

1,240 people in Riley County signed up for Nextdoor so far

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The Riley County Police Department seems to have followed a national trend when it replaced its Neighborhood Watch program with Nextdoor, an online social networking site for neighbors.

Of the 725 public agencies that use Nextdoor nationwide, more than 500 are associated with police departments, said Jennifer Burke, Nextdoor communications manager.

Major police departments that have partnered

with Nextdoor include St. Louis, Oakland, Los Angeles, San Diego, Phoenix, Pittsburgh and Houston, among others.

Since Nextdoor's Jan. 5 implementation by the RCPD, the city of Manhattan and Manhattan Fire Department, 1,240 people in Riley County have signed up for an account. Two hundred and seventeen of those accounts were created between March 8 and April 7.

When the RCPD announced its partnership with Nextdoor, 35,000 neighborhoods nation-

wide used the service, said Matt Droge, RCPD public information officer. According to the Nextdoor website, Manhattan contributes 32 of those neighborhoods.

The number of accounts has increased 3 percent since January, with the most active neighborhoods around CiCo Park, Northview, K-State stadium, south of City Park and surrounding Aggieville, Droge said.

"It's showing great promise," he said. "It offers another avenue where community members can

contact us with comments, questions or concerns about anything."

Alternative electronic means for communication include the RCPD's Twitter and Facebook accounts, the Manhattan Riley County Crime Stoppers through the TipSubmit cell phone app and online crime reporting at rileycounty-police.org/report-a-crime-online.

Droge said he is pleased with the rate at which people in Riley County are creating Nextdoor accounts. To offer a comparison, he said it took around a year

for the RCPD Twitter account to gain 1,000 followers. Five and a half years into its creation, the RCPD Twitter account now has 9,431 followers.

"We hope it will help solve some cases, but what's more important is building communication," he said.

The police department also has hosted three NextCoffee meetings. Acknowledging that not everyone in Riley County has access to a smartphone or Internet, Droge said NextCoffee was created to give them a chance to com-

municate with the police department.

NextCoffee is held once a month at a local coffee shop. The RCPD invites a guest speaker to informally discuss a topic of the month. So far topics have included communication, hazardous materials and police patrol.

Between five to 10 people have attended each of the three meetings so far.

"We're not seeing 40 or 50 people show up for coffee, but that's not necessarily the plan," Droge said. "By design, it's supposed to be small."

Man arrested near Manhattan for attempted Fort Riley terror plan

NO. 1, FROM PAGE A1

a weapon of mass destruction (explosives), one count of attempting to damage property by means of an explosive and one count of attempting to provide material support to ISIL.

Booker was expected to make an initial appearance Friday afternoon before U.S. District Judge Daniel Crabtree in federal court in Topeka.

Booker is alleged to have spent months discussing multiple plans before deciding on a plan that involved the execution of a suicide bombing mission.

The criminal complaint released Friday alleges Booker told another person "that detonating a suicide bomb is his number one aspiration because he couldn't be captured, all evidence would be destroyed, and he would be guaranteed to hit his target." Booker identified Fort Riley as a good target, "because the post is famous and there are a lot of soldiers sta-

On March 19, Booker posted, "Getting ready to be killed in jihad is a HUGE adrenaline rush!! I am so nervous. not because I'm scared to die but I am eager to meet my lord."

plaint alleges.

Booker also allegedly produced a propaganda video where he told the American people to get their loved ones out of the military now because "The Islamic State is coming for them."

From inside, whether it be in their homes, whether it be on a base like this, whether it be in the recruiting stations, whether it be in the

The complaint also alleges that Booker plotted to construct an explosive since March.

Booker was arrested without incident. He was being investigated by the FBI.

"I want to assure the public there was never any breach of Fort Riley Military Base," FBI Special Agent in Charge Eric Jackson said.

FBI Evidence Response Teams are executing search warrants related to the case.

If convicted, Booker would face a maximum penalty of life in prison.

Booker was expected to join the Army and report for basic training April 7, 2014. But on March 15, 2014, Booker publicly posted to Facebook: "I will soon be leaving you forever so goodbye! I'm going to wage jihad and hopes that i die."

On March 19, Booker posted, "Getting ready to be killed in jihad is a HUGE adrenaline rush!! I am so nervous. not because I'm scared to die

lord."

After the posts, Booker was interviewed by the FBI on March 20, 2014. When he admitted he has signed up for the Army, Booker stated that if he went overseas and was told to kill a fellow Muslim, "he would rather turn around and shoot the person giving orders," according to complaint.

Because of his comments, he was denied entry into the military.

Booker's alias, according to the complaint, is Mohammed Abdullah Hassan.

The investigation was conducted by the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, including members from the FBI's Kansas City Division, the Topeka Police Department and the Kansas Highway Patrol.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tony Mattivi, Assistant U.S. Attorney David Smith, and Trial Attorneys Josh Parecki and Rebecca Magnone of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism

SEED 'EM



Staff photo by Sarah Midgorden
Architecture and design students Diane Cocchiara (center) and Beth Krehbiel (right) and K-State Beach Museum of Art employee Troy Britt (front) arrange sedum plants Thursday afternoon at the museum as part of the "Stan Herd: Cairns on the Beach" exhibit.

How many people won