

COMMUNITY CORNER

Fort Riley to celebrate Easter with activities for all throughout post

By Col. William Clark
GARRISON COMMANDER

This past weekend, I attended several great events at Fort Riley, among them were the Month of the Military Child Pancake Breakfast and the Great Escapes Expo. When I wrote about the Great Escapes Expo a few weeks back, I told you I wanted everyone to know there is plenty to do at Fort Riley and in the surrounding communities. This weekend, that still holds true.

As some Families celebrate Easter or Passover this weekend, I want you to know that Fort Riley has several activities planned to aid in this celebra-

tion.

A Family bowling and Easter egg party will be from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., April 7 at the Custer Hill Bowling Center. The event is open to all Department of Defense ID cardholders and their Families.

The cost is \$25 per lane and includes a large one-topping pizza, two pitchers of soda, six pairs of shoes and two hours of bowling. Children also will receive eggs filled with treats and get to participate in a drawing for an



Col. Clark

Easter basket.

At the post library, from 1 to 3 p.m., April 7, children ages 1 to 11 can hunt for eggs, do the bunny hop, make a craft project and have a snack. Children are asked to bring their own basket.

Then, on Easter morning, April 8, a sunrise service will be led by Garrison Chap. (Col.) Edwin Ahl at 6:45 a.m. at Morris Hill Chapel.

Following the service April 8, Riley's Conference will host its annual Easter Brunch from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., serving up omelets, French toast, maple-glazed ham, herb-roasted chicken, baked ziti with Italian sausage, peel-and-eat shrimp, side dishes, salad,

assorted breads, desserts and a variety of beverage choices. The cost of a ticket is \$13.75 for adults and \$7.95 for children. Children 4 years of age and younger eat free.

After the brunch, Families can participate in an Easter egg hunt, which begins at noon April 8 in the lawn behind Riley's Conference Center.

About 15,000 eggs will be split up between age groups, but all will be filled with candy and toys.

And for our single Soldiers, who may not be as interested in Easter egg hunts, there is entertainment for you, too. Why not participate in a non-traditional Easter activity that

is sure to help you enjoy the long weekend – paintball.

A paintball tournament will be from noon to 4 p.m., April 7 at the Outdoor Recreation Center, 9011 Rifle Range Road. Events will include speedball, capture the flag, search and destroy, and force-on-force. No advance registration is necessary – you can pay and sign up the day of the event. Cost to participate is \$10.

And if paintball isn't your thing, don't forget about the Warrior Zone – they have ongoing activities that include:

- 8-ball Billiard Tournament – First Thursday of the month
- Magic the Gathering – 7

p.m. to close, every Friday

- Texas Hold 'Em – Noon to 8 p.m., every Saturday
- WarHammer – Noon to midnight, every Saturday

Above all, while enjoying these and other activities, keep safety in mind. For many, this weekend is a four-day weekend. Enjoy it, but do so in a safe manner so we all return to work Tuesday morning ready to complete our missions.

For more information on recreational activities, visit www.rileymwr.com.

If you would like to comment on this column or suggest a topic for the Community Corner, send an email to rlc.post.newspaper@conus.army.mil.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

Descriptive praise build children's self esteem

By Joan E. Lefebvre
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

How do you react when someone says you are a great cook? Tells you how smart you are? Remarks on your attractiveness?

Do you doubt the person? Deny the compliment? Feel threatened? Fed manipulated? Some people react quite negatively to praise, either becoming openly defiant or withdrawing.

These are normal reactions to a positive judgment – you don't notice that the comment is positive, you notice that it is a judgment.

In an effort to enhance their children's self-esteem, parents often use praise to recognize the efforts and accomplishments of their children.

Obviously, recognizing our children's positive behavior is more likely to build self-esteem than dwelling on problems. But praise is not always uplifting.

Praise like "you're great... wonderful... marvelous" can be too much for anyone to take. It is hard to accept such extravagant praise. Did you ever notice how uncomfortable you get whenever anyone evaluates you? The minute someone tells you you're "good" or "pretty" or "smart," all you can think about are the times you were bad or felt ugly or did something dumb.

Children also become uncomfortable with praise that evaluates them. They often push it away. Sometimes they will deliberately misbehave to prove you wrong. For example, you tell Jason what a great artist he is, and he tells you Jenny is better at drawing. Or you tell Liz she sings beautifully, and she is embarrassed about your bragging.

DESCRIPTIVE PRAISE

Instead of evaluating what your child has done, it is usually better to describe it. Describe in detail exactly what your child did. Then your child, hearing the description, is likely to recognize the truth and credit his or herself.

The kind of praise a child can "take in" and that truly builds self-esteem comes in two parts. First, the adult describes what the child has done – "I see you are all ready to go to the store. You picked up your toys, put on your jacket and even turned off the light in your bedroom." Second, the child, after hearing his accomplishment described, praises himself – "I know how to plan ahead and be responsible."

