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# The Real McCoy®

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## \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy reaches 40 percent complete; work continues

**STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL**  
*Public Affairs Staff*

As of Jan. 9, the progress on the \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project, which is managed by the Army Corps of Engineers, has surpassed 40 percent complete.

The project includes two buildings being constructed in a sizeable construction space of the installation's 1600 block of the cantonment area. On the west building, the contractor has been busy finishing framing so they can then fully cover the building. On the east building, more of the exterior walls were receiving brick placement.

The contractor for the project, BlindermanPower (Construction), which has also completed another major project at Fort McCoy — the fiscal year-2022 funded South Barracks Project, was awarded a contract totaling \$55,759,100, according to the Army Corps of Engineers. The notice to proceed was acknowledged on July 19, 2024. The contract duration is scheduled for completion in 1,260 calendar days.

In 2024, for numerous months, actual full construction of the new buildings had to wait for another contractor to move five World War II-era barracks buildings. Those are destined for a separate future project, Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works (DPW) officials said.

The project description in the contract states the plan is to build the two buildings based on the standard layout



**Contractors complete work Dec. 31, 2025, for the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy. The project description states the plan is to build the two buildings based on the standard layout depicted in the Operational Readiness Training Complex.**

depicted in the Operational Readiness Training Complex.

"This facility is required to replace

antiquated World War II-era wood transient training officer quarters currently being utilized to train Soldiers during

major exercises, annual training, battle assembly, and mobilization at Fort McCoy," the description states. "This fa-

cility will be designed with the ability to be winterized or deactivated during the (See **OFFICER QUARTERS**, Page 3)

## Soldiers train to earn 91J MOS at RTS-Maintenance at Fort McCoy

**STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL**  
*Public Affairs Staff*

Seven Soldiers are starting off 2026 by earning their newest Military Occupational Specialty — 91J — by completing five weeks of training in the 91J10 Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer Course at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Maintenance at Fort McCoy.

Students include Sgt. Melvin Velau with 8-229th Aviation Regiment at Fort Knox, Ky.; Spc. John Jesop with the 277th Aviation Support Battalion at Fort Drum, N.Y.; Spc. Hunt Gibson with India Company, 230th Brigade Support Battalion of the North Carolina National Guard; Spc. Chandler Petrimoult with 210th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Polk, La.; Spc. Joshua Anderson with 834th Aviation Support Battalion of the Minnesota National Guard at Arden Hills; Spc. Joshua Ortiz with the 288th Quartermaster Company in Victoria, Texas; and Sgt. Richard Ubaldo with the 302nd Quartermaster Company in Guam.

Instructors for this course session are Sgt. 1st Class Paul Hendrickson with RTS Maintenance and Staff Sgt. Aaron Devries of the 13th Battalion, 100th Regiment.

Hendrickson described the course, and more.

"These are Soldiers who are coming from active duty, Guard, and Reserve," Hendrickson said. "With this course, what they are learning is how to do maintenance on heaters, fuel pumping units, water purification units at unit level size, company level, and battalion brigade size. They are also learning laundry units as well and how to maintain those."

Hendrickson said the course takes five weeks and two phases of training.

"During phase one, during module A, it is just the basic fundamentals of how to read a publication, forms, and things like that," Hendrickson said. "In module B, which we are in right now, it is mechanical theory and principles of diesel engines. When we get into Module C, that is when we get into electric ... the fundamentals of electricity, how it works, and how to read schematics, which is a big thing for this course."

"For module D, that is when we start getting into doing maintenance on the 350-gallon-per-minute fluid pumps," he said. "And then we go into the heaters, and then the decontamination units. Decon units are used for, well a lot of times, most units are used for pres-

(See **91J10 TRAINING**, Page 4)



**Students and staff with the 91J10 Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer Course complete hands-on training Jan. 9 at Regional Training Site-Maintenance at Fort McCoy**

## Class 55 graduates from Wisconsin Challenge Academy



**Cadets with the Wisconsin Challenge Academy's 55th graduating class prepare to be dismissed following their formal graduation ceremony at Lincoln High School on Dec. 20, 2025, in Wisconsin Rapids. The Wisconsin Challenge Academy is a part of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program based at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, which introduces at-risk youth to the values, skills, education and self-discipline required to succeed as adults.**

**STORY & PHOTOS BY PAUL GORMAN**  
*Wisconsin National Guard Public Affairs*

A corps of 105 Wisconsin youth became the Wisconsin Challenge Academy's 55th graduating class Dec. 20, following a formal ceremony at Lincoln High School.

The academy is a part of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program based at Fort McCoy, which introduces at-risk youth to the values, skills, education and self-discipline required to succeed as adults.

Retired Brig. Gen. Joni Mathews has served as the academy's director since April 2022, following 36 years of military service that culminated with her role as Wisconsin's deputy adjutant general for Army.

"The commencement ceremony is what truly drew me to the academy and inspired me to serve as the director," Mathews said. "The gym is filled with pride, from families, friends, mentors, our team and especially the cadets as soon as they enter. You can feel it in the room as it erupts in tears of joy, loud applause and cheers."

The graduation marked the completion of the highly regimented 22-week residential phase of the program during which all

105 cadets received their high school equivalency diploma, earned between seven and 13 college credits, ran over 160 miles and collectively contributed to 5085 hours of community service.

Maj. Gen. Matthew Strub, Wisconsin's adjutant general, addressed the cadets and family members in attendance before presenting each cadet with their graduation certificate.

"What makes this day truly special is not the diploma, it's the journey that you took here," Strub said. "You were challenged in ways that tested your discipline, your resilience and your determination. And through it all you discovered that success is not about perfection. It's about perseverance."

Additional awards and scholarships were presented to individual cadets for exceptional achievement throughout the program's residential phase. The highest recognition, that of distinguished honor graduate, was presented to Cadet Zion Martinez, who presented parting remarks on behalf of the cadet corps.

"My father told me you can make it happen, it just depends how bad you want it," (See **GRADUATES**, Page 3)

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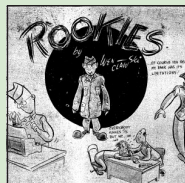
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NEWS

# Fort McCoy holds January 2026 session of installation SOHAC

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy held the installation Safety and Occupational Health Advisory Council (SOHAC) meeting on Jan. 7 at Fort McCoy.

The SOHAC is an installationwide council managed by the Installation Safety Office that shares ideas and concerns about all things safety for not just garrison team members but also tenant organization members.

The council doesn't just discuss basic safety subjects, they also discuss infrastructure, climate, and weather. They also discuss the potential risks and hazards the post could see in coming months or even years.

This meeting was presided over by Fort McCoy's Senior Commander, 88th Readiness Division Commanding General Maj. Gen. Joseph Ricciardi. Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon was the lead Fort McCoy Garrison representative. Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major, also was present for the meeting as well as directorate and special staff leaders.

Installation Safety Manager Ed De Leon led the discussion throughout. He discussed safety inspection results from across the garrison and what further efforts are planned.

After completing his discussion, De Leon then listened in as tenant organizations from the post discussed their safety issues and information.

This SOHAC was the fiscal year 2025 closeout," De Leon said. "It was originally scheduled for Oct. 1, 2025, but the government shutdown prevented that. The basic theme of this SOHAC was focusing on risk management. I used a case study of a fatal accident at Fort Bragg and analyzed the latent and active failures that contributed to the catastrophic result that ended in one Soldier fatality and one Soldier seriously injured. I wanted to try and create a discussion on accident prevention and based on the discussion after that segment, the senior commander discussed what measures are being done as what more can be done to ensure the safety of training units."

At many of these sessions, De Leon further details risk management.

"Army Risk Management is a systematic, five-step process used to identify, assess, and control risks associated with all hazards that could impact personnel, equipment, or mission success," De Leon said in giving the definition. "It's a decision-making tool designed to balance the potential costs of risk against the benefits of achieving the mission. The goal is to maximize operational effectiveness and



(All photos) Fort McCoy personnel attend the installation Safety and Occupational Health Advisory Council (SOHAC) meeting on Jan. 7 at Fort McCoy, Wis. The SOHAC is an installationwide council that shares ideas and concerns about all things safety for not just garrison team members but also tenant organization members. The council doesn't just discuss basic safety subjects, they also discuss infrastructure, climate, and weather. They also discuss the potential risks and hazards the post could see in coming months or even years.

ensure mission accomplishment while minimizing potential negative impacts."

And what comes with risk management is also having the right equipment to do the job. De Leon emphasized the importance for supervisors and leaders to complete risk management assessments

for their employees as well as assessments for personal protective (PPE) equipment needed.

"It's important to evaluate job hazards and have the PPE required to mitigate those hazards," De Leon said.

The next SOHAC meeting with all tenant activi-

ties included is planned for April.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>, on Facebook by searching "ftmccoy," on Flickr at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi>, and on X (formerly Twitter) by searching "usagmccoy."

# Fort McCoy leaders, personnel support January meeting at Sparta Chamber of Commerce

BY MELISSA DUBOIS & SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, Fort McCoy Garrison's senior enlisted advisor, and another installation member participated in the Jan. 14 meeting of the Sparta (Wis.) Area Chamber of Commerce as post representatives.

During the meeting, the Fort McCoy representatives provided an update about news at the installation as well as answered questions from the chamber leaders and members.

The Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce regularly works with and supports Fort McCoy in numerous events throughout the year. The relationship between the city and the post goes back a century as Fort McCoy's founder, Maj. Gen. Robert Bruce McCoy, was also from Sparta.

Community outreach is an important part of the Army mission. According to the Army, as stated at <https://www.army.mil/outreach>, "the Army is about more than ensuring our national security at home and abroad, it's about giving back and getting to know the communities that support us."

It's also possibly important for community leaders to hear from the installation that provides a significant economic impact to their communities.

Fort McCoy's total economic impact for fiscal year (FY) 2024 was an estimated \$1.6 billion, Fort McCoy Garrison officials announced, which is up from FY 2023's total impact of \$1.38 billion. The data was compiled by Fort McCoy's Plans, Analysis and Integration Office.

Workforce payroll, operating costs, and other expenditures totaled more than \$398 million for FY 2024. A total of 1,934 personnel worked at Fort McCoy in FY 2024 — 1,061 civilians, 495 military, and 378 contract employees.

Approximately 66 percent of the workforce lives within Monroe County. The total FY 2024 workforce payroll for civilian and military



Photo by Melissa Dubois

Members of the Sparta (Wis.) Area Chamber of Commerce meet Jan. 14 in the Sparta Barney Center. Members of Fort McCoy, Wis., also attended the meeting to provide information about the post, and more.

personnel was \$270.4 million.

FY 2024 operating costs of \$170 million included utilities, physical plant maintenance, repair and improvements, new construction projects, purchases of supplies and services, as well as salaries for civilian contract personnel working at Fort McCoy.

Other expenditures accounted for \$21.2 million and covered

\$511,296 in payments to local governments (including land permit agreements, school district impact aid, etc.) as well as \$20.7 million in discretionary spending in local communities by service members training and residing at Fort McCoy.

Fort McCoy will continue to support these monthly meetings as well as other community events and meetings.

# Fort McCoy supports first 2026 meeting with local natural resources, extension committee

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy personnel once again provided updates about the installation's natural resources-related efforts Jan. 12 during the January 2026 meeting of the Monroe County (Wis.) Natural Resource and Extension Committee.

The monthly committee includes members Nodji VanWychen, Joey Esterline, Cedric Schnitzler, Doug Rogalla, Todd Sparks, and Paul Zas-tophil from areas within the county. According to the Monroe County webpage for the committee at <https://www.co.monroe.wi.us/government/county-board-of-supervisors/boards-committees/natural-resource-extension/-folder-2344>, the committee has a diverse mission.

"The mission of the Monroe County Natural Resource Committee is to manage, conserve, and protect our natural resources," the website states. "The committee will facilitate wise, sustainable land use and outdoor recreation through information and education while supporting technical and financial assistance to landowners of Monroe County and encourage all residents of Monroe County to be stewards of our natural resources keeping in mind the generations to follow."

As part of Monroe County, Fort McCoy has a part in supporting the committee. The post does so through the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB) as well as the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.

During the January meeting, NRB Endangered Species Biologist Jessup Weichelt served as one of the Fort McCoy representatives where he reviewed recent accomplishments completed by NRB and related Fort McCoy personnel. The Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office discussed current news and events related to the committee.

Among those accomplishments in natural resources management Weichelt mentioned from December 2025 in the meeting were:

— In fisheries management, personnel collected water samples from one base flow and one run off event.



Members of the Monroe County (Wis.) Natural Resource and Extension Committee meets in Sparta, Wis., on Jan. 12.

— Fisheries personnel also conducted temperature-dissolved oxygen profiles on 10 lakes. Oxygen was optimal, which is typical during early ice cover.

— Fisheries personnel conducted 14 creel surveys. Angler activity increased as the month progressed which was a result of improving ice conditions.

— The fisheries personnel also sent life history information on six tagged largemouth bass that were reported, and continued data analysis of current conditions and historical trends.

— The fisheries team also began the process to have rainbow trout stocked in Fort McCoy lakes in the spring of 2026.

— In forestry management, the forestry technician drafted the after-action report for the 2025 prescribed burn season at Fort McCoy.

— Under forestry they also finalized and submitted the Arbor Day Foundation Tree City Award for Fort McCoy. The package is currently undergoing state-level review.

— The team also performed contract administration and oversight for two active timber sales. However, for now, all logging operations have ceased at Fort McCoy in adherence to a formal directive issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

— In invasive species management, herbicide treatments were conducted on 16.9 acres in Training Areas B32, C16, and C19 (17.9 species acres). Basal herbicide treatments were done on common buckthorn (0.2 acres), glossy buckthorn (16.9 acres), and honeysuckle (0.8 acres). Shredding was conducted on 6.5 acres in Area D4 (6.7 species acres). Shredding was done on common buckthorn (0.2 acres)

and glossy buckthorn (6.5 acres).

— Invasive species managers also completed woody invasive surveys conducted on 194.5 acres in preparation for shredding.

— In wildlife management, the cantonment archery and regular archery season has been on-going since it starts Sept. 13. Eighteen deer have been harvested during the cantonment archery season and 177 deer have been harvested during regular archery so far. The fall turkey season ended Jan. 4, and nine turkeys were harvested.

— The 2025 gun-deer season took place over Nov. 22 to 30. Final harvest results were 313 deer harvested. Of the 313 deer harvested, 167 CWD samples were collected — a 54 percent sampling rate. One deer tested positive for CWD during the gun-deer season from training area B22.

— Trapping started on Oct. 18 for most land furbearers (coyote, fox, racoon, bobcat, and fisher) and the trapping for furbearers found in water (mink, otter, muskrat, and beaver) started on Nov. 1. Most common animals being trapped currently are beaver.

— A deer carcass dumpster and CWD kiosk (samples require the head) will be available for hunters across South J St. from the Hunter Information Point. The kiosk and dumpster will be available through the end of January.

— The annual review and changes to the Fort McCoy Regulation 420-29 (Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Rules and Regulations) will be getting underway in January.

— Wildlife management personnel at NRB worked with Permit Sales to make the spring turkey applications available. See the Fort McCoy iSportsman page at <https://ftmccoy.sportsman.net> to submit an application.

— Personnel also completed three winter carnivore track surveys, worked on a report for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and worked on processing 2025 bat data.

The Fort McCoy personnel who support the Monroe County committee help the entire county have its best possible support for effectively managing natural resources and supporting education for natural resources, cultural history, and more.



NEWS

# OFFICER QUARTERS

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winter months.”

Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy said with the project now being 40 percent complete, the contractor will continue at a strong pace.

In his Jan. 9 update, Green gave the latest actions.

“In the west building, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continued,” Green wrote. “Interior and exterior spray foam continued. Interior rough-in framing and sheet rocking continued. Masonry continued, west side section A. Standing seam roof panels install started. Finishing of sheet rock started. Sound insulation started.

“In the east building, structural steel erection continued for section B,” he wrote. “Winterization continues. Exterior stud framing continued section A & B. Exterior spray foam started on structural steel in-fills. Column pads placed section B.”

The project description, also as stated in previous news articles, gives more information about how the project will continue to grow.

“When Fort McCoy is not stood up as a mobilization platform, its primary mission is to support the seasonal requirements of training ... Army Reserve Soldiers,” the description states. “In order to conserve as much energy as possible, while also decreasing the funding necessary to field extended utility costs, this building will be deactivated when it is not being used for training.”

The contract requirements also show that work includes building a standing seam metal roof over rigid insulation on steel deck on structural trusses; using utility brick veneer over rigid insulation on steel studs with exterior glass mat gypsum sheathing; building a concrete floor on metal deck and on-grade; installing and elevator, aluminum doors

and windows, gypsum board and metal frame partitions, steel door frames and steel doors, and acoustical ceilings; installing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems; completing plumbing, security, and electrical systems; and more.

The officer’s quarters project makes two active, large construction projects taking place in the 1600 block of the installation. All this work also continues with the master plan for the 1600 block that will include not only the four barracks but also three 20,000-square-foot brigade headquarters buildings — one of which is done — and now the two 160-room officer quarters, said Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works officials.

Contract completion date is currently is Dec. 31, 2027.

See more news about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by visiting <https://www.usace.army.mil/Media/News>.

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Contractors complete work Jan. 7 (above) and Jan. 17 (below) for the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy.



# GRADUATES

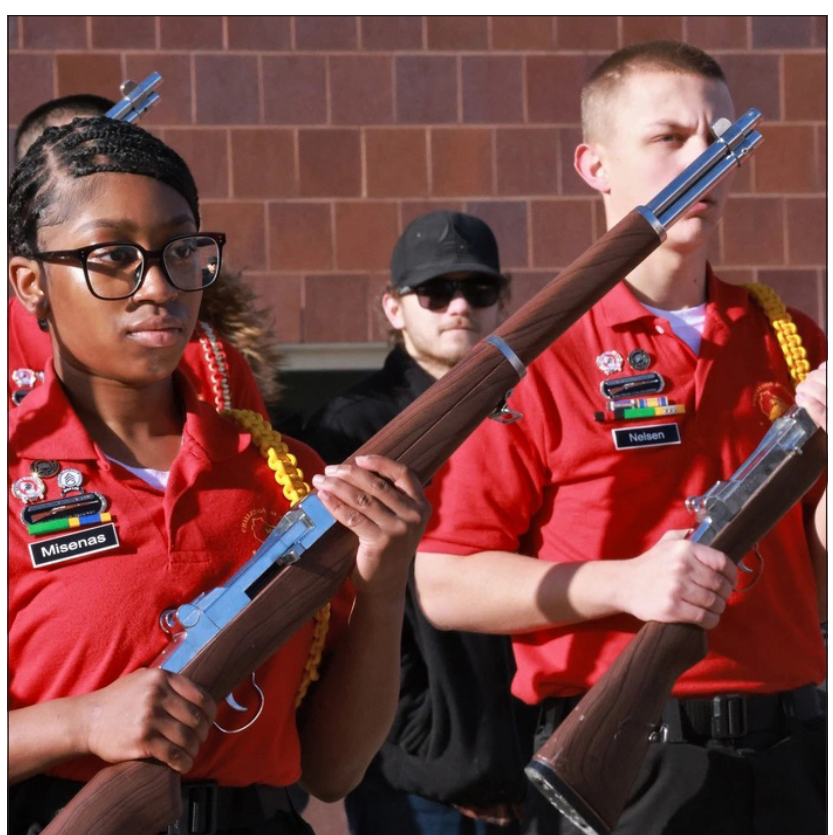
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said Martinez. “Class 55, we have proven how bad we want it. We have the tools, we have the character and we have the discipline. Now, it’s time to go out and make it happen. Let’s not just wait for the future. Let’s build it.”

The graduation ceremony also marked the beginning of the program’s 12-month post-residential phase, during which mentors previously paired with each graduate will help them to sustain and build on the gains made during their residential phase.

“These teens voluntarily chose to attend the Academy. It wasn’t easy, but they did it,” said Mathews. “They overcame so many challenges, gained confidence, and set goals and dreams they never thought were possible.”

For additional information about the Wisconsin Challenge Academy including guidelines for enrollment, visit: <https://challengeacademy.org>.



(Both photos) Cadets with the Wisconsin Challenge Academy’s 55th graduating class prepare to be dismissed following their formal graduation ceremony at Lincoln High School on Dec. 20, 2025, in Wisconsin Rapids.



## East Barracks Project

Contractors work on a new \$27.3 million transient training troops barracks project, known as the Fort McCoy East Barracks Project, on Jan. 16 at Fort McCoy. Contractors began in May 2024 getting the site set up for the fourth transient training troops barracks project at Fort McCoy, which was awarded in February 2024 to L.S. Black Constructors, which is a familiar name in the barracks construction history at Fort McCoy, having built the first two of the 60,000-square-foot transient training troops barracks on post.

They also recently built the new brigade headquarters building located in the same block as the barracks buildings. The exact contract amount for the project was \$27,287,735. In the award announcement, it states it was “for the construction of the barracks, which will provide housing for enlisted service members undergoing training at the installation.”

The building will be able to house up to 400 people. As of Jan. 9, the project was 93 percent complete, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who oversees the project on the installation.

Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

## Protection Executive Committee meeting

Fort McCoy leaders, including the Fort McCoy Senior Commander and 88th Commanding General Maj. Gen. Joseph A. Ricciardi, meet Jan. 7 in building 905 at Fort McCoy.

The committee is managed by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security.

During this meeting, the senior commander was briefed on an upcoming higher headquarters assessment benchmarks/plan progress and the annual all-hazards risk assessment.

Photo by Scott T. Sturkol



FORT MCCOY – TOTAL FORCE TRAINING CENTER



NEWS

91J10 TRAINING

from Page 1

sure washers or cleaning up bays. They have a lot of use.”

Hendrickson said the equipment the 91J Soldiers work on has a direct impact on some very important situations.

“A couple of years ago, Puerto Rico got hit with a really big hurricane, and they lost all their power,” Hendrickson said. “They lost all fresh water supply and everything else. So, the Puerto Rico National Guard unit down there was able to utilize the Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit (ROWPU), which is a 3,000-gallon reverse hydrolysis water purification unit to ensure that the population was able to get clean drinking water, clean water for showers and bathing, hygiene ... everything like that. And then we were also able to use generators and get them a power grid somewhat established.

“The other upside with the Juliets is they are able to maintain the laundry units,” Hendrickson said. “So, unlike the people who are running the laundry units, these guys repair them. But they have to also know how to run them too. In a nutshell, they know how something runs to be able to fix it, like practicing what you preach.”

Ubaldo, one of the students, said the course is a great opportunity.

“It’s actually awesome, really good, really knowledgeable, good hands-on stuff,” Ubaldo said.

Ubaldo added on what he is looking to take away from being in the course.

“It’s (gaining) more knowledge on ... breakdowns and the way (things) work,” Ubaldo said. He said he’s also glad to learn about recovery of any equipment that they would have to fix.

Guest Instructor Devries explained his contribution to the course.

“I’m a guest instructor, so I’m being certified in the course,” Devries said. “So, I have to teach one class per module, and then I get certified to teach more of the class and be more involved with the comprehension of the material for the students.”

Devries was a student in the class less than a year ago. He said training Soldiers to fix and maintain the equipment that 91J Soldiers will work on is huge for the Army because it’s equipment that

affects their daily lives during a deployed situation, especially.

“The quartermaster equipment, your heat pumps and your water pumps, clean water and having laundry, everybody needs that stuff,” Devries said. “It’s really important to the Army, whether it seems that they think so or not, but it’s definitely important and it goes a long way.”

Hendrickson said he enjoys teaching students and being a part of the RTS-Maintenance team.

“I love this job,” Hendrickson said. “This is probably the best job that I’ve had. I like the moment when students have that ‘ah-ha’ moment when they’re able to articulate or connect the material to something that they understand. That’s the best part.

