


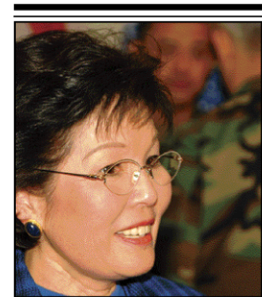




<b>Weather Forecast</b>		Today  High:63 Low:34
Saturday 	High:60 Low:33	Sunday  High:63 Low:38

FRIDAY

# Fort Riley Post

Patricia Shinseki was here with her husband March 22. Turn to Page 11.

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## Fort Riley: America's Warfighting Center

### Army Chief of Staff Gen. Shinseki makes announcement at luncheon during visit

By Christie Vanover  
Deputy MRO

FORT RILEY, KAN.-The Chief of staff of the Army, Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, and Maj. Gen. Thomas Metz, commanding general, 24th Infantry Division (Mech) and Fort Riley, announced March 22 that Fort Riley has been named an American warfighting center.

In comments at Kansas Congressman Jim Ryun's quarterly luncheon, Shinseki said, "Riley remains America's Warfighting Center ... I think it's a great logo for Fort Riley - America's Warfighting Center, home of the great 24th Infantry Division and those brigades of the 1st

Armored and 1st Infantry Divisions."

This summer, Fort Riley's role as a warfighting center will be intensified as it prepares the 30th Enhanced Separate Brigade of the North Carolina National Guard and thousands of reservists from 18 states for the National Training Center.

"We're bringing more than 8,000 reserve component personnel from all over the nation not just North Carolina," said Maj. Kevin West, training officer, 30th Enhanced Separate Brigade.

"Our intent this summer is to replicate the NTC rotation here at Fort Riley, so when they get out to the NTC in 2003, they'll know what to expect, and they will have a feeling like they have already

done that before," he said.

"This is an opportunity for Fort Riley to validate the warfighter center concept. We have the maneuver area, we have the support structure, we provide an OPFOR (opposing force) for the units, and we feel we can provide them with the best training experience possible," said West.

In addition to training Fort Riley's active components, Fort Riley is home of one of the Army's two integrated divisions responsible for training and preparing three National Guard Enhanced Separate Brigades. The installation also trains more than 32,000 additional Reserve and National Guard soldiers annually.

"Riley supports about 300 Reserve

Component units from the surrounding areas that come here and rely on (Maj.) General Metz's oversight and support to get through their training readiness," he said.

Metz, West and other Fort Riley officials laid out the installation's plans for its summer training to Shinseki during one of his many briefings about the Fort Riley plan to harmonize with Shinseki's vision of transformation.

"Today's visit by the chief was a super day. Any day you get the Chief of Staff to come visit your installation is a very important day, but it was a special day because we were able to articulate to him all the capabilities that make us a warfighting center," said Metz following

Shinseki's departure.

"He already knew of our tremendously valuable training ranges, our training areas and our simulations. What we emphasized to him today was our force projection capability," he added.

With the capabilities of Fort Riley's railhead and the Manhattan Regional Airport, Fort Riley can move a loaded brigade in less than two days. "We can move them to the Port of Beaumont (Texas) in 48 hours," said Metz.

In addition to Shinseki's words of appreciation for America's soldiers, Shinseki focused on troop movement

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during his speech to Manhattan, Junction City and Fort Riley representatives.

"Readiness is about today's responsibilities and today's missions. Transformation is about tomorrow's readiness for the missions we can't even envision today," he said. "The kinds of formations we look for have some characteristics that are important."

"The Army has to be more responsive than the Army is even today. It has to be more deployable than it is today. Our light forces can go with lightning speed to lots of places, but if it's a long, protracted fight, we have to get the heavy forces in there. The heavy forces take a while to deploy and we've got to do something about that," he added.

Shinseki's vision of transformation includes three vectors, the Objective Force, the Legacy Force and the Interim Force. The Objective Force is the Army's ultimate goal, with the first brigade scheduled to stand up in 2010. The Legacy Force is today's Army and the Interim Force will begin standing up this year to "fill the gap."

"The luxury of having the time over the next eight years to get that future objective force right lies on the shoulders of the legacy force, the forces we know today," said Shinseki.

"If you fail to change, you may become irrelevant. This nation cannot afford an Army that's not fully relevant, and that's why transformation is important," he said.

The first Interim Brigade Combat Team will stand up at Fort Lewis, Wash., this year. Shinseki

explained that Fort Riley was not chosen as a site for an IBCT because its inventory of mechanized heavy equipment is needed for the future Objective Force.

"The brigades of Riley are important to our inventory as heavy brigades, and we're going to keep them that way until they're ready to transform," he said.

"If you take an Interim Brigade Combat Team and compare it to our heavy brigades and you ask me which is a better warfighter, I

will tell you it's the heavy brigade. It's the force that will take on anyone else's best," he said.

Metz takes pride in Fort Riley's mechanized warfighting capabilities. "Everyday we prepare two brigade combat teams and an engineer group to go to war," he said.

"Once one of those units leaves Fort Riley, I'm absolutely confident that we will bring one of the reserve component brigades here and will continue with all of the

facilities we have getting them ready. Therefore we are America's Warfighting Center."

