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## **Guard warrant officer candidates complete service project, give back**

By Matthew J. Wilson  
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CROCKER, Mo. – Missouri National Guardsmen from the 2nd Battalion, 140<sup>th</sup> Regiment Missouri Regional Training Institute Warrant Officer Candidate School recently took part in a civil service project as part of their training.

The warrant officer candidates of class 11-001 spent a day at an animal shelter being built by the Pulaski County Humane Society where they assembled dog pens, scraped and painted concrete floors, and cut and removed overgrowth from around the building.

Warrant Officer Candidate Lance Black said the purpose of the new building is to combine the shelters in St. Robert and Waynesville into one county-wide shelter.

“Crocker didn’t have one at all, so they are killing three birds with one stone,” said Black, who lives on Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.

Black is the class project officer and did the majority of the project coordination for the class.

He said the reason he chose to help the shelter was because he and others in the class supported the cause.

“I myself have rescued dogs, and so have three of the other candidates, from the Humane Society or animal shelters,” he said.

Black, an Arkansas National Guardsmen, said he ironically has adopted two dogs from the Pulaski County (Arkansas) Humane Society near his home.

Warrant Officer Candidate Sterling Infield, who lives in Columbia, said he was proud to be a part of the project.

“It’s good to give something back to the community,” said Infield, who returned from deployment with the Missouri Guard’s 4175<sup>th</sup> Military Police Detachment Criminal Investigation Division earlier this year. “After just getting off deployment myself, I’ve been overwhelmed by the community support that’s out there.”

Infield said he enjoyed returning that support.

“It’s a good cause,” he said. “We’re making a place where it’s habitable for homeless animals – we’re giving them a home.”



This is the fifth straight year the Guard's Warrant Officer Candidate School has done a civil service project.

The first two classes completed their project on post near the Guard's Regional Training Institute. The first year the class performed area beautification and the following year it painted and cleaned up a classroom.

In 2009, the class reached out to the local community as it worked with the St. Robert Fire Department, washing and waxing fire trucks and cleaning the fire house.

Last year's class picked up trash on a one-mile stretch of Route H, just outside post's Waggoner gate, that has been adopted to be cleaned by the U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Daniel Verslues, one of the class' training, advising and counseling officers said the service project gets the warrant officer candidates involved in the community.

"Community projects are always good because it gives the Guard and all services some exposure to the community," Verslues said. "Here you can tell they appreciate it."

It's also good training for the candidates on the way to becoming warrant officers, Verslues said.

"It makes the candidates get creative," he said. "Like when we got here, they got paint and brushes, but then they have to figure out how to get things done. It demonstrates a little bit of their self-starter initiative."

Verslues was pleased to see that in these candidates when one had the guts to respectfully ask him to go into town and purchase a machete to help clean up the vegetation round the building.

"We could do that thinking for them, but it's better if we get that to come out of them, because that is what they are going to be responsible for when they get where they are going," Verslues said. "At their level, that's really what they should be learning."

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