“And I love being in the Army,” he said. “I like turning wrenches. This is my job.”

And as the course continues to February, he said once the students enter phase two of the course, they’ll start working more on larger units of equipment, such as the ROWPU and the laundry trailer operated by 92S Soldiers (shower and laundry specialists).

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Spc. Hunt Gibson with India Company, 230th Brigade Support Battalion of the North Carolina National Guard, who’s also a student with the 91J10 Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer Course, completes hands-on training Jan. 9 with Instructor Staff Sgt. Aaron Devries of the 13th Battalion, 100th Regiment, providing support at Regional Training Site-Maintenance.

Soldiers completing 91J training complete small diesel engine training event

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

Seven students with the 91J10 Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer Course at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Maintenance at Fort McCoy held some specific hands-on training Jan. 9 to learn more about the Yanmar L70 diesel engine.

“These are the single-cylinder diesel engines,” said Sgt. 1st Class Paul Hendrickson, course manager and instructor. “They are primarily used in equipment like BTU heaters as well as the engine-powered raw water pumps for the Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit as well.”

Hendrickson said during the training they were learning a familiarization about the engine itself.

“Right now the reason they are disassembling (the engine) is so that way we can actually show them how an engine works,” Hendrickson said. “We can show them what the camshaft is, what the crankshaft is, what a piston looks like, how a piston goes in, what the fuel injectors look like, and how to set and time everything with the engine to make it run smooth.”

Hendrickson said it’s a perfect example of hands-on training, which RTS-Maintenance is known for in training hundreds of Soldiers every year from active duty, Guard, and Reserve.

For this session of the course, seven Soldiers were participating. Students include Sgt. Melvin Velaa with 8-229th Aviation Regiment at Fort Knox, Ky.; Spc. John Jessop with the 277th Aviation Support Battalion at Fort Drum, N.Y.; Spc. Hunt Gibson with India Company, 230th Brigade Support Battalion of the North Carolina National Guard; Spc. Chandler Petrimoulx with 210th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Polk, La.; Spc. Joshua Anderson with 834th Aviation Support Battalion of the Minnesota National Guard at Arden Hills; Spc. Joshua Ortiz with the 288th Quartermaster Company in Victoria, Texas; and Sgt. Richard Ubaldo with the 302nd Quartermaster Company in Guam.

Instructors for this course session were Hendrickson and Staff Sgt. Aaron Devries of the 13th Battalion, 100th Regiment, who served as a guest instructor.

Devries said teaching students in training like this with hands-on application is the best.

“I like being able to teach the students and passing on life knowledge and life experience as well as Army experience,” Devries said. “We all go through something different, so it’s really valuable to talk to everybody and see what they know and what they don’t know and what they can learn from that as well.”

According to the Army, the Yanmar L70 diesel engine is a reliable, compact, and efficient engine widely used in various industrial applications, known for its durability and performance. It’s a single-cylinder, air-cooled, direct injection diesel engine. This design helps in achieving high efficiency and low emissions, making it suitable for various applications.

The engine typically delivers a power output of around 6.5 to 7.5 horsepower, depending on the specific model and configuration, specifications show. This makes it ideal for light to medium-duty applications. The L70 engine also provides a robust torque output, which is essential for applications requiring consistent power delivery, such as in construction equipment and generators.

Throughout the course, the 91J students will also have lots of other hand-on training opportunities, Hendrickson said.

RTS-Maintenance trains thousands of Soldiers every year in the Army’s 91-series MOS and the 89B MOS. Some of the courses taught there, in addition to the 91J10 course, include the 91B10 Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic Course, 91L10 Construction Equipment Repairer Course, Unit Armorer Course, 89A10 Ammunition Stock Control and Accounting Specialist Course, 89B10 Ammunition Specialist, 89B30 Ammunition Specialist Advanced Leader Course, and 89B40 Ammunition Specialist Senior Leader Course.

Also, the unit aligns under the 3rd Brigade (Ordnance), 94th Division of the 80th Training Command, and is centrally located in the cantonment area with an entire complex to hold training.

Fort McCoy’s motto is to be the “Total Force Training Center.”

Located in the heart of the upper Midwest, Fort McCoy is the only U.S. Army installation in Wisconsin.

The installation has provided support and facilities for the field and classroom training of more than 100,000 military personnel from all services nearly every year since 1984.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online at [https://home.army.mil/mccoy/] (https://home.army.mil/mccoy/), on Facebook by searching “ftmccoy,” on Flickr at [https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi/] (https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi/), and on X (formerly Twitter) by searching “usagmccoy.”

Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set “Fort McCoy” or another installation as your preferred base.

Fort McCoy is also part of Army’s Installation Management Command where “We Are The Army’s Home.”



(Above and below) Soldiers completing 91J training at Fort McCoy complete small diesel engine training event Jan. 9 at Regional Training Site-Maintenance at Fort McCoy.



Spc. Chandler Petrimoulx with 210th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Polk, La., who’s also a student with the 91J10 Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer Course, completes hands-on training Jan. 9 at Regional Training Site-Maintenance.



Sgt. Richard Ubaldo with the 302nd Quartermaster Company in Guam, who’s also a student with the 91J10 Quartermaster and Chemical Equipment Repairer Course, completes hands-on training Jan. 9 at Regional Training Site-Maintenance.





SPECIAL INSERT TO THE REAL MCCOY

JANUARY 2025

# Fort McCoy 2025 year in review:

## First half of year included new construction, building moves, retirements

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

The year 2025 was another busy time at Fort McCoy with tens of thousands of troops training at the installation along with many new construction projects taking place, plus much more.

The first half of the year meant a focus on moving five World War II-era barracks for later repurposing plus it also saw many longtime installation employees reach the end of their Army careers. All at the same time, training ramped up as the year went on with Army Reserve, Army National Guard, and other active- and reserve-component forces coming to the installation.

### JANUARY

— The Fort McCoy Voice Modernization Project, led by Kenneth O'Connell and other team members with the Fort McCoy Network Enterprise Center, was ultimately completed after four years of work in early January 2025.

The project's primary objective was to provide the warfighter with a modern and sustainable voice communication system by replacing the existing, aging, non-supportable phone systems on Fort McCoy with a modern Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) system.

The project was a complex undertaking that involved several stages, including core installation, phone migration, and the decommissioning of the old analog/TDM system.

The team faced several challenges along the way including supply chain problems and contract renegotiation issues, along with the changing all Fort McCoy phone numbers, but their expertise and co-operation ensured that the project was successfully completed.

One of the key benefits of the new VoIP system is its ability to optimize circuits, reducing the need for expensive T1/PRI (Primary Rate Interface) and resulting in significant cost savings for the Army.

— From mid-January to mid-February 2025, Garrison Information Management Officer Bob Pennebecker and Information Technology Specialist Shawn Quinn took on the task to receive old phones for disposition after Fort McCoy switched to a new Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) system.

Both Pennebecker and Quinn are with the Fort McCoy Garrison Information Management Office. They signed out warehouse building 1675 in January and went to work accounting for all the old desk phones that were replaced with new VoIP phones.

"We collected more than 1,500 phones," Pennebecker said.

Once collected, the old phones were placed into storage bins where they will then be recycled through government recycling, Pennebecker said.

— As one of three major construction projects ongoing at Fort McCoy, the East Barracks Project has been continuing to see plenty of progress as the projects nears closer to 20 percent complete as January 2025 continues. As of Jan. 8, contractors with L.S. Black Constructors on the project could be seen continuing to build the frame of the building even as January's bitter cold temperatures take hold.

Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the Army Corps of Engineers at Fort McCoy said in his Dec. 20, 2024, update about the project that progress was at 16 percent complete, and likely it will be closer to 20 percent complete during the first January update.

"Structural steel and steel decking deliveries are ongoing," Butts wrote Dec. 20. "Steel erection and decking continues in the center section of the building. Metal framing on the first and second floor of the south wing continues. Contractor has enclosed and is heating areas where concrete placement is occurring to maintain required temperatures," he wrote.

— Fort McCoy held its first meeting of the Safety and Occupational Health Advisory Council for calendar year 2025 and the second quarter of fiscal year 2025 on Jan. 14 at the installation.

The SOHAC is an installation wide council that shares ideas and concerns about all things safety for not just garrison team members but also tenant



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

A barracks building from the 1600 block at Fort McCoy is shown being moved Jan. 22, 2025, from the 1600 block to another area of the installation. Contractors moved five buildings from January to May 2025.

organization members, Installation Safety Office (ISO) officials said. The council doesn't just discuss basic safety subjects, they also discuss infrastructure, climate, and weather. They also discuss the potential risks and hazards the post could see in coming months or even years.

Leadership present at the meeting included Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez; Fort McCoy Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Mike Corkum; Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon; office and directorate leaders; and other installation personnel.

Installation Safety Manager Ed De Leon led the discussion during the meeting. De Leon talked about facility inspections the ISO is completing. He said the office has completed 140-plus facility inspections for fiscal year 2025.

De Leon also discussed accidents. During fiscal year 2025, he said of the five recordable accidents that have been documented during this time, four were vehicle accidents.

— Plans and Programs Specialist Travis Todd with the Fort McCoy Resource Management Office was presented with the Army Materiel Command Employee of the Quarter award Jan. 15 while he was attending the Army's Civilian Education System Intermediate Course at Fort McCoy.

Todd was presented the award by Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez. The award was announced for Todd and 11 other Army Materiel Command employees for the third quarter of fiscal year 2024.

— Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez and Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon held a "lunch and learn" session Jan. 15 with students during the Army Civilian Education System (CES) Intermediate Course being held for the first time in session on post. The hour-long information exchange featured Baez and Cantlon answering questions about their leadership experience as well as their opinions on leadership situations.

Baez discussed some of her experience of working with civilian employees during her Army career, and what she has learned.

"I have worked with civilian employees at all levels — very junior level to very high level. ... I have been in the Army Reserve for many years, and I know that ... your GS-7s, 9s, and 11s are the people who carry the water, who carry the bulk of the work that is done in the Army Reserve. And I know that when I was company commander, I had a (unit admin employee), she was a GS-7, and she ... worked super hard every day."

— Leaders with Fort McCoy Garrison and installation agencies met Jan. 17 with community leaders and workforce professionals in Sparta, Wis., during the Fort McCoy Workforce

### Collaborative Meeting.

The meeting brought together people who are working to improve employment opportunities in the region, including at Fort McCoy. Attending from Fort McCoy included Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon, Lorie Retzlaff with the Fort McCoy Army Community Service team, Fort McCoy Public Affairs Officer Tonya Townsell, and others.

From the civilian side, representatives from the Sparta Chamber of Commerce, Tomah Chamber of Commerce, Black River Falls Chamber of Commerce, La Crosse Chamber Commerce, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Western Technical College, and more were present.

— Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez made a special evening visit Jan. 20 to visit with the Tomah School District Board of Education in Tomah, Wis., during their monthly January meeting.

Members on the board include Michael Gnewikow, Spencer Stephens, Ricky Murray, Susan Bloom, Teresa Devine, Cathryn Rice, and James Newlun.

During the nearly three-hour meeting, Baez was given time to introduce herself and discuss education items regarding Fort McCoy.

"We have many programs that we are part of," Baez said. "One of them is the Wisconsin Council of the Interstate Compact for Military Children. For those of you who might not be in the military, as military families transition from one state to the other, one of the things that they face every couple of years is changing their children from one school to another.

"So this only creates stress in the family, but also stress in the children," Baez said. "So as we look at what things we can do to improve those transitions from state to state, the council here in Wisconsin has done an outstanding job creating policies that help those transitions from one state to the other."

— More than 20 students — all Army civilian supervisors in grades GS-10 to GS-12 — participated in the first on-post session of the Army Civilian Education System Intermediate Course at Fort McCoy from Jan. 6-24.

Workforce Development Officer Mike Modawell with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Human Resources (DHR) said the training is helping many Fort McCoy employees get the training they need, and it's helping provide an additional avenue for training.

According to a course description available at <https://armyuniversity.edu/amsc/courses/intermediate>, the course "prepares current and aspiring Army civilian leaders (GS 10-12) to become more innovative, self-aware, and prepared to effectively lead and care for personnel and manage assigned resources at the organizational level."

The description also states the course is required per Army Regulation 350-1 for Army civilian su-

pervisors in those grades and provides effective leadership training.

— Contractors successfully moved a barracks building Jan. 22 from its resting area of 80-plus years to a new location on Fort McCoy's cantonment area.

It was the first of five barracks buildings on the installation cantonment area's 1600 block that are being moved during January and February 2025 while the ground is frozen, Army Corps of Engineers officials said.

Devoight Building Movers of Manitowoc, Wis., is the contractor doing the building moves.

These buildings will eventually be reset at another area of the post so new construction can begin in their current location on new officer quarters.

Four other barracks buildings also were moved from the 1600 block to other areas in 2023. Those four buildings are now operational in their new locations in the 1700, 1800, and 2100 blocks on the post.

In 2023 during the first barracks move operations, that was the first time an effort like that took place at Fort McCoy, Fort McCoy officials said.

— Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez led the first Fort McCoy Garrison town hall meeting of 2025 on Jan. 23 in building 905 at the installation to inform the post workforce about the latest news, directives, and recognize award winners.

Maj. Gen. Joseph Ricciardi, 88th Readiness Division commanding general and the Fort McCoy senior commander, also provides comments during the start of the meeting. Ricciardi provided an update about some important Army changes and thanked the workforce for what they do for Fort McCoy.

"I've been trying to make my way around to all the agencies on the installation," Ricciardi said. "First thing I want to say is thank you everyone for what you do. I spent two years in the G9 and a year at (Installation Management Command). I am intimately familiar with what you do, the challenges that you have in doing what you do every day, the constraints, and all the stuff that you do behind the scenes very unselfishly and that you do not get recognition all the time, which is even more impressive. Especially here, when you're pushing training units through ... they come and go.

"There's never a 'thank you, hey, that was fun,'" Ricciardi said. "They're just ready to get out of here. So, thank you for what you do and for the mission that you prepare to do. We have an incredibly important mission here at Fort McCoy."

Baez took time first to discuss the Defense Organizational Climate Survey, or DEOCS, that Fort McCoy personnel took in fall 2024. According to the Department of Defense (DOD) Office of People Analytics, the survey is a Congressionally mandated unit-level climate survey that is available to all military commanders and Department of Defense civilian organization leaders. The survey collects information on unit climate, harassment and discrimination, and other aspects of organizational climate.

— Retired Army Col. Chris Kolenda held a "lunch and learn" event at Fort McCoy on Jan. 21 at McCoy's Community Center that focused on leadership.

The event focused on the topic of leadership at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels in a blended (military and civilian) organization. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy, helped organize the event.

During his presentation, Kolenda discussed completing a 1,700-mile bicycle trip. Kolenda started the trip in September 2022. He cycled from Spalding, Neb., to Arlington National Cemetery, Va. Along the way he stopped to visit six gravesites of troops who died and served under his command in Afghanistan.

"I set up ... that bike ride and raised enough (See YEAR IN REVIEW 2025, Insert Page 2)



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

ROTC cadets compete in the Northern Warfare Challenge on Feb. 21, 2025, at Fort McCoy. ROTC teams with U.S. Army Cadet Command came from all around the United States as they battled through a wide variety of challenges and long ruck marching courses in cold and snow to fight for the top spot as challenge champion.



Photo by Sgt. Nataja Ford

U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to the 88th Readiness Division hike the Whitetail Ridge Ski Hill during snowshoe training at Fort McCoy on Jan. 25, 2025.



## FORT MCCOY’S 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

# YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

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money to set up the Saber 6 Foundation,” said Kolenda, a Nebraska native who now resides in Milwaukee. “And what we do in Saber 6 is we help veterans turn (with) post-combat stress.

“Now, when you’re riding 1,700 miles ... it took me 24 days of pedaling ... I had a couple of break days so 27 days total, you have some time to think,” Kolenda said. “I think I averaged 74 miles a day, which is about somewhere between six to eight hours a day. And so, you just pedal. And since I do leadership a lot, I was like, I bet there’s some leadership lessons I could derive from this bike ride. And one of the first ones is that just like you have to fit the bike to the rider, you should fit the role to the person.”

— **Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez and Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon were two of the garrison command team members from Fort McCoy who toured the Western Technical College campus Jan. 27 in Sparta, Wis.**

Baez and Cantlon were among several Fort McCoy team members — others from the Fort McCoy Army Community Service Office and Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office — who visited the campus to learn more about the facility and meet with staff. The campus borders Fort McCoy’s South Post, and the staff there works regularly with Fort McCoy workforce members in numerous capacities.

The visit was organized between Fort McCoy and Western’s Kevin Ruetten, the college’s business services coordinator. Those meeting with the Fort McCoy members from Western were Ruetten; Western President Roger Stanford; Kevin Dean, Western’s dean of health and public safety; Josh Gamer, Western’s dean of integrated technology; Brian Barquest, veterans affairs coordinator with Western; Angie Martin, Western’s director of business and industry services; and John Zimprich, Western’s business and industry sales lead/training consultant.

— **A small, wooden keepsake box adorned with carvings and the inscription, “Gefangenschaft Amerika 1944,” was donated in late January to the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office for inclusion in the Fort McCoy History Center.**

Rosanna Laude, who operates the Upscale Rumage store in Libertyville, Ill., came across the artifact made by a German prisoner of war (POW) from World War II in donations to the shop. In lieu of selling it, because she knew what she had, she contacted the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office and offered to donate it to the post — which it was.

After further inspection and research with staff and archaeologists at Fort McCoy, it was determined the inscription reads, “Imprisonment America 1944.” The lingering question after that was did the German POW make the box at then-Camp McCoy or elsewhere?

Ryan J. Howell, staff archaeologist and cultural resource manager with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch, said German POWs were not only located at Camp McCoy during World War II, but they were also in areas all throughout Wisconsin and northern Illinois, including near Libertyville.

So, was the box made at Camp McCoy during World War II? Maybe, according to Howell. But there’s no concrete evidence to prove otherwise.

“The German POWs had a wood shop, and the POWs were encouraged to do arts and craft projects in their spare time,” Howell said.

— **Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez made her first visit to the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse on Jan. 22 in La Crosse.**

During the visit, Baez met specifically with the university’s newest president/chancellor, Chancellor James Beeby. Beeby became the new chancellor in 2024 — just as Baez became Fort McCoy Garrison’s commander in 2024.

In an hour-long meeting at the university, Baez and Beeby discussed Fort McCoy’s partnership with the university. “Fort McCoy is a huge part of the community here (in this region),” Baez said during the meeting. “We are also good partners with school districts. ... We also take part in community activities (with educational institutions). ... And we like to expand our partnerships.”

Baez completed the visit with support from members of the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.

— **A special ceremony was held Jan. 29 at Fire Station 1 to honor Fire Chief Timothy Jorgenson with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department as he retired from Army Civil Service with more than 32 years of service.**

Jorgenson began his service as a civil servant at Fort McCoy in 1992, and has worked in various positions within the fire department. He ascended to fire chief and served in that position for many years.

Assistant Fire Chief Brady Brever opened the ceremony.

“Today we honor Chief Tim Jorgensen on his retirement from the Fort McCoy Fire Department with over 32 years of distinguished federal service for Fort McCoy,” Brever said. “Thank you to everyone for being here to honor Chief Jorgenson.”

Also there to honor Jorgenson was the Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez. Also present was Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Calarco, Fort McCoy Garrison’s command sergeant major. And perhaps most appreciated by Jorgenson, dozens of firefighters and police personnel were in attendance to honor him as well.

“When we look at some of the things that he accomplished through his 32-year career, (there were many) major events that happened during those 32 years,” Baez said. “We had flood responses, we had COVID, we had Operation Allies Welcome, and

more ... So, when we look at the experience and everything that happened through those major events, we also have Chief Jergenson’s leadership.

“We have Chief Jergenson not only guiding the fire department here, but also mentoring all those new members that are part of the fire department,” Baez said. “It takes patience and experience to do a good job. It takes patience and experience to be a good leader. ... Thank you for being here with us.”

— **Pam Severson has helped thousands of people in her 31 ½ years at Fort McCoy, which might be why dozens of people showed for her retirement from government civil service Jan. 31 at the building 50 dining facility at Fort McCoy.**

During her ceremony, she had guest speakers touting her successful career, including Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez, Fort McCoy Logistics Readiness Center (LRC) Director Tanya Morene, Fort McCoy LRC Plans & Operations Division Chief David “D.J.” Eckland, and Wisconsin State Senator Patrick Testin.

Baez followed Severson’s introduction by Eckland with praise for Severson’s career as well.

“Every time that we recognize the caliber of the employees at Fort McCoy, I am .... Not surprised,” Baez said. “When we look at employees like Pamela here, that have dedicated over 30 years of her life to the Fort McCoy community, this is commendable. This is a great thing.

### FEBRUARY

— **The fiscal year 2022-funded Fort McCoy Transient Training Troop Barracks Project, also referred to as the South Barracks Project, has made continuous progress, and by the beginning of February 2025 has reached 70 percent completion.**

The contractor BlindermanPower (Construction) got the building to 70 percent complete by Jan. 31, said Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy in his Jan. 31 update on the project.

In his update, Green said the contractor has completed many items on the list of work needing done and continues to move forward.

“Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continued,” Green wrote in the update. “Interior sheet rocking continued. Interior sound batting continued. Interior finishing continued, and painting continued. Latrine/senior leaders tile work continued. Exterior canopy work continued. Ceiling grid also continued.”

— **Members of the Fort McCoy snow-removal team have been having a busier time during February 2025 as multiple snow and ice events have come through the installation.**

It’s well known that winter in Wisconsin can provide all kinds of bad weather, including freezing rain, snow, or sleet at any time or even all in one day. When that happens, the Fort McCoy snow-removal team plows through whatever Mother Nature dishes out.

The team includes the Fort McCoy grounds/snow-removal contractor Kaiyuh Services as well as Directorate of Public Works, or DPW, personnel.

In an email to the installation community, Fort McCoy DPW Director Liane Haun emphasized safety around operators clearing snow as winter continues.

— **Building movers chalked up a full second movement of a World War II-era barracks building Feb. 12-13 as they moved it from the installation’s 1600 block on the cantonment area to the 500 block for temporary placement.**

The first of the five 83-year-old buildings was moved Jan. 22. A total of five barracks buildings on the installation cantonment area’s 1600 block are being moved during January and February 2025 while the ground is frozen, Army Corps of Engineers officials said.

Devooght Building Movers of Manitowoc, Wis., is the contractor doing the building moving with wheels and remote control powered by a generator. These buildings, originally constructed in 1942, will eventually be reset at another area of the post so new construction can begin in their current location on two new officer quarters buildings.

Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works master planners said a plan was previously worked out with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the contractor to move the five old barracks buildings to the 500 block of Fort McCoy in this move. The buildings will be temporarily set in that block until new locations are determined.

— **February 2025 held some of the coldest days seen at Fort McCoy in years. Below-zero temperatures hovered for many days mid-month while also several snow events hitting the post as well and none it stopped construction efforts on the fourth four-story transient training troops barracks project at Fort McCoy.**

The project, also referred to as the East Barracks Project, was list at 27 percent complete as March 2025 began, said Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the Army Corps of Engineers at Fort McCoy.

As of Feb. 28, the date of Butts’ most current update on the project, contractors with L.S. Black Constructors were moving right along with framing and sheeting work and more.

“Metal framing in the middle section floors continues,” Butts wrote about the project Feb. 28. “Contractor has enclosed and is heating areas where concrete placement is occurring to maintain required temperatures.

“Exterior sheeting continues. Rebar placement continues. North section structural details (are) being completed. (And) mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continues,” Butts wrote.

