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# The Real McCoy

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## U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy creates new motto; mission, vision statements also new for 2026

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy has a new motto as well as new mission and vision statements starting in 2026.

The changes coincide with Fort McCoy's 2026-2030 Five-Year Strategic Business Plan, according to officials with Fort McCoy's Plans, Analysis, and Integration Office (PAIO).

The motto was updated from "Total Force Training Center" to "Training the Total Force and Shaping the Future since 1909."

"The change came about during the development of the 2026-2030 Strategic Business Plan when Fort McCoy's senior leaders met to review the garrison's mission, vision, and values," said PAIO Chief Bonnie Hilt.

"The inclusion of '1909' highlights the year of the installation's establishment, adding historical significance," Hilt said. "Furthermore, the phrase 'shaping the future' was incorporated to align with the Department of War's focus on transformation and future readiness. The updated motto, 'Training the Total Force and Shaping the Future since 1909,' now represents a blend of historical pride and forward-looking commitment for the installation."

The installation's mission statement also reflects the new Strategic Business Plan, officials said.

The new Fort McCoy mission statement states: "Fort McCoy strengthens Total Force Readiness by serving as a training center, Mobilization Force Generation Installation, and Strategic Support Area enabling warfighter lethality to deploy, fight, and win our nation's wars."

Similarly, Fort McCoy's vision statement is also reflective of the plan for the next five years. It states: "To be the premier training center sup-



U.S. Army Graphic/Photo Illustration by the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office

This graphic/photo illustration highlights the Fort McCoy mission and its new motto beginning in 2026: "Training the Total Force and Shaping the Future since 1909." 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.

porting the most capable, combat-ready, and lethal armed forces."

In a previous news article, Fort McCoy Garrison Deputy to the Garrison Commander Cameron Cantlon described Fort McCoy's mission and why

these statements are important to the strategic planning process.

"Fort McCoy is 60,000 acres, and the primary mission of Fort McCoy is training Soldiers," Cantlon said. "The ... Soldiers who are here with units

to train, (include) ... Reserve, ... National Guard, ... active duty. In the case of mobilization, we are mobilizing Soldiers for contingent missions, for war, or for operations.

"Fort McCoy is the only federal installation (of its kind) in the Midwest," Cantlon said. "We are the primary and premier training center for our Reserve and National Guard formations. Yes, there's other places that could conduct mobilization. ... But when things get big, when the operations get large and the numbers get large, Fort McCoy stands up."

Cantlon also described in the article how the post can also be a strategic support area for the U.S. government in a wide variety of roles.

"What's a strategic support area? It's basically a government saying, yeah, we want you to do this thing as well. Or for a while, you're going to do this," Cantlon said. "That happened (several) years ago, and we had 13,000 Afghans show up. So, we can take on those types of missions as well. We don't have one of those going on right now, but you never know when we'll be asked to do something similar to that."

He additionally described how Fort McCoy can support a disaster response or similar event.

"We also support federal government and federal resources from disaster response to emergency response or preparedness," Cantlon said. "If something's going on in the Midwest and the federal government's ramping up for it and there needs to be support for potential operations, potential protection, potential anything, we are the place that holds and hosts our federal partners across the federal government. That could be FEMA, federal marshals, Secret Service, you name it — we support it here at Fort McCoy."

Garrison leaders also say the work for the motto, (See **MOTTO**, Page 3)

## 11th Field Hospital Soldiers hold exercise at McCoy's RTS-Medical

BY GREG MASON & SCOTT T. STURKOL

Fort McCoy Public Affairs/Fort McCoy Multimedia-Visual Information Office

Soldiers with the 11th Field Hospital, based out of Fort Hood, Texas, successfully concluded a Collective Training Exercise at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Medical at Fort McCoy, Wis., which ran from March 4 to 12, 2026.

This training was supported by the 1st Medical Brigade from Fort Hood, Fort McCoy's RTS - Medical and the Fort McCoy Medical Simulation Training Center.

Organizers said the exercise was structured to ensure medical personnel train as they fight. Participants engaged in a range of activities, including refining staff processes and enhancing medical skills through state-of-the-art simulation and cadaver-based training.

These efforts, organizers said, are crucial for strengthening overall medical readiness and preparing our teams for future missions. They also stated the event highlights the power of partnership between active-duty units and Reserve training assets. Such joint efforts, they say, foster a shared learning environment, ensuring that warfighters will receive the highest level of care through a cohesive and expertly trained medical force.

Maj. Toritsetimiyan M. E-Nunu with the 11th Field Hospital described the training.

"We're here to do a culminating training event where we're able to enhance our medical training as well as integrate our standard protocols," E-Nunu said in an early March interview at <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/1000528/11th-field-hospital-sharpens-medical-readiness-fort-mccoy-wis>, who also noted there were close to 100 Soldiers in the training event.

"Those who are participating are actually active-duty Soldiers as well as active-duty nurses, doctors, and medics, and we do have Soldiers from outlying units that are serving as our role players," E-Nunu said.

The major said the training Soldiers completed class work as well as simulated training on the human as well as veterinary simulators. They also held a live exercise in a field hospital.

(See **EXERCISE**, Page 5)



Photo by Kevin Clark/Fort McCoy Multimedia-Visual Information Office

Soldiers with the 11th Field Hospital of Fort Hood, Texas, participate in a live exercise March 10 at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Medical at Fort McCoy. Nearly 100 Soldiers were part of the training at the installation from March 4-12.

## U.S. Forest Service-Fort McCoy partnership leads to effective 2026 prescribed burn season on post

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy held its first prescribed burn for 2026 on March 24, and the team who got the effort started was bigger than past years.

For 2026, Fort McCoy has partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to manage the installation's prescribed burn program.

"The U.S. Forest Service brought 18 personnel (six federal fulltime staff and 12 Blackwell Job Corps trainees/students)," said Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division Chief Brent Friedl. "We (contractors, DPW Natural Resources Branch, Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Fire Department) provided (between) 11-13 people. So, on the first day there were 31 personnel participating in the burn."

The first prescribed burn on March 24 was completed at Range 6 and Range 29 on North Post at the installation. The second day of burning, on March 25, the team went to Range 29. On March 26, the team went to Range 31A, also in the installation's North Post. And the team also completed more burns into April.

(See **PARTNERSHIP**, Page 4)



Members of the U.S. Forest Service and the Fort McCoy prescribed burn team oversee a prescribed burn April 7 at a range area on North Post at Fort McCoy. 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, under contract with the post.

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**Learning center visit**

Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez visits with children April 20 at the Southside Early Learning Center in Sparta, Wis.

Baez's visit was part of a month-long observance in April for Month of the Military Child. Many military children from Fort McCoy attend schools in Sparta and other neighboring communities to the installation.

April is recognized as the Month of the Military Child, honoring over 1.6 million children for their resilience, sacrifices, and strength while their parents serve in the U.S. armed forces. Established in 1986, this month highlights the challenges of frequent moves and parental deployments, with a special focus on appreciation.

Contributed photo

**Fort McCoy Garrison command team signs proclamations for April observances**

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez, commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy; Lt. Col. Chad Holder, garrison deputy commander; and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major, sign proclamations March 26, 2026, for April to be observed as Autism Awareness Month, Month of the Military Child, and Child Abuse Prevention Month at Fort McCoy.

The three observance month efforts are in support of the Fort McCoy Family Advocacy Program with the Army Community Service Office as well as the entire installation community.

According to <https://riseupforautism.com>, "Autism Awareness Month was founded in April 1970 by psychologist Dr. Bernard Rimland to increase public understanding of autism. The National Autistic Society introduced the puzzle piece symbol in 1963 to represent the complexity of autism, which later became internationally recognized. In 1984, President Ronald Reagan issued the first U.S. presidential proclamation recognizing April as National Autism Awareness Month. The United Nations established World Autism Awareness Day on April 2, 2007, marking the official start of the month-long observance."

The website also states the observance "is dedicated to raising awareness about autism spectrum disorder, celebrating the unique strengths of autistic individuals, and advocating for inclusion and equal opportunities in education, healthcare, employment, and community life. The observance emphasizes not only recognition but also meaningful action, encouraging communities to create supportive environments where autistic individuals can thrive."

With Month of the Military Child, it recognizes the unique challenges and contributions of military children, who often face frequent relocations, parental deployments, and the need to adapt to new schools and communities, according to <https://www.war.gov/Spotlights/Month-of-the-Military-Child>.

Established by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger in 1986, this observance highlights the strength and adaptability of over 1.6 million military children in the United States, the website states.

"Military children play a vital role in supporting their families' service to the nation," the website states. "They demonstrate resilience, courage, and adaptability while navigating frequent moves, fam-



Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major; Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez, commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy; and Lt. Col. Chad Holder, garrison deputy commander, hold proclamations they signed March 26, 2026, for April to be observed as Autism Awareness Month, Month of the Military Child, and Child Abuse Prevention Month at Fort McCoy

Photo by Mike Volpe/Fort McCoy Garrison

ily separations, and the demands of military life. The observance encourages communities, schools, and organizations to recognize and celebrate these contributions."

With Child Abuse Prevention Month, it's a time for communities to come together and take action to support strong families, thriving children, and healthier communities.

The theme for 2026 is "Pinwheels of Possibility," emphasizing the collective responsibility of families, communities, and support systems in creating safe environments where every child can thrive, states the website, <https://preventchildabuse.org>.

"Key dates include Wear Blue Day on April 10,

the National Week of Action from April 13 to 17, Digital Action Day on April 14, National Home Visiting Week from April 20 to 24, and the National Day of Giving on April 28," the website states. "These activities aim to raise awareness, drive action, and ensure every child has the chance to grow up safe, supported, and loved."

At <https://thrivefromthestart.org>, they also addressed Child Abuse Prevention Month.

"This April, Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America), a proud member of the ThriveFromThe Start network, is recognizing Child Abuse Prevention Month through its 2026 campaign theme, Pinwheels of Possibility," the website states. "The cam-

aign centers the power of families, communities, and systems working together to create the conditions where all children can grow up safe, supported, and full of possibility. As the national symbol of child abuse prevention, the pinwheel represents the bright, healthy futures every child deserves."

And at Fort McCoy, numerous events are held by Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation in support of the observances, including a Movie Night, special craft events, and other family affiliated activities.

Learn more about Fort McCoy's April observance activities for these observances by visiting <https://mccoy.armymwr.com>.

**Fort McCoy families flock to 2026 Easter Eggstravaganza event**

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Hundreds of Fort McCoy community members and family members made their way to McCoy's Community Center on March 28 to take part in the 2026 Easter Eggstravaganza event.

Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) Marketing Director Liz Faber said leading up to the event that it was going to be special.

"Springtime fun starts at McCoy's! Join us Saturday, March 28 at 9 a.m. for the Easter Eggstravaganza," Faber wrote in a postwide invitation.

"Breakfast buffet is available for purchase, egg hunts, children's activities, and the Easter Bunny will all be there!"

All of what Faber wrote and more took place during the event, and organizers said they were happy with a "great turnout."

In a Facebook post March 28 at the DFMWR page at <https://www.facebook.com/mccoymwr>, they wrote how well the event went.

"The 2026 Easter Eggstravaganza is officially in the books," the post states. "A huge THANK YOU to our amazing military families and Fort McCoy employees who came out to celebrate with us."

"It was truly an egg-ceptional morning filled with smiles, laughter and community spirit!"

"From fun children's activities and exciting egg hunts to a delicious breakfast at McCoy's Community Center, the day was packed with unforgettable moments," the post states. "We're so grateful to everyone who joined us and helped make this event such a success. We can't wait to do it again next year!"

One comment reacting to the post added, "This was an egg-celent time! Our kids have such a great time, they enjoy being able to see their military community friends and meet new ones. The buffet was spot on! Keep up the great work Fort McCoy MWR!"

Learn more about Fort McCoy DFMWR activities and news and events by visiting <https://mccoy.armymwr.com>.



Photos by Liz Faber/Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation

(All photos) Fort McCoy community and family members participate in the 2026 Easter Eggstravaganza event March 28 at McCoy's Community Center.

NEWS

# Fort McCoy Police seize 2.5 pounds of marijuana during traffic stop

At approximately 11 a.m. March 14, Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Police Department Officer Marc Johnson observed a black Chrysler mid-sized sedan traveling at 74 MPH in a 55 MPH zone on State Highway 16.

Johnson initiated a traffic stop on the vehicle a short distance later. Upon approaching the vehicle, the officer detected a strong odor consistent with marijuana. Shortly thereafter, Fort McCoy Police Officer Jonathan Juran, a certified drug recognition expert and field training officer (FTO), arrived on scene to provide assistance.

During the investigation conducted by Officers Johnson, FTO Juran and Shift Sergeant Kevin Eckelberg, it was determined the driver of the vehicle was in possession of approximately 2.51 pounds of a green leafy substance (marijuana), which later tested positive for tetrahydrocannabinol, or more commonly known as THC.

The seized marijuana, with an estimated street value of \$5,000 to \$7,500 in Wisconsin, was packaged in multiple small baggies and co-located with a digital scale, consistent with materials typically used in drug distribution.

The Fort McCoy Police Department would like to remind you that federal installations are governed by federal law and policies, and while marijuana may be legal in some states, it is still prohibited federally and therefore not authorized to be introduced to the installation. A good parallel example would be the preclusion of firearms from a federal installation.

While the seizure of controlled substances is not uncommon for the Fort McCoy Police Department, the confiscation of 2.5 pounds of marijuana during a single traffic stop represents a particularly significant seizure, department officials noted.

This event underscores the Fort McCoy Police Department's continued commitment and the unwavering vigilance of our officers in ensuring Fort McCoy remains a safe and secure environment while actively combating illegal drug activity within the post's jurisdiction, officials said.

The subject, whose name is being



Contributed photo

Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services Police Department Officer Marc Johnson, Field Training Officer Jonathan Juran, and Shift Sergeant Kevin Eckelberg are shown March 18 with marijuana that was confiscated during a traffic stop at Fort McCoy. Johnson was the responding officer to the vehicle carrying this and other items.

withheld, was charged with:

- Possession of marijuana with intent to distribute.
- Wrongful possession of marijuana.
- Possession of drug paraphernalia.
- Carrying a concealed weapon.
- Speeding.

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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."

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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."

(Article prepared by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services.)

# Fort McCoy leaders support 2026 Monroe County Economic Development and Tourism Conference

BY MELISSA DUBOIS & SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

The 2026 Monroe County Economic Development and Tourism Conference was held March 30-31 at the Havenwood Center in Sparta, Wis., and included several members of Fort McCoy participating in the event.

Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez, commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy, and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, the garrison's senior enlisted leader, attended on March 31 and spoke about Fort McCoy's economic impact plus visited with a wide variety of community and business leaders not only for Monroe County but also Western Wisconsin.

Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) Director Scott Abell also attended May 30 to meet with outdoor recreation leaders of Wisconsin. Fort McCoy, of course, is also known for year-round outdoor recreation opportunities for the public at Pine View Campground and Whitetail Ridge Ski Area.

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. These are among the subjects that Fort McCoy Garrison leaders addressed during the conference.

In an email to attendees of the conference after the event, Adrian Lockington, executive assistant



Photo by Melissa Dubois

Col. Sheyla Baez Ramirez, Fort McCoy Garrison commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, senior enlisted leader for U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy, participate in the 2026 Monroe County Economic Development and Tourism Conference on March 31 at the Havenwood Center in Sparta, Wis. Both leaders spoke about Fort McCoy's economic impact to the region as well as opportunities at the installation. Organizers said the event was successful.

with the Monroe County Administration, expressed thanks for another year's successful event.

"Thank you for joining us at this year's annual Economic Development and Tourism Conference and for helping us shine a light on the important opportunities and progress within our county," Lockington wrote. "Your engagement and participation played a key role in making this event meaningful and productive. We also want to extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed to planning, organizing, and executing the conference. Your teamwork and dedication allowed the event to come together smoothly and successfully."

"In addition, we appreciate the many partners, businesses, and representatives who were unable to attend but still offered their support and encouragement," Lockington wrote. "Their involvement —

whether in person or from afar — reinforces that this work is valued across our county, throughout our region, and at the state level. This conference is more than a county event. It reflects a shared commitment from our local and neighboring businesses, community partners, and state representatives who continue to champion economic development and tourism in meaningful ways."

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## MOTTO

mission, and vision statements also help plan each year's support for troop training. During fiscal year 2025, 109,962 troops trained at Fort McCoy, stated Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) personnel.

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 (weekend) training; annual training; mobilization; institutional training; and numerous exercises, including a Combat Support Training Exercise, Global Medic, and numerous other training events.

DPTMS Range Officer Brooks Lundeen said the training numbers were split as 46,047 troops completing annual

training, and 63,915 troops completing battle assembly training.

As Fort McCoy moves forward with the new statements and motto, Fort McCoy PAIO will continue to apply them in support of the Army Installation Management System and Fort McCoy objectives and goals.

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Overall, the post prescribed burn team includes personnel with the Fort McCoy DES Fire Department; 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, under contract with the post.

