

## COMMUNITY CORNER

# Growth continues to boost area economy

By Col. Kevin Brown  
GARRISON COMMANDER

Fort Riley and the Central Flint Hills Region welcomed the "Big Red One" home in 2006 after its 10-year stint in Germany. At the transfer of authority ceremony in August 2006, Fort Riley was home to approximately 12,000 Soldiers and 15,000 Family members, with a promise to the community more would follow.

Fort Riley's economic impact summary for 2009, which was just completed by our Plans, Analysis and Integration Office, shows just what the growth at Fort Riley has contributed to the community in terms of money and population growth in the area.

In 2005, the year of the Base Realignment and Closure announcement that the 1st Infantry Division would return to Fort Riley, we had 10,060 Soldiers and 12,714 Family members living on and off post. As of Sept. 30, 2009, that number was at 18,458 Soldiers and 22,453 Family members. That's up almost 6,000 people from 2008.

Since 2008, Fort Riley has added 61 Family quarters for officers, 94 Family quarters for enlisted Soldiers and just more than 1,500 barracks spaces. That gives Fort Riley a total of 11,176 quarters to house its Soldiers and Family members. The rest of our Soldiers and Families move into the Central Flint Hills Region, which is made up of the seven counties surrounding post. Besides our Soldiers and their Families, Fort Riley employs more than 8,500 civilians who work to support our mission.

Within those seven counties, Fort Riley's Soldiers, Family members and civilians live, work, relax and shop. Overall, Fort Riley has had a total direct economic impact of almost \$2.1 billion. While the largest chunk, \$1.4 billion, of that fell into the payroll category, almost \$293 million was spent on supplies, services and contracts. Almost \$232 million went into construction, just more than \$18 million for education and around \$80 million for health care.

Compare last year's economic impact to that of 2008 and there has been a growth of more than \$230 million. That is a lot of money and as we continue to see growth at Fort Riley, that number



Col. Brown

will continue to grow.

If you look past the economic impact, however, I think Fort Riley has contributed something even greater to the Central Flint Hills Region — our Soldiers and Families. Soldiers live by the Army Values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. Each of our Soldiers has volunteered for service to their country. It takes a special person to do this and those people are living in the Central Flint Hills Region.

Those values the Army and its Soldiers uphold are transferred to the community when our Families volunteer in schools and churches, with scouts and for other community organizations. Since such a small percentage of our population volunteers for service, our community members get a chance to say something that many in our country can't, "I know a U.S. Soldier." Those Soldiers helping build communities in Iraq and Afghanistan aren't just Soldiers; they are our neighbors. Our children play baseball together. Our Families support each other.

Besides the everyday interactions of our Soldiers, Families and community members, our units have partnered with towns across the Central Flint Hills Region. From these partnerships, our communities have built relationships with units and our Soldiers have often learned civic lessons to take with them when they deploy to help build communities in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Many Soldiers and Families acknowledge Fort Riley as their favorite duty assignment. The reason for this is because of the great communities around the installation and the great relationships our Soldiers, Families and civilians have within those communities. As we continue to work together, economically and personally, within the Central Flint Hills Region, more and more Soldiers will want to call Kansas home while on active duty and after.

View the 2009 Economic Impact Summary at [www.riley.army.mil](http://www.riley.army.mil) under the "Our Post" at the top of the page.

## Weekly e-mail gives new parents tips

By Nikia Simon  
MEDDAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Expectant and new parents are offered a weekly e-mail communication tool at Irwin Army Community Hospital as a resource to guide them through pregnancy and parenting experiences.

"At a recent (video teleconference), Irwin Army Community Hospital was recognized as being ranked second with patient use of (The Parent Review) services out of 30 military medical facilities with deliveries of 500 or more per year," said Maj. Mark Ochoa, IACH chief of obstetrics/gynecology clinic.

TPR allows the IACH team to develop a richer, more supportive relationship with its patients.

"TPR is a weekly update about pregnancy designated especially for (IACH) patients," said Sandra Heigle, IACH complicated OB nurse.

Patients can enroll with their OB provider and start receiving weekly, customized information, news and parenting resources by e-mail.

Anytime after seven weeks of pregnancy, patients are encouraged to schedule an OB education appointment with Heigle, where they receive their first opportunity to sign up for the e-mail service.

"(Patients) can sign up for (TPR) anytime after eight weeks of pregnancy, and it continues until their child turns 3 years old," Heigle said.

An IACH patient and expecting military spouse, Serena Seliger, attend-



IACH

An Irwin Army Community Hospital patient and expecting military spouse, Sterena Seliger, attends Sandra Heigle's, IACH complicated OB nurse, education class on Feb. 24 at nine weeks of pregnancy. Seliger is expecting a baby boy in September.

ed Heigle's education class on Feb. 24 at nine weeks of pregnancy. She is expecting a baby boy in September.

"I learned what (medications) I can and can't take, warning signs and how to watch my weight during my pregnancy. Everything was very informative," Seliger said.

Messages are personalized according to the patient's due date and continue through the third year of the baby's life. The e-mails also provide brief reviews of the latest research on pregnancy and newborn issues in an easy-to-understand format. During pregnancy, the messages in-

clude week-by-week information on fetal development, wellness tips and valuable resources. After the baby is born, messages offer child development information, practical tips on baby care, health and safety, and other topics of special interest to new parents.

Heigle facilitates open communication and answers patient questions by e-mail on a daily basis.

"I am looking forward to the e-mails so I can know how the baby should be developing," Seliger said.

For additional information on TPR, contact Heigle at 785-239-7736.



If you would like to comment or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, send an e-mail to [file.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil](mailto:file.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil).

## IN BRIEF

**Join Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation for dinner and a movie** at 6 p.m. March 11 at Riley's Conference Center. Riley's chef will create a menu to compliment the movie. Cost is \$7.95 per person, \$3.95 for children ages 4 to 10 and free for children 3 and younger. Call 785-784-1000 to make your reservations.

**USO Fort Riley hosts free No Dough Dinners before each pay day.** Upcoming dinners will be from 5 to 6:30 p.m. March 12 and 31 in Building 7856 off of Normandy Drive and Drum Street. For more information, visit [www.uso.org/fortriley](http://www.uso.org/fortriley).

**Teens are needed to participate in a focus group** from 3 to 6 p.m. March 16 at the Middle School Teen Center. Free pizza will be served.

Anyone interested should contact the Fort Riley Customer Service Officer, Colleen Bay, at 785-239-2540 or [colleen.bay1@us.army.mil](mailto:colleen.bay1@us.army.mil). Space is limited. The focus groups, a part of the Community First process, is designed to identify and resolve issues that address the well-being of the Army Family. The intent of the focus group is to identify and discuss service support programs on the installation that affect group members' everyday lives. It is not meant to be a complaint session, but a time and place to bring up issues that can be resolved by the garrison commander or issues that need to be forwarded through the Army Family Action Plan process.