

## COMMUNITY CORNER

# Month of the Military Child celebrates 'heroes' beginning in April

By Col. William Clark  
GARRISON COMMANDER

According to the American Heritage dictionary, a hero is "a person noted for feats of courage or nobility of purpose." This term is often assigned to service members and veterans. In April, we will recognize a different kind of hero – the military child.

Since 1986, the U.S. has celebrated the more than 1.7 million children under the age of 18 who have at least one parent serving in the armed forces. We celebrate them during April's Month of the Military

Child, and this year's theme is "Military Kids: Heroes for the Future."

Although military children are not often the first thing that comes to mind when we think of a hero, by the definition, they certainly are. Military children are courageous every day, especially in a military that has now faced more than 10 years of conflict. This conflict brings deployments, often multiple. Our children deal



Col. Clark

with separation and stress that most adults never will, and yet, often, they do so with such ease. In honor of these heroes, Fort Riley is planning some special events on post to recognize our children and their contributions to our military Families.

Child, Youth and School Services under the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation will spearhead most of the events, beginning with the Month of the Military Child and Child Abuse Prevention Month proclamation signings. This will take place during the kick-off event for the month, the Pancake Breakfast

and School Ages Services Fashion Show from 9 a.m. to noon March 31 at the Forsyth East Child Development Center. Both events are free.

The Great Escapes Expo, a travel and leisure event, will follow from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Riley's Conference Center.

A few other key events include:

- Month of the Military Child Parade – Preschoolers will participate in a parade April 10 from Riley's Conference Center to Garrison Headquarters.
- Building 500, where they will sing a song and be addressed by Garrison Command Sgt. Maj.

Colvin D. Bennett.

- "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" – A professional theater company, Great Plains Theatre, Abilene, Kan., will have a live performance of the play at 6 p.m. April 10 at Barlow Theater. Tickets are available at the Leisure Travel Center on Custer Hill at no cost. The play is based upon Eric Carle's much-loved children's book.

- Month of the Military Child Festival – The festival will be from noon to 3 p.m. April 22 at the Forsyth and Forsyth East CDCs and will include face painting, a jump rope competition, bullying prevention,

a static fire truck display, train rides and arts and crafts, among a plethora of other activities. All activities and food at the festival are free and open to the public.

This list is not all-inclusive. Visit [www.rileymc.com](http://www.rileymc.com) to see a full list of events – and there are plenty. Let's turn out in force to these events to show our children we are proud of their contributions to our Families.

*If you would like to comment on this column or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, send an email to [rlc-post.newspaper@coms.army.mil](mailto:rlc-post.newspaper@coms.army.mil).*

## Division recognizes 'Devil' Brigade spouses

By Mollie Miller  
1ST INF. DIV. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Volunteers whose selfless service has improved the quality of life of the Soldiers and Families of the 1st Infantry Division were recognized March 15 during a ceremony at division headquarters.

Brig. Felix Gedney, 1st Inf. Div. deputy commanding general for transition, and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Kenny, senior noncommissioned officer, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., presented division spouses with the Dr. Mary E. Walker award. The recipients of the award were all members of the "Devil" Brigade.

"Volunteers transform military installations into communities," Kenny said. "The volunteers we recognize today have bettered the Army, not only for themselves, but for everyone around them."

Walker, the only female recipient of the Medal of Honor, has been described as a woman of immense courage and bravery who worked hard to enhance the quality of life for all those around her. The award that bears her name recognizes those



Mollie Miller | 1ST INF. DIV.

Brig. Felix Gedney, deputy commanding general for transition, 1st Inf. Div., congratulates award recipient Mary Cook following a Dr. Mary E. Walker award presentation March 15. Cook was one of eight 1st HBCT spouses recognized during the ceremony for work they have done to better the lives of Soldiers and Families. Also recognized were Stephanie Banks, Danielle Corenchuk, Tracy Duffy, Kimberly Grubbs, Kathy Katona, Kate Kidder and Jessica Supanich.

who, like her, have contributed significantly to the quality of life for Soldiers, exemplifying personal concern for the needs, training, development and welfare of Soldiers and concern for Families of Soldiers.

Dr. Mary Walker award recipient Mary Cook said doing

her part to help other Devil Brigade spouses thrive, rather than just survive the 1st HBCT's most recent deployment lies at the heart of all her volunteer efforts.

"For me, it is just about being a good example," she said. Cook's fellow 1st HBCT

spouses, Stephanie Banks, Danielle Corenchuk, Tracy Duffy, Kimberly Grubs and Jessica Supanich, also received the Dr. Mary Walker award during the ceremony. Recognized, but not present at the ceremony were Kathy Katona and Kate Kidder.

## Exchange announces latest spring contest

AAFES PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DALLAS – As Spring blooms, Easter is just around the corner, and the Army and Air Force Exchange Service is ushering in the new season with its latest Patriot Family contest.

The "Patriot Family Peeps Diorama" contest gives military shoppers the opportunity to show their creative side and craft a patriotic scene using Peeps candy. Entrants must use a shoebox or comparable item of reasonable size to create a patriotic play, scene or event that inspires emotion. The winner will receive a \$1,000 Exchange gift card.

"We can't wait to see how creative military Families can get with their marshmallow masterpieces," said the Exchange's Chief of Staff Col. Tom Ockenfels. "If the entries are anywhere as imaginative as those from last year, we'll definitely have a tough time judging this contest."

Entries will be accepted through April 8. Judging will be based on originality, innovation and the entrant's ability to portray each scene in a respectable manner. Complete entry rules and regulations can be found at [www.shopmyexchange.com/Community/patriotfamily/contests.htm](http://www.shopmyexchange.com/Community/patriotfamily/contests.htm)

