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Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Holiday Train rolls through McCoy

The 2024 Canadian Pacific Holiday Train went through Fort McCoy on Dec. 9 on its way from Tomah to Sparta, Wis. The 2024 Holiday Train is touring Canada and the U.S. from Nov. 21 through Dec. 20, raising money, food and awareness to support food banks across their network. Professional musicians play free concerts from the brightly decorated train's stage. Canadian Pacific donates to the local food bank at each stop and encourages all attendees to make a monetary or heart-healthy food donation. Since its inaugural journey in 1999, the CPKC Holiday Train has raised more than \$24.3 million and collected approximately 5.3 million pounds of food for community food banks in Canada and the U.S., according to the railway. See more photos, Page 9.

Construction under way for new 4-story Collective Training Officers Quarters at Fort McCoy



Fencing is shown set up Dec. 9 for the start of the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy.

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

Preparation and beginning work has started for the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy.

The contractor for the project, BlindermanPower (Construction), was awarded a contract totaling \$55,759,100, according to the Army Corps of Engineers, which is overseeing the project. The notice to proceed was acknowledged on July 19. The contract duration is scheduled for completion in 1,260 calendar days.

BlindermanPower is also currently working on another major project at Fort McCoy — the fiscal year-2022 funded South Barracks Project.

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

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

"This facility is required to replace antiquated World War II-era wood transient training officer quarters currently being utilized to train Soldiers during major exercises, annual training, battle assembly, and mobilization at Fort McCoy," the description states. "This facility will be designed with the ability to be winterized or deactivated during the winter months. When Fort McCoy is not stood up as a mobilization platform, its primary mission is to support the seasonal requirements of training ...

Army Reserve Soldiers. In order to conserve as much energy as possible, while also decreasing the funding necessary to field extended utility costs, this building will be deactivated when it is not being used for training.

"Fort McCoy's mobilization mission may ramp up at any time (and in any season), (so) this building must have the ability to be brought online for use quickly during harsh Wisconsin winters," the description states. "Information systems, fire protection and alarm systems, and sustainability and energy enhancement measures are included. Supporting facilities include site development, utilities and connections, lighting, paving, parking, walks, curbs and gutters, storm drainage, information systems, landscaping, and signage."

The contract requirements also show that work includes building a standing seam metal roof over rigid insulation on steel deck on structural trusses; using utility brick veneer over rigid insulation on steel studs with exterior glass mat gypsum sheathing; building a concrete floor on metal deck and on-grade; installing and elevator, aluminum doors and windows, gypsum board and metal frame partitions, steel door frames and steel doors, and acoustical ceilings; installing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems; completing plumbing, security, and electrical systems; and more.

"Air barrier testing, and HVAC silver is required," contract requirements state. "They must also complete site work to include base proposal demolition; relocate of five existing buildings; and complete site clearing, grading, drainage, utilities, paving, and permits."

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Fort McCoy kicks off holiday season with 2024 Tree Lighting Ceremony



Photo by Scott T. Sturkol

Fort McCoy community members celebrate at the lights come on during the 2024 Fort McCoy Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 5 at McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy.

BY CLAUDIA NEVE

Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy community members participated in the 2024 Fort McCoy Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 5 at McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy.

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

This year's celebration featured not only the iconic tree lighting but also an array of festive activities, including holiday crafts for children, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and a short play featuring the Grinch and citizens of Whoville.

"We celebrate our strong sense of community, the bonds we share, and the spirit of giving that makes this time of the year so special," said Karla Rynes, Business and Recreation Division Chief. Rynes welcomed attendees also saying "it's time to come together as a community and spread joy, warmth, and cheer."

The ceremony also included remarks from the Garrison Command Team. Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Sheyla Baez-Ramirez emphasized the importance of community and gratitude during the holidays.

"It's a special evening for all of us here at Fort McCoy because this marks the official start of the holiday season," Baez said. "We always have things to be thankful for, and this is a great opportunity to gather outside of the office, outside of work, and get to know each other a little bit better and celebrate the great things we have

(See **TREE LIGHTING**, Page 9)



Photo by Claudia Neve

Fort McCoy community members participate in a Christmas skit Dec. 5 during the 2024 Fort McCoy Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at McCoy's Community Center.

Be All You Can Be: Fort McCoy serves as an NCO training base in many ways

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL

Public Affairs Staff

Every year, thousands of regular Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard noncommissioned officers (NCOs) complete some type of training at Fort McCoy through professional development training, career field training, Warrior Skills training, and more. And the installation has supported this effort for decades.

One main institution on Fort McCoy supporting NCOs is the Fort McCoy NCO Academy. There, staff teach hundreds of Army NCOs in the Basic Leader Course and the Battle Staff NCO Course.

In the Basic Leader Course it's "the first level of leadership course for enlisted Soldiers in the Army," said course instructor Staff Sgt. Sabrina Magness in a previous news article in February 2024. "And although it's required, there's a lot of information that happens here with every new crop of students that I have. I let them know that I think of this course as a leadership conference. So, they're not just getting downloaded skills from their instructors and small group leaders like myself, they're also getting a chance to network with each other and just sort of share the skills around that they each have."

Sgt. David Smith, an Army Reserve Soldier who attended the Basic Leader Course in fiscal year 2024, said all of the training helped him become a better Soldier.

"Being in this course, I've learned to become a better leader, become a better listener, and also just become a better team worker as it pertains to leadership in my unit and also in small group units as



Students participate Jan. 31 in the Fort McCoy Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy's Battle Staff NCO Course combined arms rehearsal event at the academy at Fort McCoy.

well," Smith said. "Being a part of this class is very crucial — not just to being a Soldier, but as an individual as well. I've definitely (added) attributes that I can take back to my unit to become more lethal as the

Army wants us to become and be able to do the things that's required of (NCOs)."

Master Sgt. David Shimota, who was course director for the Battle Staff NCO Course in February 2024, said the course is beneficial for all the Soldiers involved because it immerses them in an environment of what a battalion-level battle staff NCO will have to know and contribute in the planning process, and more.

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."

The Fort McCoy Regional Training Site-Maintenance is also another facility that trains Army NCOs as well as other level Soldiers.

Master Sgt. William Parker, chief instructor for RTS-Maintenance, said, for example, their facility is the only reserve-component installation facility that teaches 89B courses outside of the active component school.

"We're one of two locations that teach the 89B, so that is uh extremely valuable to us," Parker said. "That's something we take pride

(See **NCO**, Page 4)

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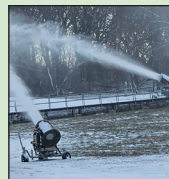
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NEWS

88th Readiness Division environmental team presented with 2024 Secretary of the Army Environmental Award for Environmental Quality, Individual/Team

Amy Borman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health made a visit Nov. 21 to Fort McCoy to present the 2024 Secretary of the Army Environmental Award for Environmental Quality, Individual/Team to the 88th Readiness Division's Hazardous Materials Centralized Management Team.

Edward Tebo, 88th Readiness Division Environmental Division chief, accepted the award from Borman in a ceremony in building 60 at Fort McCoy. Division officials said this the first time in five years the U.S. Army Reserve has been recognized in the environmental award selection process.

The award shows Tebo led a team across the 19-state region, building a data base so they could access all their materials with QR codes. The development of a centralized hazardous material database by location provided hazardous material inventories for more than 3,000 specific flammable cabinets, rooms, cages, and other hazardous material storage areas.