— **Fort McCoy’s Directorate of Public Works**



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

**A scene from a patching ceremony held March 13, 2025, is shown in building 905 at Fort McCoy. Soldiers with U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy traded out the Army Materiel Command patches on their uniforms for the blue clover patch of the 88th Readiness. Maj. Gen. Joseph Ricciardi, commanding general of the 88th Readiness Division and Fort McCoy’s senior commander, presided over the ceremony. Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez served as the top leader representing the garrison. The patching ceremony was prompted by January 2025 Execute Order 123-25 from the Secretary of the Army, “Update to U.S. Army Installation Management Structure,” which designates all uniformed personnel at the garrison as being under tactical control, or TACON, of the senior commander, who is Ricciardi at Fort McCoy. And because of the new TACON, a new patch was now needed for Fort McCoy Garrison Soldiers.**

**(DPW) and Xcel Energy continued to work together to finish the process of changing the electrical grid on post from a Delta Electrical System to a Wye Electrical System, Fort McCoy DPW officials said.**

Work on this switchover has been ongoing since 2022, officials said, and during February 2025, workers continued to work on the project.

Wye is a three-phase electrical system that uses a wire for each electrical leg and a separate neutral wire.

Delta is also a three-phase but uses one of the legs as the neutral, so it only has three wires. Work will continue throughout the year.

— **The Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office earned two unit-level awards in the 2024 Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) Communications and Public Awards competition that was completed in January. A member of the Fort McCoy Multimedia-Visual Information Office also earned one award.**

**Open house event recognized**

First, the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office earned the award for Best Community Engagement Event in Category B: Community Relations Special Event. The special event highlighted for the award was the 2024 Fort McCoy Armed Forces Day Open House.

Contributors recognized for the award include Public Affairs Officer Tonya Townsell; Senior Public Affairs Specialist Scott T. Sturkol; Public Affairs Specialist Claudia Neve (now in Germany); Public Affairs Specialist Christopher Jones (now in California); Lt. Col. James Ontiveros, public affairs contributor and civil affairs officer; and Robin Michalski, Fort McCoy Commemorative Area caretaker.

**The Real McCoy newspaper wins**

The Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office was also won an award for IMCOM Best Printed Publication for Category D: Printed Publication. The award was given for the Aug. 23, 2024, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper.

This category is for printed Department of Defense publications — including newspapers, newsletters or magazines — that support the command’s information mission.

— **Fifty-four teams of ROTC cadets competed Feb. 21-22 in the Northern Warfare Challenge event held at Fort McCoy and La Crosse, Wis.**

ROTC teams with U.S. Army Cadet Command came from all around the United States as they battled through a wide variety of challenges and long ruck marching courses in cold and snow to fight for the top spot as challenge champion.

Lt. Col. Brian Knutson with University of Wisconsin-La Crosse’s Military Science Department said at Fort McCoy cadets faced a variety of challenges during the competition. The cadets then did a 12-mile ruck in La Crosse, Wis., on the second day of their competition.

Final Results included West Point taking first, Wheaton College earning second, and the University Wisconsin-Madison taking third.

“The competition is designed for Army ROTC teams to compete against each other in cold-weather survival skills that also test their physical endurance,” said Knutson, whose ROTC team from La Crosse won the title two years ago. “The first day ... at Fort McCoy, we were testing various skills related to cold weather. They were being tested on their knowledge of weather, knots, cold-weather injuries, and then how to evacuate a casualty in cold weather.

### MARCH

— **Several Fort McCoy members shared their expertise while supporting the Western Technical College Community Panel Breakfast on March 11 at the college’s campus in Tomah, Wis.**

Western’s Tomah Campus Coordinator Niki Purvis invited Fort McCoy members to attend, which included personnel from the Fort McCoy Plans, Analysis, and Integration Office (PAIO); Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office, and Fort McCoy Garrison leadership.

According to college officials, the meeting was held to assist Western in developing their next 5-year strategic plan.

Discussion topics included attendee vantage points of how their organizations and communities see challenges, changes, and opportunities in their area, and much more. Also each org representative reviewed what their connection is to the college.

— **Members of the Fort McCoy prescribed burn team made an effort to improve safety from fire along the rail corridor on the installation March 13 by completing a prescribed burn.**

The post prescribed burn team includes personnel with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department; Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch; Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security; and the Colorado State University Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands in partnership with the post.

For this prescribed burn, the team met on near the installation border not far from family housing



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

**A scene from the Army retirement for Tim Wilder with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch is shown March 27, 2025, at Fort McCoy.**



# FORT MCCOY’S 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

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Office.

During the March meeting held March 10, NRB Endangered Species Biologist Jessup Weichelt served as one of the Fort McCoy representatives where he reviewed recent accomplishments completed by NRB and related Fort McCoy personnel.

Among those accomplishments in natural resources management Weichelt mentioned from February 2025 were:

- \* Monitored 10 lakes for dissolved oxygen and temperature for fisheries management. All lakes are still above average for dissolved oxygen due to minimal snow cover which lets light into the lake.
- \* Conducted 12 creel surveys in fisheries management. Angling pressure seems light given the good ice conditions. Some reports have indicated fish were not actively biting.
- \* Reported life history of 46 tagged fish to anglers.
- \* In endangered species management, updated the Special Status Species Fauna and Flora Database.
- \* With forestry management, administered four active timber sales, and received \$3,273.20 in timber sale revenue.

— **Fort McCoy’s Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon and another installation member participated in the March 12 meeting of the Sparta (Wis.) Area Chamber of Commerce as post representatives.**

During the meeting, the Fort McCoy representatives provided an update about news at the installation as well as answered questions from the chamber leaders and members.

The Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce regularly works with and supports Fort McCoy in numerous events throughout the year. The relationship between the city and the post goes back a century as Fort McCoy’s founder, Maj. Gen. Robert Bruce McCoy, was also from Sparta.

— **Leaders with U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy held two forums for GS-8s and GS-9s on March 26 and for GS-10s and GS-11s on March 27 to hear from personnel in these grades and provide direct information to these workforce members.**

Fort McCoy Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon led each session that was held in building 905 on post.

Discussion in the forums included understanding the current guidance on hiring freezes, downsizing, and more. Cantlon also discussed the need for transparency around work spaces and for everyone to raise questions to garrison leadership any time they need to get clarification.

Cantlon took questions from all attendees that covered a variety of topics, including leadership support, budget items, evaluations, and more.

“We’re always here to support you,” Cantlon said during the GS-10/GS-11 forum. “Please let us know anytime you have any questions about anything.”

Forums like these strengthen ties and communication between leadership and the workforce, officials said. It also reflects the importance of the Army Civilian Corps to the mission.

— **Now that three of the five older barracks have been moved from the construction area in the 1600 block at Fort McCoy where the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project is under way, contractors have been able to complete more work on grounds preparation.**

Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy said the project calls for the construction of two new 48,000-square-foot, four-story Collective Training Officers Quarters buildings.

In his March 28 update, Green gave the latest actions.

“Work continued for the fourth building to be relocated,” Green wrote. “Demo also continued. Clearing and grubbing continued. Over dig and fill started.”

— **Although the first prescribed burn at Fort McCoy took place in late-January 2025, the main part of the 2025 prescribed burn season has been under way in early to mid-March 2025.**

The post prescribed burn team includes personnel with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department; Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB); Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security; and the Colorado State University Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands in partnership with the post.

Prescribed burns took place on March 3, 11-13, and 18, at several areas around the installation. Most of them were focused on range areas around the post’s impact area so they were safe for training, and more.

Prescribed burns improve wildlife habitat, control invasive plant species, restore and maintain native plant communities, and reduce wildfire potential. Prescribed burns benefit the environment in many ways and are one of the tools we can use on a large scale to improve our wild habitat, said Fort McCoy Forester Charles Mentzel in a past news article who is part of the prescribed burn team and was present with all of the burn efforts so far in 2025.

— **Fort McCoy leaders and team members took time out March 25 to participate in the Monroe County Economic Development Housing Meeting in Sparta, Wis., to support the planning and discussion for addressing housing in the county.**

Participating from Fort McCoy were Fort McCoy Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Mike Corkum, Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Director Liane Haun, Fort McCoy Housing Chief Zach Hynes, and other installation members.

According to the Monroe County Economic Develop Committee who spearheaded the event, topics addressed were:

- \* Current housing situation in Monroe County;
- \* Reviewing where the greatest need for housing is;
- \* Defining “affordable” housing;
- \* Looking at what other counties are doing to address a lack of housing;
- \* Funding opportunities for housing the committee might be missing;
- \* How can all the varying agencies collaborate to address housing issues in Monroe County;
- \* And what are some actions Monroe County can take to address housing concerns.

— **Tonya Townsell gave her last presentation as the Fort McCoy public affairs officer March 27 as she gave her farewell remarks during her retirement ceremony at the Fort McCoy History Center at Fort McCoy, Wis.**

Townsell started her career in Army Public Affairs in 1990 when she enlisted in the Army and completed the Defense Information School Basic Journalist Course at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. From there her career took her to places all over the world, including assignments in the United States as well as Europe.

Her early days as a Soldier included supporting a presidential inauguration in the 1990s, and more. During 11 of her 30 years of service, Townsell served as a Soldier both on active and in the National Guard. After that, she transitioned to a career as a civil servant in Army Public Affairs. Over the years, Townsell has been a part of a lot of professional awards too. At Fort McCoy, the number of awards received by the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office staff has been significant during her leadership between 2015 and 2025.

During those 10 years, her office earned 16 Army Materiel Command public affairs awards, 40 Army Installation Management Com-



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

**Army ROTC cadets complete field training April 11, 2025, at Fort McCoy. They are among more than 70 other cadets from seven universities completing field training. ROTC training leaders said the training was a combined field training exercise.**

mand public affairs awards, and more than 150 monthly trophy awards on the Defense Visual Information and Distribution Service monthly recognition.

Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez, who presided over Townsell’s ceremony, discussed her career.

“Today we are celebrating Tonya’s accomplishment for over 30 years of federal service,” Baez said. “We have many things to say about Tonya. ... For the last 10 years at Fort McCoy as the public affairs chief, things at Fort McCoy have taken a turn. When we look at social media, when we look at any type of ... media that is out there for the Army, ort McCoy is all over the place.

— **Kendra Pierce with the Fort McCoy Multimedia-Visual Information Office and members of the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office earned award placings in two categories for the 2024 Army Materiel Command (AMC) David G. Harris Public Affairs Competition that was announced in late-February.**

The placings at AMC were the next level of competition for Pierce and the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office after they placed in the 2024 Installation Management Command (IMCOM) Public Affairs and Communications Awards competition in January.

Pierce earned a second place Army Materiel Command award in Graphic Arts Category A: Layout and Design. Pierce’s entry was a special graphic created for the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security.

As it also earned an award at IMCOM, the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office also earned an AMC third-place award in Category B: Community Relations Special Event for work done during the 2024 Fort McCoy Armed Forces Day Open House.

Contributors recognized for the award include now-retired Public Affairs Officer Tonya Townsell; Senior Public Affairs Specialist Scott T. Sturkol; Public Affairs Specialist Claudia Neve (now in Germany); Public Affairs Specialist Christopher Jones (now in California); Lt. Col. James Ontiveros, public affairs contributor and civil affairs officer; and Robin Michalski, Fort McCoy Commemorative Area caretaker.

— **In February 1985, Tim Wilder began a 40-year journey at Fort McCoy that he admits was a labor of love from start to finish. At that time, little did he know he would make an impact on the endangered species and natural resources programs at Fort McCoy that will last for generations.**

On March 27, 2025, Wilder retired from the Army Civil Service with dozens of coworkers, friends, and family in attendance to pay tribute to his service and accomplishments. During his career, Wilder was a biological science student trainee from February 1985 to October 1987, wildlife biologist from November 1987 to June 1994, Fort McCoy’s first endangered species biologist from June 1994 to March 2018, and chief of the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB) from March 2018 to March 2025.

### APRIL

— **Fort McCoy’s total economic impact for fiscal year (FY) 2024 was an estimated \$1.6 billion, Fort McCoy Garrison officials announced, which is up from FY 2023’s total impact of \$1.38 billion.**

The data was compiled by Fort McCoy’s Plans, Analysis and Integration Office and announced in April 2025.

Workforce payroll, operating costs, and other expenditures totaled more than \$398 million for FY 2024.

A total of 1,934 personnel worked at Fort McCoy in FY 2024 — 1,061 civilians, 495 military, and 378 contract employees.

Approximately 66 percent of the workforce lives within Monroe County. The total FY 2024 workforce payroll for civilian and military personnel was \$270.4 million.

FY 2024 operating costs of \$170 million included utilities, physical plant maintenance, repair and improvements, new construction projects, purchases of supplies and services, as well as salaries for civilian contract personnel working at Fort McCoy.

Other expenditures accounted for \$21.2 million and covered \$511,296 in payments to local governments (including land permit agreements, school district impact aid, etc.) as well as \$20.7 million in discretionary spending in local communities by service members training and residing at Fort McCoy. Other factors of economic impact for the fiscal year included more than \$92.6 million in military construction on post.

— **Seventy-one cadets and nearly a dozen staff members with Army ROTC units at seven universities in Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan trained at Fort McCoy on April 11 in field training lanes to build their skills.**

“The cadets were participating in a combined field training exercise,” said Maj. Michael Centola, associate professor of military science and executive officer for the Badger ROTC Battalion at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. “Schools came together to train on small unit tactics, troop leading procedures, and land navigation.

“This was the last large-scale training exercise for the third-year cadets prior to their formal assessment at Fort Knox (Ky.) later this summer,” Centola said.

Cadet Grace Sandretti with the University of Wisconsin-Madison ROTC Program, who is a senior cadet, served as an opposing forces person to help train the junior cadets during the field training. She described how important this effort was.

“The field training exercise (FTX) is a great opportunity for cadets to make mistakes,” Sandretti said. “I find that in this environment we’re able to talk about any mistakes that are made and talk through the missions. That creates a really great space for cadets to learn.

— **Fort McCoy’s Forestry Office continued to manage a significant effort during April 2025 with many activities designed to improve Fort McCoy’s thousands of acres of forest land.**

During the month, forestry and related work was coordinated by Forester Charles Mentzel and Forestry Technician Tim Parry who both work within the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.

As part of their monthly work, they share work completed with the personnel supporting the Monroe County (Wis.) Natural Resources Committee. Some of those completed work items include:

The Forestry team administered six timber sales during April.

“We typically have six to nine timber sales a year, or about 600 acres worth,” Mentzel said. “Some get cut the following year.”

Timber sales are administered by the Omaha District of the Army Corps of Engineers and are sold by sealed bid, said Mentzel.

The timber harvest activities also support Fort McCoy’s strategic objective of enhancing the post’s military training value through improved area utilization and land use initiatives, Mentzel said.

— **From April 11-13, Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment of the Wisconsin National Guard brought more than a dozen helicopters as well as crews and support personnel to hold a drill training at Fort McCoy.**

Helicopters included UH-60 Black Hawk medivac helicopters from

the battalion’s West Bend, Wis., location as well as Light Utility Helicopters (UH-72A Lakota) from the same location. Personnel and equipment also were on hand from the 147th location in Madison, Wis.

“We were doing a field training exercise to help get ready for an upcoming mobilization,” said Capt. Cole Hamilton, operations officer and more with the 147th who helped organize and conduct the drill training.

Hamilton said the training focused on a wide variety of scenarios, training lanes, and even hot and cold load training for moving patients in a medivac situation.

James L. Hubbard, airport manager with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security Airfield Division, said the 147th had people and aircraft operating from the Sparta-Fort McCoy Airport, Young Air Assault Strip, and other training locations on the installation’s South Post.

Members of the 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment regularly complete training operations at Fort McCoy, and the unit also supports numerous training events at the installation each year. In 2024, the unit supported training on Fort McCoy nearly every month, and it’s been similar with their training in 2025.

— **Leaders with U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy took time April 24 to hold a pair of town hall meetings with the installation workforce where they took questions, provided updates about ongoing personnel programs, and discussed upcoming construction that will affect installation personnel.**

Fort McCoy Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon led the effort on both meetings. Cantlon gave updates on news and information within the garrison.

In discussing an ever-changing environment in the workplace currently facing the workforce, he offered some encouragement.

“Please continue to do what you do every day,” Cantlon said. “Let’s focus on that. Those are the things that make us what we are here at Fort McCoy. We have a great reputation. We have a great ethic. We do good work.”

Cantlon also took numerous questions about personnel actions. One included about whether or not restructuring within the garrison is likely.

“The question is, will there be restructuring looked at before October, because clearly after October, we will be doing restructuring,” Cantlon said. “The answer is yes, we will be looking at restructuring and where we have the ability within the hiring freeze restraints for moving personnel and doing things on personnel actions, where we have flexibility and some agility, we will take action. Planning has already started.”

— **Building movers doing work at Fort McCoy proved that a fourth time can be a charm, too, as they successfully moved a fourth World War II-era barracks April 16 at Fort McCoy.**

Three World War II-era barracks buildings were already moved on Jan. 22, Feb. 12-13, and March 18. This fourth building was moved to the same area as the first two.

Army Corps of Engineers officials and the contractor are working to complete the movement of five 80-plus-year-old buildings, although the contractor now has the route to move the buildings built up to better move around corners and along roadways. It’s so well set up that moving the fourth building was the fastest yet.

Devooght Building Movers of Manitowoc, Wis., is the contractor doing the building moving with wheels and remote control powered by a generator. Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works planners have said a plan was previously worked out with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the contractor to move the five old barracks buildings to the 500 block of Fort McCoy in these moves. The buildings are temporarily set in that block until new locations are determined.

— **Fort McCoy held a community event April 25 to plant 500 trees in a designated planting area to establish a forested area on the installation’s cantonment area.** In doing so, the effort also earned the post its 36th Tree City USA designation.

Forester Charles Mentzel with the Forestry Office of the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch unveiled the installation’s newest Tree City USA designation flag during the event, and participants in the effort also took a group photo.

The flag later found its home on a flagpole right next to Fort McCoy’s old Main Gate on the cantonment area near State Highway 21.

Tree planting is an annual effort at Fort McCoy where the Forestry Office coordinates what areas need planting, and where they will best improve lands which are also used as part of the post’s training and maneuver space.

“Fort McCoy has more than 46,000 acres of forested land managed by the Forestry Office, and it’s important to maintain those forested areas,” Mentzel said.

The 500 trees planted April 25 were the major replanting effort for 2025. In 2024, Forestry Technician Tim Parry, also with the Forestry Office, said the post planted 5,000 trees — 500 on the cantonment area and 4,500 in Training Area B-05 on Fort McCoy’s South Post.

— **Fort McCoy’s prescribed burn team held a final burn for the spring season April 23 along Badger Drop Zone on the installation’s South Post covering dozens of acres to reduce wildfire risk in that area.**

The post prescribed burn team includes personnel with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department; Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB); Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security; and the Colorado State University Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands in partnership with the post.

This burn started in the center of the drop zone and covered the more well-used areas of the drop zone and went on for more than four hours. The drop zone is used consistently by Air Force air mobility forces to conduct airdrop practice as well as C-130 Hercules training operations. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III aircraft and crews have also conducted airdrop practice over this drop zone using Container Delivery System bundles in past years.

— **Fort McCoy celebrated the Army Reserve’s 117th birthday April 23 with a special celebration at McCoy’s Community Center that included free food, cake, and games and fun for all attendees.**

Fort McCoy’s Senior Commander, Maj. Gen. Joseph Ricciardi, commanding general of the 88th Readiness Division, led the Army Reserve birthday observance.

Ricciardi discussed the importance of the Army Reserve’s contribution to America and more as the celebration got started.

“Since its inception, the Army Reserve has played a pivotal in enhancing strength, flexibility, and effectiveness of the United States Army,” Ricciardi said. “We have served as a force multiplier ... Throughout history, the Army Reserve has proven essential in adapting to the nation’s evolving needs.

— **Students and staff with the Air Force’s Air Mobility Liaison Officer (AMLO) Qualification Course traveled to Fort McCoy to train April 15-18 at the installation’s Young Air Assault Strip.**

Lt. Col. Andrew Baker, course director with the 435th Training Squadron at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., said the class previously conducted this training in Colorado, but for the first time brought the AMLO students to Fort McCoy because of the capabilities found on the post.

“What we found at Fort McCoy was the type of runway that we were going to be operating on, the dirt runway,” Baker said. “The runway — it was great. It was better for training because ... it gave us a lot of opportunity for students to see the impact of landing operations. It was significantly better than (training) on a very hard, compacted dirt runway.”

(See YEAR IN REVIEW 2025, Insert Page 4)



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

**An aircrew with the 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment of the Wisconsin National Guard operates a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter April 11, 2025, during drill training at Fort McCoy.**



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

**Forester Charles Mentzel and members of the Fort McCoy prescribed burn team oversee a prescribed burn April 23, 2025, on Badger Drop Zone on South Post at Fort McCoy, Wis.**



# FORT MCCOY'S 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

from Page 3

## YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

The students also utilized Badger Drop Zone to complete specific training events. “The drop zone was much bigger and much better for our students to kind of see that,” Baker said.

Baker described the types of training the AMLO students focused on during their week at McCoy.

“During the week, we focused on ... drop zone control and also landing zone safety officer (training),” Baker said. “The drop zone control was essentially just calling airdrops in, directing the aircraft to a point of release, and then they threw out a 15-pound sandbag. That would score how well the student directed that aircraft to a release point. It’s called verbally initiated release system, or VIRS.”

— **Fort McCoy team members took time to support the April 2025 meeting of the Monroe County (Wis.) Natural Resource and Extension Committee in Sparta, Wis.**

As part of Monroe County, Fort McCoy has a part in supporting the committee. The post does so through the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB) as well as the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.

During the meeting held April 14, NRB Fisheries Biologist Steve Rood served as one of the Fort McCoy representatives where he reviewed recent accomplishments completed by NRB and related Fort McCoy personnel.

Among those accomplishments in natural resources management Rood mentioned from March 2025 were:

\* In fisheries, personnel collected temperature and oxygen profiles on all 10 lakes at Fort McCoy.

\* Fisheries personnel installed batteries and fuses in aerators at Stillwell and Swamp Pond.

\* NRB personnel led “go/no go” burn meetings mornings of possible prescribed burns. Also, conducted prescribe burns on eight days in March on 22 units completing 7,196 acres. This included Ranges 6, 18, 32, 33, 100, 101, 102, 105, and all of the North Impact Area.

\* Forestry personnel administered six timber sales on post taking in \$23,583.20.

\* With invasive species management, the NRB team provided comments to the NEPA coordinator on two proposed projects in April.

— **Just in time once again for the 2025 fishing season, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Genoa National Fish Hatchery of Genoa, Wis., stocked more than 15,000 rainbow trout in several waterways throughout the post.**

USFWS personnel delivered the trout April 23 and 25, said Fort McCoy Fisheries Biologist Steve Rood who works with the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB). Trout were stocked in Suukjak Sep, Sandy, Stillwell, and Big Sandy lakes and Sparta and Swamp ponds.

“Each year we purchase and stock the same number of rainbow trout into each lake,” Rood said in a past news article about the same process. “The average length of the rainbow trout that were stocked this year were just under 11 inches. These quality fish will provide an exciting opportunity for all anglers to pursue.”

## MAY

— **Fourteen Army National Guardsmen competed in the 2025 Region IV Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy from April 30 to May 3. The seven Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) and seven Soldiers represented Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.** They put their Soldier skills to the test for the opportunity to advance to the national level.

The four-day event challenged the Guardsmen, pushing them to their limits while measuring their proficiency in warrior skills, military procedures, physical fitness, and mental fortitude. To earn a place in the regional competition, each Service Member first competed in and won at their respective state-level competitions.

