



THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION POST

Crushing the Opposition

‘Dagger’ brigade leaves National Training Center ready for Europe rotation

Photo and story by Sgt. Michael C. Roach
19TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — Fort Riley’s 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Soldiers successfully completed their training rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, May 12 certifying them for an upcoming deployment to Europe.

“Dagger” brigade Soldiers aimed to improve their skills and maintain a positive outlook ahead of their deployment, said Col. David Gardner, 2nd ABCT commander.

“I think our biggest success was companies and platoons understanding the (operational tempo) required to succeed in decisive action,” he said.

The scenario-based training at NTC pitted the unit as the decisive-action element against an opposition force capable of simulating a wide variety of adversarial threats units may encounter

in real-world environments. During the rotation, the Dagger brigade was faced with combatting criminal, insurgent and near-peer oppositions in both rural and urban environments.

“I think what we emphasized with it was that each Soldier had an opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way against the enemy,” Gardner said. “I think each of them took that opportunity that was presented to them and we had lots of instances of Soldiers doing outstanding things in the face of the enemy.”

Facing the enemy required myriad assets, resulting in a robust force capable of handling the OPFOR in multiple arenas of the battlefield. In total, the Dagger brigade brought with them approximately 3,300 Soldiers who are organic to the unit, an additional 850 attachments and four supporting units. This collection of skill sets and assets

See DAGGER, page 10



Full-Scale Exercise energizes Fort Riley rescue, relief capabilities



Sgt. 1st Class Steven Houser of the 300th Military Police Company, 97th Military Police Battalion, consults with Lt. Casey Sparks of the Directorate of Emergency Services during a Full-Scale Exercise at Fort Riley May 17. Houser and his Soldiers comprised a quick reaction force for rescue efforts, said Will Paskow, Chief of Police, DES.

Story and photo by Andy Massanet
1ST INF. DIV. POST

“Exercise, Exercise, Exercise,” with those three words Fort Riley garrison personnel launched a full-scale exercise to test directorate crisis responses May 17. The exercise was planned to last 24 to 36 hours, about twice as long as similar exercises conducted in previous years.

The scenario — severe weather wreaked havoc on Fort Riley. At approximately 10 a.m. a tornado was reported on the post near the Grant Street gate and 10 minutes later a twister ripped through the Warner-Peterson housing area.

According to the exercise summary released the morning of May 18, within an hour of the tornado, 15 to 20 injured people were reported.

As the event unfolded, reports of extensive damage to Fort Riley infrastructure came in, including power and computer outages, a small fuel spill at building 7120 and a ruptured containment system.

First responders from Fort Riley Fire and Emergency Services were dispatched to the Warner-Peterson neighborhood, eventually joined by medical personnel from Irwin Army Community Hospital; the Directorate of Public Works; Corvias Housing; Army Community Services; members of the 300th Military Police Company, 97th Military Battalion, and the American Red Cross.

Responders from FRFES began assessing structural damage and escorting the injured to the casualty collection point at the corner of Longstreet and Jackson.

Meanwhile, assets from Junction City and Riley County, Kansas, were requested per a mutual aid agreement.

“It’s a slow methodical process, almost like a hazmat situation,” said Ric Seward, fire chief, FRFES, referring to emergencies involving hazardous materials.

According to DES Chief of Police Will Paskow, the initial priorities call for gathering the walking wounded and bringing them to a staging area so they can be accounted for.

Then there was the debris. “The area was covered with downed trees and power lines, so once we got the walking wounded out, our brothers from DPW came in and pushed the rubble out of the way,” Paskow said.

See EXERCISE, page 9

Fighting more than flames; fire department changes names

Story and photo by Season Osterfeld
1ST INF. DIV. POST

The firefighters of Fort Riley take on more than extinguishing flames — whether it’s rescuing someone trapped in a vehicle, administering medical aid, cleaning up hazardous materials and more, they’re on it.

To recognize all they do, the Fort Riley Fire Department got a name change to Fort Riley Fire and Emergency Services.

“The fire department has transitioned from just putting out house fires or vehicles or grass fires,” said William Hadley Jr., assistant chief of operations with FRFES. “We’re now more into wildland fire fighting mitigation; technical rescue, which covers high and low angle rescues; confined space and trench rescue; vehicle or auto extraction; hazardous

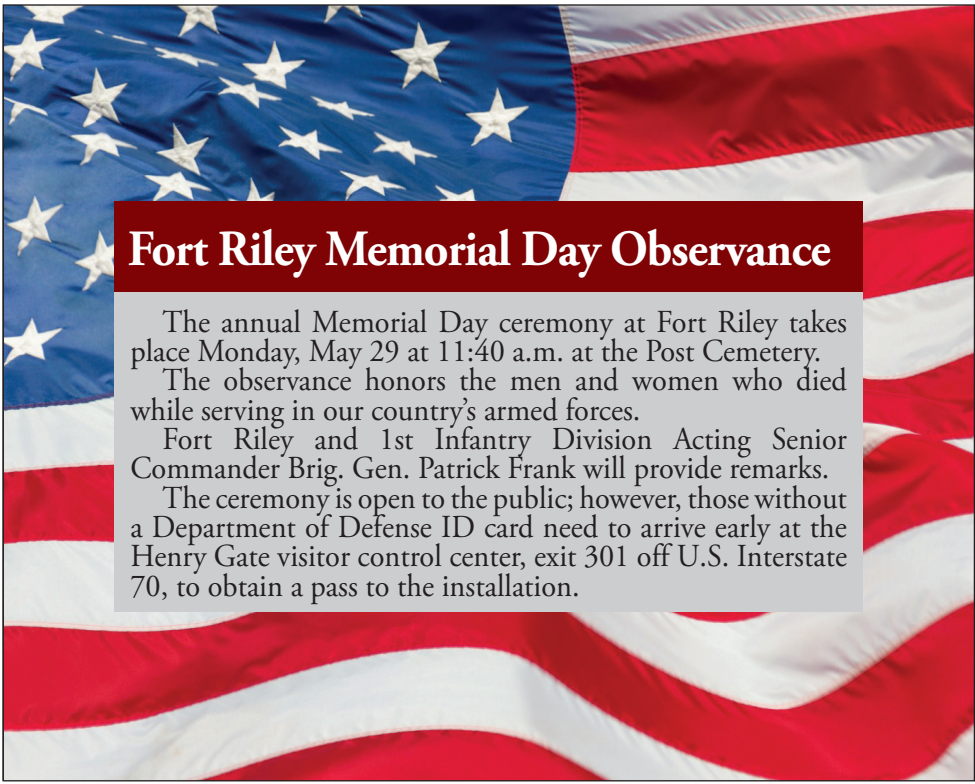
materials and also (Emergency Medical Service), so just saying fire department, you’re just putting us into one category.”

The transition to FRFES and the new patch design selection began in summer 2016, Hadley said. At least 10 designs were reviewed before they settled on one.

“The patches are implemented for us here at (building) 1020 (FRFES headquarters) the first of June and for everybody else in July,” he said. “The complete uniform will change by 1 October.”

The change will be a gradual, but subtle one, said Brian Frayser, deputy chief of FRFES. However, it was one that is long overdue.

“We’ve been more than that, now we’re just actually saying Fort Riley Fire and Emergency Services,” he said.



Fort Riley Memorial Day Observance

The annual Memorial Day ceremony at Fort Riley takes place Monday, May 29 at 11:40 a.m. at the Post Cemetery.

The observance honors the men and women who died while serving in our country’s armed forces.

Fort Riley and 1st Infantry Division Acting Senior Commander Brig. Gen. Patrick Frank will provide remarks.

The ceremony is open to the public; however, those without a Department of Defense ID card need to arrive early at the Henry Gate visitor control center, exit 301 off U.S. Interstate 70, to obtain a Pass to the installation.

FORT RILEY VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Pvt. Thierey Decembre, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, volunteers almost every weekend with the Drunk Driving Prevention Program to drive fellow Soldiers to and from local clubs. He has contributed his off-duty time to help prevent drunk driving incidents.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, call Becky Willis, Army Volunteer Corps Program manager, at 785-239-4593.

IN THIS ISSUE



FORT RILEY AND 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION COMMUNITY CELEBRATE DIVERSITY IN THE ARMY, SEE PAGE 11.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE



VISIT CLAY CENTER, KANSAS, AND EXPLORE THE ZOO, PARKS AND MORE, SEE PAGE 16.

Elementary students set sights on skies after Air Traffic Control tour

Story and photo by Suet Lee-Growney
1ST INF. DIV POST

Fifth graders from Amanda Arnold Elementary School, Manhattan, Kansas, toured Fort Riley's air traffic control facility May 18.

The purpose of the visit was to expose the students to various career fields in the aviation industry other than being an aircraft pilot.

The ATC tour was the culmination of spring semester fifth-grade specific programs — Science and Technology Academies Reinforcing Basic Aviation and Space Exploration and Adopt a Pilot.

The group of 26 students was led by their teacher Emma Blackwell. The large group broke up into three smaller ones and took turns visiting the air traffic control tower, radar room and a lunch group.

"It's really fun to look at everything and learn and do hands-on things," Blackwell said.

Blackwell said the visit was beneficial to her students because they were learning and talking about science, technology, engineering and mathematics related career fields all semester.

"It's so much more meaningful when they get to go and see things first hand and interview experts in the field," she said. "It gives them a really good feel for what kind of careers that could possibly be in STEM, and that's a really big push of STARBASE in schools right now."

According to Blackwell, most of her student's inspiration for ambition come from mass media, such as being an NBA player.

"For some of (the students), it might be the tipping point they take more classes in high

school and college that interest them," Blackwell said. "I think it's always good for the kids to have eyes opened a little bit and think about things from a new perspective."

The best part of the fifth grader's day, according to Blackwell, was going into the air traffic control tower, though the way up was through a long flight of stairs.

"I think they loved being up there and seeing the view and all the instruments and asking questions," she said. "The exercise didn't hurt them either."

