

COMMUNITY CORNER

Post, community leaders review CPC progress

By Col. Richard Piscal
GARRISON COMMANDER

Fort Riley and our partners in the Central Flint Hills Region are getting after it. Together, we are making Fort Riley the premiere division-level installation in the world. We held the semi-annual Community Partnership Conference May 20 at Riley's Conference Center and looked at the accomplishments of the past several months and looked forward at our plans to continue to tackle complex housing, health care, education, recreation and employment issues within the region.

We rely heavily on our community partners to help us perform our missions each day. And each day, our friends in the local region step up to the plate and work with us, side-by-side, as we go about caring for our Families and preparing our Soldiers for war. Their impact on us is significant.

Fort Riley's impact on the region also is sizeable. In Fiscal Year 2008, Fort Riley's economic impact was almost \$2 billion. Nearly double the economic impact from FY 2005. Our growth will continue through 2013.

We are using the campus concept to plan for our growth. We have spent \$1 billion on military construction projects and we will spend about \$1 billion more to co-locate like entities to make them more user friendly. We are working on the training and logistics campuses on Custer Hill. The medical campus that includes the Warrior Transition Battalion and new hospital is underway while Sacco Softball Complex and the outdoor recreation campus is relocating to McCormick Park and Moon Lake.

The pending changes and growth have solidified the need for a Regional



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and counties.

The RPO provides a model that can be immediately implemented for ongoing regional coordination, communication and monitoring and will allow the region to speak with one voice and better coordinate efforts in areas such as economic development; data coordination; land use planning; population forecasting; social services; education and workforce and housing and rural development among others.

Here are some other highlights:

HOUSING

- We continue to focus on available and affordable off-post housing within the region. We have almost 4,300 Soldiers living in the Central Flint Hills Region.

- We have partnered with local real estate professionals, lending institutions and professional home inspection firms to provide the content to offer home-buying seminars. Eight seminars have been conducted and about 135 potential homebuyers have participated.

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture, since 2005, has issued \$42 million in guaranteed rural housing loans to Soldiers and civilians – seven counties and 416 loans.

HEALTH CARE

- We continue to improve health care access for Soldiers and Families in the CFHR.

- We have collaborated with Salina Regional Health Center for a "New Options" behavioral health clinic that opened May 4 in Junction City. It is a fully staffed and trained post traumatic stress disorder clinic meeting the needs of Soldiers, commanders and Family members.

EDUCATION

- We continue to develop and strengthen life-long learning opportunities in the region.

- Seventeen states are now members of the Military Children's Compact Commission, formerly the Interstate Compact.

- We developed and aviation program with Kansas State University-Salina to offer two certificate programs in aviation. The aviation general review class begins June 2.

- We have reduced the time from two years to one year for teacher licensure for applicants who currently have a degree in an outside field.

- Tuition assistance programs have been developed through the Career Advancement Account program, the Workforce Investment Act, the Montgomery GI Bill and other scholarships and grants. Assistance programs provide support for our highly-mobile Family members to further their education.

- We continue to look for potential recreational and leisure growth.

- Our partnership with K-State has resulted in increased access to Big XII athletic events. About 10,000 tickets have been donated to Soldiers and

Families for football, basketball, baseball and volleyball.

- We are looking at making even more improvements to Fort Riley's Marina on Milford Lake.

- We are exploring the options on a brand-name restaurant on Fort Riley and a Sportsman Complex in the CFHR.

EMPLOYMENT

- We continue to focus on employment opportunities and how we recruit and retain a quality workforce.

- A state-wide career held on Fort Riley in February had 74 employers attend from across the state and about 400 job seekers attended the event – 118 offered jobs on the spot.

- Our partnerships have resulted in a one-button job search link, transition assistance workshops and career fairs.

- Fort Riley, in coordination with VPSI, Inc., a commuter transportation company, and the Department of Transportation, will start a van pool program June 1. Forty participants signed up and eight vans are on hand.

The community partnership conferences continue to be an effective and constant conduit of information between Fort Riley and our community partners, because many of our community members play a significant role in strengthening our partnerships. They understand what a Soldier's life is like – because either they once wore a uniform or have supported those who did. They understand what it means to selflessly serve our country.

If you would like to comment on this article, or suggest a topic to be covered in the Community Corner, e-mail riley.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil.

IN BRIEF

Registration for the Middle School Teen Center's summer camps and field trips has begun.

Registrations close one week prior to the event. Summer events:

- June 1 to July 15 – Speak Out for Military Kids interactive theater camp from 1 to 4:30 p.m. A parent information meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. May 28.

- June 2 – Visit Worlds of Fun from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. for \$30. Don't forget to bring money for food.

- June 12 – Visit the Omaha Henry Doory Zoo from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. June 12. The cost is \$11.50, plus money for food.

- June 22-27 and July 27-31 – Extreme Water Sports Camp from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for \$60 plus money for food at Oceans of Fun. Camp will include kayaking, canoeing, water skiing, tubing and a trip to Oceans of Fun.

- June 23 or July 28 – Visit Oceans of Fun from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. for \$25.

For more information about any of these events, call the teen center at 239-9222.

Rock Springs 4-H Center will host five sessions of its annual Family camp this summer.

The 2009 camp dates are: July 3-5, July 10-12, July 31-Aug. 1, Aug. 14-16, and Sept. 4-6.

Family camp presents an opportunity for parents and their children to attend a fun-filled adventure set in the natural beauty of Rock Springs 4-H Center. Housing options for each session range from rustic cottages to air conditioned suites, giving each Family the opportunity to personalize their camp experience.

Each session's agenda may vary slightly, but typical activities include: swimming in Rock Springs' Olympic-sized pool; horseback riding on an authentic trail ride with one of Rock Springs' famous palominos; archery,

trap or rifle shooting; arts and crafts; canoeing and campfires.

Rock Springs is located 12 miles south and west of Junction City. For more information about Rock Springs or Family camp, call 785-257-3221 or send an e-mail to administration@rocksprings.net.

Celebrate your success with the Career Pathfinder program.

Let the Employment Readiness Program know how the program helped you. If you still need assistance finding the right path, call 785-239-9435 or e-mail teresa.johnson@us.army.mil.

Ever think you would be a great social worker, teacher or secretary? The Army Spouse Career Assessment Tool can let you know what career you are best suited for. The Employment Readiness Program will host ASCAT sessions from 1 to 3 p.m. and from 4 to 6 p.m. May 28 at Army Community Service. ASCAT will let you know what leadership style you have, what kind of work environment you prefer and your personal strengths that you contribute to the work force.

Call 785-239-9435 for more information or to register.

At Fort Riley's Son Rock Kids Camp, June 8-12, kids will experience an adventure camp like no other.

Children will have a great time singing songs, watching skits, creating crafts, playing games, making new friends and more. The Fort Riley Religious Education Office is looking for adult volunteers who are willing to share their time and talents with the community. We need camp counselors, coordinators, ski performers, center coordinators, helpers and more. Opportunities are available to even fit the busiest of schedules. A preschool program will be available for volunteer's children, ages 3-4, as well as a nursery. For more information, contact Don Ericson at 239-0979 or donald.ericson@conus.army.mil.

Come to the Garrison Change of Command at 9 a.m. June 5 at Ware Parade Field to farewell Col. Richard Piscal and hail Col. Kevin Brown.