

Ernie,

First, I want to thank you and Purina on behalf of the Fort Riley Riding Club for providing this news forum, your continued service, hard work and effort to the horse community across these great United States of America. Fort Riley has gone through some changes and expansions in the recent year. As with all things that change, some sacrifices have to be made. The Fort Riley Riding Club is no exception. We are a non-profit organization located on Fort Riley. We have been supporting our U.S. Army Soldiers for over 30 years now. We provide Soldiers, D.O.D. civilians and family members a place to raise, train, board, and ride their horses. This is a family type environment with children, families, and friends riding, training, and learning about their horses together.

Recently Fort Riley changed the way they support our troops with their housing needs. The U.S. Army found that it would benefit our Soldiers more to have subsidized housing, so they sold the housing to a company named Picerne along with the land that our riding club was located on. I found out about this “move” while I was stationed in Iraq. I was not sure where we would put our horses; however, the Army and Picerne assured us that they had not forgotten about us, or our horses, and that we should keep “driving on” is what my wife told me. So we did. The Commanding General's Mounted Color Guard had offered to take care of the horses whose owners were deployed, but with the club's hard work and both the Army and Picerne's compassion, our club was able to keep our horses in the pasture during the destruction of our stables and barns. This was a blessing to say the least. We have recently won the bid on a plot of land on Fort Riley. We will be able to keep our Riding Club located on Fort Riley, in about the same area. This is exciting news to us. We are now tasked with the chore of rebuilding our stalls, barns, fencing and arenas. This is a HUGE task for a club of our size and budget, which has almost all of its work force aged members tasked out to support our Army. Our wives and families do what they can but sometimes it's just not enough. Since we are a non-profit organization we are not able to access direct help from the Army, we are just a cheering squad, if you will. My wife and I got married on Fort Riley on horseback and both love horses and the horse community in Kansas. Fort Riley has been GREAT to our family, along with countless others, and we want to thank them by building the new stables in a way that show our pride for the U.S. Army, Fort Riley, and the Fort Riley Riding Club.

If you are an individual or business and would like to help us support our troops and their passion for our equine partners please contact our club treasurer Karen Trapp at address PO Box 2537, Fort Riley KS 66442. Or call 1 (785) 375-6242. 100% of your donation (fencing, gates, wood, structures, currency, or time and effort) will go directly to the club and our continued support of our Army Soldiers and their continued relationship with their horses. No donation is too big or too small. Thank you for your time, consideration, and effort.

Sincerely,  
Jason Starr  
Club Member  
Fort Riley, KS