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 fire management personnel in past news articles.

Prescribed burns help set back invasive species, and they burn up their seed banks. Burns also give native species an opportunity to compete against some of the non-native species, as many native species depend on fire to help stimulate them and set back non-native species.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources also gave the following information describing the benefits of prescribed burns for wild areas.

“Some specific advantages of prescribed burns include stimulating prairie grass growth and improve habitat for upland game and waterfowl; creating pockets of open water for waterfowl amidst cattails proliferating in low areas; stimulating the growth of wildflowers, which attract insects — a vital food source for young game and non-game grassland birds; and improving cover type for grassland nesting birds such as pheasants.”

Prescribed burns also “spur native vegetative growth for songbirds; and creates open pockets of

bare ground, increasing diversity and richness of ground foraging, seed-eating small mammals and birds.

As the prescribed burn season continues, Fort McCoy leadership stated the post will continue performing prescribed burn operations where local conditions provide a safe and effective burn. Fort McCoy will also continue to carefully assess the most appropriate days to conduct prescribed burns.

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Members of the U.S. Forest Service and the Fort McCoy prescribed burn team oversee a prescribed burn April 7 at a range area on North Post at Fort McCoy. 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, under contract with the post.

## Spring prescribed burns renew training lands, ecosystems on post

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

Smoke rising over training ranges at Fort McCoy this spring marks the return of a carefully planned and increasingly important operation: prescribed burning.

The installation’s 2026 burn season began March 24 on North Post ranges, with crews continuing operations over several days as conditions allowed. The effort is ongoing through the spring, conducted in phases when weather, humidity, and ground conditions align for safe and effective burns. This year’s operations also reflect expanded coordination with the U.S. Forest Service, bringing together dozens of personnel alongside Fort McCoy Fire Department crews and natural resources staff.

While prescribed fire supports military readiness by maintaining safe and usable training lands, officials say its deeper value lies in how it sustains the region’s natural landscape.

“There are many ecological benefits to prescribed burning,” said Kevin Luepke, wildlife biologist with Fort McCoy’s Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.

Luepke said one of the most immediate impacts is reducing fuel loading across the installation. “Prescribed burning removes dead vegetation like leaves, pine needles, twigs, branches, and grasses from previous years,” he said. “That reduces wildfire risk because the vegetation that comes back is green and full of water, which doesn’t burn as easily.”

Beyond reducing fire danger, Luepke emphasized that much of Fort McCoy’s landscape is naturally dependent on fire. Oak savanna, pine barrens, and prairie ecosystems have evolved with periodic burning, and without it, they begin to decline.

“The habitat here is fire-dependent,” Luepke said. “Most of the native plants, grasses, shrubs, and trees rely on fire to thrive. Without it, you start to see fire-intolerant species become more abundant.”

He pointed to species such as jack pine and wild lupine as examples of plants that rely on fire to reproduce. “Some of these species need heat from fire to open pinecones or break seed coats so germination can occur,” he said.

Prescribed burning also plays a role in controlling invasive species, which are often less tolerant of fire. “Periodic fire helps keep invasive plants in check by killing them or reducing the seed that was spread the previous year,” Luepke said. “In some cases, it also supports our biocontrol efforts because those insects need exposed soil to complete their life cycles. Burning removes the leaf litter and allows that process to continue.”

The benefits extend to wildlife across the installation. Luepke said the new growth that follows a burn is especially valuable.

“The regrowth after a prescribed burn is highly preferred by wildlife,” he said. “You get nectar-producing plants that butterflies depend on, grasses and forbs that provide nesting cover for birds, and tender woody vegetation that deer use for browse.”

Even trees affected by fire contribute to the ecosystem over time. “Some mature trees may be damaged during a burn, but that creates opportunities for other species,” Luepke said. “Those trees can be used by woodpeckers, and when they eventually die, they provide habitat for bats, raccoons, squirrels, wood ducks, and other cavity-nesting wildlife.”

Fire also helps return nutrients to the soil.

“When vegetation burns, it creates ash that acts as a natural fertilizer,” Luepke said. “It’s rich in potassium and other nutrients that help



Members of the U.S. Forest Service and the Fort McCoy prescribed burn team oversee a prescribed burn March 24 at a range area on North Post at Fort McCoy.

native plants grow back.”

In addition, prescribed burning can have public health benefits by reducing tick populations. “Fire can kill ticks in all life stages—adults, nymphs, and eggs,” Luepke said. “That can help reduce tick-borne illnesses in those areas.”

As burns continue across Fort McCoy this spring, officials stress that each operation is carefully planned and monitored. Temporary closures may occur in affected areas, but the long-term impact is a healthier, more resilient landscape.

For Luepke, the purpose of prescribed fire is straightforward.

“Fire promotes renewal,” he said. “It keeps these systems functioning the way they’re supposed to.”

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(Above and below) Members of the U.S. Forest Service and the Fort McCoy prescribed burn team oversee a prescribed burn April 7 at a range area on North Post at Fort McCoy.



Members of the U.S. Forest Service and the Fort McCoy prescribed burn team oversee a prescribed burn March 25 at a range area on North Post at Fort McCoy.



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**EXERCISE**

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“We are hoping to integrate all our critical medical, life-saving tasks as well as hone our surgical skills and life-saving emergency skills,” she said. “All while doing it under simulated pressure.”

E-Nunu also said, “So, it’s very beneficial to have hands-on training because repetition ... during a stressful environment ... allows for familiarity and with familiarity it allows people to excel in their skills.”

E-Nunu also said the training was a great opportunity for Soldiers who are deploying.

She said it helps them “to be able to enhance their medical training and be able to get high-fidelity training on state-of-the-art medical simulators (at RTS-Medical).”

RTS-Medical at Fort McCoy is one of three regional training sites of its type available to units in the Army Reserve.

The organization has been a tenant activity and training partner at Fort McCoy since 1991.

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*Photos by Kevin Clark/Fort McCoy Multimedia-Visual Information Office*

**(All photos) Soldiers with the 11th Field Hospital of Fort Hood, Texas, participate in a live exercise March 9 and 10 at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Medical at Fort McCoy. Nearly 100 Soldiers were part of the training at the installation from March 4-12.**



## NEWS

# Fort McCoy family members gather for 2026 MOMC Family Movie Night event

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy kicked off April as Month of the Military Child (MOMC) with the Family Movie Night on April 3 in building 905 at the installation.

The event, coordinated by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR), included the playing of the movie "Zootopia 2," and included games and a free pizza dinner for attendees. Nearly 70 military family members took advantage of the event.

DFMWR Director Scott Abell said this was the second year the event was held in the bigger building 905 versus previous years. "It's a popular event so we moved it here to accommodate more people," Abell said in a 2025 news article.

The event had previously been in McCoy's Community Center, DFMWR officials said, but the popularity of the movie event meant they needed more space.

Building 905 is one of Fort McCoy's community buildings used for events like this. It's often home to big meetings, town hall events, changes of command, and more. It was originally built in 1942 and has served as an officer's club in the past along as well as other functions.

For this event, games included a ring toss, inflatable bowling, and more.

Ashley Sivert with DFMWR Marketing said the event went well.

"DFMWR kicked off Month of the Military Child celebrations by hosting this fourth annual Family Movie Night," Sivert said.

"This free event welcomed Soldiers and their families for an evening of activities, including a complimentary pizza dinner, buildyour own MOMC Beasie the Cow stuffed animals, craft stations, games, and the showing of Zootopia 2," she said. "A total of 69 patrons attended, helping us launch Month of the Military Child with great energy and community spirit."

A family member who attended the event said on a related DFMWR Facebook post they enjoyed attending the movie night.

"Thank you again! Wonderful family event! The kids and the adults had a blast," the comment states.

According to the Department of Defense (DOD), the department "celebrates military children during the month of April. There are more than 1.6 million military children who face many challenges and unique experiences as a result of their parents' service," states the DOD spotlight at <https://www.defense.gov/Spotlights/Month-of-the-Military-Child>. "While military members serve around the world, we often forget the challenges faced by their children. Military families move on average every two to three years, impacting military children through changing schools and support networks.

"Each year, the DOD joins national, state and local government, schools, military serving organizations, companies and private citizens in celebrating military children and the sacrifices they make," the website states.

Learn more about Month of the Military Child events at Fort McCoy by visiting the Fort McCoy DFMWR Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mccoymwr>.

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Photos by Ashley Sivert/Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation

(All photos) Scenes from the 2026 Family Movie Night in building 905 are shown April 3 at Fort McCoy. This was a kickoff event for observing Month of the Military Child at Fort McCoy. Approximately 70 people attended the event that included the movie, games, and free pizza for attendees.



Contributed photo

## Fort McCoy legend retires from DFMWR

Congratulations to a Fort McCoy legend! After 17 incredible years of keeping the pins falling and the lanes running smoothly, the Bowling Equipment Repairer, Mark Sprague, is officially retired from the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR). DFMWR leaders said, "Mark, thank you for your unwavering service and your many contributions to the Fort McCoy community. The lanes won't be the same without you, but we wish you nothing but the best in your next chapter." Pictured here April 15 are DFMWR Director Scott Abell, Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Chad Holder, Sprague, Garrison Senior Enlisted Leader Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, and DFMWR Business Recreation Division Chief Karla Rynes, who all congratulated Sprague and presented him with a retirement certificate during a special presentation to thank him for his service.

★ ★ CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF ★  
**AMERICA & THE U.S. ARMY**

**MONROE COUNTY & FORT McCOY**

★ ★ America 250 (1776–2026) • Army 250 (1775–2025) ★



SPECIAL EDITION CELEBRATING MONROE COUNTY AND FORT MCCOY HERITAGE CONNECTION TO AMERICA/ARMY 250TH BIRTHDAYS.

# Wisconsin's Monroe County: A county named for a president who fought 250 years ago in Revolutionary War; county helps shape Soldiers who serve today

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
 Public Affairs Staff

In the rolling hills and pine-lined ridges of Western Wisconsin lies Monroe County — a place whose very name echoes the early heartbeat of the United States.

It is a name drawn from James Monroe, the fifth president, a Soldier-statesman whose life bridged the fragile birth of the nation and its confident stride into the 19th century.

To name a county on the American frontier after Monroe was no small gesture, as history shows. It was an act of remembrance and aspiration — a way of tying the raw, developing lands of Wisconsin to the ideals forged in the fires of the American Revolutionary War over 250 years ago.

## Who was James Monroe?

The White House Historical Association's biography for President Monroe states that he was considered the last "Founding Father" president.

"Monroe was born on April 28, 1758, into an affluent ... family in Westmoreland County, Va.," the biography states at <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/bios/james-monroe>. "His parents, Spence and Elizabeth Monroe, had aspirations for their eldest son, sending him to nearby Campbelltown Academy. James' childhood changed dramatically when both of his parents passed away within two years of each other. Joseph Jones, who became a paternal surrogate for the Monroe children, encouraged James to continue his education by attending the College of William & Mary. Monroe enrolled but later left to enlist in the Continental Army's Third Virginia Infantry Regiment."

After the Revolutionary War, Monroe married Elizabeth Kortright in 1786, and the couple had three children together, the biography states.

"In terms of military, political, administrative, and diplomatic experience, James Monroe was one of the most qualified individuals to ascend to the presidency during the 19th century. He fought in the American Revolution and was wounded at the Battle of Trenton; served in the legislative bodies of the Virginia General Assembly and the United States Senate, as well as Governor of Virginia; held diplomatic posts across Europe for different administrations; and served as Secretary of State and Secretary of War (briefly acting in both capacities) during the James Madison administration."

History shows Monroe also studied law with Thomas Jefferson.

"In fact, because of his relationship with Jefferson, Monroe purchased land adjacent to Monticello in Albemarle County, calling it Highland," the biography states. This plantation was one of several properties that Monroe owned during his lifetime."

Monroe's history also shows what he helped accomplish in 1803. In that year, the biography states, "President Jefferson entrusted Monroe and Robert Livingston to acquire territory from France and secure access to the Mississippi River and the port of New Orleans.

The men exceeded all expectations, acquiring New Orleans and some 828,000 square miles west of the Mississippi for \$15 million.

"The Louisiana Purchase opened up new opportunities," the biography states. "After the War of 1812, the United States experienced the 'Era of Good Feelings' — relative political peace, economic growth, and nationalist fervor. President Monroe invigorated this spirit with goodwill tours throughout the country and ensuring that the public buildings at Washington — including the President's House — were restored after they were destroyed by the British.

"Working with Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, Monroe professed American sovereignty from European nations while asserting a national right of influence over the western hemisphere," the biography states.

"This idea, later called the 'Monroe Doctrine,' shaped the next century of international relations between the United States and the world, influencing American presidents and policymakers who sought to make the country a global power."

## Army ties to Monroe County

Jarrod Roll, director of the Monroe County Local History Room and Museum in Sparta, Wis., said through active research, a specific reason as to who decided to name Monroe County after the president cannot clearly be found.

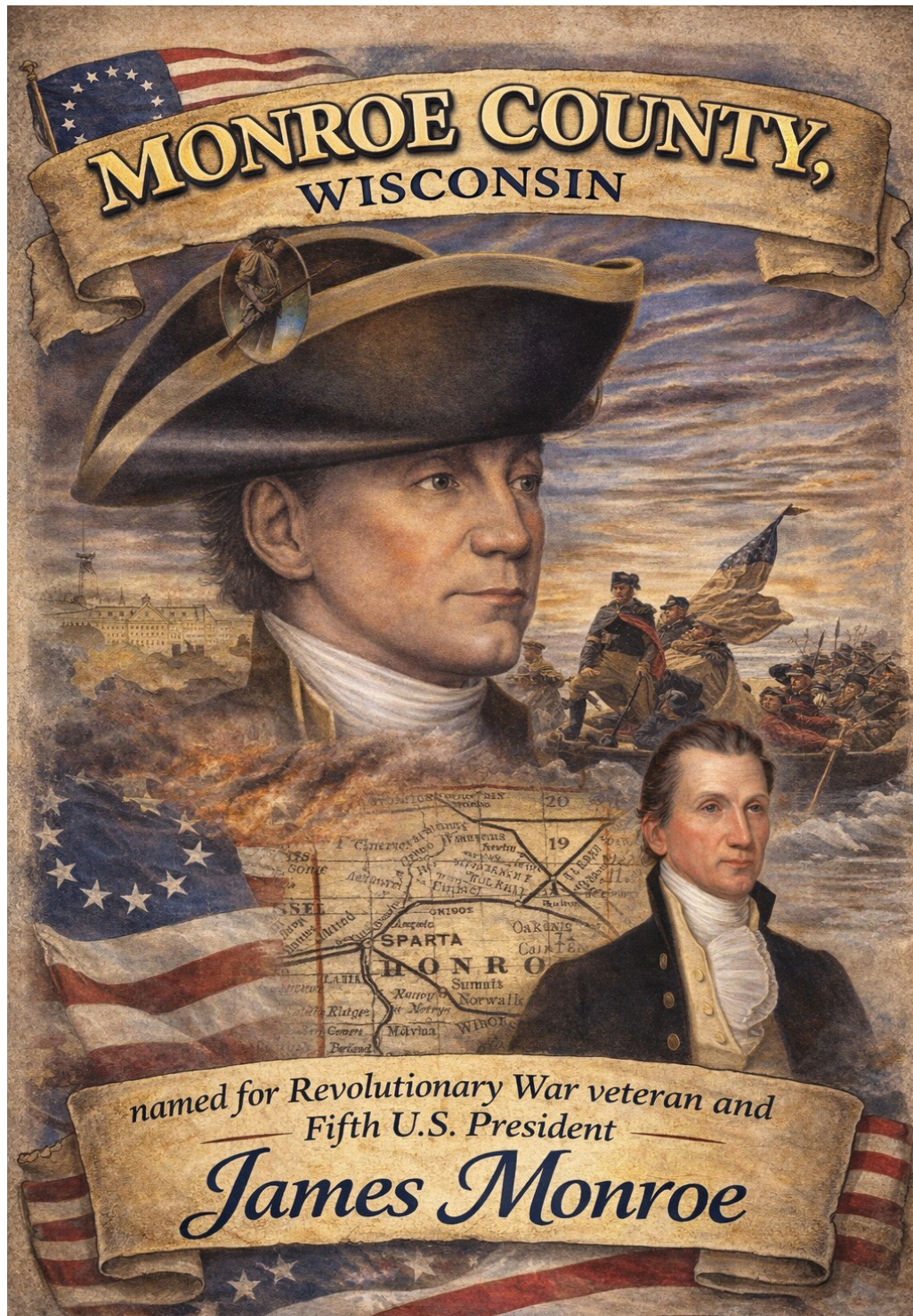
"Wisconsin counties were typically named for U.S. presidents, prominent politicians, military figures, geographical features, or Native American associations," Roll said.

"Over the years we've tried to track down any explanation as to who suggested President James Monroe as the namesake of Monroe County, Wis., in 1854, but unfortunately, we found none. The oldest explanation we have for the naming is in 1902."