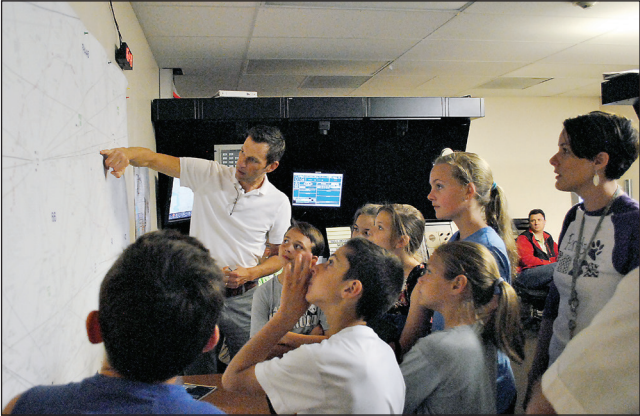
The STARBASE program is a federally funded five-day science camp where kids learn about physics and do projects such as build rockets.

Along for the visit was Capt. Ken Rae, a commercial airline pilot, and grandfather of one of the fifth graders, Kellan Janis. Rae collaborated with Mark Turner, ATC specialist, to arrange this visit as part of the classroom's Adopt-a-Pilot activities. This nationwide fifth-grade mentoring program was started by Southwest Airlines more than 21 years ago.

"Pilots go into the classroom to try to inspire kids, get them dreaming about careers and talk about jobs available," Rae said. "It's a wonderful mentorship program."

Turner said the educational tour gave the students a better perspective about aviation. There is a lot of activity that goes behind the scenes when an aircraft is flying.

"And that's what air traffic control brings to aviation," Turner said. "(This visit) gives them a little bit of perspective about what's going on, other than just the two people airplane flying."



Mark Turner, air traffic control specialist at Marshall Army Airfield, points to locations of different air space zones belonging to different airports in Kansas to the fifth graders of Amanda Arnold Elementary School, Manhattan, Kansas May 18. The students had the opportunity to tour the ATC tower and radar room as well as ask questions related to aviation during their visit.

DoD

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Fort Riley volunteers recognized at ceremony



Lt. Col. Jack Kredo, commander of the 541st Combat Support Sustainment Battalion, 1st Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade; Staff Sgt. Angela Prince, 1st Inf. Div. Sust. Bde.; Brig., and Gen. Patrick D. Frank, 1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley acting senior commander, pose May 16 at Riley's Conference Center. Prince was awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for 500 hours of service with the USO at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

Story and photo by Maria Childs
1ST INF. DIV. POST

More than 90 Fort Riley volunteers were recognized in a quarterly ceremony May 16 at Riley's Conference Center.

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley acting senior commander, opened the ceremony with remarks about the importance of volunteers to the community and how many of those volunteers are spouses, people who are recognized throughout May for Spouses Appreciation Month.

"The Soldiers in this division are all volunteers," Frank said. "It's also fitting that this month of May the ultimate Army volunteers were recognized, our military spouses. Our military spouses do

exceptional work for our community ... many of those same spouses are volunteers we are recognizing here tonight."

Frank said volunteers in organizations like Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, USO Fort Riley and youth sports, help take care of Soldiers family members while they are fighting for their country.

"The volunteering that goes on inside these organizations alone is incredible," he said.

Staff Sgt. Angela Prince, 1st Inf. Div. Sustainment Brigade, was one of the many recognized by their command team and Frank.

She volunteered with the USO while deployed at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. According to Becky Willis, volunteer coordinator at Army Community Service,

she participated in various events and activities assisting in the planning, set up, execution and cleanup. Willis said her dedication ensured service members had a fun relaxing place to come to when off duty.

Prince was awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for completing 500 hours of volunteer service during the first quarter of 2017. While deployed, she recorded service members' messages to their children to send back to the United States and worked the front desk of the USO.

"I enjoy giving back to the Soldiers especially while deployed," Prince said.

For more information about volunteering opportunities at Fort Riley, call 785-239-9435.

Be a big boy.

No matter what your buddies driving, take the keys and be the designated driver.

DON'T HESITATE DESIGNATE!

Are you up for the challenge to be "Fort Riley Strong Dad of the Month 2017?"

STEP 1: Take a Photo of Dad & Kids doing ANY Activity together

STEP 2: Send Photos to dads@rileymwr.com or tag the Fort Riley Parenting Facebook page or #9DMDM

STEP 3: Win Cool Prizes & Fun Family Time

Final Winner will receive an Outdoor Grilling Package!



THE FIGHTING FIRST!

Johnny Webb: A ‘Big Red One’ Soldier



By Phyllis Fitzgerald
SPECIAL TO THE POST

A native of Hahira, Georgia, Johnny Webb joined the Army in December 1984. He took his basic training and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, earning the 19D military occupational specialty: Cavalry Scout.

From May 1985 to July 1986 he was assigned to Hunter Army Airfield where he was a scout on a Huey helicopter.

He then attended air assault school at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and earned his air assault wings.

In July 1986, Webb was assigned to Schwabach, Germany, where he served in support of border security.

Following that, in July 1988 he was assigned to Fort Benning, Georgia, to the 3rd Infantry Division. While there, his unit provided school and range support. He also attended the U.S. Army Sniper training school.

In July 1989, Webb left for Bayreuth, Germany, where he served providing border security for an Air Cavalry Regiment. The destruction of the Berlin Wall occurred during this time.

“I was on the border when this happened,” Webb said. “At our location, there was a bridge that was named ‘Ghost Autobahn Bridge.’ We were standing guard on our side and the Russians were standing guard on the other side when all of a sudden, the bridge became loaded with cars and they were coming across the bridge. We were ordered (to) ‘hold fire’ because it was announced that the wall came down.”

While at this assignment, Webb and his unit deployed to Desert Shield in September 1990.

With the onset of the ground attack portion of what became Operation Desert Storm Feb. 24, 1991 Webb’s unit was involved in the Battle of 73 Easting.

After the Gulf War, Webb spent five months on temporary duty at Fort Benning, attending the Bradley master gunner’s course.

In July 1993, he departed Germany and went to Fort Riley. He was assigned to Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, and served there for six months, after which he was assigned to Headquarters as the squadron master gunner.

During his time at Fort Riley, the 1st Inf. Div. was moving back to Germany. Webb’s next assignment took him to Fort Knox, Kentucky, in 1995, where he served until 1998. He was assigned to 1st Army at the startup of Active Component and Reserve Component training.

“We trained units from seven southern states; a lot of traveling at this assignment,” Webb said.

In June 1998, he returned for his second tour at Fort Riley, serving as the scout platoon sergeant.

In 1999, Webb was selected as one of the platoon sergeants for new Brigade Reconnaissance Troops: Hawk Troop, 1st Cav. Regt.

From there, he went to the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi, from 2002 to 2004 to serve as an instructor for the ROTC program.

In November 2004, Webb returned to Fort Riley for a third tour, serving with the HHC, 2nd Bn., 70th Armored Regt., 1st Armored Division. In 2005, Webb and his

comrades deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During this deployment he served as a company first sergeant spending time in three different locations south of Baghdad.

In February 2006, Webb returned to Fort Riley and retired as a sergeant 1st class and settled in Junction City, Kansas.

“I decided we would depart the Army because our two oldest daughters were in high school and we did not want to move them,” Webb said.

While he was deployed, Webb’s spouse had the house built where they live.

“We stayed in Junction City we bought a house, that my wife had built while I was deployed, plus she had a job,” he said. “The four kids were all in school — two in high school, one in middle school and one in elementary school at the time. We enjoy the area and the people here.”

Today, Webb works at Fort Riley at the contracting office where he has worked since 2011. In his recreational time he likes to hunt and fish.

His favorite memory at Fort Riley was when he has with the first unit to fire during a combined-arms live-fire exercise on the multi-purpose range complex using Bradleys, tanks and helicopters.

“Range control would let us do everything except the Cobra fire boxes; however, thanks to our squadron commander Lt. Col. John Musser and the division commander Maj. Gen. Randolph House, we did get to use the Cobras. It was a great exercise.”

Editor’s Note: To submit your Big Red One story, email fitzmiss@yahoo.com.

THEN
& NOW



TRAFFIC REPORT

ACCESS CONTROL POINT HOURS

Those wanting access to Fort Riley on Saturday or Sunday should use Estes, Ogden, Henry or Trooper gates.

For more information about Fort Riley access procedures, visit www.riley.army.mil.

The access control point hours are now as follows:

Henry/Trooper/Ogden/Estes:

Open 24/7. Commercial traffic at Estes is required to have an access pass or badge prior to trying to access.

12th Street:

Open from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Friday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays; Closed Sundays and federal holidays. This gate will have inbound commercial vehicle lanes only. Although personally owned vehicles will be allowed access, there will no longer be a designated POV lane. Outbound traffic will not be authorized. Badges and passes may be issued to commercial drivers prior to access at the gate.

Grant:

Open from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Friday; closed Saturdays, Sundays and federal holidays.

Four Corners:

Closed indefinitely to all vehicle traffic.

ELLIS HEIGHTS HOUSING ENTRY POINT CLOSURE

The Washington Street entry from 1st Division Road into the Ellis Heights Housing

area is closed. Residents and commuters should find alternative entry points into the neighborhood.

1ST DIVISION ROAD CONSTRUCTION

A repaving project began April 17 on 1st Division Road between Normandy Drive and the traffic circle on Trooper Drive. The work will last about two months. Drivers should expect delays.

The intersection of 1st Division Road and Normandy/Williston Point Road will be closed from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 29. The contractor will apply asphalt through the intersection at that time, depending on weather. Access to the housing areas and fire department will be maintained throughout. Flag men and traffic control devices will re-route traffic away from and around this intersection. Drivers are asked to use alternate routes if possible.

1ST DIVISION ROAD CONSTRUCTION

Starting on or about May 30, Huebner Road will be closed from Water Tower Road to the Demon Drive roundabout to replace a failing culvert under Huebner Road.

The traffic control at the east and west ends of the closure will be staggered to allow access to Building 694 for deliveries and access to the Waste Water Treatment plant, south of Huebner.

The duration expected is two weeks for the work to be completed, assuming no inclement weather. Expect delays.

New Beginnings for appraisal program

1ST INF. DIV. POST STAFF REPORT

New Beginnings, according to the Department of Defense Personnel Advisory Service, is designed to implement improvements to DOD Human Resource practices and policies, including implementation of a new Defense-wide Performance Management and Appraisal Program. New Beginnings encompasses reforms impacting Performance Management, Hiring Flexibilities, Training and Development and Workforce Incentives.

The new performance management and appraisal system will begin implementation at Fort Riley in April with those in GS-13 and above positions attending training before entering the new system June 1. The rollout will be in stages with the last segment of civilian employees entering the new system July 1, 2018.