In the awards package, available at https://www.denix.osd.mil/awards/denix-files/sites/12/2024/04/EQ-T-88RD-Narrative_Final_CH.pdf, it specifies the work from a Hazardous Materials Program Development Tiger Team.

"This nomination for Environmental Quality, Individual/Team is for the development of a hazardous material management program tailored to the unique demographics of all (Army Reserve) readiness divisions by a Tiger Team of members comprised of all four 88th Readiness Division Environmental Division branches, Department of the Army civilians, Gryphon Environmental, LLC service contract employees, the G4-Directorate of Logistics, and the Safety and Occupational Health Office," the awards package states.

The package further states the 88th Readiness Division Environmental Division chief determined that a centralized database of all hazardous material used by the division, sortable by unit/organization, site, and each specific storage location, would be a first step in resolving the issues related to hazardous material inventory management.

"He established a Hazardous Material Program Development Tiger Team and challenged them to devise a process where any hazardous material at any facility would have access to safety data sheets for every product in the hazardous material inventory," the awards package states. "To accomplish this the team had to literally 'think outside the box' to create a process that is capable of functioning beyond a typical single installation fence line.

"To ensure efficient and accurate establishment and effective operation of a new database, the Environmental Division chief chose VelocityEHS safety data sheets and Chemical Management Software, an off-the-shelf database system already populated with hundreds of thousands of safety data sheets, flexible hierarchical storage frameworks, ad hoc reporting, and an Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act module," the awards package further states. "Next, all members of the Environmental Division had to be engaged to do the data collection and entry, as well as the awareness campaign in addition to their normal duties. Personnel in the 88th Readiness Division Environmental Division understood the importance of bet-



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

Amy Borman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health, provides comments Nov. 21 while presenting the 88th Readiness Division's Hazardous Materials Centralized Management Team with the 2024 Secretary of the Army Environmental Award for Environmental Quality, Individual/Team in building 60 at Fort McCoy. (Below) The team receives the award from Borman (left).



ter managing hazardous material and volunteered from across the three primary units."

Team members recognized as contributing members for the award include Tebo; Tim Gelhaus, 88th Compliance Branch chief; Dave Torgersen, Gryphon Environmental, LLC, program manager; Katherine O'Neill, pollution prevention, Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act and hazardous materials program manager; Martin Pansch, storage tanks and spill prevention control and countermeasures program manager; Steven Bragg, integrated pest program manager; Kristin Cleveland, toxic substances program manager; Michelle Holtom, regional environmental protection specialist; Tony Bridges, regional environmental protection specialist; Andrea Pawlik, regional environmental protection specialist; Molly Stearns, regional environmental protection specialist; Todd Nestegard, regional environmental protection specialist; regional environmental protection specialist;

Jennifer Cummings, regional environmental protection specialist; Jennifer Allen, regional environmental protection specialist; Sara Hecht, regional environmental protection specialist; Amy Lord, regional environmental protection specialist; Imelda Kelley, regional environmental protection specialist; Jason Sikorski, 88th G4/Directorate of Logistics regional maintenance manager; Brian Russell, 88th safety and occupational health manager; and Joshua O'Neill, systems consultant.

With specific accomplishments, thanks to this team's work, "personnel who use hazardous material can access all safety data sheets and their hazardous material inventories for their location via a Quick Response, or QR, code and cell phone, providing fast access of hazardous material, which is particularly useful in emergencies. Readily available inventories save time searching for hazardous material and where to return it, freeing up time for

other, more direct mission-related activities."

Borman described the significance of the award and what the team accomplished after the award presentation.

"I appreciate that you've given me (this) opportunity, and you're the first ... award recipients under what I hope will be many more opportunities for us to get out and to really thank you for everything that you do," Borman said. "The Army doesn't function without a highly functioning environmental team. And (it's) not often that you get recognized as an environmental team for the work that you do.

"This award really just gives the opportunity to express and share our appreciation with you for all of the great things that you're doing, not only for Fort McCoy, but for the Army in general," Borman said. "And the lessons that we're going to be able to learn from the work that we did but with ... everything that you've done with your hazardous materials program, those are lessons that we're going to be able to share across the Army. And for those of you who are not tracking and have not seen, this team was responsible for putting into place a hazardous materials management program that reduced the number of issues and violations across the 88th by over 80 percent, which is significant."

Borman added, "They should be awarded, applauded, and really recognized for all of the work that they've done. ... These awards are really important and they are the Secretary of the Army's environmental awards and they are given each year ... to teams of individuals who do amazing work with regards to ... innovative work with regards to maintaining our environmental programs within the Army. So kudos to you, applause to all of you, and congratulations on behalf of not only myself, ... and on behalf of the Secretary of the Army for doing the work that you're doing. And I would encourage you to keep it up, keep innovating, and keep Fort McCoy on the right path. Because I think there are many, many more things to come based on the systems that you have put into place and the work that you've done. It's clear that you care and are concerned about Fort McCoy, about the exposures, and about ensuring that readiness continues to be maintained and that we can continue to honor his honor, which is where we're all headed."

Read more about the 88th Readiness Division by visiting <https://www.usar.army.mil/88thRD> or <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/88RSC>.

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>, on X (formerly Twitter) by searching "usagmccoy," on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/fortmccoywi>, and on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@fortmccoy>.

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

Fort McCoy supports thousands for Army Reserve, other training during November 2024

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

During November 2024, the second month of fiscal year 2024, Fort McCoy supported thousands of troops training from several Army Reserve units as well as others in institutional training.

Among the larger units training at McCoy was the 687th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, which is headquartered in Wausau, Wis., and has sub-units throughout Wisconsin as well as Ohio.

Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) officials said the 687th brought more than 450 Soldiers for training, covering a wide variety of training.

Another Army Reserve unit, the 389th Engineer Battalion, which is headquartered in Dubuque, Iowa, also sent nearly 500 Soldiers to train at Fort McCoy during November 2024.

The 389th has trained at Fort McCoy many times before, especially coming to the post to support a wide array of troop projects. In 2023, for example, the company completed several new projects. On the Fort McCoy cantonment area, the 389th Soldiers removed and poured a new section of sidewalk near a walking bridge. At Logistical Support Area Liberty, the company installed a 400-amp breaker along with the supporting electrical lines. And at the Fort McCoy Central Receiving Shipping Point (CRSP) parking lot, company Soldiers worked with Fort McCoy personnel to install new energy efficient light poles throughout the parking lot.

Staff Sgt. Tyler Goodman with the 389th discussed the work his company completed at the CRSP parking lot in 2023 in a previous news article.

"Our company was tasked with assisting in setting in 28 light poles for the CRSP Yard, which has not had very good lighting for years from what I hear, so it's good training for our Soldiers to get their hands on something that they've probably never experienced before," Goodman said.

Other units coming to Fort McCoy in November 2024 with smaller numbers of Soldiers, DPTMS officials said, included the 415th Military Police Detachment (headquartered in Iowa); 469th Engineer Company (headquartered in Illinois), and the 371st Transportation Detachment (also headquartered in Illinois).

In July 2021, Soldiers with the 469th trained at Fort McCoy on how to breach obstacles in an urban environment, according to an article written by Cheryl Phillips with the 88th Readiness Division Public Affairs Office at <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/401483/469th-engineer-company-soldiers-explode-into-action>.

In that training, Master Sgt. Bradley Schmolz of the 469th described the breaching capability as a "niche" the engineers can employ in an urban locale. The engineers spent a July afternoon learning how to form a half dozen different types of charges at the live fire explosive breaching range, the article states. Each charge serves its own purpose and gives off a different type of explosion.