Henry Gannett, "Origin of Certain Place Names," in U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin No. 197 in Washington in 1902 states, "Monroe County, State of Wisconsin, was named for James Monroe, ex-president of the United States."

Wisconsin isn't the only state with a Monroe County. Nationally, Monroe County exists in 17 states, including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

But Wisconsin's Monroe County is the only Monroe County with a major Army installation like



Fort McCoy. Monroe had not merely governed; he had bled for independence with the Continental Army, crossing icy rivers with George Washington and enduring the brutal trials at Trenton (N.J.).

## Army kinship with McCoy

His legacy was one of perseverance, expansion, and a belief that the United States was destined to grow and endure. And grow it did — westward, steadily — until places like Monroe County, Wis., emerged from forest and prairie.

Yet Monroe's spirit did not remain confined to the name alone. It found a living presence in the soil itself, most notably, possibly, in Fort McCoy, a vast military installation that would come to define the county in the 20th century, and still in the 21st century.

Fort McCoy bears the name of Robert Bruce McCoy, a distinguished Army officer whose career reflected the evolving might and professionalism of the U.S. Army, which itself is more than 250 years old.

Where Monroe fought as a young officer in a fledgling Continental Army, McCoy served in a modern, organized force — one that had grown into a global instrument of American power and stability. And yet, across the span of more than a century, the two men share a striking kinship.

Monroe and McCoy were both shaped by service before recognition. Monroe, wounded in battle and tested in the crucible of revolution, carried those experiences into his presidency — where he would articulate the Monroe Doctrine, asserting America's place on the world stage.

McCoy, too, rose through the ranks not by chance, but through steady dedication, leadership, and an understanding of the Army's mission in a changing world. His name, affixed to the fort, represents not only his own service, but the countless Soldiers trained there — Citizen-Soldiers preparing to defend the same republic Monroe helped secure.

In Monroe County, their legacies intersect in a uniquely American way. The county's name recalls the founding generation — men who fought for the very idea of the nation.

Fort McCoy represents the continuation of that idea — defended, trained, and renewed by each generation that followed. One symbolizes the birth of American independence; the other, its preservation. There is something poetic in that alignment.

Where Monroe once marched under uncertain skies, fighting for a nation not yet fully realized, Soldiers at Fort McCoy train under that nation's flag — its stars now numbering 50, its strength unquestioned. The wilderness Monroe never saw became the proving ground for the Army he helped inspire.

And so, Monroe County stands as more than a place on a map. It is a living narrative — where the ideals of James Monroe meet the enduring service symbolized by Robert Bruce McCoy. From revolution to readiness, from musket to modern force, the story of Monroe County is, in many ways, the story of America itself.

Fort McCoy's motto beginning in 2026 is "Training the Total Force and Shaping the Future since 1909."

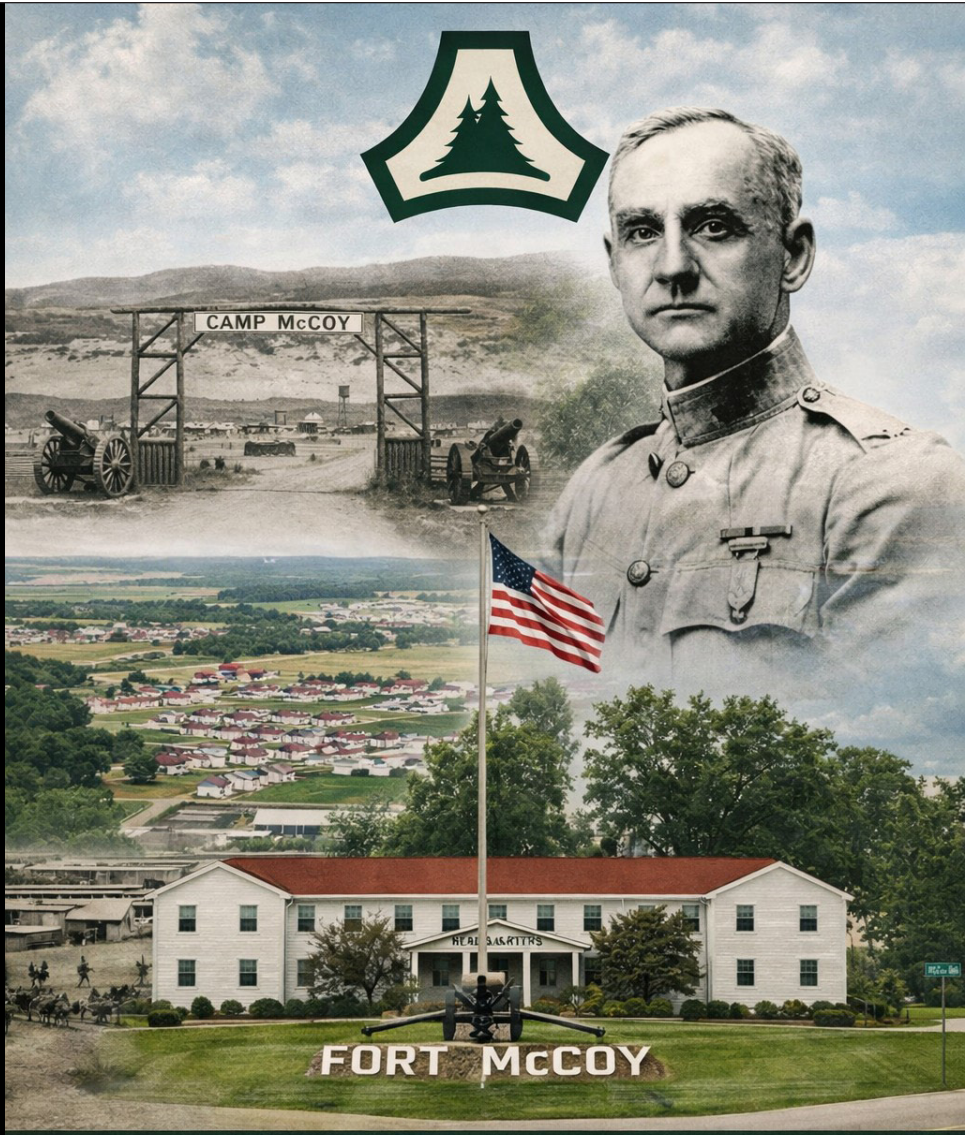
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★ **CAMP MCCOY** ★  
**TO FORT MCCOY**  
 — MONROE COUNTY, WISCONSIN —



## REMEMBERING ORIGINS OF MONROE'S CONTINENTAL ARMY/REVOLUTIONARY WAR



## U.S. Army Revolutionary War 250th Commemoration 2025-2033

# Looking at history of Continental Army

BY U.S. ARMY CENTER FOR MILITARY HISTORY

Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, D.C.

### 'This We'll Defend'

The U.S. Army's official motto, "This We'll Defend," has been in use since 1775. This phrase signifies the Army's unwavering commitment to safeguarding the nation's freedom and democracy against all threats, both foreign and domestic.

It serves as a constant reminder to soldiers of their duty to protect not only themselves but also the safety and democratic values of every American.

Over time, while "This We'll Defend" remains the enduring motto, additional expressions such as "No mission too difficult" and "Duty — Honor — Country" have been adopted to encapsulate various facets of Army life and values.

These mottos collectively embody the core principles outlined in the Army Creed, including loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.

### Establishment of the Continental Army

On June 14, 1775, the Continental Congress in Philadelphia adopted the New England Army of Observation, making it a "continental" army — a united fighting force — that could represent all 13 colonies with the addition of the troops from the three middle colonies. The Continental Army thus became America's first national institution.

The Continental Congress further:

"Resolved, that six companies of expert riflemen [sic], be immediately raised in Pennsylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia; ... [and] that each company, as soon as completed [sic], shall march and join the army near Boston, to be there employed as light infantry, under the command of the chief officer in that army."

The U.S. Army also recognizes this resolution as establishing the infantry branch, making it the oldest branch in the Army.

### Selection of George Washington as Commander in Chief

The next step was to select a commander in chief. George Washington of Virginia wanted the job.

He had extensive experience, had commanded units from other colonies in the field, and was a delegate to Congress. On June 15, 1775, Congress unanimously voted on the measure, and the next day presented Washington his commission.

It read, in part:

"We, reposing special trust and confidence in your patriotism, valor, conduct, and fidelity, do, by these presents, constitute and appoint you to be General and Commander in chief, of the army of the United Colonies, and of all the forces now raised, or to be raised, by them, and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service, and join the said Army for the Defence [sic] of American liberty, and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof. And you are hereby vested with full power and authority to act as you shall think for the good and welfare of the service."

Thus, the Continental Congress commissioned George Washington as commander in chief of the Continental Army, 19 June 1775.

### Life of the Continental Soldier

Continental soldiers came from many different backgrounds and included Black people and Native Americans.

By 1780, persons of color made up as much as 10 to 15 percent of the Continental Army.

Some estimates range as high as 30 percent.

The average age of the Continental Soldier was 22, although the general age range fluctuated from ages 15 to 70s.

The first oath of enlistment for the Continental Army adopted on 14 June 1775 ran as follows:

"I \_\_\_ have, this day, voluntarily enlisted myself, as a soldier, in the American continental army, for one year, unless sooner discharged: And I do bind myself to conform, in all instances, to such rules and regulations, as are, or shall be, established for the government of the said Army."

On the march, the Continental Soldier carried 45 to 60 pounds of gear, including musket, bayonet, knapsack, haversack, ammunition, blanket, and other mission-critical items.

Continental Army uniforms varied by state and branch of service. In 1779, the Continental Congress established the blue uniform coat as the color for the Army, but shortages of dye meant that many regiments wore brown or green coats until the end of the war.

The Continental Army often employed women to provide important services such as nursing, laboring, laundering, and other logistics functions.

To fill vacancies in the Continental Army, Congress assigned yearly quotas to each state, which offered recruiting inducements such as bounties and land grants. States that were unable to fill positions with volunteers resorted to drafts from the state militia.

In 1778, Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben designed the first drill regulation for the Continental Army.

Known as the "Blue Book," it synthesized European and British tactical doctrine and shaped the Continental Army into a professional fighting force.

The Continental Army provided soldiers with daily rations of meat, bread, vegetables, sugar or molasses, and beer or cider, with weekly allowances of candles and soap. However, shortages were common, and most soldiers received well below the authorized ration.

Most Continental Soldiers carried the British Short Land Service Musket ("Brown Bess"), or a locally made copy or the French Infantry Musket ("Charleville" muskets), both of which ranged between .80- to .69-caliber and weighed just over 9 pounds (12 with the addition of a bayonet).

Infantry Soldiers were expected to fire three rounds per minute.

### Weapons

The weapons of this period consisted of firelocks for infantry; pistols, firelocks, and sabers for mounted troops; and cannons for artillery.

Firelocks included flintlock muskets, carbines, fusils, rifles, and a few other, less common arms.

The musket, by far the most common arm, was loaded using a paper cartridge containing a 1-ounce ball and black powder rammed down the barrel.

A musket required 13 steps to load and fire. A good Soldier could manage about three shots per minute and reliably hit a target within 100 yards.

Rifles were accurate out to about 300 yards but took up to a minute to load. The spent black powder created enough white smoke to obscure a battlefield in a matter of minutes.

Armies often closed to less than 50 yards before firing and used the bayonet to decide the outcome of the battle.

Mounted troops, called dragoons or light horse, scouted for the army, delivered messages, and sometimes closed in with sabers to follow up a bayonet charge. Artillery softened up the enemy line or fortifications or knocked out enemy cannons.

All of these weapons required sophisticated tactics to maneuver the lines of highly disciplined troops into range to use their weapons effectively.

Infantry Soldiers of all ranks had to learn and understand the complex movements explained in works such as British army Lt. Col. Humphrey Bland's *Treatise of Military Discipline*; *The Manual Exercise, as Ordered by His Majesty in 1764*; and later Gen. Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben's *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of*



U.S. ARmy photo illustrations

the Troops of the United States, or the Blue Book.

By maintaining tightly ordered ranks, soldiers could concentrate their fire or bayonets to maximum effect. Mastery of these intricate maneuvers gave the Army of the United States the tactical proficiency to prevail on the battlefields of the Revolutionary War.

### Tactics

The Continental Army waged war using linear tactics. It fought in closely formed lines or ranks of Soldiers, usually two but sometimes three deep.

The Soldier in the front rank and the soldier in the rank behind him formed a file. Soldiers typically stood between 18 inches and 4 or 5 feet apart, depending on the type of combat.

If facing enemy infantry or mounted troops in an open field, they might form at closer order to better concentrate their fire. If fighting in woods or if facing artillery, they might open their files — increasing the distance between Soldiers — in order to get around trees and bushes or to make themselves less of a target.

Commanders sometimes ordered independent fire by files, with each pair of soldiers shooting in turn. Light infantry troops often practiced this tactic.

When firing as part of a platoon or battalion, officers gave the command to march, load, and fire.

To communicate information over the noise of the battle, drummers used different drumbeats that conveyed commands and enabled soldiers to fire in near-perfect unison.

Any missed step or unheard command could put soldiers in the wrong place and open them up to severe injury or death.

Commanders therefore demanded strict discipline to execute linear tactics. Corporals ensured that privates knew and understood their drill and kept order within the ranks.

Sergeants kept the ranks and files together on the battlefield, protected the officers, and helped them to evacuate the wounded and resupply ammunition.

Both corporals and sergeants wore an epaulette or strip of cloth on their right shoulder to show rank.

Those of the corporals were green, those of the sergeants were red. After 1779, the epaulettes were white cloth, one for corporals, and two for sergeants. Sergeants usually carried swords in addition to muskets, and early in the war sometimes carried a polearm known as a halberd.

Drummers, who also played fifes, often wore uniforms of opposite colors so that their officers could find them in the heat of battle.

Officers wore uniforms in the color of their regiments, with a sword, sash, and epaulettes to denote rank, or a long polearm called a spontoon. Immediate recognition was critical in the heat of battle, and armies of the day often wore brightly colored uniforms, if they were available, to distinguish friend from foe.

At other times, Soldiers wore simple linen hunting shirts. Few

thought about the need for camouflage, as the capabilities of the weapons that soldiers carried meant that most battles were fought in the open at relatively close range.

### Rations

The Continental Army had two types of rations.

The rations issued in a garrison, such as a fort, generally included freshly baked bread, fresh meat, and fruits and vegetables.

Rations in the field consisted of dried bread (often called ship's biscuit); salted beef (also known as corned beef) or pork; and dried peas.

Commissaries either issued beer to the Soldiers or provided an allowance to buy it.

The typical Continental Soldier should have received the following in November 1775:

- 1 pound bread or flour per day.
- 1 pound beef, 1 pound fish, or ¾ pound pork per day.
- 3 pints peas or beans, or vegetable equivalent, per week.
- 1 pint milk per day.
- ½ pint rice or Indian meal (cornbread) per day.
- 1 quart spruce beer or cider per day, or 9 gallons of molasses per company per week.

— 3 pounds candles per company per week.

— 24 pounds soft or 8 pounds hard soap per company per week.

An amended ration from 24 December 1775 authorized "corned beef or pork four days in a week, salt fish one day, and fresh beef two days." In lieu of milk during the winter, General Headquarters increased the meat ration to 1½ pounds beef and 18 ounces of pork.

The rice and cornmeal ration became a weekly rather than a daily ration. A ration of 6 ounces of butter or 9 ounces of lard per week also was added.

To cope with food shortages, Gen. Phillip Schuyler issued a general order authorizing substitutions for various foods.

For example, when only bread and pork were available, a soldier's full daily ration was 2 pounds of bread and 1 pound pork. Cooking equipment was equally simple.

On Dec. 21, 1775, Congress authorized 100 haversacks, a camp kettle for every six soldiers, as well as a cord of hickory "or other wood in proportion," and forty iron pots for cooking at the barracks.

Not much detail is known about eighteenth-century field cooking. Soldiers generally cooked their rations in tin camp kettles, initially with six soldiers to a "mess"— the term for a group of soldiers who all ate together.

There is some evidence that some soldiers may have roasted their meat over open fires, but it is more likely that most used kettles to boil the meat.

Some states, such as Pennsylvania, issued skillets when camp kettles were not available.

Read more about this history by visiting <https://history.army.mil/Revwar250/Continental-Soldier/#establishment>.



MONROE COUNTY TODAY

Where history lives: Inside one man's mission to preserve Monroe County

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

As the United States prepares to celebrate its 250th birthday, there is a natural pull to look back — to reconsider the people, places and moments that shaped the nation.

In Monroe County, Wisconsin, that reflection carries a certain irony. The county bears the name of James Monroe, the nation's fifth president, even though he never set foot in the region. Yet the story of Monroe County is not defined by its namesake, but by the generations of people who built lives there — and by one man who has spent more than two decades making sure those lives are remembered.

For more than 20 years, Jarrod Roll has served as director of the Monroe County Local History Room and Museum, a position that is at once highly visible and largely unseen.

Visitors know him as the person who can guide them through exhibits, answer obscure questions, or help trace a family lineage. But much of his work happens quietly — behind the scenes, in the steady, meticulous effort required to collect, preserve and interpret the story of an entire county.