To find out more information, the staff of the 1st Infantry Division Post will publish it as it rolls out and from the frequently asked questions addressed by the team at the DOD Civilian Personnel Advisory Service.

Question and answer for this week:

Q: How has Strategic Workforce Planning contributed to “New Beginnings?”

A: The Defense Department is committed to implementing effective means of recruiting, compensating, and incentivizing the workforce in order to shape an effective workforce for today and into the future. The sound use of workforce incentives depends on a foundation that includes strategic planning for the organization and its workforce to ensure that incentives are used effectively to meet recruitment and retention needs. The Defense Department continues to focus on its strategic workforce planning efforts, now fully integrating more than 600 occupations, including crafts and trades occupations, covering approximately 735,000 employees into a Functional Community construct based on similar job and occupational families.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE NEW BEGINNINGS SYSTEM, VISIT WWW.CPMS.OSD.MIL/SUBPAGE/NEWBEGINNINGS/NBHOME

Fort Riley religious education director shares personal story about adoption

By William Carol Townsend
DIRECTOR OF FORT RILEY
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Editor's Note: William Carol Townsend wanted to share his story about being adopted. Military families who adopt have financial assistance available to them. For more information, visit http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Library/Federal_Benefits_Page/Adoption_Assistance.html?serv=147.

At age 45, I learned I was adopted at birth.

This truth came to me after my mother was showing signs of dementia. Because of her condition, we introduced her to a memory ministry at a church. In an interview after her enrollment, she revealed I was adopted.

I realized then I had never seen a picture of her during pregnancy or heard the story of my arrival.

My wife moved from the sofa to where I was sitting and whispered to me, “I have known all along.” I learned that during our engagement, my father confided to my wife and asked her not to tell.

In hindsight, I can understand why I wasn't told. Adoption wasn't normal in the 1950s.

My parent's closest friends, even the church I was raised in, knew not to tell me.

But once I knew, I had to know the whole story. My wife became lead investigator. She began by calling the church of my childhood. The elderly secretary remembered. She gasped and said, “He never knew!” She then shared her memories.

A woman associated with the church had welcomed a young couple who came to America from Austria to live with her. The German-speaking couple arrived by ship at Ellis Island and later at the port of Galveston in Texas. Both had lived through the Holocaust. The couple and their two children were placed in this home to help them in their new home country. However, it seemed rejection, ostracism and hatred was the norm for immigrants from this part of Europe at the time.

The young man ventured forth to find work. His wife stayed to care for their two children. Times were tough and the young man landed in jail, lived on the street and, later in life, in a mental institution in Texas.

The young woman was my birth mother. She survived by becoming a bar maid. During her work at the bar, she gave birth to a third child who was

fathered by a patron of the bar.

This baby girl went to a family who was active in my childhood church. A year later, a boy was born and given to another family in that same church.

That boy was me.

The mindset of that day was not to discuss illegitimacy. My half-sister and I would not know the story of our adoption.

My birth mother managed to survive, divorced her husband and soon married a gentleman she met at the bar. This man was stable and became the father of two additional children. For several years, her life and the lives of the four children who remained with her was comfortable. Upon his death, my birth mother lived off his savings, even buying a travel trailer and going forth to see America.

When I found my birth mother, she was living on Social Security and hopscotching between two daughters, one who lived in metro Los Angeles, the other in Las Vegas.

The investigation led us to an elderly lady, who happened to be the sister of my birth mother. Again, my wife took the lead. She called my biological aunt and learned the phone number of my oldest half sister. She and her family lived in California.

My wife and I considered the next step. Should I call my half-sister or not?

On a Saturday evening, I made the call. My half sister answered the phone. I quickly introduced myself and announced I was her half brother, whom she had never met. She screamed. After a few pleasantries, I asked where I might find my birth mother. She replied, “She's in the next room. I'll go get her!”

It dawned on my wife and me that I was about to talk to my birth mother with my real mother within hearing distance. My birth mother, with a broken German accent, was quite emotional. It seemed we talked for hours.

A face-to-face meeting was in the works.

My wife and I traveled to Las Vegas to meet the family, but before that, I wanted to secure my adoption records. When I called the Department of Vital Statistics, I was informed all adoption records were sealed. I would have to petition the civil judge for my records and give a good reason in asking.

I chose to connect with a state senator. My brother-in-law recommended the gentleman from his district. When I called and explained my situation, the secretary paused. She said I had to speak immediately with the state

senator. I soon realized this person had introduced legislation to allow adoptees over age 21 access to their records. My story was integral in getting that law passed.

As my wife and I disembarked from the plane in Los Angeles, a passenger said there was a reporter and camera person at the gate. Surely there was a famous person on our flight. When we walked into the waiting area, my half sister sprinted to us and showered us with love. Soon, we were surrounded by my new extended family, including the camera person and reporter. But, my birth mother waited. As I looked around, she was standing near a column, waiting.

The identity of my biological father was never confirmed. Could it have been my birth mother's first husband or a bar patron? Interestingly, there was a period of time when her husband had come home and could have been my father. While in Las Vegas, my wife and the two sisters poured over pictures comparing features.

A couple of years later, my wife and I celebrated our wedding anniversary by traveling around Austria. We met my birth mother's first husband in a pensioner's home for Holocaust survivors. He did not want our company. Upon returning to

America, I inquired about his records while living in a mental institution. The case worker agreed to my request and within two weeks, a large sealed envelope arrived. His experiences would be shared through my eyes and mouth. This Jewish gentleman deserved freedom, opportunity and support. Yet, he faced discrimination, incarceration and was deported.

A few months ago, at our “Big Red One” welcome social for arriving Soldiers, I spoke to a young lady who just arrived at Fort Riley. I learned she was Jewish and was seeking a synagogue for worship. While waiting for her husband, I mentioned I might have Jewish roots. Without blinking an eye, she remarked, “you are definitely Jewish. I see that in your features.” I thought, perhaps my birth mother's first husband was my father after all.

What is remarkable to me about this story is the importance of adoption. The story of discovering my past is rich with intrigue, family heritage, motherhood and cultural perspectives. Knowing my birth mother loved and kept me in her mind is a blessing. But, having a mother who sacrificed to adopt a child and raise him to manhood far exceeds the discoveries of this story.

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19. Overall experience with Pharmacy

20. Overall experience with Radiology

21. Overall experience with Laboratory

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22. Overall, I am satisfied with the healthcare I received on this visit.

23. I would recommend this facility to a TRICARE-eligible family member or friend.

I am able to see my provider when needed.

Strongly Disagree

Somewhat Disagree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Somewhat Agree

Strongly Agree

RILEY ROUNDTABLE

If you could change your name to anything, what would you change it to and why?



"Mark. I like that name."

SPC. NATHANIEL HERNANDEZ
DALLAS, TEXAS

1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division



"Keep it the same. I like my name."

SPC. DENNIS LARSEN
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

1st Combined Arms Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division



"Anthony. I like that name – I've always liked that name."

PFC. RICHARD PERRY
CLEVELAND, OHIO

82nd Brigade Engineer Battalion, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division



"Jon. It's just a good name."

PFC. MICHAEL HERRON
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

82nd Brigade Engineer Battalion, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division



"Lorenzo because it's mysterious."

PFC. ERIC MINETT
TRACY, MINNESOTA

82nd Brigade Engineer Battalion, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division

THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION POST

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Circulation 8,800 copies each week.

A licensed newspaper member of the Junction City and Manhattan chambers of commerce.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Post welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should not contain any libelous statements or personal accusations. Letters accepted for publication must include the writer's full name and phone number. Letters may be edited for space, but never for content. Send an e-mail usarmy.riley.imcom.mbx.post-newspaper@mail.mil.

FATALITY-FREE DAYS



As of Wednesday, May 24, 320 days have passed since the last vehicular fatality at Fort Riley. Safe driving doesn't happen by accident. For more information about safety, call the Garrison Safety Office at 785-239-0514.

The next USAG Resilience Day Off is

JUNE

9

COMMAND TEAM CORNER

Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division remember

Soldiers, families and friends of the 1st Infantry Division,

As we approach Memorial Day, it's essential to remember why we as a nation set time aside to recognize this holiday. Though our great division — the nation's First Division — has persevered for 100 years, this holiday started long before our inception.

It began as Decoration Day, a time to honor those Soldiers who died during the Civil War, which ended in 1865. Many towns across the U.S. decorated the graves of those individuals who paid the ultimate price during what they thought would be the last major bloodshed this nation would see.

However, from July 1914 to November 1918, World War I was fought and won, but at the cost of 116,516 of the nation's finest. From this point forward, Decoration Day, which would eventually



Brig. Gen.
Patrick D. Frank

be known as Memorial Day, would honor all who died in defense of our great nation.

Memorial Day weekend is typically celebrated with a barbecue with friends and families. That is fine. Take any and every moment you can with your loved ones. However, take time to remember why you have that time. Remember that the 1st Infantry Division, the Army and all of our sister services,

have sacrificed for the freedoms we cherish today.

For example, we remember Pvt. Randol Shelton. Shelton died alongside his fellow infantrymen, Sgt. Joel L. Murray and Spc. David J. Lane, Sept. 4, 2009, while serving with 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., in Iraq. On May 20, Shelton's hometown of Schiller Park, Illinois, dedicated and renamed their community baseball park in his name.

There are numerous communities like this throughout all 50 states who remember their fallen in their own way. Beyond our fallen Soldiers, there are other important people who are deeply impacted by Memorial Day — our treasured Gold Star Families.

The survivors of our Soldiers are owed a debt of gratitude by this country.

These steadfast and strong mothers, fathers, sons and daughters bear the torch for heroes who no longer have a voice. And we too must be advocates for our "Big Red One" Soldiers who are forever part of our history.

So this Memorial Day weekend, enjoy your time with family and friends, but also take time to honor those who have given their lives in defense of this great country. Remember why we are able to hold and cherish those we love, and remember those who are no longer able to do so.

The Fort Riley community will be observing Memorial Day with a ceremony at 11:40 a.m. May 29 at the post cemetery. I invite each and every one of you to attend.

Duty First!

Brig. Gen. Patrick D. Frank
1st Inf. Div. and Fort Riley acting senior commander

Social serving Soldiers, spouses: second year counting

By Bryan Bartlett

SPECIAL TO THE 1ST INF. DIV. POST

Every Wednesday night for the last two years, staff from the Candlewood Suites and the Army Community Service Relocation Program have hosted the International Hotels Group Social.