"One of the trainers was Sgt. Paul Modaff, who instructed his team on how to build a water impulse charge," the article states. "This charge uses 'water to force the impact toward the door,' and is especially effective at buckling bigger flex steel doors that were at the demo range, he said. The Soldiers sandwiched a few feet of detonation, or 'det' cord between saline IV bags."

Training also took place on post in November 2024 at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Maintenance, RTS-Medical, Fort McCoy Non-commissioned Officer Academy, Fort McCoy's Simulations Complex, and more. Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers also supported training in mid-November with a UH-60 Black Hawk.

Training numbers are tracked annually by fiscal year, said Larry Sharp, chief of the Fort McCoy DPTMS Training Coordination Branch. During fiscal year 2024, 73,991 troops trained at the installation.

Sharp said the training numbers were split during fiscal year 2024 as 30,573 troop completing annual training, and 43,418 troops completing battle assembly training.

"The exercises are counted as annual training, and institutional training is all mixed in as well," Sharp said.

The training through the first two months of fiscal year 2025 has been busy, DPTMS officials said, and in the end, they expect training numbers to be similar to fiscal year 2024 or higher.

Fort McCoy's motto is to be the "Total Force Training Center."



(Above and below) Training operations are shown around Fort McCoy on Nov. 15 as troops complete a variety of activities on post.



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.

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NEWS

Fort McCoy's East Barracks Project makes steady progress



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

Contractors work on a new \$27.3 million transient training troops barracks project, known as the Fort McCoy East Barracks Project, on Dec. 10 (left) and Dec. 9 (above) at Fort McCoy. Contractors began in May 2024 getting the site set up for the fourth transient training troops barracks project at Fort McCoy, which was awarded in February 2024 to L.S. Black Constructors, LLC, for approximately \$27.3 million. L.S. Black Constructors is a familiar name in the barracks construction history at Fort McCoy, having built the first two of the 60,000-square-foot transient training troops barracks on post. They also recently built the new brigade headquarters building located in the same block as the barracks buildings. The exact contract amount for the project was \$27,287,735. In the award announcement, it states it was “for the construction of the barracks, which will provide housing for enlisted service members undergoing training at the installation.” The building will be able to house up to 400 people and will be more than 60,000 square feet.

Fort McCoy's South Barracks Project now at 59 percent complete



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

The construction area for a new \$28.08 million barracks building is shown Dec. 10 (above) and Dec. 3 (right) at Fort McCoy as progress on the facility continues. The contractor BlindermanPower (Construction) has made great strides in getting work done and now has the project at 59 percent complete, said Ken Green with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Office at Fort McCoy in his Dec. 6 update on the project. BlindermanPower (Construction) got the contract to build the facility in June 2023 at just over \$28 million. Previous news articles have stated the statement of work for the project states the contractor will make the building be made of “permanent construction with reinforced concrete foundations; concrete floor slabs; structural steel frames; steel stud infill; masonry veneer walls; prefinished standing seam metal roofing; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning capabilities; plumbing; mechanical systems; and electrical systems. Supporting facilities include land clearing, concrete sidewalk paving, general site improvements, and utility connections.”



QUARTERS

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In his second update about the project on Nov. 22, Green said perimeter fences and contractor buildings had been put in place. Additionally, work to begin preparing five old buildings to be moved from the site area to a new area had also begun.

Master Planner Brian Harrie with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works already has a plan worked out with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the contractor to move the five old barracks buildings to the 500 block of Fort McCoy, which will likely happen early in 2025.

The officers quarters project makes three active, large construction projects taking place in the 1600 block of the installation. The others being the South Barracks Project and the fiscal year 2023-funded East Barracks Project that's being constructed by L.S. Black Constructors.

All of this work continues with the master plan for the 1600 block that will include not only the four barracks but also three 20,000-square-foot brigade headquarters buildings — one of which is done — and now the two 160-room officer quarters, Harrie said.

Projects like this also play a part in supporting the economic impact to local economies around Fort McCoy. When looking back the last five years, Fort McCoy's economic impact has continuously been \$1 billion or higher every year to local economies. In FY 2019 it was \$1.18 billion, all the way to FY 2023's \$1.38 billion.

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

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(Above and below) Fencing and contractor buildings are shown set up Nov. 13 for the start of the fiscal year 2024-funded \$55.75 million Collective Training Officers Quarters Project at Fort McCoy.



NEWS

Field Hospital/Hospital Center Commander's Course held at RTS-Medical at Fort McCoy



Photos by Col. Fernando Rivera/Regional Training Site-Medical Fort McCoy

(All photos) Personnel participate in the Field Hospital/Hospital Center Commander's Course at Regional Training Site (RTS)-Medical at Fort McCoy in November. The course focused on teaching medical leaders from across the Army, to prepare for large-scale combat operations (LSCO) against a near-peer adversary. With more than 80 senior leaders and noncommissioned officers present from across the U.S., Germany, Hawaii, and Korea, the students were exposed to the unique challenges presented by LSCO on medical operations. This includes the need to remain highly mobile and to be prepared for the unique threats posed by cyber, information, and electronic warfare on each step of a unit's road to war.



NCO

from Page 1

in. And that course continues to get rewritten, material continues to change, and we'll continue to implement what equipment and what facilities we have to execute that training."

Parker added that also to build success in training, they must also make sure students have everything available to be successful.

"Each course that is written is required to have certain equipment to run that course," Parker said. "So, it is very essential that Soldiers who are coming here to train have the most updated equipment to train on because that's the equipment they're going to see when they get back to their units."

RTS-Maintenance trains thousands of Soldiers every year in the Army's 91-series MOS as well as the 89B MOS. The unit aligns under the 3rd Brigade (Ordnance), 94th Division of the 80th Training Command, and is centrally located in the cantonment area with an entire complex to hold training.

"Here at RTS-Maintenance, we offer professional military education for noncommissioned officers in the maintenance and munitions MOS, and that's from your basic entry or reclassification all the way until your senior levels, such as a senior leaders course," Parker said.

Army NCOs can also participate in specific field training at the installation. For example, in September 2024, the 649th Regional Support Group of the Army Reserve held a "Defender University" training at Fort McCoy specifically focusing on NCO training.

Command Sgt. Maj. David Sayers, command sergeant major with the 649th, discussed what the training was all about.

"We came up to Fort McCoy to train on skill level 2 and skill level 3 progression in order to develop our Soldiers, specialists, and sergeants for promotion under Army Regulation 600-8-19, Paragraph 3-6, that states all Soldiers must have skill level 2 and skill level 3 proficiency in their digital job book in order to qualify for promotion."

And that was the basis for Defender University.

"We developed an NCO professional development program called Defender University where we invite our Soldiers to come up and attend and conduct training in four areas, utilizing a round-robin format, as well as build the capability of our NCOs to teach, train, mentor, and instruct from a cadre perspective," Sayers said.

The command sergeant major further said what they completed was "critical training" for NCOs in the Army Reserve.

"This is something that we need to focus on because skill level one, that lower level, that's great. Everybody should be able to do that. But to be able to teach and develop skill level two, skill level three — that's that next level. That's where that NCO learns how to be an NCO, how to run a team, how to manage a squad, how to incorporate those skill level one tasks and build upon them. And these are vital tasks. These are everything from running a casualty collection point to medevac requests to how to teach your unit to put on mop gear properly, how to conduct riot control, and entry control.

"These skills are vital not only for your development, but also for the safety and survivability of your unit," Sayers said.

