

COMMUNITY CORNER

Always keep safety in mind when enjoying summer activities

By Col. Kevin Brown
GARRISON COMMANDER

It's that time of year again: barbecues, days on the lake, road trips, outdoor fun and sunshine – when it's not raining. Hopefully, you were able to enjoy some of these activities over the long Memorial Day weekend. Maybe you spent the weekend at Millford or Tuttle Creek lakes, or perhaps you enjoyed a barbecue with friends and neighbors on Memorial Day. These types of activities give us all a chance to take a break from our busy lives and enjoy our family, friends, and, hopefully, some good weather.

But with this summer fun does come a certain level of risk. Summer is often a very dangerous time of the year for the Army, with notable increases in off-duty accidents

and fatalities, and I want to ensure we are doing all we can to prevent accidents from happening.

Just before the long weekend, the Garrison Safety Office hosted a postwide safety day with booths and demonstrations at Riley's Conference Center to bring awareness to summer safety initiatives.

The Garrison Safety Office also has initiated a 111 Days of Summer Safety Campaign, which began May 21 and will run through Sept. 8. Throughout this campaign, the safety office will provide training to help mitigate risks and provide materials for unit and organization safety officers.

Many of these materials



Col. Brown

already can be found at <http://www.riley.army.mil/UnitPage.aspx?units=USAG.Safety> or by calling 785-239-2514.

I'd like to bring attention to just a few of these initiatives.

HEAT SAFETY

The summer months in Kansas often involve hot days and nights. Reaching near 100-degree temperatures is not uncommon. And when working or playing outside, heat injuries such as sunburn, heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke can occur. To prevent heat-related injury, use sunscreen, SPF 45 or greater; limit your exposure to sun for extended periods of time; stay hydrated and wear loose, lightweight clothing.

WATER SAFETY

Boating and swimming are very popular summer activi-

ties, especially in this area. In Kansas, all boaters must have a Kansas Boater Card obtained after completion of the Kansas State Boaters Safety Course, which is available in person or online under the boating link at www.kdwp.state.ks.us. If boating, always wear a life jacket. Inspect your boat prior to getting on the water. Pay attention to the weather, and do not go out on the water if bad weather is in the forecast.

When swimming, always swim with a buddy; select swimming sites that have on-duty lifeguards. And with any water activity, do not drink alcohol before or during activity.

GRILLING SAFETY

Summer is the perfect time to grill, but unattended grills or misuse can lead to fire and serious injury. Before grilling, perform a thorough safety

inspection before lighting the grill. Never use a grill in an enclosed space, and ensure the grill is stable before cooking. Don't wear loose clothing when cooking on a grill. Keep flammable materials away from the grill, and make sure the fire is out when you are done.

DRIVING SAFETY

With increased vacations, road trips and motorcycle rides in the summer months come an increase in vehicle injuries and fatalities. Taking precautionary measure as simple as inspecting your vehicle prior to use can make the difference between a safe trip and a trip to the hospital.

Also, remember to never use alcohol when operating a motor vehicle. Prearrange for a sober driver or call a taxi if you plan on drinking. Follow other simple driving safety measures

such as avoiding cell phone use, wearing your seat belt, driving defensively and obeying posted speed limits and regulations.

In addition to the Garrison Safety Office, another resource for information on these topics and more is the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center at <https://safety.army.mil>.

Use these resources to help protect yourself, your family and even your coworkers – be a leader in your office, demonstrating proper safety within your unit or organization. Don't forget to take those extra few minutes to make sure everyone is thinking about safety. Let's make this summer a safe one.

If you would like to comment on this article or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, send an email to rlc.post.news@coms.army.mil.

Military Family gets fresh start

By Shandi Dix
1ST INF. DIV. POST

Medically retired Sgt. Nate Helmuth, and his family of four, left Fort Riley for the sunny skies of Florida, his home state, in December 2010. Now six months later the Families' move may have proven to be for the better.

"The move from Kansas to Florida has truly changed our lives. I truly believe it was a being-in-the-right-place, at-the-right-time sort of thing," said Kristle Helmuth, Nate's wife.

While stationed at Fort Riley Nate was assigned to the 72nd Engineer Company, 1st Engineer Battalion, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, and accompanied the unit on a 16-month deployment to Baqubah, Iraq, in 2006 and 2007.

Upon Nate's return their lives changed.

"When I first got home I had a lot of problems adjusting. I was angry, scared, anxious. I did things I never imagined. I hit rock bottom, almost lost my wife and family. I pushed my friends away, but my wife stuck by my side and never let me fail," Nate said. "From there I was able to slowly build myself back up to where we are now, things are not perfect, but they are getting better every day."

During his deployment Nate was involved in multiple incidents involving improvised explosive devices and now suffers from a traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Since his diagnosis, the couple has created a "new normal" for their family. Kristle has used the experience to educate herself and better equip herself to help Nate and others.

Shortly after they got settled in Florida, a student film crew from Quinnipiac University in Connecticut approached the



COURTESY PHOTO

Nate and Kristle Helmuth hold the "key" to the new home they received from the Military Warriors Support Foundation during a presentation at the Players Championship May 11 in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. Nate was stationed at Fort Riley with the 72nd Eng. Co., 1st Eng. Bn., 1st HBCT, 1st Inf. Div., before being medically retired.

Helmuths about making a documentary for their senior capstone project.

The six-member film crew spent 11 days in January and four days in April filming the family.

"The student director had been reading my blog for about a year before the filming began, and when she presented the idea to the group they were very excited," Kristle said.

The Helmuths were skeptical about having their life documented, she said.

"I was scared at first. I didn't know how I would handle it, how my husband would handle it or even how my kids would handle it," Kristle said. "I was not sure how far it would go, but I knew that I wanted it to reach as many people as possible."

Two-day carnival at Rally Point Field to usher in summer season

By Flevia Hulsey
1ST INF. DIV. POST

A carnival at Rally Point Field will help usher in summer fun at Fort Riley.

Victory Carnival will be from 4 p.m. to midnight June 9 and from noon to midnight June 10. The public is invited to enjoy the rides and attractions of "Toby's Carnival."

"It's to boost morale of families and provide an opportunity to get out of the house and enjoy their afternoons and evenings," said Duane Clayton, recreation specialist, Directorate of Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

Families and individuals alike can enjoy more than 10 rides, several activity booths and carnival games, and carnival food such as barbecue, funnel cakes, corn dogs, cotton

candy and more, Clayton said.

The event was planned after organizers noticed a great turnout for the carnival at past Oktoberfest celebrations at Fort Riley, Clayton said. Organizers decided to "take a great idea and relocate it" – this time taking place in the summer.

Described as an "old-fashioned county fair carnival," it also will feature other attractions such as a strolling magician, mule wagon rides and live music. Every evening from 7 to 10 p.m. musical entertainment will take to the stage.

"We will have bands coming in and playing in the fest(ival) tent," Clayton said. "Vendors will be coming in and selling beer and food."

"Everything will be there on site," he said.

Modern Superstar and Gypsy Pistleros, will take place Friday night and will feature alternative rock music. Controlled Detonation, the 1st Infantry Division rock band, will play Saturday night.

An additional attraction – one that had not been done at Oktoberfest carnivals – is the presence of vendors, both on- and off-post organizations and local businesses.

"This way you're not just coming to sit and let kids have fun, you can also do some shopping and look around," Clayton said.

Wristbands are available for purchase at the event, so Clayton said "all you have to do is show up."

Chappie, a local one-man musical entertainer, will perform Thursday. The Rockin' Ink Tour, which includes

HOUSE
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See FRESH START, page 17