

# Explosion results in five Fort Riley soldiers being killed in Iraq

TOPEKA (AP)—An explosion underneath an armored personnel carrier in Iraq caused five deaths and resulted in the deadliest day for Fort Riley since the war began last year.

The soldiers, whose units and

names were not immediately released, were killed Wednesday when a bomb detonated under their M-113 in Malahma. The area is in the Sunni Triangle — roughly between Baghdad, Ramadi and Tikrit.

Fort Riley spokeswoman Chris-

tie Vanover said Wednesday that officials were still notifying family and unit members about the deaths, which brought the number of soldiers from the Kansas post to die in Iraq to 35.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius issued a

statement: “It’s an incredible tragedy when life is lost and we in Kansas take it even more personally when we’re talking about soldiers based in Kansas.

“My thoughts and prayers are with the families who have lost

loved ones in the war, and we join Americans in praying for the safe return of our soldiers.”

Senate Majority Leader Lana Oleen, whose district includes Fort Riley, learned of the deaths late Wednesday.

Moved to tears by the news, she said she could not imagine the difficulty facing American children whose parents are in Iraq.

“The war is so real in Kansas. We are every bit a part of that war,” said Oleen, R-Manhattan. “Five soldiers affects hundreds out there.”

The deaths also came one day before the one-year anniversary of the first Fort Riley death in Iraq.

Sgt. Jacob Butler, 24, was a scout with the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Armored Division. He died April 1, 2003, at Assamawah, Iraq, when a rocket-propelled grenade hit his vehicle.

About 4,600 Fort Riley soldiers are in Iraq. The five soldiers who died Wednesday were part of the 1st Infantry Division’s 1st Brigade, which deployed in September.

Members of the 1st Armored Division and the 937th Engineer Group, which are also based at Fort Riley, were deployed at the start of the war and are scheduled to return to the base through April.

## ‘Happy Public Health Week to you,’ health nurse says

This is a most important celebration for all of us who have been protected by our public health department. You should thank your commissioners and the health department staff for keeping Thomas County Health Department as a very important part of your county.

When you are healthy, do you remember the immunizations you received as a child and adult? They continually protect you from diseases.

And how about our pregnant and delivered moms, with their babies? We protect them with program such as the Maternal and Infant program and Healthy Start.

When you are driving and have to make a sudden dangerous stop and your children are safe in their car seats, do you remember the health department that rented you the car seat or gave you the education to safely place your child in the car seat or place the car seat in the car?

Have you stepped on a rusty nail and remembered you need a tetanus shot to protect you? Problem feet and toenails?

The foot care program, offered by the health department, will take care of them for you.

Our children and adults are of-

### Healthy Haps

ferred bicycle education and baby-sitting education to help keep our communities safe.

Did you know taht our health department staff travels to different parts of the county to do blood pressure screens? They have referred many clients to their health care providers for prevention of problems such as heart attacks and strokes.

The education that comes out of the department is with every visit and phone call. Need a physical for yourself or your child? The registered nurses on staff are qualified to do physical assessments for all ages.

Are you breastfeeding and wish you had some help to keep you going? Our staff is knowledgeable and qualified to help you with our lactation program. Pregnant and considering adoption? Come in and visit with our certified staff program.

Pregnant and considering adoption?

Come in and visit with our certified staff who can help you sort things out. What about sexually

transmitted diseases? We are very confidential with all our services and would be happy to visit with you about these. Planning your family can be a challenge and we will help you with education and services included in our Family Planning program.

Screenings of blood sugar, hemoglobin, dip stick urinalysis and lead will help prevent further problems. Our referral service will get you where you need to be or help will be provided.

This year in Thomas County, we gave around 1,500 flu shots to protect our county against the flu.

Developmental, hearing and vision screenings are early prevention tools that keep our community aware of any problems and where to go should any be found.

