advancing to the next level.

He said he did not know what to think about the state competition. He was even more nervous than the he was when he was qualifying.

"My first thought is that tomorrow would be a lot more difficult," he said. "The other kids are also in the top 100 students, and there is too much left unknown."

Forman said Cunningham did a

good job representing Fort Riley Middle School. However, only 10 students would advance to the national-level in Washington, D.C.

"He did very well, but there were just a few more students than he was just a few more questions than Phillip," Forman said. "I'd say he finished in the top 50 students in the state."

He said Cunningham was not the first student that Fort Riley Middle School had sent to the state competition, but his perfor-

mance was probably the best. And he is sure that Cunningham would not be finished with the competition.

"Phillip is very ambitious, and I am sure that he will use his experience this year to set new goals," Forman said. "I'm sure he will be ready for next year."

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Insecticide spraying scheduled

During May, a contractor will be spraying certain trees and shrubs with EPA registered insecticides and fungicides for insect and disease prevention and control. The schedule is: Main Post and Marshall Air Field, next week; Colyer Manor and Camp Forsyth, May 10 - 16; Custer Hill Family and Troop Housing, May 17 - 22 and Whiteside and Camp Funston, May 23 - 31. For more information, call 239-8402 or 239-2644.





Fort Riley Community



In Step on Channel 2

6:30 a.m. In Step
8 a.m. In Step
Noon In Step
6 p.m. In Step
10 p.m. In Step

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Volunteer of the Year recognized at ceremony

By Kim Levine
Staff Writer

Fort Riley's Installation Volunteer of the Year was named Monday at the Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at Barlow Theater. Shawni Sticca, who was nominated by the Enlisted Spouses Club, wiped away a tear as she accepted the awards presented to her as the 2002 Volunteer of the Year.



Shawni Sticca

"I was very surprised and shocked when my name was called," said Sticca. "And I am very, very honored."

Sticca worked approximately 800 volunteer hours last year, volunteering as the president of the Enlisted Spouses Club, an instructor for Army Family Team Building, the Family Readiness Group leader for her husband's company and Forces Command volunteer conference attendee.

"Shawni's involved in so much and so many things, but she's never too busy to help a family in need," said Betsy Young, installation volunteer coordinator.

Sticca added that she wished her husband, 1st Sgt. Patrick Sticca, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor, who is currently deployed to Korea, could have been there to share in her moment.

"I am most excited about telling my husband," said Sticca. "I know he will be proud of me." Sticca has been volunteering for the Army for nine years and has been a Fort Riley volunteer

for about a year and a half. Sticca said that she learned very early in her marriage that it is how you make the military life work for you that helps you. It is how you make every duty station home that helps you help the other spouses, she said.

"I feel like I'm accepting the award on behalf of all of the other volunteers that I work with here on Fort Riley," said Sticca, "especially the ones who help me with the things that I do."

Sticca was presented a framed certificate by Brig. Gen. Frank Helmick, commanding general, 24th Infantry Division and Fort Riley, an engraved medallion by Col. John Simpson, garrison commander, 24th Inf. Div. and Fort Riley, a parking pass for special parking around post by Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Hearron, command sergeant major, 24th Inf. Div. and Fort Riley, and a bouquet of flowers by Melissa Helmick and Barbara Hearron. Sticca also received two \$100 savings bonds and the use of a 2004 Grand Prix for 30 days from a local auto dealership.

After Sticca received her awards, she presented Helmick with a check for \$1,573,721.38, representing the amount of money volunteers saved Fort Riley through volunteer work in 2002. Young explained that according to President George Bush, each volunteer hour is worth \$16.54, and Fort Riley's volunteers worked for over 95,000 hours last year.

"There are a lot of people out there that the volunteers have made a difference in their lives," said Helmick, "and you really can't put a price on that. They will remember you for the rest of their lives." The ceremony also recognized the other 37 volunteers nominated from units and organizations, with a framed certificate, an engraved medallion, a parking pass and a

flower.

