

# Program teaches about support for military families

ABILENE — Military families often live on or near a military base with support services to help them handle family issues that occur during periodic separations.

That isn't the case for Army Reservists and members of the National Guard being called to serve in the current conflict in Iraq, said Ann Domsch, speaking Nov. 14 before a community group gathered in Abilene.

Domsch, Operation Military Kids (OMK) Project Coordinator, is a retired Kansas State University Research and Extension 4-H youth development agent and specialist.

Citizen soldiers may be your next door neighbors, Domsch said. They might be the high school history teacher or the minister at the local church. These soldiers also may live 100 or more miles from the nearest military base and support services.

With her program titled "Ready, Set, Go," Domsch dedicated the evening to teaching teachers, school counselors and principals,

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Ann Domsch,  
Operation Military Kids Project Coordinator

community service personnel, church committee members and, at the recent meeting in Abilene, even the sheriff, about how deployment affects family dynamics.

The goal is to raise awareness and build support systems and community coalitions that can fill the gap in services for these families, she said.

To make her point, Domsch asked for 10 volunteers to whom she assigned roles in the community, such as a teacher, nurse, or minister, and then asked each to grasp a blanket on which she spilled

balls and other objects to represent children and family members left behind. As the volunteers were called to serve, support for those remaining was jeopardized, as soon there was no one left to support the blanket.

The program in Abilene was organized with the help of Marsha Weaver, K-State Research and Extension family and consumer sciences agent in Dickinson County, who invited more than 30 community representatives to attend the three-hour session.

Abilene is like many communi-

ties from which volunteers are leaving their home, family, jobs and everyday life to serve our country, Weaver said.

The session, part of "Operation Military Kids," is funded by a two-year grant from the United States Army through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Children, Youth and Families Program. OMK is sponsored by ARMY Child and Youth Services in collaboration with National 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, the American Legion, the Military Child Education Coalition and several state organizations.

Kansas is among the 34 states participating, and the hope, said Domsch, is to build community coalitions to coordinate support services that will extend beyond the grant period.

"While the emphasis is on the needs of families when a spouse or parent is deployed, families typically need services after a deployed spouse or parent has returned," she said.

Here's an example, in which a wife and mother has been deployed: Her husband works full time and now has sole responsibility for caring for the couple's two young children. He has, out of necessity, learned to cook and found that he enjoys preparing meals and special-occasion foods such as birthday cakes. With the kitchen formerly his wife's territory, the family will have some adjustments when reunited, Domsch said.

With the muddying of roles and responsibilities typically resulting when deployment occurs, readjustments are further complicated if there is injury involved, she said.

Frances Swensen, a member of the American Legion's Children and Youth Commission and State OMK team member, assisted Domsch with the training by offering an overview on the military culture and lifestyle.

Swensen, who grew up in Mineral Wells, Kan. joined the United States Navy in 1944 and served as

a radio operator on Bainbridge Island, Wash. Though long retired, she is an energetic volunteer who credits military life with teaching her basic life skills, including how to get along with others, develop an appreciation for people from other cultures, and to follow the rules.

"Life is easier if you follow the rules," she quipped.

The OMK team focuses on helping others in recognizing needs that are part of everyday life, Domsch said. One family may need help with transportation and another may need some relief from childcare 24/7. The boy next door, who's missing his Dad, may appreciate some time tossing the football back and forth or help with cleaning up the lawn mower for its winter rest.

The grant team is crisscrossing the state to help Kansas' families and build community. More information on Operation Military Kids and on upcoming programs is available by calling (785) 532-5833.

## North Dakota legislator expects debate on proposal to ban game farm hunts

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — More than a month before North Dakota's legislature starts, landowners and wildlife advocates already are locking horns over a proposal to ban private hunting preserves, known as high-fence game farms.

State Sen. Tim Mathern, D-Fargo, said he plans to bring a bill to the 2007 session that would prohibit landowners from operating

businesses that allow hunters to shoot elk and deer inside a fenced area.

"I can see that this is going to be really controversial," Mathern said. "I had no idea it was that big of a business activity."

More than 100 deer and elk farms are registered in North Dakota, state veterinarian Susan Keller said.

Private game farms have been

banned in several states, including Montana and Wyoming. Idaho is expected to consider a similar ban, said Terry Steinwand, director of the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. Mathern said the potential for breeding problems and disease were among the factors that led him to introduce the bill — though state veterinarians said disease hasn't been a problem at the

game farms. However, the most important question is an ethical one, he said.

"Is this right, basically, to put animals in a fence and shoot them and call it a sport?" Mathern asked.

Sally Dvirnak, who runs an elk hunting ranch with her husband in western North Dakota, said she believes Mathern's proposal violates property rights and free enterprise.

"We're just people trying to stay on the family farm," Dvirnak said. "What frustrates me the most is that you have people who don't like it and don't agree with it who feel they have the right to dictate what someone else can and can't do. That's not America."

Shawn McKenna, executive director of the North Dakota Wildlife Federation, said game farms ignore the principle of fair chase.

"It ain't hunting," McKenna said. "It's going out there and shooting something in a pen, basically."

Shawn Schafer, who runs a white-tailed deer ranch, said most hunters would not pay to shoot animals in a pen. Customers want an authentic hunting experience, which they said is provided by most of the game farms in North Dakota.

"People are looking for a quality hunt and a safe place to hunt," Schafer said. "Customer satisfaction will regulate the people who have animals in a corral."

McKenna said size doesn't matter. "How much acreage is enough?" he asked. "Ultimately you're chasing them into a 7- or 8-foot fence. Where's the sport in that?" Brian Kramer, a spokesman for the North Dakota Farm Bureau, said his group is taking a wait-and-see approach on Mathern's bill.

"This issue has come up before, and it seems to me the sentiment was along the lines of these are privately owned animals," Kramer said. "It's no different than if you buy a cow from me. You want to shoot it rather than having me take it into the butcher plant."

## Judge clears men in cattle futures market schemes

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — A federal judge has cleared the last of three people accused of scheming to manipulate the feeder cattle futures market. Todd Delay, chief executive of DL Global futures of Columbus, Ohio, was cleared last week by U.S. District Judge Richard Kopf in

Lincoln.

The Commodity Futures Trading Commission had alleged last year that Delay was part of a scheme to improperly boost prices of feeder cattle futures. Two Nebraska feedlot managers — Jack McCaffrey of North Platte and John D. Lawless of

Imperial — were also named in a federal lawsuit the commission filed in Chicago.

The commission dropped McCaffrey and Lawless from the lawsuit a week before the trial began. McCaffrey has since died.

A two-week trial was held in

May, and Kopf on Friday filed his ruling in favor of Delay. Kopf said the commission failed to prove that Delay "manipulated or attempted to manipulate the feeder cattle futures market, or that the cattle sales information he caused to be reported was false or misleading."