Roll is quick to correct a common assumption about what he does.

"When I applied, it was for county historian," he said. "But I'm not a county historian... I'm a manager of a museum and archives."

It is a distinction that says as much about the evolution of the job as it does about Roll himself. The position was created in 1976, during the surge of patriotic energy surrounding the nation's bicentennial. Across the country, communities rediscovered an interest in local and family history. In Monroe County, that interest took hold in a particularly lasting way.

A bicentennial committee formed to organize celebrations quickly realized that the enthusiasm were seeing — people digging into genealogy, asking questions about their communities, wanting to preserve artifacts — should not be temporary. They approached county leaders with an idea: create a permanent space and a paid position dedicated to safeguarding Monroe County's history.

The county agreed, funding both a facility and a role that would anchor that mission for decades to come.

Looking back now, as the country approaches its 250th anniversary, the symmetry is hard to miss. The same spirit that led to the creation of Roll's position — an awareness that history matters, and that it must be actively preserved — remains just as relevant.

Roll often reflects on that origin story, not as a historical footnote, but as a responsibility.

"It was the foresight of those folks in 1976," he said. "They saw the value in it, and the county has honored that for 50 years."

Honoring that legacy has meant adapting the role to fit reality. The title "county historian" suggested a singular authority on the past, but Roll quickly realized that Monroe County's history was far too broad — and too rich — for any one person to fully know.

"There are people in this county who know way more about specific topics than I do," he said.

Instead, his job is to bring those pieces together—to create a place where knowledge can be collected, organized and shared. It is part administrator, part curator, part educator, and part collaborator. It is also, at times, an exercise in balancing priorities.

The work he enjoys most—immersing himself in research and crafting narratives—often has to wait.

"In order to write and create a presentation, I had to do it outside my normal work hours," he said. "During the day, there's no time to buckle down and start researching."

That reality reveals something essential about the nature of local historical work. It is not simply about discovering stories; it is about maintaining

the infrastructure that allows those stories to exist in the first place. Collections must be cataloged, preserved and made accessible. Exhibits must be designed. Visitors must be assisted. Partnerships must be maintained. And all of it must function within the constraints of time, funding and space.

The result, in Monroe County, is a facility that often surprises those who walk through its doors.

Roll recalls a recent visitor researching family history who was struck not just by what was available, but by how easy it was to access.

"I cannot believe how wonderful this facility is," the visitor told him.

That reaction is not uncommon, and it speaks to decades of work — not just by Roll, but by the volunteers and predecessors who helped build the collection.

"This isn't something I did by myself," he said. "We've been doing this for 50 years."

If the archives are the backbone of Roll's work, the people of Monroe County are its heart. And one of the first things he noticed when he began his job was just how deeply military service runs through the community.

"It became very clear right away," he said. "There were a lot of veterans living here."

That realization shaped some of his earliest efforts, including an exhibit on Korean War veterans that connected him with local service organizations and opened the door to countless personal stories. Over time, those connections expanded, reflecting the broader influence of Fort McCoy, the military installation that has long been central to the county's identity.

The presence of Fort McCoy has created a unique dynamic. Soldiers come to Monroe County from across the country — sometimes for training, sometimes for deployment—and many of them return later in life.

"They come back and retire here," Roll said.

It is a pattern that adds layers to the county's history, blending local and national narratives in ways that are both subtle and profound. A visitor signing the guest book might list South Carolina or Texas as their home, but their connection to Monroe County is real—formed through experience, memory and, often, a sense of belonging.

Roll sees those connections play out every day. A group of visitors walks in on a quiet afternoon. They are not from the area, but they are curious. They explore the exhibits, ask questions, and begin to see how their own experiences interact with the place.

"It's just great talking to them," he said.

Those interactions reinforce a central truth of Roll's work: history is not static. It is something people carry with them, something that evolves as new stories are added and old ones are rediscovered.

In Monroe County, those stories stretch far beyond any single theme. There is military history tied to Fort McCoy and the Veterans Administration Medical Center. There are stories of global significance, like the Japanese American soldiers who trained in the area during World War II, or the Cuban refugees who arrived in 1980, bringing an international dimension to a rural Wisconsin community.

There are also deeply personal stories — like those of families displaced during World War II to make way for military expansion. Roll recalls one volunteer who still remembers that moment vividly, even though she was only a child at the time.

"She remembers her mom crying," he said.

Such memories underscore the human impact of historical events, reminding visitors that history is not just a series of dates and facts, but a collection of lived experiences.

Beyond those narratives, Monroe County's identity has been shaped by geography and movement. Long before modern infrastructure, the area sat at the crossroads of early travel routes — paths that would later become state roads, then rail lines, and eventually major highways. Each layer of transpor-



Photos by Theresa Fitzgerald

Jarrod Roll, the Monroe County Local History Room director in Sparta, Wis., speaks as an organizer in the "Lost Voices of Mariel" Panel that answered questions Feb. 13, 2020, at the Monroe County Local History Room. The panel recalled the 1980 Cuban Refugee Program at Fort McCoy. In 1980, the Mariel Boatlift brought 14,000 people to the refugee compound at Fort McCoy. An exhibit and this panel explored the lives of the Cuban refugees who began their journey in the United States and how the event impacted Monroe County.

ation brought new opportunities, new people, and new stories.

"Sparta was at the crossroads of two state roads," Roll explained.

That position helped accelerate development, turning the county into a hub of activity. Even today, the legacy of those early routes can be seen in the region's continued growth and connectivity.

Yet for all its connections to broader networks, Monroe County has retained a strong sense of local identity. It remains, in many ways, a rural place — one where agriculture has played a central role for generations, even as economic changes reshape the landscape.

There is, Roll notes, a quiet pride in that continuity.

"People will tell you they're third or fourth generation," he said.

That pride is not just about longevity; it is about belonging. It is about the sense that, despite change, there is something enduring about the community.

For Roll, capturing that sense is just as important as preserving artifacts or documents. History, after all, is not only what happened — it is how peo-

ple understand what happened, and how they carry that understanding forward.

As the nation approaches its 250th anniversary, that work takes on added urgency. Milestones invite reflection, but they also raise questions about what will be remembered and what might be lost.

In Monroe County, those questions are answered, in part, by the steady work of one man and the institution he helps lead. Day by day, Jarrod Roll gathers the fragments of the past — stories, records, memories—and ensures they remain accessible to the present.

The county may be named for a president who never knew it, but its true history lies in the people who have lived there, served there, and passed through its crossroads. And thanks to Roll, those stories—large and small, local and global—are not slipping away. They are being preserved, shared, and carried forward, ready to be rediscovered by the next generation as America begins its next chapter.

Learn more about Monroe County history by visiting the Monroe County Local History Room in Sparta, Wis., or go online to <https://monroecountyhistory.org>.



Photo by Kaleen Holliday

Former Fort McCoy Senior Enlisted Advisor Command Sgt. Maj. Raquel DiDomenico is pictured with Jarrod Roll on Nov. 22, 2021, during the opening reception for a new holiday exhibit at the Monroe County Local History Room that featured a 1960's theme.



Courtesy photo

Jarrod Roll, director of the Monroe County Local History Room and Museum, speaks to visitors Dec. 30, 2025, during an event with Lego masters from Eau Claire, Wis., at the Deke Slayton Museum in Sparta, Wis.



Courtesy photo

Jarrod Roll (left) is pictured with staff members and volunteers in November 2024 for an event at the Monroe County Local History Room and Museum.

# MONROE COUNTY HISTORICAL PHOTOS

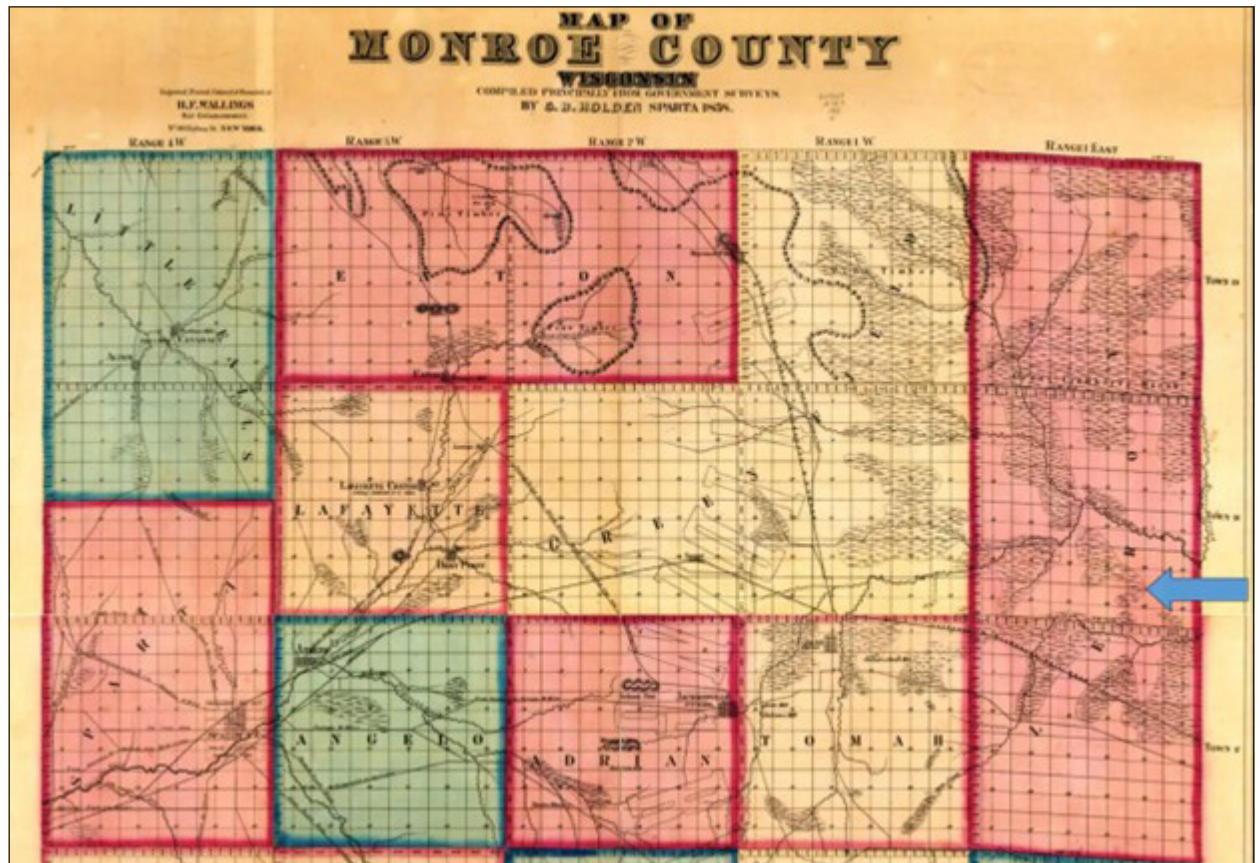


Monroe County Local History Room archive photos

A Veterans Day parade is shown taking place on Camp McCoy on Nov. 11, 1943, during the installation's time training service members for fighting in World War II.



This photo is of a large crowd gathered under the wooden arches erected at the intersection of Water and Oak Streets in Sparta for the welcome home parade on May 19, 1919, for the 32nd Infantry Division returning from overseas following the end of World War I. The arches remained up until 1933.



Did you know Monroe County used to have a township called Leroy? This 1858 Monroe County, Wis., map shows it at the right encompassing what is now Scott, Byron, and Oakdale Townships. Leroy was later renamed Oakdale after the mail kept getting confused with Elroy.



Photo shows construction work on the Chicago & North Western Railroad in Tunnel City, Wis., in 1911. Did you know that Monroe County has six railroad tunnels? Three are in Tunnel City and three are on what is now the Elroy-Sparta Bike Trail. This tunnel is located just a few miles from Fort McCoy.



This is a photograph of a group of people by the stone pillars Camp McCoy sign on South Post in 1947. The area still stands today and was built by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s.



In honor of the anniversary of Pearl Harbor (Dec. 7), here's a photo of three Pearl Harbor survivors from Monroe County in front of a military exhibit at the Monroe County Local History Room in 2001. Pictured are: Bill Richgruber, Walter Friske, and Spencer Olsen.

**TRAINING**

# Fort McCoy NCO Academy's Battle Staff NCO Course 004-26 students hold Combined Arms Rehearsal

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

Students with the Battle Staff Non-commissioned Officer (NCO) Course held their end-of-course Combined Arms Rehearsal (CAR) on April 1 at the academy with Fort McCoy Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Chad Holder serving in support of the training event.

The future enlisted leaders of the Army Reserve, National Guard, and active-component units who were in the course combined their experience from the course to hold the rehearsal, Fort McCoy NCO Academy officials said — the institutional training venue that manages the course.

The CAR is the culminating event for the course, officials said. It synchronizes what the students have been doing for 22 days at Fort McCoy. One of the main points of having the CAR is to synchronize each battalion, so that way then the brigade can understand exactly what's going on. It also gives the picture to the other battalions on what's going on across the entire battle space.

Holder served as a simulated brigade commander receiving the briefing during the CAR.

Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Caires, course director for the Battle Staff NCO Course, described the course training.

"Here at Fort McCoy NCOA, our Battle Staff Course consists of 159 academic hours," Caires said.

"One-hundred-eleven of those hours are just military decision-making processes on its own. Our course here has key topics such as mission command, command and control, Army operations, multi-domain operations, and large-scale combat operations."

The Fort McCoy NCO Academy's course description further details what students learn.

"The course provides technical training that is relevant to missions, duties, and responsibilities of an assigned battle staff NCO at the battalion and above echelons," the description states.

"NCOs attending the course will be assessed on their ability to write, depict graphics, facilitate a brief, and contribute to the military decision-making process."

The Army's NCO Leadership Center of Excellence, available at <https://www.ncoworldwide.army.mil>, further defines what Soldiers learn while attending the course.

"The Battle Staff NCO Course is 175 total hours, covers 30 lessons with 10 overarching topics throughout the foundations, mission command, military decision-making process, and combined arms rehearsal modules," a course pamphlet at the website states. "The course provides training that is relevant to missions, duties, and responsibilities assigned to staff NCOs working in battalion and higher positions, both on the battlefield and in garrison environments."

Caires said the course has Soldiers from all Army components being trained in the course. And the course supports NCOs in the ranks from staff sergeant to master sergeant.

One of the students from Class 004-26, Sgt. 1st Class Ashley White with 10th Battalion, Army Reserve Careers Group, said she did extra preparation for attending the course.

"I jumped on (the internet) and bought myself a battle staff book," White said. "I read through the whole thing. I heard it was a pretty challenging course. I have a drill sergeant unit that's under my footprint, so I used some of my drill sergeants and their experience to help me with map overlays and reading maps."

Another student in Class 004-26, Staff Sgt. Sydney Parks with the 844th Engineer Battalion, added, "For myself, I went through the welcome letter, read through some of that, and then being in a combat engineering unit, I have a lot of people that have gone through courses like this, so gaining information from them was a big help."

White's advice for any future students attending the course might prove helpful.

"I would honestly just say get with your peers, make sure you're networking, ask everyone who might be in an operational and tactical MOS to help you if you are in support MOS and be prepared to talk doctrine," White said.

Parks added, "Talking to your peers is a huge aspect of this and learning from those around you to include within the course and then, of course, making Field Manual 5-0 your best friend is going to be a good aspect."

The Fort McCoy NCO Academy holds several sessions of the Battle Staff NCO Course throughout each fiscal year at Fort McCoy.

The Fort McCoy NCO Academy's mission is to "train and develop adaptive, agile, disciplined, fit, and professional leaders who are ready to 'Lead the Way' in any environment."

The academy's vision is to be "the Army's premier NCO Academy with the best people experiencing the finest quality of life in the military."

Learn more about the academy by visiting <https://www.usar.army.mil/Commands/US-Army-Reserve-Command-USARC/Fort-McCoy-Main/Fort-McCoy/BSC>.



**(All photos) Students participate April 1 in the Fort McCoy Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy's Battle Staff NCO Course combined arms rehearsal event at the academy at Fort McCoy, Wis. The Fort McCoy NCO Academy holds several sessions of the Battle Staff NCO Course throughout each fiscal year at Fort McCoy.**



## NCO Academy students conduct field training for Basic Leader Course Class 004-26

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

Students in the Basic Leader Course Class 004-26 with the Fort McCoy Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy held Collective Individual Training (CIT) on the Bayonet Course on the installation cantonment area March 27 as part of a graded field training course assessment.

The Basic Leader Course is the first level of leadership course for enlisted Soldiers in the Army. Academy Commandant, Command Sgt. Maj. Jason Kirkman, said the CIT being completed by the Soldiers was an important section of training in their course.

"This is a graded assessment where these young students will be demonstrating and teaching these collective skills to their peers," Kirkman said. "This is a graded assessment to ensure that they know the proper techniques of conducting these courses so they can take it back to their home station."

The students were distributed throughout the training area to complete the tasks set before them.

