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Print Page

October 27, 2016 10:20AM

15th MP Bde. hosts annual fall festival

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The 15th Military Police Brigade's annual fall festival Oct. 21 was a collaborative effort between the 40th and 705th Military Police Battalions (Detention) to have a family-oriented event that included Halloween costumes, games, contests and food.

First Sgt. Edward Cartwright, 256th Military Police Company, 40th MP Battalion, said, "The 'trunk-or-treat' component is also a pure fun aspect of the annual fall festival."

"This is a great opportunity for all of the soldiers, NCOs and officers to bring their families and have a relaxed time together," said 2nd Lt. Emily Ross of the 256th MP Company, 40th MP Battalion.

Most of the 15th MP Brigade operations facility grounds were transformed into a festival-like setting that included a bounce house, various game stations and more than a dozen vehicles with decorated trunks on display. A ladder truck from the Fort Leavenworth Fire Department was also on display.

"It is nice of the brigade to bring everyone together for a fall celebration that allows the families to mingle together and the kids to have fun," said Megan Blasczyk, wife of 1st Lt. Andrew Blasczyk of the 291st MP Company, 40th MP Battalion.

Capt. Nathaniel Titus, commander of the 291st MP Company, decorated the bed of his truck for "trunk-or-treat" and was giving candy to the costumed children as they passed by his display.

"The 'trunk or treat' is a way to build esprit de corps," Titus said. "And, we get families together. We give kids candy. I've been in the Army for a while, so what you see is an accumulation of all of the decorations that have been used over the years, so now I have a boiling cauldron, a smoke machine. I buy things that look cool and get help from soldiers to set it up for this event."

Painting miniature pumpkins, decorating candy, cooking hot dogs and dipping candied apples were among the activities that drew crowds of soldiers and family members. The festival was organized to allow soldiers who work at the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks and the Joint Regional Correctional Facility to participate with their families.

Dressed as a ghoulish in hospital scrubs, Sgt. Michael Ramos of the 256th MP Company, 40th MP Battalion, was with his wife Hanna and daughter Mikah. The number of families who came out for the event and the various activities available for children impressed Ramos.

"The kids are definitely having a blast. This gives another day of costume fun and celebration for them with all of the games, activities and treats," Ramos said.

His wife was impressed with the community building aspects of the event.

"It is a wonderful environment for the families to get to meet one another, the children get to play games with each other and deeper bonds can develop among us," Hanna Ramos said.

Festival organizers were satisfied that it achieved its purpose.

"We've grown this event to be a dual effort with the 40th MP Battalion," said 705th MP Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. John J. Fair. "The concept was to connect our family readiness groups as a brigade, not simply work as single battalions. We have a hayride that travels down by the motor pool and back. We also have a haunted house for them to go through. It is a tangible way to show appreciation for our families. And, it is an opportunity for us to say thank you to our families for the tremendous support they give their soldiers."



PHOTO/ CHRISTOPHER BURNETT, FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP

Eighteen-month-old Mia Horvath takes candy offered by her mother, Felicia, as her father, 1st Lt. Ben Horvath, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Military Police Battalion (Detention), watches during the 15th MP Brigade's trunk-or-treat event Oct. 21 at the battalion headquarters buildings. The joint unit fall festival is conducted by the 705th and 40th MP battalions. Photo by Christopher Burnett/Fort Leavenworth Lamp