In 2017, The 65th Field Artillery Brigade continued its reputation as America’s Thunder as it participated in multiple training events to include the Fleet Synthetic Joint Training Exercise, Yama Sakura 71 (YS-71), and culminated with Warfighter 17-05 (WFX 17-05). The 65th FAB also supported 1st Battalion, 145th Field Artillery in Operation Skull Valley and Operation Devils Breath and supported 2nd Battalion, 222nd Field Artillery at the Orchard Combat Training Center, Idaho. Members of 1-145th FA also deployed this year, with more to deploy in 2018.

Soldiers from 65th FAB augmented 2-222nd FA to participate in YS-71 with 17th Field Artillery Brigade at Joint Base Fort Lewis-McChord, Wash. There, they served as the counterfire headquarters for I Corps during the training event.

WFX 17-05 took place at Camp Atterbury, Ind., in June. During the three-week exercise, 65th FAB’s mission was to perform the function as the field artillery headquarters for 40th Infantry Division.

Soldiers in 1-145th FA, participated in Operation Skull Valley in Dugway, Utah, in order to certify their live-fire exercise capabilities. The 1-145th FA also participated as part of Homeland Response Force during Operation Devils Breath. The event simulated a tornado event that triggered requirements for decontamination, wide area search, security and command and control operations.

In 2017, B Battery, 1-145th FA, was recognized as the best National Guard field artillery battery in the nation as it received the Hamilton Award. The award recognizes mission accomplishment and overall unit excellence.

In October, approximately 100 Soldiers from D Battery, 1-145th FA, were deployed to the United Arab Emirates in support of ongoing operations. They are providing security support and conducting other artillery missions. This will be the first of two rotations of Soldiers, the second is scheduled for mid 2018.

The 2-222nd FA conducted annual training at Orchard Combat Training Center. The operations section coordinated with a team of joint terminal attack controller’s from 19th Special Forces Group, the 190th A-10 Squadron from Gowen Field, and HH-60 assets...
from the Navy. The 65th FAB provided high command for 2-222nd FA during this training.

65th FAB’s Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/65FAB/

130th Field Artillery Brigade, Kansas Army National Guard, Kansas Redlegs

The 130th Field Artillery Brigade, Kansas Army National Guard, Kansas Redlegs, completed its 2017 collective training event with a 72-hour counter-fire exercise in conjunction with its active duty partner, 1st Infantry Division Artillery. First ID DIVARTY and the 130th FAB collaborated for months, establishing a training framework in which 1st ID DIVARTY was the force field artillery headquarters and the 130th FAB was the counter-fire headquarters. Both organizations leveraged Mission Training Center facilities, training and mentors to ensure all 130th FAB systems and sections were trained and integrated. The exercise sets the stage for 1st ID’s Warfighter Exercise 18-3 where the partnership will continue and reverse training audiences.

1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, Kansas Army National Guard, Western Kansas Redlegs

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, 130th Fires Brigade focused on individual readiness, unit readiness, section-level training and platoon-level training. They executed platoon-level, dry fire safety certification and validation, section evaluation and section qualification. The training was mission essential task list-focused, platoon-to-battery training, which builds the platoon up to a safe, collective and tactical unit. All Soldiers focused on key tasks in order to achieve the desired end state.

Annual training was conducted at Fort Riley, Kan., June 3-17. The M109 A6 Paladin, howitzer crew members of the two super batteries completed 213 fire missions, safely firing 1,216 155 mm high-explosive projectiles. Super Battery One completed 153 missions, safely firing 862 155 mm high-explosive projectiles in preparation for evaluations during a rotation at the National Training Center. At NTC, Super Battery One safely performed all its evaluated tasks at or above the standard.

Super Battery Two completed 60 missions, safely firing 354 155 mm high-explosive projectiles. The battalion qualified at full Table XII. During annual training, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery safely controlled artillery Fires for 1,216 rounds. They maintained command and control of two, three-platoon firing batteries, and processed 213 fire missions. In addition, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery supported a 75 mm pack howitzer shoot for River Fest, and provided stranded motorist assistance recovery teams in response to Operation Jupiter.