Army NCOs also coordinate and lead numerous training efforts at Fort McCoy every month of the year that builds Warrior Skills required by every Soldier. This includes managing weapons qualifications training for tens of thousands of Soldiers every year at McCoy as well as coordinating efforts like the Army Combat Fitness Test and classroom training.

Larry Sharp, chief of the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) Training Coordination Branch, said training, for example in fiscal year 2024, also included big exercises supported by NCOs including a Warrior Exercise, Combat Support Training Exercise, Global Medic, Spartan Warrior military police exercise, Mobilization Support Force — Exercise 24, and numerous other training events.

And with Fort McCoy hovering near 100,000 troops training at the installation every year, it's also fitting that this effort likely mirrors what the Army NCO Creed states.

"No one is more professional than I. I am a noncommissioned officer, a leader of Soldiers," the creed states. "As a noncommissioned officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as 'The Backbone of the Army.' I am proud of the Corps of noncommissioned officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the military service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

"Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind — accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient."

And in reflection of that, Fort McCoy will continue to be "proficient" in supporting the training efforts of Army NCOs in the future, officials said.

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Soldiers in the Regional Training Site-Maintenance's Construction Equipment Repairer Course learn about engines and other equipment during course operations March 6 at Fort McCoy.



Students in the 89B Advanced Leader Course, taught by instructors with Regional Training Site-Maintenance at Fort McCoy, learn about ammunition inspection forms March 4, 2020, during training at the post Ammunition Supply Point.



Students participate Jan. 31 in the Fort McCoy Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy's Battle Staff NCO Course combined arms rehearsal event at the academy at Fort McCoy.

NEWS

Nearly 400 deer harvested during 2024 Fort McCoy gun-deer season

Wisconsin's and Fort McCoy's 2024 nine-day gun-deer season took place Nov. 23 to Dec. 1, and hunters saw some warmer weather to start the season and ended the season seeing 385 deer harvested.

"We did not get the harvest we were hoping for, but not too terrible either," said Wildlife Program Manager and Biologist Kevin Luepke with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch. I think we had a number of factors that influenced the harvest this year. The warmer weather during the first half of the season, no acorn production forced deer to seek out alternative food sources, the late season (this year was the latest that a gun-deer season can take place, ending in December), the first recorded case of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) on the installation, and not having all the bonus antlerless harvest authorizations purchased through the lottery drawing."

Entering the 2024 gun-deer season at Fort McCoy, Luepke said the deer herd was looking plentiful.

"The herd was looking good during the summer with doe-fawn ratios exceeding levels over the past five years," Luepke said. "The mild winter and abundant acorn crop in fall 2023 really lent itself to deer herd growth."

Luepke also said little to no acorn production on the installation in fall 2024 was noted by wildlife and forestry staff. It's difficult to say whether or not that contributed to a lower harvest in 2024 (was 426 in 2023), but it does make a difference.

"Deer will have to seek out alternative food sources this fall and winter, so deer may not be in the oak ridges that hunters had success in during previous years," Luepke said. "The lack of acorn production this year may also cause the herd to go into winter with less fat reserves that are needed for winter survival."

Hunters at Fort McCoy also saw a change in authorizations with their permits during the 2024 hunt.

"This year, we changed the harvest authorizations that were received with the purchase of a gun-deer permit," Luepke said. "All gun-deer hunters (received) an either-sex harvest authorization instead of issuing a hunter's choice approval to those who applied and were selected through a lottery drawing. Bonus antlerless harvest authorizations were also available through a lottery drawing instead of a first-come, first-serve offering as in the past."

For the 2024 gun-deer hunt, deer data collection point was also in full operation on South Post in the same location just off Highway 21 as previous years. Hunters were required to bring their harvested deer through the deer data collection point. Biological data was collected, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) sampling offered, and a dumpster was available to discard any carcasses. Collected CWD samples were sent to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and all successful hunters were encouraged to have their deer tested.

"That biological data we collect at the station is important to evaluate the herd health and calculate the installation deer population," Luepke said. "We also collect lymph nodes for CWD testing."

Testing is important, especially since there were findings of diseases affecting deer in 2024.

"We have some diseases that showed up in October that we don't quite have a handle on the extent of the herd it is actually affecting," Luepke said. "EHD was found on the installation in early-October. Currently, one deer has tested positive for EHD, but 10 other dead deer are also being attributed to EHD. No additional dead deer were reported during the gun-deer season. Above EHD being found on the installation, an archery hunter also had a buck test positive for CWD in late-October. That deer was harvested in training area B-5 and is the first CWD positive test result that has been harvested from Fort McCoy. We were able to collect 241 CWD samples from the 385 deer harvested, results are coming back as 'CWD not detected' from those test samples, but we are still waiting on 27 samples to be processed yet." (More information on EHD and CWD can be found on the Fort McCoy iSportsman site at <https://mccoy.isportsman.net> and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources website at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov>.)

During the season, staff asked hunters to report any dead deer they may come across to the wildlife staff who were working the deer data collection point, Luepke said.

"Any CWD positive deer results that do come back, that hunter will be eligible for a replacement harvest authorization the following year and will be awarded a gun-deer permit the following year prior to the lottery drawing," Luepke said. "To be eligible for the replacement harvest authorization, samples must be submitted through Fort McCoy by either lymph node extractions at the deer data collection point or the self-serve kiosk that is also available near the deer data collection point. Replacement harvest authorizations that are issued next year still require the hunter to purchase the gun-deer permit for next year's season, the replacement harvest authorization is NOT a replacement gun-deer permit."

For information on local CWD sampling kiosks, deer carcass dumpsters, and deer donation locations, visit the Monroe County Land Conservation website at <https://www.co.monroe.wi.us/departments/land-conservation>.

Fort McCoy's deer population continued to show it had larger bucks available to hunters, as well, Luepke said.

"There were several big bucks that came through," Luepke said.

Learn more about deer hunting at Fort McCoy by visiting the installation iSportsman page at <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>.

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

Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set "Fort McCoy" or another installation as your preferred base. Fort McCoy is also part of Army's Installation Management Command where "We Are The Army's Home."

(The Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office and the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch prepared this article.)



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol and contributed photos

Wildlife Program Manager and Biologist Kevin Luepke with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch speaks with people planning to deer hunt in the 2024 gun-deer season at Fort McCoy while they attend a special Meet and Greet event Nov. 22 at Whitetail Ridge Ski Area at the installation. The event was organized by Luepke and the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch and included support from the Fort McCoy Permit Sales Office, Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services, and the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation. (Below photos) Hunters and deer are shown during the first few days of the gun-deer season on post.



COMMUNITY

Fort McCoy staff preparing Whitetail Ridge Ski Area for late-December 2024 opening

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Staff with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) are working to get Whitetail Ridge Ski Area for opening in late December, weather permitting.

Snowmaking is currently underway, and Mother Nature has been cooperative thus far,” said Recreation Specialist/Facility Manager Alex Karis with DFMWR. “We are hoping to have some snowtubing options available on Dec. 21 and 22, but still have a little ways to go for that. Depending on how cold it stays, we should be ready to go by Dec. 26.”

Karis said if the planned opening takes place Dec. 26, they will have holiday hours from Dec. 26-31 where the ski area will be open from noon to 8 p.m. New Year’s Day, Jan. 1, 2025, the area will be open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

After the new year, beginning on Jan. 2, the ski area will then go to regular hours. Those hours are Thursdays and Fridays from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The ski area offers downhill skiing and snowboarding for both novice and experienced athletes. The ski hill features a 185-foot vertical drop and a self-loading T-bar. It also offers a terrain park for snowboarders.

