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Sgt. Tyler A. Juden Memorial Bridge being dedicated at Ark City

ARKANSAS CITY – A ceremony dedicating the Sgt. Tyler A. Juden Memorial Bridge – on U.S. 166 at Arkansas City – will be held on Oct. 16 at Cowley College.

Sgt. Juden, a Cowley County native, was a sniper for the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne. He was on his second tour of duty when he was killed during an attack on his unit on Sept. 12, 2009, in Turan, Afghanistan. He was 23.

The dedication will be at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 16, in the Earle N. Wright Community Room of the Brown Center, 215 S. Second St., on the Cowley College campus.

Sgt. Juden's name will be on two signs on eastbound and westbound U.S. 166 approaches to the bridge. The bridge crosses the Walnut River on the east side of Arkansas City. State Rep. Bill Rhiley, Wellington, sought the legislation authorizing the signs to be installed by the Kansas Department of Transportation. One of the signs will be displayed at the ceremony.

The soldier's father, Bob Juden, who is organizing the ceremony, said of the bridge naming, "It's in his name, but we want to make it perfectly clear: We want it to be for all veterans."

Sgt. Juden grew up in a rural area northeast of Arkansas City. "He was raised out here, primarily with a BB gun in his hands ... he grew up going to rodeos," Bob Juden said. The father retains a memory of his son as a child wearing a brown cowboy hat, perched on a hay bale and perfecting his BB-gun aim.

Sgt. Juden graduated from Arkansas City High School. “He was a good student. He was a good citizen,” his father said. Sgt. Juden was planning to be a teacher, like his parents.

“He felt like everybody should go in the service,” his father said. “He was fighting for you. He was fighting for me. He was fighting for our country, and he believed that.”

CAPTION: Sgt. Tyler A. Juden/Photo courtesy of the Juden family

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