

FORT CARSON RETIREE NEWSLETTER



Retirement Services, 1625 Ellis St, Fort Carson, CO 80913, 719-526-2840/2660

FORT CARSON GARRISON COMMANDER UPDATE

I want to use this month's newsletter to update you on the many activities going on at Fort Carson. While there is much discussion in the Army about reduced budgets and fiscal constraints, we at Fort Carson continue to benefit from earlier Army decisions related to BRAC, growth, and force realignment that caused a large expansion of the Fort Carson military population and a need for new facilities. I believe this has directly benefited our retiree population as we have expanded many services of interest.

Most recently this included our grand opening ceremony of the expanded AAFES Exchange on Fort Carson. The completion of this project increased the facility size by nearly 60%, allowing our AAFES partner to greatly improve the quality of goods available. Renovations continue on the mini mall area as well as plans for an expanded Class VI facility on the Post.

In late Spring, we anticipate the much awaited opening of the new commissary facility at the intersection of Prussman and Chiles Roads. This facility

will provide the largest selection of products of military installations in the Front Range in a modern, state of the art facility. At Evans Army Community Hospital, the installation's medical facility has undergone considerable expansion with the opening of the Soldier Family Care Center last year. This facility increased Fort Carson's medical facility by approximately 50%, allowing our medical professionals to improve the delivery of medical care to our expanding active duty and retiree population.

In early December, the Fort Carson and El Paso County leadership participated in the ground breaking ceremony for the Cheyenne Mountain Shooting Complex. The location of the complex is near Gate 20 and will provide both the military and local community shooting enthusiast with a first rate, safe, shooting range. The efforts to bring this site to fruition were led by our Directorate for Family, Morale, and Recreation in partnership with El Paso County. We anticipate the first rounds "down range" in the Spring. The range will



provide another recreation service open to our retiree population.

We continue to see interest in the use of electronic media to communicate with our many audiences. The newsletter is one example that provides the garrison an opportunity to communicate more frequently and with more timely information at far less cost than our traditional yearly mail out. I appreciate your input to subject areas and hope to continue to make it a useful source of information. Finally, as we begin 2012, I want to wish you best wishes for the New Year. Thanks for your service and continued support to Fort Carson.

COL Robert F McLaughlin
Garrison Commander

1 January 2012

Special points of interest:

- Changes at the Gates
- Fort Carson Construction
- Winter Safety Tips
- FC Event List

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Greetings from the RSO - Ms. Leona Abdullah-Allen

2012 COLA Watch: Congress passed a bill to set the 2012 COLA rate at 3.6%. This will mean an increase in military retirement pay, VA rates for compensation and pension for disabled veterans and surviving families, and social security recipients beginning in January of 2

Your 1099R tax statement includes 13 payments this year. This isn't a mistake. The pay schedule for retirees was adjusted in mid-2011 to comply with the 2011 National Defense Authorization Act.

RSO Notes

NEW FORM MAKES REPORTING RETIREE DEATHS EASIER

DFAS has launched a new online form to make it easier for grieving family members to report the deaths of military retirees. Share this information with your loved ones:

<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/newsevents/newsletter/newform.html>

DOWNLOAD ENTIRE NEWSLETTER
Click the URL below and then use the "PDF Version" link at the bottom of the web page, if you'd like to save or print the entire newsletter in one document.

<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/newsevents/newsletter.html>

Australia Looking for a Few Good [US] Veterans <<http://tracking.military.com/cgi-bin/outlog.cgi?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Emilitary%2Ecom%2Fnews%2Farticle%2Faustralia%2Dlooking%2Dfor%2Da%2Dfew%2Dgood%2Dus%2Dveterans%2Ehtml%3FESRC%3Darmy%2Da%2Enl&code=111226WRAH01&eml=85b5e119bc12e575d922ba32348cc253>>

