



The Fort Sill Tribune

Volume 54, Number 10

Home of the Fires Center of Excellence

March 17, 2016



Linnea Baker (right), a nurse practitioner, hands a chart to Dr. Jamie Laughy, a pediatrician at Reynolds Army Community Hospital, prior to an appointment at the pediatric clinic.

Photo by Joel McFarland

RACH medical professionals save life of Fort Sill infant

By James Brabenec

Medical professionals at Reynolds Army Community Hospital overcame a series of challenges to save the life of a baby in respiratory distress, Feb. 16.

Dakota McGowan's regularly scheduled appointment with pediatrician Dr. Jamie Laughy turned out to be a life-threatening emergency. The 3-month-old daughter of Elizabeth and Spc. Laurence McGowan, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade, has a congenital heart murmur and was born with a rare genetic disorder, which severely limits her immune system.

Laughy said most patients fall into one of two categories — horses and zebras — the healthy herd of horses compared to the rarely seen zebra with a problem that required specialized care.

"You usually hear the beats of horse hooves, but you will rarely hear a zebra," she said. "As far as I know there has never been a child who had both those conditions at once — she's not even a zebra, she's a white elephant."

Dakota's chart for her checkup called for a weight check and two medications to boost her immune system. However, she arrived at RACH in respiratory distress with a blood-oxygen level of 65 percent instead of the normal 95-100 percent.

In such cases RACH typically calls 911 and has patients transferred to a facility equipped for a higher level of care.

Laughy called the University of Oklahoma Medical Center for an immediate transfer, but the OU staff was in "divert status," meaning medical personnel, facilities or equipment were unavailable and they couldn't accept her. OU cardiologists directed the RACH physician to administer oxygen.

However, Dakota's respiratory distress got worse, as her carbon dioxide level was three times the normal level, meaning she was likely in this state for two days.

"I knew then we had to intubate

her and put her on a ventilator," said Laughy, speaking of a procedure to insert a flexible tube into a patient's windpipe to establish and maintain a good airway.

"Because she was such a rare case, and she was in imminent peril, there was not enough time to wait for emergency personnel to arrive," said Laughy, "and therefore, her best chance at survival was immediate stabilization at Reynolds."

At that point, Laughy called a Code Blue, a hospital-wide alert that indicates a patient needs immediate resuscitation. John Wells, a respiratory therapist, and Capt. Michael Means, a nurse anesthetist, promptly responded.

The team moved immediately to labor and delivery as Laughy held the baby and her accompanying oxygen, with pediatric nurses

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"That was probably one of the best run emergency Code Blue type situations I have seen in my 28 years as a respiratory therapist."

John Wells

First female 13B graduates AIT

Story, photos
By Cindy McIntyre

Much attention has been paid this past week to Pfc. Katherine Beatty, the first Army female to graduate as a 13B cannon crewmember since the military occupational specialty (MOS) was opened to women on Jan. 2.

However, the entire class and cadre are also in the spotlight, as they upheld the Army's core values, treating her the same as they would any Soldier.

Pfc. Katherine Beatty's husband Charlie and their 2-year-old daughter Brylee couldn't attend the graduation, but Charlie sent along this congratulatory message for his wife.

"She would say I was her hero, but truly she is mine. She is a far better Soldier than I ever was and she will outshine anything I've ever accomplished. She has the ability and intelligence to take her military career as far as she wants. Also she can deadlift 315 pounds, just saying."

Beatty was interviewed by Lawton's ABC-TV affiliate KSWO-7 because of the historic significance of her graduation from a formerly all-male MOS.

"I just wanted to pave the path, to show females that we can do it," she said. "It's pretty exciting." She said she was doing powerlifting training five to six times a week with her husband long before she started basic combat training at Fort Sill in September. They did deadlift squats and bench presses.

Being in advanced individual training with all males was "kinda scary" she said, "but everyone's really awesome, everyone was really welcoming." They were hesitant at first to talk to her or sit next to her on the bus she said, laughing about it, but once they did she said she felt like part of the family, "like they were my brothers." She also said absorbing all the information in a five-week class was a bit hard to keep up with and she wished it had been a little longer. "But that's what we're going to our units for," she said.