According to requirements, collective training at the NCO Academy is conducted in small collaborative groups using the Army Experiential Learning Model.

This includes:

- Team-level exercises simulating real-world scenarios.
- Tactical drills and live-fire or obstacle courses.
- Mission command practice using troop-leading procedures to plan and execute operations.
- Joint leadership activities where students apply leadership in group settings. These activities build cohesion, decision-making, and the ability to lead in complex environments.

With individual training, it's based on the Army's Warrior Task and Soldier's Manuals, which define the critical individual tasks for each military occupational specialty.

The NCOs use these to:

- Identify mission essential task list tasks relevant to the unit's mission.
- Plan and conduct individual training to ensure Soldiers can perform these tasks to the required standard, and more.

Class 004-26 graduated in late March. Kirkman discussed upcoming changes to the Basic Leader Course as well.

"In addition to the course duration being increased to 29 days, we're also adding more rigor to focus on warfighting functions," Kirkman said. "To have these students go back and be able to perform again, much like the Collective Individual Training that they're conducting ... to go back and take these warfighting functions back to their home station."

The Fort McCoy NCO Academy's mission is to "train and develop adaptive, agile, disciplined, fit, and professional leaders who are ready to 'Lead the Way' in any environment." The academy's vision is to be "the Army's premier NCO Academy with the best people experiencing the finest quality of life in the military."

The academy trains hundreds of Soldiers each year in the Basic Leader Course and the Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer Course. Learn more about the academy by visiting <https://www.usar.army.mil/Commands/US-Army-Reserve-Command/Fort-McCoy-Main/NCOA-Fort-McCoy>.



**(All photos) Students in the Basic Leader Course Class 004-26 with the Fort McCoy Noncommissioned Officer Academy hold Collective Individual Training on the Bayonet Course on the installation cantonment area March 27 at Fort McCoy, as part of a graded field training course assessment.**



the Total Force and Shaping the Future since 1909."

The installation's mission: "Fort McCoy strengthens Total Force Readiness by serving as a training center, Mobilization Force Generation Installation, and Strategic Support Area enabling warfighter lethality to deploy, fight, and win our nation's wars."

And Fort McCoy's vision is, "To be the premier

training center supporting the most capable, combat-ready, and lethal armed forces."

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.

## COMMUNITY

## Six months along, Fort McCoy Garrison Headquarters project moving along steadily

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Six months in, renovation work of the U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters, Building 100, has steadily made progress ever since it began Oct. 1.

The work involves a complete overhaul of the building that was originally built 80-plus years ago in 1942, said Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Engineering Division Chief Dan Coburn.

The contract to complete the renovation, Coburn said, 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 in a previous news article. "Construction ... is expected to take one year."

Over the past six months, the appearance of the building has changed many times — often to adjust for the colder weather of winter. But as the "complete gut and repair" of the facility moves forward, each day it appears to be that much closer to being completed.

DPW officials said the overall project is approximately 50 percent complete.

Back in 1942, the Fort McCoy Garrison Headquarters building was part of a much larger, rapid expansion of the post during World War II, when Fort McCoy (then known as Camp McCoy) was transformed from a quiet training site into a major "New Camp" cantonment for mobilizing and training troops, history shows.

In 1942, after the U.S. entry into World War II, the War Department authorized and funded construction of an expanded cantonment area at Camp McCoy to house and train tens of thousands of Soldiers. Construction of the cantonment began in early 1942, with grading and building work starting around March after engineers surveyed the site in 1941.

During that intense build-out, more than 1,500 buildings were erected in a matter of months as part of the base's "New Camp" effort. These included barracks, support facilities, administrative buildings, and headquarters structures. The headquarters building was among these original World War II-era structures built as part of that cantonment. It was designed to support command, operations, and administrative functions for the base's wartime training mission.

The buildings erected in 1942, including the headquarters, were typically temporary wooden structures meant to support a wartime surge in training capacity, history shows. They were built quickly but robustly enough to last through the war



Contractors work on a renovation of the U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Headquarters on April 17 (above) and March 23 (below) at Fort McCoy. Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works officials said renovation construction began on Oct. 1 and continues. The contract to complete the renovation was awarded to R.J. Jurovski Construction, headquartered in Whitehall, Wis., for \$5.4 million.



and into subsequent decades of use. Fort McCoy's expansion in 1942 was a major national defense project — more than 8,000 workers participated, and the total cost for the mobilization cantonment exceeded \$30 million (about half a billion in today's dollars).

Fort McCoy itself dates back to 1909 as a train-

ing and maneuver area; it expanded massively in 1942 as wartime needs increased, history further shows. The installation continued to evolve after World War II, being designated a permanent training center in the 1970s and receiving new construction in later decades, but the garrison headquarters building's roots are in that pivotal World War II

expansion.

Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works officials said once the headquarters is fully renovated, it will have modern design and features that bring it to code in the 21st century. If the renovation only takes a year, it will be completed at the end of September.

## April is Alcohol Awareness Month: Officials note it's a time for reflection, healthy choices

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, providing an opportunity for the Fort McCoy community to reflect on the role alcohol plays in our lives and to promote responsible decision-making. Understanding the effects of alcohol and making informed choices contributes to a healthier and more resilient community.

Excessive alcohol use can have significant impacts, affecting physical and mental health, relationships, and overall well-being. It's linked to various health problems, including liver disease, heart conditions, and certain types of cancer. Additionally, alcohol misuse can increase the risk of accidents, injuries, and mental health challenges.

Fort McCoy offers comprehensive resources to support individuals and families concerned about alcohol use. The Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) provides confidential counseling, educational programs, and referrals to treatment services for military personnel, civilian employees, and family members.

This Alcohol Awareness Month, consider taking steps to prioritize your health and well-being:

Evaluate your drinking habits: Reflect on your alcohol consumption patterns and consider whether they align with your health and personal goals.

Set reasonable limits: If you choose to drink, establish moderate limits for yourself and stick to them.

Plan ahead for social events: If you anticipate consuming alcohol, arrange for a designated driver or alternative transportation.

Seek support when needed: Don't hesitate to reach out to the ASAP office for confidential guidance and support.

Fort McCoy's ASAP stands ready to assist those seeking information, support, or resources related to alcohol use.

For more information, contact the ASAP office at 502-898-2441/5955.

Let's work together to build a healthier and safer environment for everyone at Fort McCoy.

(Article prepared by the Army Substance Abuse Program Office at Fort McCoy.)

## APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

**MYTH:**

- Alcohol only affects your mood
- Alcohol is the best outlet to relax and reduce stress

**REALITY:**

- By cutting back on alcohol consumption, you can see changes in everyday life such as:
  - More Energy
  - Better Sleep
  - Improved mood
  - Better physical health
- Alcohol increases stress levels on the body. Adrenaline levels increase in the body as we drink. We may feel more relaxed when we drink alcohol, but the body actually comes under additional stress.

**ADDITIONAL FACTS:**

- Beer, wine, and liquor all have different amounts of alcohol
- Each drink's amount of alcohol may vary
  - 12 ounces of beer (5% alcohol)
  - 8 ounces of malt liquor (7% alcohol)
  - 5 ounces of wine (12% alcohol)
  - 1.5 ounces of a "shot" of 80-proof (40% alcohol) spirits or liquor

**FOR MORE INFO/HELP CONTACT:**

- ADAPT: (850) 283-7511
- SAMHSA National Helpline: 1-800-662-Help

The percent of "pure" alcohol, expressed here as alcohol by volume (alc/vol), varies by beverage.

U.S. Air Force graphic by Senior Airman Jacob Dastas

## Fort McCoy team members support April 2026 local natural resources committee meeting

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy staff provided updates about the installation's natural resources-related efforts April 13 during the April 2026 meeting of the Monroe County (Wis.) Natural Resource and Extension Committee.

The monthly committee includes members Nodji VanWyche, Joey Esterline, Cedric Schnitzler, Doug Rogalla, Todd Sparks, and Paul Zastophil 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 and other post personnel.

During the April meeting, 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.

The Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office discussed current news and events related to the committee.

Among those accomplishments in Fort McCoy natural resources management Rood mentioned from March 2026 in the meeting were:

— **In fisheries management, personnel placed 38 thermographs** to monitor stream and air temperatures from April through September.

— **Fisheries personnel also collected temperature-dissolved oxygen data on nine lakes.** For end of winter, dissolved oxygen remained high in all lakes monitored. East Silver Lake was not sur-



Members of the Monroe County Natural Resource and Extension Committee meets in Sparta, Wis., on April 13.

veyed in March due to poor ice conditions.

— **Fisheries managers monitored ice-out dates on all Fort McCoy lakes.** Ice-out dates for all lakes were within their historical ranges. Suukjak Sep Lake, Stillwell Lake, North Flowage, and Lost Lake all held ice longer than the others. These lakes began to open up during warm temperatures in mid-March until a cold front came through the area and therefore did not open up completely until later in March.

— **Fisheries personnel also conducted eight creel surveys.** Only two anglers were interviewed during this time. Both were fishing on the North Flowage for largemouth bass. The lack of anglers is likely due to a mix of poor ice conditions and the closing of all lakes but the North Flowage and Lost Lake beginning on March 2. No stream anglers were observed fishing the early catch and release stream trout season.

— **Natural resources fisheries personnel updated seven lake kiosks** with a sign informing anglers of the new stream trout harvest season that began on April 4. It also informed anglers this season only includes Fort McCoy streams and not the lakes or impoundments.

— **Fisheries management sent life history information on 16 recaptured tagged fish** to one angler. All were largemouth bass from either the North Flowage or Lost Lake.

— **Fisheries personnel also began fyke netting surveys on the North Flowage** on March 30. These surveys will continue through early to mid-May to monitor populations, length at age, and body condition of all fish species within the lake.

— **In forestry management, personnel aided customers and answered questions for firewood permits.** They also coordinated efforts to

add firewood to piles along Highway 16 and Arcadia Avenue.

— **Forestry also began coordination and submitted administrative paperwork for the cantonment Arbor Day tree planting event** where 500 red pine seedlings will be planted.

— **Forestry personnel also managed efforts in reopening Fort McCoy to logging activities.** The forestry technician managed three active timber sales.

— **Forestry and other natural resources personnel supported prescribed burns** that have been conducted on Ranges 6, 29, 31A, 100 series ranges, and a portion of the North Impact Area for fuel reduction. A total of 998.5 acres were burned for fuel reduction purposes during March.

— **In threatened and endangered species management, personnel caught and processed the first Blanding's Turtles of the season.**

— **Personnel also conducted eagle nest checks** and there were no activity at nest sites.

— **Threatened and endangered species personnel also tested telemetry equipment and checked South Post Blanding's turtle and snake locations** (turtles haven't moved from hibernaculum) during March. They also prepared materials for herp processing and inventoried transmitters, updated and prepared bat monitors for deployment, uploaded 9 deployments to the NABAT website, submitted bat report for review, and submitted bat summary for review.

— **In invasive species management, personnel spent one day committed to fire training** and several days to fire break maintenance during March. Additionally, a snowstorm limited what work could be accomplished for a time period. Personnel completed .65 acres of poison sumac

treatments (not counted in invasives). They also conducted 7.5 acres of habitat shredding in Training Area C16. While this area did contain glossy buckthorn, it was not counted as invasive acres. One contract shredder and one contract spray crew conducted work during March as well. Personnel did follow up hand cutting in the contractor shred area to remove missed tall buckthorns so they can be foliar sprayed with the shred plants next summer.

— **Staff participated in a planning meeting** for the Monroe County Invasive Species Working Group's Field Day at Fort McCoy, which is scheduled for June 11 at Pine View Campground.

— **Staff are also collaborating with the Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference** field trip committee to potentially hold a field trip on Fort McCoy in conjunction with the conference scheduled Oct. 6-8 in La Crosse.

— **In wildlife management activity, personnel continued work on the annual review and update** for the Fort McCoy Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Rules and Regulations (Fort McCoy Regulation 420-29). Met with the other directorates/working group for discussion on all recommendations. Proposed changes have been made to the regulation based on the recommendations of the working group. Once maps are completed, the Fort McCoy Regulation 420-29 will be sent back around to working group members for any last minute changes prior to being submitted for the administrative process for garrison commander/senior commander approval/signature.

— **Wildlife management personnel worked with Permit Sales** and the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security to set spring turkey permit quotas during March. A drawing was held during the first week in March with all permits/harvest authorizations applied to user accounts. No leftover permits/harvest authorizations were available, and there were 460 permits issued.

— **Wildlife management personnel coordinated a volunteer blue bird box monitoring program** meeting on March 25. Roughly 40 boxes were built over the winter to replace any damaged boxes from last year. Boxes are closed up and volunteers have started monitoring, blue birds were documented back in the area in late February and early March.

— **During March, wild turkey and ruffed grouse surveys started.**

COMMUNITY

# 2026 Fort McCoy fishing season begins May 2

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

The 2026 Fort McCoy fishing season opens May 2, concurrent with the Wisconsin general inland fishing season opener.

Fishing on installation lakes and flowages is allowed May 2 through March 1, 2027, 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 2 to Oct. 15.

Fort McCoy has 10 installation lakes and impoundments and approximately 71.2 miles of cold-water 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.

"The general inland waters fishing seasons opens on Saturday, May 2, at 5 a.m.," said Rood.

"This year the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources changed the start date for the inland trout season which applies to streams, springs and spring ponds, to the first Saturday in April at 5 a.m. Fort McCoy streams will be open on the same dates as the Wisconsin inland stream season. This change applies only to streams on Fort McCoy. There are no springs or spring ponds on Fort McCoy.

"Fort McCoy lakes/ponds are closed to all fishing activities from the end of the general open season on March 1 until May 2 at 5 a.m. (except Lost Lake and North Flowage)," Rood said.

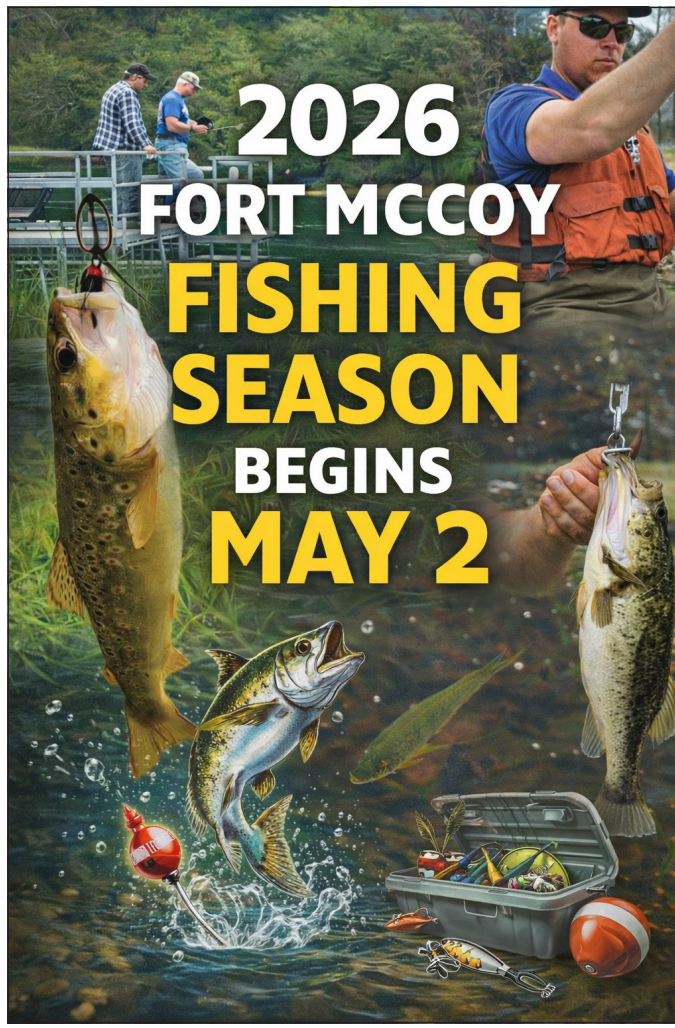
Rood said the May opening is often one of the busiest two days for angling on Fort McCoy as anglers pursue rainbow trout in some of the lakes. This year should not be any different, as Fort McCoy will again be stocking six lakes with rainbow trout. This is a tradition that began in 1963 and has been carried on for more than 60 years and totaling over 1.2 million rainbow trout stocked over that period.

"Creel survey results show that over 60 percent of Fort McCoy anglers will pursue rainbow trout at some point throughout the season," Rood said in a past news article.

"Stocking will be the same as previous years," Rood said. "Six lakes/impoundments on Fort McCoy will be stocked with rainbow trout — Big Sandy Lake, Sandy Lake, Sparta Pond, Stillwell Lake, Suukjak Sep Lake, and Swamp Pond. Stocking densities will be consistent with previous years and are based on lake size, fishing pressure, and the native fish community population.

Anglers must have the appropriate Wisconsin licenses to fish on post, as well. This includes a general Wisconsin fishing license, a trout stamp if fishing for trout, and the Fort McCoy fishing permit.

