

Goodland soldiers train in California

By Greg Stover
The Goodland Star-News

Citizen-soldiers from Goodland's National Guard unit have been to California for training this spring, part of what it takes to be ready to defend their country at a moment's notice.

The Goodland unit, Detachment 1 of the 170th Maintenance Company, operates out of the armory at 720 E. Armory Rd., west of the National Weather Service office.

The detachment is one of three belonging to the 170th; Detachment 2 is in Colby and Detachment 3 is in Russell. The rest of the 170th, including the company headquarters, is in Norton.

One of the few times all the members of the company get together as a unit is during annual training, normally a 15-day period of active duty some people call "summer camp." This year, the unit traveled to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., in May.

Most of the unit's soldiers left Kansas early in the morning on May 15 by charter plane out of Salina, landing in Victorville, then rode buses to Fort Irwin.

Once the unit settled in, the 170th went to work providing maintenance support for the base. The soldiers worked on wheeled and tracked vehicles, replacing engines, repairing transmissions and making other repairs needed to keep the vehicle running.

The 170th's maintenance supply section received, issued, crated and stocked over \$5 million in parts. Even the unit's cooks kept busy, supplementing the staff at the main dining hall.

Many of the 170th's soldiers completed training to qualify in their assigned specialties.

About a week after the 170th returned home, the 174th Ordnance Maintenance Battalion, the unit's next higher headquarters, went on its annual training along with the other companies assigned to it at Fort Riley.

There, the soldiers reinforced the base's maintenance operations, and took part in a tactical exercise.

On June 9, the recruiters who support the battalion took guests from some of their hometowns to visit them at Fort Riley. It was a full day for the visitors, some of whom started their journey at 3 a.m.

The tour started with a visit to the

Mobilization and Training Equipment Site, or MATES, where some equipment for Kansas reserve units is stored and maintained. Few units, especially combat units, keep all their vehicles and equipment at their armories.

The tour included a visit to nearly every part of the equipment site, including the maintenance bay where vehicles are repaired and speciality workshops. They were treated to a lunch prepared at a mobile kitchen trailer and issued a MRE (meal, ready-to-eat) for later.

After lunch, the guests got a tour of an engine refurbishing facility where engines are brought in from units around the world, taken apart and put back together. Each component is inspected, tested, repaired or replaced (if needed), reassembled and calibrated, then the engine is tested and shipped out to a unit which needs it.

The final part of the tour was to the field site where the 174th battalion staff was taking part in a tactical exercise. Soldiers practice their skills while reacting to situations presented by the exercise controllers. They had to do their jobs within the unit but also be ready to react to any attack or other emergency.



Four of the guests (above), including Brigham Sloan (left) of Goodland, who visited the 174th Ordnance Maintenance Battalion at Fort Riley last month eat lunch prepared in a mobile kitchen