— **Thousands of troops took to Fort McCoy training areas during May 2025 to complete weekend training, extended combat training, institutional training, or participate in major training events.**

Troops included Guard, Reserve, and active-duty personnel, and a lot of varied activity was taking place.

In early May, Army Reserve Medical Command officials said a new field hospital was shown at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Medical at Fort McCoy.

“Product Manager Soldier Medical Devices, capability and materiel developers, and RTS-Medical personnel collaborated on the new design for a standard medical shelter in support of Soldier hospitalization (at Fort McCoy) on May 1,” states an Army Reserve Medical Command Facebook post on May 3 at <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1106221858211625&set=a.470326441801173>.

Training also included the U.S. Army Reserve Command E3B (Expert Soldier Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, Expert Field Medical Badge) competition the took place between April 27 and May 10 at Fort McCoy.

According to the Army Reserve at <https://www.usar.army.mil/E3B>, a “total of 109 candidates from all three U.S. Army components (active, Reserve, and National Guard) started the E3B” competition. Command Sergeant Major of 3rd Medical Command, Command Sgt. Maj. Robert T. Priest, and Commanding Sergeant Major of 352nd Civil Affairs Command, Command Sgt. Maj. George H. Conklin, spoke to the 14 Soldiers who emerged as 2025 badge recipients having satisfactorily completed all required tasks.

The Army Reserve also held its Best Squad Competition from May 8-19 at Fort McCoy. In a story by Capt. Elizabeth Polk, it states “75 warriors di-

vided into 15 squads to endure six grueling, challenge-filled days” during the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) Best Squad Competition.

May 2025 also saw the National Guard hold its 2025 Region IV Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy from April 30 to May 3.

— **Leaders with Fort McCoy Garrison and installation agencies met May 15 with community leaders and workforce professionals in Sparta, Wis., during the Fort McCoy Workforce Collaborative Meeting, which promotes relationships and employment opportunities.**

The meeting brought together people who are working to improve employment opportunities in the region, including at Fort McCoy. Attending from Fort McCoy included Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Mike Corkum; Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major; Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office personnel, and others.

— **The 2025 Fort McCoy fishing season opened May 3, concurrent with the Wisconsin general inland fishing season opener. Fishing on installation lakes and flowages is allowed May 3 through March 1, 2026, said Fisheries Biologist Steven Rood with the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.** The general inland trout season on post and in Wisconsin is from May 3 to Oct. 15.

Fort McCoy has 10 installation lakes and impoundments and approximately 71.2 miles of Coldwater streams and tributaries, Rood said. Most of the streams are class I trout waters maintaining naturally reproducing brook and brown trout. The impoundments on Fort McCoy cold-water streams provide a variety of uses for recreation, military training, and habitat for fish and wildlife.

— **Fort McCoy held its first May 1 National Prayer Brunch at the Fort McCoy Religious Support Office fellowship space at the installation.**

The event followed the presidential proclamation that established May 1 as a National Day of Prayer. In the 2025 proclamation available at the Federal Register at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/05/07/2025-08132/national-day-of-prayer-2025>, it states in 1988, the Congress, by Public Law 100-307, as amended, “called on the president to issue each year a proclamation designating the first Thursday in May as a National Day of Prayer, ‘on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups, and as individuals.’”

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Amy Noble opened the event with an invocation and prayer.

Maj. Randy Downs, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy, then took the time to introduce the guest speaker.

Downs said Boland remained on active duty for 30 years with notable assignments that also included being a battalion commander and the Fort McCoy Garrison commander from 1988-1991.

— **Fort McCoy team members witnessed a change-of-responsibility ceremony May 16 for a new command sergeant major for U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy in building 905 at Fort McCoy.**

During the ceremony, Command Sgt. Maj. James J. Riddle assumed duties as garrison command sergeant major (CSM) from Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Calarco, who has retired from the Army. Immediately prior to this assignment, Riddle served as the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command G-3/5/7 sergeant major from July 2023 to April 2025 at Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

Riddle said he looked forward to serving at Fort McCoy.

“It is truly, deeply, an honor to be here, humbled to stand before you to assume the responsibility of Fort McCoy Garrison (CSM),” Riddle said. “This moment is a moment of great pride, not only for me, but for my family, and for those who have supported me throughout the years and the journey.”

— **The \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project in Fort McCoy’s 1600 block now has its full construction space open after the fifth and last World War II-era barracks was moved from the area to the 500 block on May 13.**

Four World War II-era barracks buildings were already moved on Jan. 22, Feb. 12-13, March 18, and April 16. The movement of the last building went as fast as the fourth — less than a day. Devooght Building Movers of Manitowoc, Wis., is the contractor doing the building moving with wheels and remote control powered by a generator.

In this fifth move, the movers had ideal weather to get it done with partly sunny skies and moderate temperatures.

— **Leaders and staff from Fort McCoy, the To— With the last of the World War II-era barracks moved from the work site May 13, more actual construction of the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project has taken hold, stated Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy in his May 16 update on the project.**

The contractor for the project, BlindermanPower (Construction), which is also currently working on another major project at Fort McCoy — the fiscal year-2022 funded South Barracks Project, was awarded a contract totaling \$55,759,100, according to the Army Corps of Engineers, which is overseeing the project. The notice to proceed was acknowledged on July 19, 2024. The contract duration is scheduled for completion in 1,260 calendar days.

The project description in the contract states the plan is to build the two buildings based on the standard layout depicted in the Operational Readiness Training Complex.



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

**Contractors work on a new \$27.3 million transient training troops barracks project, known as the Fort McCoy East Barracks Project, on May 21, 2025, at Fort McCoy.**

Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy said the project calls for the construction of two new 48,000-square-foot, four-story Collective Training Officers Quarters buildings.

In his May 16 update, Green gave the latest actions, including stating the project is now 6 percent complete.

“Demo continued,” Green wrote. “Fifth building was relocated. The tie down for two buildings continues. And footing/columns/stem wall placements continued on the west building.”

— **This year, 75 warriors divided into 15 squads to endure six grueling, challenge-filled days during the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) Best Squad Competition at Fort McCoy.**

The 200th Military Police (MP) Command’s squad emerged victorious. The squad, consisting of Staff Sgt. Christian Leonard, Sgt. Aaron Court, Spc. Serge Fenn, Pfc. Luke Griguolo, and Pvt. 2nd Class Seth Stetz, demonstrated resilience and exceptional teamwork to secure the annual top honor. Before arriving at Fort McCoy, each Soldier fought to qualify at the brigade and command level competitions.

The winners then became a part of the 200th MP Command’s best squad and sent to Wisconsin.

— **Soldiers with the Army Reserve’s 13th Battalion, 100th Regiment held slingload training at Sparta-Fort McCoy Airport on May 22 at Fort McCoy with the support of two UH-60 Black Hawks and crews from the Wisconsin National Guard.**

Leading the preparations for the training was Sgt. 1st Class Colter Lee Kincaid with the 13th Battalion, 100th Regiment.

Kincaid, who said the slingload training they were completing best could be described as “cross-level” training for unit personnel who aren’t associated with the 89B military occupational specialty (MOS) of ammunition supply specialist.

“I’m here ... to present to some different MOS’ to do some cross-level training and also try to share our experience and our knowledge base with what we do and why we do it,” said Kincaid, who regularly serves as an 89B instructor, during the training.

— **Cadets with the Wisconsin Challenge Academy’s Class 54 held a special event May 21 in McCoy’s Community Center at Fort McCoy with the setup and support of the War Memorial Center Medal of Honor traveling exhibit.**

The Milwaukee County War Memorial Center is located in Milwaukee and has been a fixture of the military history community in Wisconsin since 1957, according to its website at <https://warmemorialcenter.org>.

— **An aircrew with the 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment of New Century, Kansas, operated a CH-47 Chinook during the helocast event May 15 for the 2025 Army Reserve Best Squad competition at Big Sandy Lake on South Post at Fort McCoy, Wis.**

According to an Army Reserve article by Capt. Elizabeth Polk at <https://www.usar.army.mil/News/News-Display/Article/4190517/200th-mp-command-named-best-squad-at-army-reserve-competition>, the Army Reserve Best Squad competition for 2025 included 75 warriors divided into 15 squads to endure six grueling, challenge-filled days” of competition.

The helocast event was on the sixth day of competition.

“On day six, the Soldiers woke up at 3 a.m. to march 12 miles back to Big Sandy Lake for the helocast challenge,” the article states. “The helocast challenge is a combat water insertion via a CH-47 Chinook helicopter into the battlefield. Soldiers dived into the water wearing their usual Operational Camouflage Pattern (OCP) uniform, boots, and black life jackets; swam up to the surface gasping for air, and were picked up by cadre-filled Zodiac boats.”

— **Fort McCoy Garrison leaders Cameron Cantlon, the deputy to the garrison commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major, participated in the May 27 meeting of the Sparta, Wis., Board of Education.**

The meeting was held at Sparta High School, an institution that has educated many Fort McCoy family members over the years. The board includes Pat McKenna, Colin Burns-Gilbert, Ashley Berendes, Todd Wells, Amy Lopez, David Burnett, and David Gaunk.

— **Fort McCoy’s East Barracks Project was reported 45 percent complete as of May 30, said Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the Army Corps of Engineers at Fort McCoy.**

In his May 30 update, Butts said the contractors with L.S. Black Constructors were steadily making progress on the project.

“Masons were building a mock-up wall,” Butts wrote in the update. “Drywall installation continues. Air barrier spray continued. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continues.”

## JUNE

— **Organizers with the Wisconsin Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) held their 2025 Boss Lift event on June 4 at Fort McCoy that included Wisconsin National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters flying in employer representatives, static displays, a Commemorative Area visit, and more.**

According to their website at <https://www.esgr.mil/About-ESGR/Contact/Local-State-Pages/Wisconsin>, the ESGR, a Department of Defense office, “is comprised of dedicated and trained volunteers and staff. (They) develop and promote employer support for Guard and Reserve service by advocating relevant initiatives, recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of applicable laws, and resolving conflict between employers

and service members.”

— **Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Fort McCoy’s South Barracks Project has surpassed 90 percent complete in his June 18 update about the project.**

Butts said in the update that the project is 92 percent completed and the contract completion date is currently Aug. 20.

“Contractor is working on their punch-list items,” Butts wrote. “Interior cleaning continued. Painting continued with touch-ups being completed. Sod, grass seeding, and blanketing continued. Exterior parking lot grading continued. Exterior concrete work also continues. Fourth floor pre-furniture inspection was also held.”

— **Patrick J. Appelman, director of Installation Management Command (IMCOM)-Readiness made a visit to Fort McCoy on June 3 to interact with the Fort McCoy workforce, meet with Fort McCoy Garrison leaders, and more.**

This was Appelman’s first visit to Fort McCoy in 2025. As part of this visit, the IMCOM-Readiness director held a town hall with the installation workforce to discuss current events and news, held a luncheon with garrison directors and leaders, and went to various garrison offices and agencies to meet personally with workforce members.

— **Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry Regiment, 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, completed training at Fort McCoy in early June and among the many Soldiers in the unit completing training were Army medics and related medical personnel.**

Soldiers with the 127th were getting ready for deployment, and more, said Staff Sgt. Mitchell Fromm, a 127th medic who helped lead the training.

“So as a platoon of medics, we cover an infantry battalion,” Fromm said about what his medic platoon will do while deployed. “We’ve got about 45 medics in total. Of that we disperse them among five different companies, and we run a (field) hospital.”

— **The Army Reserve’s 204th Army Band of Fort Snelling, Minn., performed for hundreds of participants on June 13 during the 2025 Fort McCoy Army Birthday Celebration at McCoy’s Community Center at Fort McCoy.**

This celebration highlighted the U.S. Army’s 250th birthday. The band played to all of the people who visited McCoy’s for a free lunch and a cake-cutting ceremony and of course — the music.

— **Fort McCoy celebrated the Army’s 250th birthday with several events June 13 throughout the installation.**

The celebration, coordinated by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, kicked off with the Army Birthday 5k Run/2-Mile Walk at 7 a.m. June 13.

For the run/walk in 2025, approximately 150-plus people took part in all ages, and all those participants received free Army Birthday t-shirts as well. At the same time as the run/walk, a free breakfast was provided for all the run/walk participants at the front of Rumpel Fitness Center. Breakfast items included juice, water, bars, donuts, and more.

Later the same day, beginning at 11:30 a.m. at McCoy’s Community Center, the birthday celebration continued with a free lunch, cake-cutting ceremony, and on-site band entertainment from the Army Reserve’s 204th Army Band of Fort Snelling, Minn.

— **Hundreds of people visited Fort McCoy’s Pine View Campground on June 29 to take part in the Clydesdales Parade and Show at the campground for the installation community and campground guests.**

The Clydesdales are the famous Budweiser Clydesdales. The team of horses and staff and equipment set up on a campground perimeter road not far from the campground office and then held a show for the visitors on how they set up the wagon and how each Clydesdale is connected to the wagon.

Fort McCoy’s Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) led the installation’s effort to hold the parade event at the installation. The Clydesdales were in the area for another event in Tomah, Wis., and it worked out that the team could also be part of an event at Fort McCoy, DFMWR officials said.

— **American Legion National Commander James A. LaCoursiere Jr. and others with the national level American Legion team made an office visit June 26 with members of the Fort McCoy Garrison leadership.**

LaCoursiere was elected national commander of the

— **Thousands of troops trained at Fort McCoy in June 2025, including Marines, Soldiers, Airmen, and more. Some of the units with larger numbers of troops training on post were with the Illinois National Guard.**

— **Yet again, the Monroe County (Wis.) Invasive Species Working Group held their annual 2025 Field Day on June 26 at Whitetail Ridge Ski Area and at Pine View Campground at Fort McCoy.**

More than 40 people participated in this event. — **Boy Scouts and troop leadership with Boy Scout Troop 301 of Danville, Ind., visited Fort McCoy’s Commemorative Area on June 18 to get a first-hand learning experience about the U.S. military, the Army, and Fort McCoy.**

The group was less than 10 people but was fully engaged in all of what the area had to offer. Army Historian Ward Zischke with the 88th Readiness Division led the effort to engage with the visitors, discussing many of the artifacts in the Fort McCoy History Center and historical buildings in the area.



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

**Community members participate in the Clydesdales Parade and Show on June 29, 2025, at Pine View Campground at Fort McCoy. The Clydesdales are the famous Budweiser Clydesdales. The team of horses and staff and equipment set up on a campground perimeter road not far from the campground office and then held a show for the visitors on how they set up the wagon and how each Clydesdale is connected to the wagon.**



## FORT MCCOY'S 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

# Fort McCoy 2025 year in review:

## Second half of year included more construction, thousands of troops training

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

As 2025 progressed, the second half of the year included more training with thousands of troops coming to post and the big construction projects continued to grow in progress.

The second half also saw work begin on renovating the U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters, a successful Retiree Appreciation Day, hundreds of visitors to Fort McCoy's Commemorative Area, a government shutdown, and more.

### JULY

— Fort McCoy conducted a July session of the Safety and Occupational Health Advisory Council (SOHAC) on July 8 that included Fort McCoy Garrison representatives from all directorates and offices.

This meeting, led by the Fort McCoy Installation Safety Office (ISO) was presided over by Fort McCoy's Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon. Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major, also was present for the meeting as well as directorate and special staff leaders.

Installation Safety Manager Ed De Leon led the discussion throughout. He began discussing the Army Safety and Occupational Health System, citing the importance for leaders, supervisors, and the workforce to complete necessary safety training. De Leon also discussed the 101 Days of Summer Safety awareness campaign and why this awareness is important.

— Getting warrior tasks, weapons training, and completing troop projects were among the many things Soldiers with the Army Reserve's 389th Engineer Battalion and associated units did during their annual training in the second half of July 2025 at Fort McCoy.

The 389th Engineering Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Scott Lardinois said he appreciates it when his unit can complete some work for Fort McCoy and get their training done as well.

"(Fort McCoy) is a great facility for us," Lardinois said. "You guys actually let us do construction and get after our combat side. So, we appreciate being here. We appreciate the hospitality."

Lardinois said 389th troops, including many with the 411th Engineer Company, were training all throughout the post. The majority of troops with them set up their training operations from Tactical Training Base Valor on Fort McCoy's North Post.

"Usually when we come up here we occupy this whole area ... because we're the only ones," Lardinois said. "It's a good area to train in."

— Actor/musician Gary Sinise and his fellow members of the Lt. Dan Band held a concert July 13 in front of nearly a thousand concert-goers in front of McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy.

The two-hour free concert by the 20-plus years old band included free food for the guests, courtesy of the Gary Sinise Foundation, and more. Fort McCoy's Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DEFMWR) as well as Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) provided direct support on the day of the event.

Maj. Gen. Joseph Ricciardi, 88th Readiness Division commanding general and Fort McCoy senior commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, Fort McCoy Garrison command sergeant major, provide opening remarks at the beginning of the concert.

"Thank you for coming out to this incredible event," Ricciardi said. "I'd like to take the opportunity very quickly to thank the Fort McCoy MWR and DES for this setup and keeping us safe today."

"We are very fortunate to have Mr. Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band performing us today," Ricciardi said. "For nearly 40 years, Gary Sinise has stood as an advocate for America's servicemen and women. Beginning with his support of Vietnam veterans in the early 80s and his portrayal of Lt. Dan Taylor in the landmark film, Forrest Gump, 30 years ago, he's formed an enduring connection with servicemen throughout the military community."

"After the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, he began a full-on mission to serve and support our first responders and military personnel, lending his services to charities across the country," the major general said. "He formed Lt. Dan Band in 2003, and in the last 20 years, Gary and the band have played more than 580 concerts in support of active duty-troops, veterans, Gold Star families, wounded servicemembers, and our first responders. Tonight's concert is generously supported and sponsored by the Gary Sinise Foundation. So ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band."

The band plays a wide variety of pop and rock music as well as some country selections. In addition to Sinise, band members also include Gina Gonzalez, Mari Anne Jayme, Jeff Vezain, Kirk Garrison, Danny Gottlieb, Beth Gottlieb, Dan Myers, Ernie Denov, Ben Lewis, Mitch Paliga, Julie Dutchak, Molly Callinan, and Tom "Bones" Malone.

During the show, Sinise discussed more about his history and why he and everyone with the band and his foundation take time to support military members, veterans, and their families.

— Leaders with U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy took time July 24 to hold a pair of town hall meetings with the installation workforce where they took questions, provided updates about ongoing personnel programs, and reviewed upcoming events with the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

Fort McCoy Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon led the effort on both meetings. Cantlon gave updates on news and information within the garrison. He discuss the ever-changing environment in the workplace that continues to face the workforce.

The meetings also gave people a chance to further meet the new garrison command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle. This was Riddle's first town hall with the Fort McCoy workforce.

— U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) received a new commander July 11 during a change-of-command ceremony in building 905 at Fort McCoy.



Members of the 203rd (Welsh) Multi-Role Medical Regiment, a unit of the Royal Army Medical Service within the Army Reserve of the British Army that's based in Wales, and members of the Royal Canadian Medical Service visit the historic Commemorative Area on Aug. 14, 2025, at Fort McCoy.



Members of the Lt. Dan Band, including actor/musician Gary Sinise, play a song selection July 13, 2025, during a concert by the band at Fort McCoy, Wis. Hundreds of people attended the free concert. Fort McCoy's Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation and Directorate of Emergency Services worked to ensure the concert went well. The band is part of the Gary Sinise Foundation which has been supporting military members and their families for nearly 15 years.

During the ceremony, Maj. Zachary Daugherty took the reins of command from Maj. Randy Downs. Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon presided over the ceremony. First Sgt. Thomas Ninkovich, company first sergeant, also participated in the ceremony.

— Soldiers with the Iowa National Guard's 248th Aviation Support Battalion and Detachment 1, Company A, 1st Battalion, 376th Aviation Regiment held training July 14 at Fort McCoy's Young Air Assault Strip on South Post as well as other areas on South Post.

The aviation Soldiers were not only utilizing the Forward Air Refueling Point (FARP) at Young airstrip but also were operating a UH-72A Lakota helicopter for training as well.

The aviation Soldiers were among hundreds of Iowa-based troops completing annual training at Fort McCoy in July. Training like this often takes place at Young Air Assault Strip, too, according to officials with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security.

— Soldiers at Fort McCoy for training conducted convoy training practice as they drove military trucks in a convoy throughout the installation.

The trucks and Soldiers were with the 411th Engineer Company of the 389th Engineer Battalion — which are Army Reserve engineer units based in Iowa. These engineers were at Fort McCoy for annual training as well as supporting troop projects for training.

— Soldiers with the Army Reserve's 389th Engineer Battalion literally moved earth during training on July 25 as part of an ongoing troop construction project just outside the cantonment area fence at Fort McCoy, Wis.

The project work is located in an area of land near the old Gate 20 and Logistical Support Area Liberty and the cantonment area fence, said Larry Morrow, troops projects coordinator with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works (DPW).

The site plan is to make it into a base operations support site for installation service contractors, such as facility maintenance, roads and grounds, solid waste, custodial, pest management, and more, Morrow said in a previous news article.

— Soldiers with the 372nd Engineer Company, an Army Reserve unit out of Pewaukee, Wis., worked on a troop Project replacing broken sidewalk sections on J Street during their annual training in June at Fort McCoy.

The 372nd Soldiers worked for several days to prepare the area as well as manage the concrete pours to set in the new sidewalk. Through

this work, engineer troops get the training they need, and the installation benefits from the work they do to improve Fort McCoy training ranges and quality-of-life programs, post officials said.

This isn't the first time the 372nd has completed work at Fort McCoy either. In previous years the unit's Soldiers have completed a wide variety of work on post. Fort McCoy Troop Projects Coordinator Larry Morrow with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works said it was a significant amount of work. Soldiers with the 372nd team put in new aggregate on the base, and set in forms to pour concrete for the new stretch of sidewalk.

— Ever since late-June, construction on the \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy has included the contractor building the framework for the first building on the site.

Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy said the project is now 13 percent complete and rising daily. In his July 18 update, Green gave the latest actions.

"On the west building, slab prep/placement continued," Green wrote in the update. "The west building structural steel also continued, and Nelson stud placement started on deck #2."

"East building electrical rough-in continued," Green stated. "And also on the east building, footings and pier rough-in and placements continued."

— As of mid-July 2025, Fort McCoy's South Barracks Project was edging ever closer to completion with a variety of work being completed.

Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Fort McCoy's South Barracks Project has reached 94 percent complete in his July 11 update about the project.

In the July 11 update, Butts also wrote everything that is getting completed.

"Contractor is working on their punch-list items," Butts wrote. "Interior cleaning continued. Painting continued with touch-ups being completed. Exterior parking lot concrete continued."

— The Army Community Service's 60th birthday was celebrated among dozens of Soldiers and civilian workforce members July 25 at McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy.

The event, organized by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DEFMWR) and the Fort McCoy Army Community Service Office, featured opening words by several Fort McCoy leaders as well as a cake-cutting ceremony and free food for all in attendance.

During the opening comments, a lot of praise was made about what ACS has done the last 60 years as well as how the organization continues to be an integral form of support for Soldiers and their families.

"It's fantastic to have all of you here," said Fort McCoy ACS Director Sylvia Lopez. "For six decades, ACS has been the cornerstone of support for our military community. We've adapted to the changing times, evolving needs, and the challenges faced by those we serve."

— Two crews from Wisconsin Conservation Corps (Wis-Corps) made a special visit to Fort McCoy's Commemorative Area on July 11 during one of the open hours' days at the area where people at Fort McCoy can go see all the area has to offer.

The nine people in the crews were accompanied by Natural Resources Specialist Jessica Salesman with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch. Together they walked through all the areas of the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area.

— Leaders with U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy's leadership team as well as other garrison members attended a special "Business after 5" event July 23 to continue Army community engagement efforts with local elected and business leaders.

