

'Tug' of War...



Sgt. Michael FitzPatrick gave his daughter, Ciara, (above) a big hug after coming home from Iraq. Sgt. FitzPatrick, known as "Tug" to some of his friends, served in Iraq (right) with the Kansas National Guard's 174th Security Force Company and was awarded the Army Commendation Medal.

— Courtesy photos



Almena man returns home from Iraq

By KIRBY ROSS

Phillips County Review
Sgt. Michael FitzPatrick, Sr., Almena, has been awarded the Army Commendation Medal for actions taken in Iraq.

The Commendation medal is a military award which is presented for sustained acts of heroism or meritorious service.

Sgt. FitzPatrick was at an undisclosed location south of Mosul in northern Iraq immediately

after an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) hit a civilian fuel truck near him. The explosion caused the stricken vehicle to crash into another truck immediately ahead of it that had also been hit by an IED. The collision crumpled the front end of the vehicle in question and trapped its driver behind the steering wheel.

Sgt. FitzPatrick ran to the scene and tried to help remove

the driver from the cab of the truck.

Sgt. FitzPatrick climbed into the cab through the shattered front windshield, placed his back against the passenger seat and his feet against the dashboard that had been forced into the passenger seat.

Through St. FitzPatrick's efforts and the efforts of others, it became possible to free the driver and to render critically

needed first aid to him.

Sgt. FitzPatrick serves in the 174th Security Force Company, Kansas National Guard (formerly known as the 174th Maintenance Company). Since the beginning of August the 174th has lost two soldiers in combat-related incidents.

Sgt. FitzPatrick is the son of Diane Riley, formerly of Phil-

lipsburg but now of Titusville, Fla.

His wife, Chelsey, also a Phillipsburg native, is the daughter of Alan and Connie Hanke. The couple have three children, Corey, 6, Ciara, 3, and Cailyn 8 months.

**Sgt. FitzPatrick returned home the first of September after serving 15 months in Iraq.

Workshops to help with transition

Passing the farm on to the next generation often proves to be a difficult task for farm families. K-State Research and Extension, the K-State Department of Agricultural Economics and the Farm Credit Associations of Kansas are teaming up to present a workshop series aimed at making the transition easier.

Organizers of the "Keeping the Family Farming" workshops are designed to help farm families take a proactive approach to solving problems that often arise in the transitional process. "For many years, we've received referrals from the Kansas Ag Mediation Service," said Duane Hund, coordinator of the K-State Farm Analyst Program. "Many of those revolved around transitional issues gone wrong."

The point of the workshops, Hund said, is to help resolve financial and family issues that tend to pop up when families try to figure out how to best pass the farm to the next generation. Conflicts can arise during the planning process, Hund said, because farm transition often involves change, which some family members are more open to than others.

"Keeping the Family Farming" will help families avoid conflict by providing them with an opportunity to communicate openly with each other, Hund said. "Many conflicts come from people assuming things. We'll probe for those assumptions and bring them into the open and discuss them."

Topics discussed during the conference will include a financial analysis of the operation, developing a fair plan for passing the farm on, planning for retirement, evaluating the goals of each family member, evaluating the financial feasibility of adding another generation to the operation and estate planning.

Hund said he and other organizers believe the workshop setting will be an excellent venue for people to work on and discuss each issue. Among the issues that cause conflict among family members, Hund said, is estate planning.

"If mom and dad aren't open, it leads to assumptions," he said. "They need to be clear on who gets what."

The two-workshop series will be offered at two locations. Workshops will be held Dec. 7-8 and Jan. 25-26 in Junction City. The series will also be offered in Hays Dec. 14-15 and Feb. 1-2. Those interested in attending either workshop must register by Nov. 14. Registration is \$200 per family of four and is limited to 30 families at each location.

In addition to the workshops, K-State's Farm Analyst Program will send an analyst to work with families on economic analysis and to visit privately about any issues they feel need additional discussion outside of the workshop setting.

"There's no cookie cutter approach that says, 'Here's what we do,'" Hund said. "It's all based on communication between family members."

More information is available by contacting Rodney Jones in the K-State Department of Agricultural Economics at 785-532-1957.

Group gathers to remember Fatima

About 20 citizens of Norton and Phillips counties gathered at the Norton County Courthouse at noon, Oct. 13 to commemorate the 90th anniversary of Mary's (the mother of Jesus Christ) appearances to three small children in Fatima, Portugal.