The Tribune's Facebook page "smoked" with comments and shares. As of March 16, 348,000

people were reached, there were nearly 1600 shares, and 239 comments just on the video alone. While there were negative comments, most were supportive:

Alicia Gray Herbert — Congratulations Pfc. Beatty, I am very proud of you. The hard part is dealing with the ignorant attitudes, feelings and comments that will follow your success. There are some very small minded people out there that are afraid of change. You are doing an amazing job and I am honored to have been your Drill Sergeant.

Billie Collins — Congrats Beatty! When you're doing something good there's always going to be someone mad that they couldn't do the same. She was in the battery I'm at as a drill sergeant so I've seen her pass most of the males on the PT test.

Jeffery Powell — I was field artillery my entire 30 year career...I congratulate her! Hooah!!!

GL Remus 25 years FA myself and I've seen dirtbags in all shapes sizes and colors...I congratulate her as well because I know plenty of men who can't do what she's doing.

April Harris — Way to go! Women have to work so much harder and strive to exceed the average just to prove we are worthy to hold the same jobs as men. Then when we do outshine the guys the bullies come out in force to try and break us again. She doesn't have to prove a thing to you keyboard jockeys. Her leadership will handle her performance evaluations and



The new members of the 13B cannon crew member military occupational specialty stand at graduation March 11. In the back row were their instructors, who pinned the artillery branch insignia on their lapels during the ceremony. Behind Pfc. Katherine Beatty are Staff Sgt. Dennis Dunn (left) and Staff Sgt. Michael Prater. Soldiers of classes 12-16 and 13-16, C Battery, 1st Battalion, 78th Field Artillery, move on to their permanent duty stations.

she will or will not prove she belongs right where she is. She probably hates the publicity but it's great for young girls and women to see they don't have to sit at home and make babies. Whether you agree with it or not it's good for women to have role models like this soldier.

Randy Miozzi — Welcome to the Artillery Red Leg!! Great job! I am an NCO, and a cold war vet. Been a Red Leg since 1984, 82nd Airborne. I am proud of this trooper. Could never have cared less who you were, as long as you did your job. Distinguished honor grad, hell she would be my number 1 cannoneer from day 1, and I feel confident that she will be a gunner in no time.

Erin E Eriacho-Sherbondy — I love all the negativity because either way, you have a stellar Soldier (who just so happens to be female)

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Post retirement ceremony set for March 24

Fort Sill Retirement
Services Office

Fort Sill honors its retiring military officers, enlisted Soldiers and DA civilian employees bimonthly with a postwide retirement ceremony. The next ceremony is slated for March 24 at 9 a.m. at the 95th Adjutant General Battalion (Reception) Complex, Bldg. 6005 Bessinger St. on the basic training side of the post. Honoree Soldiers need to report at 8 a.m. Dress for the audience is military duty uniform and civilian business casual. The event is open to the public.

Retirees

Lt. Col. Kevin Zammert, Fires Center of Excellence
Maj. Raimond Willis, FCoE
Chief Warrant Officer 4 Scott Beran, Ordnance Training Detachment
Chief Warrant Officer 4 Randall Reynolds, Directorate of Doctrine and Training
Chief Warrant Officer 3 Joseph Jones, 69th Forward Support Company
Chief Warrant Officer 2 James Austin III, HQ Support Co., 100th Brigade Support Battalion
Sgt. Maj. Lloyd Compton Sr., Fort Sill Garrison
1st Sgt. Albert Huggins, 1st Battalion, 79th Field Artillery

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Window Sill: Sgt. Marchiar Varnes

Sgt. Marchiar Varnes doesn't have plans for this year's St. Patrick's Day, however he is open to whatever luck may bring him.

"I might go out and have a little fun or try and find a parade somewhere," he said.

However, Varnes does plan on wearing green, which he says is easy to do since he is in the Army.

Varnes does say he plans on spending time relaxing with his wife, and the two of them enjoy going to the mountains or climbing Mt. Scott. Having



been born in Alaska, Varnes says he enjoys Mt. Scott but would like to see more.

"Alaska is beautiful," he said. "It doesn't compare."

Is there someone you know who should be highlighted? We want to know. Contact the Tribune staff at 580-442-5150.

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