

COMMUNITY CORNER

Secretary of defense helps break ground for \$20M new school on post

By Col. Kevin Brown
GARRISON COMMANDER

Just a year after his last visit to Fort Riley, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates returned to post May 19 to break ground on a new elementary school at Fort Riley in the Forsyth neighborhood. Along with post leaders, school officials and other VIPs, Gates helped break ground on the more than \$20-million facility. Estimated to house about 650 students, Geary County Unified School District 475 officials hope the school will be ready to welcome students

from the Forsyth and Colyer Manor neighborhoods for the 2012 to 2013 school year.

It is fitting Gates was here yesterday, as he delivered the news May 8, 2010, that Fort Riley would receive federal funding for school improvements. I appreciate the time Secretary Gates took to come out to Fort Riley and help us mark this milestone. I also appreciate his time in hosting



Col. Brown

a town hall with our Family members who support their Soldiers day in and day out.

I am thrilled to see the elementary school project begin as it represents another way Fort Riley, the Army and the Department of Defense continue their pledge to provide excellent service to our service members and their Families.

In October 2007, the Army unveiled the Army Family Covenant, which institutionalizes the Army's commitment to provide Soldiers and Families – active, Guard and Reserve – a quality of life commensurate with their level of service and

sacrifice to the nation. Among the commitments made in the Army Family Covenant was "expanding education and employment opportunities for Family members."

Bottom line: Fort Riley's school district, USD 475, is over capacity, and this new school will help alleviate the stress on the system.

It represents educational opportunity at Fort Riley. With completion of the new school in the Forsyth neighborhood, Fort Riley will have another exceptional educational facility for our children – bringing the total number

of elementary schools on post to six.

This comes at a very important time as the post has seen unprecedented growth in the last five years. And next year, we will likely have the largest number of troops with boots on the ground in Kansas since the mid 1990s. You may have already noticed an increase in Soldiers on and around post.

But in 2012, we expect to have five brigades – around 18,000 Soldiers – home. Many of these Soldiers will bring with them their Families, who rely on us and our local partners to provide educational services to

their children.

Education is a top priority at Fort Riley. No matter how many times it's said, it's true, our children are our future.

Building a new school is part of that. Not only will the facility be new and updated, but it will allow for smaller class sizes and more individualized attention for our students.

We will do whatever we can to ensure we give our children the best education possible.

To comment on this article or suggest a topic for Community Corner, email rlc.post.news@percussus.army.mil.



Shandi Dix | POST

Dana Quinn, manager and closer, Kansas Secured Title, far left, talks to potential homebuyers about title insurance May 10 during the DPW Housing Services Officer Home-Buying seminar at Riley's Conference Center.

Potential homebuyers learn about process during seminar

By Shandi Dix
1ST INF. DIV. POST

Sixteen potential homeowners took advantage of a free Home-Buying seminar at Riley's Conference Center May 10.

The seminars are sponsored by the Housing Services Office, Directorate of Public Works.

"The Home-Buying training seminars help by taking the bite out of the home-buying experience, by giving facts about what to expect on this journey," said Derina Williams, housing management specialist, Housing Services Office, DPW. "For the prior homeowners, they will learn of any changes to the home-buying process. These seminars prepare you for what is to come."

Ingwersen said the training seminars provide future hom-

owners more information. "I didn't know when I came into the business what title insurance was, so I'm just saying it's more for information that they know what the process (is) as far as the realtor, then the lender, what title insurance is," she said. "That's why we are here – to kind of help with how the process should go."

Among the attendees were Shelley and Cpl. Scott Fiddner, 299th Brigade Support Battalion rear detachment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

The Fiddners are looking at purchasing a home in South Carolina and are trying to get the most information they can, the couple said.

The Fort Riley Housing Services Office continually

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Post to offer Rental Property Management training May 24

By Shandi Dix
1ST INF. DIV. POST

When preparing to rent a property, homeowners should ask themselves questions like, "Do you know how to advertise for renters," and "Do you have the ability to perform background and credit checks on renters?"

If homeowners answer "no" to any of those questions, then they may need to consider using a property manager to rent their home.

Fort Riley's Directorate of Public Works Housing Office is offering Rental Property Management training at 1 p.m. May 24 at Riley's Conference Center.

"With the shifting economy, more people find themselves in the position of needing to rent their home," said Elbert New-

man, chief, House Services, DPW. "In the Housing Services office, we are seeing an increasing number of customers in this situation. They may be leaving Fort Riley due to (permanent change of station) orders or deployment, can't sell the home, want to keep the home to return to or have purchased the home as an investment property. Some are trying to manage these properties as absentee landlords, which often results in problems."

The training seminar will provide an overview of how residential property management works and the services offered; Kansas landlord and tenant laws; landlord and tenant responsibilities; why it is advisable to hire a professional property manager; and what to consider when selecting a property manager.

Guest speakers at the event will be Annette and Craig Lauppe with Advanced Property Management, Manhattan.

The training is free and open to all service members, Department of Defense civilians, military retirees and the local community.

People should attend the training to become educated and informed in the rental management process and the steps to take to be successful in renting property, Newman said.

"Residential property is a major investment. Personnel considering turning their property into a rental need to educate themselves in the process to avoid costly mistakes," he said.

For more information or to make a reservation, call 1-800-643-8991 or 785-239-3525.

