

Chamber treats Operational Test Command to dinner

by April Lawrence Grant, Herald correspondent



Figure 1Herald/April Lawrence

From left, Monica MacKay Hull, director of business development for Copperas Cove Economic Development Corporation, Retired Sgt. Major Terry Stewart and Sonya James-Stewart relax at the Military Affairs Dinner

Copperas Cove Chamber of Commerce honored U.S. Army Operational Test Command June 20 with a Military Affairs Dinner.

“This is a welcome dinner to let them know that we think about them and that we’re supporters of them,” said Dennis Webster, co-chairman of the Copperas Cove Military Affairs Committee. “We want them to know what they can get from Copperas Cove.”

The city holds seven to eight dinners each year to show support for Fort Hood soldiers who make up more than 40 percent of Copperas Cove’s population, Webster said.

The evening was full of laughs, cheers and fellowship for the city, which prides itself on its dedication to its military partners.

“The Central Texas area is one of the friendliest areas to the military of any place,” Webster said. “I’ve spent over 30 years in the military, and I chose to stay here because of the support that’s shown in this community toward the soldiers.”

The dinner, held at the Civic Center, featured a grilling-style dinner and the “Who’s Who” of Copperas Cove, with representatives from the city, Cove Independent School District and several businesses.

Monica Hull, Cove Economic Development Corporation director of business development, said the dinner is a great opportunity to bring together the community and Fort Hood.

“They’re our neighbors, and this is a way to have some meaningful conversation and show them what Copperas Cove is all about.”

Col. Scott A. Spellmon, executive director for the office of the chief of engineers, commander of the West Fort Hood-based unit — U.S. Army Operational Test Command — thanked the chamber for its hospitality.

“I have not been to an event like this before,” he said. “This is really something special, and I thank you for it. It’s no wonder why they call it the Great Place because of neighbors like you.”

Betty Price, chamber president, and Copperas Cove Councilwoman Cheryl Meredith presented Spellmon with a mayor’s coin, commemorative hat and belt buckle.

“We all work together, because we know how important this community is to us and we want everyone to know how great it is,” Price said.

“We are your true friends.”

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