

COMMUNITY CORNER

October Energy Awareness Month opportunity to focus on savings

By Col. William Clark
GARRISON COMMANDER

Sustainability – it's not just an Army buzz word, it is a part of daily operations at Fort Riley. During October, Energy Awareness Month, we – as a garrison and as a community – have the opportunity to focus and strengthen our efforts to significantly improve the Army's energy security. At Fort Riley, we are doing our part to improve our energy consumption. Besides just being a good idea as good stewards of the earth, developing our energy independence makes good sense from a force

protection standpoint. If our energy resources are our own, they become harder targets for terrorism.

Fort Riley's Energy Branch, Directorate of Public Works, works day in and day out to keep us on track and energy conscious, and we've made great strides.

Fort Riley was designated a Net Zero water installation in 2011. A Net Zero Water installation is defined as one which limits the consump-



Col. Clark

tion of fresh water and returns water back to the same watershed, so as not to deplete the groundwater and surface water resources of that region in quantity or quality.

According to Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment, who announced the selected installations, Fort Riley along with the other installations will become centers of environmental and energy excellence. Further, they will establish a framework of reduction, re-purposing, recycling and composting, energy recovery, and disposal to guide them toward achieving

net zero in an environmentally responsible, cost-effective and efficient manner.

Additionally, we have local initiatives in place. For example, on post, all new construction has to be 30 percent more efficient than the national standard. Since 2012, all federal buildings must have meters that will allow individuals to monitor and control systems such as heating and cooling – this includes Fort Riley.

These are just a few examples of our efforts in reducing our energy consumption. I encourage everyone to take a look at their actions each day.

Every little bit helps and when we all work together we can accomplish our goals.

One of the biggest ways you can help, in general, is to reduce your own energy usage. Some suggestions include:

- Turning off lights in unoccupied rooms or when sufficient daylight is coming through windows.
- Unplugging personal refrigerators and using a community refrigerator in the break room instead.
- Making sure windows and doors remain closed and tightly sealed during harsh weather.
- Turning off monitors.

copies and printers at the end of the day.

• Replacing incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.

To learn more about saving energy at work and at home, visit www.energy.gov. And, keep an eye on the newspaper during October for more stories about how Fort Riley is putting energy savings to work.

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

JCHS receives new schedule for 2012-2013 school year

By Pamela Redford
1ST INF. DIV. POST

TEACHERS, STUDENT OPINIONS

Junction City High School switched to a new class structure for the 2012 to 2013 school year in an effort to create a balanced block schedule and be more fiscally responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Instead of having seven 90-minute classes, now students at the Freshman Success Academy and the Career Campus have eight 80-minute classes, alternating every other – blue and white – day.

From 2 to 2:40 p.m. every day students have a seminar period, during which they can get help with homework, conduct club meetings, participate in a career exploration cluster, work on school improvement initiatives or read a book – to name a few options.

Teachers still have a planning period every day, but it is 10 minutes less than it used to be.

According to JCHS Principal Melissa Sharp, a teacher's lost time is a student's gained time – students are gaining 30 minutes of instructional time per week with the new schedule.

Students also have the opportunity to take more elective classes, like robotics, music theory, earth and social sciences.

Former JCHS principal Stanley Dodds worked for years with a scheduling committee to research options for a new schedule that would better meet the needs of the students and the school district, Sharp said, and the balanced block is a result of years of hard work and negotiation.

The need for the balanced block arose from a discrepancy in class sizes, Sharp said. Before the change, class sizes and instructional time were heavier on white days with four classes and lighter on blue days with three classes.

Now, with four classes per day and a seminar period, classes are smaller and there is more opportunity for involvement and help, Sharp said.

Another reason for the move to a balanced block was that the old schedule – in place for 16 years – was one of the most expensive options available, Sharp said.

In this economy, she said, the district has to do more with less and be fiscally responsible with taxpayer dollars.

Although the new schedule

er workload, and it has created an environment that our students have not adjusted to yet. The same can be said for the staff, when you add an extra class, you are potentially adding an extra class for the teachers to plan for, and this creates less time for the teachers to grade, plan, collaborate or help students.

