



PHOTOS BY SPC. JASON STADEL

Spcs. Tameka Henderson, right, and Paula Media serve hamburgers and hot dogs to the students from Ross Middle School.

## 2-43 rewards Ross students

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108th ADA Bde. Public Affairs

The "Strength in Honor" battalion extended its community relationship with Ross Middle School last week by hosting nearly 700 students at a showing of *Glory Road* held at Stayton Theater and a barbecue at Kelly Park.

The 2nd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery, is partnered with Ross Middle School for the Partners in Education program.

"They have done an incredible job," Linda Burns, Ross Middle School military liaison, said. "Any time I call them, they are always willing to help."

Last summer, Soldiers from 2-43 ADA helped to improve the appearance of Ross by lending a hand and finding grants and donations to landscape the front of the school.

Nineteen Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery and 555th Maintenance Company planned and coordinated the showing of the movie and barbecue.

Sgt. Harold McCarthy, HHB 2-43, liked the chance to be a part of the Partners in Education relationship with Ross.

"Anything that involves community relations – I try to be active and encourage others to be active," said McCarthy. "We can take this opportunity to give the students a positive impression of what we do every day."

Before the screening of *Glory Road* the students were given a history about the 1966 Texas Western (now UTEP) basketball team. They were told about the significance of Texas Western's college basketball national championship during the heart of the civil rights movement. Texas Western was the first major college basketball team to have

an all-black starting five.

After the movie, the students were bused to Kelly Park for hamburgers and hot dogs. Food service specialists from 555th were given the brunt of the work by having to feed 700 students with one mobile kitchen trailer. They also battled through the conditions of a hot grill and 90-plus degree temperatures.

"Usually for 700 people, we'd have more than one MKT and more people," Spc. Tameka Henderson said.

Henderson and Spc. Paula Medina served every student and teacher who went through the MKT line.

First Lt. James Harvey, executive officer for HHB 2-43 ADA, was in charge of the day's activities. He praised the work of all the Soldiers for making the day a success.

"They've been doing a great job with the kids. [The Soldiers] have been patient with them and willing to help," he said.

He added the food service workers went the extra step to make the event a success. "They've definitely gone above and beyond," said Harvey. "We had such a huge amount of kids, and they worked really hard to keep the line moving."

Ross Middle School is one of the 92 campuses in the El Paso Independent School District. EPISD has more than 2,300 businesses participating in the Partners in Education program. The EPISD Web site said the idea of the program is to "enhance, enrich, support, encourage and offer a variety of expertise to our students."

Burns said Ross' partnership with 2-43 ADA has done just that.

"This has given the students a sense of pride in school," said Burns. "We have a lot of kids that come from military families. They're proud when the Soldiers come and see us."



More than 700 Ross students and faculty make their way through the food line at Kelly Park.



Spcs. Chris Ford, right, Carlos Millan, center, and Pvt. Macgver Santan, left, prepare plates as the students wait to walk through the mobile kitchen trailer.