For snowtubing, ride up to the top of the hill on the Magic Carpet, then slide down one of six 800-foot-long runs, Karis said. Tubers must be 38 inches tall, or their parents must sign a waiver.

And snowtubing at Whitetail is a great experience, Karis said based on feedback he’s received.

“Our tubing has become fairly popular, so we want to make the experience the best and safest possible,” he said.

Karis is correct in noting Whitetail has been becoming more popular. Whitetail Ridge Ski Area had its best season for customers ever during the 2022-2023 winter season with 14,465 customers, he said. The 2023-2024 winter season was hampered by lack of snow and warmer weather, but Karis said they still had a successful season.

Whitetail Ridge also offers cross-country skiing and snowshoe trails. Trails are groomed and free to use, but equipment is available to rent, if needed, Karis said.

The chalet and Ten Point Pub offer a warm break from outside activities. Relax inside and take advantage of the snack bar menu, which features sandwiches, appetizers, pizza, and drinks.

“So, for people who don’t necessarily want to go out in the cold, but if they still want to bring the family, we have food and beverage options inside,” Karis said. “We also have a deck that overlooks the ski hill with propane heaters out there. But we definitely do have areas for people who might not want to come to tube or ski, and they can come and enjoy themselves at the Ten Point Pub.”

The snowtubing hill also saw another upgrade earlier in 2024 when Soldiers with the Army Reserve’s 702nd Engineer Company, which is based in Johnson City, Tenn., spent six days in early to mid-August working on a troop project that “sig-



Whitetail Ridge Ski Area is shown Dec. 3 at Fort McCoy as snow is being made at the area. Whitetail Ridge, part of Fort McCoy’s Pine View Recreation Area, offers a variety of activities for the whole family. The ski hill offers snowtubing, downhill skiing, and snowboarding. For more information about costs and special events at Whitetail Ridge, visit <https://mccoy.armymwr.com>.



nificantly” improved the snowtubing hill at Whitetail Ridge.

In a previous news article at <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/478880/army-reserves-702nd-engineers-upgrades-fort-mccoys-whitetail-ridge-ski-area-with-troop-project>, Karis said the work the Army engineers completed reshaped the tubing hill in a way that will save time and effort by ski area staff.

“They brought in a lot of dirt and completed some significant excavating,” Karis said. “They helped reshape the hill and make it a little less steep.”

Karis said there was a section of the hill that needed more dirt and was an issue when it came to snowmaking.

“There was spot where we had to fill in with between 10 to 25 feet of manmade snow on that hill,” Karis said. “But they fixed that. Now it will only need 5 to 10 feet of manmade snow.”

“They also straightened the lanes we’ll have for snowtubing,” he said. “They did a great job. We’ll definitely put it to the test this winter. But overall, we’ll reduce snowmaking time on that hill. ... We could save up to four to five days of snowmaking.”

The area is typically open through mid-March, weather permitting.

Pine View Recreation Area facilities are open to the general public. Discounts are generally offered to military members or Department of Defense civilian employees. A visitor’s pass, military ID, or Department of Defense ID is not required to ac-

cess the recreation area.

Prices for the 2024-2025 season are available at <https://mccoy.armymwr.com/programs/whitetail-ridge-ski-area>. Call 502-898-4498 for more information.

Also, keep track of hours and the latest special offers at Whitetail Ridge by visiting <https://mccoy.armymwr.com/programs/whitetail-ridge-ski-area>, Karis said.

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>, on X (formerly Twitter) by searching “usagmccoy,” on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/fortmccoywi>, and on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@fortmccoy>.

Archery seasons return at Fort McCoy through January 2025

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

The regular archery/crossbow season and cantonment archery season resumed Dec. 2 at Fort McCoy and will continue through Jan. 31, 2025, said Wildlife Biologist Kevin Luepke with the Natural Resources Branch (NRB) of the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division.

“The archery harvest so far has been very good,” Luepke said during the 2024 Deer Hunter Meet and Greet on Nov. 22 at Whitetail Ski Area. He noted more than 130 deer were already harvested through archery on post.

The archery season is a non-quota season, so permits are available through iSportsman at <https://mccoy.isportsman.net> at any time during the season, Luepke said.

“The cantonment archery season is a quota hunt and applicants were selected and notified,” Luepke said in September. “Cantonment archery is the urban deer management program, and I would like to remind hunters that it is a Earn-a-Buck program that requires the harvest of two (antlerless or spike bucks) deer before hunters are allowed to harvest a forked antler buck.”

A Fort McCoy archery permit and a Wisconsin bow or crossbow hunting license are required to hunt on Fort McCoy for regular archery/crossbow, NRB officials said. Harvest is limited to one deer (antlered or antlerless) with the appropriate deer harvest authorization supplied with the Fort McCoy archery permit. Fort McCoy archery permits can be purchased on iSportsman at <https://mccoy.isportsman.net> or at the Permit Sales Office during normal business hours.

Archery hunters also must remember that when hunting with both bow and crossbow, they must have the appropriate Wisconsin bow/



Whitetail deer try to blend in with the snowy landscape on the cantonment area during a spring snow storm on April 3, 2018, at Fort McCoy.

crossbow license upgrade. The upgrade allows for use of either, otherwise hunters must choose between just using a bow or just using a crossbow.

Regular Wisconsin archery licenses are \$24 for resident archery and \$24 for resident crossbow. An upgrade is an additional \$3. The Fort McCoy regular archery/crossbow permit is \$17. Wisconsin hunting licenses are sold on the Wisconsin GoWild web site for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at <https://gowild.wi.gov>.

People who have more questions on appropriate licensing requirements for Fort McCoy can get answers by visiting the Fort McCoy iSportsman page at <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net> or by calling the Permit Sales Office at 608-388-3337. For Wisconsin archery rules and regulations, visit https://widnr.widen.net/s/chhtkdmjsh/wm0685-2021_small.

NRB officials said annually approximately 800 archery permits are purchased for Fort McCoy, and hunters have had a success rate of about 15-20 percent. On average about 90-100 deer are harvested on post each year during archery season, but recent years there have been more.

Archery hunters are reminded that use of any tree stands or blinds must be temporary and must be taken down each day. Also, if hunters succeed in harvesting a deer, that deer must be registered on Fort McCoy’s iSportsman website.

“Fort McCoy offers hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities to military (active and retired) and their dependents, government employees, and the general public,” Luepke said. “Revenue generated from the sale of hunting, fishing, and trapping permits is used for the management of fish and wildlife habitat and populations on Fort McCoy.”

For more information about the installation’s hunting, fishing, and other outdoor opportunities, go online to the Fort McCoy iSportsman page at <https://mccoy.isportsman.net> or call the Permit Sales Office at 608-388-3337.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy>, on Facebook by searching “ftmccoy,” and on Twitter by searching “usagmccoy.”

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

2025 early catch, release trout season opens Jan. 6 in Wisconsin, Fort McCoy

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Wisconsin’s 2025 early catch-and-release trout season, which includes Fort McCoy streams and tributaries, opens Jan. 6 and continues until 11:59 p.m. May 3.

Only artificial lures may be used during the early catch-and-release trout season, and all fish caught must be released immediately, said Fort McCoy Fisheries Biologist Steve Rood with the Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch. The appropriate Fort McCoy permit, Wisconsin fishing license, and trout stamp are required.

Access to Fort McCoy’s trout streams and tributaries is fairly easy. There are many trout fishing opportunities available within close proximity of several major roadways at Fort McCoy, Rood said.