The U.S. military is downsizing. But for those who want to stay in uniform, there may be a new option emerging. Australia has put out the "Help Wanted" sign for foreign national veterans. Read More <<http://tracking.military.com/cgi-bin/outlog.cgi?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Emilitary%2Ecom%2Fnews%2Farticle%2Faustralia%2Dlooking%2Dfor%2Da%2Dfew%2Dgood%2Dus%2Dveterans%2Ehtml%3FESRC%3Darmy%2Da%2Enl&code=111226WRAH01&eml=85b5e119bc12e575d922ba32348cc253>>

1099R REQUESTS

If you lose your 1099R, there are two ways to get a copy, but the quickest, easiest way is myPay. Find out how:

<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/newsevents/newsletter/1099requests.html>

TRICARE Young Adult

TRICARE Young Adult is a premium-based health care plan that qualified dependents may purchase. TRICARE Young Adult provides medical and pharmacy benefits, but dental coverage is excluded.

Plan Overview

TRICARE Young Adult allows dependent adult children to purchase

Our R&R subscribers are circling the globe flying SPACE-A on military aircraft, staying in military lodging, taking trips and tours with ITT/ITR travel offices and having fun at military RV/camping and outdoor recreation areas. Together, these subscribers have a powerful clearing house of information by sharing their travel "finds" with each other via Military Living's @R&R Travel News.

FEATURES:

- a six-time yearly, by-subscription, 16-page military travel newsletter
- Learn to fly free on U.S. military and commercial contract aircraft
- Stay in military lodging

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE:

www.militaryliving.com

1-877-DoD-HOPS ext 1

Retiree Council Notes

As we start a new year, let us be thankful for all those who have served to protect our freedom and keep those on active duty in our prayers. The year 2012 is going to be a decisive year in American history, so I am asking each and every one of you to exercise your number 1 right "VOTE" in November 2012.

I am proud to announce that one of our council members, Latoya Lucas, has been appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to sit on his Advisory Committee for Women Veterans Issues. Latoya is one of 6 new members appointed to that prestigious committee. For further information go to: <http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2227>

VA has amended its regulations to add certain genitourinary injuries to the Schedule of Covered Losses under the Service members' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program, or TSGLI. For more information go to: <http://www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/TSGLI/TSGLI.htm>

The American Legion will be conducting a **FREE** 'Job & Resource Fair' on Thursday Jan 26 at the Plaza Hotel Conference Center, Longmont, CO. For more information contact you're nearest American Legion Post or the CO Legion web site:

<http://www.cololegionveteransresources.org>

Retiree Appreciation Day 2012 is tentatively scheduled for **October 20, 2012** at the Special Events Center, please mark your calendars.

You should notice a pay raise in your retired pay, VA disability and social security benefits, but along with that come increases in your taxes and Medicare 'Part B'. We are lucky to have received these, so budget them wisely, as we do not know what next year will bring.

*****I would like to invite all retirees to participate in the monthly Retiree Council meeting. We meet the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Cheyenne Shadows Golf Course Snack Bar at 9am. The meetings generally last 1 hour .

benefits to handicapped veterans provided by The Retiree Council has a cooperative relationship with America's Huey 091 Foundation. The Foundation is working to return the iBOT to production. A picture of the iBOT and a link to the foundation website is suggested.

www.huey091foundation.org . The website includes a link to a video introduced and narrated by Gary Sinise describing the quality of life Systems. Their iBOT Mobility



News from the MEDDAC — Evans Army Community Hospital

Local Phone Number Changes for TRICARE Appointment CARE Line

The local telephone number to call for TRICARE medical appointments has changed. Beneficiaries can dial 526-CARE or 524-CARE and continue to get access to care. The old 457-CARE was supported by Air Force funding to a contractor and is no longer available. As a result, Fort Carson MEDDAC chose to take over the local line. “By maintaining the number, we ensure continuity and quality of care to make an appointment that will get our beneficiaries to their patient centered medical homes,” said MEDDAC Commander COL Jimmie O. Keenan. Although the phone number prefix has changed, all of the other features and menus within the CARE line remain the same. Because Fort Carson MEDDAC owns the new numbers and hosts the new system onsite, there are other benefits as well. “This will ensure reliability and shorten response times to technical problems,” said MAJ. Roby Randall, MEDDAC Information Management Division chief. “The collaboration and cooperation between the Army and Air Force medical commands will save the taxpayers \$55,000 a year.” Beneficiaries calling the old number in December will hear a message about the new 524/526-CARE line