Descriptive praise is harder and takes longer, but the payoff is usually greater. Descriptive praise helps children become independent, creative thinkers and doers. They do not look to somebody else for approval. They trust themselves and their own judgment. They have enough confidence to say to themselves, "I'm satisfied," or "I'm not satisfied," with what I have done. They learn to make corrections or adjustments based upon their own evaluations.

Descriptive praise is unconditional love, not conditional upon your approval.

EVALUATIVE PRAISE CREATES DEPENDENCY

Some praise creates dependency upon the approval of others. The evaluative praise, "You are a very generous person," makes the child dependent on the judgment of the praiser. But the descriptive praise, "When you saw that Elliot forgot his sandwich, you gave him part of yours" gives a child a sense of her own abilities and accomplishments.

Descriptive praise lets a child evaluate herself. If you want your daughter to focus her attention more on the impact she had on Elliot, you might say something like,

"Look at Elliot's face. He looks pretty happy because you gave him something to eat when he didn't have anything." You can help your child see how her actions affect others.

Ask yourself, does my praise make my children more dependent upon me and my approval, or do my words help them see their strengths and give them a clearer picture of their abilities and accomplishments? The goal is to let your children feel in touch with their own powers and to be able to praise themselves. The person your child needs to please is him or herself.

Good Job! Wonderful! Great! Praise, as it is commonly practiced, is a way of making and keeping children dependent on us. It gets them to conform to our wishes. It sustains a dependence on our evaluations and our decisions about what is good and bad, rather than helping them begin to form their own judgments. It leads children to measure their worth in terms of what will make us smile and offer the positive words they crave. It leads to a dependency on approval.

COMPONENTS OF DESCRIPTIVE PRAISE

Effective praise, then, has two parts. First, the parent expresses appreciation for some specific contribution or effort. Second, the child draws conclusions about himself or herself based on this specific statement from the parent.

For a mother to tell her son, "You're so strong" is not

as effective in building self-esteem as saying "That was really a heavy load. Thanks for your help." This boy can then think to himself, "I must be pretty strong. Mom thought I was a good helper." These internal conclusions will be much more believable to the child than a parent's general value judgment of the child as a person.

Evaluative comments are often unnecessary. In the long run, parents can become less judgmental and controlling, and help their children become more independent and motivated, simply by acknowledging what their children do. Just pointing out an aspect of a child's drawing that seems interesting – without saying it's nice or you liked it – will likely be enough to encourage further efforts.

For example, if your preschooler makes you a get-well card, instead of saying "It's beautiful," you can describe it: "I love these yellow balloons and red hearts. They cheer me up. I feel better already just looking at them."

PRACTICE USING DESCRIPTIVE PRAISE

It takes more thoughtful effort to use descriptive praise than evaluative praise. Why do we respond with a barrage of compliments? It's easy. It feels good to have someone looking to us for approval. But it takes skill and care and attention to encourage people in such a way they remain interested in what they are doing and don't feel controlled.

Remember descriptive praise has two parts: Describe what you see and hear; and Describe what you feel.



Calun Reece | POST
The Good News Club ends its meeting with a game and discussion of the Bible lesson for the day March 29 at Morris Hill Chapel. The club is a nondenominational after-school club for elementary-age children.

Good News Club kicks off 4-week program

By Calun Reece
1ST INF. DIV. POST

The Good News Club kicked off its four-week program March 29 at Morris Hill Chapel. The club is a nondenominational after-school club for elementary-age children and teaches Bible stories, scripture memorization and missionary life.

Activities and games also are included to help children learn about the Bible in an interactive way.

The children enjoy coming to the club, according to Peggy Weddle, homeschool teacher, Manhattan. The club only had 11 children signed up to attend, but about 60 attended the first meeting.

The club is instructed by a group of trained volunteers, which include teenagers and adults.

Joel Moldrup, homeschooled freshman, Manhattan, taught the group the Bible story.

"It's my second year of doing the Good News Club, and

I enjoy (teaching) very much," Moldrup said.

The youth volunteers are the teachers for the Good News Club, Weddle said, adding the volunteers complete two weeks of training through Child Evangelism Fellowship. The organization gives them the preparation and tools needed to teach the Bible to children, she said.

"I just love Child Evangelism Fellowship," Weddle said. "It's really helped with confidence, public speaking, and most importantly, the love and good news of Jesus, and it's made all the difference in our Family."

The club makes a difference in the lives of the children and the children's Families as well, Weddle said.

"Children from all different backgrounds come, and many of the Families here are stressed because of deployments," she said. "The parents are grateful for these activities."

For more information about the club or to join, call 785-239-0979.



For information about religious services at Fort Riley or to talk to a chaplain, call 239-3359 or visit www.riley.army.mil and click on "Fort Riley Services" under the Services link.