The cost of a Fort McCoy annual fishing permit is \$13 for people aged 16 and older. Permits for youth under 16, seniors, and disabled anglers and four-day fishing permits are \$8. All are available for purchase through the iSportsman website, <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>.



"All Fort McCoy permits, including the iSportsman Annual Access Pass expire on March 31 each year," Rood said. "This means anyone interested in participating in recreational activities on Fort McCoy will need to log into their iSportsman account and acquire new permits for the activity they wish to participate in. For all hunting, fishing, and trapping permits, a state of Wisconsin license is required in addition to a Fort McCoy permit.

"Also, as a reminder, a free annual access pass is required for everyone participating in recreational activities including non-hunting/non-fishing activities such as hiking, dog walking, or berry picking," Rood said.

All anglers are also reminded to check the iSportsman system each day for lake and training area closures to ensure the water they intend to fish is open for that day, Rood said.

All permits for hunting, fishing, and firewood cutting at Fort McCoy must be purchased through iSportsman and an iSportsman account is required to purchase any of these permits.

"Anglers are also asked to please remember to display a card or sheet of paper with your iSportsman account number on the dashboard of your vehicle," Rood said.

Anglers have plenty of options for fishing too. North Flowage and Lost Lake on Fort McCoy's North Post are open year-round for pan-fish, such as bluegill, and are available for the Wisconsin bass catch-and-release season all throughout the year at times outside the regular fishing season.

For trout fishing, with the exception of Silver Creek, there is a bag limit of five trout with no size restrictions. There is a special regulation for trout caught at Silver Creek from the western installation boundary to the bridge at the West Silver wetland (bag limit is three trout, no minimum length, artificial lures only). The Fort McCoy fishing map also available on the Fort McCoy iSportsman website, is highlighted in orange along Silver Creek to distinguish the special regulation area.

There also will be a Free Fishing Weekend on June 6-7 in Wisconsin and at Fort McCoy. No licenses or permits are needed, but all bag limits and other rules apply. Fort McCoy rules and regulations can be found online using the Fort McCoy iSportsman web site, <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>, and selecting the "Regulations" tab from the menu. Rules and regulations and maps are also available at the Hunter Information Point (HIP) located along State Highway 21 at the intersection of South J Street and State Highway 21 and will be open year-round.

"The Free Fishing Weekend is an excellent time for people to come out and see all the fantastic fishing areas we have here," Rood said.

Anglers are required to call the iSportsman Game Line at 866-277-1597 or visit the iSportsman website for updated fishing area closures before going out.

People interested in renting fishing equipment at Fort McCoy can do so through Recreational Equipment Checkout with the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation at Pine View Campground. Available equipment includes fishing poles, kayaks, and canoes. Varying rates apply. To find out more, visit <https://mccoy.armymwr.com/programs/recreational-equipment-checkout-outdoor-recreation> or call the Pine View Campground office at 502-898-3517/2619.

To see the latest Wisconsin fishing information, go to <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing/seasons>.

And for more about Fort McCoy fishing rules, review the fishing regulation at <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>. All fishing, hunting and related Fort McCoy regulations were updated as of September 2025.

(The Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch contributed to this article.)

## Fort McCoy's Pine View Campground set to open for 2026 season on May 1

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL  
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy's Pine View Campground will be open for the 2026 season beginning May 1, said Supervisory Recreational Specialist Alex Karis with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

"We are looking forward to another fun-filled summer of camping at Pine View and hope to see everyone come out and stay with us," Karis said.

The campground has a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities available to people who want to stop by this unique campground nestled in Pine View Recreation Area. Pine View Campground is part of the Pine View Recreation Area.

Celebrating 54 years of use in 2026, Pine View Recreation Area includes hundreds of acres of publicly accessible land with miles of hiking trails, the La Crosse River that's home to several species of trout, Trout Falls on the La Crosse River, Suukjak Sep Lake and Suukjak Sep Creek, the campground, and Whitetail Ridge Ski Area.

"Pine View Recreation Area offers four-season, year-round activities to include camping, hiking, fishing, and more," Karis said. "In ... the entire Pine View Recreation Area there's opportunities to enjoy some fantastic outdoor recreation opportunities.

One activity includes participating in Wisconsin's fishing season, which prospective anglers can partake along the La Crosse River in the Pine View Recreation Area near the campground. Anglers must have the required Fort McCoy fishing license and related Wisconsin fishing license and trout stamp to be able to fish on the installation. Learn more about fishing rules and requirements for Fort McCoy by visiting the Fort McCoy iSportsman page at <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>.

"Suukjak Sep Lake also offers a place for anglers to try their hand at fishing," Karis said.

The lake was formerly known as Squaw Lake. The new name, Suukjak Sep, translates to "black wolf" in the Ho-Chunk language and was renamed recently. The lake is a man-made impoundment on Suukjak Sep Creek which was also recently renamed. The creek itself was named Squaw Creek sometime in the mid-1800s.

Every spring the lake is stocked with hundreds of rainbow trout, too, and it has a natural population of other species of fish to include bluegill and bass. Fort McCoy fishing rules also apply for Suukjak Sep Lake and all permits and licenses are required. Refer to the Fort McCoy iSportsman website, <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>, for more information.

And another great outdoor recreation opportunity for the public to see and visit are the Pine View Recreation Area hiking trails, Karis said.



— comfort stations (toilets/showers).

— camp store (retail items, such as wood, are available via delivery to sites).

— yurts, tent sites, and basic electric sites.

— playgrounds and pavilions.

— basketball, volleyball, and horseshoes areas.

And for 2026, Karis said the campground will have the following activities planned:

— Kentucky Derby Viewing event will be on May 2.

— Down and Dirty Trail Run is June 20.

— Christmas in July is July 25.

— Haunted Trails is Aug. 22.

— Electric or motorized bikes and scooters are prohibited at Pine View Campground.

— There will be a weekly movie showing at 6 p.m. on Saturday evenings on the E-Trailer.

— Axe throwing trailer will be available Fridays through Sundays for \$10 per hour per person.

Karis added, "We have exceptional camp sites, cabins, and more. I encourage everyone to pay us a visit."

The campground reservation office is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. To reserve a site or a cabin, call 502-898-3517. For additional information, such as rates and fees, go to <https://mccoy.armymwr.com/programs/pine-view-campground>.

(The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation contributed to this article.)

### Celebrate Armed Forces Day with us!



## FORT MCCOY Armed Forces Day Open House

Saturday, May 16th, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

At the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area

NEWS NOTES/FACILITIES



**NEED A FAST AND CONVENIENT WAY TO WASH YOUR GSA VEHICLES?**

**THE MWR CAR WASH NOW ACCEPTS THE WEX FLEET CARDS**

Come and see us at MWR Headquarters Building 1668 to purchase your tokens to wash your GSA Vehicles at the MWR Car Wash.

502.898.3011 @FortMcCoyMWR

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICES QUARTERLY

# BENEFITS BRIEFING

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 (8211)

TO REGISTER, CALL 502-898-2359 OR EMAIL: [jesse.k.ogundu.civ@army.mil](mailto:jesse.k.ogundu.civ@army.mil)

SOLDIERS, SPOUSES, RETIRES, AND FAMILY MEMBERS ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND. ALL costs are paid by Military, Defense, Office of Management and Enterprise Services and regulated by the VA. Veterans, spouses, retirees, and their dependents are not eligible for this briefing. For more information, please contact the ACSI office at 502-898-2359.

*Celebrate Armed Forces Day with us!*



**FORT MCCOY**  
**Armed Forces Day Open House**  
 Saturday, May 16th, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
 At the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area

**Free, Family Friendly, Open to the Public!**

Come celebrate Armed Forces Day with a walk through our History Center, Equipment Park, the Veteran's Memorial Plaza and five World War II barracks. Lots of booths and kids activities!

Guests must enter the installation through Gate 20 along Hwy 21 between Sparta and Tomah, Wis. Signs will be setup along Hwy 21 directing traffic to the event. Adult guests must be prepared to show REAL ID and proof of vehicle insurance to enter the base.

**SALUTE TO SERVICE LUNCHEON**

To honor the men & women who serve our nation's Armed Forces, Fort McCoy MWR is hosting a complimentary buffet lunch for Active Duty, National Guard & Military Retirees.

**THURSDAY MAY 7, 2026**  
**AT MCCOY'S COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**FROM 11:00AM - 1:00PM**

Free meal available to the first 250 participants. First come, first served. One meal per person. Must present valid Military ID card to be eligible. Dependents/spouses not eligible. Additional meals may be purchased for \$13.50.

USA, GARY NEUMANN, LA CROSSE, VETERO

**MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH**

MCCOY'S COMMUNITY CENTER

MAY 10 | 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

\$32 ADULT • \$15 KIDS 6-13 • FREE KIDS 5 & UNDER

CHOOSE BETWEEN 3 SEATING TIMES: 10:00am - 11:30am • 12:00pm - 1:30pm • 2:00pm - 3:30pm

502.898.2065 @FortMcCoyMWR

**VETERAN'S WELCOME CEREMONY 10 AM, PERSONALIZED ID TAGS, FOOD FOR PURCHASE, AND MUCH MORE!**

Come celebrate Armed Forces Day with a walk through our History Center, Equipment Park, the Veteran's Memorial Plaza and five World War II barracks. Lots of booths and kids activities!

Guests must enter the installation through Gate 20 along Hwy 21 between Sparta and Tomah, Wis. Signs will be setup along Hwy 21 directing traffic to the event. Adult guests must be prepared to show REAL ID and proof of vehicle insurance to enter the base.

**Next issue of The Real McCoy**

The May 2026 edition of [The Real McCoy](http://TheRealMcCoy) will be published May 15, 2026. The deadline for submissions or article ideas is May 10, 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**  
 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

**Other Dining**

**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.

# facilities services

This schedule is projected through May 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.**

**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.

**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://www.aespm.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.sportsman.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.mccoy.asc.mbx.lrc-pppo@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.mccoy.asc.mbx.lrc-pppo@army.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.

**dier 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 [stojalowsky@magellanhealth.com](mailto:stojalowsky@magellanhealth.com) and [meyert@magellanhealth.com](mailto:meyert@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.

**School Age/Youth Center:** Building 1792. Activities for youth kindergarten through 12th grade. Offers after-school, non-school, and inclement weather care for eligible youth. Open: M-F: 6:30 am - 5:30 pm; Summer & Non-School Days: 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm. After School Call: 502-898-4373. Childcare requests should be made at <https://public.militarychildcare.csd.disa.mil/mcc-central/mcchome>.

**Health Care**

**Alcoholics Anonymous:** For more information, call 502-898-5955/2441.

**Fort McCoy Civilian Employee Assistance Program:** Screening and referral services for civilian employees and family members experiencing difficulties due to problems related to substance abuse, mental health, marital/family discord, or other causes. By appointment only. Call 502-898-2441/5955.

**Fort McCoy Sexual Harassment/Assault Response & Prevention (SHARP):** 24/7 hot-line: 502-898-3000.

**Occupational Health Clinic:** Building 1679. Open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 502-898-8461.

**TRICARE:** TRICARE North Region, 877-874-2273; TRICARE West Region, 877-988-9378; TRICARE South Region, 800-444-5445; TRICARE for Life, 866-773-0404; or [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).

**Veterans Crisis Phone Number:** New option by dialing 988 and pressing 1. Veterans may still reach the Veterans Crisis Line with the previous phone number — 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1.

**Worship**

**Catholic:** Chapel 10, building 1759. 9:15 a.m. Sun. Call 502-898-3528. **Protestant:** Building 50. 11:30 a.m. Sun. 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. **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.

**USO Wisconsin at Fort McCoy:** Building 1501. 10th Ave. For more information or to volunteer, call 414-477-7279 or email [eskol@uso.org](mailto:eskol@uso.org).

**Warrant Officers Association, Chapter 0317:** For more information email [usawomccoy@outlook.com](mailto:usawomccoy@outlook.com).

**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.sportsman.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.

**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 [darril.hawkins.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:darril.hawkins.ctr@mail.mil) to schedule tests. Email [connie.j.schauer.civ@mail.mil](mailto: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](mailto: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. Tuesdays from 7:30 a.m. to noon. Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please schedule appointments at <https://idco.dmdc.osd.mil/idool/>. (If times are available, you can schedule same-day appointments). We WILL NOT be able to accept walk-ins during appointment times and customers will be advised to schedule an appointment or return during walk-in hours. Emergency PIN resets WILL BE authorized and taken around customers with scheduled appointments.

**Walk-in Services:** Mondays and Fridays ONLY from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Walk-ins are on a first come, first serve basis. Extended wait times are expected during walk-in hours with a chance that you may not be serviced at all. It is always best to schedule. 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.

**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>.

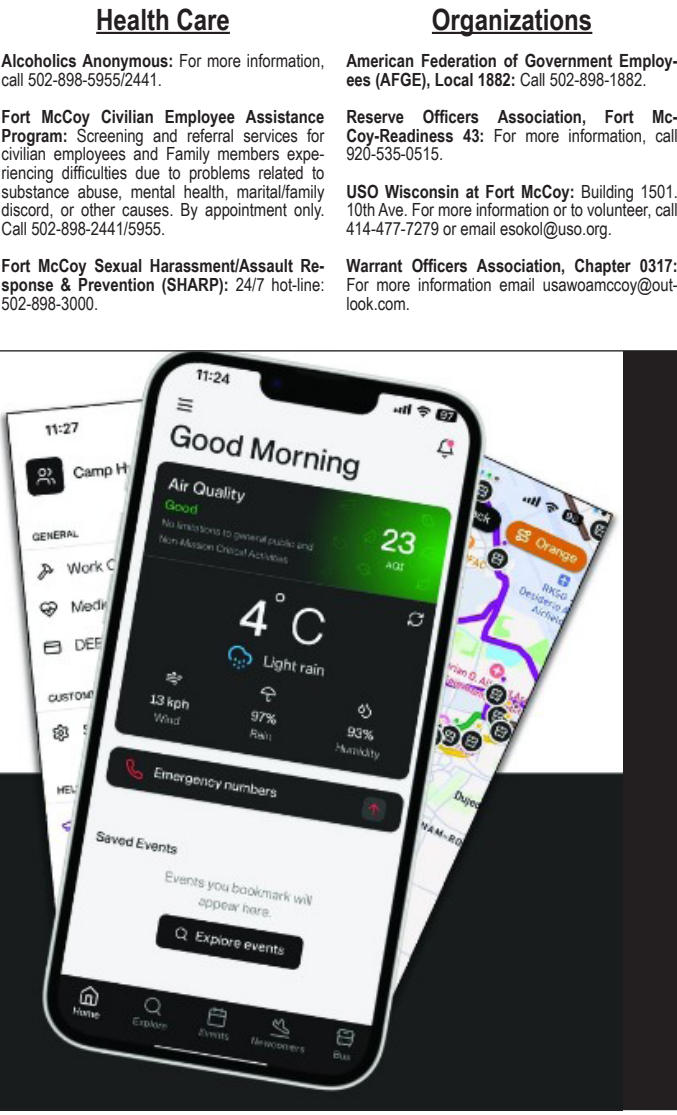
**Housing Office:** Building 6158. Open 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Family Housing, Single Sol-

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GIANT VOICE EMERGENCY-NOTIFICATION SIGNALS			
CONDITION	IF YOU HEAR	THIS INDICATES	INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS
<b>Natural Disaster</b>	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.
<b>Attack</b>	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.
<b>All Clear</b>	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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Send news items to the Public Affairs Office, ATTN: (IMMC-PA), 100 E. Headquarters Road, Fort McCoy, WI 54656-5263, or call 502-898-4128 or 2769 or send e-mail to [usarmy.mccoy.imcom-central.list.pao-admin@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.mccoy.imcom-central.list.pao-admin@mail.mil).

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**Commemorative Area Caretaker**.....Robin Michalski  
**Editorial Content**.....502-898-4128

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

**FIREARM REGISTRATION POLICY**

All privately owned firearms brought on the installation must be registered through the Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) Police Department. Firearm registration is required by Army Regulation 190-11, 4-5, "Privately owned weapons and ammunition."

Firearms are required to be registered prior to entrance or immediately upon entering any lands identified as Fort McCoy property. For more information, call 502-898-2266.

HISTORY

HISTORY

from Page 12

Monday, April 7, Kabat, from La Crosse, nearly drowned in the main channel of the Mississippi when turbulent waters capsized his canoe and sucked him underneath a barge. Gundlach, an electrical engineering intern working for the Directorate of Engineering and Housing, helped pull Kabat from the river.

Gundlach had purchased a new boat motor and was trying it out on the river. "I saw two canoes, one was tipped over and somebody was swimming towards the shore," Gundlach said. The canoes were in front of a barge docked against the shore, he added.

"I went over there at first to see if they needed help with the canoe," Gundlach explained. "I could see the one guy had made it to shore."

When he got to the canoes he was told another person, Kabat, was still in the water. Gundlach went down upstream to look for him. "I saw the wake out from a few times and I didn't see anybody, but on my way back I saw a lifevest floating in the water."