“The 2024 stream surveys found trout abundance (measured in the number per mile) was at the fourth highest and trout biomass (measured in pounds per acre) was at an all-time high,” Rood said. “This follows the trend from the previous five years with trout abundance and biomass well above average. These extraordinary numbers and size of trout will provide anglers with a great opportunity to pursue some quality fish.”

Rood said anglers at Fort McCoy should keep an eye out for tagged trout.

“Many of the brown trout anglers may encounter have been marked with a blue Floy tag to track their movement, age and growth,” Rood said. “Each tag has a unique five-digit identification number along with a phone number for the Permit Sales Office. However, with the recent change in phone numbers, the number on the tag is out of date. Anglers



A trout caught in an installation stream is shown May 24, 2023, at Fort McCoy.

are reminded that if they wish to report catching a tagged fish, they need to use the new Permit Sales Office phone number: 502-898-3337, and disregard the phone number located on the tag.

“If an angler reports a tagged fish they can receive the life history of that particular fish,” Rood said. “Along with tagged trout, there are also tagged largemouth bass and walleye located in some of the lakes on Fort McCoy.”

Rood added that trout spawning surveys from fall 2024 indicated trout successfully completed their spawning migrations.

“This should result in another abundant year

class of fish in 2025,” Rood said.

The early catch and release trout season on streams begins on the first Saturday in January and runs through the Friday preceding the first Saturday in May.

Fishing licenses and permits for 2025 are valid through March 31. A 2025 Wisconsin fishing license, trout stamp, and related Fort McCoy permit will be required starting April 1.

The 2025 licenses can be purchased from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) online at <https://gowild.wi.gov>. All prospective anglers must do is create an account at the Go Wild site, select the licenses they need, pay for the licenses, and print them, all online.

Fort McCoy fishing permits are only available through the iSportsman automated permit issuance system at <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>.

People without direct access to the internet can also utilize the Hunter Information Point (HIP) self-serve kiosk or stop into building 2168 to receive assistance from the Permit Sales Office to purchase their permits from the iSportman system.

The HIP is located along State Highway 21 at the intersection of South J Street and State Highway 21 and is open year-round. A credit card will be required to purchase a permit from the HIP.

Anglers are also reminded to read the updated Fort McCoy fishing regulation that is on the Fort McCoy iSportsman web site, <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>, and to check the gameline for closed areas prior to fishing. The gameline can be accessed on the iSportsman website, at the HIP, or via phone at 866-277-1597.

Also, through a number of resources available online, following are some tips on how to properly catch and release trout:

- When catching and releasing a trout, face the fish upstream in gentle flowing water, preferably in the stream water near the shore and not in fast current.
 - When releasing the fish, don’t let the fish go until it gives strong tail-swimming movements and swims firmly out of your gentle grip.
 - Handle trout gently, keeping it in the water as much as possible. Unhooking the trout without lifting it from the water is best.
 - Remove hooks with needle-nosed pliers or forceps. Using barbless hooks makes releasing trout much easier.
 - If a trout is hooked deeply, cut the line and release the fish. The hook eventually will dissolve, leaving the trout unharmed.
- More information about inland trout fishing is available online at the WDNR website at <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing/trout>. The WDNR also states Wisconsin boasts more than 13,000 miles of trout streams with more than 5,000 classified as high quality, class I trout streams.
- For Wisconsin 2024-25 trout fishing regulations and more about license rates, visit <https://widnr.widen.net/s/gvs9sx8mdl/seasondates2425>.
- Anglers looking for more information about installation fishing regulations should go to the Fort McCoy iSportsman website at <https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net>, or contact the Permit Sales Office at 502-898-3337.
- 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>, on X (formerly Twitter) by searching “usagmccoy,” on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/fortmccoywi>, and on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@fortmccoy>.

THIS MONTH IN FORT MCCOY HISTORY

sonnel made a lot of good recommendations that I hope we can enact as money becomes available.”

10 Years Ago — December 2014

FROM THE DEC. 12, 2014, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Units can create their own dining experience at Fort McCoy (By Scott T. Sturkol)* — Most military installations have limited dining facilities to support operations. Service members at Fort McCoy have more options available.

Fort McCoy's 32 transient training dining facilities provide a unique opportunity for unit food service personnel to manage their unit's dining experience, said Fort McCoy Food Service Manager Andy Pisney from the Logistics Readiness Center's Supply and Services Division.

Pisney said units that sign out a dining facility develop their own food service schedules and menus and feed their troops on the unit's schedule in a location convenient for their personnel.

“Each one of the transient training dining facilities is located in the various blocks on Fort McCoy,” said Pisney, a retired Soldier who spent more than 20 years in the Army’s food service career field.

“Depending on where they are billeted, units can sign out dining facilities in the same area as their barracks.”

Fort McCoy's cantonment area, built during World War II in "cookie-cutter blocks," puts a dining facility within walking distance of wherever a unit is billeted. Disney said

"Most often it works out where we can accommodate units that want to cook for themselves," Pisney said. "Our staff does an excellent job helping these units have that capability open to them."

Each block has two dining facilities that are connected, Disney said. Units with a large number of service members at Fort McCoy for training may end up signing out two of the facilities.

Regardless of the number needed, Pisney said the dining facilities are ready for use at all times.

"That's what is unique about Fort McCoy," Piskey said. "When you sign for a facility here, you get a complete dining facility. It is first class. You have TVs, air conditioning, all new cooking equipment, dishwashing equipment, a full pantry that has all your pots, pans and utensils."

"All you need is the food," Pisnev said.

Zandra Myers, Fort McCoy Food Service specialist, said she and her coworkers in food service management work hard to ensure units get what they need. They also work with other agencies, such as the Directorate of Public Works Training Facility Support Branch, to maintain the facilities.

"We make sure all the facilities are stocked with the right number of items needed to operate successfully," said Myers who also is a retired Soldier from the food service career field.

"If any of our customers need anything, we'll immediately help them get what they need."

Pisney said all of the transient dining facilities have been renovated, and have had increased use over the last six years.

“The number of units wanting to sign out a dining facility has increased every year since 2008,” Pisney said. “We had 122 in the last fiscal year, 99 the year before that and so on.

Since the end of mobilization, more units are going back to having fully trained food service specialists and doing their own cooking. Our facilities, I believe, make that effort easier for them.”

In addition to transient training dining facilities, Pisney's office oversees the food service contract at two "brick and mortar" facilities — buildings 50 and 2674 — and will do the same at the new dining facility at the Staff Sgt. Todd R. Cornell Noncommissioned Officer Academy complex.

5 Years Ago — December 2019

FROM THE DECEMBER 2019 NEWS ARCHIVE FOR FORT MCCOY PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE: *First CWOC class of 2019-20 training season graduates 38 students at Fort McCoy (By Scott T. Sturkol)* — Thirty-eight Soldiers and Marines graduated from the Fort McCoy's Cold-Weather Operations Course's class 20-01 in mid-December 2019, kicking off the 2019-20 winter training season for the course.

Led by instructors Hunter Heard, Manny Ortiz, and Joe Ernst with contractor Veterans Range Solutions, which works with Fort McCoy's Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security, Cold-Weather Operations Course, or CWOC, students trained for 14 days in a variety of cold-weather subjects.

Students completed snowshoe training and skiing, and they learned how to use ahkio sleds and the Arctic 10-person cold-weather tent and to build improvised shelters.

"It went really well with this class," Heard said. "It was a really great group of students. They all worked really well together and kept a high level of motivation throughout the entire class."