and then will be forwarded to the correct number. In January 2012, the old line will simply play a message about the new numbers. By February, the old line will be permanently cut off. Colonel Keenan emphasized that continuity and uninterrupted service is the focus. She said, “We truly want to ensure we do all we can each and every day to care for American’s sons and daughters by reducing confusion and the hassle of accessing health care.” Don’t forget! The new local phone numbers are 524-CARE and 526-CARE. In addition, beneficiaries can make appointments anytime online.



Register at tricareonline.com and have the convenience of making your appointments at the click of a button whenever you want!

Beating the Holiday Blues

The acronym **R-E-S-T** can be helpful in remembering ways to

cope with the holiday blues

R- Reasonable expectations and goals

E- Exercise daily, even if it is only a 20 minute walk during lunch

S- Stress relief. Incorporate ways to relief stress like aromatherapy, reading a book, playing with your dog or taking a relaxing bubble bath

T- Time to relax and remember.

Think about past holidays where you were surrounded by friends and Family and recall the way you felt. Find time for yourself. Finally, don’t be afraid to seek professional help. There are a number of organizations and agencies willing to give advice or help with questions.

Evans Army Community Hospital Department of Behavioral Health, 4th floor, (719) 526-7155

Army Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (ASAP), (719) 526-2862

Military One Source, 1-800-342-9647 or

www.militaryonesource.com

(This is a program open to all military members and their families. It includes 10 free behavioral health sessions that are confidential.)

VA Mental Health Home Web

Page: www.mentalhealth.va.gov or

1-800-273-8255 (VA suicide prevention hotline)

News from the MEDDAC — Evans Army Community Hospital (Cont)

How the Patient Advocate Office Seeks to Serve You

The Patient Advocate Office at Evans Army Community Hospital serves as a liaison point between the hospital and its beneficiaries to find practical solutions for concerns, problems, and complaints. Patient advocates and ombudsmen work together to assist, guide, provide information, and resolve issues using tactful diplomacy to open the lines of communication between those providing health care and those receiving it. Advocates and ombudsmen are determined and committed to caring, educating, and finding workable solutions on a wide variety of issues pertaining to active duty Service Members, spouses, Family members, and retirees. By combining

efforts, they are able to ensure proper resolution of issues in a timely and efficient manner. They are an available and reliable source for information, privacy, and understanding. The results of those combined efforts have already had direct impact on process improvement, customer service and availability of appointments. In turning to this office, Soldiers, spouses, Family members, and retirees have an avenue that is efficient in finding reasonable solutions to everyday questions and problems dealing with access to care, board processes, referrals, second opinions, conflicts with appointments, complaints, TRICARE billing assistance and general TRICARE information. No one is turned away. Even when the answer is not readily available, someone will re-

search, address the issue and help find a solution. The Patient Advocate/Ombudsmen Office is proud to let all beneficiaries know its employees care about customer issues regardless of how small or how big. Beneficiaries should know that Evans Army Community Hospital and Hospital Commander Col. Jimmie O. Keenan, as well as the Office of the Surgeon General, are dedicated, interested, and committed to CARE.

The Patient Advocate/Ombudsmen Office is located in room 1301 on the first floor of Evans Army Community Hospital. You can also reach a Patient Advocate by calling (719) 526-7256 or 524-5783.

Army Community Services

Army Community Service has a new information office available on Fort Carson. The professional and knowledgeable staff is available to answer questions regarding services and programs both on and off post. The office, called the Warrior Family Community Partnership is located on the corner of Specker & Prussman inside building 1532, The Hub. In addition to information about services, The Hub recently opened a Borriello Brother's Pizza inside the facility. You can call or stop by to get answers to your questions.

Telephone: (719) 526-8747/8749

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Address: 6371 Specker Avenue - Building 1532, Fort Carson CO 80913



The Hub is located at the corner of Prussman and Specker Avenues

Directorate of Emergency Services

Holiday Travels

Practicing safe travel tips and being aware of the conditions around you can greatly reduce the risk of being involved in an accident; with the Holidays here they also bring increased travelling and traffic.

