

## COMMUNITY CORNER

# Services available for veterans

By Col. Kevin Brown  
GARRISON COMMANDER

For more than half of the last century, U.S. Soldiers have been involved in operations around the globe. More than four million Soldiers fought in World War I; more than 11 million in World War II; almost three million in Korea; more than four million in Vietnam; and almost 800,000 in the Gulf War. Since operations began in Afghanistan and Iraq, most of our Soldiers have deployed at least once, if not three, four or five times.

While those may seem like large numbers, according to U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Defense statistics, in 1950, just six years after the end of World War II, slightly less than 1 percent of Americans were serving in the military. In 1972, just before the end of the draft, 1.12 percent of Americans were serving in the military. Today's all-volunteer military is made up of just under half a percent of the American public.

This past week we honored those veterans, those who had the courage to serve. Some served by choice and some served by chance, nonetheless, they all deserve our respect and the support of the Army.

Fort Riley's Irwin Army Community Hospital houses a one-stop shop for veterans on the fourth floor of the hospital. The IACH Department of Veterans Affairs office provides services and information for Soldiers, veterans, family members and survivors. Services provided include assistance and information on VA benefits such



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as disability claims and compensation, pension and VA home loan guarantee, educational programs and vocational rehabilitation and employment information. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Walk-ins are welcome, but they recommend you call ahead. Call 785-240-7307 for vocational rehabilitation and employment, 785-240-7302 for veterans health administration, and 785-240-7283 for military service coordinators. For more information on VA services, stop by the office or visit [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

For our veterans recently redeployed from the Mideast, Fort Riley offers numerous services to help with reintegration to garrison life. On the lighter side, the Army Substance Abuse Program is sponsoring Comics on Duty Nov. 19 for the Soldiers of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team. The comedic act also will perform an evening show for all ID card holders 17 and older at 7 p.m. Nov. 19 at Riley's Conference Center. For more information, call 785-239-9435.

As they returned home, the "Dagger" Brigade's Soldiers each had the opportunity to speak to a military family life consultant. The consultants keep no records to encourage Soldiers to speak openly and honestly about their experiences and what they feel they need. Consultants then

can refer the Soldiers to the help they need. For more information on military family life consultants, call 785-221-9483 or 785-239-9535.

Veterans who are transitioning out of the Army can benefit from the Army Career and Alumni Program. ACAP provides pre-separation briefings, counseling and referrals to teach Soldiers about programs available to help them transition to civilian life. The staff also provides job assistance and resources. For more information on ACAP, visit [www.acap.army.mil](http://www.acap.army.mil), call 785-239-2278 or stop by the ACAP main office in Building 210 Custer Ave., Room 006 of the Soldier and Family Assistance Center office in Building 671A Third St.

Besides housing an ACAP office, the Soldier and Family Assistance Center also provides wounded warriors with everything from housing to assistance receiving benefits. The SFAC is located in Buildings 671A and 673A just east of the hospital on Warrior Road.

Explore Fort Riley's Web site at [www.riley.army.mil](http://www.riley.army.mil) to learn about other services offered for our veterans and their families. We continually strive to fit our services to the needs of our Soldiers and their families to provide them with benefits commensurate with the sacrifices they make. Thank you to all of the Soldier and Families at Fort Riley and across our Army. We appreciate you.

*If you would like to comment on this article or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, e-mail [tile.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil](mailto:tile.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil).*

# Postal Service announces guidelines for holiday mailing; free kits available

By Air Force Tech.  
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ARMY NEWS SERVICE

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – U.S. Postal Service officials have announced recommended mailing dates for delivery by Christmas to U.S. servicemembers serving in Afghanistan and other overseas locations.

First-class and priority mail for servicemembers stationed in Afghanistan should be sent by Dec. 4 for arrival by Christmas. The deadline for parcel airtel mail is Dec. 1, and space-available mail bound for Afghanistan should be sent by Nov. 21.

Officials recommend parcel post mail to all military overseas locations should be sent by Nov. 13.

A chart with recommended mailing deadlines for all types of mail to various APO and FPO addresses is available at the Postal Service's Web site.

Express mail cannot be used to mail packages to Afghanistan; however, priority mail is available.

Priority mail packaging products, including priority mail flat-rate boxes, can be obtained free at any post office or online at <http://shop.usps.com>.

The priority mail large flat-rate box can be used to mail to any overseas military address, no matter the weight of the box, for \$11.95.

The U.S. Postal Service offers free military care kits, designed for military families sending packages overseas. To order by phone, call 1-800-610-8734 and ask for the military care kit. Each kit includes two "America Supports You" large priority mail flat-rate boxes, four medium-sized priority mail flat-rate boxes, six priority mail labels, a roll of pri-



ority mail tape and six customs forms with envelopes.

"All packages and mail must be addressed to the individual servicemember by name, without rank, in accordance with Department of Defense regulations," said Air Force Master Sgt. Deb LaGrandQuintana, the 455th Expeditionary Communications Squadron official mail manager.

Military overseas units are assigned an APO or FPO ZIP code, and, in many cases, that ZIP code travels with the unit wherever it goes, LaGrandQuintana said.

The Postal Service places APO and FPO mail to overseas military servicemembers on special transportation destined to be delivered as soon as possible.

Mail sent APO and FPO addresses may require customs forms. All mail addressed to military post offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions regarding content, preparation and handling. For general guidelines on sending mail to servicemembers overseas, visit [www.usps.com/supportingourtroops](http://www.usps.com/supportingourtroops). Postal Service officials recommend taking the following measures when sending packages:

- If you use a regular box, use one strong enough to protect the contents with no writing on the outside.
- Cushion contents with newspaper, bubble wrap or Styrofoam. Pack tightly to avoid shifting.
- Package food items like cookies, fudge, candies, etc. securely in leak-proof containers.
- Use pressure-sensitive or nylon-reinforced packing tape.
- Do not use wrapping paper, string, masking tape or cellophane tape outside the package.
- Print your return address and the servicemember's complete name, without rank, followed by unit and APO or FPO delivery address only on one side of the package.
- Place a return address label inside the package.
- Stuff fragile items with newspaper or packing material to avoid damage.
- Remove batteries from toys and appliances. Wrap and place them next to the items inside.
- Purchase insurance and delivery confirmation service for reassurance of package delivery.

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