Included in those recognized at the ceremony were the volunteers from the 15 organizations on post. Those volunteers accounted for over 55,000 hours in 2002.

"The organizations help to make Fort Riley a great place to live," said Young. Family Readiness Groups accounted for over 40,000 hours in 2002, almost doubling what was recorded the previous year.

"FRG's stand ready to assist families and single soldiers throughout the year during deployments, National Training Center rotations or just newly arrived families at Fort Riley," said Young.

During the ceremony, the mayors and assistant mayors of the communities were also recognized and presented with coupon books, engraved medallions, certificates and flowers.

Simpson also gave his thanks to the volunteers of Fort Riley during the ceremony.

"Fort Riley could not function as the robust community that we are without the efforts of these great Americans," said Simpson. For those that give of their time, talents and heart every day, today is our day to give back to you."

Young said she was happy to see the volunteers smiling, explaining that the ceremony was a very small token of appreciation for what they do for Fort Riley.

"All of Fort Riley's volunteers truly epitomize this year's theme, the Spirit of America's Heartland," said Young. "Small things done with great love bring joy and peace, and I think this quote says it all about our volunteers."

The Volunteer Recognition Ceremony kicked off Volunteer and Military Spouse Appreciation Week. The week included several events, discounts and gifts for all Fort Riley volunteers and spouses.



CDC/Olmsted

Lori Hinkley, Child Development Center, paints a flower on the face of Mackenzie Haddix under the watchful eye of Na'imah Bradley. The CDC ended its Month of the Military Child April activities with the annual Spring Fling for parents and children. More than 200 families participated.

Army Concert Series comes to Fort Riley

By Kim Levine
Staff Writer

Tickets are now on sale for the 2003 Army Summer Concert Series, featuring performances by Night Ranger and Cheap Trick, Memorial Day weekend.

The concert will be May 24 at Marshall Army Airfield. Gates open at 6:30 p.m. and Night Ranger starts the concert at 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$12 per person in advance or \$15 at the gate. Group tickets are available for \$25 for up to four people, and all four must enter together. Purchase tickets at Information, Ticketing and Registration on post, at participating local Dil-

lon's stores or by phone at 239-5614.

The concert is open to the Fort Riley community and the general public.

Seating is festival-style, so concertgoers should bring their own chairs or blankets. Six concession stands will sell food and beverages at the concert.

Cameras, recording devices, pets, coolers, glass and outside food and beverages are not allowed within the gates.

Free parking is available at the site, which is located right off I-70 at exit 301. For security purposes, concertgoers will need photo identification, vehicle registration and proof of insurance to access the installation.

Nutritious meals, snacks important to growing kids' health

By Heather H Moriyama, MS
Chief, IACH Nutrition Care Division

Tommy will only eat peanut butter. Jenny refuses to drink milk. Brandon plays with his food at the table. Kristin snacks on candy all day. Almost all children at one time or another develop eating habits that parents may become concerned about. For some parents, meals and snack times frequently turn into a battleground over what to eat, how much to eat and when to eat.

What's a parent to do? As a parent, keep in mind that the primary goal of meals and snacks is to ensure your child receives adequate nutrition to grow, play and stay healthy. It is essential for children to receive the right amounts of calories, protein, vitamins and minerals to grow and develop properly. You can help your child receive the proper nutrition by following several guidelines and by encouraging good eating habits and behaviors.

Proper nutrition begins with the foods you buy. You have total control over what kinds of foods are in the house and available to eat. How often do you see young children buying their own candy and soda? If your child is currently eating too many sweets or high fat foods, limit how often he can have them, such as only on special occasions. If unhealthy foods are not readily available, he will choose healthier snacks instead. Never completely forbid certain foods - it will only make them more desirable. An occasional lollipop will not harm an otherwise healthy diet.

