Veterans Day Parade attracts big names

STAFF REPORTS

Armistice Day or Veterans Day has been marked in Leavenworth County with special events annually since 1919. But Veterans Day 2007 brings a new designation to the area.

For the first time, the Veterans Day National Committee has recognized the Leavenworth County Veterans Day Parade as an official Veterans Day regional site. The designation is awarded to communities for serving as a model "for other communities to follow in planning their own observances."

Thirty Veterans Days events across the country received the designation this year, including Leavenworth and Emporia in Kansas.

"We were very honored," said Diane Smith, secretary of the Leavenworth County parade committee. "We didn t even know we were being looked at to be selected."

Because of Leavenworth County s selection, the Department of Veterans Affairs is dispatching one of its top officials — Robert J. Henke, the chief financial officer of the VA — to Leavenworth to deliver the National Veterans Day Message.

Henke, assistant VA secretary for management, will speak at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 11, at American Legion Post 23, 418 Cherokee St., Leavenworth. The message is a kick-off to the Veterans Day Parade, Nov. 12.

Earlier this week, parade organizers had confirmed 219 entries in this year s parade — which is billed as the oldest Veterans Day observance in the nation.

"We usually get calls right up to the morning of the parade," Smith said.

Grand marshal for this year s parade will be Lt. Col. Grant W. Gooch of the Iowa Air National Guard.

Gooch, a Leavenworth native, graduated from Leavenworth High School in 1986 and earned a degree in electrical engineering from Kansas University in 1991. His military career began at KU with the Air Force ROTC. A senior pilot with more than 2,100 hours logged in aircraft from the T-37 to F-16s, he currently is chief of wing safety for the 132nd Fighter Wing of the Iowa Air National Guard.

His military experience includes enforcement of the no-fly zone over Iraq prior to Saddam Hussein s removal from power and participating in airstrikes against al-Qaida targets in the Anbar province during the current Iraq war. He is scheduled again to deploy to Iraq in spring of 2008.

The parade will begin at 10:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 12, at Fourth and Cherokee streets in downtown Leavenworth. The parade will proceed east on Cherokee to Esplanade Street; north on Esplanade to Delaware; west to Seventh Street; south to Cherokee and east to its end at Fifth and Cherokee.

The parade will stop for taps at 11 a.m., and a formation of F-16 fighter jets will fly over the parade at 11:03 a.m.

Participants in this year s parade include "Our Returning Heroes," a float with service members who recently returned from areas of conflict, U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., U.S. Reps. Nancy Boyda, D-Kan., and Ike Skelton, D-Mo., marching units from Fort Leavenworth, the Missouri National Guard, Kansas National Guard, numerous bands, honor guards, veterans organizations and others.

Basehor s Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion plan to participate in the parade.

Related events include a Veterans Breakfast sponsored by Leavenworth Rotary beginning at 7 a.m. at the Riverfront Community Center, 123 N. Esplanade St. The $6 cost will be waived for all disabled veterans.

After the parade, there will be a public display of military equipment at Haymarket Square, Seventh and Cherokee.

The parade is sponsored annually by veterans and fraternal organizations in Leavenworth, Lansing and the area.
SOLDIERS SALUTE during a moment of silence during the 2006 Leavenworth County Veterans Day Parade in downtown Leavenworth. This year’s parade will be Monday, Nov. 12, in Leavenworth, and organizers are expecting more than 200 units to participate.
Students from 10 Kansas high schools will be honored Tuesday, Nov. 13, by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and KU Endowment.

A total of 214 seniors from high schools in Shawnee County will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 6:30 p.m. dinner program at Topeka's Holiday Inn Holidome, 605 SW Fairlawn.

The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and has honored more than 100,000 students. Scholars rank in the top 10 percent of their high school senior classes and are selected regardless of curricula, majors, occupational plans or higher-education goals.

During the ceremony, each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary in hardback and CD versions, presented by Sarah Blaney, assistant director of Kansas programs for the KU Alumni Association.

Provost and executive vice chancellor Richard Lariviere will speak to the students, parents and guests.

The Kansas Honors Program is made possible through KU Endowment and proceeds from the Jayhawk license plate program.

Area honor students include:

**Rossville High School**
Stacie Cook, Whitney Fox, Ashley Heptig, Ryan Kerwin, Jeff Miller, Allyson Porter

**Silver Lake Jr./Sr. High School**
Joshua Baden, Jordan Lambert, Amanda Pfannenstiel, Paulina Rudolph, Jaimie Tosh, Sara Wetzel
Groups support right to carry firearms on campus

By Brandon Steinert
KANSAS STATE COLLEGIAN

Various students around the country protested against their campus anti-firearm policies by wearing empty holsters during a week in late October. These schools included neighboring universities like the University of Kansas and Oklahoma State University.

According to the university handbook, “Kansas State University prohibits the possession or use of firearms, explosives or weapons on campus.”

Recent violent crimes on campuses have encouraged some students, like those in Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, to question these policies.