CWOC training also focuses on terrain and weather analysis, risk management, proper cold-weather clothing wear, developing winter fighting positions, camouflage and concealment in a cold-weather environment, cold-water immersion reaction and treatment, and injury prevention.

“An important part of the training and understanding operations in the cold weather is how to identify and understand what causes cold-weather injuries,” said Ortiz, who was a combat medic in the Army. “This year, we have scenarios on how students can respond to help a victim of hypothermia. This helps them build confidence and knowledge in understanding cold-weather injuries overall, as well.”

The class included more than a dozen Marines with the 2nd Battalion, 24th Marines (2nd, 24th), which is an infantry battalion based out of Chicago consisting of approximately 1,000 Marines and Sailors. The battalion falls under the 23rd Marine Regiment and the 4th Marine Division. Many enjoyed their training in the course.

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/fortmccoy>, on X (formerly Twitter) by searching “usagmccoy,” on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/fortmccoy>, and on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@fortmccoy>.



A member of a squad of Cold-Weather Operations Course Class 20-01 students made up of Soldiers and Marines climbs out of a hole in the ice Dec. 16, 2019, during the beginning of a new cold-water immersion training scenario for the course at Big Sandy Lake on South Post at Fort McCoy.

NEWS NOTES/FACILITIES

FAMILY WORKSHOP

Decorate a Snowman Family

Jan 7, 16 or 21 | 4:00 - 6:30 pm
ACS Building Bonds Workshop
Bldg 1130

Spending Time Together as a Family Builds Family Resilience! Build family memories as you customize your Snowman Family yard decoration.

- * All materials and instruction supplied
- * Class size is limited
- * Children must be accompanied by an adult
- * Single and geographical bachelors are welcome

TO REGISTER, PLEASE CALL ACS AT 502-898-3505
Must register 1 week prior to workshop. Space is limited.
Children must be accompanied by an adult.
All events are open to Military, Civilian, Veterans, Family Members and registered Fort McCoy Volunteers unless otherwise stated. For information on upcoming training opportunities through ACS, please go to <http://mccoy.army.mil/mccoycentral> or contact ACS at 502-898-3505.

US ARMY MWR ACS EFMP

www.mccoy.army.mil | 502-898-3505

SKI & SNOWBOARD LESSONS

Does your child want to learn to ski or snowboard? Lessons will be taught by trained instructors at the Whitetail Ridge Ski Area. Parents or Guardians are responsible for providing transportation to and from lessons.

Thursdays from Jan 9 - Mar 6, 2025

Beginners:
4:30 - 5:30 PM
Advanced:
6:30 - 7:30 PM

Grades:
1st - 12th

Location:
Whitetail Ridge

Cost:
\$130 | \$100
With equipment rental. Without equipment rental. Must bring your own.

TO REGISTER FOR LESSONS CALL **502.898.8956** | Youth must be registered with Child and Youth Services prior to enrolling in lessons. Call 502-898-8956 to register with CYSL. Registration ends Dec 30, 2024. Space is limited to 10 children per class so sign up today! Payment due at the time of registration and is non-refundable.

Christmas 2024 Hours of Operation

Army Community Service: CLOSED Dec 25

Auto Skills Center: CLOSED Dec 23 - Jan 2

Child & Youth Services: CLOSED Dec 24-25

MWR HQ BLDG 1668: CLOSED Dec 25

McCoy's Community Center: 11 am - 1 pm Dec 20
CLOSED Dec 21 - Jan 2

Whitetail Ridge: CLOSED Dec 25

Pine View Campground: CLOSED Dec 24-25

Rumple Fitness Center: 7 am - 3 pm Dec 16-30
CLOSED Dec 24-25
24/7 Access will be available

SEASON PASSES

EARLY BIRD SPECIALS
Offer runs Dec 2-6, 2024 | Passes are not transferable.

| | |
|---|--|
| MILITARY/DOD REGULAR PRICE \$200 \$150 | GENERAL PUBLIC REGULAR PRICE \$300 \$250 |
| ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBER REGULAR PRICE \$100 \$75 | ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBER REGULAR PRICE \$150 \$125 |

502-898-3517 @FortMcCoyMWR

FAMILY CALENDAR WORKSHOP

January 18, 2025 | 9 am* - 12 pm
*Early start time (1 hour) for EFMP Families

Design and create a personalized 2025 calendar with your Family!

Using rubber stamp art, stickers and many more items, this workshop gives Families an opportunity to increase communication skills while having fun creating memories.

Details

- All supplies are furnished
- Class size will be limited
- If desired, bring your own photos
- Children must be accompanied by an adult

Call Army Community Service to register at 502-898-7262 or email lorie.l.retzlaff.civ@army.mil. Register by January 15.

Class held at ACS Family Building 2161 South J Street.

US ARMY MWR ACS EFMP

ACS events are open to Military, Civilian, Veterans, Family Members and registered Fort McCoy Volunteers, unless otherwise stated. For information on upcoming training opportunities through ACS, please go to <http://mccoy.army.mil/mccoycentral> or click on Calendar.

Fort McCoy phone number changes

*ALL PHONE NUMBER AREA CODE & PREFIXES HAVE CHANGED 502-898-xxxx.

Last 4 digits remain the same.

*This applies to all numbers using 608-388-xxxx

Since November, all phones at Fort McCoy no longer have the 608-388 phone area code and prefix. All phones now begin with 502-898.

See a complete list of Fort McCoy phone numbers by visiting the phone book on the Fort McCoy website at <https://home.army.mil/mccoy/contact/phonebook>.

2024-25 FORT MCCOY GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE: The 2024-25 Fort McCoy Guide is now available throughout the installation in news stands and at the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office. Call 502-898-2407 for extra copies. Also go online to <https://www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/71107> to see the online version.

Dining Facilities
Building 50 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 - \$4.35
Lunch - \$7.00
Dinner - \$6.05

Other Dining
McCoy's Community Center: Building 1571. Catering/administration, call 608-388-2065. Building 1571. Open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tues.-Fri. and 4-10 p.m. Sat. Call 502-898-7060.

Snack Avenue: Building 1538. Located inside Express. Open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat. and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sun. Call 608-269-5604 or 502-898-4343.

Specialty Express Food Court: Building 1538. Open 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Limited seating available. Delivery available to South Post and in cantonment area. Call 608-269-5615, ext. 303.

Whitetail Ridge Chalet/Ten Point Pub: Open during regular ski area hours. Call 502-898-3517.

Recreation

Automotive Skills Center: Building 1763. Open 1-9 p.m. Thur.-Fri. and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat.-Sun. Call 502-898-3013.

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS): Call 502-898-3200.

iSportsman: Portal for outdoor recreational activities, registration and check-in required. Register, apply for permits, and sign in or out of recreation areas at <https://fmmcoy.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. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 502-898-2619/3517.

Recreation Accommodations: Open 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tues.-Fri. Mon. by appointment only. Call 502-898-2029.

Rumple 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 darrell.l.hawkins.ctr@mail.mil to schedule tests. Email connie.j.schauer.civ@mail.mil for other services.

Equal Employment Opportunity: Open 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. No walk-ins. Call 502-898-3106/3107 or email usarmy.usarc.usarc-hq.mbx.eeo@mail.mil.

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

ID Card/DEERS Section: Building 2187. Open 8-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3:30 p.m. Mon.-Wed. and Fri. and 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3:30 p.m. Thur. Call 502-898-4563.

IHG Army Hotels: Building 51. Open 24/7. Call 502-898-2107 or 877-711-TEAM (8326).

Installation Legal Office: Building 2171. Call 502-898-2165.