Plan meals and snacks to include a variety of food from the major food groups - breads and cereals, fruits, vegetables, milk and dairy products, meat and meat alternatives. Foods from all the groups are necessary to provide the nutrients needed for growth. No one food group is more important than another. Try to set eating schedules for your family. Offer

your child three well-balanced meals and two to three healthy snacks a day. Young children generally need to eat every three hours. Whenever possible, try to eat with your child to encourage following the schedule.

Allow your child to choose what and how much he wants to eat. It is your responsibility to offer the appropriate kinds and amounts of food, but it is up to your child to decide how much to eat. Never force a child to eat. Studies have shown that children, when left on their own, are able to eat the right amounts of food over time.

When serving food, keep in mind that they need smaller portions than adults. Generally, provide one tablespoon of each type of food for every year of a child's age. Ensure that they consume something from each food group. If one of the food groups is completely avoided for a day or two, don't worry about it. However, if it is avoided for a longer period of time, it may be a concern.

Sometimes children refuse to eat a certain group of foods that are important to good nutrition. Vegetables are commonly refused, but it is not unusual for milk and meats to be refused also. If this happens for more than a few days, try different preparation methods.

For example, if a child dislikes soft, hot cooked broccoli, try raw crunchy broccoli. Or, if a child doesn't like sandwiches, try cutting them into different shapes with a cookie cutter. If a child continues to refuse a food, offer a nutritionally equivalent one - try low fat yogurt or cheese instead of milk, or a fruit instead of a vegetable.

Don't fight food jags. Food jags are periods when a child insists on eating the same food day after day. This is normal and can be expected. If your child is experiencing one, serve the food that your child wants but continue to offer other foods as well. Food jags usually do not last longer than a few weeks. You may want to discuss it with your pediatrician or a registered dietitian.

Expect occasionally finicky eating behaviors. Sometimes appetites vary from meal to meal or day to day. If your child is overtired, excited or in a strange new place, it may affect how much or what he eats. During these times, try to ensure that the food being eaten is nutritious. Have high nutrient foods available, such as fruit or milk rather than low nutrient foods like candy or sugared punch. If you are concerned that your child is not eating enough, visit your pediatrician and check to make sure he is growing normally - this is a good indicator of whether or not he is getting adequate nutrition.

Finally, be a good example. The most important

thing that you can do to teach your child about eating right is to set the example. Do you eat regular meals? Do you try new foods? Do you eat everything you serve to your child? Examine your own eating habits. If you regularly skip breakfast, don't be surprised if your child doesn't eat breakfast is important either.

Childhood is an important period for the formation of attitudes toward food. Your actions regarding your child's eating behavior now will affect his eating habits later in life. Take the time to practice good eating habits and your child will learn healthy eating habits for a lifetime of good nutrition.

Quick, healthy snacks for busy families

By Ryan D. Wood
Staff Writer

Military families face many challenges that the civilian family might not have to deal with. The frequent separation of family members due to deployment and training can cause a challenge to the family member left home with the children.

Eating habits change due to the stress of a new home, deployed family members and many other changes more frequent in the military home, said 1st Lt. Nicole Snyder RD, chief, production and service board, nutrition care division.

There are some things that a parent can do to help a child through difficult times nutritionally. If stress or a new situation is affecting a child's eating habits, head off any serious health problems by providing foods that the child can snack on at any time which are nutritious.

The following recipes provide healthy alternatives to candy and other non-nutritious foods. A child will still have fun eating, and get valuable vitamins and minerals from these healthy snacks.

Quick Nachos

Place a layer of low fat crackers on a plate. Top each cracker with 1/4 slice of reduced fat cheese.

Sprinkle with chopped tomatoes. Microwave until cheese is melted.

Ants On A Log

Wash celery stalks.

Fill the middle with peanut butter. Put raisins all along the celery "log." Cut into serving pieces.

FruitFizz

Add club soda to your favorite fruit juice instead of serving soda.