This year, Task Force Broncbuster supported area recruiting by providing a cannon for 11 college and high school football games, resulting in nine enlistments and a number of leads. TFB also assisted in manning six recruiting booths in the Garden City area as well as provided logistical support for a Blackhawk helicopter event at Garden City Community College. The TFB training program acknowledges that these Soldiers should have 60-plus civilian education promotion points when they graduate from Garden City Community College and the program. TFB unit graduated its first Soldier from the program with an associate’s degree. That Soldier is now enrolled in Reserve Officers’ Training Corps at Pittsburg State University.

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/1-161-Field-Artillery-Battalion-Kansas-Army-National-Guard-138173279555954/
138th Field Artillery Brigade, Kentucky Army National Guard

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 138th Field Artillery Brigade, Kentucky Army National Guard, Kentucky Thunder

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 138th Field Artillery Brigade’s year started off with the execution of Warfighter Exercise (WFX) 17-2 in Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., where the brigade commander and staff integrated with the 28th Division’s Fires cell to serve as division fire support coordinator and provide division artillery and force field artillery services.

After completion of the WFX, the brigade headquarters turned focus to redevelopment of the brigade command post to meet mission requirements for a lighter, faster and more mobile command post that retains the ability to conduct mission command and execute division and corps Fires. The lion’s share of this effort was focused on the utilization and retrofitting of the Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles expanding vans to provide the mobile method for the command post.

Selected to participate in Dynamic Front 2018 in Germany, the 138th Field Artillery Brigade closed out 2017 with staff preparations to provide the NATO Allied Rapid Reaction Corps and five NATO supporting countries with corps-level Fires and force field artillery headquarters services. Altogether 20 plus countries are scheduled to participate in the event. The training is valuable training as the brigade works to develop functional technical procedures to provide effective-responsive Fires in this multi-national environment.

2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery, Kentucky Army National Guard, Long Rifles

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery, Long Rifles, successfully completed a very busy training year in 2017. The battalion laid a solid foundation in its core mission essential task list and devised a framework to achieve the training goals. The battalion started the year concentrating on Army Warrior Tasks to include qualification with the M4, M249, M240, M2 .50cal, and Mk-19 40 mm. The battalion did crew served qualifications mounted on Field Artillery Ammunition Support Vehicles at Cedar Creek.

The Soldiers moved to Fort Knox, Ky. and began certifying key leaders on the Artillery Skills Proficiency Test for their required military occupational specialty. The battalion made a deliberate effort to focus on drivers’ training for new Soldiers while training on Field Artillery Tables III, IV and V.

In June, the battalion mustered at Fort Knox. They moved to the field and finished certifying the howitser sections. In addition to safely shooting over 900 rounds, the battalion conducted National Guard reactionary force training lanes, vehicle ambush lanes, mounted gunnery lanes and base defense lanes. They implemented new Joint Capabilities Release systems into training and used them to assist with battle tracking.

The Long Rifles partnered with 101st Division Artillery to assist with conducting live-fire exercises. The resources 101st DIVARTY provided (13F, 13A, 13R) enabled and enhanced training for the live-fire exercises. It gave 2-138th FA the ability to verify the accuracy of fire missions and shoot late into the night with the equipment they provided. It also enabled the Long Rifles to accomplish tasks in a multiple unit training assembly that previously would have taken much longer.

The battalion is currently at 100 percent strength. They qualified up through Table XXII this fiscal year and shot over 1,200 rounds.

MORALE

Morale is high, and the Soldiers are gaining valuable experience with each and every inactive duty training period. There is no reason to think Long Rifles will not continue trending upward as they look forward to Fiscal Year 18.