WHAT IS THE IHG SOCIAL?

It is a free meal and social event for incoming and outgoing Soldiers and their families. It is free for anyone with a military ID card to stop by and learn about the programs and services available here at Fort Riley, including housing, employment, education, child and youth services, volunteer-ing and more.

Regardless of where a family currently resides, the IHG Social is here every week rain, sleet or snow to help our Soldiers and family members meet their needs.

Some questions answered at the IHG Social include are you:

- Looking for housing on Fort Riley or within the local communities?
- Needing financial assistance through AER loans or grants?
- Looking to make a large purchase such as a car, furniture, or large appliances (Financial counselors are there to provide assistance)?
- Sleeping on the floor or air mattress waiting on your household items to arrive?
- Needing assistance with English as a second language?
- Wanting to go to college and earn your at no cost Associates Degree?
- A spouse looking to further his/her career or to start a new career?
- Needing childcare on Fort Riley or looking at the different schools on post and off post?
- Deciding between Manhattan or Junction City School Districts and all the Arts, Athletics, Academics departments?
- Looking to participate in youth sports as a coach or referee or sign up your children?
- In need of a sponsor or have sponsorship concerns that need chain of command involvement?
- Wanting to attend a certain religious service and do not know when or where the service is being held?
- Just looking for things to do in the local community?

If you have questions like these, the IHG Social is for you.

The primary focus of the IHG Social is to allow Army spouses the opportunity to sit down and discuss their future with subject matter experts. Many on-post business partners are present to provide information. The social is open to all

newcomers and soon-to-depart Soldiers, regardless of where they are currently residing.

The IHG Social averages 60 Soldiers and family members each week, which means in the last two years more than 6,000 people have signed in for the social. It gives the spouse or family member the opportunity to receive the information first-hand just as they are arriving to Fort Riley. So, as the Soldier is going through in-processing, the spouse is submitting job applications or enrolling in college with the help of the subject matter expert.

Along with assisting the Army spouse in all the different programs offered, the IHG Social has also been beneficial to the 1st Infantry Division command team catching and assisting Soldiers with personal problems, financial crises, or sponsorship concerns while they are still inprocessing. Being able to sit and discuss all the options or make appointments as necessary fixes many Soldier issues before they ever arrive to the unit.

For the more serious cases, being able to notify the chain of command immediately to begin providing assistance to the Soldier or family member has been very beneficial as well.

Over the past two years, representatives from several agencies have attended the social at Candlewood Suites like Beth Lohman, general manager for IGH Army Hotels, Bryan

Bartlett ACS relocation manager, Shirley Avant-Ferguson from Education Services, Sandy Johnson the school liaison officer with Child and Youth Services, William Townsend from the Religious Support Office, Edwin Ramos and Tim Morgan Fort Riley Housing Division, Becky Willis, ACS volunteer coordinator, Erika Harrington ACS Exceptional Family Member Program, Luis Catinchi, Carol Buchli, and Scott Wadson, ACS personal finance counselors, William "Bill" Brooks Armed Forces Bank, Sgt. 1st Class Jermaine Phillips, 1st Inf. Div. sponsorship non-commissioned officer in charge, Sgt. Dasha Long, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team sponsorship noncommissioned officer.

A sincere 'thank you' goes to Sanctuary Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan Stephens and Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. James Collins for their support and time, as well as to all the other command teams who have attended throughout the last two years.

Finally, Thank you to the dedicated Soldiers and civilians who come out every Wednesday night, many volunteering their time to help and support the 1st Inf. Div. Soldiers and family members arriving to the 'Big Red One' as they start their lives here at Fort Riley, Kansas.

For more information about the weekly social, call me, Bryan Bartlett, at 785-239-5739.

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FORT RILEY

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1

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Childcare hiring fair draws a crowd, helps fill positions

Story and photo by Suet Lee-Growney
1ST INF. DIV. POST

Fort Riley Child and Youth Services staff held a childcare provider hiring event May 15 at Riley’s Conference Center.

Christopher Solano, Non-appropriated Funds division human resources officer at Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, said the event could not have been more timely since the hiring freeze took effect January this year. During that time, CYS was unable to hire new staff and lost Child and Youth Program Assistants to either moving for a permanent change of duty station or resigning, increasing the number of unfilled positions.

During the event, 40 applicants attended, 34 interviews were conducted on the spot and 33 tentative job offers were made.

“This event is designed to help us get the word out to more applicants and also get them through the process quicker than they normally would,” Solano said.

The process of the job fair was simple. Potential CYPAs could either apply online to expedite the hiring process or fill out an application when they came. Their applications would be vetted to see if they met the minimum qualifications of the position. After, applicants were referred to management for interviews. There were four interview stations set up. When they were selected, they began the pre-employment process of background checks at a different station. Lastly, they go to occupational health for the last part of their hiring course.

“This process can knock three or four weeks off of the entire (employment) process,” Solano said. “Childcare background checks are much more lengthy than, really, any other position on this installation.”

Although manpower for CYS has been on a decline since the hiring freeze, Solano said Fort Riley CYS have not reduced their services.

“What this means is that you have employees who are working overtime, working extra hours at longer shifts in order to keep the doors open to maintain the levels that we have now,” he said.

Solano said this hiring event is important because it is not just about hiring childcare employees, it’s about ensuring all the childcare providers have the availabilities for Soldier and family readiness.

“Many other (military) installations have reduced services, Fort Riley has not,” he said. “However, we need to get people in quickly in order to make sure that doesn’t happen.”

Wendy Winston, administrator at CYS, said they are looking for a candidate who is eager to work with children while providing quality care. Job experience is not necessary as candidates would be given all the training required.

“I am just looking for people who (are) willing to do the work; they’re willing to be there in the absence of a parent,” Winston said. “(CYPAs) are there to take away a little bit of the stress level that parents have when they go into their jobs.”

Winston said CYS is available all around the world and is a program that allows people to grow career wise, especially for military spouses.



Danita Brantley, School Age Services director, conducts an interview with a child and youth program assistant applicant at the Child and Youth Services hiring event May 15. There were 40 applications, which led to 34 immediate interviews were conducted.

“(CYPAs) are able to move from one installation to the next and take that job with them,” Winston said.

Sharon Erickson, wife of Spc. Robert Erickson from Company B, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, was one of the interviewees.

Erickson is a Navy veteran and mother of three children.

“We’ve been here for a while, so it would be nice to get back into the workforce,” Erickson said.

Erickson said hiring events like this are beneficial to women and military spouses to help them get employed.

“I am a firm believer that everyone should be contributing if they can, but that’s just me,” she said. “I’ve been at home, so now it’s time for me work outside the home. It’s good for morale.”

Even after the event, CYS will still be hiring. Applications are available at www.usajobs.gov or contact the Fort Riley NAF HR office at 785-239-2325. The next CYS hiring event will be held in June.

LEARNING TO SAVE LIVES



LEFT: Renee Satterlee listens to instruction at the Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation Classes for non-health care providers May 15 at building 1020. RIGHT: Participants perform chest compressions on dummies at a CPR Classes for non-health care providers hosted by Firefighters from the Fort Riley Fire and Emergency Services May 15 at building 1020. “We’ve tried to make this easy,” said Richard Watson, assistant chief and health for FRFES and safety officer. “The purpose here is to gain confidence. This isn’t a heavy testing environment. What we’re after is that you have confidence so that, when something does happen, you can jump in there.”

COMMUNITY HONORS FALLEN ‘BIG RED ONE’ SOLDIER



COURTESY PHOTOS

RIGHT AND LEFT: On May 20, the Chicago suburb of Schiller Park, Illinois, honored one of their own, naming a community baseball field for Pvt. Randol S. Shelton, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. Shelton died on Sept. 4, 2007, while serving in Baghdad in support of the Global War on Terrorism. The fallen Soldier grew up playing baseball at Kennedy Field, now Randy Shelton Field, fewer than two blocks from his house. Master Sgt. Jamie Hughes, assistant inspector general noncommissioned officer for the 1st Infantry Division, represented the “Big Red One” at the dedication ceremony.

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EXERCISE Continued from page 1

Subsequent actions called for assembling a rescue task force, he said.

“We’ll use structural engineers from public works to go ahead and assess the structural integrity of the houses and firefighters will do a deliberate search of the houses.

Also involved were Soldiers from the 97th MP battalion which comprised a quick reaction force,” Paskow said, “to serve as litter bearers if, God forbid, we should need that.”

Soldiers were also used to patrol the exterior perimeter of the housing area “to make sure we haven’t missed anybody,” Paskow said, “Obviously, our priority today is the safety security and accountability of our Big Red One Soldiers.”

Helping in that accountability were dogs and handlers from Kansas K9 Task Force.

“These are disaster search dogs and wide-area search dogs and they only look for live people,” said Heather Swift of the Task Force. “And what they’ll do is bark when they find a victim.”

Swift described the difference between the two types of dogs.

“Disaster search dogs are used in structures and other places in urban environments,” Swift said. “Wide-area search dogs are used in fields and rural areas, more of what we deal with in Kansas.”

Part of the challenge during the exercise came in the form of real inclement weather in from high winds, building gray clouds and, for a time, a squall of rain and small hail. But the teams pressed on.

“The conditions were a bit tough, but everybody is pulling together and are optimistic and doing the right things,” Paskow said.

Once those victims were cleared through the casualty collection points and evaluated by first responders for injuries, they were transported to ACS where impacted Soldiers were escorted to the Family Assistant Center.

Once there, according to Cheryl Erickson, director of ACS, professionals began the process of determining what services Soldiers required and documented where they were being relocated. Also documented were contact information, including units, email addresses and phone numbers for follow-up at a later date.

By the evening hours, a press release issued by the Fort Riley Garrison said seven people had been killed.

At the end of the exercise, Fort Riley had achieved 100 percent accountability of personnel and casualty next of kin notification was complete. In all, seven people were hospitalized and 29 personnel in the shelter awaited housing.



Andy Massanet | FORT RILEY PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Heavy equipment operators from the Directorate of Public Works clear roadways in the Warner-Peterson neighborhood during a Full-Scale Exercise at Fort Riley May 17. Such clearance would be necessary to allow first responders to enter the area.