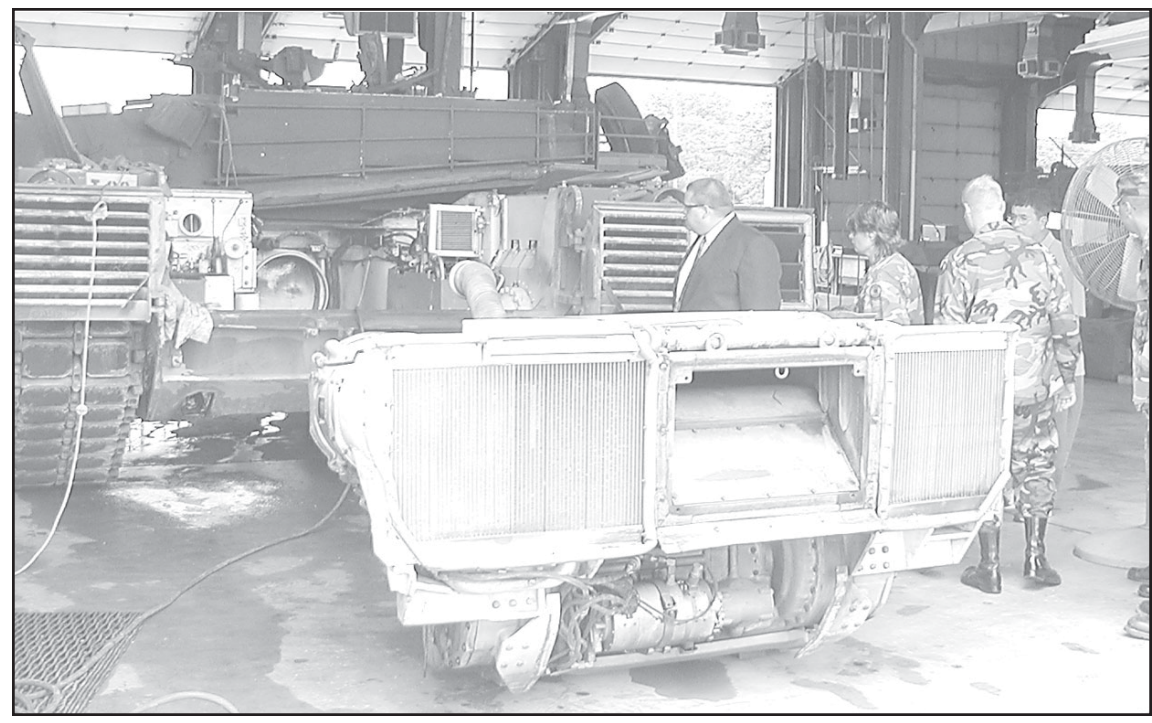
trailer, called MKT for short. Sloan (below right) got a close-up view of the engine compartment of a tank during the group's tour of the equipment site.


Photos by Greg Stover/The Goodland Star-News



Three noncommissioned officers (above right) from the 170th Maintenance Company work on an armored personnel carrier in one of the maintenance bays on Fort Irwin. They are Sgt. William Detwiler (top) of Gorham, SSgt. James Griffin of Colby and Sgt. Jose Cintron of Junction City. Soldiers (right) visit the unit's crest painted in 1996 on a rock formation where units who train at the National Training Center leave their mark to tell others they were there. The 170th's was updated to reflect its latest tour of duty and the one it did there in 1998.

Photos by Sgt. Mark Reasoner





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The Sherman County Conservation District will conduct a sign up July 6th through July 30th for both Non-Point and State Water Resources Cost Share Programs.

Some of the State Water Resources Cost Share Program practices eligible for cost share include Contour Buffer Strips, Critical Area Planting, Diversions, Fencing, Grassed Waterways, Pipelines, Terraces and Livestock Wells. The Irrigation Practices will include Subsurface drip, Irrigation Water Conveyance, Irrigation Water Management and Irrigation System, Sprinkler. Cost Share is NOT authorized for nozzle upgrades (example 9 to 2 ft.) Exceptions shall be allowed for spacing modification (example 10 to 7.5 ft or 5 ft or less) if NRCS determines significant efficiency gains will be achieved. Non metered systems will incur a state cost share limit of 50% or less up to landowner limit of \$1500. Systems with end guns will not qualify for cost share. All other irrigation practices will be cost shared at 50% not to exceed \$2500. You will be required to provide water right information. The other non irrigation practices will be cost shared at 60% of average cost or actual cost whichever is less with a \$5000 landowner limit.

The Non Point Source Funds can be used for FAILING on site waste water systems and plugging abandoned wells. We only received \$7000.00. KDHE will have to evaluate and rank the applications and there will be a \$50 fee upfront for these services. Last year we were only able to fund three systems.

For further information call Sandy Rodgers at the Conservation District Office 785-899-3070 extension 35.
210 W. 10th St. • Goodland, Kan. 67735