Peanut Butter Roll-Ups

Roll bread flat. Spread it with peanut butter. Sprinkle with raisins. Roll up bread like a jelly roll. Cut in two pieces.

Microwave Sweet Potato Chips

2C sweet potatoes
2 Tsp butter
1 Tbsp brown sugar

In food processor, thinly slice sweet potatoes. In microwave dish, spread out sweet potatoes. Sprinkle with water. Microwave on high for about 5 minutes.

Mix in butter and brown sugar. Microwave another 2-3 minutes. Let sit.

For more information on child nutrition and recipes to try out with your family, go to the following Web sites: www.afsa.org/childnutrition/education; www.nationaldairyCouncil.org or www.eatright.org



Snakes leaders in myths, legends

By Alan Hynek
DES Biologist

Since the beginning of time, snakes have been at the center of many fears and legends. They are perceived as being secretive, creepy and just downright sneaky. Snakes are different from other wildlife not only in a physical sense, but also in the tall-tales category. Bar none, snakes have more associated myths, stories and legends than any other animal.

With the onset of warmer weather, snakes and other reptiles are now becoming more noticeable on Fort Riley. And when the snakes emerge from hibernation, peoples fears emerge with them. The most common reason people dread snakes is for fear that they are venomous. However, to die of snakebite in Kansas, you really have to work at it. Only one snakebite fatality has occurred in the state in the past 47 years. Venomous snakes are not all that common either. Of the 38 species of snakes found in Kansas, only 5 are venomous. However, you should still be weary while outdoors in this area. Copperheads are fairly common and can inflict a severe wound. Snakes generally avoid people and move away when threatened. Most snakebites occur when they are handled, stepped on or cornered. All too often, people are bitten while trying to kill the snake!

Without a doubt, the legendary

rattlesnake is the one who gave all other snakes a bad name. There are three species of rattlesnakes found in Kansas, the prairie, timber and massasauga. The timber rattlesnake is found in the eastern third of Kansas, but is becoming increasingly rare. Of all venomous snakes, it has the mildest disposition and will remain

On the Wildside: News About Nature

motionless and quiet to avoid being seen. The massasauga is the smallest of the rattlesnakes and can be found in the eastern two-thirds of Kansas. It too is becoming increasingly rare throughout its range. It is somewhat aggressive and is difficult to hear when it rattles because of its small size. Timber rattlesnakes and massasaugas have not been found on Fort Riley, although both have been found nearby. The prairie rattlesnake is what western movies are made from. It has a nasty disposition and is larger than any other venomous snake in Kansas (up to 5 feet). This snake does not occur on Fort Riley.

No other snake has been subjected to more tales and mistaken identity than the cottonmouth, commonly called the water moccasin. However, this dangerous snake has only been documented twice in the state of Kansas, both times in the Spring River drainage in Cherokee County. Cottonmouths are often confused with the several species of water-

snakes in Kansas are very aggressive and will strike even when unprovoked. Consequently, this mistaken identity has led to the demise of many harmless water-snakes and countless broken fishing rods.

The copperhead is by far the most common venomous snake in Kansas. As its name suggests, they are normally copper in color, but vary from reddish brown to gray. The color and pattern of the copperhead makes it difficult to see among the leaves on the forest floor. They are usually found on the edge of woodlands and in association with rocky outcrops.

Although the chance of being bitten by a venomous snake is highly unlikely, obtaining quick medical attention is most important. It does absolutely no good to "cut and suck" as was once prescribed. That may even make the translocation of venom worse. If bitten by a venomous snake, try to stay calm and go directly to a hospital.

All snakes, including venomous species, are beneficial to mankind. They are highly efficient predators of rodents, and serve to keep nature in balance. Their presence indicates a healthy environment. DES Conservation has several snakes on display at building 1020. For more information on snakes or any other natural resources topic, call 239-6211 or stop by the office, Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.