Our bioterrorism team has been keeping up with the ongoing education, ordering of needed supplies and remodeling to accommodate the necessary equipment.

Have you ever been to your health department? We are located at 350 S. Range at the north entrance of the Thomas County Office Complex.

Our hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fri-

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## Former Brewster man promoted with patrol

Tod L. Hileman , a Brewster High School graduate and a Kansas Highway Patrol trooper, was promoted to technical trooper and was assigned as the public resource officer for the Patrol’s Troop D in February, said Col. William Seek, superintende of the patrol.

Hileman joined the patrol as a trooper on Aug. 21, 1998, Seek said. He was stationed in Russell County and assigned road patrol duties, he said.

He was then transferred to Ellis County on Jan. 1, 2001 and in March of 2002 he was promoted to



Tod Hileman

Trooper II.

“As Troop D’s public resource officer,” Seek said, “Hileman will be the agency’s media contact for the area and will specialize in safety presentations, child safety seat fittings and recruitment.”

During his career with the patrol, Hileman has served on the West Region DUI Strike Force since 1999, served as a pursuit driving instructor since 2000 and served as an advanced forensic mapper since 2001.

He has received three Commander’s Commendations for his work and a Distinguished Unit Citation with the West Region DUI Strike Force.

In addition to graduating in Brewster, Hileman also attended Colby Community College and studied criminal justice at Barton County Community College.

## Legislature sends enhanced 911 bill to the governor

TOPEKA (AP) — A bill imposing a new, 50-cent monthly fee on wireless phones to finance improvements in county 911 systems cleared the Legislature on Wednesday and went to Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

Proponents of the measure think it could generate \$7.8 million a year for upgrading emergency communications systems, making it easier to locate people who make emergency 911 calls on wireless phones.

Legislative negotiators drafted the final version of the bill. The House approved the compromise, 83-42, and the Senate passed it, 29-8.

“The governor supports this bill and is glad to see the Legislature working together to get this important safety issue resolved,” said Sebelius spokeswoman Nicole

Corcoran.

Currently, personnel in most counties’ dispatch centers are shown the number but not the location of a cell phone on which a 911 call is made — information that is automatically provided on calls made from traditional phones. Also, the bill’s supporters have said, cell phone calls are sometimes routed to the wrong county or even across state lines.

Under the bill, the wireless fee would be collected starting July 1, with 25 cents remaining in a user’s home county and 25 cents going to rural counties with relatively few wireless users.

Counties already can impose a monthly fee of 75 cents on traditional wireline phones to provide money for emergency communications system.

## Tiahrt supports job push

WASHINGTON (AP)—It’s not high wages that send American manufacturing jobs overseas; it’s taxes and regulation and all the other costs of doing business, Rep. Todd Tiahrt told colleagues on Wednesday.

Tiahrt was briefing the House Republican Conference on a series of bills aimed at enticing companies to stop “outsourcing” by making their products in other countries. He said GOP leaders have embraced his package — he calls it “Hire Our Workers,” or HOW — and will act on it beginning in May.

“We’ve been outsourcing jobs from Boeing,” he said of the leading employer in his Wichita-area district. “At one time there were 25,000 employees at Boeing Wichita, and we have 12,000 now.”

“There’s a reason for that, and it’s not wages,” he said. “The reason is

regulatory policy, tax policy, health policy — all these things that have made the environment not conducive to getting a good return on our investment. For example, Tiahrt said an estimated \$1,200 of the cost of each new automobile is based on manufacturers’ health care costs.

“If we could figure out a way to streamline or remove those costs, we’d be more competitive,” he said.

“One CEO told me in Wichita, Kan., ‘If people came to work for free, if wage costs were \$0, I would still have to consider outsourcing jobs,’” he added.

Tiahrt also mentioned lawsuit liability, energy policy, research and development and trade fairness as issues that drive up manufacturing costs. His package reflects themes frequently sounded by the White House and GOP leadership in Congress.