103rd Brigade Support Battalion, Kentucky Army National Guard, Thunder Support

During Training Year 2017, the 103rd Brigade Support Battalion executed three annual training events: two for their attached palletized load system (PLS) companies (2123rd Transportation Company and 2112th Transportation Company) and the Headquarters Service Company, 103rd BSB. The battalion staff was challenged with a full command post exercise at Camp Dodge, Iowa, exercising the military decision making process, and demonstrating their ability to effectively conduct mission command through simulation. In addition, Soldiers of 103rd BSB received valuable military occupational specialty training, to include challenging vehicle recovery missions, slingload training, allied trades and the completion of 21 logistic packages of Class I and III (B) covering 740 miles. The 2123rd Transportation Company fully implemented the Associated Unit Pilot Program with the 101st Sustainment Brigade, completing the exchange of Soldiers (E6) with the 74th Transportation Company and conducting their first annual training event at Fort Campbell, Ky., with training assistance from 129th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. The 2112th TC conducted line haul missions for Bluegrass Army Depot, Ky., transporting 199,921 pounds of scrap metal from Richmond, Ky., to Bedford, Ind., covering 30,579 miles. In addition, 2112th TC received valuable fork-lift training by loading and transporting 960 ammo cans to various storage facilities on Bluegrass Army Depot. For the 10th year in a row, the 103rd BSB completed 100 percent of the brigade’s services, totaling 69 pieces of equipment, and 85 services complete between the two PLS companies. In addition to the above mentioned training events during Training Year 2017, the 103rd BSB assisted the local community by participating in seven state active duty events.

1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery, Kentucky Army National Guard, Morgan’s Men

First Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) spent the past year focusing on field artillery core competencies to provide accurate, timely and decisive rocket and missile Fires in support of unified land operations. This training included fire mission processing at all levels through the Harris AN/PRC – 150(C) at extended ranges. The 1-623rd FA also had the new Joint Capabilities Release (JCR) and the Profiler Meteorological System fielded in the battalion and was used extensively during training, improving their operational readiness.

The battalion conducted training with their active duty counterparts, 3rd Battalion, 27th Field Artillery HIMARS at Fort Bragg, N.C., in March of 2017. An observer-controller, trainer team from 1-623rd FA was requested and sent during a weeklong field training exercise and live-fire exercise (LFX) at Fort Bragg. The 1-623rd FA was able to help their counterparts achieve effective Objective-T ratings with outside evaluations. This partnership enabled a sharing of ideas and best practices from both units in order to improve training for real-world scenarios. Both of these opportunities allowed Morgan’s Men to demonstrate their abilities, while also learning valuable lessons.

Annual training (AT) was the high point of the year. The battalion fully utilized and put the Harris radio to the test of long-range communications conducting AT at three different training
sites in Kentucky: Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center, Fort Campbell and Fort Knox. Fort Campbell was a new training area for the battalion, which created learning opportunities, especially during reconnaissance selection and occupation of position and unit movement. Headquarters and Headquarters Battery was centrally located at WHFRRTC with A Battery road marching to Fort Campbell and B Battery road marching to Fort Knox. Utilizing JCR and Harris radio, HHB 1-163rd FA was able to control field artillery movements and a capstone live-fire was executed utilizing Harris LRC for the fire missions through Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System. The battalion was externally evaluated by 2nd Battalion, 305th Field Artillery from 1st Army. The 101st DIVARTY also participated in the training events using a Q36 Radar and 13F Soldiers to monitor the LFX. This reinforced the active duty – National Guard relationship.

In addition to focusing on field artillery tasks, Morgan’s Men continued to excel in providing outstanding support to local communities and the Commonwealth of Kentucky through the performance of a wide range of state active duty missions, which included providing security at the 2017 Kentucky Derby. The battalion was awarded the Kentucky Adjutant General’s Award for Physical Security 2017 for the second year in a row, while the 203rd Forward Support Company won the Philip A. Connelly Regional Award in 2017 and will compete nationally in 2018. Individually, Sgt. James Barnett from B Battery, 1-623rd FA was selected as the Kentucky Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer of the year after a competitive selection process. Morgan’s Men achieved all established goals for Training Year 2017 and is positioned for continued success as it moves into Training Year 2018.

169th Field Artillery Brigade, Colorado Army National Guard, Liberators

In September 2017, the Liberators of the 169th Field Artillery Brigade returned from a historic nine-month deployment serving as the U.S. Army Central Command force field artillery headquarters. Providing effective command and control to 3rd Battalion, 321st Field Artillery Regiment; 5th Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment; B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery Regiment and A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery. The 169th FAB executed distributed mission command across a vast operational area and within a wide-ranging mission set.

While supporting both Operation Spartan Shield and Operation Inherent Resolve, the Liberators significantly contributed to the defeat of ISIS by delivering over 3,000 precision strikes during the liberation of Mosul, Iraq, and during other crucial combat operations. Concurrently, the 169th FAB conducted a robust theater security cooperation program with key field artillery partners across the CENTCOM area of responsibility. In addition to dozens of other events, in August the 169th FAB’s Spartan Thunder Exercise achieved bilateral fire mission processing and airspace coordination objectives with partner-nation rocket artillery forces in the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait. The Liberators made significant advancements in field artillery readiness. The Soldiers contributed to the defense of the Arabian Gulf and promoted peace and stability throughout the region.

