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The Real McCoy®

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Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Fort McCoy rail team moves equipment

Employees with the Fort McCoy Logistics Readiness Center (LRC) rail operations team use the installation locomotive to move rail cars loaded with Army equipment May 14 at Fort McCoy. See more photos and learn more about the rail movement on page 7.

Soldiers recognized for work as housing mayor, assistant mayor

Master Sgt. Benjamin Thorstad with the 86th Training Division and Staff Sgt. Jerod Meyer with the Wisconsin Military Academy were both recognized May 7 for their volunteer

work as the mayor and assistant mayor, respectively, for South Post Housing.

The recognition ceremony took place inside the South Post Community Center. Thorstad

was presented with the a Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal by Garrison Commander Col. Hui Chae Kim for giving more than 850 hours of volunteer service as the housing mayor.

According to the description for community service for the award, Thorstad was the South Post Housing mayor throughout the tenures of two garrison commanders and two garrison command sergeants major (CSMs). He provided support to the community by continuing to plan events and activities throughout leadership changes. The majority of his service was conducted without the help provided by an assistant mayor.

Thorstad did a lot for the housing residents, the description states. For example, he assisted in planning a chamber of commerce event for the community with music and food. More than 120 military family members out came to enjoy the event.

Thorstad also planned and led two barbecues per year where each had 20-40 guests, and he hosted and encouraged participation of three community cleanups per year with between five and 15 residents showing up to help at each cleanup.

Thorstad has hosted more than 10 community meetings encouraging families to address military housing and community subjects and render possible solutions to make the community a better place, the description states. Thorstad also hosted the five quarterly town halls with Fort McCoy leadership to provide an opportunity for residents to address military housing concerns and improvements.

Meyer, who has served as assistant housing mayor for less than a year, received a garrison commander personal coin for excellence for his efforts and accomplishment to develop a South Post Housing survey that helped

(See **MAYOR**, Page 2)

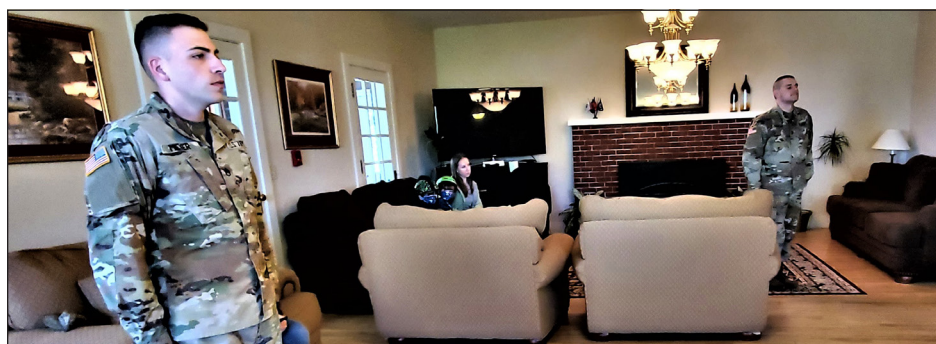


Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Staff Sgt. Jerod Meyer (left) with the Wisconsin Military Academy and Master Sgt. Benjamin Thorstad with the 86th Training Division participate in a small recognition ceremony May 8 at the South Post Community Center at Fort McCoy.

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NEWS



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Housing construction continues

Workers supporting contractor Relyant Global LLC of Maryville, Tenn., continue work on a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-led project May 7 to build seven new military family housing units at the South Post Housing area at Fort McCoy. A contract of \$6.6 million was awarded to Relyant Global in May 2019, and the notice to proceed with work was acknowledged in June 2019. A project completion date for the housing should be sometime in summer 2020. The construction includes building three four-bedroom and four three-bedroom houses. Work includes site preparation work, utilities and pavement construction, and electrical and natural-gas systems installation. The Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Housing Division manages military housing at the installation.

MAYOR

from Page 1

garrison and housing leadership to identify shortfalls and gaps within the current housing regulation, said Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Mantha, garrison CSM. The survey also provided input to the inbound garrison commander to consider possible future changes or modifications. This tool was also critical for leaders to make assessments and used as a reference with recommendations.

“Thank you to both of you for the work you did,” Kim said after the presentation. “You served this community well.”

“We appreciate everything you have done,” said Monica Richmond, chief of the Directorate of Public Works Housing Division. “Your support has helped us tremendously.”

Thorstad said he appreciated help from leadership personnel as well.

“I want to thank you all for your support — I couldn’t have done it without you,” he said.

Everyone attending the ceremony, which was fewer than 10 people, practiced required social distancing and related protective measures.

(Article prepared by the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.)



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Garrison Commander Col. Hui Chae Kim talks with Staff Sgt. Jerod Meyer and Master Sgt. Benjamin Thorstad during a recognition ceremony for both Soldiers on May 8 at the South Post Community Center at Fort McCoy.

Dining Facility

Dining Facility 1362, located at the Noncommissioned Officer Academy, is open. Military members and Department of Defense civilians on official orders for temporary duty training may use dining facilities. Units must coordinate through the Food Program Management Office at 608-388-6518/4739.

Hours
Reopens for dinner June 1.
Breakfast: 6-8 a.m.
Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m.

Rates
Breakfast — \$3.50
Lunch — \$5.65
Dinner — \$4.90

Installation Access

All personnel and authorized visitors must use the Main Gate. Gate 20 is closed until further notice. All electronic gates are reserved for emergency personnel.

Recreation

Automotive Skills Center: Building 1763. Closed until further notice. Call 608-388-3013.

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS): Call 608-388-3200.

iSportsman: Portal for hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreational activities. Register, apply for permits, and sign in or out at ftmccoy.isportsman.net.

McCoy's Community Center: Building 1571. Offers books, arcade, gaming area, and bowling. Closed until further notice. Call 608-388-7060.

Bowling Center: Closed until further notice.

Leisure Travel Services Office: Open 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 608-388-3011.

Pine View Campground/Recreational Equipment Checkout Center: Building 8053. **Opens May 22. Open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sun.-Sat.** Call 608-388-2619.

Rumpel Fitness Center: Building 1122. Closed until further notice. Call 608-388-2290.

Indoor swimming pool, atrium, sauna and steamroom: Closed until further notice.

Sportsman's Range: Closed for the season. Call 608-388-9162/3517.

Tactics Paintball & Laser Tag: Closed until further notice. Call 800-531-4703.

Whitetail Ridge Ski Area: Closed for the season. Call 608-388-3517.

Dining

McCoy's Community Center: Building 1571. Catering/administration, call 608-388-2065.

Food: Closed until further notice.
Sports bar: Closed until further notice.

Snack Avenue: Building 1538. Located inside Express. Open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat. and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sun. Call 608-269-5604 or 608-388-4343.

Specialty Express Food Court: Building 1538. Open 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Carry-out only. Call 608-269-5615, ext. 303.

Whitetail Ridge Chalet: Building 8061. Closed for the season. Call 608-388-3517.
Ten Point Pub: Closed.

Services

Alteration Shop: Building 1538. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri. and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat. Call 608-269-1075.

Barber Shop (Exchange): Building 1538. Open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 608-269-1710.

Car Rentals (Enterprise): Info available at the Exchange, building 1538. Use the phone at the Enterprise sign. Call 608-782-6183 or 800-654-3131; use CDP# 1787245.

Car Wash: Building 1568. Offers self-service and automatic bays and vacuums. Open 24/7. May close during extremely cold weather. Accepts cash or credit cards. Call 608-388-4161.

Commissary: Building 1537. Open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon.-Sat. 100 percent ID check at door. Limited to 20 patrons at a time. No reusable bags. Call 608-388-3542/3543.

Computer Lab: Building 50, room 100A. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Computers, projector, printer, scanner, fax machine available. Call ahead for availability. Call 608-388-2474.

CWT (Carlson Wagonlit Travel) SatoTravel: Building 2180. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. No walk-ins. Call 608-388-2370, 608-269-4560, or 800-927-6343.

Education/Learning Center: Building 50, room 123. Open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. No walk-ins. Email darrel.l.hawkins.ctr@mail.mil to schedule tests. Email connie.j.schauer.civ@mail.mil for other services.