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

Laundry Facilities: Open 24/7. Exclusively for use by Soldiers training on Fort McCoy. Civilian, family members, and retired military members are not authorized to use these facilities. Call 502-898-3800 to find out which buildings are open.

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

Military Personnel: Building 2187. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. By appointment only.

facilities services

This schedule is projected through Jan. 9, 2025.
Hours of operation and services can change frequently.
Call facilities to verify hours before traveling.

Bold, italic typeface indicates a change since the last publication.

In/Out-processing: 502-898-4822.
Personnel Automations: 502-898-4842.
Reassignments: 502-898-4746.
Records Update: 502-898-5677.
Centralized Promotions: 502-898-5677.

Multimedia/Visual Information: Building 2113. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. DA/command photos are by appointment only. Schedule at <https://vivos.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 fmmcoy.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@mail.mil.

Retirement Services Office: Building 2187. Open 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 502-898-3716.

R.I.A. Credit Union: Building 1501. Open 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Mon.-Fri. and 2-4 p.m. Tues. and Thurs. ATMs are located in building 1501 (available 24/7); McCoy's, building 1571; Exchange, building 1538; and IHG Army Hotels, building 51 (available 24/7). Call 502-898-2171.

Service Station/Express/Class VI: Building 1538. Open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mon.-Sat. and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Sun. Call 502-898-4343. Pay-at-the-pump gas is open 24/7.

Transition Service Center: Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 502-898-7956.

Visitor Control Center: Building 35. Open 6 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Passes issued at Main Gate outside of VCC hours. Physical Security open for fingerprints Thur. only; call 502-898-2266. See ID/DEERS section for its hours.

Family Support
Army Community Service: Building 2111. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 502-898-3505.

Army Substance Abuse Program: Building 1344. Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. By appointment only. Call 502-898-2441.

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93% Humidity
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Events you bookmark will appear here.
Explore events

| CONDITION | IF YOU HEAR | THIS INDICATES | INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| Natural Disaster | 3- to 5-minute steady tone or voice announcement | Disaster imminent or in progress. Examples: Tornado, flash flood, hazardous-materials release, wildfire. | Be alert. Ensure all personnel are warned. Take cover by evacuating to a safe location or sheltering in place. Notify supervisor of location. Tune in to local radio or TV stations for emergency information. |
| Attack | 30-sec. to 5-min. wavering tone or voice announcement | Attack imminent or in progress. Examples: Vehicle bomb, terrorist action, release of biological or radioactive materials. | Be alert. Ensure all personnel are warned. Implement force-protection condition (FPCON) procedures as indicated. Take cover by evacuating to a safe location or sheltering in place. Notify supervisor of location. |
| All Clear | Voice announcement | Immediate threat from disaster or attack is over. | Be alert for secondary hazards. Account for all personnel. Check building. Await instructions on FPCON level. Report fires, injuries and other hazards. |

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The Real McCoy

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Send advertising inquiries to kyle@evansprinting.com or call 608-377-4296.

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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.

2024 Canadian-Pacific Holiday Train rolls through Fort McCoy

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

The 2024 Canadian Pacific Holiday Train went through Fort McCoy on Dec. 9 on its way from Tomah to Sparta, Wis.

The 2024 Holiday Train is touring Canada and the U.S. from Nov. 21 through Dec. 20, raising money, food and awareness to support food banks across their network.

Professional musicians play free concerts from the brightly decorated train's stage. Canadian Pacific donates to the local food bank at each stop and encourages all attendees to make a monetary or heart-healthy food donation.

Since its inaugural journey in 1999, the CPKC Holiday Train has raised more than \$24.3 million and collected approximately 5.3 million pounds of food for community food banks in Canada and the U.S., according to the railway.

Rail traffic rolls through Fort McCoy daily, including many Canadian Pacific trains.

As this train made its way through the post, dozens of Fort McCoy community members were out to watch it slowly ride through.

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

Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set "Fort McCoy" or another installation as your preferred base. Fort McCoy is also part of Army's Installation Management Command where "We Are The Army's Home."



TREE LIGHTING

from Page 1

around us.”

The ceremony also honored the sacrifices of military families, especially those with deployed loved ones. Command Sergeant Maj. Thomas Calarco, garrison command sergeant major, introduced a local family whose mother had recently deployed, sharing his own reflections about military families.

“You all pay a significant price for this great nation. My family has committed so many more sacrifices than I could ever dream of,” Calarco said. “I know I see a lot of military members in this audience. And me personally, I can remember the last day at home, my four-and-a-half-year-old son tried to crawl into my kit when I was in the middle of my living room. And my wife took a picture of it so I can never forget it.”

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

The event was organized by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR). Learn more about Fort McCoy DFMWR activities by visiting <https://mccoy.armymwr.com> or their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mccoy-mwr>.

Fort McCoy’s motto is to be the “Total Force Training Center.” Located in the heart of the upper Midwest, Fort McCoy is the only U.S. Army installation in Wisconsin.

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

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



(All photos, above, right, and below) Fort McCoy community members participate in the 2024 Fort McCoy Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Dec. 5 at McCoy's Community Center. Hundreds of people attended the event to kick off the holiday season on the installation.

Twitter) by searching “usagmccoy,” on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/fortmccoywi>, and on YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/@fortmccoy>. Also try downloading the My Army



Post app to your smartphone and set “Fort McCoy” or another installation as your preferred base. Fort McCoy is also

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



Stay Safe on the Road This Winter!

Slow Down

Leave early and add cushion to your normal drive.

Skid Smart

Learn how to handle your car BEFORE you go into a skid. Winter driving classes can be a great idea.

Be Prepared

Road delays happen. Put together and carry a road trip safety kit.

Have Patience

Be willing to wait for better road conditions.

Shoulder Safety

If you pull over, get as far off the shoulder as possible. Turn off headlights and turn on hazards.

Don't Use Cruise Control

Your tires may spin too fast on slick roads, causing you to lose control.

Passing Precaution

Allow more distance for passing—or just don't pass.

Be Seen

Turn on your low-beam headlights even during the day.

Keep Your Stopping Distance

It can take 10 times longer or more to stop on ice.

Perhaps the best tip of all: ride safe, slow down, and enjoy the views.

Put a FREEZE on Cold Weather MISHAPS



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS CENTER

For more information visit
<https://safety.army.mil>



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For more information visit
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KEEP YOUR VEHICLE ON THE ROAD THIS WINTER

WHEN DRIVING IN WINTER ROAD CONDITIONS, REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING TIPS:

- CLEAR YOUR WINDOWS AND MIRRORS OF SNOW AND ICE BEFORE YOU SET OUT.
- AVOID SUDDEN BRAKING, ACCELERATING TOO QUICKLY AND HARSH STEERING IN SLIPPERY CONDITIONS.
- GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO MANEUVER BY DRIVING SLOWER TO MEET CONDITIONS.
- DON'T OVERPOWER YOUR VEHICLE UP HILLS. APPLYING EXTRA GAS ON SNOW-COVERED ROADS JUST STARTS YOUR WHEELS SPINNING.
- WHEN DRIVING AT NIGHT, LEAVE YOUR HEADLAMPS ON LOW BEAM WHEN DRIVING IN SNOW OR FOG. THIS PRACTICE MINIMIZES THE REFLECTION AND GLARE, IMPROVES VISIBILITY AND REDUCES EYE FATIGUE.
- IF VISIBILITY BECOMES POOR, FIND A PLACE TO SAFELY PULL OFF THE ROAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.





<https://safety.army.mil>