

COMMUNITY CORNER

Commander reminds Families to be safe during July 4 festivities

By Col. William Clark
GARRISON COMMANDER

With the upcoming Independence Day holiday, the nation celebrates its 236th birthday. During that time, the U.S. Army has remained steadfast in its defense of equality, diversity and freedom.

At the foundation of our service are duty, honor and love of country. We celebrate these values each year with this

holiday. As you celebrate the holiday, remember to keep safety in mind.

Fourth of July, historically, has become one of the most dangerous – if not the most dangerous – holidays of the year. The combination of hot temperatures, alcohol



Col. Clark

and fireworks can be very hazardous. Last week, I spoke about the dangers of the high temperatures we've been experiencing – remember, hydration and good nutrition go a long way in preventing heat injury. The key is to keep your body temperature regulated – and cool in the heat.

Avoid overindulging in alcoholic beverages at barbecues or picnics you may attend with family and friends. This also

will affect your hydration. And by no means should you drink and drive – it's a recipe for disaster. You will endanger your life and the lives of others. So either do not drink if you plan to drive or ensure you will have a designated driver.

Additionally, although fireworks are traditionally associated with Independence Day, fireworks are not authorized at Fort Riley.

I encourage you to enjoy the firework shows with our

neighbors in the local community. Here are just a few places where you can celebrate and watch fireworks:

JUNCTION CITY

Sundown Salute Fireworks Extravaganza, 10 p.m. July 4 at Heritage Park, 6th and Washington streets

MANHATTAN

Thunder over Manhattan, After Sunset July 4 at Cicco Park on Kimball Avenue

WAMEGO

Fireworks display, 10 p.m. July 4 at Wamego Recreation Complex

I thank each of you for your service and sacrifice. Enjoy the long weekend and have a safe Fourth of July.

If you would like to comment on this article, or suggest a topic for a future Community Corner, email usarmy.rileyincom.mbx.post-newspaper@mail.mil.

WTB commander updates JC MAC on battalion's mission

By Katherine Rosario
JCH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Fort Riley's Warrior Transition Battalion is dedicated to providing a structure for wounded, ill and injured Soldiers to heal – and that battalion returns about 55 percent of its Soldiers back to the fighting force, said WTB Commander Lt. Col. Christopher Zielke, during a recent Junction City/Geary County Military Affairs Council breakfast.

Soldiers admitted to the WTB require long-term care for complex illnesses, wounds and injuries and come from all components of the Army: active duty, National Guard and Army Reserve.

The Soldiers' main goal while in the WTB is to heal, and any Soldier who needs medical care is seen within 24 hours," Zielke said.

All Soldiers must complete

a Comprehensive Soldier Fitness plan and update it weekly while in the battalion to ensure they are building resiliency during their healing process. The plan looks at the Soldiers' career, physical, emotional, social, family and spiritual fitness.

Soldiers receive care through their primary care doctor and nurse case managers who work closely with the Soldiers' squad leaders to ensure optimal care is given, Zielke said.

A portion of the Soldiers in the unit live in a \$54-million WTB complex – a first-of-its-kind in the Army, which houses

156 Soldiers in specially modified barracks to accommodate those with physical disabilities.

The WTB also is in charge of a remote care WTB in Utah, consisting of National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers who span 17 states.

"These Soldiers are given care remotely due to their

Guard and Reserve status, and we try to get them home to where their support is and where their families are," Zielke said.

The Army is looking into closing down some of the remote-based WTBs to better split the Soldiers up among the regions, he said.

"Right now, we're not going to close down their mission, but they will be split up, and a bulk of it will come here to Fort Riley," Zielke said, adding Fort Riley's WTB will pick up about 200 more Soldiers from the plains states.

Nearly 380 Soldiers are assigned to Fort Riley's WTB, and more than 280 are assigned to the Community-Based Warrior Transition Unit in Utah.

"We are at about 100-percent capacity at both facilities, and we are very busy, and I don't see it going down anytime soon," Zielke said.

Exchange reducing toy prices for 'Christmas in July' event

AFES

DALLAS – The Army and Air Force Exchange Service is giving shoppers the opportunity to beat the December rush while saving big on some 300 toys with its "Christmas in July" toy sale.

From July 1 to 14, everything from Leapsters to Legos to Barbies and more will be discounted anywhere from 25 to 50 percent off. Additionally, shoppers using their Military Star card will receive a 10-percent discount on any toy purchase of \$100 or more.

"These are some 'toy-riffic' prices on all the toys kids love," said the Exchange's Chief of Staff Col. Thomas Ockenfels.

"Whether it's for an upcoming birthday or a jump start on Christmas shopping, this is one sale that parents won't want to miss."

HOUSE FILL AD