Team effort needed to prepare shelters for those in need



Ned Webb of the American Red Cross distributes bed linen at the Whitside Fitness Center during a Full-Scale Exercise conducted at Fort Riley May 17. The fitness center would have served as a temporary shelter had this exercise been real.

Story and photo by Andy Massanet
1ST INF. DIV. POST

With a crisis like a tornado, there will almost certainly be those left temporarily homeless, a number which will include adults, seniors, children and pets. That means shelters must be up and ready to welcome them.

For the purposes of the Full-Scale Exercise May 17, the shelter was the Whitside Fitness Center.

As was demonstrated during the exercise, a variety of agencies will send representatives to a proposed shelter. They could include police and fire personnel from the Directorate of Emergency Services, representatives from Directorate of Public Works, Irwin Army Community Hospital personnel including veterinary experts and representatives from Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation and Army Community Services.

Once all have been in-processed through the various casualty collection points and ACS, they arrive at the shelter.

“We get them checked in and provide a place to relax,” said Reed Scott, sports program coordinator for DFMWR. “Then we just wait and see how it plays out. A lot depends on what their situation is, but the goal is to get them on to better things.”

According to Dawn Douglas of the Garrison Safety Office, safety concerns include structural aspects of the facility.

“We’ll take a look at the HVAC (heating and air-conditioning systems), for example,” she said. “And we’ll make sure (the facility) is free from any recognized occupational hazards. We’ll look at pest control and we’ll take a general overview of the electrical systems. If there are using a generator, is it positioned correctly? Is it grounded? We’re looking at the ambient air temperature to make sure it is comfortable. Then we are looking at food sanitation. Shelters may have a kitchen or there may be food brought to the shelter. So we need to make sure food is handled properly and there is some kind of contingency to keep food from being contaminated.”

Another area of safety is water and ice in adequate amounts that support not only drinking but other uses, Douglas said.

“Not only must it be potable for drinking, but it has to support cleansing, washing and sanitation,” she said. “We are also looking at whether there are laundry facilities there and, if there are, are there enough services for the people who are there.”

Another concern is plumbing, she said.

All of these things have to do with safety in a general sense, Douglas said, but another aspect is the general feeling for well-being of people working there and staying.

“We don’t want people agitated or upset because they aren’t clean or are hungry or have the feeling they are not being given their basic necessities.”

Child care is another key issue, Douglas said, insofar as both safety and hygiene are concerned.

“Here (at Whitside), there are weight rooms, for example, that young children aren’t normally allowed into because they could get hurt,” Douglas said. “The hygiene issue is also important. Are their toys clean?”

Douglas added there must be enough care providers for the numbers of children, since certain ratios are mandated by policy requirements.

Other issues are cot placement and spacing, solid waste disposal — trash, medical and any other type of hazardous waste — access by handicapped or disabled persons.

For Ronald Knight, safety and occupational health manager for IACH, DENTAC and Warrior Transition Battalion Veteran Services, his role is to augment what the GSO does.

“I already understand how thorough the garrison inspection is,” Knight said. “So I focus on those needs that ... now must be handled at the shelter for a period of time. Will the site layout cause other safety issues not normally seen in the building, such as excess structural stress (floor loading weight), egress blocking, fire door propping and electrical overload.”

Knight also addresses the potential for people with special needs.

“My thoughts are about how a selected shelter site can accommodate people ... whose family members are normally homebound or have special medical needs such as oversized cots for obese and bariatric, bedridden or special equipment requirements like oxygen generators, monitors, IV medication and storage feeding tubes and so forth,” he said.

Meanwhile there will be people’s pets — dogs and cats — that will also need to be cared for. Personnel from the Fort Riley Veterinary Services office will see to their well-being.

According to Capt. Brian Adams, veterinarian, “pets can be traumatized. Dogs can suffer from a form of canine PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). They can become anxious, may want to hide or refuse to interact.”

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DAGGER Continued from page 1

Sgt. Michael C. Roach | 19TH PAD

Two 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Soldiers observe an open danger area between them and their objective at the National Training Center on Fort Irwin, California, May 4.



assisted in making it possible for the unit to maintain a fast paced operational tempo.

“A Soldier today got an (Army Commendation Medal), they said he was in the unit a week — 10 days — he got his stuff and was put on the bus and came out here,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Craig Copridge, 2nd ABCT senior noncommissioned officer, after an awards ceremony commemorating outstanding Soldiers from the NTC rotation. “So I think even that young Soldier had the morale had the high spirit to be a part of the team. What we try to do here at Dagger brigade is build a team — a team amongst teams — so Soldiers feel like they’re really contributing to something big.”

In order to maintain that motivation, training for this NTC rotation and the upcoming European rotation began nearly a year ago at both the unit and individual level. The challenges Dagger Soldiers faced in the Mojave Desert, such as wearing Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear in an austere environment, were lessened by a long-standing emphasis on physical and mental resilience.

“PT (physical training) every day, I think that’s the first part, you have got to be physically tough,” Copridge said. “In addition to that, you have got to be mentally tough. So when the day did come, when it was in 95 degrees and you were in MOPP (level) two and kind of feeling bad, you kind of knew

that ‘hey, that is part of the mission.’ So, your physical training and your mental fitness enabled the Soldiers to get through it.”

The Dagger brigade plans to take lessons learned from this NTC rotation and apply them at Fort Riley before departing for Europe.

“This was a great rotation; I think we’ve done well,” Copridge said. “I think as the commander said, ‘we are a learning and a listening organization.’ So, I think the OCTs (observer controller trainers) here are the National Training Center have provided us with a lot of great feedback that we can take back to home station and refine some things. I think that as we get ready to go to Europe, we’ll be that much more set in our

confidence of our ability that if anything is called upon, you know the Dagger brigade will once again be on point for the nation.”

While the NTC rotation was a culmination of more than a year of individual skill training, gunneries and larger events like Danger Focus II, it is also a stepping stone toward the Dagger brigade’s end goal of a successful deployment to Europe.

“I am proud that the brigade worked hard; they did well against the enemy,” Gardner said. “They continued to learn, continued to keep a positive attitude and I think everyone is excited to take this training and go forward in Europe and keep training.”



Col. John Cyrulik, left, commander of the 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, learns a Polynesian dance at the end of the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month observance May 19 at the Warrior Transition Battalion clamshell.

Sharing our Diversity

Celebrating culture of Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders

Story and photos by Maria Childs
1ST INF. DIV. POST

Polynesian music and dancing filled the Warrior Transition Battalion's Clamshell at Fort Riley as Soldiers and community members celebrated Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month May 19.

"Each year, Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month recognizes the challenges faced by Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders and native Hawaiians their vital contributions to America's story," said Sgt. 1st Class Orlando Marin, who served as the event emcee. "Asian-American and Pacific Islander Month honors Americans with a proud heritage that encompasses all of the Asian continent and the Pacific islands of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia."

Col. John Melton, commander of Irwin Army Community Hospital, was the guest speaker.

"Diversity is our strength and sometimes I think we forget that," he said. "The Army's vision for diversity is to be the national leader in embracing the strength of our diverse people."

See DIVERSITY, page 14

"The Army expects us to celebrate our diversity because we are a diverse nation. They expect us to celebrate it so when we are part of the expeditionary Army, it won't be new for us and we can show respect."

COL. JOHN MELTON | COMMANDER, IRWIN ARMY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL



Lt. Col. Alexander Murray, left, 1st Infantry Division acting chief of staff, presents Col. John Melton, commander of Irwin Army Community Hospital, with a token of appreciation after Melton spoke at the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month observance May 19 at the Warrior Transition Battalion clamshell.

DID YOU KNOW?



- The month of May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869.

MORE ONLINE

- For more information Asian-American and Pacific Islander Month observance, visit asianpacificheritage.gov.

Summer a time to keep kids active

Parents remain key resource for getting children involved

By Tiffany Roney
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Summer can be a great time for kids to get active outdoors so making exercise a priority and fun is important, according to a Kansas State University exercise behavioral scientist.

"There are so many fun activities kids can do to get exercise over the summer; it would be a shame for them to spend those months in front of the television," said Katie Heinrich, associate professor of exercise behavioral science and director of the kinesiology department's Functional Intensity Training Lab.

Heinrich said sedentary activity, or uninterrupted hours of sitting, is its own risk factor for obesity and type 2 diabetes, even among children. This risk can be heightened in the summer, especially for children from low-income schools. A study published in the Journal of Environmental and Public Health found that over summer break, children from low-income schools decreased their cardiovascular fitness and increased their body mass index.

"All children need to be active over the summer, but some groups of children are at even greater risk for not getting enough physical activity," Heinrich said. "It's up to parents to make sure physical activity is part of their children's routines."

See ACTIVE, page 13

Parents with new babies not alone

Resources available for families awaiting new additions

BY MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

As the arrival of a baby nears, parents-to-be experience everything from tension and excitement to exhaustion. The Military Health System wants women and their spouses to know that support is available following the birth of a child.

Dr. Lindsey Borgia, an Army captain and obstetrician-gynecologist at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital in northern Virginia, said that while it is difficult for first-time parents to prepare for childbirth, there is no other experience like it.

"Labor and delivery can be very unpredictable," said Borgia, who encourages new parents to have a flexible mindset during this time as unexpected circumstances may arise.

Women can talk to their health care providers about what to expect during delivery and in the first several hours thereafter. Many women prefer to hold their baby after giving birth, which allows for skin-to-skin contact, bonding and initiation of breast-feeding.

"Most new parents find themselves completely and

See BABIES, page 13

Dynamic childcare duo puts kids above themselves

Work chemistry built on foundation of trust, open communication

Story and photo by Suet Lee-Growney
1ST INF. DIV. POST

"Would we recycle a plastic Play-Doh container into a paper recycling bin?" asked Brittany Toombs, pre-kindergarten teacher at Forsyth East Child Development Center, to her classroom of eager 4- and 5-year-olds sitting cross legged on the carpet.

"Noooo!" replied the pre-kindergartners of room 136 in a singsong manner.

Courtney Johnson, also a pre-K teacher at Forsyth East CDC, is Toombs' teaching partner-in-crime for the last four years. While Toombs took questions from the children of

"There are times in the classroom when we know something isn't working and we'd look at each other and be like, 'It's time to change plans.'"