Students from Keith L. Ware Elementary School braved the rain and wind to show their support for deployed troops in a parade around McClellan Loop.

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Armor troops guard route to Baghdad

By Tim Potter
Wichita Eagle

ROAD TO BAGHDAD, Iraq - At the front of 94 trucks bearing tanks and armored vehicles, Army Sgt. 1st Class Mark Davey rode in a Humvee. He cradled an M-4 semiautomatic rifle. His job: help guard the convoy.

As the convoy rolled near an Iraqi border town, three Iraqi men in red-checked head scarves and white robes held out paper money, apparently wanting to trade for dollars. Suddenly, the men stepped into the narrow roadway, blocking Davey's Humvee.

"Don't stop!" Davey barked to his driver. "They'll get out of the way." The men stepped back. They probably had good intentions, but Davey wouldn't take a chance.

The main convoy and supply route to Baghdad is what the Army calls "secure." Still, it is not completely safe. The war against the Iraqi military may be essentially over, but the convoys — lifelines for troops farther north — still have to be wary of people lining the route.

Children run toward the convoys. A man will hold up a bottle of Crown Royal or a Playboy centerfold, trying to entice passing soldiers.

But sometimes the convoys come under small-arms fire. Occasionally, civilians throw rocks or try to grab packs off military vehicles. Soldiers know a convoy could be a large target for a suicide bomber.

Lt. Barbara Madray, with the 96th Transportation Group, based at Fort Hood, Texas, has led convoys for three months. She says the convoys need people like Davey to provide security.

The goodwill along the route can be deceptive, she said. "They're holding money in one hand, but what's in the other? You never know who's the enemy. They've been known to use children."

At the same time, soldiers don't want to appear unfriendly. The challenge, said Army Maj. John Faria, is to "keep people at arm's length, but in a respectful manner."

So Faria and Davey, part of a security detail provided by 1st Battalion, 13th Armor, based at Fort Riley, waved at people along the route recently.

The one-way trip takes about 24 hours, not including delays. A convoy truck pulling a 70-ton tank on a trailer can average only about 35 mph even on the highway.

The day after the convoy crossed into Iraq, Davey found himself in an impoverished town, outside his Humvee, surrounded by curious civilians. A transport truck had to stop because of flat

tire on a trailer. Davey and his crew provided security while soldiers changed the tire.

One of the children swarming around Davey, shouted: "Good morning! How are you? What's your name?"

"My name is Sergeant," Davey answered, amused. "My name is Ahmad," the boy said, his brown eyes shining. "I love you."

But the conversation ended when Davey spotted people on a high-rise rooftop a quarter-mile away. "Got people on rooftop off your left shoulder," Davey half-shouted to Sgt. William Goolsby, behind an M-240 machine gun mounted atop the Humvee.

The children kept shouting. "Mister, mister," trying to get Davey's attention, but he kept scanning around him, then said a quick "goodbye."

The convoy unloaded 4th Infantry Division vehicles and crews a little south of Baghdad.

On the return trip, the empty transport trucks passed people with sticks herding goats, sheep and camels in the blazing sun. The drivers saw children driving donkey carts and farmers cutting wheat by hand. They spotted charred hulls of Iraqi armored vehicles.

Later in the darkness, the convoy braked to a halt in the middle of a three-lane highway. Someone had found unexploded ordnance lying ahead. The group had to wait in the open desert, under a starry sky, while a crew cleared the material.

Beside the halted convoy sat stranded Iraqi trucks, buses and passenger cars. Scores of civilians left their vehicles and gathered along a shoulder. The crowd began to chant in words the soldiers could not understand. As the chanting grew louder, some men in the crowd began to jump up and down.

Convoy guards, holding rifles, watched nervously. A Navy Seabee told Faria, the Army major, that the people were probably harmless. But, he asked Faria, how can you know?

