

'Legacy' families offered new start

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Blair Tucker is looking forward to the return of her husband, SFC Jammie Tucker, currently deployed with the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team in Iraq. When he arrives for R&R in July, she'll be welcoming him to a brand new home in Patton Village.

The Tucker family lived in a "legacy home" — one of the homes on post that are more than four decades old — for five years in Indianhead Village, where they had flooding issues. But now, thanks to a new initiative that moves interested residents from older buildings to new housing, the Tuckers finally have the home they always wanted.

"I love my new home," said Blair, who moved in last month. "It no longer looks like military quarters. I love having the garage ... a porch ... my nice big kitchen. The grounds are kept nicer here. They have a community pool (and) game room. They have many different play areas scattered throughout Patton Village. It's more of a community feel.

"We wanted to move into a new house since they started building new homes. It is a reward, and I can't wait for my husband to see it."

As a working mother of two, Tucker found it difficult to move, but if she had it to do all over again, she would, she said.

Bob Chenoweth, Pinnacle community director, said he has placed more than 30 families in new homes since November, when the initiative began, and "they're amazingly happy."

"We've sorted it by who has been living here the longest to reward them for supporting the program so long," he said. "We're going down that wait list: about 10 to 15 families a month."

Some turn down the offer to move from their legacy homes in Indianhead, Bouton Heights or Custer Village because they like the neighborhood or don't want their kids to change schools.

The move isn't paid for, but the family doesn't have to pay for making their old home rent-ready for the next resident. There's no charge for damages to the home, such as stains or nail holes, when the family moves out. "We have 40 vacant homes in Upatoi — brand new homes; nobody has ever lived in them," Chenoweth said. "We are excited to fill them with well-deserving families."

The situation is similar in Patton and McGraw villages. Fort Benning is four years into the 10-year Initial Development Plan, which includes the renovation or construction of all 4,000 homes on Fort Benning.

“Right now out of that 4,000 homes, we have 3,000 homes that are occupied and about 1,000 that are unoccupied,” Chenoweth said.

It’s those 1,000 homes that Pinnacle is wanting to fill. They can build faster if the housing is at higher capacity, Chenoweth said, so they have several specials for people who currently live off post.

To find out about move-in incentives and neighborhood features, visit <http://benning.pinnaclefamilyhousing.com>

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