

Townhall set Aug. 25

By Cannoneer staff

Fort Sill's live televised, call-in town hall meeting is Aug. 25 from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

All Fort Sill personnel and their family members may participate.

At the live meeting, representatives from all major garrison support functions and other post leaders will be available to answer callers' questions and concerns.

Viewers can watch the meeting live at http://sill-www.army.mil/usag/town_hall/town_hall.html

The number to call during the live telecast is 442-1100.

It will also be broadcast off post on Fort Sill Channel 8.

Questions can be submitted ahead of time at tellthegarrisoncommander@conus.army.mil

"The purpose of town hall is to get people to ask questions that have a large impact on our community," said Nancy Elliott, Fort Sill Public Affairs. Operators will answer the phones and first ask callers about their areas of concern. Callers may elect to remain anonymous, but if more information is needed to address their concerns, it may be difficult to follow up without contact information, organizers said.

Organizers said they are, of course, prepared to hear and answer complaints or accept suggestions.

Tough questions are OK, but courtesy is the rule. Anyone using abusive language or making verbal attacks on individual members of the community will quickly hear only a dial tone.

Those with questions about individual, personal matters will be directed to the appropriate resource.

Making it real



Soldiers from the 168th Brigade Support Battalion place a "wounded" battle buddy into an Oklahoma Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during convoy live-fire training, which also included combat medical evacuation scenarios, last week at Fort Sill. See story, photos on Page 5A.

Photo by Spc. Levi Spellman

News briefs

Gate closure, hours

Key Gate West closes Aug. 12 through Nov. 24 for construction. During construction, Key Gate East (recruit training side) and Bentley Gate (Sheridan Road) will become 24/7 gates. Scott Gate (Fort Sill Boulevard) will be open seven days a week from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. Gate 2 and 52nd Gate will be open Mondays through Fridays from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. Apache Gate will be open Mondays through Fridays from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Any changes will be posted on the Fort Sill web page and the Cannoneer page on Facebook.

Ceremony

The public is invited to the change of command for 1st Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Aug. 12 at 9 a.m. on Polo Field. Lt. Col. Todd Wasmund will hand over command to Lt. Col. Mark Krieger.

Women's Day luncheon

The Fort Sill Women's Equality Day luncheon will be Aug. 18 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Patriot Club. This year's theme is "Our History is Our Strength." The guest speaker will be Dr. Cindy Ross, Cameron University president. Cost is \$8. For tickets, contact a unit Equal Opportunity adviser or the Installation Equal Employment Opportunity Office at 442-6938/4108.

Reclamation sale

The next Fort Sill reclamation sale is Aug. 20 from 8 a.m.-noon at Building 2102, Currie Road. The sale is cash only and people must have a valid military ID card for purchases.

Contacts

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Alternative energy sources

Fort Sill pool first plunge into solar power

STORY, PHOTO
By James Brabene

If the hot summer sun brings to mind thoughts of a pleasant, refreshing swim, consider the Rinehart Fitness Center pool can derive most of its heat from the celestial star.

This alternative energy source is but one in use at Fort Sill, and others may soon help reduce the post's energy demands on conventional utilities.

Adjacent to the pool, on its west side, rows of solar panels provide a heat source that augments existing natural gas-fueled boilers. This renewable energy source is Fort Sill's first step into solar power and may light the way toward other projects that may soon dot the post landscape. The panels were installed by a contractor through the Army Corps of Engineers and cost Fort Sill \$300,000 for this clean, safe, readily available energy.

"Fort Sill, like all government installations, receives congressional mandates and executive orders that require the post to reduce energy consumption and increase renewable energy production," said Chris Brown, Directorate of Public Works energy manager. The Army Corps of Engineers from Huntsville, Ala. did a study, and this was one of their energy conservation measures they came up with.

Fort Sill appears to be a great location for this type of system. Brown said the area is listed as an above average location for solar radiation, or sunlight. Preliminary data suggests the post is saving about 4.3 million British thermal units, which works out to about \$30,000 a year in energy costs using these solar panels. Given this return on investment, the panels should pay themselves off in 10 years, though volatility of commodities markets may realize this payback scenario several years quicker.

Water is circulated through the black panels and returned to a utility room where the temperature is moderated before being sent out to the pool. Brown said

because of the ongoing heat wave, the solar panels are working too well and are not in use.