Equal Employment Opportunity: Open 7 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. No walk-ins. Call 608-388-3106/3107 or email usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.mbx.eeo@mail.mil.

Exchange: Building 1538. Open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat. and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sun. Call 608-269-5604.

ID Card/DEERS Section: Building 35. Open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon., Wed., Fri. By appointment only. Call 608-388-4563 to verify ID Section

facilities services

This schedule is projected through **June 11**.
Hours of operation and services may be affected by COVID-19 precautions and are changing frequently.
Call facilities to verify hours before traveling.
Bold, italic typeface indicates a change since the last publication.

is operational.

IHG Army Hotels: Building 51. Open 24/7. Call 608-388-2107 or 877-711-TEAM (8326). Some services suspended/limited.

Installation Legal Office: Building 1644. By appointment only. Call 605-388-2165.

Launderette/Dry Cleaning: Building 1538. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 608-269-1075.

Laundry Facilities: Open 24/7. Exclusively for use by Soldiers training on Fort McCoy. Civilian, family members, and retired military members are not authorized to use these facilities. Call 608-388-3800 to find out which buildings are open.

Military Clothing: Building 1538. Open 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Mon.-Sat. and 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Sun. Call 608-269-5604, ext. 203.

Military Personnel: Building 2187. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. By appointment only. Soldier In & Out-processing: 608-388-4822. Personnel Automations: 608-388-4842. Reassignments: 608-388-4746. Records Update: 608-388-5677. Centralized Promotions/Records Update: 608-388-5677.

Multimedia/Visual Information: Building 2113. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. No DA/command photos until further notice per DA policy. Call 608-388-4520.

Official Mail Distribution Center: Building 1654. Open 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Mon.-Fri. No mail delivery; pickup only. Call 608-388-4520.

Patriot Outfitters: Building 1538. **Closed until further notice.** Call 608-269-1115.

Permit Sales: Building 2168. Hunting, fishing, and firewood permits. Closed until further notice. Check ftmccoy.isportsman.net for updates. Call 608-388-3337.

Personal Property Processing Office: Building 200. Remote assistance only. Call 608-388-3060, fax: 608-388-5634, email: usarmy.mccoy.asc.mbx.lrc-pppo@mail.mil.

Retirement Services Office: Building 35. Open 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Mon.-Tues. and Thurs.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 608-388-3716.

R.I.A. Credit Union: Building 1501. Lobby closed. ATMs are located in building 1501 (available 24/7); McCoy's, building 1571 (currently closed); Exchange, building 1538; and IHG Army Hotels, building 51 (available 24/7). Call 608-388-2171.

Service Station/Express/Class VI: Building 1538. Open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat. and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sun. Call 608-388-4343. Pay-at-the-pump gas is open 24/7.

Transition Service Center: Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 608-388-7956.

Visitor Control Center: Building 35. **Open 6 a.m. - 2 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Passes issued at Main Gate outside of VCC hours.** Physical Security open for fingerprints Thur. only; call 608-388-3702. See ID/DEERS section for its hours.

Family Support

Army Community Service: Building 2111. Closed until further notice. For emergencies, call: 608-630-7473. Family Advocacy Program: 608-388-3000, SHARP; 877-272-7337. Army Emergency Relief, or 608-487-4663, other ACS emergencies.

Army Substance Abuse Program: Building 1344. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 608-388-2441.

Child Development Center: Building 1796. Closed until further notice. Call 608-388-3534/2238.

Housing Office: Building 6158. Open 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Family Housing, Single Soldier Housing, and referral services. Self-Help Warehouse open 7:30-8:30 a.m. and 12:30-1:30 p.m. Wed. until further notice. Call 608-388-2804.

Military and Family Life Consultant Program (MFLC): Building 2111. Provides education, information, and support for anyone affiliated with the military. MFLC services are confidential. By appointment only. Call 608-598-7324 or 608-400-6124.

Red Cross: Fort McCoy active-duty Soldiers and Family members can call 877-272-7337 for emergency assistance. For other Red Cross services, call 800-837-6313 or 608-788-1000.

School Age/Youth Center: Building 1792. Activities for youth grades kindergarten through 12. Offers after-school, nonschool, and inclement-weather care for eligible youth. Closed until further notice. Call 608-388-4373.

Health Care

Alcoholics Anonymous: For more information, call 608-388-5955/2441.

Fort McCoy Civilian Employee Assistance Program: Screening and referral services for civilian employees and Family members experiencing difficulties due to problems related to substance abuse, mental health, marital/family discord, or other causes. By appointment only. Call 608-388-2441/5955.

Fort McCoy Sexual Harassment/Assault Response & Prevention (SHARP): 24/7 hotline: 608-388-3000.

Occupational Health Clinic: Building 2669. Open 7 a.m.-3 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 608-388-3025.

TRICARE: TRICARE North Region, 877-874-2273; TRICARE West Region, 877-988-9378; TRICARE South Region, 800-444-5445; TRICARE for Life, 866-773-0404; or www.tricare.mil.

Troop Medical Clinic: Building 2669. Call 608-388-3025 for available services or assistance locating local services while training at Fort McCoy. **If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your health care provider for medical advice.**

Worship

Catholic: Chapel 10, building 1759. Canceled until further notice. Channel 19 (La Crosse) shows Mass at 9:30 a.m. Sundays.

Jewish: Congregations of Abraham, 1820 Main St., La Crosse, Wis. Call 608-784-2708 for options.

Mormon: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 702 E. Montgomery St., Sparta, Wis. Call 608-269-3377 for options.

Protestant: Chapel 1, building 2672. Canceled until further notice. Readings available on Facebook.com/FtMcCoyRSO/.

Protestant Women of the Chapel: Building 1792. Canceled until further notice. Call 608-

388-3528.

Spanish Language: Catholic services in Norwalk; call 608-823-7906 for options. Seventh-Day Adventist services in Tomah; call 608-374-2142 for options.

Face-to-face services are not currently available. Call RSO at 608-388-3528 for options and assistance.

If you have an emergency, call 608-388-2266, and the on-call duty chaplain will be contacted.

Organizations

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), Local 1882: Call 608-721-7401.

American Society of Military Comptrollers: Meets several times throughout the year. For more information, call 608-269-1912.

Reserve Officers Association, Fort McCoy-Readiness 43: For more information, call 920-535-0515 or email justdave49@centurylink.net.

USO Wisconsin at Fort McCoy: Building 1501. Closed until further notice. Unit assistance may be available upon request. For more information or to volunteer, call 414-477-7279 or email ehazlett@usowisconsin.org.

Warrant Officers Association, Chapter 0317: For more information, email usawoamccoy@outlook.com.

Safety Measures

There are measures that each of us must take to mitigate any potential spread of the virus locally. These include: **frequent hand washing; avoiding close contact (6-foot buffer); not shaking hands; covering coughs and sneezes; cleaning frequently touched objects and surfaces; staying home when feeling ill; and avoiding touching your eyes, nose and/or mouth.**

In accordance with Department of Defense guidance, face coverings are required in public settings, including the commissary and Exchange.

Wipe down work areas and commonly touched surfaces daily. A list of recommend disinfectants is available at www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2.

If you or any family member feels sick, consult with your health care provider about your symptoms and seek advice on treatment.

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Send advertising inquiries to River Valley Newspaper Group, P.O. Box 4008, La Crosse, WI 54601 or call 608-374-7786/877-785-7355.

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Read this publication online at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>.

FIREARM REGISTRATION POLICY

All privately owned firearms brought on the installation must be registered through the Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) Police Department. Firearm registration is required by Army Regulation 190-11, 4-5, "Privately owned weapons and ammunition." Firearms are required to be registered prior to entrance or immediately upon entering any lands identified as Fort McCoy property. For more information, call 608-388-2266.

NEWS

Memorial Day Virtual 5k set for May 18-25

The Army Birthday Virtual 5K is set for May 18-25.

Participants will run or walk around their neighborhoods, an outdoor track, or on a treadmill. The first 50 participants who submit a picture with their time from a fitness tracker or smartphone app will receive a free T-shirt. Please maintain social distancing.

Wear something that honors a fallen hero and share a photo to be entered to win a \$50 gift card to a sporting goods store.

