

New housing referral system finds your new home

Greg Welker, Army War College Public Affairs Office

New housing referral system makes finding a home easier



July 1, 2009 -- Everybody knows it's difficult to find good housing from across the nation or sometimes from across town. It's an old story that has a new ending: The Carlisle Barracks Housing Office is implementing a new, free

internet-based housing referral system to overcome that problem, the Automated Housing Referral Network.

AHRN was created to help military members and their families find housing upon receiving a Permanent Change of Station order. www.AHRN.com is a user-friendly site that allows you to look at houses, inside and out, over the internet. Owners, either renting or selling properties, give detailed information about the house, neighborhood, local schools, and crime in the area.

"This housing referral network is a quantum leap forward from the process we used in our housing services office and the word-of-mouth or sponsor method," said Bif Coyle, chief of the Housing and Residential Communities Office here. "With the internet, incoming military and families are able to reach out from anywhere and get an updated list of available housing."

Using AHRN.com is a simple process as well. Local property managers and military register their available properties on the site, often several months before the property will be available. These properties are then easily visible to incoming personnel when they search the site for available housing. AHRN is also available to DoD Civilians or contractors with a ".mil" email address.

"It is very user friendly," said Denise Milton, Housing Management Specialist. "Simply register with an email address and search for homes. On the site, click *search listings*, or *manage* for those renting or selling. It's just that simple."

The Carlisle Barracks Housing Services Office is looking forward to expanding its AHRN.com program by encouraging local property managers to register.

"The larger the database, the more useful it will be to people searching for places to live," said Coyle. To make

registering properties a worry-free proposition, AHRN.com incorporates several layers of privacy protection. In return for registering their properties, AHRN.com provides property owners with a consistent resource of quality tenants.

“It’s a win-win for everyone who uses the site,” says Coyle.

To register or find out more, visit AHRN.com.

Authors experience

I decided to give a try myself and found it very easy to register and search through listings. Make sure, though, that you don’t make your search too specific. Doing so may not display properties meeting most of your criteria. Right now there are 103 listings in the Carlisle area.

Overall it is very easy to navigate and self-explanatory to register. The search function is straightforward and will make finding a property pretty easy.