



'Eagle's Nest' to aid families

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Local businesses in Kentucky and Tennessee are forming a new coalition to help military families in the Fort Campbell Area.

The Clarksville-Montgomery County and Hopkinsville-Christian County chambers of commerce recently initiated a fund, dubbed Operation Eagle's Nest, "to provide support to organizations that assist families of soldiers assigned to Fort Campbell," according to their mission statement.

The fund evolved out of concern that some units might get overlooked in the Adopt-A-Unit program, a sponsorship initiative that pairs businesses with units.

"[Even] if everybody adopts a unit, somebody is going to fall through the cracks," said Bill Sites, co-chair of the military affairs committee in Clarksville. "So why can't we do something collectively, instead of everybody having their own campaign, so that we can adopt the whole post?"

The chambers will facilitate the fund, said Chelsea Harkins, military affairs director at the Hopkinsville-Christian County Chamber of Commerce. Major Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and Fort Camp-

bell, along with Fort Campbell chaplains, will determine which organizations on Fort Campbell will receive the funding.

"The families will receive funding through the organizations that are already established in Fort Campbell," said Ed Rufo, general manager of James Corlew Chevrolet and founding sponsor of Operation Eagle's Nest. "We will grant funds to different organizations that already have processes [for screening applicants]."

Many facets of the program are still being ironed out since the idea was introduced last week. Project committee members say they envision a regional and national campaign, to include a Web site.

The governing body of the fund has yet to be determined. Plans are for it to include staffers from the Hopkinsville and Clarksville chambers of commerce, the military affairs chairperson and two or three additional members from each military affairs committee. Bob Vail, director, Fort Campbell Readiness Business Center, and Holly Petraeus are being consulted in setting up and administering the fund.

The current committee has established a bank account for donations and submitted paperwork for those donations to be tax-deductible. They have also obtained a post office box on Fort Campbell.