

COMMUNITY CORNER

Garrison commander reminds Families to be thankful for what they have

By Col. William Clark
GARRISON COMMANDER

Happy early Thanksgiving to all! As the majority of Fort Riley celebrates a long weekend in honor of Thanksgiving, please be sure to take some time to remember what you are thankful for – whether it's friends, Family, health, a job or a meal on the table.

At Fort Riley, we want to ensure that each of our Soldiers and Family members has the opportunity to properly enjoy Thanksgiving. Whether your Family is here and you will spend a quiet evening at home, or if you are traveling long distances to see your loved ones, I hope you enjoy the day off.

If you are staying and cooking at home, please keep fire safety in mind when cooking for Thanksgiving. For more tips, visit on food safety visit the USDA site at www.fsis.usda.gov/factsheets/Seasonal_Food_Safety_Fact_Sheets/index.asp.

If you are traveling, keep in mind that the highways and airports will be busy. Allow extra time for road or air travel so you are not in a rush and do not increase your chance of an accident. Practice defensive driving, if applicable, or make



Col. Clark

sure to follow all Transportation Security Administration regulations if flying. For local traffic, visit www.ksdot.org.

And if you don't have a place to go to this Thanksgiving, the Army family will welcome you at one of three dining facilities on post with a home-cooked, traditional Thanksgiving meal.

Demon Diner will host a meal from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 21, and Devil's Den and Cantigny dining facilities on Custer Hill will host meals from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 22.

I've been told the menu will include all the traditional fixings – turkey, ham, stuffing, potatoes and corn on the cob –

with just a few surprises in the mix. Pumpkin and apple pie will finish off what I am sure will be a tasty meal.

While you reflect on what you are thankful for this year, consider those in our community who may be less fortunate than you. Operation Santa Claus, a long-standing Fort Riley program that provides gifts for military Families who may otherwise be unable to provide them for their children, is in full effect. So, if shopping on Black Friday, maybe you can pick up an extra toy for our military Families in need.

Toys and monetary donations can be dropped off at the Op Santa Headquarters, Building 261 Stuart Ave., on Main

Post. Mailed donations should be sent to: Operation Santa Claus, P.O. Box 2427, Fort Riley, KS 66442. Donations also can be dropped off at one of about a dozen locations that include the 1st Inf. Div. headquarters, Building 580; Garrison headquarters, Building 500; each brigade headquarters building, the Exchange, Armed Forces Bank on Custer Hill, Fire Station 1 and the Forsyth Fire Station. Drop-off boxes also will be at the Wal-Mart in Junction City and Manhattan.

And, finally, I encourage you to take advantage of some of the early holiday activities at Fort Riley. The post will host a traditional German Christkindl market that will feature arts,

crafts and other gifts from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dec. 1 at Riley's Conference Center.

That same day, the Historical and Archeological Society of Fort Riley will host a Historic Tour of Homes from noon to 4 p.m. Dec. 3 on Main Post.

Finally, the post will light its holiday tree at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 6 in front of Garrison headquarters, Building 500.

Happy Thanksgiving, and let's make this a safe and joyous holiday season.

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

MRC Continued from page 11

ters deployed this year, 70 percent of their Families stayed in the Central Flint Hills Region, he said. Officials are pleased, MacWillie said, because it is a "huge difference" for them. When the Families stay together, Soldiers feel better, and they can communicate better, he added.

Thirty percent of those Families live on post, and 70 percent live in the local communities.

They decided "this is where the security is," MacWillie said. "This is where the schools are. This is where their friends are and their hearts."

MacWillie updated attendees on everything from 1st Inf. Div.-led operations in the Regional Command-East area of Afghanistan to the budget at Fort Riley and current training.

He said he wanted to dispel myths about the Army budget and its effects at Fort Riley. It's not bad, MacWillie said.

The Army is just going back to where it was, divesting itself of things it had to have while fighting on two fronts.

"And that's going to translate to Fort Riley, Kan.," MacWillie said. "It already has. A lot of our contracts are no longer there because they're not required."

With deployments to Iraq over and deployments to Afghanistan winding down, Soldiers will apply their trades at Fort Riley, MacWillie said, and fewer contractors will be needed.

The post won't see any new military starts in construction, he continued. The new hospital will be the last major construction at Fort Riley. That doesn't mean there won't be construction, as facilities must be updated, MacWillie said.

The general also highlighted the Friends of Fort Riley Day program, which, in the last year, is where Fort Riley officials have invited groups

of community members to the post to tour facilities, see equipment and interact with Soldiers.

MacWillie said he wanted to show citizens their Army because the big Army has invested in Fort Riley.

"You know that, but you have to be able to put your hands on those new tanks, and you have to be able to see the glow in the Soldier's face about the new Bradley Fighting vehicles," he said, referring to a vehicle whose newest version is being fielded by Fort Riley troops.

"We think through this Friends of Fort Riley that we can empower you to be the advocate – two-way street," MacWillie said. "You can tell us what's not right, what is needed. And then once you know about your Army, you can go out and tell others."

It's making Fort Riley stronger every day, he added.

CUPCAKE BLISS



ABOVE: Jason Harris and Ian McCluskey, members of the 4-H Cooking Club at the Middle School Teen Center mix ingredients to make cupcakes during the Cupcake Festival Nov. 15 at the MSTC. The festival celebrated the enjoyment and fun of baking and decorating. Children baked cupcakes, decorated them, ate them and shared them with other children and parents at the facility. The cooking club meets at 4:30 p.m. on Fridays.



RIGHT: Makenzie Dry adds batter to cupcake pans to make cupcakes Nov. 15 at the MSTC.

Photos by Sam Turner
MSTC

Fort Riley Weekly Luncheon Bible Study



When: Noon to 1 p.m. Wednesdays
Where: Fort Riley USO – next to Burger King on Custer Hill
What: Weekly free lunch – Fort Riley USO and chaplain-led Bible study
POC's: Chap. Adriatico 239-9530, Chap. Ball 240-3855



Would you be ready to shelter-in-place?

For some emergencies, the safest course of action is to stay where you are.

- Get an emergency kit.
- Know how to secure your home.
- Listen to the radio or TV for instructions.

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It's up to you. Prepare Strong.





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<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/605757>