Here are a few tips that will help keep you and your family safe during your holiday travels:

Check on Conditions (Weather and Road)

At this time of year, the weather can be unpredictable. Even if the weather and roads look okay in your neighborhood, that may not be the case at your destination. Be sure to check the [Federal Highway Administration's](#) website for up-to-the-minute traffic information, detours and road construction before you leave. You may also want to check [The Weather Channel's](#) website to find out the weather conditions of the interstates and roads you will be traveling on.

Winterize Your Car

The last thing you want to do is break down and end up stranded on the side of the road all because you failed to have your car winterized. So make sure to have a certified mechanic check your oil level, tire pressure, windshield wipers, heater, defroster, antifreeze, and brakes, before you head out on icy and snowy roads.

Keep Your Cell Phone Nearby

You never know what could happen during your travels, so it is

always a good idea to bring your cell phone and car charger with you. In the event that you do need to use your cell phone, ensure you pull off to the side of the road to make the call.

Take Your Time

The heaviest holiday travel traffic occurs during the days immediately before and after Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. With that in mind, give yourself extra time to make it to your destination. If it takes you 2 hours to make it to your destination give yourself 3-4 hours travel time.

Medication

Medications are necessary for some seniors. Either take enough for the trip or make sure a pharmacy is available to refill any prescriptions needed while traveling. Some medications may not be taken into all countries. This should be checked prior to leaving on any vacation. Also remember that some types of medicine will not be available in other countries should you run out while traveling. There are medical supply companies which will deliver wheelchairs and other equipment for special needs travelers to certain hotels around the globe. Many airlines and cruise ships offer special accommodations for the less mobile senior. Do not be afraid to ask for any special equipment you may need while traveling.

Traveling by Air

If traveling by airline, do not pack valuables into checked luggage, put them in your carry-on luggage. Pay attention to the pre-flight briefing, it offers valuable safety information. Put your contact information on the inside and outside of every bag, immediately report all lost luggage. Notify Airport Officials of any suspicious persons or packages, do not approach the individual or package

Make your holiday travel safe and happy for your entire family.

Fire

We at Fort Carson Fire and Emergency Services hope this newsletter finds you well. There is no doubt that Winter has found us! The temperatures have dipped to serious lows thus presenting hazardous conditions for each of us to face. It is paramount to our survival that we take the necessary precautions when venturing out in these conditions. For instance, dress appropriately due to drastically changing weather conditions for our area. Also, ensure your vehicle is equipped for Winter travel by having tires with adequate traction and deicer fluid to clear windshields. Most of all stay safe through the remainder of the Winter season.

Directorate of Emergency Services (cont)

Security and Access Control

Division

Over the past several months Fort Carson has been installing a new Automated Installation Entry (AIE) system at the installation's gates. The system is designed to leverage technology to increase security on the post by electronically validating an individual's identification. Once fully employed the system will increase traffic throughput at the gates and give the installation a means of verifying IDs by using a PIN code during periods of increased Force

Protection Conditions (FPCON). All military ID card holders to include retirees and their family members are entitled to enroll in the program. Enrollment can be completed at the Fort Carson Vehicle Registration Office (VRO) building 6012, just outside the main gate off of Hwy 115. Hours of operation for the VRO are 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays. This is a voluntary program and personnel not registered in the AIE program will still be able to gain access to Fort Carson by utilizing the lanes not identified for

AIE and having their identification physically validated by the gate guards. The AIE system also allows personnel who are registered to act as "Trusted Travelers". This means that if the driver of the vehicle has enrolled in the system, and they are using a lane where the AIE system is active, then they can swipe their ID without requiring all their passengers to show their IDs. Trusted Traveler can only be applied to passengers with a valid reason for entering the installation (i.e. guests of the sponsor under their immediate control).

Department of Public Works—Upcoming Construction

1. A pedestrian activated school crossing signal will be constructed across Chiles Ave in front of Abrams Elementary to enhance pedestrian safety at that location. The project will be completed in early 2012.