Faria wished he knew Arabic. Another soldier eyeing the crowd, Spc. Michael Funk, felt uneasy. Two nights earlier, he rode at the end of a convoy that saw tracer rounds fired over it.

Funk, with the 1133rd Transportation Group, based in Mason City, Iowa, said his sergeant told him to "lock and load," slang for preparing to fire.

He felt relieved when an MP's Humvee, armed with a grenade launcher, pulled in behind his vehicle. "Better safe than sorry," he said.

Editor's Note: Reprinted with permission from the Wichita Eagle.

MREs offer more choices

By Kristen Guss
Army News Service

Beginning with contract production runs in June, the Defense Logistics Agency will add new Meals, Ready to Eat menus, while eliminating others.

The changes were in response to the likes and dislikes expressed in Army surveys taken by soldiers in the field.

The new entrees include Pork Rib and Sauce, Vegetable Manicotti and Roast Beef with Vegetables.

Entrees being eliminated include Jamaican Pork Chop, Pasta Alfredo and Beef with Mushrooms. However, the current stock of MREs will be used until exhausted.

The MRE is a pre-packaged operational ration designed to sustain an individual engaged in heavy activity such as military training or during actual military operations when normal food service facilities are not available. It is totally self-contained and consists of a full meal packed in a flexible meal bag. The full bag is lightweight and fits into military field clothing pockets. Each meal bag contains an entree and a variety of other useful items, such as chewing gum, matches and moist toilette.

Except for the beverages, the entire meal is ready to eat. While the entree may be eaten cold when desired or necessary, it can also be heated in a variety of ways, including submersion in hot water while still sealed in its individual entree package. Since Operation

Desert Storm, a flameless ration heating device has also been packed into each meal bag to heat the entree.

Each meal bag contains the components of one meal. Soldiers who are engaged in heavy activity normally consume three MREs a day.

In its ongoing effort to be responsive to its customers, DLA provides several types of MREs tailored to different dietary requirements.

The Meal, Religious, Kosher or Halal, is provided for individuals in the military services who maintain a strict religious diet. Each meal consists of one Kosher or Halal certified entree and religiously certified or acceptable complementary items sufficient to provide the recommended daily nutritional requirements. There are two vegetarian meals in every box of MREs, which supports those troops who, for various reasons, cannot consume meat.

Special Humanitarian Daily Rations are also produced and distributed to displaced persons or refugees under emergency conditions. These packs contain enough food to sustain a moderately malnourished person for one day.

In support of Iraqi Operations, the Defense Logistics Agency's Defense Supply Center Philadelphia has shipped approximately 30 million individual menu bags of MREs. If the menu bags were laid end to end, these MREs would go around the world 228 times. DLA has also procured and begun distribution of more than 4 million Humanitarian Daily Rations.

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4 x 21.25"
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Letters to the Front

"We miss you. Stay safe. Our prayers are with you all. Bobby, hurry home to Fort Riley!"
Michel Thomas, Pittsburg, Kan.

"Your country supports you in all you have done and all that you are doing in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Thank you!"
Maj. Ron Lysinger, 4th Bn., 1st FA, Boise, Idaho

"Hi to my husband, Ken Smith. I love you and miss you. You guys stay safe and hurry home. Thank you so much for a great job! God bless you all."
Susie Smith, spouse, 1st Bn., 41st Inf., Houtzdale, Pa.

"Praise God for the chance to do for others what our forefathers did for us. They will one day cherish the freedoms you are willing to fight for on their behalf. Do not lose sight of why you are there, and God will grant you peace and strength. Thanks!"
Kathy M. Belcher, spouse of Capt. Gary M. Belcher

"Thank you and good luck. Come home safe. I am supporting everything you do. To my son, Bobby, we love you and miss you. We are all thinking about you!"
Margaret Thurman, Germany

"We wish you all a safe return. Your family and friends miss you all, and I will continue to pray that God watch over you always."

