

Send off, welcome for soldiers planned

Army major heads to war; other soldiers return

By Sharon Corcoran

slcorcoran@nwkansan.com

A send off for an Army Reserve major and a welcome home for 10 soldiers back from the Middle East will fill the time between basketball games and half time of the boys game Friday at Max Jones Fieldhouse.

Occupational therapist Larissa Coon, a major in the Army Reserves, has been called up to serve in Iraq with the 1835th Medical Detachment from Denver. She went to Colorado for training Jan. 21-28 and is back home, but will soon go to California for more training before shipping out to Iraq on March 24.

Five soldiers who returned in August and five expected back before Friday have been invited to the event for a welcome home, said Staff Sgt. Mark Reasoner of the Goodland armory. The Goodland armory of the Kansas National Guard will provide a color guard, and a Goodland father and son will sing, the son "The Star Spangled Banner" and the father "God Bless the U.S.A."

Just before the start of the boys basketball game (about 7 p.m., after the girls game is over), the color guard will enter the field house, and then Devin Mangus will sing the national anthem. At half time, his father, Danny Mangus, will sing "God Bless the U.S.A."

That will be followed by the welcome for those who have returned from Iraq. Sgt. Lonny Guyton and Specialists Aaron McClelland, Kody Sanchez, Richard Sturtevant

and Ian Donovan, who came home in August, will be honored along with soldiers scheduled to return shortly before the ceremony, Reasoner said.

That group — Specialists Amanda Bonner, Drew Edwards, Ryan Nichols, Kelly Simmonds and Randy Lee — is scheduled to be back, Reasoner said, and will be invited. They may not want to break away from family, though, he said, so they may not all attend.

Dale Schields, director of human resources at the Goodland Regional Medical Center, where Coon works, will introduce her. She is adjutant of the Goodland American Legion Post. Ken Baum, service officer and a past commander of the post, said he planned the event, mostly on his own but with help from Goodland High School Principal Sharon Gregory and Superintendent Shelly Angelos.

Coon says her unit does combat stress control.

"We go to the guys who've seen the worst of the combat," Coon said, "to give psychiatric care, to combat post-traumatic stress."

She served a year in Germany earlier in the war and said she expects to be in Iraq at least a year. Her husband Lowell is a biology teacher at Colby Community College. They have two children, Amanda, 8, and Trent, 6.

Also at the basketball games, the king and queen of Goodland High's winter Snoball will be crowned, and senior athletes and their parents will be honored.



Maj. Larissa Coon practiced her taekwondo moves last month at the Goodland Activities Center. She will be honored at a send off at half

time of the boys basketball game Friday night.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

Coach resigns to be with family

Goodland High football coach Jonathan Dansel turned in his resignation effective at the end of the school year at the Goodland School Board meeting last Monday, saying he planned to join his wife's family farming operation so he'd have more time with his family.



Dansel

Dansel, who lives near Weskan in Wallace County, has been the head football coach for two years and the team has made it to the first round of the state playoffs both years.

"The 45-mile drive from Weskan has sorta been wearing on me," he said, "and with a new baby on the way this spring, I know it will only get more difficult to balance work and family."

"I've preached to my football boys the

importance of keeping their priorities in correct order: God, family, football. My drive the last two years to and from work has made it more difficult to keep my own priorities in line. If having grandparents two miles away wasn't so important to my wife, we would just move up here and I would keep my job, but that is a hard thing to give up.

"I am completing my second year as a teacher and coach in the district. I chose to resign early this semester to show respect to my football boys and the administration in order to give them plenty of time to make hires for next year. I didn't want to leave my boys hanging out to dry at the end of the

school year."

Activities Director Don Smith said he has started looking for a new coach. He said he appreciated Dansel notifying the district early.

"I want to give him credit for giving us that help," said Smith "The process has begun. It is early and we will have to see what comes up and see who is interested."

"I know he has been on the road every day, and I think he has done good things for our program. I know the students respect him, and he has done a good job, both on the field and in the weight room. We will try to find someone who will continue that progress."

Dansel said he is not quite ready to give up his whistle yet as a coach, and hopes to coach again if he gets the chance.

Groundwater district to hold annual meeting

Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4 plans its 33rd annual meeting for noon Wednesday, Feb. 20, at the Howard Johnson Hotel in Goodland.

Wayne Bossert, district manager, said this year the meeting will feature a guest speaker from northeast Colorado to talk about how farmers have been forced to shut down some wells.

Tom Cech, who manages the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District, will talk about groundwater well closures enforced in northeast Colorado over the past two years, Bossert said.