2. The intersection of Chiles Ave and Ellis St will have center left turn lanes installed on both the north and southbound Chiles and a traffic signal will be installed. The project is scheduled for completion in Fall 2012

3. B St, between Gate 4 and the Academy Blvd overpass will be repaved and a paved pathway will be constructed adjacent to the

from the gate. This pathway will link into a new trail being constructed by El Paso County connecting B St with Pikes Peak Community College. This project will be completed in Summer 2012.

4. Prussman Blvd is being widened from 2 lanes to 4 lanes between Chiles and Specker Aves. New traffic signals will be installed at the intersections of Prussman/Specker and Prussman/Wetzel. The work ties directly into the recently completed improvements at Prussman/Chiles where the intersection was modified to provide better traffic flow and direct access into the new Post Commissary.

The ongoing improves to Prussman will be completed in February 2012

5. Victory Loop will be extended from Specker Ave to the entrance to Iron Horse Park on Wetzel Ave. This will provide a direct link between the park, the new Post Fitness Center, and the both Specker and Wetzel Aves. The project is scheduled for completion in Fall 2012.



Department of Public Works—Upcoming Construction (Cont)

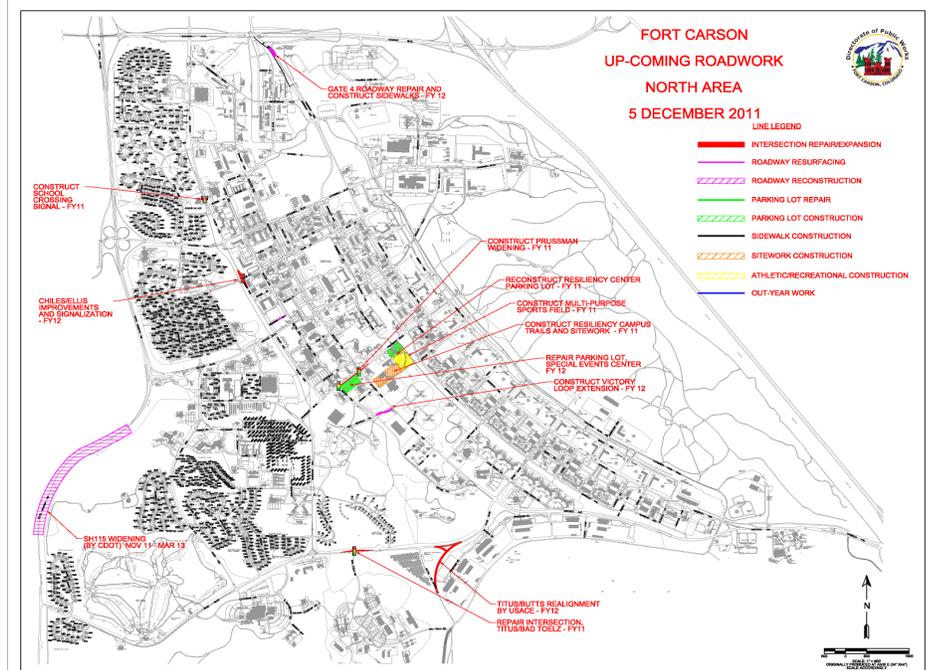
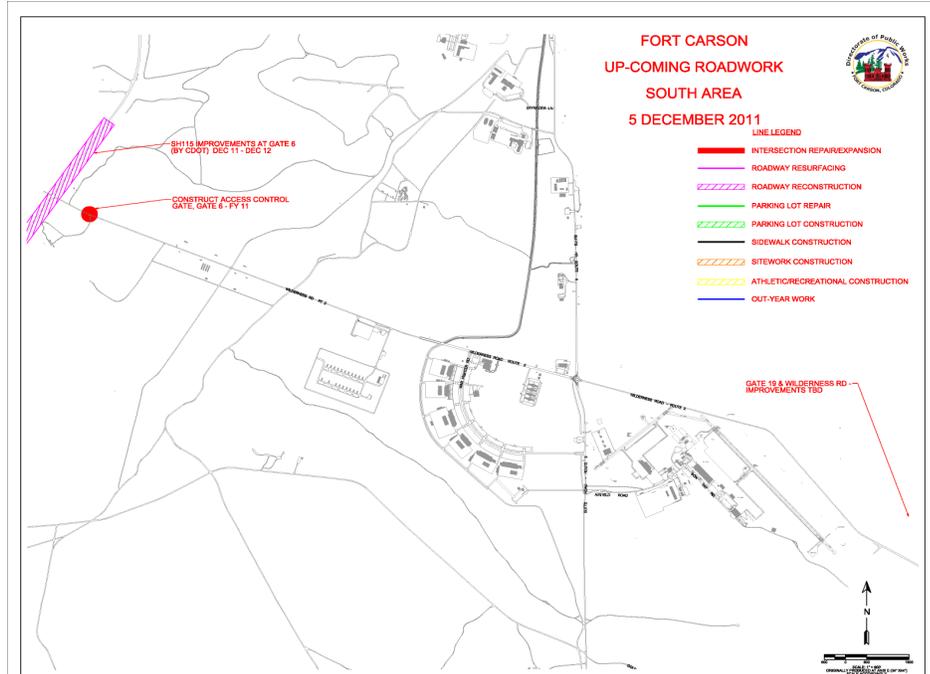
6. The intersection of Titus Blvd and Bad Toelz Rd will be improved with a center left turn lane on Titus and a dedicated right turn lane on Bad Toelz. The existing traffic signal will be replaced and upgraded. The project is underway and scheduled for completion in May 2012.