COURTNEY JOHNSON | PRE-KINDERGARTEN TEACHER, FORSYTH EAST CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

room 136, Johnson laid the groundwork to the second part of the class by organizing and assembling materials for the recycling-themed class activity.

"We come to work and we enjoy it," Johnson said. "There are times in the classroom when we know something isn't working and we'd look at each other and be like, 'It's time to change plans.'"

The fluidity of their work chemistry is built on a strong foundation of trust and open communication.

"I trust her," Johnson said of Toombs. "I know I can count on (Toombs), I know I can."

Johnson said this deep trust she and Toombs share carries over the kids in their classroom.

"We had a child who was scared to go to the pumpkin patch field trip," Toombs said.

Instead of just pulling the child aside, she and Johnson addressed the entire class on the issue of being fearful of going to new places.

See DUO, page 14



Courtney Johnson and Brittany Toombs are both pre-kindergarten teachers at Forsyth East Child Development Center. They pair have known each other for about seven years and worked together in room 136 pre-K class for four years. Throughout those years, they have both developmentally enriched many children's lives by preparing them with skills required for kindergarten and beyond, such as reading and classroom etiquette.

FORT RILEY POST-ITS

AQUA ZUMBA CLASS

Looking for a new workout? Check out Aqua Zumba at Eyster Pool. Aqua Zumba blends the Zumba philosophy with water resistance for a high-energy, low-impact workout.

Classes are held Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. View the schedule on the aquatics page at riley.armymwr.com/us/riley/programs/aquatics.

The cost is \$3 per class or \$25 for a 10-class pass. For more information call 785-239-4854.

HEART SAVER CLASSES

Three CPR classes will be held at Fire Station Headquarters, 1020 Huebner Road, June 2 and June 28 from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Students will practice on mannequins. Classes have 12 spots available and are open to service members, dependents, contractors and Department of the Army civilians. To register, contact Assistant Fire Chief Richard Watson at 785-240-6241 or email him at Richard.e.watson1.civ@mail.mil.

VICTORY FEST 2017 TICKETS ON SALE

Victory Fest is Aug. 19 at Marshall Army Airfield and tickets are now available.

Individual General Admission starts at \$25 for Department of Defense ID holders, students and veterans. Non-affiliated civilian tickets start at \$35. Children 4 and under are free.

Four ticket general admission packs start at \$85 for Department of Defense ID holders, students and veterans. Non-affiliated civilian tickets start at \$125.

Platinum access individual tickets, which include all day access, covered seating, meals and more, are \$100 for ages 5 and up.

General admission group tickets are \$20 a ticket. A minimum purchase of 25 tickets is required.

For more information or to purchase a ticket, visit victoryfest2017.com.



EDUCATION SERVICES SEEKING OPINIONS

Staff of Fort Riley Education Services are conducting a needs assessment survey for information about what programs and services people would like to see. The survey is open to service members, dependents, retirees and civilians.

To take the survey, go to www.surveymonkey.com/r/RileyEduc2017.

DEMON DINER DRIVE THRU AND GRAB AND GO

Demon Diner Building 694, Drive Thru and Grab and Go area started May 1. Breakfast hours are 7:30 to 9 a.m. and lunch is 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Limited menu options will be available, including sandwich of the day and mainline meal of the day. Standard Meal Rates apply, \$3.45 for breakfast and lunch \$5.55 or Meal Card Holders can present their entitlements card.

SCHLITTERBAHN WATERPARKS HONORING AMERICAN HEROES

Military and first responders get free admission May 29 to June 4 at all Schlitterbahn Waterparks. Staff are offering free admission as a tribute to first responders and members of the armed forces who dedicate their lives to the safety and freedoms of everyone in their community.

Spouses and dependents with a service member or first responder receive 50 percent off the gate admission.

First responders and members of the military need to show their military ID or proof of employment at the waterpark ticket booths. Discounted tickets for spouses and dependents are available at the ticket booth.

For more information, visit www.schlitterbahn.com/kansas-city.

REAL ESTATE WORKSHOP

A Real Estate Workshop will be hosted by staff of the Fort Riley Housing Services Office June 1 at Riley's Conference Center from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Learn about topics such as financial planning; Mortgage information/VA loans; buying and selling properties; income producing properties; manage your property after PCS; home inspections and more.

Staff hope to teach attendees how to create and maintain wealth with their home.

The workshop is free and lunch is included.

Space is limited and registration is required at fortrileyhso.eventsmart.com

For more information, call 785-239-3525.



ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF CAMPAIGN EXTENDED

Due to this spring's heavy deployment, training and rotation schedule, the garrison commander has approved a 15 day extension to the AER campaign. You have until May 30 to make a contribution.

FORT RILEY REEL TIME THEATER MOVIE SCHEDULE

Friday, May 26
How to be a Latin Lover (PG-13) 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 27
Wonder Woman Advance Screening (PG-13) 2 p.m.
Tickets available at both your local Exchange Food Courts. Seating open to non-ticket holders 30 minutes prior to showtime Showing begins at 2 p.m. Doors open at 12:30 p.m.

The Circle (PG-13) 7 p.m.

Sunday, May 28
The Boss Baby (PG) 5 p.m.
Theater opens 30 minutes before first showing
For more information call 785-239-9574.

Regular Showing: \$6
3D Showing: \$8
First Run: \$8.25
3D First Run: \$10.25
For more information call 785-239-9574.



FORT RILEY LEISURE TRAVEL

Discount tickets are available for events in the surrounding area as well as major theme park destinations.

Upcoming events with discount tickets include:

Great Wolf Lodge - Kansas City Hotel: Blackout dates apply. Waterpark tickets included for all guests.

B&B Junction City Gem Theater: \$30 value gift card for \$25 good for movie tickets and concessions.

Salina - Rolling Hills Zoo and Museum: adults \$10, children \$5 and seniors \$9.

ENGRAVING EVENT

Staff of the Riley "Big Red One" Express Exchange is scheduled to host a Jack Daniels Engraving Event from noon to 4 p.m. May 30. Those who purchase a Jack Daniels Dingle Barrel, Gentleman Jack or Woodford Reserve will receive free engraving.

FATHER'S DAY CRAFTS AT THE USO

Staff and volunteers of USO Fort Riley are teaming up with the Arts and Crafts Center to offer do-it-yourself crafts for Father's Day. Stop by anytime from June 9 through June 17 to complete the craft.

For more information, call 785-240-5326 or visit the organization's Facebook page.

COMMUNITY CORNER

Time of year to get out, enjoy activities summer provides us all

By Col. John D. Lawrence
FORT RILEY GARRISON COMMANDER

School's out, the weather's warmer and we're heading into Memorial Day weekend. Even though the summer solstice isn't until June 20, most Americans consider this the official start to summer. Here in the heart of Kansas, it's a great time to get outside and make memories with your friends and family while enjoying the numerous outdoor activities throughout the region.



Colonel Lawrence

Fort Riley's Outdoor Recreation Center is the place to gear up for everything from neighborhood parties to outdoor adventures. Outdoor Rec can provide information about camping, hunting, fishing and other activities. There, you can

also rent tables, inflatables, tents, kayaks, trailers and more. Stop by or call them at 785-239-2363.

Fort Riley is also right next door to Milford Lake, the largest man-made lake in Kansas, where you can spend a day on the lake with a watercraft rental, do some fishing, sunbathing or camping. You can also visit the Fort Riley Leisure Travel Center for other tourism information. They've got solutions to just about any adventure you can dream up.



In addition to the many activities on post, you may want to check out other parts of Kansas; the Flint Hills Region is one you don't want to miss out on this time of year. Start by researching the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism website at ksoutdoors.com, which has information about hunting, fishing, boating, state parks, wildlife, nature and places to visit.


No matter what summer activities you choose to partici-

pate in this summer, remember to do them safely. Kids will be out running around neighborhoods during the day and into the early evening—seven days a week. Help keep them safe by always expecting the unexpected. And remember to use good risk management when getting on ATVs, motorcycles and watercraft. It's always a good idea to let someone know where you're going and when you plan to return. In short, have fun and be safe.

For more summer fun ideas, visit the Directorate of Family, Morale and Welfare online at www.facebook.com/rileymwr and riley.armymwr.com/calendar. Get out there this summer and create great memories of your time here at Fort Riley!

— To comment on this article or to suggest a topic for Community Corner, email usarmy.riley.imcom.mbx.post-newspaper@mail.mil or visit my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/fortrileyygc.





SEXUAL ASSAULT.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT.
NOT IN OUR ARMY.
TOGETHER, THIS WE'LL DEFEND.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND MEN

Join Us: [USArmySHARP](#) [f](#) [t](#) [@](#)

WORSHIP	
Protestant Services	
Victory Chapel	239-0834
Contemporary Protestant Service	
Sunday Worship.....	1100
Children's Church.....	1115-1215
Morris Hill Chapel	239-2799
Gospel Protestant Service	
Sunday School.....	0900
Sunday Worship.....	1100
Main Post Chapel	239-0834
Traditional Protestant Service	
Sunday Worship.....	1030
Catholic Services	
Victory Chapel	239-0834
Sunday Mass.....	0845
Sunday Catechism.....	1000
Saint Mary's Chapel	239-0834
Saturday's Vigil Mass.....	1630
Sunday Mass.....	1200
Mid-day Mass- Mon., Wed., & Fri.....	1200
Tuesday & Thursday Mass.....	1800
IACH Chapel	239-7872
Mid-day Mass- Tue. & Thur.....	1200
Buddhist Service	
Normandy Chapel	239-2665
Sunday	1430
Meditation Practice- Mon.- Fri.....	1230
Open Circle Service	
Kapaun Chapel	239-4818
Fort Riley Open Circle- SWC	
1st & 3rd Friday monthly.....	1800

Wednesday Night Family Night
Weekly light dinner and fellowship at 1800, followed by 1845 classes at Victory Chapel 785-239-3359

Club Beyond - Faith Based Youth Program
Grades 6th - 12th, Meets Sundays
MS Youth-1530-1700 at Morris Hill Chapel
HS Youth-1830-2000 at Morris Hill Chapel 785-370-5542

Club Beyond is a Non-Federal Entity and is not part of the DoD or any of it's components and it has no government status.

