

COMMUNITY CORNER

Building sustainability, resiliency goal of new 5-4-9 work schedule

By Col. Kevin Brown
GARRISON COMMANDER

As of Jan. 4, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Riley has begun a trial run of a new schedule for many of its employees. The alternate work week – referred to as a 5-4-9 schedule – has several goals that get at Fort Riley's and the 1st Infantry Division's goals of building resiliency and sustainability.

The 5-4-9 schedule allows employees to build up hours by working five nine-hour days one week. The next week, employees work three nine-hour days and one eight-hour day. By Friday of the second week, employees will have worked their 80 hours and will get Friday off.

Of course this schedule can't apply to everyone. Emergency responders, child care workers and those staffing recreation facilities are some of the employees who don't fall under this plan.

Most garrison administration offices are participating in the test, which will run from January to March.

The goal of this test is twofold: to cut down on Fort Riley's energy consumption and to increase employee satisfaction by providing extra time to spend at home.

By completely closing down numerous garrison buildings at least two extra days per month, the post's energy bill should drop by thousands of dollars. While the energy will be used for an extra hour on other days, the cost for the extra hour versus a whole day should be significant. These are factors the employees at the Directorate of Public Works will be monitoring closely during our 5-4-9 schedule trial run to determine if the savings are worthwhile. I expect they will be.

On the other side of the coin is



Col. Brown

resiliency. Fort Riley employs thousands of dedicated employees. While I know they love their jobs, I also recognize the fact they love to spend time with their Families and at their own pursuits.

The 5-4-9 schedule – if implemented for the long run

– will provide employees with 21 extra days off per year excluding training and federal holidays.

Soldiers and Family members may be concerned about lapses in service. This won't happen. Most days of the week, employees will have more time to accomplish their tasks and essential services won't be participating in the 5-4-9 schedule.

I ask everyone to work with us and help Fort Riley and the 1st Inf. Div. make strides toward our goals.

With the Jan. 8 external release of the 2015 Fort Riley Campaign Plan everyone will be aware of our intentions – to make Fort Riley the best division-level installation in the Army.

To accomplish this will require the participation of our Soldiers, Families, civilian and contract employees, and our community partners. I have no doubts that we can do it – and know we are already well on our way there. Keep an eye on the newspaper and www.riley.army.mil in the upcoming weeks for more information on the 2015 Campaign Plan.

If you would like to comment on this article or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, e-mail rile.post.newspaper@com.us.army.mil.

BOWLING IN A NEW YEAR



Partygoers celebrate New Year's Eve at Custer Hill Lanes. The event, which was open to the public, included bowling, party favors, a champagne toast at midnight, a breakfast buffet and door prizes. DEMPER

Family, friends can build on spirit of holiday season through new year

By Nancy Peterson
K-STATE RESEARCH
AND EXTENSION

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Holiday gatherings bring Families together, and two Kansas State University specialists are encouraging Families and friends to build on the spirit of the season in the new year.

Maintaining the connections with Family and friends throughout the new year can add joy to life and serve as the foundation for a support system during the inevitable ups and downs in life, said Charlotte Shoup Olsen, K-State Research and Extension Family systems specialist.

"Time is a factor for everyone," said Olsen, who urges scheduling time for yourself and your relationships on a weekly basis.

Doing so can be just as important as scheduling a school or business conference, she said.

In educating couples as to how to improve communications skills to enhance – and strengthen – their relationship, Olsen encourages setting aside time for a walk, cup of coffee or conversation about their day each day.

In saying that, she also advises couples to turn to each other, listen in-

tently and leave discussions about Family issues, finances or employment for another time.

"A couple's relationship serves as the basis of their – and their Family's – life together," said Olsen, who explained couples should not feel guilty about scheduling time for their relationship or a date.

Relationships evolve with the natural stages of life. Newly married couples will have more time to spend with each other than young parents, yet after the children are grown and on their own, a couple also may feel a time crunch caring for aging parents or extended Family, Olsen said.

Sellers, K-State's specialist on adult development and aging, is a colleague of Olsen's in the School of Family Studies and Human Services based in the College of Human Ecology at K-State.

Age should not be viewed as a deterrent in nurturing relationships with Family and friends, Sellers said. And, while consistency is key to making the connection and building a successful relationship, it can be particularly important for older adults, who typically shrink their circle of Family and friends shrink, Sellers said.

Making time for everyone isn't easy, but it is worth doing and will usually

add value to life, she added.

Finding the right combination in making a successful connection may take time, yet a regular call, afternoon running errands together, a ride on a sunny day or simply sitting together and looking through photographs can help to maintain a personal connection and a relationship, she said.

And, while computer-savvy older adults may check e-mail regularly, letters and cards are appreciated, Sellers said.

"Having something tangible to read and re-read is comforting," said Sellers, who noted many older adults will often hang on to cards to display them long after a celebrated day or occasion.

"Be authentic. An unscheduled or impromptu visit may be the highlight of the day for an older adult and much more successful in nurturing a relationship than a hurried, obligatory visit," Olsen said.

Encouraging older adults to volunteer within the community or their living area and to engage in educational and social opportunities to meet others with similar interests also can help to expand an otherwise shrinking social circle and support system, Sellers said.

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CYSS offers college prep classes

By Ashley Strehle
1ST INF. DIV. POST

The transition from high school to college can be tough for both parents and students. That's why Child, Youth and School Services will offer college preparation seminars.

The seminars are open to anyone interested in the topics being presented, said Stacy Groth, CYSS Liaison, Education and Outreach Services director.

"All are welcome," she said.

The free classes will be held from January until May.

All of the classes will be at 7 p.m. in the CYSS conference room in Building 6620, unless otherwise noted.

Classes are taught by local school district professionals and community partners, including representatives from Parent 2 Parent, K-State Research and Extension Office and Army Community Service.

"The program was designed to support Families and youth through the various stages of the educational process," Groth said.

Earlier classes have discussed topics such as successful parent-teacher conferences and school transitions.

The college preparation seminar courses will cover topics to support life after high school, Groth said.

A new series of college preparation seminars will begin on Jan. 13 with a seminar on financial aid.

College Choices will be the next topic covered in a seminar on Jan. 21. On Feb. 18 a seminar on preparing financially to leave home will be held in the ACS Annex.

The seminars in April will cover resume and college essay writing, and school transitions, they will be held on April 8 and 15, respectively.

A seminar on May 13 will cover job interviews.

For more information on the college preparation seminars, call 785-239-9539.

For more information on CYSS and its programs, visit www.rileymwr.com.

Check out Custer Hill Bowling Alley's specials by going to www.rileymwr.com and clicking on "Bowling."