7. Titus Blvd will be expanded from 2 lanes to 4 lanes between Specker and Butts Road as will Butts Rd between Tutus and Ardenes Rd. The intersection at Titus and Butts Road will be realigned and the traffic signal relocated and improved. The change will provide greater traffic flow, particularly for drivers going to and from the areas along Butts Rd. This project will be completed in mid-2013.

8. The Access Control Facilities at Gate 6 are currently under construction. This construction will be completed in January 2012.

9. State Highway 115 will be expanded from 2 lanes to 4 lanes between the recently completed project outside of Gate 5 and the Rock Creek Bridge located just south of Gate 6. The project will also provide intersection safety improvements at Wilderness Rd, outside of Gate 6 and at Pawnee and Cherokee Roads further to the north. This project will be completed in December 2012.

10. State Highway 115 will be expanded from 2 lanes to 4 lanes between Gates 1 and the recently completed improvements outside of Gate 5. The project will be completed in Spring 2013.



Click on Diagram to Enlarge



DFMWR

The FOXHOLE

Saturday and Sunday, All NFL games showing, starting 10:00 a.m. till close

Wednesdays, Mountain Post Running Club, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday & Thursday, Electronic Bingo starting at 6:30 p.m., and Saturdays starting at 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, Karaoke in the evening.

Building 1532, Specker Ave.

(719) 526-5347

Outdoor Recreation, Snowmobile Trips

Come out for a fun and exciting day as you ride through a winter wilderness and enjoy the awe inspiring views

of the surrounding 14,000 foot high mountain peaks. Explore the local winter wonderland for 3+ hours

NEW! Outdoor Recreation, Private Backcountry Ski or Snowboard Guiding

So you have done an intro class and you want more! Come down and set up a private backcountry ski day with

one of our guides and we will continue to develop your backcountry skills and knowledge, while making some

powder turns. We may even take you out to one of our secret stashes.

Dates: Come down to the office and schedule a day that works for you.

Cost: \$120 for individuals / \$75 per person of group of two or three

(719) 526-5366

Thunder Alley Bowling Center

Saturday, Cosmic Bowl at 1:00 p.m. and Saturday evening is Color Pin starting at 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, Family Pizza Bowling. Get 2 slices of pizza and a drink and three games of bowling for \$7.

Tuesday, 50's Night, come out and bowl to the music of the 50's. Other 50's include 50 cent games, 50 cent shoes,

and 50 cent hot dogs! Starts at 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Family Day. Bowling games for Families are only \$1.