Post photos to the Facebook event discussion board at www.facebook.com/rumpelfitnesscenter/ between 12 a.m. May 18 to 11:59 p.m. May 25.

Families are welcome to participate together, but only one T-shirt will be given away per family. T-shirts can be picked up at Rumpel Fitness Center once it reopens for business.

Pine View Campground opens May 22

Pine View Campground is opening to the public May 22.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, new operational guidelines and requirements will be in place.

These guidelines include:

- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet at all times.
- Prohibit the use of buildings or public spaces that would encourage social gatherings of any number of people.
- Limit all campsites to members of a single household of living unit. All other private gatherings of any number of people are prohibited. No visitors.

In order to achieve these guidelines, the following changes from our normal operations will apply:

- Guests will not be required to check in in the office – go directly to the site.
- Staff will be placed outside the office and in the circles to provide assistance to arriving guests.
- Comfort stations (showers and restrooms) will be closed until further notice.
- Operating conditions and policies will be emailed to guests directly and posted on social media.
- Cabin keys will be placed in drop boxes.
- Rental Equipment will be sanitized upon return.

Available services include full-

service campsite and cabin rental, fishing and hiking trails (open to campground patrons only/no day visitors), the lake/beach area (no lifeguards on duty), rental equipment, shuffleboard, and miniature golf.

These services remain unavailable until further notice: comfort stations (toilets/showers); camp store (retail available via delivery to sites); yurts and tent sites; playgrounds and pavilions; basketball, volleyball, and horseshoes; and the Sportsman's Range.

For more information, call 608-388-3517 or visit www.mccoy.armymwr.com.

Army Birthday events planned for June 12

The Army Birthday is June 12, and Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation is planning events to celebrate.

The Army Birthday Virtual 5K is set for June 8-14. Participants will run or walk around their neighborhoods, an outdoor track, or on a treadmill. The first 50 participants who submit a picture with their time from a fitness tracker or smartphone app will receive a free T-shirt. Please maintain social distancing.

Post photos to the Facebook event discussion board at www.facebook.com/rumpelfitnesscenter/ between 12 a.m. June 8 to 11:59 p.m. June 14.

A drive-thru breakfast will be available at McCoy's Community Center, building 1571, from 7 to 9 a.m. June 12. Options include a doughnut, breakfast bar, coffee, or juice. Cupcakes and fresh fruit will also be available to take away for a later snack. Free T-shirts will also be given away while supplies last.

Free automatic car washes will be available from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The code will be posted on the MWR Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mccoymwr/ and Instagram page at www.instagram.com/fort_mccoy_mwr/.

'Virtual volunteering' opportunity available

The Tomah Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center is asking for letters and cards for veterans restricted to the VA Community Living Center.

The Connection Club is a virtual volunteering opportunity to keep individuals connected and create the sense of community on Fort McCoy and beyond. Volunteers in this po-

sition will commit to contacting a minimum of three people (phone call, email, text, snail mail) each week. Two need to be specifically related to Fort McCoy, and one can be outside of Fort McCoy (veteran, a contact at another post, service/family member known in the past, etc.).

The volunteer will share positivity with their contact, which could be in the form of a quote, idea, a link to a video, a card, etc., along with the human connection of checking in on someone else.

The Connection Club is an extension of Hunting the Good Stuff (looking for the positive in every day) and Building Strong Relationship modules in the resilience curriculum taught by Army Community Service resilience trainers.

Those interested must contact Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator Lorie Retzlaff at 608-388-6507 (leave a message) or lorie.l.retzlaff.civ@mail.mil to register as a Fort McCoy volunteer.

Tomah VA requests letters for veterans

The Tomah Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center is asking for letters and cards for veterans restricted to the VA Community Living Center.

They are in need of uplifting and positive messages, children's artwork, etc.

In order to ensure each veterans receives a card or letter, they need at least 200 each week.

Address letters to: Tomah VA Medical Center; ATTN: Mail Call (135); 500 East Veterans St.; Tomah, WI 54660.

Issues sought for Army Family Action Plan

The Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) is your platform to voice quality-of-life issues, feedback, ideas, and suggestions.

It's the best way to let Army leadership know about what works, what doesn't, and how you think problems can be resolved.

The program gives active and reserve-component Soldiers, civilians, retirees, survivors, and family members a primary tool to help identify issues and concerns and shape standards of living.

For more information or to submit an issue, visit <https://mccoy.armymwr.com/programs/army-family-action-plan>.

Army general to co-lead 'Operation Warp Speed'

BY DAVID VERGUN

Department of Defense News

President Donald J. Trump announced May 15 that Army Gen. Gustave F. Perna, the commander of Army Materiel Command, will co-lead an effort, dubbed Operation Warp Speed, to find a vaccine for COVID-19 by January 2021.

Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper said the Department of Defense is very excited and committed to partnering with the Department of Health and Human Services, across the government, and in the private sector to accomplish the mission. "Winning matters, and we will deliver by the end of this year a vaccine at scale to treat the American people and our partners abroad," he said.

The goal is to produce about 300 million vaccines by January, said Jonathan Rath Hoffman, assistant to the secretary of defense for public affairs, at a Pentagon press

briefing May 15.

Hoffman mentioned that it's a goal involving a whole-of-government approach, not just the DOD.

Regarding DOD and the Pentagon, Hoffman said neither has been shut down, and daily operations continue, albeit with mitigation steps that include social distancing, face masks, quarantine when necessary, and telework if the situation allows.

As for increasing the number of personnel at the Pentagon, Hoffman said it will be conditions-based and informed by medical experts. The Pentagon, he said, is in consultation with the governments of the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland. Policy and decisions are currently under review and are expected to be released in a matter of weeks.

Regarding the hospital ships USNS Comfort and Mercy, Hoffman said they have completed their work in New York City and Los Angeles and are standing by if their services are needed elsewhere.

Army anti-terrorism technology helps pinpoint COVID-19 cases

BY THOMAS BRADING

Army News Service

The Army technology that's used to root out terrorism threats is now being deployed to help monitor the spread of COVID-19, and in the process, it's giving Army leaders an advantage in making real-time, force-protection decisions, the Army's top criminal investigator said.

The Joint Analytic Real-Time Virtual Information Sharing System, or JARVISS, is Army software that's designed to target criminal activity and provide natural disaster information in and around Army installations and stand-alone facilities, said Army Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen, provost marshal general.

As the COVID-19 pandemic emerged earlier this year, JARVISS shifted its mission to also help leaders track the virus and its impact on installation readiness, training and recruiting.

The shifted focus toward biological threats wasn't much of an adjustment in how they operate, said James Allen, the JARVISS pro-

gram manager.

JARVISS was originally developed in 2018 after the Fort Hood, Texas, shootings. It was designed to compile information on any threat against the Army, Allen explained. Using data synthesis, the objective was to add another information layer that tracks COVID-centric data.

In the past, installation-specific profiles were developed around the types of threats specific to them. The idea of a worldwide biological threat wasn't necessarily on every commander's radar until a few months ago, Allen said.

The desktop and mobile app can store unclassified Army data and open-source threat information from more than 80,000 sources, including social media, news media, blogs and government agencies, Vereen explained. It then translates the holistic information into actionable data to help commanders make real-time decisions.

Read more online at www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2185429/army-anti-terrorism-technology-helps-pinpoint-covid-19-cases.

NEWS

New simulations buildings mean improved capability for training

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

As the construction of five new buildings nears completion in the 200 block on the Fort McCoy cantonment area, planning continues on setting those new facilities up with additional simulations training capabilities.

“With the new buildings, the garrison will be able to co-locate all simulators together to provide a one-stop service for units conducting training on post,” said Training Support Officer Rob Weisbrod with the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS). “This will allow Fort McCoy to fully support a live-virtual-constructive integrated training environment (LVCITE).”

Simulators and trainers currently in use at Fort McCoy include the Reconfigurable Vehicle Tactical Trainer; Virtual Battle Space Simulation; Call-For-Fire Trainer; Engagement Skills Trainer; Virtual Clearance Training Suite; HMMVV (High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle) and Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected Egress Assistance Trainers; Un-stabilized Gunnery Trainer-Crew, Rough-Terrain Cargo Handler simulator, 660 Interactive Truck Driver simulator, All-Terrain Lifter Army System forklift simulator, and Medical Simulation Training Center, Weisbrod said.