The event was held at the Monroe County Fairgrounds in Tomah, Wis., and included members of both the Tomah Chamber of Commerce as well as the Sparta (Wis.) Chamber of Commerce. The event was part of the opening day for the 2025 Monroe County Fair.

Attending for Fort McCoy were Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon as well as Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major. Also attending were members of the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office as well as the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

— Leaders with Fort McCoy Garrison and installation agencies met July 17, 2025, with community leaders and workforce professionals in Sparta, Wis., during the Fort McCoy Area Workforce Collaborative Meeting.

The meeting brought together people who are working to improve employment opportunities in the region, including at Fort McCoy. Among those attending the meeting were Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, Fort McCoy Garrison command sergeant major; Maj. Zachary Daugherty, commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters and Headquarters Company; and representatives from (See YEAR IN REVIEW 2024, Insert Page 6)



Soldiers with the Wisconsin National Guard operate a M109A6 Paladin on the cantonment area Aug. 5, 2025, at Fort McCoy. They were moving the vehicle near the Guard's Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site where they store all different types of military equipment and vehicles like this.



# FORT MCCOY'S 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

## YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

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several other post agencies to include Army Community Service, Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office, and Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

— **Approximately 45 people over two tours from the Natural Resources Foundation (NRF) of Wisconsin visited Fort McCoy on July 14 to participate in a butterfly field day at the installation for a third straight year.**

The Fort McCoy coordination for the field trip was again led by Endangered Species Biologist Jessup Weichelt with the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB) and supported by Natural Resources Specialist Jessica Salesman, also with the NRB.

“We mostly observed various common skippers like the Dun and Tawny Edge Skipper as well as a good amount of Regal Fritillary, Gorgone Checkerspot, Eastern Tailed Blue and Spring Azure butterflies,” Weichelt said. “The weather did get a little hotter than you would like for butterfly surveys, but it didn’t completely deter butterflies from being out. We were able to see the rare Ottoo Skipper with both groups as well as Karner Blue Butterflies and the Regals, which are what I consider the big three for this tour.”

— **An interesting artifact, a 100-plus-year-old panoramic photograph, was donated to the Fort McCoy History in July 2025 by a Wisconsin resident who believes she had family descendants in the photograph.**

That resident, Joyce Thorson from Augusta, Wis., brought the long panoramic photo to the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area and the History Center. Augusta is located near Eau Claire, Wis., and Joyce visited Fort McCoy on July 11 with her husband Delton Thorson.

The photo shows the 1st Regiment, 10th Battalion of the Wisconsin National Guard. The picture also shows that it was taken at “Camp Bruce E. McCoy.”

According to installation history, Camp Bruce E. McCoy — named in honor of Robert Bruce McCoy’s father — was the official designation of the site from 1910 until it was renamed “Camp McCoy” on Nov. 19, 1926.

In 1909, the U.S. War Department purchased about 14,000 acres in west-central Wisconsin, creating the Sparta Maneuver Tract. This tract was split by a railroad into two sites: Camp Emory Upton (north) and Camp Robinson (south). In 1910, following \$40,000 in improvements, the combined site was renamed Camp Bruce E. McCoy, honoring the Civil War veteran and father of Maj. Gen. Robert B. McCoy.

From 1910-1919, the camp expanded significantly, hosting artillery training during World War I and constructing new facilities, the history states. Training paused from 1919 to 1923 when the site served as the Sparta Ordnance Depot.

— **In June 2025, Linda (Wendel) Dehaven contacted the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office by email to discuss some old photos she found taken by her father while serving in the Army at then-Camp McCoy.**

The photos and the time her father served were during the 1950s. Her father, former Sgt. Donald Wendel with the 110th Engineer Battalion of the Missouri National Guard, served within the Army engineer field during his entire service in the National Guard.

“My dad was a lifelong Missouri resident,” Dehaven said. “He was born in Raytown, Mo. Then bought the family farm in 1952. He owned and operated Wendel Dairy Farm his whole life. My dad passed away in 1990, he was 55. He died from an aneurysm.

“He had four children, Bill, Bob, me, and Mary,” Dehaven said. The photos were donated by Dehaven and the Wendel family to Fort McCoy to be included in the installation’s historical archives, which are located within the Fort McCoy History Center at the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area.

— **The 19th Wisconsin Government Opportunities Business Conference (GOBC) kicked off at Fort McCoy on July 30 at building 905 giving an opportunity for businesses to engage with federal and state government agencies.**

Fort McCoy Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, top enlisted leader to U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy, both participated in discussing Fort McCoy and federal opportunities for the businesses. Also included was a representative from Mission Installation Contracting Command-McCoy.

— **On July 23, the Fort McCoy Fisheries Program partnered with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the La Crosse County (Wis.) Land Conservation Department to collect mottled sculpin from Fort McCoy waters and then restock them into a Brook Trout Reserve Stream in La Crosse County where mottled sculpin are absent.**

## AUGUST

— **Soldiers with the 469th Combat Engineering Company (Infantry) and 402nd Combat Engineering Company held a large detonation on Fort McCoy on Aug. 3 on the installation’s impact area on North Post.**

Both engineer companies are with the Army Reserve and train regularly at Fort McCoy. Staff Sgt. Nathan Schulke said in an interview with Greg Mason of the Fort McCoy Multimedia-Visual Information Office right before the blast what they had planned to do.

“Today we’ll be firing off a MICLIC, or a Mine Clearing Line Charge,” Schulke said. “This is a

breaching tool that the Army and the Marine Corps use to breach minefields.

“Basically, it’s going to be firing a rocket followed by a line of over 2,000 pounds of explosives, and that will clear a path through the minefield,” Schulke said. “It’s a pretty big deal because firing a live rocket and a live charge is rarely seen in a training environment.”

The pre-planned effort was completed in the pre-determined location just as expected. The resulting explosion could be heard not just on the installation but in areas outside the post’s borders as well.

The 469th and 402nd Soldiers were at Fort McCoy for two weeks of annual training and this event was one of the main highlights of their training.

— **First Army’s 181st Infantry Brigade (Multifunctional Training Brigade), responsible for partnering with the reserve component to advise, assist, and train units to mobilize and meet combatant commander requirements, hosted a change of command to welcome a new commander Aug. 5.**

U.S. Army Col. Stewart U. Gast assumed command from Col. Charles W. Wells of the 181st MFTB during a ceremony presided over by Lt. Gen. Mark Landes, commander of First Army.

Gast is arriving to Fort McCoy from South Korea, where he served as the Combined Forces Command Assistant Chief of Staff Deputy Engineer and the U.S. Forces Korea Engineers Chief of Plans and Operations. Gast also brings a wealth of experience in training from serving as a Brigade Engineer Battalion Senior OC/T at JRTC.

“It is an honor and a privilege of a lifetime to be standing here today, taking command of such an important organization at this time in our history,” said Gast. “I understand our mission, its importance, and I will ensure we meet our goals.”

— **Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery Regiment, a Wisconsin Army National Guard unit that operates the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), conducted training at Fort McCoy, Wis., on Aug. 25, 2025, at a live-fire range at Fort McCoy.**

The unit conducts training and live-fire exercises with HIMARS regularly at Fort McCoy as well as Camp Ripley, Minn.

The unit has been involved in international training, such as rapid deployment operations with the Swedish armed forces.

— **Approximately 7,000 U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers, alongside allied and partner forces, converged on Fort McCoy for Global Strike and Global Medic during the 2025 Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX), a large-scale, multi-domain training event designed to prepare units for the transforming battlefield of the future.**

Led by the 78th Training Division, in coordination with the 412th Theater Engineer Command and the Medical Readiness and Training Command (MRTC), CSTX sharpened skills across engineering, medical, sustainment, security, and logistics operations. The exercise replicated complex, high-intensity combat scenarios that challenged both technical proficiency and tactical decision-making, while integrating modern threats such as unmanned aircraft systems, cyber, and robotics.

Brig. Gen. Sandra Martin, deputy commander of the 412th Theater Engineer Command and senior trainer for the event, oversaw planning and execution.

“I’m responsible for working with the observer-coach-trainers; getting information and feedback on how the units are doing every day with achieving their training objectives,” Martin said. “We spent a year of planning that led up to CSTX, and during that planning, we worked closely with the 78th Training Division to understand what challenges Soldiers would benefit from the most.”

— **Thousands of service members, most of them Army Reserve Soldiers, descended on Fort McCoy for the 78th Training Division Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) 78-25-02 from Aug. 2-15, and that meant the Fort McCoy food-service team had a big task in front of them to ensure all those people had food and other supplies for their training.**

The installation’s food-service team ensures that need is always met, said Food Service Specialist Jim Gouker with the Fort McCoy Logistics Readiness Center (LRC).

That team includes the LRC Food Program Management Office (FPMO) and the LRC Subsistence Supply Management Office (SSMO); the full food-service contractor DCT Inc.; and food suppliers, such as Sysco Foods of Baraboo, Wis.

This exercise also included related exercises Global Strike 2025 and Global Medic 2025. It was a diverse group of service members training and their needs for items stretched to all areas of the post.

Gouker said for food service the SSMO supported CSTX/Global Medic/Global Strike with Class I in the following quantities: Meals, Ready-to-Eat (MREs), 80,424 standard meals; MREs Kosher, 192 meals; MREs Halal, 1,380 meals; Unitized Group Rations (UGRs)-As, 12,650 meals; UGRs H&S, 134,550 meals; UHT milk, 48,330 containers; bagged ice, 202,000 pounds; and additional enhancements such as fresh fruit, salad mix, salad dressings, and bread.

— **Dozens of representatives of Fort McCoy Garrison staff as well as personnel with installation tenant organizations met Aug. 5 in building 905 for a special postwide meeting.**

The Garrison-Tenant Staff Meeting is an important opportunity for all who attend, garrison



Photos by Greg Mason/Fort McCoy Multimedia-Visual Information Office

**Soldiers with the 469th Combat Engineering Company (Infantry) and 402nd Combat Engineering Company conduct operations for a Mine Clearing Line Charge on Aug. 3, 2025, at Fort McCoy**

officials said.

Fort McCoy Garrison Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Chad Holder, who took over as deputy commander in July, led the meeting. Also attending from the garrison leadership team was Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major. The meeting is an opportunity for open dialogue and discussion between the garrison staff and tenant organization partners, Holder said during the meeting.

— **The roar of engines from UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopters could be heard for nearly two weeks in August 2025 throughout Fort McCoy as the aircraft and their crews supported the 78th Training Division’s Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) 78-25-02 at the post.**

CSTX 78-25-02 took place from Aug. 2-14 at areas all throughout Fort McCoy. There were eight Black Hawks and three Chinooks that operated from Fort McCoy were from the 8th Battalion, 229th Aviation Regiment at Fort Knox, Ky.

During the exercise, training officials said the helicopters supported troop movements across North Post and South Post at Fort McCoy and numerous special training events. Chinooks also supported a special exercise at Big Sandy Lake on South Post on Aug. 11 where Soldiers with the 647th Regional Support Group under the 416th Theater Engineer Command completed bridging operations during Global Strike 2025.

— **Soldiers with the 279th Engineer Utilities Detachment, an Army Reserve unit out of Weldon Spring, Mo., worked on a troop project replacing broken sidewalk sections on J Street during their annual training with the 78th Training Division’s Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) 25-02 in August at Fort McCoy.**

The 279th Soldiers worked for several days to prepare the area as well as manage the concrete pours to set in the new sidewalk. Through this work, engineer troops get the training they need, and the installation benefits from the work they do to improve Fort McCoy training ranges and quality-of-life programs, post officials said.

— **Nearly 50 members of the British armed services as well as nearly 30 members of the Canadian armed forces visited the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area on Aug. 14 for a tour of the area that included stopping at the Fort McCoy History Center, Equipment Park, Veterans Memorial Plaza, and more.**

Members of the 203rd (Welsh) Multi-Role Medical Regiment — a unit of the Royal Army Medical Service within the Army Reserve of the British Army that’s based in Wales — made their way to the Commemorative Area following participation in the 2025 Global Medic exercise on post.

Also included were members of the Royal Canadian Medical Service (RCMS) who were also visiting the area after serving in Global Medic.

— **More than 30 members of the 223rd Support Maintenance Company (SMC), 363rd Quartermaster Battalion (Petroleum Pipeline), visited the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area on Aug. 14 after finishing regular operations supporting the 78th Training Division’s Combat Support Training Exercise 25-02.**

The 223rd SMC is an Army Reserve unit headquartered at Grand Prairie Armed Forces Reserve Complex, Texas. Soldiers with the unit made the visit on the end of their time at Fort McCoy after supporting the exercise.

— **The Predictive Index (PI) is a scientifically validated talent optimization tool designed to help organizations understand what drives their people — and how to align those drives with business strategy.**

It measures behavioral tendencies and cognitive ability, offering insights into how individuals work, communicate, and contribute to team dynamics. PI is widely used across industries to enhance hiring, leadership development, and organizational effectiveness, said Workforce Development Specialist Nicholas Kletzien with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works.

On Aug. 21, Fort McCoy Workforce Development, in partnership with Viterbo University, hosted a Predictive Index Behavioral Assessment Small Team Training on post.

## SEPTEMBER

— **Fort McCoy, Wis., held its 2025 Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 5 in building 905, giving military retirees a chance to catch up with one another and learn more about their benefits.**

The first part of this year’s event was a prayer breakfast that begins at 7:30 a.m., said Fort McCoy Retirement Services Officer Nicholas Gimson with the Directorate of Human Resources. The breakfast is organized by the Fort McCoy Religious Support Office and the guest speaker will be Father Conrad Targonski, Viterbo University chaplain.

Following the breakfast, speakers also included a welcome from Fort McCoy Garrison leadership and briefings from related agencies. Participating community partners include the Fort McCoy Retirement Services Office, TriCare, Fort McCoy’s transition assistance advisor, Military One Source, County veteran service officers, and many others. Additionally, flu shots will be available for attendees through Walgreens.

“This event was open to all military retirees, those transitioning into retirement, and their spouses,” Gimson said.

The ultimate goal of a Retiree Appreciation Day was to bring together military retirees and give them an opportunity to receive some of the most up-to-date information on the benefits they are entitled to with a seminar setting, Gimson said. Attendance to the 2025 Fort McCoy Retiree Appreciation Day was free.

— **Fort McCoy held its 2025 Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) on Sept. 5 and as part of the day’s festivities the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area was opened to the RAD attendees who were in the main event in nearby building 905.**

The area was open for approximately six hours and nearly 100 of the RAD attendees stopped by to see the historical displays and learn more about Fort McCoy’s and the Army’s history.

— **Led by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS), U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy held an Integrated Protection Exercise (IPE) on Sept. 11 at the installation.**

Fort McCoy’s September IPE focused on a natural disaster event. The scenario started with an activation of the Installation Emergency Operations Center along with a call out to action officers to report to the center.

— **Hundreds of military retirees and family members participated in a prayer breakfast Sept. 5, 2025, at the start of the 2025 Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) at Fort McCoy, Wis.**

Attendees received a free breakfast and received a presentation from guest speaker Father Conrad Targonski, university chaplain at Viterbo University in La Crosse, Wis.

During his talk, Targonski talked about pilgrimage and personal experiences.

He talked of one pilgrimage to Camino de Santiago.

“It’s since the 8th century that people would go on pilgrimage to kind of like get their minds set,” Targonski said.. “So I went with another Marine who was actually assigned to go with me because I had a problem getting lost. I drove my sergeant major crazy in Iraq. ... But anyways, I wanted to go on this pilgrimage. It’s the destination. You’re away from everything.

“Pilgrimage is different,” he said. “You go to the pilgrimage and it’s all about the journey. It’s day by day.”

— **The founder of Fort McCoy, formerly Camp McCoy — Maj. Gen. Robert B. McCoy — was honored during a special ceremony Sept. 5 on what would have been his 158th birthday.**

The Maj. Gen. Robert Bruce McCoy Remembrance Ceremony was held at Woodlawn Cemetery in Sparta, Wis., with McCoy family members present as well as students from Sparta Montessori School. The ceremony was led and organized by the 88th Readiness Division and U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy personnel.

Included in the event were a team of four Fort McCoy Soldiers who made up a color guard. Also included were guest speakers who included Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez; Command Sgt. Maj. Douglas Dieckman, 88th Readiness Division command sergeant major; and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, Fort McCoy Garrison command sergeant major.

Chaplain (Maj.) Walter McCall, Fort McCoy Garrison chaplain, then gave the invocation. He was followed by Dieckman who spoke about Maj. Gen. McCoy’s history.

“Today we honor a man whose experiences while serving in the National Guard and the U.S. Army gave him insight into the future of military training and what would be necessary to prepare Soldiers for future conflict,” Dieckman said.

— **Dozens of Soldiers, veterans, civilian workforce members, family members, Wisconsin Challenge Academy cadets, and others lined up in the dark, foggy, early morning hours Sept. 11 to pay honor to the victims of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, on the United States as they participated in the 2025 Fort McCoy 9/11 Memorial Run and Stair Climb.**

The 2.975-mile run/1.34-mile walk started and ended in the parking lot of one of the new four-story barracks at Fort McCoy — the tallest buildings on post. The stair climb, which also was meant to resemble the firefighters climbing the stairs of the World Trade Center, also took place inside the barracks building. Nearly every participant also did the stair climb.

Fort McCoy’s Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) led the coordination. (See YEAR IN REVIEW 2025, Insert Page 7)



Photo by Staff Sgt. Avery Cunningham

(Left to right) Col. Charles W. Wells, the outgoing commander of 181st Multi-Functional Training Brigade; First Army Division East, Lt. Gen. Mark Landes, commander of First Army; and Col. Stewart U. Gast, the incoming commander of the 181st, salute during the playing of the national anthem Aug. 5 during the brigade’s Change of Command Ceremony at Fort McCoy.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Ribas/Army Reserve

**Soldiers with the 363rd Engineer Battalion conduct bridging operations by connecting bay pieces Aug. 7, 2025, delivered by a CH-47 Chinook at Global Strike 2025 during the Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) at Fort McCoy. The CSTX prepares Army Reserve units for deployment by providing realistic, externally evaluated, and collective training scenarios.**



## FORT MCCOY’S 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

# YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

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nation efforts once again. In the early morning darkness, DFMWR Director Scott Abell welcomed the many participants, especially the Fort McCoy Fire Department participants.

“Thank you for the Fort McCoy Fire Department’s presence here today,” Abell said. He also passed the microphone to a Fort McCoy Soldier who gave the invocation to begin the event.

After the invocation, Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez also gave opening comments about remembering what happened 24 years ago.

“Today is the 24th anniversary for an act that changed our nation forever,” Baez said. “And the main reason why we are here is because we are not forgetting the people who lost their lives. They’re not forgotten. We are honoring their life. We are honoring their family. And three points that I’d like to make this morning is, as a nation, we don’t have to wait for the worst moment to come united and be better to each other. That is part of who we are as Americans. That is part of the values that we have. And we don’t have to wait for another 9-11 to come together.

— **Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician Brandon Perron with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department completed the 2025 Fort McCoy 9/11 Memorial Run and Stair Climb wearing his full firefighter suit along with carrying more than 100 pounds of gear.**

This was the second year straight that Perron volunteered his Patriot Day morning to complete the event in a way that memorialized the firefighters and emergency responders from their response on Sept. 11, 2001.

The 2.975-mile run/1.34-mile walk started and ended in the parking lot of one of the new four-story barracks at Fort McCoy — the tallest buildings on post. The stair climb, which also was meant to resemble the firefighters climbing the stairs of the World Trade Center, also took place inside the barracks building.

In 2024, Perron described his reasons for putting himself through such a physically demanding effort.

“It’s to honor the 343 firefighters who perished on 9/11 and those who have perished since because of cancer related issues,” Perron said. “But it’s also just in the totality of the circumstances that everybody who has either fought in the wars following and lost their lives or the civilians who lost their lives. Police officers ... everybody who was involved with 9/11 ... just to honor and respect them for what they’ve gone through and what their families are going through currently.”

— **On Sept. 24, Fort McCoy leaders and representatives with the housing contractor Cadence Communities took to the streets to hold the post’s first “walking town hall” where they met with South Post Housing community members to address concerns and ask questions.**

Participating in the effort were Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez; Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major; Maj. Zachary W. Daugherty, commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters and Headquarters Company; Zach Hynes, Fort McCoy Housing Division chief with the Directorate of Public Works; and others. Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Betty, the 15th Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, also attended the town hall to learn more about Fort McCoy housing.

The first main stop included meeting with family members at a housing area playground. That was followed with several stops at residences to talk with residents about any questions they might have for post leaders about the housing area, and more.

At each stop they received feedback and walked away with information to follow-up on for the residents. Hynes said the overall effort was very productive.

— **Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Betty, the 15th Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, attended “walking town hall” Sept. 24 in South Post Housing at Fort McCoy.**

Betty’s participation was to not lead the town hall, that was done by U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy command staff and personnel. His participation was to learn more about the installation housing area and to hear from Soldiers and families in housing.

At the beginning of the housing town hall, Betty and others received a familiarization of what the housing units look like.

Zach Hynes, Fort McCoy Housing Division chief with the Directorate of Public Works, took the lead to explain what’s in the units and to respond to any questions about the units.

Over the course of nearly an hour, Betty met with many of the housing area residents — both adult and younger — and learned firsthand why many Fort McCoy housing residents have rated this installation’s housing as one of the best in housing satisfaction surveys.

— **The contractor for the \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy has been busy finishing framing and more on one building and is set to soon erect steel framing on a second building as September comes to an end.**

Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy said the project is now 22 percent complete and rising daily. In his Sept. 19 update, Green gave the latest actions.

“Structural steel continued section B. Sleeve rough-in continued section B. Rebar was placed for elevated deck section B. Exterior wall framing continued section A,” Green wrote in the update.

“Elevated slab placements continued sections A & B,” Green stated. “Imbeds spray foam started section A. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in started. Exterior sheeting started in section A. And a truss package arrived on site.”

— **Fort McCoy personnel once again provided updates about the installation’s natural resources-related efforts Aug. 11 during the September 2025 meeting of the Monroe County (Wis.) Natural Resource and Extension Committee.**

As part of Monroe County, Fort McCoy has a part in supporting the committee. The post does so through the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB) as well as the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.

During the August meeting, NRB Endangered Species Biologist Jessup Weichelt served as one of the Fort McCoy representatives where he reviewed recent accomplishments completed by NRB and related Fort McCoy personnel.

Among those accomplishments in natural resources management Weichelt mentioned from August 2025 were:

— **Fort McCoy fisheries personnel conducted base flow, run-off, and monthly phosphorus stream water quality sampling. They also conducted monthly lake oxygen and temperature profiles.** Oxygen levels and temperatures are consistent with late summer surveys, with some lakes showing signs of oxygen deficiencies at deeper depths, although levels are not concerning.

\* Fisheries employees supporting Fort McCoy natural resources efforts also removed 50 meters of invasive brush along Stillwell Creek and placed 26 meters of brush bundles to reduce erosion.

\* Fort McCoy natural resources personnel completed the second draft of the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan and sent copies to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for review.

\* In forestry management, forestry personnel assisted Land Rehabilitation and Management (LRAM) members in identifying nine Oak Wilt treatment sites.

\* Fort McCoy invasive species management personnel stated the weather for August was good for treatments of invasive species on the installation.

— **Fort McCoy’s fourth transient training troops \$27.3 million barracks project, also known as the East Barracks Project, is approaching nearly 70 percent completion, said Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the Army Corps of Engineers at Fort McCoy.**

In his Sept. 12 update, Butts said the contractor, L.S. Black Constructors, were steadily making progress on the project. As of Sept. 12, the project was at 68 percent complete and work was scheduled to be 60 percent finished at this time.

Butts wrote in the update, “Masons continue working on the north and northwest side of the building. Drywall installation continues. Bathroom tile on the first floor continued. Window installation continues.