Got some extra time... we need some extra hands!

Do you want to do something different, learn a new skill, and meet new people? Do you want to do something

as a Family? How about assisting with a mountain bike trip, learn to rock climb or raft? Maybe hone your computers

skills or teach a craft class? All this and more is at your fingertips.

Come be a volunteer at one of the many MWR facilities, programs or special events. Call Events & Entertainment for more information or to sign up 526-1867.

RACQUETBALL LESSONS w/Ernie

McKibben PFC is offering FREE Racquetball Lessons by appointment only.

Lesson plans are tailored to the individual or group needs based on preliminary correspondence. Call 526-2597/2137 or email josefina.m.taijeron@

us.army.mil

PERSONAL TRAINING w/Jordan, Sandy, or Sarah

McKibben PFC is offering FREE small group or individual personal training



Because of the change in the law military retired pay is now processed on the first day of the month. When that day falls on a weekend or national holiday, the pay date is moved to the previous business day. This means your payment normally scheduled for Jan. 3, 2012 was issued Dec. 30, 2011.

TRX GROUP SUSPENSION TRAINING w/Sarah

McKibben is offering FREE small group TRX sessions by appointment only. If you are looking to develop functional strength, improve flexibility, balance and core stability, then this is the class for you. Call 526-2597/2137 to

sign up, email josefina.m.taijeron@us.army.mil or you may sign up in person.

MCKIBBEN FITNESS EQUIPMENT ORIENTATION w/Jordan

This FREE class is suitable for those looking to learn how to use our equipment properly. Our certified instructor

will show you how to adjust the equipment without compromising form, learn the importance of breathing techniques, range of motion, tempo and answer fitness equipment questions. Class is 30-45 minutes long and

is available Tuesday and Thursday morning 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. by appointment only. Call 526-2597/2137 to sign up,

email josefina.m.taijeron@us.army.mil or you may sign up in person.

MCKIBBEN BODY FAT / BODY COMPOSITION MEASUREMENTS w/Ernie, Sandy & Josefina

Get your FREE Body Fat Analysis and Body Composition Measurements by a male or female trainer. Make an appointment in the AM / PM or NOON for your convenience. Call 526-2597/2137 to sign up, email

josefina.m.taijeron@us.army.mil or you may sign up in person.

FREE Personal Training

By appointment only, at Waller PFC between 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m., Monday - Friday, 2:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. weekends;

group or individual sessions. All participants will meet with a certified personal trainer; the following are

included: fitness assessment, goal setting, and workout sessions.

FREE Intro to Equipment

By appointment only, at Waller PFC between 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m., Monday - Friday, 2:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. weekends;

groups or individuals. All participants will meet with a certified personal trainer who will introduce the proper way to use the equipment at Waller Physical Fitness Center.

FREE Body Fat Analysis

By appointment only, at Waller PFC between 7:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m., Monday - Friday, 2:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. weekends.

Body fat will be checked either with a hand-held body fat analyzer or with skin fold calipers.

FREE Kickboxing class

Waller PFC

Mondays, 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

Improve your cardiovascular fitness and increase your strength through a variety of upper and lower body kickboxing & athletic drills.

TRICARE coverage after eligibility for "regular" TRICARE coverage ends at age 21 (*or 23 if enrolled in a full course of study at an approved institution of higher learning*). The option you select when you enroll (Prime or Standard) determines how you get care.

Eligibility

You may qualify to purchase TRICARE Young Adult if you are:

An adult child of an eligible sponsor. Eligible sponsors include:

Active duty service members

Retired service members

Activated Guard/Reserve members

Non-activated Guard/Reserve members using TRICARE Reserve Select

Retired Guard/Reserve members using TRICARE Retired Reserve

Unmarried

At least age 21 but not yet 26 years old

Note: If you are enrolled in a full course of study at an approved institution of higher learning and your sponsor provides 50 percent of your financial support, your eligibility may not begin until age 23 or upon graduation, whichever comes first.

Not eligible to enroll in an employer-sponsored health plan based on your own employment

Not otherwise eligible for TRICARE program coverage