The Liberators accomplished various degrees of training while supporting mission sets across the globe. The brigade gained valuable insight into the necessity of partnering with host nations to accomplish a common goal while simultaneously refining standard operating procedures. This arduous training ensured all units learned valuable lessons throughout 2017. It also underscores the capabilities that National Guard Soldiers bring to the total force as they fight in the nations conflicts.

3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, Lightning

Redlegs from 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, Lightning, demonstrated their flexibility and lethality by providing accurate and responsive Fires around the globe in 2017. Three of the four firing platoons deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility (AOR) to provide Fires in support of combat operations. The last firing platoon mobilized to U.S. European Command to support NATO exercises. In total the battalion mobilized 14 of 16 launchers, supported two combatant commands and provided rocket Fires and capabilities in six separate countries throughout the year. During annual training within the U.S., the battalion S6 and fire direction center sections used advance communication Soldiers conduct bi-lateral training while serving under the 169th Field Artillery Brigade. (Courtesy photo)
systems to process fire missions that originated from 169th Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters located in the U.S. Central Command AOR. The battalion conducted three separate High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) airlift operations while partnering with 29th Weapons Squadron and 41st Airlift Squadron, United States Air Force.

B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, deployed to the Middle East in support of Operations Inherent Resolve (OIR) and Operation Spartan Shield (OSS). The mission required a general support field artillery battery (+) ready to destroy, neutralize, and suppress the enemy that partnered with joint and multi-national forces. Without a manning document, the first challenge began by manning the 120 authorized positions. The unit reorganized its doctrinal structure by combining paragraphs and line numbers from across the battalion in order to create a battalion tactical command post, a battery headquarters and four self-sustaining platoons or Light HIMARS Packages (LHPs). LHPs enabled decentralized operations at multiple firing points across two combatant commands and three different countries. B Battery was also the first battery to fire the M30A1 Alternate Warhead in combat. Overall, the battery shot over 70 strikes and 300 rockets in support of OIR.

First Platoon, A Battery, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Freedom’s Sentinel (OFS). They launched over 800 precision rockets, the highest rate of any HIMARS unit since the beginning of the war in Afghanistan. The platoon engaged numerous targets with devastating Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System and Army Tactical Missile System rocket Fires. Their support significantly impacted the ongoing war and the efforts of OFS.

While sustaining operations in support of OSS, OIR and OFS, the battalion maintained a high level of readiness at home. Second Platoon, A Battery, 3-157th, the only firing platoon not to deploy to combat operations, mobilized to Latvia in support of U.S. Army Europe’s NATO exercise, Saber Strike. The platoon coordinated across Department of Defense (U.S. Army Europe, U.S. Marine Corps, active duty and four separate National Guard states) and NATO (15 total countries) to facilitate HIMARS expeditionary operations, combine efforts and share tactical experiences while executing Fires. Their training culminated with a combined arms force-on-force exercise intermixed with the local populace. This new concept differed from previous exercises and pushed the entire unit to test their standard operating procedures and react to circumstances not previously encountered. The platoon demonstrated tremendous versatility. They integrated with maneuver forces and received various firing missions in support of the exercise. Second Platoon, A Battery fired multiple standard and non-standard missions allowing the Redlegs to reinforce core competencies while simultaneously exposing leaders and Soldiers to complex scenarios. Second Platoon also made history by firing the first HIMARS rockets in Latvia. The success of these joint operations strengthened the professional relationship between the U.S. and NATO allies in Eastern Europe.

147th Brigade Support Battalion, 169th Field Artillery Brigade

The 147th Brigade Support Battalion had a unique dual mission set during 2017. The 147th BSB served as the brigade support battalion as well as the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) enhanced force package (CERFP) for Region VIII under the National Guard Bureau CBRNE Response Enterprise. The 147th BSB has completed two previous National Training Center rotations and three CERFP external evaluations (EXEVAL) since 2012.