According to www.concealedcampus.org, the SCCC is an organization comprised of students on campuses across the United States. SCCC’s main goals are to convince state legislatures and school administrations to grant concealed handgun license holders the right to carry on campus, educate the public about concealed carry and to dispel rumors or myths in opposition.

Bryce Eastlick, an SCCC organizer, said one argument for allowing licensed students to carry a concealed firearm is the ability to help police officers in times of emergency.

“When it takes the average police or security department between five and 15 minutes to respond to an emergency call, it becomes difficult to diffuse a situation in a safe and timely manner,” Eastlick said.

When the concept of weapons on campus is mentioned, the situation that occurred at Virginia Tech comes to mind for many students.

“It was a terrible situation, and out of respect, that is not our platform of campaign,” said Eastlick. “Though, it has raised awareness on many different fronts; the false sense of security that students on campus have, the effectiveness of gun-free zones, as well as the lack of defense that those on college campuses have.”

Susan Allen, K-State’s director of nonviolence education, said she does not like the idea of people having guns at universities.

“I don’t think everybody’s talented enough to handle a gun safely,” she said. “It’s like a baby with matches. I don’t think people are mature enough to carry them ... do you trust everyone you know to drive a tank through campus?”

According to the Kansas attorney general’s Web site, www.ksag.org, concealed-carry license applicants are required to pass a thorough background check, and also a gun-safety course assigned by the attorney general.

Student Body President Matt Wagner said he thinks there is reason to worry.

“I think (allowing conceal-and-carry on campus) would be more harmful than helpful,” Wagner said. “We have a gun-control policy for a reason. More guns coming to the table would be more of a risk.”

A gun-free-zone liability bill has been introduced in Arizona and Georgia. The bills state if an area is created as a gun-free zone, the owners or operator of the property are liable for any harm it causes to victims who might have otherwise been concealing a weapon, according to a pro-firearm Web site, www.gunlaws.com.

Eastlick said a criminal doesn’t need to have a gun to be dangerous to certain people.

“A concealed firearm becomes an equalizer for a 120-pound female when a six-foot, 180 pound male attacker threatens her,” Eastlick said.

Wagner said there is no talk of the current gun-free-zone policy on campus changing through student government or any other means.

“I think that conceal-and-carry in Kansas is a good idea,” Wagner said. “I just don’t believe that campuses are the perfect place to have concealed weapons.”

Either way, some students might take these matters into their own hands. Eric Hyde, KU’s SCCC student leader, said he thinks it’s OK for students to carry on campus — despite the laws against it.

“If campus policy infringes upon students’ constitutional liberties, students should not feel afraid to conceal a weapon for the sole purpose of protecting themselves and others,” Hyde said. “Once students see a successful, positive example of concealed carry, opinions on this issue will change ... such an example will bring more support (for concealed carry.)"
Right to bear
KU Trip

Nineteen GHS Gifted Education students, accompanied by instructor Linda Knoll, visited the University of Kansas on Wednesday, Oct. 10. Students were presented with admission information and requirements, an overview of KU's history and traditions, and a campus tour. Juniors and seniors could also meet with department officials in their predicted field of study. Pictured from left are Gifted Education seniors Trent Boultinghouse, Katie Gull, Sierra Gottlob, and Andrew Thompson. Linda Knoll/GHS
Topeka Capital-Journal, on rising cost of college

The cost of moving up is going up, rapidly.
A report released this week by the College Board showed the cost of obtaining a college education had jumped more than the inflation rate for the second year in a row.
The board certainly isn’t suggesting costs have risen so high that at least a bachelor’s degree isn’t a wise purchase. But the trend of increasing costs suggests higher education and government officials need to pay attention lest they place a college degree beyond the reach of those on the lower rungs of the economic ladder.
The College Board reported the price of tuition and fees at four-year public universities rose to an average of $6,185 this year, up 6.6 percent from 2006, when tuition and fees at public universities increased by 5.7 percent.
To bring the numbers closer to home, tuition at Kansas State University rose from $2,587 per semester for full-time resident undergraduate students last year to $2,812.50 a semester this year. At University of Kansas, tuition rose from $2,756.25 a semester for the 2006-07 school year to $2,922 a semester for the 2007-08 school year.
Standing alone, those numbers seem like a bargain, but they don’t begin to address the cost of obtaining a degree.
Anyone, student or parent, who is paying for a college education or has paid for one recently knows tuition and fees are only part of the picture. Those numbers don’t include books and accessories, and rare is the class that doesn’t have some other fee attached that isn’t included in the base sticker price. Then, there is transportation and room and board for students who move away from home to go to college.
Slowing rising admission prices at our public universities in Kansas — where the Board of Regents last spring asked the Legislature for more than $500 million for delayed building maintenance and more recently approved salary increases for top administrators — may not be easy or politically popular just now.
But education and government officials need to beware of the upward trend and do what is necessary to ensure our public universities remain accessible to all.