He couldn't see anyone in the lifevest until he got closer. Only the top of Kabat's head was sticking out of the water and he was unconscious, Gundlach explained.

"He tried to pull him into his boat but the current swept them into a barge section behind them. 'I had a hold of him trying to keep him from going underneath the barge,' he said. 'I couldn't pull him out of the water by myself. All I could do was keep his head above the water and try to keep my boat from crushing him against the barge.'"

Gundlach said he was scared, but he kept trying to get Kabat out of the water. "I almost stepped on the boat and then the would slip and fall in again," he said. Finally, to Gundlach's surprise, Kabat regained consciousness and was able to help him into the boat. Kabat was also surprised, Gundlach said. Kabat's first words were, "Boy, I'm not dead yet!"

Once Kabat was in Gundlach's boat, they were taken ashore where another person helped them to the shore. Kabat was then put in an ambulance and taken to a hospital, Gundlach said. Kabat managed to get through his ordeal with only minor scratches. He said he feels lucky to be alive and glad Gundlach came by when he did. "I don't plan on canoeing in the main channel anymore," Kabat said.

For his part, Gundlach doesn't consider himself a hero. "I'm just glad the guy came to and was okay," he said. When I first saw him I thought he was dead, floating in the water like that." Gundlach does feel good about what he did. "I'm glad I could help out," he said. "I hope that if somebody finds me floating in the water they do the same."

30 Years Ago — April 1996

FROM THE APRIL 26, 1996, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: *Employees learn to be weather spotters (By Rob Schuette, Triad Staff)* — Weather-spotter training conducted at Fort McCoy April 12 will help protect the safety of post employees and provide advance notice if severe weather conditions, such as thunderstorms or tornadoes, may affect the post.

Randy Willer, post aviation state safety officer for the Sparta-Fort McCoy Airport, said the training was offered to post personnel whose job duties require them to be outside — including range control personnel, military police officers and air.

"They all have radios," Willer said. "If they spot a thunderstorm, tornado or other severe weather, they can help give warnings. Military police officers patrol the post at night and are in a unique position to help spot possible tornadoes or other weather patterns." Todd Shea, the warning coordination meteorologist for the National Weather Service at La Crosse, conducted the training.

The La Crosse National Weather Service Office has been undergoing significant changes, including adding star and upgrading instrumentation, such as the newly installed Doppler radar that provides detailed weather information. But Shea said that doesn't eliminate the need for weather spotters.

"We still need the data spotters can supply to confirm what is happening," he said. "They can tell us much about cloud formations, wind velocity and directions to help us determine what kind of storm is occurring."

Many people in Wisconsin think they're safe from tornadoes, but tornadoes are a weather phenomenon that will affect the state, he said. In fact, southern Wisconsin is at the tail-end of what is sometimes called a "tornado alley," where tornadoes occur frequently.

Three key factors used to help predict thunderstorms and tornadoes, which can develop from them, are: moisture, relatively unstable warm air that can rise rapidly, and lift, which can be caused by a warm front meeting a cold front, for example, he said.

Once the information is gathered, the National Weather Service reports severe weather, Shea said.

The training also will have spotters report weather conditions that are likely to produce severe weather. These types of storms could affect soldiers training at Fort McCoy during the

summer, Willer said.

Marvin Connors, a range maintenance technician, was one of the Fort McCoy personnel attending the training. He often works out in the field repairing targets. "This training will help me know what I'm seeing and be able to report bad weather conditions," he said.

Sgt. 1st Class David King, an air-traffic controller at the Sparta-McCoy Airport, said he had seen many thunderstorms and generally knew what they looked like.

"I didn't know the different parts of a storm and how to identify what weather conditions they might cause," he said.

"I have a very good view up in the tower and this training can help in guiding aircraft and keeping the post informed about what type of weather is approaching."

FROM THE APRIL 26, 1996, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: *40 years in civil service still not enough (By Rob Schuette, Triad Staff)* — "If you're doing something you like doing, you keep doing it."

Forty years later, Virgil Bohac, the heavy equipment leader for the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works, hasn't changed his mind about working here and is still on the job.

He passed the 40-year milestone as a full-time employee April 5.

Time has passed quickly, Bohac said. In addition to working at Fort McCoy, he has been involved with the Army most of his adult life, retiring from the U.S. Army Reserve with 32 years of military service.

"Back when I first came here in April 1955 as a part-time employee, I was glad to have any job," he said. "I had served in the Army for about 18 months and worked in the motor pool that maintains and at a number of other jobs. In my early employment here, we were laid off after the construction season ended so you had to be a jack-of-all-trades to keep working and support your family."

Bohac lives in Black River Falls. As a result of making the 90-mile round-trip commute each workday, he knows the value of good roads. He remembers making some of the roads on post from scratch using shale from pits. Nowadays, roads are wider and crushed rock and/or gravel is used, which helps reinforce the road for the modern, heavier equipment and makes road maintenance easier.

Other significant changes at Fort McCoy since he began work in 1955 include a number of new buildings and construction of the 1980s and 1990s that replaced some of the 1940s-era cantonment-area structures and upgraded the post, he said. The Multi-Purpose Training Range built in the 1990s has increased the opportunities for advanced, modern training and attracts troops from many areas of the Midwest.

One of the highlights of Bohac's career was being chosen as one of the post representatives who traveled to Washington D.C. in May 1995 to accept the Army Communities of Excellence trophy for Fort McCoy.

"It was a great experience to represent the installation and a great honor for a small installation," he said. "We also had great tour guides" (Installation Commander Col. Harold K. Miller Jr. and Lt. Col. Bill Wolsky, director of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security) to show us the sights.

Bohac said he always has been happiest being or working outside and doing things to better the post.

"I imagine it must be quite boring to be in an office all day," he said. "A lot of those people probably are jealous of me with the run I have of the post's 60,000 acres. I wouldn't trade places with any of them."

In his free time, Bohac enjoys hunting, fishing, golfing, traveling and doing most anything outdoors. He and his wife, Helen, have two adult sons, Jan and Ray.

Bohac said he plans to continue working at Fort McCoy, work in the real estate field and teach real-estate appraisal courses, and to keep extolling the virtues of the post to people in the surrounding communities.

20 Years Ago — April 2006

FROM THE APRIL 14, 2006, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: *Field artillery unit fires Paladin Howitzers (By Rob Schuette, Triad Staff)* — Members of a field artillery unit appreciated the opportunity to fire their Paladin howitzers for the first time in two years at Fort McCoy during the first week of a split extended combat training session from March 30-April 9.

Capt. Craig Van Kirk, commander of B Battery, 1st, 126th Field Artillery, of Oak Creek, Wis., said the Army National Guard Soldiers from B Battery deployed from October 2004 to October 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The other approximately two-thirds of the unit's Soldiers in the 1st, 126th in Service, Headquarters and Headquarters B, A and C Batteries currently are deployed to support OIF, he said.

B Battery personnel had a few firing missions during OIF and were able to conduct a few training sessions, but did not have many overall opportunities to fire the weapons during deployment, he said.

As the battery received a firing mission and prepared to fire at Firing Point 418 at Fort McCoy, Van Kirk said the Soldiers first fired a 50-foot lanyard to test the safety of the equipment.

"(Firing the Paladin) was one of the more than

4 Fort McCoy Triad, Friday, April 12, 1996

TRAINING  
Post's MPTR challenges aviation battalion

By Rob Schuette  
Triad Staff

Moving targets and exceptional training backgrounds at Fort McCoy's Multi-Purpose Training Range provided a real-world training experience for a Missouri Army Base in Missouri, said his unit trained at Fort McCoy from March 24 to April 4 because of the expanded training opportunities.

Capt. Richard Pember, the company commander of A Company of the 1st Battalion/135th Aviation of Whittman Air Force Base in Missouri, said his unit trained at Fort McCoy from March 24 to April 4 because of the expanded training opportunities.

"This is the first time we dealt with moving targets on an aerial gunnery range," he said. "It's a step beyond what we have been able to train on before."

The 1st/135th's mission is to use Cobra helicopter weapon systems, including 20mm machine-guns and TOW systems, to destroy tank regiments, he said. The unit also uses Huey helicopters to support the mission.

Helicopter pilots practiced various air maneuvers at Fort McCoy, such as nap-of-the-earth, or low-level flying, to avoid enemy radar and gunfire, he said. Fort McCoy's air corridors, including leased county forest land in the town of New Lyme, provided excellent training opportunities.

"The terrain is great," he said. "It's a real world — a lot like what we would expect if we were sent to Korea for a mission, for example, and also has similarities to Bosnia."

Unit members usually conduct their annual training in Arkansas in August, so the 40-degree Fort McCoy temperature was a 50 to 60 degree difference.

Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Alexander of D Company of the 1st Battalion/114th Air Assault, an Army National Guard unit from Jefferson

City, Mo., said it was his first experience working in a combat-support unit. He previously worked in a medical evacuation unit. "It was a real learning experience to fly with a gunship company," he said. "The lessons we learned about flying in formation with them and maintenance needs were very valuable."



Members of the 1st Battalion/114th Air Assault check their helicopter before takeoff.

It was a real learning experience to fly with a gunship company

Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Alexander

D Company of the 1st Battalion/114th Air Assault

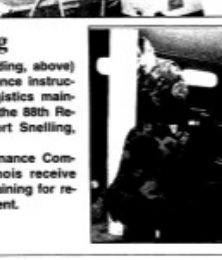
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Staff Sgt. Charles White, a member of the 1st/114th Air Assault, said the Air at Fort McCoy mission gave him the opportunity to get firsthand experience working on the aircraft. "We actually got to see how nap-of-the-earth missions are flown and how the helicopters would approach a battlefield," he said.

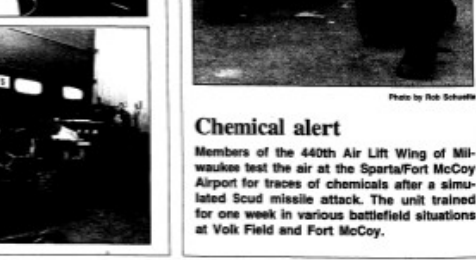
Maintenance Training

Staff Sgt. Jack Peterson (standing, above) a Regional Training Site-Maintenance instructor, teaches a new computer logistics maintenance system to soldiers from the 88th Regional Support Command of Fort Snelling, Minn.

Members of the 733rd Maintenance Company (right) from Iowa and Illinois receive Military Occupational Specialty training for repair of power-generation equipment.



Members of the 733rd Maintenance Company receive training.



Members of the 440th Air Lift Wing of Milwaukee test the air at the Sparta-Fort McCoy Airport for traces of chemicals after a simulated Scud missile attack.

U.S. Army Historical Photos

This is a news clipping from the April 12, 1996, edition of The Triad newspaper.

50 missions we had during OIF," Van Kirk said. "Our personnel are looking forward to doing this, our main mission, again."

The unit also brought the remainder of the team, including forward observers, fire controllers and ammunition section personnel to Fort McCoy to assemble the entire team needed to conduct a firing mission, he said.

Maj. Dean Nienhuis, the unit's S-3 or planning officer, said the unit's members training during the second week of the split extended combat training in August, Nienhuis said. The training will include crew-served weapons, such as the MK-19 grenade launcher and machine-gun qualification.

Sgt. Timothy Tippett, the platoon sergeant for B Battery, said the training at Fort were happy to return from OIF duty and looked forward to re-summing training together. After units return from deployments, Soldiers do not have to return to military drills for 90 days and are stabilized from further mobilizations for a minimum of six months.

Unit members will do more Soldier skills McCoy was an opportunity for unit members to train together and redevelop teamwork.

"Many of the unit members haven't seen each other since we returned," Tippett said. "This gives them a chance to get back together and work together to accomplish our mission."

10 Years Ago — April 2016

FROM THE APRIL 22, 2016, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Federal, state agencies partner for fire-suppression training (By Scott T. Sturkol, Newspaper Staff)* — Fort McCoy's fire and forestry officials, members of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), and aircrew and Blackhawk helicopters with the 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment of Madison, Wis., teamed April 12 to complete prescribed-burn and conduct fire-suppression training on Range 29 on the installations North Post.

The event marked the first time the helicopter crews used Lost Lake on North Post as a dipping site for the water buckets attached to the Blackhawks and was the fifth-consecutive year the training was held on post, according to Forestry Technician Charles Mentzel with the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch (NRB).

Forester James Kerkman, also with the NRB, said Fort McCoy is the ideal place to hold fire-suppression training.

"We are a military training base, have the facilities to support the helicopters, and the land base to do the training," Kerkman said. "The water source also is on the installation, so helicopters didn't have to cross any public roadways while carrying water to the fire."

Prescribed burns typically are completed every spring and fall through a combined effort of several post organizations, including DPW; the Directorate of Emergency Services; and the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security.

This effort was supported by those same agencies, and the WDNR also provided two air-attack airplanes to provide reconnaissance and ground-communications capability.

As of mid-April, more than 1,000 acres have been burned as part of the post's prescribed-burn program, Mentzel said.

5 Years Ago — April 2021

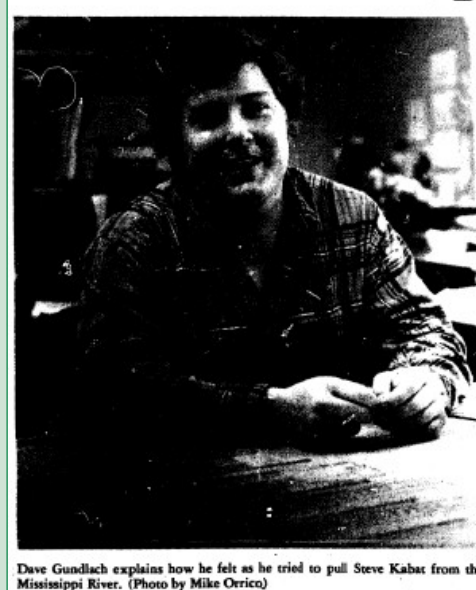
FROM THE APRIL 23, 2021, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Ground-breaking ceremony held for newest barracks project at Fort McCoy (By Scott T. Sturkol, Newspaper Staff)* — Fort McCoy senior leaders, Army Corps of Engineers and contractor representatives, and other distinguished guests participated in a special ground-breaking ceremony April 15 to highlight the start of the construction of a second modern transient training barracks on post.

Fort McCoy leaders participating included Maj. Gen. Darrell Guthrie, 88th Readiness Division commanding general and Fort McCoy senior commander; Garrison Commander Col. Michael Poss; Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Director Liane Haun; Sean Giese, resident engineer with the Omaha District Corps of the Army Corps of Engineers; and James French, chief operating officer with LS Black Constructors. Also attending were Wisconsin State Rep. Nancy VanderMeer and staff personnel for other state and federal lawmakers.

Haun opened the ceremony discussing the \$18.8 million project that was awarded to L.C. Black Constructors in September 2020. It is also the contractor building the first barracks building, according

people

Gundlach: 'I'm glad I could help'



Dave Gundlach explains how he felt as he tried to pull Steve Kabat from the Mississippi River. (Photo by Mike Orrico)

By Mike Orrico

Dave Gundlach struggled and said he just happened to be in the right spot, but his efforts saved Steve Kabat's life, Monday, April 7.

Kabat, from La Crosse, nearly drowned in the main channel of the Mississippi when turbulent waters capsized his canoe and sucked him underneath a barge. Gundlach, an electrical engineering intern working for the Directorate of Engineering and Housing, helped pull Kabat from the river.

Gundlach had purchased a new boat motor and was trying it out on the river. "I saw two canoes, one was tipped over and somebody was swimming towards the shore," Gundlach said. The canoes were in front of a barge docked against the shore, he added.

"I went over there at first to see if they needed help with the canoe," Gundlach explained. "I could see the one guy had made it to shore."

When he got to the canoes he was told another person, Kabat, was still in the water. Gundlach went down upstream to look for him. "I went back and forth a few times and I didn't see anybody, but on my way back I saw a lifevest floating in the water."

He couldn't see anyone in the lifevest until he got closer. Only the top of Kabat's head was sticking out of the water and he was unconscious, Gundlach explained.

"When he tried to pull him into his

boat the current swept them into a barge section behind them. "I had a hold him trying to keep him from going underneath the barge," he said. "I couldn't pull him out of the water by myself. All I could do was keep his head above the water and try to keep my boat from crushing him against the barge."

Gundlach said he was scared, but he kept trying to get Kabat out of the water. "I almost get him into the boat and then he would slip and fall in again," he said. Finally, to Gundlach's surprise, Kabat regained consciousness and he was able to help him into the boat. Kabat was also surprised, Gundlach said. Kabat's first words were, "Boy, I'm not dead yet?"

Once Kabat was in Gundlach's boat, they were taken ashore where another person helped them to the shore. Kabat was then put in an ambulance and taken to a hospital, Gundlach said.

Kabat managed to get through his ordeal with only minor scratches. He said he feels lucky to be alive and glad Gundlach came by when he did. "I don't plan on canoeing in the main channel anymore," Kabat said.

