

North Fort Hood Chapel opens

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS GAIL BRAYMEN

Div. West Public Affairs

Troops training at North Fort Hood have a new place to pray, but they will have to wait a little longer for a new place to stay.

The Friday ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new North Fort Hood chapel heralded the planned start of a multi-million dollar expansion project to house, feed and train troops in the North Fort Hood cantonment area.

"Within the next 18 to 24 months, we should see groundbreaking for the 52-million dollar phase one construction of a six-phase, six-battalion operational readiness training complex, complete with barracks, brigade, battalion and company headquarters, dining facilities, motor pools and maintenance facilities," Ed Turner, mobilization chief of Fort Hood's directorate of plans, training, mobilization and security, said.

"As that development continues, this chapel we are dedicating today will play a crucial role in the lives of the Soldiers and civilians who will live, work and train here," he added.

The new facilities will be built on open land across the street from the new chapel, which has already been in use for weeks by reserve component units being trained by First Army Division West for overseas deployments.

"We are holding one non-denominational service a week, soon to be adding a second to support the needs," said Chaplain (Capt.) James Khile, chaplain



Colonel Franklin Jackson, garrison chaplain, talked to a crowd of more than 30 people inside the new chapel Friday on North Fort Hood.

for the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 147th Aviation Battalion out of Madison, which is training for its mission in Iraq. "We also are offering two Bible studies a week and different opportunities throughout the week for Soldiers to come in, relax, take a break from everything. We're also doing quite a bit of counseling and morale support for the Soldiers," he added.

The new chapel provides an opportunity to enhance and develop the spiritual resiliency of the Soldiers working and training at North Fort Hood, said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Randy Edwards, Division West chaplain.

"It provides worship opportunities," Edwards said. "It also provides a training center for the unit ministry teams that Division West has responsibility for training before they deploy, so they are well prepared to provide religious support."

Khile and his chaplain assistant, who make up the 147th's unit ministry team, have been training in the chapel for the duties and situations they may encounter while deployed, including conducting a memorial ceremony.

"The facility worked great for that," Khile said. "We actually had our honor guard that fired a salute outside the door, and we walked through the whole procedure. It was very much real-life training."

Every year, tens of thousands of Soldiers are temporarily stationed or work every day at North Fort Hood, said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Richard Brunk Jr., Hood Mobilization Brigade chaplain.

"We've only had this building in use a few weeks, but already we've had a number of emergencies - Soldier crises - dealt with right here," Brunk said. "Soldiers could walk in and say, 'I need to talk to someone, I have a problem, this is going on in my life.'"

Brunk emphasized that the new chapel is not non-denominational, but multi-denominational.

"We have storage areas and resources for many different faith groups," Brunk said, adding that, in a one-week period, religious leaders at North Fort Hood have provided services for 26 different faith and language groups.

The original North Fort Hood chapel, near Texas State Highway 36, was built in 1943 and served Soldiers until 2007.

Since the old chapel closed, religious leaders have provided support to troops in the field, or in tents, or in a multi-purpose facility.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Wynn A. Hoke, 14th PAD

Brigadier Gen. Pete Atkinson, Deputy Commanding General-Canada, and Fort Hood Garrison Commander Col. Mark A. Freitag participated Friday in the ribbon-cutting ceremony held for the new North Fort Hood Chapel.



The new chapel was dedicated Friday to support North Fort Hood and the deploying and redeploying Soldiers.



Photos by Spc. Ann Marie White, 553rd CSSB

A few coats of paint were required as Soldiers of the 263rd Maint. Co., 553rd CSSB, 4th Sust. Bde., 13th ESC, help paint the walls of the Success Lab at Midway High School's alternate education center June 26 in Waco.

263rd Maint Co helps school for at-risk teens

BY PFC. AMY M. LANE
4th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs

WACO - Volunteering and providing help to the community are values cherished by Soldiers of the 263rd Maintenance Company, 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). It is a team dedicated to giving back to the community.

Volunteers from the Leopard Battalion recently spent a Saturday morning painting the Success Lab bungalows at Midway High School's alternate education center. The Soldiers joined up with Midway High School faculty, ARAMARK Properties and volunteers from Baylor University to complete the project.

"It's nice to get involved with a large group that cares so much

about the students at Midway," said Beau Theimer, an ARAMARK location manager.

For the Soldiers, their spare time is never a sacrifice when the focus is



Soldiers of the 263rd Maint. Co., 553rd CSSB, 4th Sust. Bde., 13th ESC, help paint the walls outside the Success Lab at Midway High School's alternate education center June 26.

on the best interest of students said Capt. Thomas Davis.

"My dad came out to help us out," Davis, one of the volunteers, said. "He has expertise in painting and wanted to contribute to the project."

Success Lab, which currently has 160 students, is designed to help at-risk teens graduate from high school on time. Faculty members provide academic support and counseling.

The program also relies on volunteers to provide support and guidance to the students, according to Jason Bunting, the principal of Midway High School.

"In today's culture, the need for this type of program has sparked its creation across all school districts," Bunting said. "We currently have a passing rate of 98 percent."

(Editor's Note: Spc. Ann Marie White, 553rd CSSB contributed to this story.)

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