The children said she relayed to them (and to the world) the message that penance, amending one's life, prayer (especially the Rosary), and a cessation of offending God are imperative for peace. The "Miracle of the Sun" occurred on July 13, 1917 in Fatima. It was witnessed by 70,000 people.

The group gathered on the courthouse lawn in a misty rain to spend an hour and a half praying the Rosary, the Divine Praises, litanies, requesting God's mercy, singing and inviting the public to share in this effort.

Beverly Bethune, Norton, said, "This is most timely considering our war in Iraq and all of the ills in America."

"America Needs Fatima", a national organization, is an effort to bring peace to America. The group promoted 2,000 public square Rosary rallies across the nation on Oct. 13. Tom Melroy, Norton, organized the local rally.

Daylight saving time's origins date to 1918

Daylight Saving Time's time frame officially expanded this year, so it finally will end for 2007 on Nov. 4.

The change in the period's definition is just the latest of many.

"With the passage of the Standard Time Act in 1918, the U.S. completed a shift from local, solar-based times to a national system of standard time, within time zones," said State of Kansas Climatologist Mary Knapp. "This act also included provisions for 'daylight saving'."

The system went through several modifications over the years, but the most familiar change came in 1986. It defined the daylight saving period as the first Sunday in April to the last Sunday in

October.

"With daylight saving, we are shifting activities that are ruled by the clock to hours with more daylight — thus saving energy," said Ms. Knapp, who heads Kansas' Weather Data Library, based with Kansas State University Research and Extension. "While we don't actually save any daylight, U.S. Department of Energy studies show the energy savings to be about 1 percent per day."

This other kind of saving was one reason, Knapp explained, for the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. That act pushed fall's time shift to the first Sunday of November, extending the Daylight Saving Time period by about a week.

"Don't forget: That's when you need to set your clocks back by an hour," Ms. Knapp said.

Congressman supports reduction in college costs

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Jerry Moran has announced House passage of legislation to make college more affordable for Kansas students. In the most significant changes to federal student aid programs in more than 10 years, the College Cost Reduction Act reduces student loan interest rates and increases federal grants for Kansas students.

"Investing in our children's education should be one of our nation's most important priorities," Congressman Moran said. "Unfortunately, rising tuition costs have left many students and parents wondering how they will afford a college education. Reduced interest rates and higher grant awards will help more Kansans have access to additional education and training."

The legislation cuts interest

rates in half for subsidized student loans and increases the maximum Pell grant award by \$1,090. In addition to lowering the costs associated with college, the legislation also establishes loan forgiveness programs for individuals who work in public service jobs and provides \$57 million annually for Upward Bound, a program that provides fundamental support to students preparing to attend college.

As a member of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Caucus that works to promote education in these subjects, he also supported provisions of the legislation that create a new program aimed at training more students to teach in high-need subject areas. The Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher (TEACH)

Education grant program will help colleges and universities provide \$4,000 annual scholarships to students committed to teaching for four years in subjects currently lacking qualified teachers.

"To succeed in the high-tech economy of the 21st Century, we need young people to focus on studies in math and science," Congressman Moran said. "In order for this to happen, we must have teachers trained in these subjects to instill our students with confidence and knowledge that will allow them to lead our country into the future."

Young trees vulnerable in winter

Young trees with smooth, thin bark are especially at risk during winter.

They're more vulnerable than other trees to sunscald, bark cracks, hungry rabbits and deer with antlers to rub, said Ward Upham, horticulturist with Kansas State University Research and Extension.

"It's as if these thin-barked trees have an unseen target on their trunk," he said. "Unfortunately, they include some real landscape favorites: honeylocusts, fruit trees, ashes, oaks, maples, lindens and willows."

Sunscald typically develops in late winter on the south or southwest side of the tree, Upham said. Late winter is when bright, warm winter days are most likely to heat "sunny side" bark to relatively high temperatures.

Often, trees can recover from sun-

scald, Upham added. But, they require special care for a long time — especially watering during dry weather.

Rabbits and deer, on the other hand, can easily lead to a sapling's demise. Thumper's nibbling and Bambi's antler rubbing can girdle a trunk, preventing the tree's flow of water and nutrients.

"Tall fencing is about the only way to protect young trees if the deer are hungry, too," Upham said. "Still, a good wrap, put on in October or November, can really cut the odds for the other risks."

The wrap material can be a polypropylene protection tube, hardware cloth, commercial tree wrap, heavy aluminum foil or something similar, he said. It must extend from ground to the tree's lower branches.

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