"Overall, I feel the schedule is workable. I also feel, however, that we need more electives offered with qualified teachers in those areas to help reduce the number of students in the elective courses offered currently. The common complaint I hear from elective teachers is that class sizes are too large to apply serve each student enrolled." – Sarajane Shubert, sophomore English teacher, JCHS

"Finally, the new schedule 'should' reduce most class sizes, thus making the classroom more efficient for students and teachers. But this is definitely not the case for all staff, as some classes are topping out at 30, 35, or even over 40 students in a single traditional classroom, and most P.E. classes are well over that number of 40. I've always been a firm believer in 'quality over quantity,' and it's unfortunate that some teachers are overloaded to the point where effective classroom instruction is not always available." – Dustin DeLehany, sophomore and junior English teacher, JCHS

"I like the new schedule because I like having seminar on both days. The seminar is set up where we can work on the career we want to get to ... I mainly use it to do homework. A lot of us are really busy after school with sports." – Nate Funk, 16, military Family member and junior at JCHS

"Currently it is not as advantageous as I thought it would be; there are some issues with students not having enough time to see their instructors during seminar, which is the time when they can receive extra help or support in their classes. There are only certain days when students are allowed to travel during the designated seminar time and it creates an issue when students need to meet with an instructor but they are not allowed to. To add to the issue, every student is taking an extra course this year, which undoubtedly, is creating a high-

"The change doesn't really bother me that much, but it took me a little bit to get into the swing of things. I think (the new schedule) works because there's not a whole lot of break time between classes – it's just you get through a class and go to the next one ... I think it's a good change – a lot faster paced. There's not as much time for seminar, but it takes out a lot of the unneeded parts, like designated reading time." – Jackson Timmerman, military Family member and junior at JCHS

"The times are changing. District has to look at how to better utilize what we have," she said.

Eventually, through attrition, the new schedule will save the district money because they won't have to employ as many teachers. With the balanced block, all teachers have three classes a day and one planning period.

"We're able to service the same number of students we had a year ago with less staff," Sharp said, adding, "It's not about money. It's about providing balanced services for our students."

Although the new schedule

BOSS to team with Zombie Toxin for haunted house in Junction City

By Pamela Redford
1ST INF. DIV. POST

There's a new haunted house in town.

In years past, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers members have created their own haunted house at Fort Riley, but this year the organization will collaborate with Zombie Toxin in Junction City to bring an even bigger, better night of fright to those who dare to enter 417 North Franklin St.

According to BOSS Vice President Pfc. Peter Smith, tankerman, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, the haunted house on post had serious competition in October 2011 due to the opening of Zombie Toxin, in which, he added, definitely reduced revenue from the annual BOSS money maker.

Rather than compete again this year, BOSS Soldiers decided to combine forces with Zombie Toxin Haunted House and Halloween Town and support the Junction City community in the process, Smith said.

Robert Blanken – the owner of Zombie Toxin – will have 15 "Big Red One" Soldiers each night to help support Zombie Toxin, Smith said.

The partnership is a win-win situation, Smith said. Instead of spending money on props, costumes and prosthetics as BOSS has done in years past, this time only manpower is required.

The good news is that BOSS will benefit financially from the partnership. In exchange for its manpower and support of Zombie Toxin, Blanken will contribute \$6,000 in sponsorship dollars to the program.

"I think it's great," Smith said, calling Blanken a "great community member and business owner."

Zombie Toxin has a zombie theme based on the back story of Dr. Von Monschture, a mad doctor obsessed with reanimating dead tissue. Attendees will experience 23 different rooms of horror, including motion-activated animatronics, 3D projectiles and live actors, Smith said.

Zombie Toxin has expanded the Haunted House this year to include Halloween

Town – an area designed specifically for children in a grassy, fenced-in area.

Carnival games, a laser maze, shooting gallery and more await youngsters who want to celebrate Halloween without too much of a scare.

The Zombie Toxin Haunted House opens Oct. 5 and Halloween Town opens Oct. 11. Both attractions will remain open on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays through Oct. 27 and also will be open Oct. 31.

Admission to Halloween Town is \$3. Tickets for the Zombie Toxin Haunted House are \$13 or \$18 for a speed pass to the front of the line. On Oct. 11, Zombie Toxin is offering \$3 off with active-duty military ID.

Discounted tickets can be found at Baskin Robbins, Junction City Bowl and Handy's Convenience Stores in Junction City.

For more information about tickets, coupons and featured events, visit www.zombietoxtin.com, call BOSS at 785-239-BOSS (2677) or email info@zombietoxtin.com.

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