Bridgete, military spouse, Philadelphia, Pa.

"Thank you for serving our country! We are proud of you. God bless you!"
Lois Gay, Salina, Kan.

"Come back safely. God bless!"
Sgt. Thomas Cook, 977th MP Co., New Orleans, La.

"The support of our soldiers is unwavering in the hearts of U.S. citizens, and we eagerly hope for your safe return — Mission accomplished."
William J. Pennington, Hazard, Ky.

"You guys rock!"
Capt. Jeremy Larchick, HHC, 24th Inf. Div., Oklahoma City, Okla.

"Thanks for a job well done! Keep up the great effort and come home soon!"
Maj. Tracy Emond, HHC, USAG, Canon City, Colo.

"To Staff Sgt. DeHart and his unit, I miss you guys and hope you come home safe and soon!"
Tina DeHart, military spouse

"PULLIAM-put it down for the town!"
PFC Brandon C. Schaefer, 125th FSF, Widefield, Colo.

"You guys did a good job. We are very proud of you all! Spc. Acuna, we love you and come home safe!"
Britta Acuna, Germany

"Keep up the good work. You guys are doing an outstanding job, and know that the majority of the American public is with you. I personally wish that I could be a part of your history-making accomplishments. God speed and hurry home!"
Sgt. 1st Class Hubert Scipio, HHC, 24th Inf. Div.

"Thanks for a job well done!"
Jefferson D. Lawson, Sr. vice commander, Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars

"Thanks for all you do for our country, and for being a member of our Armed Services."
Retired Master Sgt. Tom Sanko, Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 1714, Dodge City, Kan.

"Good work out there! Go 125th FSF, 2nd Bn., 70th Armor, 1st Bn., 13th Armor and 1st Bn., 41st Inf. Pulliam, you better be holding down the house over there! Schaefer and I will be there soon!"
Pfc. David McLeod, 125th FSF, Herington, Kan.

If you would like to send messages of support to our troops deployed in Operation Iraqi Freedom, e-mail your message to the Post editor at afznpom@riley.army.mil. Soldiers, please include your name, rank, unit and hometown. Military spouses and civilians, please include your name, job and hometown.



88th Regional Support Troop Lindback

Reservists from the 88th Regional Support Command, 1008th Quartermaster Battalion, exit their vehicle to assume perimeter defense during an attack by opposition forces. The 1008th participated in five days of training to increase security of their unit.

NASA Space Camp scholarship offered

By **Kim Levine**
Staff Writer

The Military Child Education Coalition has created a NASA Space Camp scholarship in memory of Bernard Curtis Brown II, a military child who was killed during the Sept. 11 attacks on the Pentagon.

The scholarship will pay full tuition, including meals, lodging, program materials and transportation, for a student to attend the

National Aeronautical and Space Administration Space Camp.

NASA Space Camp is a 5-day program, geared toward teaching children about astronauts and space and helping them to create bonds of friendship with others in the program.

Children must have an active duty military parent and be a student between 6th and 9th grade to be eligible to apply for the scholarship.

The deadline for applications is May 15, and the recipient will be

notified June 13. As of the end of April, only two children have applied for the scholarship.

Bernard Curtis Brown II was an 11-year-old military child who lived in the Washington D.C. area. He was flying to California to represent his school in a National Geographic event when his airplane was hijacked and crashed into the Pentagon.

For more information or to apply for the scholarship, call (254) 953-1923 or visit www.militarychild.org/index.cfm

Asian Pacific-American Heritage celebration planned

Fort Riley will be celebrating Asian Pacific-American Heritage Month during May. The theme for this year's celebration is "Salute to Liberty."

The Equal Opportunity Office will sponsor a free program May 14, 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m., at Barlow Theater to celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of Asian Pacific-Americans. The event is open to all soldiers, family members and civilian employees.

For more information, call the Fort Riley Equal Opportunity Office, 239-2277 or 239-2928.

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