When other simulations training moves into

the new buildings, it could also include driving simulators, a tactical vehicle safety facility, and more.

“The Army Reserve, for example, is looking to purchase the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle simulator and placing it there,” Weisbrod said. “The buildings will be configured so that future simulators can be fielded and housed in any of the new buildings.”

Simulations training is a large part of operations during exercises at Fort McCoy, Weisbrod said. An example is when Reserve Soldiers completed gunnery training during Operation Cold Steel. Operation Cold Steel was the Army Reserve’s first large-scale live-fire training and crew-served weapons qualification and validation exercise.

During that training, team members with Fort McCoy’s Virtual Battle Space 3 (VBS3) simulation facility played a direct role in training through use of the Mounted Machine Gun Trainer Plug-in Vehicle Crew Evaluator software program.

The VBS3 software program allowed hundreds of Soldiers to see Fort McCoy ranges in virtual reality and helped each of the three-person gunnery crews practice for their actual range missions, said Mike Latour, senior consultant and trainer with contractor Booz Allen Hamilton Inc., which supports the DPTMS VBS3 facility.

“The program is great because it allows (the



Service members at Fort McCoy for training in the 86th Training Division’s Combat Support Training Exercise 86-19-04 line up for simulations training Aug. 15, 2019, at the 200 block on the cantonment area at the installation.

crew) to see what it’s like to be in their vehicles, see how to choose their targets, and helps them understand the scoring they will have during actual live-fire sessions,” Latour said.

Units also utilize the Engagement Skills Trainers, which support pre-marksanship and sustainment training, Weisbrod said.

“The new buildings will fully support our strategic plans with the required infrastructure to establish a Mission Training Complex (MTC) at Fort McCoy that supports LVCITE,”

Weisbrod said. “The new facilities will allow us greater capability to future collective and joint exercises with operating a Reconfigurable Tactical Operation Center (RTOC) as well.”

More planning and preparation on how the new Simulations Center and Mission Command Campus — the 200 block — will be set up will continue throughout the coming months, Weisbrod said.

“When it’s all ready, it’s going to be a great training campus for the installation,” he said.

Construction of new simulations buildings continues at Fort McCoy

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

The construction project that’s building five new battle simulations buildings in the 200 block is progressing well at Fort McCoy, said General Engineer Nicholas Perna with the Directorate of Public Works.

“The project is currently near 70 percent complete and progressing,” Perna said.

“The contractor is currently working on drywall, electrical, plumbing, and more. The contractor is also working on the subgrade to improve drainage as well as forming up the concrete sidewalks. The roofing aspect of the project is nearly complete.”

Contractor MDM Construction Supply of Rockford, Ill., is completing the project, and the projected completion date is September.

When completed, the new simulation buildings will be managed by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Mobility, Training and Security (DPTMS).

The new simulation buildings will offer more opportunities to bring in more training, said DPTMS Training Support Officer Rob Weisbrod.

Throughout the past decade, Fort McCoy has experienced unprecedented facility modernization, according to the 2020 Fort McCoy Executive Summary, which is produced by the Fort McCoy Garrison.

The improvement effort also has included training-area development and expansion, increased training and customer-



Work on five new battle simulations buildings in the 200 block is shown May 7 at Fort McCoy.

support capacity, and improved quality-of-life opportunities.

Construction projects like this contributed to the installation’s \$1.18 billion economic impact to local

communities near the post in fiscal year 2019, according to the executive summary. Data show \$27.6 million in new construction at Fort McCoy during fiscal year 2019.

NEWS



Renovation work on building 2880 at Fort McCoy is shown May 7. This former facility used by a Navy Reserve Seabees unit is undergoing the renovation to create new spaces for several garrison offices from the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security and the Directorate of Public Works.

Former Seabees facility, building 2880, undergoes renovation

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Building 2880 on Fort McCoy's cantonment area, the facility formerly used by a Navy Reserve Seabees unit, is undergoing a renovation to create a new space for several garrison offices.

As of mid-May, the facility construction was nearly 60 percent complete, said General Engineer Nicholas Perna with the Directorate of Public Works. Work on the facility began early in 2020 by contractor MDM Construction.

"The metal siding is coming off and the contractor will be laying a brick veneer around the exterior," Perna said. "Excavation for the new footings is well underway, and they are forming them up as they go. Also, electrical, plumbing,

and framing are all progressing on this building."

Kevin Straughan with the DPW Engineering Division said two garrison directorates will relocate to the facility once it is complete.

The Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) and DPW will have offices in the building," Straughan said.

"All existing interior walls of the building are being demolished, and a new floor plan was created for the two directorates."

The DPTMS Range Management Branch, DPTMS Training Division chief, and DPW Facilities Management Branch will be among the organizations to operate in the building, Straughan said.

Perna said there will be ample space for all who work in

the building when it's done. Completion of the facility is scheduled for later this year.

Throughout the past decade, Fort McCoy has experienced unprecedented facility modernization, according to the 2020 Fort McCoy Executive Summary, which is produced by the Fort McCoy Garrison. The improvement effort also has included training-area development and expansion, increased training and customer-support capacity, and improved quality-of-life opportunities.

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Data show \$27.6 million in new construction at Fort McCoy during fiscal year 2019.

NEWS

LRC rail team moves equipment bound for deployment



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

Employees with the Fort McCoy Logistics Readiness Center (LRC) rail operations team use the installation locomotive to move rail cars loaded with Army equipment May 14 on post. Equipment and vehicles belonging to the Army Reserve's 996th Engineer Company and 327th Engineer Company were loaded for rail shipment in March in preparation for an upcoming deployment. Soldiers from the units completed the loading with support from the LRC team. Approximately 245 pieces of cargo were loaded on to 97 rail cars equaling 22.4 short tons. There were zero rail safety accidents with the effort as well.



The installation locomotive moves railcars with vehicles and equipment from the cantonment area May 14. Rail operations personnel who did the movement included Roger Everson, Rodney Everson, and Bill Peters.

ADS

COMMUNITY

88th Readiness Division receives national public affairs accolades

The 88th Readiness Division's (RD) Public Affairs team was recently recognized during two national Department of Defense public affairs competitions.

The 88th RD's new community engagement program earned top honors with the U.S. Army Reserve Public Affairs Award of Distinction in the 2019 Brumfield Mass Communications Competition. The team also received second-place honors for the Kathy Canham-Ross Award of Distinction in the U.S. Army's Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Communications Awards Competition for the same engagement program.

Cheryl Phillips, director of Public Affairs for the 88th RD, credits 88th RD Commander Maj. Gen. Jody J. Daniels' strong support of community engagements as key to each award.

"We couldn't have achieved this level of success without the support of Maj. Gen. Daniels," Phillips said. "She participated in a majority of our planned engagements, which allowed us to build many strong relationships with our community partners in the 88th RD's 19-state region."

The Brumfield Competition recognizes U.S. Army Reserve public affairs units and command public affairs Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians for outstanding achievement in furthering the objectives of the Department of Defense Public Affairs Program. More information is available online at <https://www.usar.army.mil/Brumfield/>.

The Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Communications Awards Competition is hosted by the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs on behalf of the secretary of the Army. The competition recognizes Soldiers and Army civilian employees throughout all components of the U.S. Army for excellence in achieving the objectives of the Army Public Affairs Program.

(Article prepared by the 88th Readiness Division Public Affairs Office.)



Photo by Chris Hanson/88th Readiness Division Public Affairs

Cheryl Phillips (left), director of Public Affairs for the 88th Readiness Division, meets with distinguished visitors in her office Oct. 18, 2019, at Fort McCoy.

88th RD writer earns placing in Army Reserve public affairs competition

Zachary Mott, a civilian public affairs specialist with the 88th Readiness Division and a U.S. Army Reserve public affairs sergeant, was a winner in the U.S. Army Reserve's 2019 Brumfield Mass Communications Competition.