"This project was a first step for Fort Sill, and the first of anything is often the toughest. Now we just need to prove to everyone it works good, and once that proof is in place we should see solar power used for other applications such as heating showers in barracks," Brown said. "Anywhere there's a water heater that system could be converted to include solar power."

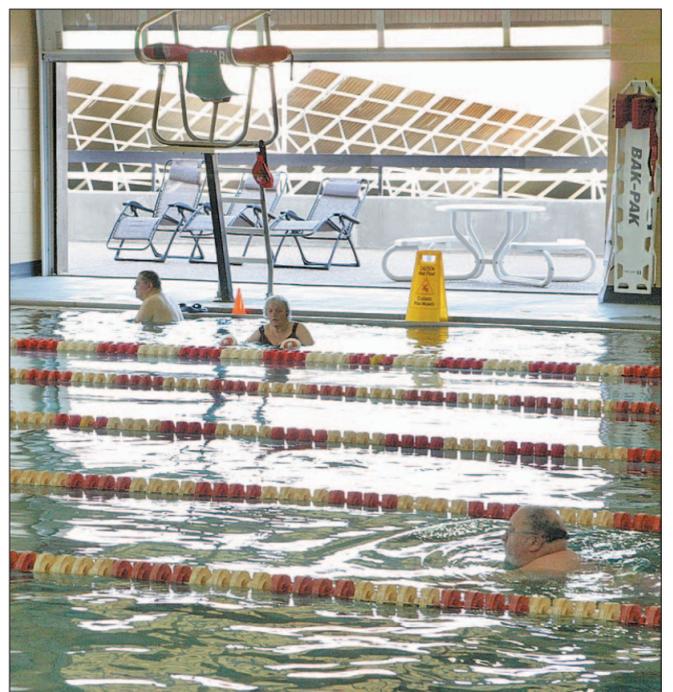
The post established 84 degrees as the optimal temperature for the pool, and will continue to use boilers in the winter or during cloudy days when the sun is obscured.

Brown said DPW is starting to get some building designs coming in that include solar panels on other buildings yet to be constructed, and he expects most new buildings will probably have some sort of solar array. Of those already erected, the new Joint Fires and Effects Training System building just south of the existing system in I-See-O Hall and an adjacent building both have solar panels supporting the facilities' energy requirements.

Natural gas

Fort Sill's energy manager said interest in natural gas is increasing. One company would like to gather methane out of shale beds on post, clean it up and put it into a natural gas pipeline. DPW has also talked with other companies, one about drawing methane produced by the post's landfill and burning it in a generator to produce electricity. Another would like to investigate using methane produced by the waste water treatment plant to run a generator. These ideas are still on the drawing board and will have to meet environmental compliance standards before any actual work is initiated.

Already in place, Brown said Fort Sill has several geothermal wells that are used to heat or cool water. He said the earth, at only eight feet below the surface, maintains a constant temperature and water can be injected into these wells. Deeper wells see



Swimmers enjoy the Rinehart Fitness Center pool July 27 as a series of solar panels stand ready to provide a clean, renewable heat source for pool water. The panels are not functioning because of the summer's persistent heat wave that heats the water too much.

increased temperatures and that water can be used for heating purposes.

Energy conservation

While solar, wind and other emerging energy sources may catch a lot of the headlines, energy conservation also plays a significant role in helping the post be good stewards with its energy resources. Brown said DPW surveys buildings to determine potential savings. Some projects are rather small, such as one started to install motion detectors to turn on or off lights in buildings when people are present or leave.

He said DPW controls building temperatures and can schedule when air conditioning turns off at the end of the day and initiate cooling the following morning before workers arrive to cut energy use. Another tool DPW uses is managing heating and cooling

during peak use hours. These are the hours utility companies charge the most and reductions in energy can save the post money.

DPW is also working to install electric meters on all Fort Sill buildings to determine which buildings are energy efficient and which could be improved. He added people who have ideas for improving energy conservation should contact their building manager. Those who don't have a building manager can call the DPW service desk to initiate a work request, or they can call Brown direct at 442-6129 with energy saving ideas.

"If there's a great idea out there, I'm always open," he said.

October is National Energy Awareness Month, look for more articles in the Cannoneer about energy innovation and conservation at Fort Sill.