“Ceiling grid continues to be installed throughout the building. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continues. Drywall finishing and painting continues throughout the building. Parking lot curb and gutter continued. Parking lot concrete paving placement continued,” Butts wrote.

— **Patrick J. Appelman, director of Installation Management Command (IMCOM)-Readiness made an official visit to Fort**



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

**A firefighter with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department, Brandon Perron, participates in a 9/11 Memorial Run & Stair Climb hosted on Sept. 11, 2025.**

McCoy on Sept. 9-10 to interact with the Fort McCoy workforce, meet with Fort McCoy Garrison leaders in the Installation Planning Board (IPB), and more.

This was Appelman’s second visit to Fort McCoy in 2025. As part of this visit, the IMCOM-Readiness director participated in the 2025 Installation Planning Board meeting on Sept. 9.

— **Fort McCoy’s South Barracks Project has been completed with the final inspection for the facility having been completed at the end of September 2025.**

Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Fort McCoy’s South Barracks Project has reached 99 percent complete in his Sept. 12 update about the project.

The contractor for the project, BlindermanPower (Construction), received the notice to proceed with construction on Sept. 26, 2023, and had 780 calendar days to complete the project. Butts said the project was completed on time.

In the Sept. 12 update, Butts also wrote everything that was being finalized.

“Contractor continues final cleaning and working on punch-list items,” Butts wrote in the update. “Exterior site work continues around the USO building. USO temporary parking lot removed. Topsoil elevations were addressed and seeding followed. Parking lot concrete sealant and striping is complete.”

### OCTOBER

— **Work was completed in October 2025 by contractors to improve the guest experience at the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area with the construction of concrete pads for placement of benches, picnic tables, and garbage cans throughout the historic area at Fort McCoy.**

The work was done despite the government shutdown in October because this project was a contracted effort.

Fort McCoy’s Directorate of Public Works (DPW) coordinated the completion of the work with support from the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office, Fort McCoy Garrison leadership, and the Fort McCoy Resource Management Office.

Overall, 14 concrete pads were completed in different sizes throughout the historical area, DPW officials said. Work on the project took approximately two weeks. Fort McCoy Public Affairs officials said the project improved numerous areas of the Commemorative Area to allow for more seating and easier maintenance of the grounds.

— **For years on end, Fort McCoy has had a significant economic impact with the local economies around the installation, particularly in Monroe County, Wis.**

One big contribution to that impact is new construction at the post. Construction dollars counted by the Fort McCoy Plans, Analysis, and Integration Office show to be a key factor and contributor to the installation’s annual economic impact each fiscal year.

Fort McCoy’s total economic impact for fiscal year (FY) 2024 was an estimated \$1.6 billion, Fort McCoy Garrison officials stated in April 2025, which was up from FY 2023’s total impact of \$1.38 billion. That impact is expected to be around the same or higher for FY 2025.

As a matter of fact, since fiscal year (FY) 2019, more than \$310 million has been calculated in new construction of buildings and ranges alone, reports show. Over that same time, more than \$1.47 billion has also been applied to operating costs that included utilities, physical plant maintenance, repair and improvements, other new construction projects, purchases of supplies and services, and salaries for civilian contract personnel working at Fort McCoy.

Projects at Fort McCoy like the current \$27.3 million East Barracks Project, the recently completed \$28.08 million South Barracks Project, and the \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project, are among those projects adding to the economic impact going into FY 2026.

Taking a closer look, following are the year-by-year breakdowns of economic impact numbers for new construction and operating costs at Fort McCoy.

\* FY 2019 — \$27.6 million in new construction of buildings and ranges; operating costs of \$120.56 million.

\* FY 2020: \$50.3 million in new construction of buildings and ranges; operating costs of \$194.4 million.

\* FY 2021: \$39.4 million in new construction of buildings and ranges; operating costs of \$249.88 million.

\* FY 2022: \$42.5 million in new construction of buildings and ranges; operating costs of \$391.46 million.



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

**U.S. Army leaders from Fort McCoy, Wis., as well as community members and leaders participate in the Maj. Gen. Robert Bruce McCoy Remembrance Ceremony on Sept. 5, 2025, in Sparta, Wis. The event was held at Woodlawn Cemetery in Sparta with McCoy family members present as well as students from Sparta Montessori School.**

\* FY 2023: \$58 million in new construction of buildings and ranges; operating costs of \$346 million.

\* FY 2024: \$92.6 million in new construction of buildings and ranges; operating costs of \$170 million.

The FY 2025 contribution will be calculated by early 2026. But as FY 2026 continues, the construction projects continue around the installation, and the economic impact to local communities from those projects also continues.

— **Training operations took place throughout October for service members at Fort McCoy.**

During October 2025, hundreds of troops trained at Fort McCoy for annual training, weekend training, institutional training, and for other military training.

Annually, Fort McCoy has trained around 100,000 troops nearly every year since 1984. National Guard, Army Reserve, active-duty Army, and other service members trained at Fort McCoy during October.

— **Contractors continued working on a new \$27.3 million transient training troops barracks project, known as the Fort McCoy East Barracks Project, throughout October 2025 at Fort McCoy.**

Contractors began in May 2024 getting the site set up for the fourth transient training troops barracks project at Fort McCoy, which was awarded in February 2024 to L.S. Black Constructors, LLC, for approximately \$27.3 million.

L.S. Black Constructors is a familiar name in the barracks construction history at Fort McCoy, having built the first two of the 60,000-square-foot transient training troops barracks on post. They also recently built the new brigade headquarters building located in the same block as the barracks buildings.

The exact contract amount for the project was \$27,287,735. In the award announcement, it states it was “for the construction of the barracks, which will provide housing for enlisted service members undergoing training at the installation.”

— **Contractors also completed work throughout October 2025 for the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy.**

The project description states the plan is to build the two buildings based on the standard layout depicted in the Operational Readiness Training Complex.

The project calls for the construction of two new 48,000-square-foot, four-story Collective Training Officers Quarters buildings.

The contract duration is scheduled for completion in 1,260 calendar days, according to the Army Corps of Engineers.

— **As October arrived at Fort McCoy, the sight of leaves changing from green to the vibrant colors of red, orange, and yellow were seen throughout the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area and Equipment Park.**

The Equipment Park was established in the mid-1990s to complement the Commemorative Area’s historical representation, documentation shows. What began as an initial outdoor display of five pieces of equipment (“macro-artifacts”) increased over time to what is today a display of 70 different items of equipment and vehicles and is still growing.

Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office officials said the park is traditionally open throughout the year between May and September, but every October the park has drive-in access for people to check it out.

— **Other activity at Fort McCoy during October 2025 was limited due to the Fort McCoy Garrison civilian workforce being furloughed during the entire month because of a government shutdown.**

### NOVEMBER

— **Fort McCoy completed another busy year supporting troop training with 109,962 troops training at the installation in fiscal year (FY) 2025.**

The FY 2025 number is more than the 73,991 troops who trained on post during FY 2024 and the 86,090 troops who trained at the installation in FY 2023, said Brooks Lundeen, range officer for the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS).

“The increase in numbers was from the addition of the strength report for units that utilized facilities in cantonment,” Lundeen said. Training support by Fort McCoy included not just ranges and training areas but also use of barracks, food, buildings, and more.

“Overall, a very successful year,” Lundeen said.

DPTMS officials said the training numbers include Army Reserve Soldiers; National Guard service members; and active-duty troops from not just the Army but also other services, such as the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force.

Training statistics also reflect many types of training opportunities that take place at the installation by active- and reserve-component forces and other governmental agencies, according to DPTMS.

During fiscal year 2025, training included battle-assembly (week-end) training; annual training; mobilization; institutional training; and numerous exercises, including a Combat Support Training Exercise, Global Medic, and numerous other training events.

Lundeen said the training numbers were split as 46,047 troops completing annual training, and 63,915 troops completing battle assembly training.

Exercises are counted as annual training, and institutional training is also mixed in, officials said.

— **The Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR)held a community dinner on Nov. 20 that was open to military members and their families as well as government civilian employees.**

The dinner was established as a Thanksgiving buffet-style dinner with turkey, ham, mashed potatoes, gravy, sweet potatoes, stuffing, salad, pie, and drinks.

According to DFMWR, the dinner was free for participants and was paid for by one of DFMWR’s regular sponsors.

DFMWR Director Scott Abell said he was very pleased with the turnout of more than 270 people.

“It was great getting the community together after a stressful period, and to properly kick off the holiday season,” Abell said.

The dinner took place from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Nov. 20 and at times nearly all the seating in McCoy’s Community Center was completely filled.

Military families brought their children, who could be seen coloring pages in one section of the center. Government civilian employees could also be seen with their spouses participating as well.

In the serving line, several leaders served up the dinner to guests, including U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Commander Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez; Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major; Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Canton; Command Sgt. Maj. Jason Kirkman, commandant of the Fort McCoy Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy; and 1st Sgt. Derek Willis and Master Sgt. Brian Weinberger, also with the Fort McCoy NCO Academy.

— **In July, the Wisconsin Challenge Academy, a tenant orga-**

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# FORT MCCOY'S 2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

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## YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

nization at Fort McCoy, welcomed their 55th class of cadets to train in the academy. Since then, the students have been active in all facets of academy training.

By November 2025, class 55 cadets continued in the residential phase until graduation in December. They've been completing all types of training, learning, community participation, and more.

— Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez, with the assistance of the garrison Religious Support Office team, and volunteers from Resource Management Office, cooked and served 50 free hot meals consisting of stewed chicken, steamed broccoli, rice and dessert to Fort McCoy furloughed civilian personnel and their families Nov. 5 from the RSO building.

The event ran from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. with personnel showing up with their families as early as 4 p.m.

All were given the option to pick-up their meal, eat in the RSO Fellowship Hall, or have their meals delivered to their workplace or home.

Many families opted to eat-in with meal organizers.

The meals that were delivered were done so by Garrison Chaplain (Maj.) Walter McCoy to the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) Police Department offices at the DES headquarters as well as the Main Gate.

"That was immediately followed up with a call to Col. Baez expressing gratitude," McCall said.

On the way out the RSO gave grocery bags of dry good items to all attendees in addition to their meals. In the informal after-action review, Baez and the RSO team agreed to doing the event again if the shutdown continued.

— Fort McCoy members took time Nov. 20 to engage with the Tomah (Wis.) Chamber of Commerce during their monthly meeting at a business in Tomah.

Fort McCoy Garrison Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Chad Holder and other representatives from the installation talked and engaged with dozens of members of the chamber.

According to its website at <https://www.tomah-wisconsin.com>, the Tomah Chamber of Commerce welcomes a variety of organizations and businesses to be a part of their group.

"The Tomah Chamber and Visitors Center invites businesses, organizations, and not-for-profit organizations to become a member and grow with the Tomah community," the website states. "We work to create an environment where it is desirable to do business, raise a family, and explore the area. Investing in the chamber is investing in Tomah."

Meeting with chambers of commerce and other civic organizations allows Army leaders like Holder to have direct engagement with community leaders, and more.

— Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major, engaged with the school board of the Tomah (Wis.) School District on Nov. 17 in the Robert Kupper Learning Center in Tomah.

Both leaders discussed installation news as well as other information in the "service to the Tomah community" segment of the board meeting. The participation was part of regular Army community engagement efforts by Fort McCoy.

## DECEMBER

— More than 300 Fort McCoy community members participated in the 2025 Fort McCoy Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 4 at McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy.

Hundreds gathered to celebrate the annual event, which signals the start of the holiday season for the installation.

The event was organized by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR). This year's celebration featured not only the iconic tree lighting but also an array of festive activities, including holiday crafts for children, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and a short play featuring garrison staff.

The ceremony also included remarks from the Garrison Command Team. Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez said welcome to all the hundreds of people in attendance. Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Riddle, garrison command sergeant major, also spoke to the attendees.

Director Scott Abell of the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) said he was happy to see so many people at the event.

"It was wonderful to see the community together enjoying the holiday season," Abell said.

After the tree was lit by the family members of the deployed Soldier, the festivities continued well into the evening with photos from Santa and interactive booths where children and families could create holiday-themed crafts and gifts.

DFMWR Commercial Sponsorship, Advertising Manager and Special Events Coordinator Ashley Sivert described in an after-action report what they did to coordinate and hold the event.

The ... ceremony ... successfully brought together approximately 320 patrons to celebrate the holiday season, supported by 19 sponsors," Sivert wrote. "The event kicked off with a lively themed skit based on 'Elf,' leading to the official lighting

of the Christmas tree, which illuminated the festivities. Attendees enjoyed 16 sponsored booths offering a variety of Christmas crafts, along with activities such as photos with Santa, Santa's Workshop, Outdoor Recreation season pass sales for the ski hill, an Elfie Selfie station, a hot cocoa bar, and several food and drink specials. The event fostered community spirit and joy, and planning for next year's ceremony will begin in early 2026, with an emphasis on enhancing activities and community involvement."

"The staff went above and beyond to deliver a great family event," Abell added.

— Approximately 156 people took part in a special holiday meal served by leaders of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy in Dining Facility 1362 on Dec. 4 at Fort McCoy.

The meal, organized by the Fort McCoy food service team aligned with the Fort McCoy Logistics Readiness Center, included a wide variety of menu items to feed the military and civilian guests of the meal.

The menu included roast turkey, pit ham, sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, savory dressing, corn on the cob, green beans, deviled eggs, cranberry sauce, turkey gravy, dinner rolls, coleslaw, salad bar, apple pie, pumpkin pie, variety of ice cream treats, chips, raisins, dried fruit, snack mixes, and a special decorated cake with a holiday theme.

The Fort McCoy food service team includes the Food Program Management Office and the LRC Subsistence Supply Management Office (SSMO); Southern Premier Foodservice Management; and food suppliers.

Jim Gouker with the Fort McCoy Food Program Management Office said he was happy with the attendance at the event.

"The turnout was awesome," Gouker said. "Very glad to have so many personnel that could enjoy a special meal."

Serving the food was Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez; Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Chad Holder; and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major.

The work continues the strong effort by the food service team, Gouker said.

— Maj. Gen. Joseph A. Ricciardi, commanding general of the 88th Readiness Division and Fort McCoy's senior commander, gave a presentation Dec. 2 for a Lunch & Learn event for the Fort McCoy military force and civilian workforce.

The event was the first Lunch & Learn coordinated by the U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters and Headquarters Company since earlier in 2025.

The major general spoke significantly on topics such as training, and Fort McCoy being a "training center of excellence."

He also reviewed commander priorities, such as those from Lt. Gen. Robert D. Harter, 35th Chief of Army Reserve and 10th Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command.

The 88th RD leader talked of how Lt. Gen. Harter is challenging members of the Army Reserve and elsewhere to come up with ideas, and more, to make the Army better.

— Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, senior enlisted leader for U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy and another installation member participated in the Dec. 10 meeting of the Sparta (Wis.) Area Chamber of Commerce as post representatives.

During the meeting, the Fort McCoy representatives provided an update about news at the installation as well as answered questions from the chamber leaders and members.

— Fort McCoy personnel once again provided updates about the installation's natural resources-related efforts Dec. 8 during the December 2025 meeting of the Monroe County (Wis.) Natural Resource and Extension Committee.

As part of Monroe County, Fort McCoy has a part in supporting the committee. The post does so through the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB) as well as the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.

During the December meeting, NRB Fisheries Biologist Steve Rood served as one of the Fort McCoy representatives where he reviewed recent accomplishments completed by NRB and related Fort McCoy personnel.

Among those accomplishments in natural resources management Rood mentioned from November 2025 were:

\* In fisheries at Fort McCoy, personnel collected water samples from one runoff event in November. Conducted base flow water sampling for baseline monitoring.

\* Forestry personnel also participated in a wildland fire working group's spring planning meeting with the U.S. Forest Service.

\* In invasive species management, with treatments, personnel treated 102.5 acres and surveyed 266.4 acres.

\* Gun-deer season statistics: 313 total deer harvested. There were 167 Chronic Wasting Disease samples (54 percent of harvest) taken. Permit quota for 2025 was 1,800. Permits issued were 1,798. Permits purchased were 1,364. Bonus antlerless tag



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Work is shown Oct. 15, 2025, where contractors prepared areas of the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area for installation of concrete pads for placement of benches, picnic tables, and garbage cans throughout the historic area at Fort McCoy, Wis. The project improved numerous areas of the Commemorative Area to allow for more seating and easier maintenance of the grounds.

quota was 450 tags. Bonus antlerless tags issued were 450 tags. Bonus antlerless tags purchased were 244.

— Fort McCoy military members and their families were treated to 106 free Christmas trees Dec. 5 courtesy of the Trees for Troops effort as a FedEx truck delivered the trees to McCoy's Community Center at the installation.

Staff with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation began passing out the trees on Dec. 6 during events taking place at McCoy's Community Center.

— The \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy is nearly 35 percent complete, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The project includes two buildings being constructed in a sizeable construction space of the installation's 1600 block of the cantonment area. Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy said the project is now 33 percent complete and rising daily. In his Nov. 21 update, Green gave the latest actions.

"In the west building, exterior wall framing continued. Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continued. Exterior sheeting continued," Green wrote. "Fluid applied air barrier continued. Interior spray foam continued. Roofing continued. Interior rough-in framing continued. Masonry continued at southside section A."

"At the east building ... structural steel erection continued for section A," he wrote. "Winterization continues. Exterior stud framing continued in section A. Third deck section A concrete placed. Structural steel started in section B."

— Contractors working on Fort McCoy's East Barracks Project were greeted on their jobsite Dec. 1 with a healthy amount of snow on the ground after the area received just under a foot of snow during the Thanksgiving weekend, yet they continue to make strides in completing the project.

In his Nov. 14 update, Butts said the contractor, L.S. Black Constructors, was steadily making progress on the project. And as of Nov. 14, the project was at 88 percent complete, and work was scheduled to be 75 percent finished at this time.

Butts wrote in the update, "Masons were finishing up working on the east side of the building. Bathroom tile on the third and fourth floors continued. Floor tile setting continued. Ceiling grid continues to be installed throughout the building."

— All of the garrison staff moved out of building 100 at Fort McCoy in late September to make way for a full renovation of the building that has been the U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters for decades.

Engineering Division Chief Dan Coburn with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works said in December the renovation construction began on Oct. 1 and continues now.

The contract to complete the renovation was awarded to R.J. Jurovski Construction, headquartered in Whitehall, Wis., for \$5.4 million.

"It is a complete gut and repair of the entire facility," Coburn said. "Construction ... is expected to take one year."

— Judy and Scott Gill of Prairie du Chien, Wis., made a special visit to Fort McCoy on Dec. 2 to deliver 26 vintage photos of Army activities around then-Camp McCoy during World War II and before.

Judy first contacted the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office by email on Nov. 17 asking if she could donate some photos.

"Is there a historical museum at Ft McCoy?" Judy wrote in the email. "I have a number of photos from the 1940s that were taken at Fort McCoy that I'd like to donate. Please let me know if you are interested."

And the interest was definitely there. Public Affairs Specialist Melissa Dubois responded to the Gill email and set up a date and time to have the Gills visit the Fort McCoy History Center to drop off the 26 unique black-and-white photos.

Judy explained how she received the photos.

"I was talking to a woman who said she had a bunch of pictures from Camp McCoy from the 1940s, and she didn't know what to do with them," Judy said.

Judy made the connection to get them to Fort McCoy. "I enjoy finding places for these things to go," she said. The photos, she said, she believes originated from a collection in McGregor, Iowa.

A few photos predate World War II. For example, there's three photos that show the old Camp

McCoy headquarters, guard house, and officer's mess of the "Old Camp" of the installation that was located on South Post of present-day Fort McCoy. The photos are from 1940.

— Wisconsin's and Fort McCoy's 2025 nine-day gun-deer season took place Nov. 22 to 30, and hunters saw some warmer weather to start the season and ended the season seeing 313 deer harvested.

There were 167 Chronic Wasting Disease samples (54 percent of harvest) taken, said said Wildlife Program Manager and Biologist Kevin Luepke with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch. Permit quota for 2025 was 1,800. Permits issued were 1,798. Permits purchased were 1,364. Bonus antlerless tag quota was 450 tags. Bonus antlerless tags issued were 450 tags. Bonus antlerless tags purchased were 244.

Also, Fort McCoy Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Rules and Regulations (Fort McCoy Regulation 420-29) were signed and approved on Nov. 17, just before the season. The regulations were distributed and made available to the public.

Luepke said overall the deer herd looked to be in good condition heading into the season.

"There (were) no new cases of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease ... reported or found this fall," Luepke said. "In addition, Fort McCoy has only had the one positive Chronic Wasting Disease case from the 2024 Archery season. Through the 2024 gun-deer season, when a majority of the CWD sampling occurs, no additional CWD positive results were received."

"During the fall of 2025, there were no additional CWD positive results received from the youth gun-deer, gun-deer for hunters with disabilities, or early archery seasons," Luepke said.

— Fort McCoy's Directorate of Public Works (DPW) and Xcel Energy continue to work together to finish the process of changing the electrical grid on post from a Delta Electrical System to a Wye Electrical System, Fort McCoy DPW officials said.

Work on this switchover has been ongoing since 2022, officials said, and during November and December 2025, workers continued to work on the project.

Wye is a three-phase electrical system that uses a wire for each electrical leg and a separate neutral wire.

Delta is also a three-phase but uses one of the legs as the neutral, so it only has three wires. Work will continue throughout the year.

— Leaders with Fort McCoy Garrison and installation agencies met Dec. 11, 2025, with community leaders and workforce professionals in Sparta, Wis., during the Fort McCoy Area Workforce Collaborative Meeting.

The meeting brought together people who are working to improve employment opportunities in the region, including at Fort McCoy. Among those attending the meeting were Maj. Zachary Daugherty, commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters and Headquarters Company; and representatives from several other post agencies to include Army Community Service, Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office, and Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

— Fort McCoy saw its first significant snow of the winter season in late November, and then continued to see snowfall throughout December, including a significant snow event Dec. 28-29 which has kept the Fort McCoy snow-removal team busy.

Equipment operators with the Fort McCoy snow removal contractor, Kaiyuh Services LLC of Anchorage, Alaska, were busy clearing the new snow Dec. 28 and 29 at Fort McCoy. Fort McCoy also held a late reporting of personnel on Dec. 29 due to deteriorating driving conditions.

Fort McCoy's motto is to be the "Total Force Training Center." Located in the heart of the upper Midwest, Fort McCoy is the only U.S. Army installation in Wisconsin. The installation has provided support and facilities for the field and classroom training of more than 100,000 military personnel from all services nearly every year since 1984.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>, on Facebook by searching "ftmccoy," on Flickr at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi/>, and on X (formerly Twitter) by searching "usagmccoy." Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set "Fort McCoy" or another installation as your preferred base.



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy leaders serve guests Dec. 4, 2025, in Dining Facility 1362 during a special holiday meal for installation personnel at Fort McCoy. More than 150 people took part in the event that coincides with the start of the holiday season at Fort McCoy.



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Scenes from the 2025 Fort McCoy Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony are shown Dec. 4, 2025, at McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy. Hundreds of community members participated.



## NEWS

# 2025 one of busiest years on record for large construction projects at Fort McCoy

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Throughout most of 2025, Fort McCoy has had at least three large construction projects dominating the new military construction on the post — injecting millions of dollars into the local economy while at the same time transforming the 1600 block of the installation's cantonment area.

Those three projects include the \$28.08 million South Barracks Project, \$27.3 million East Barracks Project, and the \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project. Combined this ongoing work made for some of the busiest construction operations on post perhaps since the cantonment area was built in 1942.

## South Barracks Project

With the South Barracks Project, which was completed in October 2025, the contractor for the project, BlindermanPower (Construction), received the notice to proceed with construction on Sept. 26, 2023, and had 780 calendar days to complete the project.