Mott was selected as a print journalism first-place winner among multiple entries in the human interest feature category for an article he wrote about deployed twin brothers while he himself was deployed to Kuwait with the 368th Public Affairs Detachment.

"I'm proud to have my work recognized by my peers," Mott said.

"We have many talented professionals in the Army Reserve public affairs community and to be selected among them is a huge honor."

Mott said he had seen family members deployed together

before, but never twins.

That was the distinctive draw he needed for his feature.

"I wanted to interview them and tell their unique story," Mott said.

The Brumfield Competition recognizes U.S. Army Reserve public affairs units, public affairs Soldiers and DA Civilians for outstanding achievement in furthering the objectives of the Department of Defense Public Affairs Program.

Mott's winning article can be found at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/325289/identical-twins-share-deployment-together>.

The 88th Readiness Division is a tenant organization at the installation.

(Article prepared by 88th Readiness Division Public Affairs.)

Identical Twins Share Deployment Together



CAMP AS SAYLIYAH, QATAR

06.04.2019

Story by Sgt. Zachary Mott

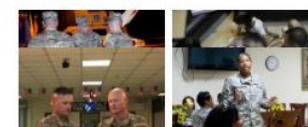
Area Support Group - Qatar

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This screen shot is a glimpse at an award-winning story written by Zachary Mott with the 88th Readiness Division.

FEATURE

History of Armed Forces Day stretches back 70 years

BY THERESA FITZGERALD

Public Affairs Staff

On August 31, 1949, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson announced the creation of an Armed Forces Day to replace separate Army, Navy and Air Force Days.

The single-day celebration stemmed from the unification of the Armed Forces under one department — the Department of Defense. Each of the military leagues and orders was asked to drop sponsorship of its specific service day in order to celebrate the newly announced Armed Forces Day. The Army, Navy and Air Force leagues adopted the newly formed day. The Marine Corps League declined to drop support for Marine Corps Day but supports Armed Forces Day, too.

In a speech announcing the formation of the day, President Harry S. Truman praised the work of the military services at home and across the seas. “It is vital to the security of the nation and to the establishment of a desirable peace,” Truman said.

“Now, therefore, I, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim that Saturday, May 20, 1950, shall be known as Armed Forces Day; and I invite the governors of the states, territories, and possessions to issue proclamations calling for the celebration of that day in such manner as to honor the Armed Forces of the United States and the millions of veterans who have returned to civilian pursuits,” states the Presidential Proclamation of Feb. 27, 1950.

Armed Forces Day is a day to honor all of the men and women currently serving as well as those who have served, both active and former military.

Celebrating Armed Forces Day serves several purposes. From its inception 70 years ago, it has served as an opportunity for citizens to unite and to honor military heroes for their patriotic service. It also was designed to increase public understanding of the role of the military in modern society. It is a day for the military to show off its state-of-the-art equipment. And, most importantly, it is a day to honor and acknowledge the people of the Armed Forces of the United States.

The installation’s first recorded Armed Forces Day Open House was May 19, 1951. It was the first opportunity in 10 years for Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa residents to see the inside of an Army camp while it trained men of the Armed Forces.

Today, the open house is Fort McCoy’s largest community outreach event of the year. The open house features something of interest to all age groups — guided bus tours equipment/information displays, demonstrations, marksmanship galleries, camouflage face painting, and more. These activities are supported by both military units and civilian departments, truly making it an installationwide event.

The day’s activities are centered at the award-winning Commemorative Area, which features the History Center; five World War II-era buildings filled with historical equipment and displays, the outdoor Equipment Park, and Veterans Memorial Plaza.

While this year’s Armed Forces Day Open House was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, plans are already being made for next year’s event. Mark your calendars to attend the 2021 event on May 15, 2021.

The Commemorative Area located in the 800 block is open for tours by appointment. Visit the Fort McCoy public website at home.army.mil/mccoy or call the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office at 608-388-2407 to learn more about scheduling a tour.



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

Visitors to the 2016 Fort McCoy Armed Forces Day Open House watch a police K-9 demonstration by the Wisconsin State Patrol.



Fort McCoy Armed Forces Day Open House visitors get off of a tour bus during the 2017 event at the installation.



Visitors to the 2018 Fort McCoy Armed Forces Day Open House take a walk through Equipment Park.



Members of the 204th Army Band of Fort Snelling, Minn., play a song outdoors during the 2019 open house.

FEATURE

Installation's newest forester isn't new to Fort McCoy, plans continued success

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

Depending on the time of year, he's used to hearing the crunch of the snow underneath his snowshoes or the swishing sound of boots moving through mud as he makes his way around the tens of thousands of acres of forest land on Fort McCoy. But it's all okay, because it's another day in his outdoor "office" for Forester Charles Mentzel.

Mentzel, who was the post forestry technician from 1992 until April 11, knows the woods of Fort McCoy from one end to the next. Mentzel said managing the forest land, a large part of the post's 60,000 acres, is a continuing effort that never gets dull. He officially became the installation's newest forester April 12.

"I think someone who has worked in forestry as long as I have has to love it," said Mentzel, a 1991 graduate of the forestry program at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and native of New Lisbon, Wis. "No matter what the weather is outside, it's always a great day to come to work. We have a great forestry program, which, in addition to the rest of the natural resources programs at Fort McCoy, provides much care and management for our environment here."

The forestry program at Fort McCoy is part of the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch. According to Mentzel, more than 40,000, or about 66 percent, of Fort McCoy's acreage are forestlands. And approximately 40 percent of the forested land (32 percent of Fort McCoy's total land area) is commercially valuable.

"All of our forest acreage is tracked using computer programs to enhance multiple-use,

sustained-yield forest management," Mentzel said. "From 4,000 to 5,000 acres are re-inventoried each year."

To do those inventories and to manage all that acreage means getting out in the field, which is where Mentzel has spent the majority of his time. "I'll go out when it's 20 degrees below zero in the middle of winter or when it's 105 degrees in the heart of summer," Mentzel said.

Field work means using a number of tools, including a radio; a diameter tape for measuring circumference of trees; and a clinometer, used to measure tree height.

"A clinometer measures angles of slope, elevation or depression of an object with respect to gravity," said Mentzel. "In forestry, it helps us measure the height of trees quickly using the measured angles and trigonometry."

Other items Mentzel may carry for work include paint to mark trees for a future timber sale, a handheld computer to input measured forestry data and a GPS device.

"With a GPS unit, we can achieve great location accuracy in preparing a land tract for a timber sale," Mentzel said. "The unit we have is worn in a backpack style and is strong enough to pick up a satellite signal beneath the tree canopy. Achieving accuracy in our readings is crucial to the overall management of our program."

The GPS unit is also compatible with the handheld computer, which has applications designed specifically for forestry management. While a forestry technician once used pencil and paper to do his or her work, it's now completed with the latest technology. Mentzel said the computer is the most important tool available.

"Compared to when I started in forestry, the tools we have now make the work more efficient and accurate," Mentzel said. "Our computers and GPS capabilities are our best tools in use now."

Even with the best tools available, Mentzel said the toughest part of his job is not the technology or the science of forestry — it's the weather.

"When it comes to weather, it can go from one extreme to another here," Mentzel said. "During Wisconsin winters, we have the snow and cold temperatures. In summer, we can have high humidity and temperatures over 100 degrees as well as rain and severe thunderstorms. The weather, by far, plays a big part in how we approach our work."

In addition to weather, the landscape and terrain can also provide challenges. For example, if he has to mark trees with paint in a land parcel for a timber sale, Mentzel said he prefers to do it in the winter versus the summer.

"In summer, the undergrowth can grow very thick, which makes it hard to move around," Mentzel said. "You also have the insects like mosquitoes and ticks, which can make it



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Fort McCoy Forester Charles Mentzel shows children how to plant a tree during the installation's observance of Arbor Day on April 29, 2016.

difficult to be out there in those swampy areas. So, it's best to go out to the swamps in winter when the ground is frozen and there aren't any insects to be found."

Mentzel's schedule keeps him busy year-round. From January to March, he and his staff are marking trees for harvest for future timber sales throughout the post. On average, the post will have eight to 10 timber sales in a year.