For his part, Gundlach doesn't consider himself a hero. "I'm just glad the guy came to and was okay," he said. When I first saw him I thought he was dead, floating in the water like that.

Gundlach does feel good about what he did. "I'm glad I could help out," he said. "I hope that if somebody finds me floating down the water they do the same."

Air Corps Vet Of B-17 Crew Ends Service

First Lt. Robert L. Simmer, Chicago, Ill., 38-mission navigator of the Army Air Corps, became the 15,000th officer to be relieved from active duty at Camp McCoy, when he was separated Tuesday. Passing through the Officers' Separation Center, Lt. Simmer, a veteran of three years and four months service, plans to return to college. He was congratulated as the 15,000th officer separate by Brig. Gen. John K. Rice, commanding general.

In his 38 months in the European theater as navigator on a B-17, he flew on 38 missions including bombing Berlin, Hamburg, Nuremberg and Nuremberg. Since the war, he has served as navigator in taking aerial photo-



This is a news clip from the April 26, 1946, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper.

# THIS MONTH IN FORT MCCOY HISTORY

Fort McCoy, Wis., was established in 1909. Here is a look back at some installation history from April 2026 and back.

## 80 Years Ago — April 1946

**FROM THE APRIL 5, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Army offers 600 WAC specialists ETO service (By Newspaper Staff)* — Overseas service is now being offered to enlisted personnel of the Women's Army Corps, the War Department announced, for those with specialized categories.

"Opportunity to be selected overseas duty has been offered widely to WACs who meet the distribution when they became surplus and those not on active duty," Maj. Gen. W. E. Paul, Assistant Chief of Staff (G-1), commented.

Previously not more than 600 WACs from the 1,000 overseas have been selected to fill these needs and all enlisted men now in the Army will be screened for overseas duty in this connection. The Army expects to secure more volunteers than are required.

In filling these overseas needs from the continental United States, WACs with various types of experience, including clerks, stenographers, telephone operators, and other categories, and more types are being sought.

Women's Army Corps is the only enlisted component of the Army open to women. It was stated that there are some additional thousands needed. WACs are no longer needed for assignment in offices or as clerical workers in the United States. These women have been transferred to other services and units.

**FROM THE APRIL 5, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Hero of Rhine Crossing ends service career (By Newspaper Staff)* — Capt. Allen Safford, who served 18 months overseas where he was awarded the Silver Star and the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster, received his discharge here Tuesday. Safford, a resident of Coulee, Minn., spent almost three years in the Army.

Capt. Safford, who is 24 years old, was inducted into the Army on June 24, 1943, and was immediately sent to Maryland. From there he was transferred to officers training school at Fort



This is a news clipping from the April 12, 1946, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper.

Benning, Ga. He graduated from the school as a second lieutenant. Capt. Safford, who is 24 years old, was born in La Crosse, Wis. and attended high school in West Salem. He entered service as a private and was promoted to corporal before entering officers candidate school.

He served with the 9th Army during the drive on Germany in the Rhine Crossing. He is credited with heroic service in the capture of a German village during the crossing of the Rhine, where he assisted in the capture of German prisoners. His heroic action won him the Silver Star and Bronze Star.

Besides the Silver Star and the Bronze Star with oak leaf cluster, he holds the ETO ribbon with three battle stars, the American Defense ribbon and the Victory medal.

Following his discharge, Safford will return to college to complete his education. He entered after three years at Newton State Teachers college.

**FROM THE APRIL 5, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Army Day — 1946 (By Newspaper Staff)* — Tomorrow, April 6, has been set aside by Presidential proclamation as Army Day, the first peacetime Army Day in five years. This Army Day 1946 the nation pays tribute to the armed force which played so great a part in bringing victory and peace.

On this day the nation, and particularly the men and women of the Armed forces can well give thought to the accomplishments in the various fields of service which the Army has contributed and to the prospects of using the Army toward greater technical and scientific developments in the new battle of maintaining the peace.

The Army in which the veterans of two World Wars served, is a means of preserving another war — which no one wants, a sure means of contributing to the peacetime well-being of the people — which everyone wants.

Let us look at some of the accomplishments of the Army in the past development of a nation eager for a more abundant life in a world of peace and progress.

For example, modern transportation — a means of better communication — has been developed in large measure by the Army and is still being improved. This includes roads, railroads, and the building of bridges and ports. This has contributed to the development of agriculture, industry and commerce.

The Army has contributed greatly to the development of aviation. In both military and civil fields, the Army has made advances in aircraft design, navigation, and safety.

The Army has aided in the development of modern medicine. The use of antibiotics, improvements in surgery, and the prevention and cure of disease have been greatly advanced through Army medical research.

The Army has been a leader in engineering projects. The building of dams, roads, and other public works has helped to improve the nation's infrastructure.

The Army has played a role in education and training. Many young men have received technical training and education through their service, preparing them for civilian careers.

The Army's contributions to American life have been many and varied. They include improvements in transportation, aviation, medicine, engineering, and education.

And with it all the Army's major peacetime mission is to secure the world's peace through strength and preparedness.

The immediate objective of this nation is to hold the victory and maintain the peace. We, the members of the Army must—THE WILL, the power. That is our pledge to America on this Army Day, 1946.

**FROM THE APRIL 12, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Reception unit slows activity for shutdown (By Newspaper Staff)* — Reception Station 16 at McCoy slowed activity Wednesday as the last enlisted men and officers were processed prior to furlough or leaves and the unit began preparing for complete shutdown after midnight Sunday, Capt. John A. Nordyke, reception station commanding officer, reported.

The unit, which will have processed nearly 85,000 men in its nine months of operation has been handicapped several times since peak months of July, August, September and October, 145 and 148 enlisted men to be sent in the Army Air Corps was the only service open to them at the local service command.

Prime duty — Reassignment: Prime duty of the station is to reassign personnel returning from overseas service. Men are channeled through the reception unit and granted furloughs or leaves are spent returning to post pending their leave to the new assignment. New replacements have also been received and processed at the station.

The processing steps for all personnel passing through prior to furlough or leave were: 1. Orientation by appropriate liaison officers; 2. Pre-paragraph inspections; 3. Payment of regular pay and allowances when applicable; and 4. Issuance of orders for temporary duty, leave or furlough.

Reception Station 16, which has been under the direction of Capt. Nordyke since December 1945, processed 85,000 enlisted men.

The largest day of operation was August 25 when 220 officers and 1,230 enlisted men were processed. The average per month stipulated that 24 houses be available to process returnees, while the average time at the McCoy station was from 11 1/2 hours.

August 15, the peak month for the unit was 23,485 enlisted men and 2,065 officers passed through the station.

The efficiency of the station was recognized recently when the command received a letter of commendation.

**FROM THE APRIL 12, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Survives Death March; Infantry vet joins RA (By Newspaper Staff)* — Sgt. Francis Ginn, Blue River, Minn., who survived 42 months of torture as a prisoner of the Japanese in the Philippines and on the infamous Bataan Death March, arrived here Wednesday after being received at Camp Stoneman, Calif.

Ginn, who originally enlisted in 1941, fell into Japanese hands at Bataan and stayed on the Death March from Bataan to Bilbilid Prison where he remained for two months. He had shipped to the Philippines to join the 31st Infantry regiment of the Philippine Division shortly after his arrival and was then inducted into the Philippine Scouts.

After spending his 90-day enlistment furlough, Sgt. Ginn will be stationed at Fort Sheridan, Ill., with the recruiting service. Ginn has returned to the United States after rather extensive service in the Philippines, and during the war was assigned to various duties.

During his service, Ginn saw action in Bataan and Corregidor. He endured the hardships of the Death March and subsequent imprisonment. Ginn, who enlisted from Blue River, Minn., is proud of his service and plans to continue his Army career by joining the Regular Army.

**FROM THE APRIL 19, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Stars And Stripes' Reporter, Sgt. Ward, gains discharge; covered famous Nuremberg Trials for GI Daily (By Newspaper Staff)* — Special correspondent for the Germany Edition of Stars and Stripes, Sgt. Ward, son of Arch Ward, sports editor of the Chicago Tribune, received his discharge here Wednesday.

Ward came into the Army in June 1943 and immediately became interested in writing for the southern states. Going overseas in January 1945, he saw service with the 1st Infantry Division in France, Belgium, and Austria.

After the German collapse, Ward was assigned to the editorial staff of the Stars and Stripes in Paris. He covered the famous Nuremberg war trials and received wide acclaim for his work.

In January of this year, he had an exclusive interview with Hermann Goering, Nazi leader, at the prison in Nuremberg. He also interviewed other high-ranking Nazi officials.

Ward wrote many stories on the war crimes trials and the aftermath of the war. His reporting was widely read by American servicemen overseas.

After the war, Ward returned to the United States and is now resuming his career in journalism. He plans to continue writing and may return to newspaper work with the Chicago Tribune.

**FROM THE APRIL 26, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *First DSC winner of World War II awaits separation; Sgt. Endres one of nation's top war heroes (By Newspaper Staff)* — The first man in World War II to receive the nation's second highest award for valor is now awaiting separation service. Sgt. Robert J. Endres, formerly of Illinois, received the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in action against enemy forces in the Philippine Islands.

Endres was one of the first Americans to engage the enemy following the Japanese attack. During fierce fighting, he displayed outstanding courage and leadership while under heavy fire.

"At his own initiative he rushed a heavily defended enemy position and assaulted it despite intense hostile fire," the citation stated. "He continued to lead his men forward, encouraging them to advance against strong enemy resistance."

Endres repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire while directing his unit and evacuating wounded soldiers. His actions contributed materially to the success of the engagement and the saving of numerous lives.

He later endured the hardships of the early Pacific campaigns and continued to serve with distinction throughout the war.

Sgt. Endres, who has spent several years overseas, is now awaiting discharge at the separation center. He plans to return to civilian life following his release from the service.

**FROM THE APRIL 26, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *Air Corps vet of B-17 crew ends service (By Newspaper Staff)* — First Lt. Robert L. Simmer, 23-month veteran of the Army Air Corps, became the 15,000th officer to be relieved from active duty at Camp McCoy.

When he was separated Tuesday, Lt. Simmer, a veteran of three years and four months service, leaves to return to college. He was congratulated on the 15,000th officer separated by Brig. Gen. John R. Rice, commanding general.

In his 16 months in the European theater as navigator on a B-17, he flew 25 missions including bombing Berlin, Hamburg, Brunswick, Kassel and Nuremberg. Since the war, he has served as navigator in taking aerial photographs of Europe.

Flew 25 missions over Europe: Lt. Simmer received his first training with the college detachment at Knoxville, Tenn. Then pre-flight training at Maxwell Field, Ala.; primary training at Maxwell Field; basic training at another base, and advanced training at Fort Worth, Texas.

After receiving his wings, he went overseas and flew with a bombardment group in England. He is entitled to wear the Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters, American Theater Ribbon, European-African-Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon, and the European Occupation Ribbon.

## 75 Years Ago — April 1951

**FROM THE APRIL 20, 1951, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER:** *70 to be initiated into 'Order of the Boar' (Camp McCoy Public Information Office)* — Approximately 70 post officers will be initiated into a unique fraternal organization — "The Order of the Boar" — at ceremonies and a dinner to be held Saturday at 1800 at Building No. 1071 in the U.S. Army hospital here. Thirty guests are expected from the Chicago chapter.

Lt. Col. Aurel P. Clark, executive officer of the hospital, is chairman of the program committee which includes Lt. Col. Frederick R. Jorbin, Capt. James L. Frank and Capt. Paul A. LaPointe. Other members of the McCoy sub-chapter, which is affiliated with the Chicago chapter, are Col. Samuel A. Cohen, and Captains William A. Graber, James T. McRee, Walter N. Price, Charles L. Tackett and Earl E. Reynolds.

"Shoots" is the name given to candidates for the Order of the Boar. Officers who have been invited to become candidates for the Order include Brig. Gen. Thomas E. Lewis, Col. Peter C. Bullard, Col. Claude A. Billingsley, Col. Elmer L. Lentz, Col. James I. Crow, Lt. Col. Terence S. Lightfoot, Lt. Col. Henry J. Knight, Lt. Col. Kenneth E. Thomas, Lt. Col. Ralph H. Watson, etc. Among the guests expected are Maj. Gen. George F. Lull, the Boar of the Chicago chapter; Col. A. S. Behrman, the Vice Boar; Col. Eugene Biolich, custodian of the Boar, and Lt. Col. Frank H. Chesrow, secretary and treasurer. Brig. Gen. Carl B. Steinhorst may also be present from Chicago.

The Order of the Boar was founded in 1928 by the first class in military sanitation and field duty at the Medical Field Service School, Carlisle Barracks, Pa. Several chapters have been established throughout the U.S., and its restricted membership now runs into the hundreds.

## 40 Years Ago — April 1986

**FROM THE APRIL 3, 1986, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER:** *TASC's Walker one 'crafty' lady (By Mike Orico, Newspaper Staff)* — Audrey Walker, a Fort McCoy Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) supply technician, feels good about finally settling down. Born in Virginia, Wis., Walker has spent most of her life traveling around the country.

"My people were theatrical people, and I was raised around the theater," she said. Her mother and stepfather were vaudevillians during the 1920's, performing in tent shows before movies became popular.

"Up until the seventh grade I averaged three schools a year," she said. "We covered all the states except the eastern coastal states."

Growing up in a theatrical family at that time was awesome, Walker said. "There was never anyone your own age to play with and my friend you made probably wouldn't be seen again," she explained.

Walker moved to Sparta in 1967 and started working at Fort McCoy in 1968. "I think with all the moving and traveling, I finally settled down and working at Fort McCoy for 18 years is pretty good," she said.

Walker explained that she has been subtly linked to the installation for much longer than 18 years. In 1975, she found out her real father was Maj. Gen. Robert B. McCoy's personal aide in France during World War I after reading a history of the war written by McCoy. "All the battles he mentioned sounded familiar, so I went home and read my father's letters from the war and realized he was McCoy's aide," she said.

Besides having a personal interest in history, Walker knits, crochets, does needlepoint and other types of needlework. She also plays the organ and collects antiques. Her collection includes jewelry, glassware and furniture.

In the last few years, Walker has become extremely skilled in the Norwegian folk art of rose-maling (flower painting). She began learning her craft in 1980. "I had seen pictures of it before and it fascinated me," she said. Her first class in rose-maling was at Western Wisconsin Technical Institute. There she met her instructor, Erlene Kelly, who still gives her help and encouragement with her painting.

"It was one of the best things that ever happened to me," she said. "I got a real good friend out of the deal and no matter how bad I feel I can sit down and lose myself in rose-maling." Rosemalers used to travel around Norway painting walls, furniture and wooden utensils for a fee or room and board, she said. "Each part of Norway was noted for its own special style of painting," she explained.

"I became interested in Rogaland style because of the beautiful shading that almost makes it three dimensional." She has also received training from other instructors in other styles of rose-maling including Telemark, Hallingdal and Gudbrandsdal.

Walker and her daughter, Sharon Rode, travel to several large craft shows during the year to sell her paintings and "washable trees" made by her daughter. "We do at least six shows a year for Craft Fair USA, held in the exhibition hall at the Wisconsin State Fairgrounds," she said. Their work is also displayed at many other craft shows throughout the state.

Together they have been the past of Walker's life. Though at the moment she isn't planning on moving again, she is thinking about adding a few more craft shows. "We hope to expand our area to Minnesota and Illinois in the future," she said.

**FROM THE APRIL 17, 1986, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER:** *Gundlach: 'I'm glad I could help' (By Mike Orico)* — Dave Gundlach shrugged and said he just happened to be in the right spot, but his efforts saved Steve Kabat's life.

(See HISTORY, Page 11)

## Pre-Philippine Invasion Scout Gains Papers

Filipino-American S-Sgt. Edilberto Bibat, Detroit, Mich., who was a member of a reconnaissance group that landed on the Philippines six months before the Philippine invasion, passed through the separation center Monday.

As a member of the reconnaissance group, Bibat and 19 others landed on Luzon by submarine prior to the American invasion. They secured information—enemy gun positions, weather reports, etc.—valuable to the Allies in planning the invasion of Luzon.

Planning to reenlist, Bibat, whose parents live on Luzon in the Philippines, has spent three years and ten months in the Army, 30 months of which were spent overseas. Eighteen years ago, he led the Philippines to



S-SGT. EDILBERTO BIBAT

come to the States. He attended Central YMCA college, Chicago, Ill.

Training in the Infantry, he was assigned to the First Philippine regiment of Filipino-Americans which was activated in the United States. Upon arriving in Australia, he was one of those from his regiment chosen for the First Reconnaissance battalion which was activated in Australia.

"Gen. MacArthur wanted us to go to Luzon," Bibat stated. "It kept us busy dodging the Japs, so the Army wouldn't allow me to see my parents until after the invasion. I was in the Philippines six months before I saw my folks. It was the first time I had been back to my home in 18 years. They were surprised to see me. We were ambushed by the Japs many times but only one of our group was killed—by a Jap sniper."

This is a news clipping from the April 19, 1946, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper at then-Camp McCoy.