The 147th BSB is positioned to conduct a CERFP EXEVAL in 2018 after a highly successful NTC 17-08 rotation. During that rotation, the BSB served as a combat sustainment support battalion (CSSB) for 2nd Battalion, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team out of Fort Bliss, Texas. During that time, 147th BSB Headquarters and seven additional companies across all three components were able to sustain the fight by delivering over 165,000 gallons of bulk fuel and over 96,000 gallons of bulk water. Additionally, 147th CSSB delivered 979 pallets of Class I rations, 40 pallets of Class IV, 30 flat racks of Class IX, and recovered 78 pieces of armor from the battlefield. They did this in 72 tactical convoy operations which totaled more than 64,800 miles driven.

It’s a total team effort from all units assigned to 147th CSSB which included reserve component forces from 850th Transportation Company out of Mississippi; 257th Transportation Company out of Nevada; 475th Quartermaster Company from Pennsylvania; 103 Quartermaster Company from Texas; 826th Ordnance Company from Wisconsin; 771st Support Maintenance Company, Tennessee National Guard; and 40th Expeditionary Signal Brigade, active component from Fort Huachuca, Ariz. Additionally, 147th CSSB included the 480th Military Police attachment from Puerto Rico National Guard; 67th Forward Support Company (2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery) from Fort Sill, Oklahoma; and five medics from active component.

With 500 Soldiers to train in a six-month window (equivalent to 12 training days), it was no small feat to overcome. However, with determination, motivation and the back-bone of the Army, the noncommissioned officer corps, 147th BSB stepped up when it counted. The unit is comprised of quality professionals ready to answer the call at a moment’s notice.

115th Field Artillery Brigade, Wyoming National Guard, Cowboy Thunder

The role of Cowboy Thunder continues to reverberate as Redlegs from the 115th Field Artillery Brigade advance their proficiencies and readiness by taking part in relevant training events throughout the year.

In June, 115th Field Artillery Brigade Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, 148th Signal Company, and the 960th Brigade Support Battalion conducted a mission command systems integration exercise intended to stress the equipment to achieve overall communication throughout the battle space. The brigade was able to communicate to its units over different systems and operate as a field artillery brigade, to include sending simulated firing missions.

In September, Redlegs from 2-300th FA executed a night live-fire exercise, successfully qualifying Table VI shooting their High Mobility Rocket System.

1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, Wisconsin Army National Guard, Red Fox

Redlegs from 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, Red Fox, worked diligently to provide accurate Fires for 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Red Arrow, and stand ready to provide support for hurricane relief efforts.

The firing season for the Red Fox Battalion began in June with a live-fire exercise, certifying on tables and preparing for annual
training. In July, A and B batteries attended new equipment fielding for the M119A3’s suspension lockout system. This system was subsequently tested during annual training, at which another live-fire exercise was conducted to include Rocket Assisted Projectile familiarization.

The Red Fox Battalion’s observers spent their field time with the infantry and cavalry units of Red Arrow, calling both artillery and mortar missions. The observers are also becoming joint Fires observer (JFO)-qualified, attending both JFO qualification and recertification courses at Fort McCoy, Wis.

The training season continued into August, where the battalion staff took part in the Red Arrow Brigade’s warfighter exercise (WFX). Accompanied by 1st Army evaluators, the staff improved both procedures and products in preparation for the upcoming exportable combat training capability rotation.

At the end of the brigade WFX, Hurricane Harvey made landfall. The Wisconsin Army National Guard, eager to provide assistance, planned and prepared for domestic operations. While not being utilized in Texas, the Soldiers of the Badger State were again called to stand ready as Hurricane Irma was set to hit Florida. Within days of receiving the notification, nearly 300 Red Fox Soldiers convoyed to Florida. Luckily, the damage from Irma was less severe than anticipated and the majority of the battalion returned to home station. One detachment of 13Fs flew to Florida, and assisted local agencies with disaster relief. While fortunate that the people in these areas didn’t require additional aid, the ability of the Soldiers in the Red Fox Battalion to rapidly prepare and deploy in support of others truly exemplifies the battalion’s motto, Eager to Assist.

**1st Battalion, 129th Field Artillery Regiment, Missouri Army National Guard, Thunder**

During the 2017 training year, the 1st Battalion, 129th Field Artillery Regiment, Thunder, focused on achieving all objectives while elevating its proficiency in delivering accurate and timely Fires.