"Overall, over 2,000 wells have now been shutdown in northeastern Colorado," Cech said, "or have been

ordered by the state to reduce pumping down to as little as 15 percent of historic levels."

The district Cech manages has been trying to help the affected farmers, he said.

Other agenda items will include election of board positions 1, 4, and 6 (Cheyenne, Sherman and Thomas counties); presentations on last year's meeting minutes, the 2007 audit and the proposed 2009 budget; and an "open session" for public questions and comments, Bossert said.

For questions, contact the district office at 1175 S. Range, Colby, Kan. 67701-0905, (785) 462-3915, e-mail wab@gmd4.org, or go to www.gmd4.org

Colby private school closes due to illness, lack of substitutes

A mushrooming number of sick students and staff forced the Heartland Christian School in Colby to cancel classes last Thursday and Friday.

"We had teachers sick and trouble finding enough substitutes," said Heartland board President Lynn Goossen. "This was not an easy decision."

Classes were to resume Monday. Goossen said this is the second time in school history that classes have been cancelled because of illness. The school opened in 1995.

The Colby school district was not closed.

Thomas County Health Department officials said they have not been notified of a major flu outbreak, adding that flu shots are still available.

"It's never too late for a flu shot," said Health Administrator Lisa Molstad.

For those who travel, a flu shot is a good idea, she added.

"The flu season peaks in late January or early February, with

the season continuing into spring," Molstad said, "and we would much rather have someone get a flu shot rather than the flu."

In an effort to help curb flu, Molstad said the Health Department will be offering flu shots for \$10 this month.

"We have an adequate supply of the vaccine," she said.

As Kansas enters the peak of the flu season, state health officials are also reminding people they still have time to get vaccinated.

Molstad said the Kansas Department of Health and Environmental Laboratories had confirmed the first positive influenza cases of this season in northwest and northeast Kansas.

Dr. Gail Hansen, state epidemiologist, said seasonal flu activity is increasing around the state. Hansen confirmed Molstad's message about there being still time to get a flu shot.

"It only takes about two weeks for the shot to become effective," Hansen said.

Although it is possible for someone to still get influenza after having the vaccine, the symptoms are usually less severe and complications less frequent, she said.

The state department and the federal Centers for Disease Control especially recommend that the following groups receive a flu shot each year:

- Children age 6 months to 8 years.
 - Pregnant women.
 - People 50 and older.
 - People with chronic medical conditions.
 - Residents of nursing homes or long-term care facilities.
 - Household contacts of people at high risk of contracting the flu listed above.
 - Household contacts of children under age 6 months.
 - Health care workers.
- Certain groups of people who should not be vaccinated include:

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs.
- People who have had a severe reaction to the flu vaccination in the past.
- Infants less than 6 months old.

Flu Symptoms

Influenza is a highly contagious respiratory illness, more severe than a cold, the state says. Symptoms include sudden onset of fever, sore throat, muscle aches and non-productive cough. More serious illness can result if pneumonia occurs. Influenza is spread by direct contact with an infected person or by airborne droplets that produce infection when they are inhaled or ingested off the hands. V

Victims are most contagious during the 24 hours before they develop symptoms and usually somewhat infectious for the next six or seven days. The incubation period, the time from when the virus enters

the body until symptoms appear, is usually one to three days.

Treatment

Treatment for uncomplicated influenza includes bed rest, lots of fluids, relief of cough and sore throat symptoms, and aspirin or acetaminophen to reduce fever. Due to the risk of Reye's syndrome, aspirin and other medicines containing salicylate should not be given to children.

Medications are available to reduce the severity and shorten the duration of influenza, but they must be administered within 48 hours of onset.

Steps you can take to avoid catching or spreading the flu include:

- Proper and frequent hand washing with soap and warm water.
- Staying home from school or work when sick.
- Covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

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208 W 2nd St
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Good Samaritan Society-Sherman County will receive sealed bids for the renovation of a whirlpool room and kitchen project at the office of Dorinda Krueger, 208 W 2nd St, Goodland, KS until 9:00 AM (Mountain Time) on Friday, February 8, 2008. Bids received after this time will not be accepted. Bids will be opened and presented at the County Commissioner meeting. Administrator and Commissioners will make joint decision on acceptance of bids.

Major work items include: Replacement of cabinets and flooring in whirlpool room, replacement of cabinets, counter top, and flooring in kitchen and dining room.

Date: January 23, 2008
Dorinda I Krueger, Administrator

Good Samaritan Society
SHERMAN COUNTY