The value of standing timber at Fort McCoy, Mentzel said, is estimated at more than \$13 million. More than 282,000 cords and 48 million board feet of commercial timber currently are growing on Fort McCoy. And, on average, timber sales produce annual revenue of approximately \$200,000 or more that goes into an Armywide forestry account. Monies from the account can then be requested to fund forestry projects on Fort McCoy.

During the spring, summer, and fall, Mentzel also supports forest fire prevention efforts with others around the post. "This means we go out and conduct prescribed burning," he said.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources defines prescribed burns as a way to "improve wildlife habitat, control invasive plant species, restore and maintain native plant communities and reduce wildfire potential." It's all those reasons and more why Mentzel and others go out and perform the prescribed burning.

"By doing this, it helps reduce wildfire potential in areas all around the post — especially in places where military training is taking place," Mentzel said. "We make sure our firing ranges and training areas are at the lowest risk possible during spring and summer, which is our busiest time on post for military training."

Mentzel's Forestry Office also manages opening areas for firewood collection to the public. People can purchase firewood permits online at iSportsman or at the DPW Permits Sales Office in building 2168 when open. The cost is \$10 for a daily permit to collect firewood and \$50 for a 30 day permit.

Julie Steinhoff, Permit Sales coordinator,

described how she works with Mentzel to manage the post firewood program.

"We manage the permit sales here for anyone who wants to cut firewood within the Fort McCoy boundaries," Steinhoff said. "Charles sets what areas are available for people to gather firewood. When people pick up their permit, they receive a map that Charles and I had coordinated on previously. We work together to update those maps monthly, if required, so our customers have the latest information."

Mentzel added that the firewood program also helps with fire prevention and land management.

"When people collect firewood here, it has to be from dead standing or down timber," he said. "By removing the dead wood, it removes overhead hazards for soldiers and takes away possible fire fuel improving the land overall."

Whether it's supporting timber sales, managing prescribed burns, scouting areas for firewood collection or working with customers, Mentzel said having a career in forestry is one he's enjoyed and will continue to enjoy for years to come.

"I've been doing something in forestry for all of my adult life," Mentzel said. "This is what I'm good at and what I enjoy. And, I'm glad I get to do it here at Fort McCoy."

Recently retired Fort McCoy Forester James Kerkman said Mentzel will continue to do well with the program.

"Charles and I have been working together since 1987, when he started out here in the Junior Fellowship Program after graduating high school," Kerkman said. "He worked during summers and breaks while attending UW-Stevens Point. Today's forestry program is as much influenced by Charles as by myself. I don't see any radical changes happening after I leave. Through the years, Charles has been doing a large part of the timber sale program and has a good rapport with the logging contractors. He also has a great working relationship with the many others on the installation we have worked with through the years. He'll continue to do well."



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Former Fort McCoy Forester James Kerkman completes a symbolic passing of the tree planting shovel to new Fort McCoy Forester Charles Mentzel on April 24 during the post 2020 Arbor Day observance.



Courtesy photo

This is a photo of Charles Mentzel from summer 1987 when he participated in the Junior Fellowship Program to support forestry at Fort McCoy.

Fort McCoy ArtiFACT: Bifurcate base projectile points

The Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch has hosted and coordinated archaeological investigations for several decades.

These investigations have identified more than 500 archaeological sites that have been attributed to human activity spanning more than 10,000 years. Some time periods are better represented than others, but the least common time period in the archaeological record of Fort McCoy is not the oldest.

The oldest discrete time period for which investigators have clear evidence is the Late Paleoindian Tradition, which dates to approximately 12,000-10,000 years ago. There are 22 sites that are associated with this period of prehistory.

The Early Archaic Period follows immediately after the Late Paleoindian Tradition, but only nine sites at Fort McCoy have produced artifacts or datable materials that link them to this time, which was approximately 10,000-8,000 years ago.

Rarer still are a specific type of projectile point commonly attributed to the Early Archaic Period: the bifurcate base projectile point.

Only two sites at Fort McCoy have produced this projectile

point style, named for the distinctive look of the base. These tools were intentionally notched at the base, presumably to make it easier to haft.

Hafting is the term for attaching projectile points onto the end of long, straight sticks to create spears. The spear can then be used as a melee weapon or launched with another tool known as an atlatl.

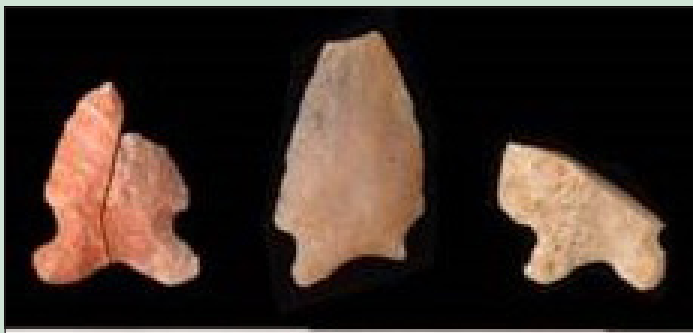
All archaeological work conducted at Fort McCoy is coordinated by the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.

Visitors and employees are reminded they should not collect artifacts on Fort McCoy or other government lands and leave the digging to the professionals.

Any person who excavates, removes, damages, or otherwise alters or defaces any historic or prehistoric site, artifact, or object of antiquity on Fort McCoy is in violation of federal law.

The discovery of any archaeological artifact should be reported to the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch at 608-388-8214.

(Article prepared by the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.)



Contributed photo

Bifurcate base projectile points that were discovered on Fort McCoy are shown. These projectile points are named so because of their distinctive notched bases, which make them easier to haft onto a stick to create a spear.

These projectile points were used in the Early Archaic Period, which was approximately 10,000 to 8,000 years ago. Artifacts from this period are rare finds on Fort McCoy, and only two sites on the installation have produced this type of projectile point.

Archaeological work on Fort McCoy is coordinated by the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.

FEATURE

Veterans recall end of WWII in Europe

BY SEAN KIMMONS

Army News Service

After being freed from a World War II prison camp by British forces, Harold Radish immediately sought the simple pleasures of freedom: a beer and a nice sleep.

A reconnaissance sergeant with the 90th Infantry Division, Radish was captured by German soldiers in February 1945. Following months as a prisoner in Nazi Germany, the Jewish-American was rescued in late April, a week before the official victory in Europe.

"The war in Europe was over," he said in a video. "The desolation and the buildings that were bombed, the killings and the rough times that I and my buddies had — it was over."

Amid the current fight against COVID-19, several veterans, public figures, and family members of those killed in WWII shared a series of videos as part of an online commemoration to honor the 75th anniversary of V-E Day.

In his video, Radish said that he and other prisoners were flown to Brussels. There, they were cleaned up, fed, clothed in British uniforms, and given a couple of hours off in the city.

"We went into a bar, we drank some beer, and then we went to sleep," he said. "And that was true liberation."

In a letter he mailed to his family after his release, Radish said he could not wait to return to them.

"I don't think anyone can get me home fast enough, though they are using airplane and ship," he said, reciting the letter. "Freedom is worth any price. It took a long time, but I (finally) found out."

Just days after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941, Americans were thrust into an ongoing fight across Europe as both Germany and Italy declared war on the United States.

Months of hard battles ensued as Allied forces began to defeat enemy strongholds in Africa and Europe. In May 1943, Axis troops were defeated in northern Africa, and by the fall of 1943, fascist Italy surrendered.

In June 1944, the D-Day invasion of Normandy broke through Germany's Atlantic defenses and established a foothold for Allied forces that led to Paris being liberated later that summer.

Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg also were liberated by



Photo from U.S. National Archives

An Army private is shown breaking the news of the end of the war in Europe to other Soldiers after receiving an Associated Press news flash on it in May 1945.

Allied forces.

In early 1945, Allies reached Germany's western border, then crossed the Rhine River in March, said Jane Droppa, vice chair of the Friends of the National WWII Memorial.

"The determined push into the heart of German fatherland was slow yet steady as the Allies encountered German forces not yet willing to give up the fight," she said. "As they pushed into Germany, Allied forces encountered scenes of unspeakable horror and human suffering in Nazi concentration camps, all of which gave new meaning to the war."