The project required building a four-story, 60,000-square-foot barracks that could house 400 people, according to the project's specifications. Two other barracks of the same specifications were already built in the same block at the installation since 2019.

Nathan Butts with the Resident Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Fort McCoy's South Barracks Project was essentially complete in his Sept. 12, 2025, update about the project. In the Sept. 12 update, Butts also wrote everything that was being finalized.

"Contractor continues final cleaning and working on punch-list items," Butts wrote in the update. "Exterior site work continues around the USO building. USO temporary parking lot removed. Top-soil elevations were addressed and seeding followed. Parking lot concrete sealant and striping is complete."

The building was then turned over to Fort McCoy's Directorate of Public Works where eventually it will be opened for troops to start using it during 2026.

## East Barracks Project

Contractors working on Fort McCoy's East Barracks Project were greeted with a healthy amount of snow on the ground as December began after the area received just under a foot of snow during the Thanksgiving weekend.

In his Dec. 19, 2025, update, Butts said the contractor, L.S. Black Constructors, was steadily making progress on the project. And as of Dec. 19, the project was at 90 percent complete, and work was scheduled to be 86 percent finished at this time.

Butts wrote in the update, "Testing, adjusting, and balancing (of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) continues. Bathroom shower and toilet partition installation continued. Floor tile setting continued, waxing preparation continued. Ceiling tile installation continued. "Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continued on all floors," he wrote. "Drywall painting continues throughout the building."

Since its initial construction phase in May 2024, construction of this barracks have been nonstop by the contractor who was awarded the project in February 2024. The exact contract amount for the project when it was awarded was \$27,287,735.

As the workers with L.S. Black Constructors work on this project, they can look over to the two other barracks they constructed in the same block. They are a familiar name in the construction history at Fort McCoy, having not only built the first two of the 60,000-square-foot transient training troops barracks, but they also built the new brigade headquarters building located in the same block as the barracks buildings.

The contract duration is scheduled for completion in 780 calendar days, which makes the current contract completion date as April 24, 2026. From the building description, when complete, the building will be able to house up to 400 people like the other completed barracks in the same block. According to the scope of work, it's like the South Barracks Project and going to be "made of permanent construction with reinforced concrete foundations; concrete floor slabs; structural steel frames; steel stud infill; masonry veneer walls; prefinished standing seam metal roofing; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning capabilities; plumbing; mechanical systems; and electrical systems. Supporting facilities include land clearing, concrete sidewalk paving, general site improvements, and utility connections."

## Collective Training Officers Quarters Project

December 2025 saw a fair amount of extreme cold weather and snow, but the contractors for the \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy kept building and moving forward.

On Nov. 21, the project was 33 percent complete, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As of Dec. 19, that progress increased to 38 percent completed.

The project includes two buildings being constructed in a sizeable construction space of the installation's 1600 block of the cantonment area. On the west building, the contractor has been busy finishing framing so they can then fully cover the building. On the east building, more of the exterior walls were receiving brick placement.

The contractor for the project, BlindermanPower (Construction), which has also completed another major project at Fort McCoy — the fiscal year-2022 funded South Barracks Project, was awarded a contract totaling \$55,759,100, according to the Army Corps of Engineers. The notice to proceed was acknowledged on July 19, 2024. The contract duration is scheduled for completion in 1,260 calendar days.

In 2024, for numerous months, actual full construction of the new buildings had to wait for another contractor to move five World War II-era barracks buildings. Those are destined for a separate future project, Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works (DPW) officials said.

The project description in the contract states the plan is to build the two buildings based on the standard layout depicted in the Operational Readiness Training Complex.

"This facility is required to replace antiquated World War II-era wood transient training officer quarters currently being utilized to train Soldiers during major exercises, annual training, battle assembly, and mobilization at Fort McCoy," the description states. "This facility will be designed with the ability to be winterized or deactivated during the winter months."

Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy said with the project now being 38 percent complete, the contractor hasn't let weather slow them down.

In his Dec. 19 update, Green gave the latest actions.

"In the west building, exterior wall framing continued," Green wrote in the update. "Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough-in continued. Interior and exterior spray foam continued. Interior rough-in framing and sheet rocking continued. Masonry continued on the west side section. Fluid applied air barrier completed. Standing seam roof panels staged."

"In the east building, structural steel erection continued for section B," Green wrote. "Winterization continues. Exterior stud framing continued in section A and B. Interior stairs section A concrete placed. Exterior spray foam started on structural steel in-fills."

The project description, also as stated in previous news articles, gives more information about how the project will continue to grow. The contract requirements also show that work includes building a standing seam metal roof over rigid insulation on steel deck on structural trusses; using utility brick veneer over rigid insulation on steel studs with exterior glass mat gypsum sheathing; building a concrete floor on metal deck and on-grade; installing and elevator, aluminum doors and windows, gypsum board and metal frame partitions, steel door frames and steel doors, and acoustical ceilings; installing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems; completing plumbing, security, and electrical systems; and more.

## Other work

During 2025, besides the three major Army Corps of Engineers-managed projects, smaller construction/infrastructure projects also took place.

All of the garrison staff moved out of building 100 at Fort McCoy



The construction area for a new \$28.08 million barracks building is shown March 12, 2025, at Fort McCoy, Wis., as progress on the facility continued. The contractor for the project, BlindermanPower (Construction), received the notice to proceed with construction on Sept. 26, 2023, and had 780 calendar days to complete the project. This project was managed by the Army Corps of Engineers and as of the end of September 2025 the project was complete. At this phase in March 2025, it was 75 percent complete.



Contractors work on the \$27.3 million transient training troops barracks project, known as the Fort McCoy East Barracks Project, on July 7, 2025, at Fort McCoy. Contractors began in May 2024 getting the site set up for the fourth transient training troops barracks project at Fort McCoy, which was awarded in February 2024 to L.S. Black Constructors. L.S. Black Constructors is a familiar name in the barracks construction history at Fort McCoy, having built the first two of the 60,000-square-foot transient training troops barracks on post. At the end of 2025, this project passed 90 percent completion.



Contractors complete work July 22, 2025, for the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy. The project description states the plan is to build the two buildings based on the standard layout depicted in the Operational Readiness Training Complex. The project calls for the construction of two new 48,000-square-foot, four-story Collective Training Officers Quarters buildings. The contract duration is scheduled for completion in 1,260 calendar days. As of the end of 2025 the project was more than 40 percent completed.

in late September 2025 to make way for a full renovation of the building that has been the U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters for decades.

DPW Engineering Division Chief Dan Coburn said renovation construction began on Oct. 1 and continues now. The contract to complete the renovation was awarded to R.J. Jurowski Construction, headquartered in Whitehall, Wis., for \$5.4 million.

"It is a complete gut and repair of the entire facility," Coburn said. "Construction ... is expected to take one year."

Also, workers with the installation grounds contractor, Kaiyuh Services LLC, completed work to clear out ditches Sept. 25, 2025, at Fort McCoy. The contractor also completed similar work previously throughout the year and will continue to update areas, according to Fort McCoy DPW officials.

And throughout the year, dozens of troop projects were completed by Army engineer units on post. One of the biggest was the completion of a three-years-long sidewalk project on the cantonment area.

Soldiers with the 279th Engineer Utilities Detachment, an Army Reserve unit out of Weldon Spring, Mo., worked on a troop project replacing broken sidewalk sections on J Street during their annual training with the 78th Training Division's Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) 25-02 in August 2025 at Fort McCoy.

The 279th Soldiers worked for several days to prepare the area as well as manage the concrete pours to set in the new sidewalk. Through this work, engineer troops get the training they need, and the installation benefits from the work they do to improve Fort McCoy training ranges and quality-of-life programs, post officials said.

This was one of many projects the 279th Soldiers participated in. On a Facebook post for the 279th at <https://www.facebook.com/279EUD/posts/pfbid025m3hJBeBz4JQxvFJhDxcpv9HvE-JAi2rbbxmjxFLcGSCoERBq2yY2uUKMnV5CnAfQAL>, it states the Soldiers did well.

"The 279th Engineer Utility Detachment put their skills to work during CSTX 25-02, building a new sidewalk to improve accessibility and infrastructure," the post states. "Mission complete, one concrete step at a time!"

## What does it all mean?

Construction work, especially on two of the 1600 block projects, will continue into 2026. However, looking back at 2025, it shows a

continuing effort by the Army to invest in Fort McCoy, contributions to the local economic impact are significant, and it attracts more troops to train at Fort McCoy.

For example, Fort McCoy's total economic impact for fiscal year (FY) 2024 was an estimated \$1.6 billion, Fort McCoy Garrison officials announced, which was up from FY 2023's total impact of \$1.38 billion. The data was compiled by Fort McCoy's Plans, Analysis and Integration Office.

FY 2024 operating costs of \$170 million included utilities, physical plant maintenance, repair and improvements, new construction projects, purchases of supplies and services, as well as salaries for civilian contract personnel working at Fort McCoy.

During FY 2025, also, Fort McCoy completed another busy year supporting troop training with 109,962 troops training at the installation in fiscal year.

The FY 2025 number is more than the 73,991 troops who trained on post during FY 2024 and the 86,090 troops who trained at the installation in FY 2023, said Brooks Lundeen, range officer for the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security.

"The increase in numbers was from the addition of the strength report for units that utilized facilities in cantonment," Lundeen said.

Training support by Fort McCoy included not just ranges and training areas but also use of barracks, food, buildings, and more. "Overall, a very successful year," Lundeen said.

Post leaders can see a future of strong continued training operations on post and continued improvements of installation training areas, facilities, and infrastructure. Calendar year 2025 was another positive year in contributing to those areas, officials said.

Fort McCoy's motto is to be the "Total Force Training Center."

Located in the heart of the upper Midwest, Fort McCoy is the only U.S. Army installation in Wisconsin. The installation has provided support and facilities for the field and classroom training of more than 100,000 military personnel from all services nearly every year since 1984. Learn more about Fort McCoy online at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>, on Facebook by searching "ftmccoy," on Flickr at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi>, and on X (formerly Twitter) by searching "usagmccoy."

Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set "Fort McCoy" or another installation as your preferred base.

Fort McCoy is also part of Army's Installation Management Command where "We Are The Army's Home."



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BENEFITS BRIEFING

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE'S QUARTERLY

Do you have questions or concerns regarding post Military benefits & submitting VA disability claims? Do you have Tricare questions or concerns? Do you have questions about your dental coverage through United Concordia? If so, these briefings are for you!

2026 DATES:  
Jan 27 Apr 28  
Jul 28 Oct 27  
10 am - 12 pm  
Army Community Service (R2111)

TO REGISTER, call 502-898-2359 or email jesse.k.ogundu.civ@army.mil

SOLDIERS, SPOUSES, RETIREEES, AND FAMILY MEMBERS ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND. All events are open to Military, Retirees, Civilian workforce, Family Members and registered Fort McCoy Volunteers, unless otherwise stated. Expenses must include both dependent and dependent spouse. For information on attending, please contact the appropriate office. All events are subject to change without notice.

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502-898-3517 @FortMcCoyMWR

**CIF inventory in December**

The Fort McCoy Central Issue Facility (CIF), building 780, will be closed from Dec. 8-19 for a 100 percent inventory as mandated by Army regulations. All emergency requests for CIF support must be approved through the CIF Property Book Officer Thomas Lovgren by calling 502-898-5275 or 608-633-2757.

**Next issue of The Real McCoy**

The February 2026 edition of The Real McCoy will be published Feb. 20, 2026. The deadline for submissions or article ideas is Feb. 18, 2026.

If your unit is at Fort McCoy for training, you have some award-winning people, or if you have something newsworthy, please pass it along to the newspaper staff. For more information, call 502-898-4128.

Dining Facilities

Other Dining

Building 1672 operates April-September, Building 1362 operates October-March - Offers full meal service

- Military members, military family members, and Department of Defense (DOD) civilians on official orders for temporary duty training may use dining facilities.

- DOD civilians working on Fort McCoy and retired military personnel may use dining facilities when MWR facilities are not open.

- Units must coordinate through the Food Program Management Office at 502-898-6518/4739.

Open Hours  
Breakfast: 6-8 a.m.  
Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Dinner: 5-6:30 p.m.

Rates per meal  
Breakfast - \$4.40  
Lunch - \$7.10  
Dinner: \$6.10

McCoy's Community Center: Building 1571. Catering/administration, call 502-898-2065. Building 1571. Open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tues.-Fri. and 4-10 p.m. Sat. Call 502-898-7060.

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 502-898-4343.

Specialty Express Food Court: Building 1538. Open 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Limited seating available. Delivery available to South Post and in cantonment area. Call 608-269-5615, ext. 303.

Whitetail Ridge Chalet/Ten Point Pub: Open during regular ski area hours. Call 502-898-3517.

Recreation

Automotive Skills Center: Building 1763. Open 1-9 p.m. Thur.-Fri. and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat.-Sun. Call 502-898-3013.

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS): Call 502-898-3200.

iSportsman: Portal for outdoor recreational activities; registration and check-in required. Register, apply for permits, and sign in or out of recreation areas at <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>.

McCoy's Community Center: Building 1571. Offers books, arcade, gaming area, and bowling. Open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tues.-Fri. and 4-10 p.m. Sat. (Bar, food, bowling). Call 502-898-7060.

Bowling Center: Open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tues.-Fri. and 4-10 p.m. Sat.

Leisure Travel Services Office: Open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 502-898-3011.

Pine View Campground/Recreational Equipment Checkout Center: Campground opens May 1. Building 8053. Call 502-898-2619/3517.

Recreation Accommodations: Open 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tues.-Fri. Mon. by appointment only. Call 502-898-2029.

Rumpel Fitness Center: Building 1122. Open 5 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Fri. and 6 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat.-Sun. 24/7 access available. Call 502-898-2290. Use designated parking areas.

Sportsman's Range: Closed for the season. Call 502-898-9162 for information.

Tactics Paintball/Laser Tag: By appointment only; 2-day notice required. Call 502-898-3517.

Whitetail Ridge Ski Area: Closed for Season. Call 502-898-4498 or 502-898-3517 for more information.

Services

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

Car Rentals (Enterprise): Information 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 502-898-4161.

Commissary: Building 1537. Open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon.-Sat. Call 414-977-5332.

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 502-898-2474.

CWT (Carlson Wagonlit Travel) SatoTravel: Building 2180. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. No walk-ins. Call 502-898-2370, 608-269-4560, or 800-927-6343.

Education/Learning Center: Building 50, room 123. Open 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon.-Fri. No walk-ins. Email daniel.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 502-898-3106/3107 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 2187. Open 8-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3:30 p.m. Mon.-Wed. and Fri. and 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3:30 p.m. Thur. Call 502-898-4563.

IHG Army Hotels: Building 51. Open 24/7. Call 502-898-2107 or 877-711-TEAM (8326).

Installation Legal Office: Building 2171. Call 502-898-2165.

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 502-898-3800 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.

facilities services

This schedule is projected through Jan. 14, 2026. Hours of operation and services can change frequently. Call facilities to verify hours before traveling.

**Bold, italic typeface** indicates a change since the last publication.

In-/Out-processing: 502-898-4822. Personnel Automations: 502-898-4842. Reassignments: 502-898-4746. Records Update: 502-898-5677. Centralized Promotions: 502-898-5677.

Multimedia/Visual Information: Building 2113. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. DA/command photos are by appointment only. Schedule at <https://ivos.army.mil> or call 502-898-4520.

Official Mail Distribution Center: Building 1009 (by Gate 20). Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 502-898-3205.

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

Permit Sales: Building 2168. Hunting, fishing, and firewood permits. Open 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Check <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net> for updates. Call 502-898-3337.

Personal Property Processing Office: Building 200. Open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Call 502-898-3060, fax: 502-898-5634, email: usarmy.mccoymasc.mbx.lrc-pppo@mail.mil.

Retirement Services Office: Building 2187. Open 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 502-898-3716.

R.I.A. Credit Union: Building 1501. Open 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Mon.-Fri. and 2-4 p.m. Tues. and Thurs. ATMs are located in building 1501 (available 24/7); McCoy's, building 1571; Exchange, building 1538; and IHG Army Hotels, building 51 (available 24/7). Call 502-898-2171.

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 502-898-4343. 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 502-898-7956.

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 502-898-2266. See ID/DEERS section for its hours.

Family Support  
Army Community Service: Building 2111. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 502-898-3505.  
Army Substance Abuse Program: Building 1344. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 502-898-2441.

Child Development Center: Building 1796. Open: M-F: 6:30 am - 5:15 pm. Call: 502-898-2238. Childcare requests should be made at <https://public.militarychildcare.csd.disa.mil/mcc-central/mcchome>.

Housing Office: Building 6158. Open 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Family Housing, Single Soldier Housing, and referral services. Self-Help Warehouse open noon-3:30 p.m. Wed. and 8 a.m.-noon Fri. Call 502-898-2804.

Military Family Life Counseling: Building 2111. MFLCs can provide short-term, nonmedical counseling at no cost and augment existing military support programs. Services can be provided on or off post. Call 352-598-4972 or 352-801-2742 or email stojalowskyj@magellanhealth.com and meyerjt@magellanhealth.com.

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.

Family Time

FAMILY VALENTINE CARD WORKSHOP

February 7, 2026 | 9 am\* - 12 pm

\*EFMP Families are welcome to come at 8 am for an early start

Spend time as a Family making Valentine's Day Cards!

Details

- All materials supplied
- Class sizes is limited
- Pre-registration required
- Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult

Call Army Community Service to register at 502-898-6712 or email [lorie.l.retzlaff.civ@army.mil](mailto:lorie.l.retzlaff.civ@army.mil)

Register by February 4, 2026.

Class held at 2161 South J Street.

ACS

U.S. ARMY

EFMP

Exceptional Family Member Program

ACS events are open to Military, Retirees, Civilian workforce, Family Members and registered Fort McCoy Volunteers, unless otherwise stated. For information on upcoming training opportunities through ACS, please go to <http://mccoymarmwr.com> and click on Calendar.

mccoymarmwr.com | 502-898-3505

Worship

Catholic: Chapel 10, building 1759. 9:15 a.m. Sun. Services also available through Facebook Live at <https://www.facebook.com/FtMcCoyRSC>. Call 502-898-3528.

Protestant: Building 50. 11:30 a.m. Sun. Services also available through Facebook Live at <https://www.facebook.com/FtMcCoyRSC>. Call 502-898-3528.

All faiths, self-worship: Sun. Building 2672, 10 a.m.-3p.m.

Fellowship: Sun. Building 2675, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Other faiths in the local area: Please call the RSO office at 502-898-3528 or check our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FtMcCoyRSC>.

Counseling: Call the on-call duty chaplain at 608-630-6073.

Organizations

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), Local 1882: Call 502-898-1882.

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, 10th Ave. For more information or to volunteer, call 414-477-7279 or email [esokol@uso.org](mailto:esokol@uso.org).


Warrant Officers Association, Chapter 0317: For more information email [usawomccoy@outlook.com](mailto:usawomccoy@outlook.com).

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GIANT VOICE EMERGENCY-NOTIFICATION SIGNALS			
CONDITION	IF YOU HEAR	THIS INDICATES	INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS
Natural Disaster	3- to 5-minute steady tone or voice announcement	Disaster imminent or in progress. Examples: Tornado, flash flood, hazardous-materials release, wildfire.	Be alert. Ensure all personnel are warned. Take cover by evacuating to a safe location or sheltering in place. Notify supervisor of location. Tune in to local radio or TV stations for emergency information.
Attack	30-sec. to 5-min. wavering tone or voice announcement	Attack imminent or in progress. Examples: Vehicle bomb, terrorist action, release of biological or radioactive materials.	Be alert. Ensure all personnel are warned. Implement force-protection condition (FPCON) procedures as indicated. Take cover by evacuating to a safe location or sheltering in place. Notify supervisor of location.
All Clear	Voice announcement	Immediate threat from disaster or attack is over.	Be alert for secondary hazards. Account for all personnel. Check building. Await instructions on FPCON level. Report fires, injuries and other hazards.

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The Real McCoy

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Editorial Content .....502-898-4128

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

**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 502-898-2266.



# THIS MONTH IN FORT MCCOY HISTORY

Fort McCoy, Wis., was established in 1909. Here is a look back at some installation history from December 2025 and back.

## 80 Years Ago — January 1946

**FROM THE JAN. 4, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Tanker saved wounded colonel's life* — Kenoshan wins Silver Star Medal (By Newspaper Staff) — For giving first aid to the colonel of his battalion under heavy mortar and artillery fire and dragging the wounded officer to safety, Pfc. Adam Bowman, Kenosha, Wis., who was discharged here Sunday, received the Silver Star Medal.

In action with the 716th Tank Battalion in Luzon, P.I. Bowman was fighting from his disabled tank when his colonel was wounded. Acting without hesitation, Bowman gave the officer first aid and carried him to cover.

In 18 months overseas, Bowman served on at Luzon, on Manila, Hollandia, Panay, and Mindanao. He trained at Camp Chaffee, Ark., and Camp Howell, Texas, before going overseas.

Commenting on the speed with which he was processed through the McCoy Separation Center, Bowman said. "This is the best camp I've been in. I was fed well and treated well."

He intends to return to his former occupation as a bartender in Kenosha.

**FROM THE JAN. 4, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Record sale seen here Jan. 5-12 by Malenky* (By Newspaper Staff) — A surplus property sale of new and used plumbing, hardware, electrical, automotive parts, construction and miscellaneous material will be open to the general public in addition to military and civilian personnel assigned to Camp McCoy from 8 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 5 through 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12, Brig. Gen. John K. Rice, commanding general, announced.

Anyone interested in purchasing from the large quantity of serviceable property may inspect the material at salvage warehouse, Bldg. 2133. Purchase will be on a cash and carry basis through Capt. Louis Malenky, salvage and redistribution officer.

**FROM THE JAN. 11, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *McCoy Transport Group speeds thousands of GIs to destinations daily* (By Newspaper Staff) — One of the finest post transportation systems in the Army is found at Camp McCoy where thousands of men are speeded to their destinations daily under the capable supervision of Capt. James D. Littlewood, transportation officer, and his crew of 500 workers, including military and civilian personnel.

Working on a 24-hour schedule, seven days per week, efficient service is given through the coordination of the Motor Pool and Convoy section, under the direction of Lt. A. Brown; the freight office manned by Lt. Elmer Ambrose; baggage department supervised by Lt. O.M. McCombs; and passenger branch service, directed by Lt. C.P. Wells.

In connection, service is given to destination and camp locations by means of commercial vehicles and intracamp busses. By consolidating the two separation units for the final phase of Army life, the veterans, here for separation, meet in the area near the transportation ticket office for clothing issue, and visits to the finance office, theater no. 5 for the final separation ceremonies, and to the ticket office for transportation to the depot.

Acting as a liaison between the separatees and the railroads, the transportation office is able to arrange speedy service for arrivals on the 15 trains that pass through Camp McCoy daily. These include eight eastbound trains and seven going west to the principal gateways, including Minneapolis and Saint Paul, Minn., Milwaukee, Wis.; and Chicago, Ill.

The bus system, including the semi-shuttling buses that run all day to and from the railroad ticket office, handles an average of 6,000 or 7,000 separatees weekly who are leaving for their homes or other destinations. The incoming group of men, from July through December, is estimated as over 200,000.

The intracamp bus system, handling an average of 68,000 passengers weekly, has a four-bus system that makes three runs per hour, leaving the depot on J Street near 11th Street on the

## Tanker Saved Wounded Colonel's Life

### Kenoshan Wins Silver Star Medal

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Friday, January 4, 1946 — THE REAL MCCOY — 5

U.S. Army Historical Photos

This is a news clipping from the Jan. 4, 1946, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper at then-Camp McCoy.

hour, 20 minutes after the hour, and 20 minutes before the hour.