AWANA
Meets Sundays, 1500-1700 Victory Chapel 785-239-0875

Protestant Women of the Chapel (PWOC)
Weekly Tuesday Meeting 0900-1130 & Evenings at 1830-2000 at Victory Chapel
Childcare Provided.
For more information email rlcypwoc@gmail.com or Facebook "Fort Riley PWOC"

Catholic Women of the Chapel (CWOC)
Weekly Wednesday Meeting at St. Mary's Chapel 0900-1130
Childcare provided.
For more information email fortrileycwoc@gmail.com or Facebook "Fort Riley CWOC"

Check for schedule over Training Holiday weekends

WWW.RILEY.ARMY.MIL

GOAL: \$75,000*

1

\$72,136.35 as of May 23

2017 ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN
(12-week campaign, beginning March 1, 2017, is extended two weeks until May 30, 2017)

Soldiers Helping Soldiers

In 2015, AER worldwide provided \$62.3 million in zero-interest loans, grants and scholarships to 42,743 Soldiers and family members, retirees, widows and orphans. During that same time period, Fort Riley provided more than \$1.125 million in assistance and processed nearly 1,000 separate cases.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

THE POWER OF 1

RECOGNIZING RUN FOR THE WALL



Spc. Elizabeth Payne | 19TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT
Brig. Gen. Patrick Frank, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley acting senior commander, and retired Chief Warrant Officer 3 Phyllis Fitzgerald, mayor of Junction City, Kansas, hand out Vietnam veteran commemorative pins to Vietnam veteran motorcycle riders May 21 at Run for the Wall in Junction City's Heritage Park. Veterans en-route to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., stopped in Junction City for a ceremony, dinner and overnight rest. More than 450 Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association members ride the Central Route Hub and have traveled from Ontario, California, starting May 17 and will complete the ride May 26 in Washington, D.C.

CHAPLAINS CORNER

Honoring, learning from the departed

Chaplain (Capt.) Christopher Mohr
2ND ARMORED BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM,
1ST INFANTRY DIVISION

It is tradition in much of the Buddhist community to celebrate the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away during the full moon of the fourth or fifth lunar month of each year — May 10 this year. We call this Vesak, after the month it occurs in.

The full scriptural reasons behind this are found in several lengthy passages in the Majjhima Nikaya and you can read them and decide for yourself if they mean anything to you. However, the impact of perhaps 200 to 400 million people around the globe celebrating these three events should be fairly clear. It would be easy to focus only on the Buddha's birth or his enlightenment, pushing any discussion of the finality of passing away to somewhere out of sight and out of mind. Indeed, who really wants to think about death? It is something that most people are less than fond of and would rather not think about, and yet, there is no person who is not touched by it at some point.

We all want to live and we tend to think of ourselves as going on and on, but it is a fact that none of the many quests



Christopher Mohr

for immortality has produced any results. We can't change the fact that we are all going to die one day. What we can change though is what we do with the time we have in this life and what we learn from those who went before us.

We all have this precious chance, this spectacularly rare chance to make our lives into something that we and those that come up after us can draw inspiration from, just as we have been inspired by whatever person or persons we each draw our own inspirations from. Have you known some of these noble people whose impact on your life inspires you to be better, to keep striving to be like them? I know I have and they are people I remember every single day. Or rather, I remember the lessons they left behind, and am thankful that I had the chance to learn from them. They may be gone, but the lessons live on. And remembering the lessons, values and teachings and having gratitude for receiving them is the real meaning behind our celebration of the birth, life and death of the Buddha.

With Memorial Day coming soon, I want to raise your awareness of one of the many ways we in the Buddhist community remember those who have gone before and offer our gratitude: the Lantern Floating. There are few more powerful ways to honor the people and lives that have made an impact on us than by remembering them and wishing them "safe travels," as it were. However those next "travels" are defined — whether scientifically or

spiritually — regardless of whether that looks like heaven, rebirth or nothing at all, there is great benefit in reflecting on and honoring their lives and showing our gratitude that we had the chance to meet and know those we have lost.

Traditionally, most Buddhist Lantern Floating ceremonies involve small, portable containers that house a small candle and often have some written remembrance on them. Depending on the part of the Buddhist world, the lantern will either be a sky lantern, floating in the air, or a water lantern, floating like a boat on the water. These types of ceremonies are usually at the end of summer, but some modern parts of the Buddhist world do so on Memorial Day to be in keeping with the local customs and meet the needs of the community.

In fact, did you know that the Fort Riley community has held an interfaith Lantern Floating ceremony at Moon Lake for the last two years? At the end of each of the last two summers, we have floated lanterns in remembrance of and out of gratitude for those who we have lost. This year, we'll be holding another Lantern Floating ceremony at 8 p.m. on Memorial Day. I'd like to invite anyone who would like to offer their gratitude to someone who has left to join us and share in a moment of joy and peace with a gathering of different faiths. There will be a small number of lanterns prepared for those who wish to honor their own friends, relatives and inspirations who are no longer in their lives.

TUESDAY TRIVIA CONTEST



The question for the week of May 23 was: What movie will the Barlow Theater show this Saturday afternoon in a special advance screening?

Answers: www.riley.army.mil/About-Us/Calendar/ModuleID/634/ItemID/446/mct/EventDetails/

This week's winner is Alexis Rice, whose husband is Pvt. Daniel Rice, a Soldier in Company E, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade.

Pictured above is Alexis.

CONGRATULATIONS ALEXIS!

ACTIVE Continued from page 11

Heinrich said children need 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise each day, ideally with a mixture of cardiovascular, muscle-building and bone-strengthening activities. Moderate exercise raises heart and breathing rates slightly above resting rates and vigorous exercise causes participants to need to stop to catch their breath.

Traditional summertime activities that have cardiovascular benefit include bicycling, swimming and playing tag. Heinrich said children can build muscle by climbing on playground equipment and they can strengthen their bones by jumping rope.

Heinrich said the two main keys for making summer exercise sustainable all season long are to engage in it together and make it desirable to the child.

"Instead of just telling your child to go outside, play with them and show them how to enjoy the activity," Heinrich said. "Kids want to do behaviors they see their parents model, so if the parent sits and watches TV, that's what the child will want to do."

Instead of turning on an exercise video or lifting weights, Heinrich advises enjoying the outdoors together and even implementing a bit of friendly competition.

"Remember that kids prefer games and fun activities over routine exercise," she said. "If you can get them moving because it's fun — not because they have to — that's the biggest win."

BABIES Continued from page 11

profoundly exhausted," Borgia said.

Rest is important for the body to recover as it continues to go through physical and hormonal changes. In 2016, the Department of Defense announced a department-wide policy allowing all female service members 12 weeks of maternity leave.

After the birth of a child, a mom's body and mind will continue to change. Some are surprised by the range of emotions they feel, even within the course of a few minutes, Borgia said. Mood swings and "baby blues" are common after giving birth. Women with postpartum baby blues may feel weepy, emotional, vulnerable, irritable, sad or anxious. However, symptoms that persist for more than two weeks may be a sign of postpartum depression.

Any mother who feels she may be having difficulty coping with the demands of a new baby can contact her health care provider immediately for support. The MHS also offers support through its 24-hour/seven-days-a-week Nurse Advice Line 1-800-TRICARE, option 1.

"While her body recovers from delivery, a woman may experience a certain amount of light period-like bleeding, called lochia, which can last for a few days or weeks following delivery," Borgia said.

Breastfeeding can begin immediately after delivery and is associated with decreased rates of asthma in children and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. After delivery, mothers begin producing colostrum, a form of high-protein milk. Over the next few days, the colostrum develops into breastmilk, both of which contain antibodies from the mother and help fight disease.

"Breastfeeding can sometimes be challenging for new mothers," said Borgia, who advises new moms to take advantage of lactation support groups and interact with lactation consultants if they need one-on-one help.

"New babies need nutrition — ideally in the form of breastmilk — along with diapers, a safe place to sleep, and lots of love," Borgia said.

She encourages parents to contact their health care team for support if they feel as though they are struggling.

Theresa Hart, a nurse consultant and program

manager for perinatal pediatrics and special medical programs at the Defense Health Agency, encourages new parents to prepare themselves for family life by planning ahead for potential big changes.

"Get to know your military benefits and prepare for the big stuff, like deployments, moves, retirement and more," said Hart, adding that more information is available online through Military OneSource.

New parents are also encouraged to take advantage of parenting services and support programs found at military installations or in local communities. For additional information on tips, services and support programs for parents, visit Military OneSource.

REAL TIME THEATERS

WB

invites you to a special screening of
WONDER WOMAN

You are cordially invited to attend a
special screening at your local Reel Time Theater.

ADMIT ONE

Date: May 27, 2017 Time: 1400

Please arrive early. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. This pass does not guarantee you a seat. Seating available to non-ticket holders 30 minutes prior to show time. Theater is not responsible for overbooking. This screening will be monitored for unauthorized recording. If attending, you agree not to bring any audio or video recording devices into the theater (cell phones are accepted but must be turned off) and consent to a physical search of your belongings and person. Any attempted use of recording devices will result in your immediate removal from the theater, forfeiture of the device, and they subject you to criminal and civil liability.

GIVING BLOOD



Spc. Elizabeth Payne | 19TH PAD
Anita Eschliman, the risk reduction program coordinator for the Army Substance Abuse Program in building 7424, donates blood May 17 at the American Red Cross blood drive at the Army Wellness Center. Eschliman said she donates blood as often as she can because she believes in supporting a good cause. The blood drive was two days long and held in two locations with the May 18 drive at In-Processing, building 208.

KANSAS MILITARY WORKFORCE SUMMIT

Brig. Gen. Patrick Frank, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley acting senior commander, speaks with Antonio Soave, Kansas secretary of commerce, May 19 at the Kansas Military Workforce Summit at the Geary County Convention Center. Frank and Soave both gave keynote remarks at the event, which was hosted by the Kansas Department of Commerce and the Junction City Area Chamber of Commerce.

J. Parker Roberts
1ST INF. DIV. PUBLIC AFFAIRS



DIVERSITY Continued from page 11

They continue investing time in developing culturally astute Soldiers and civilians.” Melton shared his culture story with the audience, telling stories about his mother who immigrated to the United States. He also talked about the harm of stereotypes while trying to remain diverse and being cognizant of stereotypes in every day interactions.

“The Army expects us to celebrate our diversity because we are a diverse nation,” he said. “They expect us to celebrate it so when we are part of the expeditionary Army it won’t be new for us and we can show respect.” According to the observance website, asianpacificheritage.gov, the month of May was chosen to commemorate the im-

migration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants. At the end of the event, Lt. Col. Alexander Murray, 1st Infantry Division acting chief of staff, presented Melton with a

“Big Red One” token of appreciation for his role as guest speaker. “It’s got to be nervewracking to get up in front of people you don’t know and perform,” Murray said of the performers at the event. And then, Murray and Melton were able to join in the dancing fun as Big Red One Soldiers danced to conclude the event.



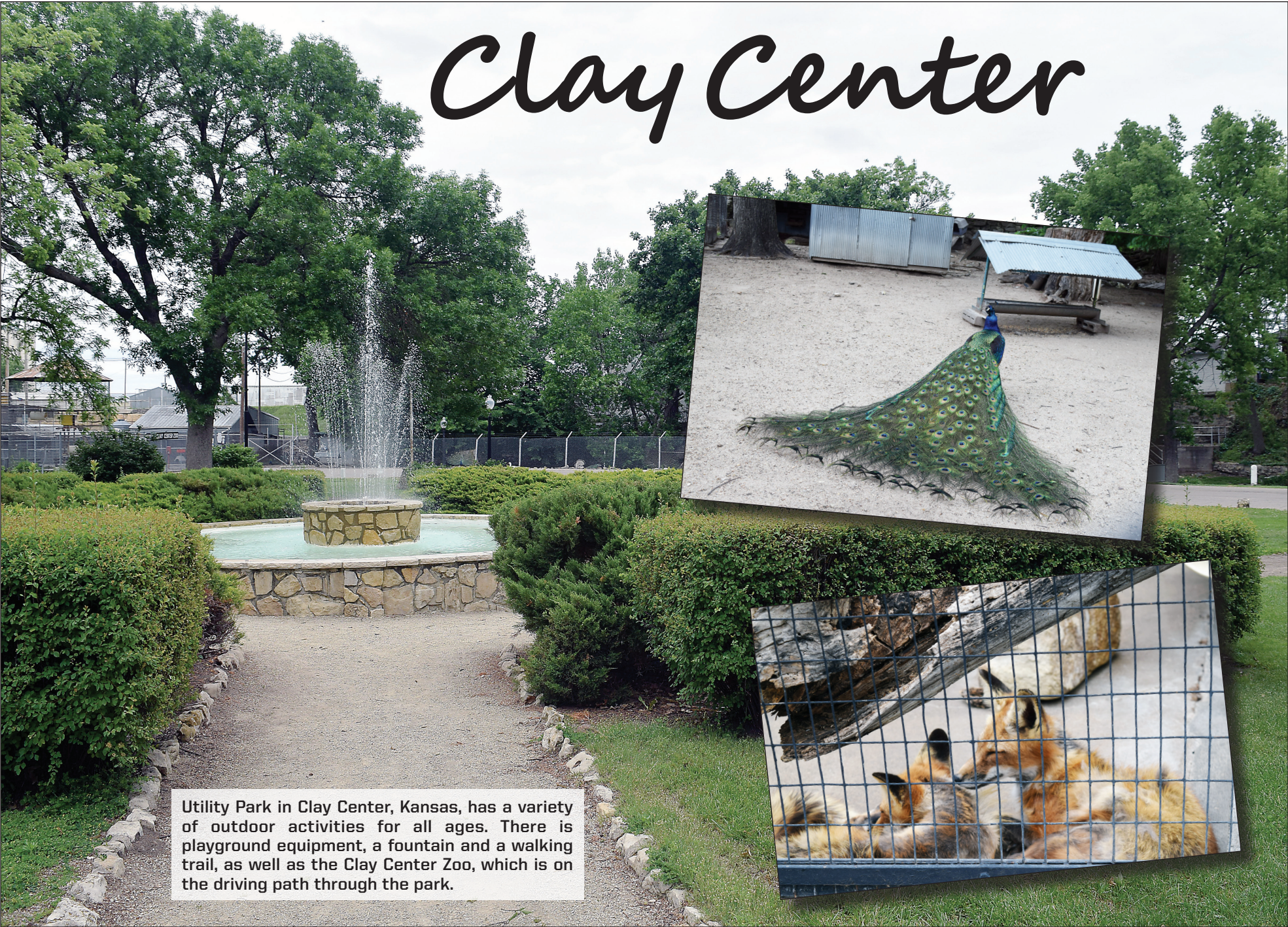
Suet Lee-Growney | POST
Brittany Toombs, pre-kindergarten teacher at Forsyth East Child Development Center, helps her students sort through cards for their recycling lesson exercise.

DUO Continued from page 11

Most children ages 3 and 4 do not go to new places, unless they are brought by their parents. “For (the child) to trust us and go on the bus with us and go to the pumpkin patch and not be scared anymore, that made us feel good because (the child) put all her trust into us,” Toombs said. “That was good for the child.” Other than instilling positive assurance, Johnson and Toombs’ curriculum focuses on skills that will prepare the students for school. “We practice kindergarten readiness,” Johnson said. James Dilena, 5, son of Capt. Jordan Dilena, 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, is in classroom 136. James’ mother, Katie Dilena, said the teachers have not only helped him gain skills he will require to kick start his journey to kindergarten, but also developmentally. “They do really good with keeping his attention, you know, on whatever their class is doing,” Dilena said. “To keep a 5-year-old’s attention, it’s hard.” During class time, James and his classmates were perceptive and curious to their surroundings and lesson. Toombs and Johnson take care of their students by always responding to their needs and questions. Their attention and focus on the children begins when the pre-kindergarteners walk in the door. “That’s our time to kind of check in with them to see if they’re OK,” Johnson said. “Kind of get a grasp of their attitude for that day because we know right away what kind of attitude they’re going to have, so we can comfort them at that moment if we need to.” The most rewarding part of their job is getting to know each child. “Each one is different,” Johnson said. She said she will always remember each kid for what makes them unique.

“I will always remember this kid because of this, but I will always remember this kid because of that,” Johnson said. Toombs and Johnson reminisced while sitting across the child-sized table from each other on how lovely it feels to have a child remember them as teachers, even after he or she moves on from the class. “It’s nice to hear a kid come over to you and give you a hug,” Johnson said. And then without missing a beat, Toombs completed Johnson’s sentence and said, “And say ‘I miss you,’ ... I gained a bond with a lot of them.” Toombs said working for this school program is personally fulfilling for her because her son, Cameron, is going through pre-K as well. “To be able to see where (Cameron) is at and where (the children in her class) are at, and help both areas out, is rewarding,” Toombs said. “The way the program is formed is rewarding.” Johnson and Toombs said they could be having a bad day, but their interaction with the children and listening in on the kids’ conversations with each other can sweeten their day. “Our kids, they always make us laugh and smile,” Toombs said. “One little boy, he knows how to just get me right there and just say, ‘Ms. Toombs!’ And say something, and I just bust out laughing.” Johnson helped Toombs get her Child Development Associate Credential at the beginning of Toombs’ teaching career. Since then, Johnson has not only been an insightful mentor to her, but also a friend. “Working with (Johnson), she showed me where I needed to go, what I needed to do,” Toombs said. “I love Ms. Johnson.” “Oh, thank you,” Johnson replied. “I love you too ... I think if you have good team work, it carries over to the kids because they know what they need to do because we have shown them.”





Utility Park in Clay Center, Kansas, has a variety of outdoor activities for all ages. There is playground equipment, a fountain and a walking trail, as well as the Clay Center Zoo, which is on the driving path through the park.



COURTESY PHOTO



LEFT: Complete with a lazy river, two large slides and two diving boards, the Clay Center Aquatic Park is open daily after Memorial Day from noon to 7 p.m. Cost of admission is \$3 per person for all ages and anyone entering the facility must pay admission. **RIGHT:** The Clay Center Veterans Memorial is located outside the courthouse in downtown Clay Center.



COURTESY PHOTO

The downtown district of Clay Center, Kansas, is home to the district courthouse. Founded in 1857, Clay Center is the county seat for Clay County. Named for the Kentucky statesman Henry Clay, Clay County was settled in north-central Kansas by farmers who were drawn to the area's fertile soil. Agriculture remains the primary industry in the area today. Each year, residents of the city celebrate the Fourth of July with fireworks and a town celebration. For more information about Clay Center, visit www.cityofclaycenter.com or call 785-632-5674.

Story and photos by Maria Childs
1ST INF. DIV. POST

Clay Center, Kansas, can be found at the junction of U.S. Highway 24 and Kansas Highway 15, just 40 miles north of Fort Riley. With a public library, a city zoo, city parks and a golf course, the town has more than enough opportunities for tourists to explore.

Founded in 1857, Clay Center is the county seat for Clay County. Named for the Kentucky statesman Henry Clay, Clay County was settled in north-central Kansas by farmers who were drawn to the area's fertile soil. Agriculture remains the primary industry in the area today.

As visitors enter the town, signs will point them in every direction for attractions. Clay Center boasts a variety of parks with something different to see at each one.

Dexter Park offers a unique playground called "Safari Run" that has play opportunities for children of all ages and abilities. In Dexter Park, there is also a band shelter where the city band performs during the summer.

Huntress Park and Clay Center Swimming Pool are tucked in the middle of the town off Highway 24. Visitors can also find a 9-hole disc golf course at this park.

On the southwest edge of the town, Utility Park and the Zoo are nestled in a shaded area with a lot of trees. There are multiple gazebos and picnic areas, as well as a walking trail, fountain and small zoo. Admission to the zoo is free.



The downtown district of Clay Center, Kansas, has plenty of shopping opportunities including boutiques. A historical society and museum is also in the downtown district.

The Clay Center Aquatic Park is also a popular attraction among visitors. Complete with a lazy river, two large slides and two diving boards, there is something for everyone at the aquatic park. Clay Center Aquatic Park is open daily after Memorial Day from noon to 7 p.m. Cost of admission is \$3 per person for all ages and anyone entering the facility must pay admission. Family season passes are available for \$150, single season passes for \$50 and a 10-punch card for \$30 with the 11th visit free.

For those looking for adventures indoors during the heat of the summer, the downtown district has plenty of shopping opportunities including boutiques. A historical society and museum is also in the downtown district.

Each year in July, the city holds sidewalk sales the Thursday, Friday and Saturday of the week prior to the Clay County Fair.

For more information about Clay Center, visit www.cityofclaycenter.com or call 785-632-5674.