As American and Soviet soldiers moved into Germany from the west and east, both forces met in late April along the Elbe River, cutting the remaining German forces in two.

Less than a week later, Nazi Germany leader Adolf Hitler committed suicide a few days before the fall of Berlin. German leaders then signed an unconditional surrender of their entire forces, ending the war in Europe on May 8, 1945.

An estimated 15 to 20 million people died during the war in Europe. In total, WWII claimed some 60 million people worldwide, including 400,000 Americans.

For retired Col. Frank Cohn, that day was just like any other at that time.

As an intelligence agent who could speak German, he was assigned to a unit called T-Force that was in Magdeburg near Berlin. The unit's mission was to go into large German cities after they were captured to inspect building and personality targets.

"Building targets were anything that was going to be of use to the force and in support of the crimi-

nal investigations and prosecution of war criminals," he said. "And the personality targets were people who were going to be tried."

When news came of the surrender, he said it didn't really mean much to him and others in his unit. To them, the war had already been over for a few weeks.

"So we never really even celebrated it," he said of V-E Day. "We just took it as another day, and we were in the occupation as far as we were concerned. It means so much more now than it did then."

"When I was drafted, I had absolutely no fear that we were going to lose the war," he added. "We were going to win. But certainly, in retrospect, it wasn't that obvious, and I think we can celebrate it."

The son of 2nd Lt. Robert Meek also spoke of his father's sacrifice months earlier in the war.

Meek, a B-25 Mitchell bomber copilot, was killed during a raid on the Magenta Bridge near Milan, Italy, in October 1944.

"The plane was hit by flak, killing my father instantly," retired Col. Robert Meek Jr. said. "The pilot was able to return the plane and land it, even though he and two other members of the crew were wounded."

To Meek, V-E Day meant the beginning of the end of evil in the world, in regard to German fascism and Japanese imperialism. By remembering this day, he said hopes it can serve as a stark reminder to not let certain history repeat itself.

"If we are to allow evil to persist and exist, then we will go through the catastrophic conditions that we had in World War II," he said. "So, please remember that men and women were willing to sacrifice to save freedom and democracy."

COMMUNITY

Hatch Act restricts political activities, even while teleworking

With the increase in home-based telework due to recent events and the upcoming presidential election, Department of Defense (DOD) employees may have questions about allowable political activity.

The Hatch Act and DOD policy govern the political activities of DOD civilian employees. Among other restrictions, the statute and regulation prohibit employees from engaging in political activities in a federal workplace; while on duty; while wearing a government uniform, badge, or insignia; and/or while using a government vehicle.

Political activity is defined as an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.

Teleworking away from the traditional office setting does fall under the "while on duty" restriction. From whatever location you are teleworking, that site constitutes your place of duty for that particular workday. If you are teleworking from home, you are on duty and may not engage in political activities in your home while you are on duty, even if you are on a personal device like a home computer or personal cellphone.

Employees participating in virtual work-related conferences are subject to the same on-duty Hatch Act restrictions as when they attend meetings or communicate in person with others at work. For example, employees should not wear a campaign T-shirt or hat while participating in a work-related video conference call, and they should ensure that any partisan materials, such as campaign signs or candidate pictures, are not visible to others during the call.

Additionally, some teleconferencing programs and email applications allow individuals to add a profile picture, which is visible to others. Employees using email or other conferencing programs for work purposes may not use the profile pictures associated with these platforms to show support for or opposition to a political party, partisan political group, or candidate for partisan political office.

After the end of a workday, employees cannot use government computers or government mobile phones to engage in partisan political activity. For example, employees may not send or forward political material or messages using their government laptop or government mobile phone after completing a day of telework.

However, employees may engage in permitted political activities while using personal devices after the end of the workday or during a lunch break while they are working at home. Remember that if you are in a federal building during a lunch break, you cannot use your personal computer or personal mobile phone to engage in political activity.

The Hatch Act prohibits federal employees from soliciting or receiving political contributions. Fundraising is a 24/7 prohibition. For example, Federal employees may not ask for



Courtesy graphic

contributions, collect contributions, host or forward an online political fundraiser, or promote political fundraisers.

While teleworking, employees can use their government computers or government mobile phones to post a comment on a professional association's online discussion forum or an online news article about a current policy or a proposed policy change. Commenting about a current policy or proposed policy change is not considered political activity, and therefore the Hatch Act does not restrict this activity.

Federal employees may express their opinions about current events and matters of public interest, such as referendum matters, changes in municipal ordinances, constitutional amendments, pending legislation, or other matters of public interest, like issues involving highways, schools, housing, and taxes. Employees must still be mindful of using official time for official purposes and of DOD computer-use policies and must ensure they do not use or make any reference to their official position or title when expressing personal opinions.

This article is not comprehensive guidance, nor should it be substituted for legal advice. It is intended to provide an overview of the interplay between the Hatch Act and a telework setting.

Political activity by members of the armed forces is covered under DODD 1344.10.

For more information, contact your ethics counsel or visit the Standards of Conduct Office website at https://ogc.osd.mil/defense_ethics/topics/political_activities.html.

(Article prepared by the Fort McCoy Installation Legal Office.)

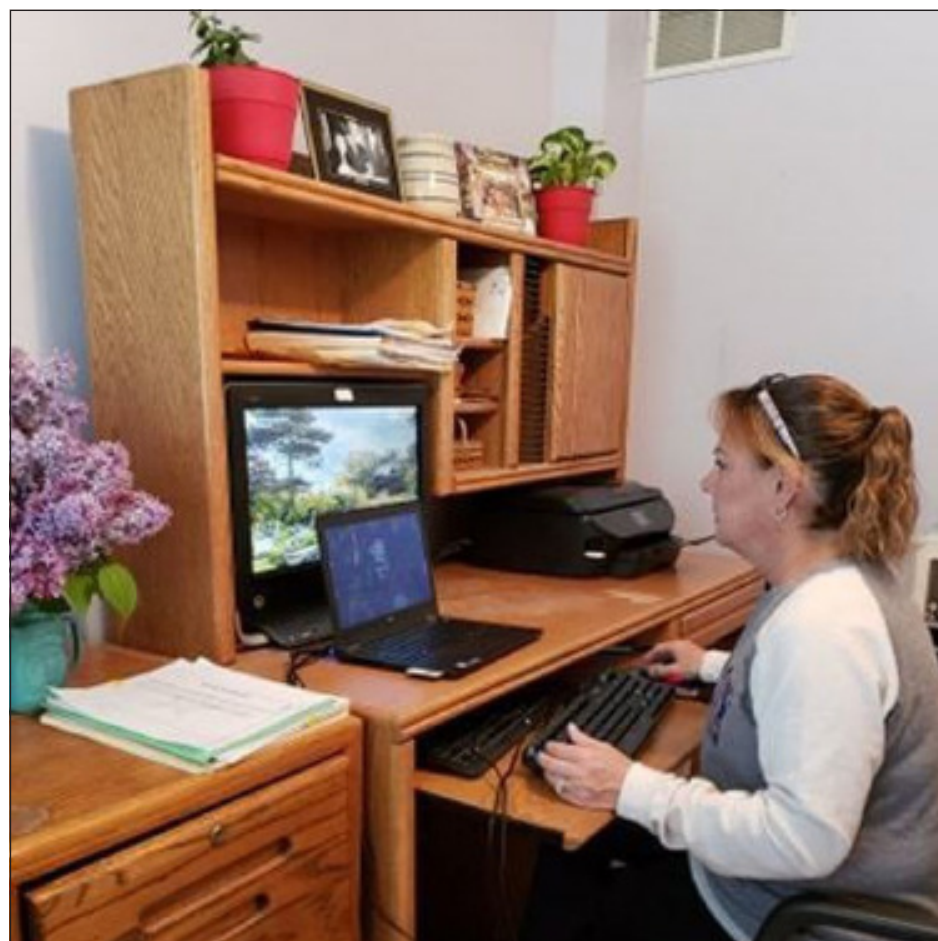


Photo by Warren Marlow/First Army

Teresa Sullivan, a First Army management analyst, works from home in early May.