In June, the battalion conducted annual training at Fort Ripley, Minn. The Soldiers fired 1,134 rounds to include high explosive, smoke and illumination missions with tremendous effects while conducting numerous battery occupations.

The 1-129th FAR also conducted a live-fire exercise and Precision Guided Kit Net Fielding at Fort Riley, Kan., becoming the third National Guard field artillery battalion to qualify on precision guided munitions. The 1-129th FAR also conducted 10 additional net fieldings, modernizing the battalion’s equipment and facilitating training focused on near-peer and peer threats.

This year was a success for the 1-129th FAR. The Soldiers of the battalion were awarded four Meritorious Service Medals, 12 Army Commendation Medals, 41 Army Achievement Medals and 91 Missouri Commendation Medals. The 1-129th FAR also had seven Soldiers complete Air Assault School and two Soldiers successfully complete the rigorous Pathfinder School. The 1-129th FAR’s Truman Chapter of the Field Artillery Association was awarded the best chapter in the nation for the second time in three years. The battalion had numerous accomplishments in 2017, and looks to continue the trend in 2018.

**2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery, Kansas Army National Guard, Knights of Fire**

The focus of 2nd Battalion, 130th Field Artillery in 2017 was to mobilize two elements while maintaining proficiency of Soldiers that did not mobilize. A Battery, from Holton and Marysville, Kan., with Soldiers from across the battalion and state mobilized in April to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. B Battery from Paola and Lenexa, Kan., mobilized in August to Afghanistan in support of Operation Freedom Sentinel.

The road-to-war for A Battery was well on its way by October after the battery completed individual weapons qualification and artillery skills proficiency testing at the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina, Kan. This training built on what was completed in Training Year 2016 and laid the foundation for mobilization preparation.

In February, both A Battery and B Battery conducted equipment issue, the Administrative Soldier Readiness Process, the Medical Soldier Readiness Process, and Yellow Ribbon training requirements. This process went extremely well and ensured all Soldiers on the deployment manning documents, and their families, were medically and administratively ready for their respective mobilization.

In March, A Battery began their pre-mobilization training at the Great Plains Joint Training Center where they completed all individual Soldier skills training that was required for mobilization. Following Salina, A Battery moved to Fort Riley, Kan., to complete the field artillery portion of their training. The battery completed Field Artillery Table VI and 13 total section qualifications. B Battery took artillery skills proficiency tests and did individual Soldier training requirements in preparation for their pre-mobilization training that began July.

In April, A Battery held their departure ceremony at Holton High School where Soldiers, families, employers and community members came to send off the unit. A Battery later reported to Fort Bliss, Texas, for post-mobilization training and certification.

May and June proposed a great training opportunity for B Battery that the battalion had never accomplished before. The battalion partnered with the 139th Airlift Wing of the Missouri Air National Guard to conduct Field Artillery Table III training. This training consisted of air-load and transport operations of the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). Two HIMARS sections were flown by C-130 from Rosecrans Air Base, Mo., to Fort Riley and were able to land and assume an operational posture. This training is key for the mission set that the Soldiers may fill in future operations.

During Annual Training 2017, Soldiers who were not mobilizing, consolidated in Hiawatha, Kan., to train on Army warrior tasks and engage in local community and recruiting events. A priority of any formation is to grow the force. The battalion devoted time and resources this annual training to make strides to do just that. The battalion completed all training goals and conducted 15 separate
recruiting or community support events. This resulted in 21 potential recruits for the battalion and Kansas Army National Guard.

In July, B Battery began their pre-mobilization training at the Great Plains Joint Training Center in Salina where they completed all individual Soldier skills training required for their mobilization. B Battery then moved to Fort Riley to complete the field artillery portion of their training. The unit trained to and completed Field Artillery Table V section certification for five total sections.

In August, B Battery held their departure ceremony at Saint James Academy in Lenexa, Kan., where Soldiers, families, employers and community members came to send off the unit. B Battery later reported to Fort Bliss for post-mobilization training and certification.

More training objectives were accomplished in Training Year 2017 than ever before. Readiness metrics were higher than previous years, and 2-130th FA set the bar high within the Kansas Army National Guard. Moving forward the battalion will focus on maintaining field artillery skill proficiency with the Fight Tonight mentality. The Soldiers reintegrate deployed elements upon release from active duty and drive forward as one of the most combat proven, highly lethal forces in the nation.

