

COMMUNITY CORNER

Library's 2-month program will recognize Vietnam veterans

By Col. Kevin Brown
GARRISON COMMANDER

March 27 I had the opportunity to help kick off a two-month program that will aid us at Fort Riley and in the Central Flint Hills Region in accomplishing some great goals. First, it will encourage adults to read – not for work or school – but for fun and to broaden our horizons. Second, it will help us remember and honor our Vietnam veterans.

The Big Read program, which is designed to help revitalize reading in our society, is possible due to a \$7,500 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to the Dorothy Bramlage Public Library in Junction City. The library matched the grant and chose to feature Tim O'Brien's "The Things They Carried" as the book for the program.

Susan Moyer, library director, said the library chose the book, which is a semi-autobiographical account of the author's time in Vietnam, because Junction City is by-and-far a community of Soldiers, both current and former. This book seemed to be a natural and logical fit.

In conjunction with the program, activities including book discussions, movie



showings and other events will be held through May 23 in Junction City, Fort Riley and Grandview Plaza. The library purchased 800 copies of the book for distribution throughout the community. To join in The Big Read, stop by the Dorothy Bramlage Public Library to pick up a copy.

I'm thankful for the program and all that it's going to bring to our community. It will allow some closure and some story-telling to Vietnam veterans for all they've done. And, for the next couple of months, the program will help us get after a couple of concepts we talk about today for our Soldiers and Families on Fort Riley – Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and resilience.

Besides encouraging reading, the program will help Soldiers from the past and present to connect. Through activities and discussions, the

two generations will see there are others out there who have experienced the same things, and we can provide support to each other.

The program will conclude with a picnic and concert May 23 that will coincide with a visit from Run for the Wall, a motorcycle group traveling across America to Washington, D.C. to visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Planning of the program also prompted Junction City and Geary County to proclaim March 29 as Vietnam Veteran's Day.

For more information on The Big Read, call Dorothy Bramlage Public Library at 785-238-4311. For more information about The Big Read, visit www.ncbigread.org.

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

THE BIG READ

Film Series: "The Green Berets" – This series focuses on the depiction of the life of a Soldier in Vietnam
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
6:30 to 10 p.m. April 9

Film Series: "Forest Gump" – This series focuses on the depiction of the life of a Soldier in Vietnam
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
6:30 to 10 p.m. April 16

The Vietnam War Defined by the Novels of Tim O'Brien – Professor Thomas Prasch will offer his scholarly insights on "The Things They Carried" and its author, Tim O'Brien.
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
7 to 9 p.m. April 19

Book Discussion at Grandview Plaza Community Building
402 State Street, Grandview Plaza
7 to 9 p.m. April 20

Film Series: "Bob Hope: The Vietnam Years, 1964-1972" – This series focuses on the depiction of the life of a Soldier in

Vietnam.
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
6:30 to 10 p.m. April 23

Far Out Man! Flashback Crafts from the '60s and '70s – Families will have a great time tie dyeing bandanas, making ojos (God's eyes), making Shrinky Dink key chains and other groovy vintage crafts.
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
10 a.m. to noon, April 24

Family Book Discussion at the Dorothy Bramlage Public Library
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
6 to 8 p.m. April 26

Book Discussion at the Dorothy Bramlage Public Library
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
7 to 9 p.m. April 29

Feelin' Groovy Classic Game Night – Kids will have an evening straight out of the '70s from the board games their parents played to the types of snacks they ate.
230 W. Seventh St., Junction City
6:30 to 8:30 p.m. April 30

Canine Unit Demonstration – Members of Fort Riley's canine unit will offer a demonstration and talk about how dogs are used in today's Army. This program will be held in partnership with the Friends of Animals and will include on-site adoption for shelter animals.
402 State St., Grandview Plaza
10 a.m. to noon May 1

Book Discussion at The Main Grind
313 E. Chestnut St., Junction City
10 a.m. to noon May 8

Book Discussion at the Post Library
7264 Normandy Drive, Fort Riley
10 a.m. to noon May 22

Soldier Appreciation Night – Soldiers and their Families will be treated to a picnic and concert in Heritage Park. This will be held in conjunction with the Run for the Wall stopover in Junction City including the ceremony held at the Vietnam Memorial, Sixth and Washington streets
5 to 10 p.m. May 23

Brooks emphasizes children during MAC breakfast

By Shandi Dix
1ST INF. DIV. POST

Since April is the Month of the Military Child, Carol Brooks, first lady of Fort Riley and the 1st Infantry Division, spoke to Junction City and Fort Riley representatives March 25 about children's stress during deployments during the Junction City-Geary County Military Affairs Council breakfast at the Geary County Historical Society.

Professors from two different war colleges conducted a study on the effects of multiple deployments on children. More than 550 adolescents from 11 to 17 years old were surveyed at the 12 largest stateside installations, including Fort Riley.

"The findings tell us that encouraging environment and activities, especially sports, which can serve to provide a distraction, contributes to adolescents having less deployment stress," Brooks said. "Additionally, ado-

lescents who reported a strong, happy Family life measured less deployment stress, and they appeared to have better coping skills."

The authors were surprised to find the greatest predictor of the child's ability to cope with deployment was the child's belief the Soldiers were making a difference.

"Adolescents who believed that the American public supports that war and that deployed Soldiers are making a difference in the war demonstrated less stress and the greatest ability to cope with deployment," Brooks said.

Stress that is experienced by teens during a deployment is not associated with the number of previous deployments. The study also found that with each deployment the level of stress each child suffered went down.

The authors suggested this might be due to the child knowing they have coped with a deployment before and they

have learned to deal with it. It was found that teens, in general, appear to be internalizing some Army values such as duty, sacrifice and selfless service, and although they are not happy about their parent being gone, they understand it, which helps them cope.

"Even though we have our Army's new normal marked by constant and recurring deployments, as a whole, it looks like our children are actually coping better than we think, and that's actually where you can make a difference," Brooks said.

Brooks also spoke about a new Armywide program, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, which includes five pillars of personal strength – physical, emotional, spiritual, social and Family fitness.

"The Army is working with Soldiers, Families and civilians to strengthen these pillars to improve their resilience," she

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Carol Brooks, first lady of Fort Riley and the 1st Inf. Div., speaks to Junction City and Fort Riley officials March 25 during the Junction City-Geary County Military Affairs Council breakfast held at the Geary County Historical Society.

Shandi Dix
POST