COMMUNITY



Photo by Ensign Benjamin Nickerson/Chief of Naval Air Training Office

Ensign Tim Peterson uses an infrared thermometer to take Ensign Samantha Alex's temperature May 15 at Training Air Wing 4 at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas.

DECA starts screening workers for COVID-19 symptoms

On May 8, the Defense Commissary Agency (DECA) began daily health screenings of anyone who works in commissaries — including employees, baggers, and affiliated contractors — before they start their shifts.

Commissaries will initially conduct the screenings with a questionnaire that focuses on any visible symptoms related to COVID-19 and traces their travel history as well as potential connections with anyone affected by the virus.

As stores receive their infrared thermometers, the screening will include temperature checks. If a temperature check determines anyone is a potential risk, they will be directed to go home and contact their health care provider. They can return to work once they have no signs of a fever or illness, and they will be screened again.

"Military resale is good at evolving and adapting, and screening the people who work in our stores is the first step in a new normal that helps reduce the risk of transmission for everyone," said retired Rear Adm. Robert J. Bianchi, Department of Defense special assistant for commissary operations. "We should expect to operate like this for the foreseeable future."

Bianchi, who is also the CEO of the Navy Exchange Service Command (NEXCOM), said his Navy Exchange stores are also preparing to implement these procedures for the personnel working in their facilities.

"There are probably going to be many commercial businesses that start implementing temperature checks for employees and wearing of face coverings, so this should be no surprise to anyone as they may experience this in many aspects of their personal lives," he said.

The employee health screenings are the latest in a series of safety measures that commissaries have implemented:

- anyone (including customers) entering a store must wear a face covering.
- stores have plexiglass sneeze shields in all regular checkout lanes.
- commissary personnel wipe down checkout areas, product display cases, restrooms, and shopping carts with disinfectant and practice routine hand washing and other basic sanitation measures.
- touchless credit card processing eliminates the need for the customer to sign
- customers scan their own ID cards so cashiers can provide them touchless transactions.
- reusable bag usage has been banned.
- only authorized customers — this includes disabled veterans with Veteran Health Identification Cards — will be able to enter a commissary. Visitors will no longer be allowed to accompany authorized customers, and a 100 percent ID check is in place.
- DECA canceled special events such as the spring sidewalk sales, in-store product demonstrations (including DECA's free coffee program), group tours, vendor-sponsored events, and other events to discourage group gatherings.

Commissaries are working with installation leadership and public health personnel to implement risk reduction practices such as designated store hours for various patron groups and limiting the number of patrons in the store.

Commissary customers should continue to refer to the federal government's response to coronavirus, COVID-19 website, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Coronavirus site for updates and guidance regarding this virus. Updates related to the commissaries can be found on DECA's coronavirus page at <https://commissaries.com/coronavirus>.

Exchange keeps Fort McCoy families safe with distance shopping

The Army & Air Force Exchange Service is making sure Fort McCoy Soldiers and military families can get the critical products they need while maintaining physical distancing in a safe environment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For contactless shopping, ShopMyExchange.com is always open. Authorized Exchange shoppers with installation access can use the "buy online, pick up in store" service to reduce contact with others while getting what they need. The Fort McCoy Exchange has also implemented curbside pickup.

Personnel on installations can get fresh meals at Fort McCoy Exchange restaurants, which are carry-out and delivery only. Foot decals spaced 6 feet apart on the floor at stores and restaurants remind shoppers to keep a safe distance from others.

Reducing cash transactions in favor of credit or debit cards is limiting the need to handle cash, which can transmit bacteria and viruses. This protects both shoppers and associates, as do the acrylic shields recently installed at Exchange registers throughout the installation. The Exchange is also expediting the shipment of reusable, washable face-

masks for all Fort McCoy Exchange store associates. Associates awaiting the arrival of the masks are encouraged to make their own in accordance with the surgeon general's guidelines.

"The Exchange is honored to support the Fort McCoy military community," Fort McCoy Exchange General Manager Donald Basil said. "As long as Soldiers are serving us, the Exchange is serving them."

Additional measures include thorough and frequent store cleanings, such as disinfecting customer service and sales points multiple times daily at all facilities, halting product sampling, and routinely cleaning all facilities and restrooms.

At its restaurants, the Fort McCoy Exchange has increased handwashing frequency for associates, increased frequency of cleaning/disinfecting customer touchpoints, closed dining rooms at command request, offered take-out and delivery on the cantonment area and to South Post Family Housing, removed condiments from dining rooms, and eliminated use of personal cups.

"The safety and well-being of Fort McCoy shoppers and associates are our top priorities," Basil said. "We are 'family serving family.'"



Photo by Senior Airman Elizabeth Baker/86th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Lidvina Mikulic, Army and Air Force Exchange Service concessionaire, helps a customer April 21 at the Base Exchange at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Graphic by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

OUTDOORS



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

A family does some fishing at Swamp Pond on May 9 on South Post at Fort McCoy. The fishing season opened at the installation and in Wisconsin on May 2.

Remember safety, risk management when out fishing

Wisconsin's annual fishing season opened May 2. With that opening comes more and more anglers heading to their favorite fishing spots to try their luck.

While out, these anglers should also make safety a top priority, officials say. From boating to fishing hooks to walking the water's edge, anglers have a variety of risks every time they go out.

The National Park Service offers the following advice for angler safety:

- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket when on, in, or near the water. If anglers falls into the water, they may not be able to reach their life jackets if they were left on the shore or in a boat. If a life jacket can be reached, it's nearly impossible to put it on while someone is in the water. Don't take the chance of drowning and wear a life jacket.

- Designate a water watcher. When fishing around, on, or in open water, children and poor swimmers should always wear a properly fitted, U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device. Inflatable swimming rings and inflatable water wings are not a substitute for a life jacket. Assign a person in a family or group to be the "water watcher." This person is responsible for keeping track of the children in the group when they are around, on, or in water. A moment's distraction could quickly lead to a child drowning.

- Use sunscreen and wear sun protection gear. Ultraviolet (UV) light damage to skin can occur in as little as 15 minutes.

Sand and water reflect UV rays, increasing exposure. Apply sunscreen before the start of fishing and reapply at least every two hours or more frequently if sweating or getting wet while fishing. Remember to use a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15 or greater. Wear a hat, long sleeve shirt, pants, and sunglasses to provide the best protection from the sun.

- Don't get hooked; prevent and treat fishing hook related injuries. Handle the hook carefully during baiting and removing a catch. Look around before casting — make sure no one is nearby. Always wear shoes in fishing areas — discarded hooks and sharp rocks could injure feet. Learn first aid for removing hooks from the skin and treating the wound. If the hook has deeply penetrated the skin, muscles, tendons, or bone, if it is on the face or near/in the eyes, or if someone is bleeding excessively, seek medical treatment immediately.

- Check the water temperature. People should get out of the water if they are getting cold. Natural bodies of water can be very cold even in the summertime. Hypothermia can begin to occur in water that is 80 degrees or colder, depending on your health, body composition, clothes being worn, and other factors. Hypothermia causes the body temperature to drop below average, typically 98.6 degrees. Symptoms can range from mild to severe — affecting a person's ability to think and move to becoming unconscious leading to possible death. Know when to get out of the water and what to do if someone experiences hypothermia.

According to takemefishing.org, the following are some additional fishing safety tips to consider.

- Inspect waterfronts daily — the natural environment is subject to change without notice.

- Don't fish in areas where it is not permitted. These areas have been declared "off limits" to protect wildlife, vegetation, or for personal safety.

- Because fishing is practiced in a variety of environments, evaluate factors specific to fishing safety in each environment. For example, the ice fishing safety tip "avoid old ice" is only relevant in an ice-cold environment.

- Bring along extra safety items, such as water, flashlights, maps, and a cellphone or radio.

- Always wear foot gear appropriate to the conditions.

- Use appropriate insect protection measures, including proper clothing and repellents.

- Keep fishing knives sharp, and cover the blade when not in use.

- Handle fish carefully.

Apply all of these simple safety procedures for fishing to make your fishing experience worry-free. For more related safety information, visit <https://www.nps.gov/articles/fishing-safety.htm>, or contact the Fort McCoy Installation Safety Office at 608-388-3403.

(Article prepared by the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.)