*Semper Parvo Meliores, Always a little better.*

2-130th FA Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/2ndBattalion130thFieldArtillery/

2-130th FA Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe9Voyi6MACusGGS4yTZEJA

1st Battalion, 182nd Field Artillery Regiment, Michigan National Guard, *Sudden Death*

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 182nd Field Artillery Regiment, *Sudden Death*, spent 2017 in reset after completing their mission in the United Arab Emirates, the kingdom of Jordan and Iraq in support of Operation Enduring Freedom-Spartan Shield and Operation Inherent Resolve.

While in reset, the battalion spent the year focused on individual and equipment readiness in addition to reintegration with families and friends. A new battalion commander also brought a focus to survivability contrary to recent deployment experience. Soldiers embraced this focus and leaders incorporated it into training plans as they analyzed deployment lessons learned and how to integrate the two.

In addition to reset activities and the evolution of mission focus, in March 2017 the *Sudden Death Battalion* augmented the Latvian National Armed Forces Combat Brigade with fire direction specialists at Hohenfels, Germany, in support of Exercise Allied Spirit. Their mission was to participate in the integration of coalition Fires during the exercise as part of the Artillery Systems Cooperation Activities program. The battalion also supported additional security cooperation activities in Latvia surrounding Latvian artillery capability improvement as part of the 25-year Security and Prosperity Partnership between the Michigan National Guard and the Latvian National Armed Forces.

In July 2017 the *Sudden Death Battalion* went back to the field.
during annual training 2017 to test and measure the renewed focus on field craft and survivability at the Army warrior task and battle drill level. Soldiers who had not spent the night in the field in years remembered what it was like and enjoyed the opportunity to get back to basics.

The Sudden Death Battalion is well on its way to being mission ready for any contingency, under any circumstance, anywhere in the world. Might if Right – Sudden Death!

1st Battalion, 214th Field Artillery, 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Georgia Army National Guard, Hydra

Redlegs from the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Hydra, participated in Saber Guardian Exercise in Valcea, Romania, as part of a wet gap crossing which has not been conducted since the Cold War Era. The fire support and air defense and airspace management cells (ADAM) coordinated with 2nd Cavalry Regiment and multinational units to provide fire support during the crossing. Integration of surface-to-surface and surface-to-air assets was an invaluable opportunity for the Hydra Fires and ADAM cell to execute their military occupational skills during the exercise. Hydra Fires members played a vital role in the planning and mission accomplishment in this multinational exercise.

1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment, New York Army National Guard, Washington Greys

The 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment, Washington Greys, executed a rigorous training year. The battalion focused on platoon and above collective tasks and honed the skills developed during the previous year’s Joint Readiness Training Center rotation. Soldiers remained vigilant, motivated and capable, proving that the battalion remains Ready and Faithful.

The battalion used its time wisely, maximizing training opportunities throughout the year. The firing batteries, located in New Windsor and Bronx, N.Y., conducted field artillery tables throughout the year to ensure howitzer sections were certified and ready to progress through platoon tables prior to annual training. During annual training, the batteries executed repetitive day/night occupations and multiple platoon-level air assault artillery raids in conjunction with the New York Army National Guard’s 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation Regiment. Training culminated with a brigade-level fire support coordination exercise resulting in the massing of Fires across the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Headquarters Battery, based in the Jamaica area of Queens, N.Y., improved proficiency in establishing and executing mission command while certifying its meteorological, radar, fire direction and survey sections. The biggest challenge came in the form of ensuring the battalion and brigade were synchronized in support of the fire support coordination exercise. The complex nature of integrating air/ground clearance, radar, artillery, mortars and fire support elements from different battalions and different states presented many opportunities for Soldiers to expand on leadership capabilities.

G Battery, 427th Brigade Support Battalion, also based in Jamaica, N.Y., provided exceptional support. They sustained all batteries to ensure they remained mission ready. The weather and mud at Fort Drum, N.Y., offered many opportunities for equipment recovery and challenging logistical resupply missions. These Soldiers worked tireless hours and played a crucial role in the battalion and brigade’s successes.

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