**FROM THE JAN. 18, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Legion of Merit awarded former Camp McCoy CO* (By Newspaper Staff) — Col. George M. MacMullin, former Camp McCoy commanding officer, has been awarded the Legion of Merit it was learned here this week.

Col. MacMullin, who is now in the Philippines, guided Camp McCoy through its war years to national fame as a training center. He assumed command here June 17, 1942, and was commander until June 15, 1945. While awaiting his present assignment he served as deputy commander until fall.

Col. MacMullin's citation follows:

"By direction of the president under the provision of the act of Congress approved 20 July 1942 (Sec. 3 War Department Bulletin 40, 1942) and Executive Order 9260, 29 Oct. 1942 (Sec. 1 War Department Bulletin 54, 1942) and pursuant to authority delegated to the commanding general Army Service Forces in War Department memorandum 19 Sept. 1945, the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious conduct and performance of outstanding services during the periods indicated was awarded by Headquarters Army Service Forces to the following officer — Col. George M. MacMullin — June 1942 — June 1945."

**FROM THE JAN. 25, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Release Siegfried Line vet earns Silver Star Award* (By Newspaper Staff) — A veteran of the initial attack on the Siegfried Line, Sgt. Norbert Guindon, 20, Escanaba, Mich., who earned the Silver Star Medal for his heroism in that advance, was released from Army here Thursday.

Guindon, who was a forward observer with the 862nd Field Artillery Battalion attached to the 254th Infantry Regiment of the 63rd Infantry Division, was decorated with the Silver Star for his part in the March 15, 1945, assault on the Siegfried Line. Under heavy fire, after his unit had been cut off from the rear by Nazi troops, he directed artillery fire, carried an observer's radio and served as a rifleman in the surge back through the German lines.

In exposed positions at all times, he also helped lay down a covering fire for a platoon cut off from their adjacent company. Guindon earned battle stars for participation in the Rhineland and Central Europe offensives. He served in France and Germany in the 13 months he was overseas.

## 40 Years Ago — January 1986

**FROM THE JAN. 9, 1986, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER:** *Post Soldier honored by 4th Army* (By Lou Ann Mittelstaedt) — Sgt. 1st Class John Gissel, Readiness Group Fort McCoy, recently received the last of an impressive list of awards recognizing him as the Forces Command (FORSCOM) 4th Army Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Gissel accepted a complete Army dress blue uniform from Sheril Castillo, manager of the Fort McCoy Military Clothing Sales Store, on Thursday, Dec. 12. The Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) contributed to the recognition of selected outstanding enlisted servicemembers nationwide by giving them an Army green uniform or its equivalent.

Gissel opted to apply credit for that uniform toward the dress blues.

"With a lot of pushing and drive from the personnel at the Clothing Sales Store, the uniform got here in time for me to wear it to the Readiness Group Christmas party," Gissel said.

In addition to the uniform, Gissel received a one-week trip for two to Hawaii, a Meritorious Service Medal from 4th Army and a certificate of recognition.

Competition for the award was held in Des Moines, Iowa, last February. Gissel, along with 21 other soldiers from a seven-state area, went before a board to answer questions "about anything and everything." After the points were tallied, the board narrowed the field to four participants — Gissel among them.

Another board for the four Soldiers remaining in the competition was held the following day. According to Gissel, the second board was much more difficult than the first.

"I was nervous to say the least," he said. "But I think when you go before a board you have to put yourself as the underdog. That gives you the motivational drive to make it through."

And Gissel did more than just make it through. When the points for the second board were totaled, Gissel was the winner.

"I was shocked — the three other guys were really good," he said. "There were some very sharp Soldiers at the boards — the best the Army has to offer."

**FROM THE JAN. 23, 1986, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER:** *Getting troops from here to there* (By Lou Ann Mittelstaedt) — Fort McCoy recently served as the deployment site for Wisconsin Army National Guard members who participated in REFORGER 1986.

Nearly 4,600 troops reported from their home stations to Fort McCoy for final processing before departing for Germany. The preparations at Fort McCoy during the REFORGER exercise were the same as those that would be used in the event of a war. Troops would process through the stations run by Wisconsin's State Area Command at Fort McCoy, just as they had for this exercise.

When commercial buses delivered the troops to Fort McCoy, the first stop for the Soldiers was the Recreation Center, building 2000, where they got a break from the ride and had refreshments.

Next, they attended an initial briefing which outlined the events that would be taking place on the installation.

The troops were then assigned barracks for their short stay on post and given free time to take care of last-minute details. Then next came POM processing.

cessing.

POM stands for Preparation for Overseas Movement. POM processing is an administrative review of a Soldier's records and personal preparation for overseas deployment. ID cards, ID tags, medical warning tags, NATO orders and individual orders were all checked as part of the processing.

Each troop participating in the exercise was issued a pre-packaged meal to eat on the aircraft and an \$80 check for spending money while in Germany. A check cashing facility was available for the Soldiers to cash their checks.

Troops then packed their personal duffle bags, which were then palletized for transport to Germany. If the troops had free time remaining before their departure to Volk Field, they returned to their barracks to rest up for the trip to Germany.

After their arrival at Volk Field, troops underwent a final inspection by Customs officials and awaited loading onto either commercial or military aircraft. Then, it's Germany here we come!

## 30 Years Ago — January 1996

**FROM THE JAN. 19, 1996, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER:** *DPCA director honored as 'MWR Person of Year'* (By Newspaper Staff) — One of the best Christmas presents the Fort McCoy Directorate of Personnel, Community and Activities (DPCA) director received was not under his tree but hidden within a stack of office mail that had accumulated when he was on vacation during the holidays.

Rick Combs, post DPCA director, said when he reviewed the December 1995 issue of "Military Club and Hospitality," he looked at the table of contents and flipped to the last page to learn who was the "MWR (Morale, Welfare, Recreation) Person of the Year."

"I was totally stunned when I saw it was me," Combs said. "It was really a big surprise, like somebody who found out they had just won the lottery."

The magazine goes to worldwide MWR organizations of all the armed services — Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force — so the Fort McCoy story will be known worldwide as a result of the article, Combs said.

Mike Lupacchino, the DPCA Community Recreation Division chief, and Sharon Moser, the DPCA Community Operations Division chief, said they saw an announcement of the contest in a prior issue of the magazine, which is published eight times yearly. So, they decided to nominate Combs, who assumed his current position in February 1993.

"Since Rick has come here, there has been a dramatic change at DPCA," Lupacchino said. "He has a thorough knowledge and expertise of DPCA issues because he started at the bottom as a recreation aide/lifeguard (at Fort Stewart, Ga.) and worked his way to the top position here. He was able to present the DPCA needs to the rest of the installation's management as an equal player."

Among Combs' accomplishments in DPCA, according to the magazine, were:

- \* showing a net income in the MWR fund before depreciation of \$25,000 in fiscal year 1994. This followed a \$46,000 loss in FY 1993.

- \* authorizing the procurement of nonappropriated-fund Capital Purchase Minor Construction equipment in all areas to help replace old, outdated equipment, allowing front-line employees to perform their job properly with the right equipment to better serve MWR customers.

- \* gaining the proper appropriated funding for MWR operations that was lacking in past years.

- \* adopting and implementing the installation's philosophy on Total Quality Management (Total Army Quality) throughout the organization, empowering everyone down to the front-line employee.

Lupacchino said Combs also has expedited funding for two construction projects to help improve the quality of life for Fort McCoy customers.

One project is the Community Activities Center/Bowling Alley that is scheduled to be completed in August. The other was the MWR Car Wash, which opened in December.

"Rick is a true leader and mentor who supports and empowers his staff," Lupacchino said.

"He has a true passion for his job, and the customers he serves. His intentions and work are not for personal gain, but for every customer who enters one of the DPCA facilities, programs or activities. His attitude and work ethic is contagious to all, and a model to follow."

## 20 Years Ago — January 2006

**FROM THE JAN. 13, 2006, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER:** *Former coal yard to close, landfill to be capped* (By Rob Schuette) — A project at Fort McCoy to move the former coal yard closer to closure in accordance with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requirements includes using excavated coal residual as part of the grading layer for the installation's demolition landfill site. This joint project will help protect the environment and save several hundred thousand dollars, said Al Balliett and Tim Gelhaus.

Balliett, chief of the installation's Plans Division, Environmental Branch for the Directorate of Support Services (DSS), and Gelhaus, the environmental manager for VT Griffin, the contractor for DSS, said the project began as a closure project for the former coal yard.

The coal yard has not been used actively since the mid-1990s when Fort McCoy transitioned from using coal to natural gas and liquid propane for heating, Balliett said.

"We had separate projects planned to close the former coal yard and to cap the demolition landfill," Balliett said. "When the Wisconsin DNR wanted us to approach them to combine the two projects."

The soil and coal residual contained trace contaminants so it would have had to be disposed of in a certified landfill, Balliett said, which would have carried a high cost. The combined project is estimated to save the installation an estimated \$200,000.

The excavated soil will be used as grading layer fill in the capping process of the demolition landfill, he said. It would not pose any danger as it will be encapsulated beneath a geo-textile membrane impregnated with bentonite clay. The soil will help create a slope gradient of approximately 6 percent to allow the water to run off from the site. The clay will become nearly impermeable to water after it becomes wet and greatly reduce water infiltration down into the material underneath it, he said.

Backfill material for the excavated areas within the former coal yard has been provided by the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security and the Biological and Cultural Resource Team dredging project at Swamp Creek. Approximately 10,000 cubic yards of sand will be used between the former coal yard and the demolition landfill, yielding an approximate cost savings of \$50,000 by not using sand from an off-post location.

"We've been using the demolition landfill less and less over the years so now is a good time to close it," Balliett said.

Gelhaus said the demolition landfill is the last landfill still in use at the installation, and its continued use could present potential liability problems to the installation.

By closing the landfill site, which is expected to be completed in the spring time frame, Gelhaus said the installation will avoid any potential future liability, specifically groundwater contamination.

The wood waste in the landfill has been pushed up into a much smaller area to meet the slope gradient requirements, Gelhaus said. Any of the future wood waste material generated will be dispensed in roll-off dumpsters for proper disposal or recycled for reuse, such as pallets, he said.

"This project is a win-win for the installation," he said. "It will help protect the environment and provide opportunities to improve the rail-loading capabilities."

## 10 Years Ago — January 2016

**FROM THE JAN. 8, 2016, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *New Strykers at MATES support CBRN units* (By Scott T. Sturkol) — Personnel with the Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site (MATES) at Fort McCoy are completing the equipment-fielding process for four Stryker M1135 Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Reconnaissance Vehicles (NBCRVs) that arrived at MATES in late November.

The Strykers are being fielded for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) units in the Wisconsin National Guard.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Roy Bissen of the MATES Fielding Office said the Strykers are a welcome addition to the MATES inventory.

"It's a huge asset for the CBRN units," Bissen said. "We always have a (CBRN) unit on alert. Getting these is good for the state and the country as a whole, especially with anti-terrorism efforts."

MATES Soldiers have been coordinating the fielding of the NBCRVs with a General Dynamics team delivered the vehicles to Fort McCoy from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., and led mechanical training on the vehicles in December.

According to Army documentation, the NBCRV's suite of nuclear, biological, and chemical sensors enable it to test for a wide range of contaminants. One feature is a set of two small rubber wheels on robotic arms that roll along

(See THIS MONTH IN HISTORY, Page 8)

### Legion Of Merit Awarded Former Camp McCoy CO

Col. George M. MacMullin, former Camp McCoy commanding officer, has been awarded the Legion of Merit it was learned here this week.

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Col. MacMullin's citation follows:

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This is a news clipping from the Jan. 18, 1946, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper at then-Camp McCoy.



Vol. 23, No. 2



Published for Fort McCoy, Wis., an Army Community of Excellence

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### Conference highlights upcoming training

BY ROB SCHUETTE  
Triad Staff

Several hundred representatives from units that will train at Fort McCoy this year attended the 2006 Fort McCoy Annual Training Coordination Conference Jan. 19 to learn about training opportunities at the installation.

The representatives also were able to meet with installation personnel and other unit representatives to coordinate their upcoming training.

Fort McCoy is striving to keep on the leading edge in developing ranges and training facilities to support the military personnel who train at the installation, said Bill Kasten.

Kasten, director of Fort McCoy Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, said the goal of the installation is to support troops at Fort McCoy today and develop plans and strategies to support training doctrine 10 to 20 years in the future.

To meet those objectives, the installation has developed a schedule to improve ranges and bring a number of new facilities on line, he said.

"We encourage you to tell us what you need in ranges and training areas," Kasten said.

Sentinelia said the installation strives to be "purple" and meet the training needs of all services — Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines.

"We cannot do that unless you tell us your experience possible with a minimum of distractions."

"If there's some training out there that some of you may not have completed at home station and you need that training while you are here, let us know," Kasten said.

Attendees at the Fort McCoy 2006 Annual Training Coordination Conference hear about changes in the training ranges at Fort McCoy.

Photo by Rob Schuette

### Snowfest set for Jan. 28 at Whitetail

Snowfest 2006 will be held Saturday, Jan. 28 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Fort McCoy's Whitetail Ridge Recreation Area, weather permitting. The event is open to the public.

Discounts on snow tubing and skiing will be available. Activities will include the Cardboard Classic, Big Air Competition, and a Paintball Tournament.

For more information about Snowfest 2006 or Whitetail Ridge, call the Fort McCoy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) events line at (877) 864-4909 or visit the MWR Web site at <http://www.mccoymwr.com>.

Hill conditions are available by calling (608) 388-4489.

### More concert tickets on sale Feb. 1

Due to an adjustment to the Fort McCoy Army Concert Tour venue, a limited number of tickets to the Lynyrd Skynyrd concert will be on sale at the MWR Community Center.

This is a news clipping from the Jan. 13, 2006, edition of The Triad newspaper at Fort McCoy.



## HISTORY/COMMUNITY

## Fort McCoy ArtiFACT: Adze woodworking tool

Think of a modern-day carpenter and their woodworking toolkit. Carpentry tools one might find include adzes, axes, chisels, saws, gouges, and woodworking rasps.

A number of these same types of tools could be found in ancient carpenters' woodworking toolkits, too, especially adzes, axes, chisels, and gouges.

This article will focus on the woodworking tool known as the adze.

An adze is a woodworking tool with a primary function of shaping and smoothing wood through chopping/cutting and carving.

An adze is like an axe but has a cutting edge that is perpendicular (at a right angle) to the handle rather than parallel to the handle. An axe is used for chopping or hewing (converting a log into lumber or timber), while an adze is used for shaping wood.

There are two types of adzes — hand adze and foot adze. A hand adze is a short-handled tool used with one hand, while a foot adze is a long-handled tool used with both hands which usually strikes at or just above foot level.

An adze typically has a domed shaped upper side with a bevel (sloping surface or edge) towards the cutting edge and a flat bottom. An adze is made from either ground/polished stone or chipped/flaked stone.

In the past, the adze was used in woodworking to shape wood by cutting, carving, and smoothing. An adze was used to hollow out logs to create canoes, carve bowls, and construct furniture.

Only two stone adzes have been recovered from two separate archaeological sites at Fort McCoy

(see picture). It should be noted that numerous stone axes and/or choppers have been recovered at the military installation though.

The adze is a carpentry tool that is still used today for woodworking. Other carpentry tools that can be found at archaeological sites and have stood the test of time include axes, chisels, and gouges. The main difference between the modern adze and that found in the archaeological record is that an adze used today is made of metal rather than stone (ground/polished or chipped/flaked).

All archaeological work conducted at Fort McCoy was sponsored 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 individual who excavates, removes, damages, or otherwise alters or defaces any post-contact or pre-contact 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.

(Article prepared by the Fort McCoy Archaeology Team that includes the Colorado State University's Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands and the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.)



Contributed photo

Examples of an adze woodworking tool are shown that were found in past archaeological digs at Fort McCoy.



## Groomer ops

An employee operates a groomer on a hill Jan. 14 at Whitetail Ridge Ski Area at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Whitetail Ridge, part of Fort McCoy's Pine View Recreation Area, offers a variety of activities for the whole family.

The ski area offers both downhill skiing and snowboarding as well as snowtubing.

For more information about costs and special events at Whitetail Ridge, visit <https://mccoy.armymwr.com> or call 502-898-3517.

## THIS MONTH IN FORT MCCOY HISTORY

from Page 7

the ground behind the vehicle. The arms automatically lift off the ground to transfer any dust that might have accumulated to an external sensor, which determines if there are any contaminants.

"The NBCRVs will allow the CBRN units to do more intensive training, too," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mark Nohr with the MATES Fielding Office. "The vehicles provide a more mobile capability for those units that was not previously available."

Sgt. 1st Class Jamee Buchen, motor pool sergeant for the 457th Chemical Company of Burlington, Wis., trained with six other 457th Soldiers on Stryker maintenance at the MATES facility in December.

Buchen said each vehicle requires 40 hours of scheduled maintenance monthly, so getting the training straight from the contractor has been beneficial. "This is extremely important to have this training — we have to be able to maintain these vehicles effectively so they are always ready for use," he said.

Sgt. Matthew Bothe, a mechanic with the 457th, said he gained valuable insight on much of the NBCRV's special equipment.

"(For example) I learned about all the sensor suites and how they work and their functions and capabilities," Bothe said.

"This vehicle has a lot more complexity in maintenance operations, but the training has certainly helped."

## 5 Years Ago — January 2021

**FROM THE JAN. 8, 2021, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Students fight chill factor for CWOC cold-water immersion training at Fort McCoy (By Scott T. Sturkol)* — During the first class of the 2020-21 training season for the Cold-Weather Operations Course at Fort McCoy, 19 students participated in cold-water immersion training Dec. 15 at Big Sandy Lake on Fort McCoy's South Post.

Though there was a thin layer of ice, students weren't able to complete the training through a hole in the ice, but rather by wading icy waters and then submerging and coming back up under the careful watch of course instructors.

Surface temperatures during the two hours of training were between 15 and 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Practically every student had a slightly shocking reaction when entering the ice-cold water.

"Cold-water immersion, just like the course itself, tests the students both mentally and physically," said CWOC instructor Hunter Heard, who coordinates training with fellow instructors Manny Ortiz, Brian Semann, and Joe Ernst. All are with contractor Veterans Range Solutions, which works with Fort McCoy's Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security to complete the training.

Heard said the training is just a small part of the overall curriculum for CWOC. Normally for the cold-water immersion, a large hole is cut in the ice at the lake by CWOC staff, then a safe and planned regimen is followed to allow each participant to jump into the icy water. Emergency response personnel are always nearby in case they're needed when the training takes place. For this class the staff cleared a pathway to safely walk in and out of the lake.

Heard said students get fully immersed while doing the training. Once they are in the water, they will stay in anywhere from one to three minutes but never longer than three minutes.

Ernst said cold-water immersion is critical to the ability to survive and operate in a cold-weather environment.

"The experience of someone being introduced to water in an extreme-cold environment is a crucial task for waterborne operations and confidence building," Ernst said. "For a person to fall into water in that environment, the onset of panic generally introduces itself quickly. For our service members who will be operating in an extreme-cold environment, it is a task that, if not trained for, can produce unnecessary casualties."

The human body's reaction to falling through ice and into frigid water starts with the mind, Ernst said.

"The shock to the system generally results in an immediate response of a heightened rate of breathing," Ernst said. "Visual limitations like tunnel vision, and confusion and muscle tension are common reactions. The ability of a person to regain control and composure after getting in this situation is possible."

During CWOC, Ernst said the experience and guidance of the



U.S. Army Historical Photo

This is a news clipping from the Jan. 8, 2021, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper.

course's cadre are critical to direct students to a slower rate of breathing and to advise students on regaining physical and mental control.

"Assessing the environment and situation can only serve as a life-saving technique," Ernst said.

Also, for the second season, students learn in a special cold-water immersion training scenario before every student completes their immersion, Heard said. The scenario includes having one of the squad members go through a cold-water immersion event in the lake and then their squad, as a team, has to take what they learned during the course to help the affected squad member warm up and recover.

This includes having the squad member take off most clothing and then climb into a sled lined with dry blankets. At the same time, other squad members erect an Arctic cold-weather tent with a heater where the squad member then warms up and recovers to prevent injury.

Ernst said the most important aspect of training is the techniques of extraction and recovery from the cold water.

"Quickly building a fire, should a heated structure or vehicle not be available, is one skill set we teach," Ernst said. "We also teach the medical training that covers the effects of cold-water immersion and the timelines of recovery to prevent further injury."

In addition to cold-water immersion, CWOC students are trained on a variety of cold-weather subjects, including snowshoe training and how to use ahkio sleds and other gear. Training also focuses on terrain and weather analysis, risk management, cold-weather clothing, developing winter fighting positions in the field, camouflage and concealment, and numerous other areas that are important to know in order to survive and operate in a cold-weather environment.

**FROM THE JAN. 8, 2021, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *'Remagen' battalion holds unit training building cold-weather awareness, skills at Fort McCoy (By Scott T. Sturkol)* — More than 50 Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 310th (1-310) Brigade Engineer Battalion held a foundational training day Dec. 9 at Fort McCoy focusing on cold-weather safety and skills and more.

The 1-310 "Remagens", a sub-unit of the 181st Multi-Functional Training Brigade (MFTB) at Fort McCoy, holds a foundation day every month, said Staff Sgt. James Dean, 1-310 battalion operations noncommissioned officer.

"For this training day, we focused on equal opportunity, the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) program, diversity, and inclusion," Dean said. "We also focused on cold-weather training and equipment familiarization."

Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Bob McTighe said foundational training days for his unit foster a "people first" environment built on trust and inclusion.

"Our foundational training days routinely include challenging physical training, counseling, team building events, and scenario-based,

small-group discussions on current events pertaining to sexual assault, sexual harassment, racism, extremism, diversity, and equal opportunity."

The December training was completed in round-robin format where Soldiers went to different stations to complete and learn tasks.

Subjects covered in the training included learning about the Army Extended Cold Weather Clothing System, cold-weather injury prevention and treatment, cold-weather risk management, planning considerations for over snow movement, snowshoeing, Arctic 10-person tent and stove drill, cold regions patrol base considerations, cold-weather vehicle maintenance and Humvee tire chain installation, weapons maintenance in cold weather, and individual camouflage in a snow-covered environment.

The day of training also included a ruck march where each Soldier stopped at stations and responded to equal opportunity/SHARP training scenarios.

"It was a full day of raising awareness on important SHARP and equal opportunity ideals as well as an excellent chance for our battalion Soldiers to further their skills for cold-weather operations," Dean said.

As a training unit with many experienced Soldiers who serve as observer-coach/trainers, Dean said they have to maintain high readiness within the unit to be at their best.

"These foundation days allow us to have everyone well trained with Warrior tasks and other skills," Dean said. "And for every month's foundation day we bring in different subjects and exercises to build those skills."

As part of the 181st MFTB, 1-310 Soldiers and staff partner with Army Reserve and National Guard units to advise, assist, and train Army personnel throughout their complete Sustainable Readiness Model cycle to achieve collective training readiness in support of worldwide requirements, the 181 mission statement shows.

Fort McCoy's motto is to be the "Total Force Training Center." Located in the heart of the upper Midwest, Fort McCoy is the only U.S. Army installation in Wisconsin.

The installation has provided support and facilities for the field and classroom training of more than 100,000 military personnel from all services nearly every year since 1984.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>, on Facebook by searching "ftmccoy," on Flickr at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi>, and on X (formerly Twitter) by searching "usagmccoy."

Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set "Fort McCoy" or another installation as your preferred base. Fort McCoy is also part of Army's Installation Management Command where "We Are The Army's Home."



This is a news clipping from the Jan. 8, 2016, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper.