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98th Army Reserve Readiness Training Center activates in special ceremony at Fort McCoy

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff



The flag for the 98th Army Reserve Readiness Training Center is unfurled Oct. 21 in building 50 during an activation ceremony for the 98th at Fort McCoy.

Soldiers, leaders, family members, and representatives from organizations across the Army Reserve gathered Oct. 21 at Fort McCoy to mark the formal activation of the 98th Army Reserve Readiness Training Center (ARRTC), establishing a new chapter in the organization's longstanding history of developing Soldiers and leaders through institutional training.

The activation ceremony took place in Building 50, which now serves as the headquarters of the 98th ARRTC. The ceremony included remarks from senior leaders, an invocation by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Walter McCall, garrison chaplain for U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy, the reading of the activation order, and the uncasing of the unit's colors to signify the formal beginning of its mission.

Capt. Wanda Snipes performed the national anthem.

Col. Michael Child, deputy commanding officer of the 102nd Training Division, welcomed attendees and emphasized the importance of institutional training to the readiness of the Total Army.

"Institutional training is one of the enduring advantages," Child said. "It provides a technical foundation for leader development and professional education that Soldiers carry back to their formations."

Child said the training conducted through the 98th ARRTC directly supports the Army's ability to fight and win the nation's wars by preparing Soldiers and leaders for their responsibilities before their units train collectively, mobilize, or respond to national requirements.

The 98th ARRTC will contribute to readiness across all three Army components through military occupational specialty transition training, professional military education, and staff training.

Its mission includes professional military education courses such as the Basic Leader Course, Advanced Leader Course, and Senior Leader Course, as well as the Battle Staff Course.

The organization also commands the Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Fort McCoy and oversees three Ordnance Training Centers located at Fort McCoy, Fort Devens, and Fort Hood, Texas, along with the Engineer and Chemical Training Center at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

Together, these organizations provide training intended to develop technically proficient Soldiers, confident noncommissioned officers, and capable staffs throughout the Army.

"This building, Building 50, is now officially the home of the 98th," Child said. "It will become an institution of excellence because of the professionals within its ranks."

Child challenged the center's first command team, Lt. Col. Brandon Michael Collins and Command Sgt. Maj. Justin Tranberg, to establish high standards, develop their personnel, and build an organization known for professionalism, competence, and disciplined execution.

He also recognized the Soldiers and staff members whose work will support Army readiness through their daily training and leadership.

"Your work strengthens units, develops leaders, improves readiness across the Total Army," Child said. "More importantly, it helps ensure the Army is prepared to fight and win its nation's wars."

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Fort McCoy hosts Community Leader Engagement event

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Community leaders from western Wisconsin visited Fort McCoy on Oct. 15 to learn more about the installation's military training mission, economic impact, and role in supporting Soldiers and the surrounding communities.

Representatives from the chambers of commerce and respective cities of Sparta, Tomah, La Crosse, and Black River Falls participated in the Community Leader Engagement (CLE) event, which included an installation tour, opportunities to meet with military and civilian leaders, and hands-on experiences with training simulations.

Coordinated by the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office and U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy leadership, the event brought together community representatives and installation personnel to strengthen relationships, increase understanding of Fort McCoy's mission, and explore how the installation contributes to the region.

During the visit, participants toured several locations across the installation, including South Post Housing, Whitetail Ridge Ski Area, Pine View Campground, and the Commemorative Area. The itinerary also included an overview of Fort McCoy's history and a visit to the History Center and Equipment Park, where visitors could learn more about the installation's military heritage and development.

The tour provided an opportunity for community leaders to see the variety of facilities and activities at Fort McCoy beyond its primary role as a military training installation.

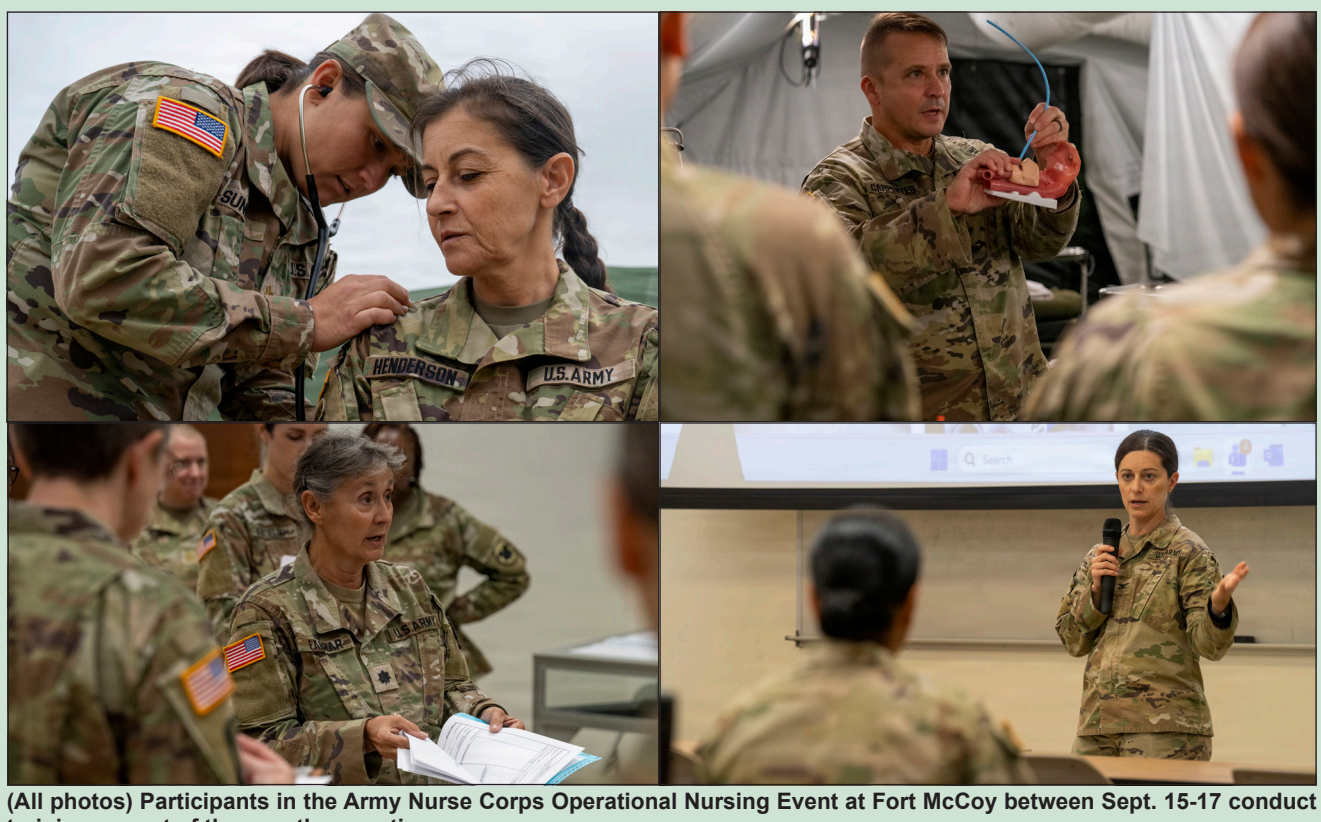
Participants also visited the installation's simulations training facilities in Building 221, where they took part in hands-on experiences with the Reconfigurable Virtual Collective Trainer and Engagement Skills Trainer. The demonstrations offered insight into how Soldiers use simulation-based systems to practice skills, develop proficiency, and prepare for military operations.

The visit also included opportunities to engage with Fort McCoy leaders from the garrison and the 88th Readiness Division, the itinerary shows. Discussions gave community representatives a chance

(See **CIVIC LEADERS**, Page 3)



Community leaders from Sparta, Tomah, La Crosse, and Black River Falls Chambers of Commerce and respective cities in Wisconsin participate in a Community Leader Engagement event Oct. 15 at Fort McCoy.



(All photos) Participants in the Army Nurse Corps Operational Nursing Event at Fort McCoy between Sept. 15-17 conduct training as part of the event's operations.

'Warrior Medics,' 'Desert Medics' join active, Guard peers for ANC ONE 2026

STORY & PHOTOS BY SGT. 1ST CLASS CHRISTOPHER HERNANDEZ
Army Reserve Medical Command

Approximately 20 U.S. Army Reserve nurses throughout the Pinellas Park, Florida-based Army Reserve Medical Command, the Salt Lake City-based 807th Theater Medical Command and the Gillem Enclave, Georgia-based 3rd Theater Medical Command took part in the annual U.S. Army Nurse Corps Operational Nursing Event (ANC ONE) alongside 60 other active Army and Army National Guard nurses at the 88th Readiness Division auditorium and Regional Training Site — Medical at Fort McCoy from Sept. 15-17.

This year's ANC ONE marked the third iteration of the event — intended to provide a didactic, pragmatic and dialogue-driven platform and provide professional growth and development for Army nurses.

Col. Maria Pescatore, the deputy chief of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, said ANC ONE imparts a multitude of lessons-learned insights and clinical applications useful for field and austere environments.

"My interpretation of the vision of the Operational Nursing Event would be to establish a framework course that many of our (multi-component) nurses can come to and get a shared vision and learn from each other on up-to-date lessons learned of a large-scale combat operation," said Pescatore.

The Falls Church, Virginia denizen said the first two days of ANC ONE encompassed strategic level oversight, such as medical experiences in Operation Epic Fury and the mission and capabilities of forward resuscitative surgical detachments, or FRSDs.

For the third and final day of ANC ONE, the Army nurses engaged in rotational hands-on scenarios to refresh on rudimentary nursing and clinical skills and knowledge.

"On day three, we came out here to RTS-Medical, and we had rotations through the skills lab, we talked about the Hamilton ventilator, we had the Belmont rapid infuser, we had a wound care station as well as an overall patient assessment station and packaging a patient for evacuation," Pescatore said. "So, a lot of getting back to the basics of nursing that we all need to be proficient in."

Moreover, Pescatore said validation for credentialing purposes is handled through the RTS-MED here.

"Continuing education credit is earned during this course, which is also another great benefit for maintaining our licenses," said Pescatore.

Illinois Army National Guard 1st Lt. Tiffany Truesdell, a medical-surgical nurse assigned to the Springfield, Illinois-based Joint Forces Medical Detachment who attended ANC ONE this year, said she is grateful for the opportunity in interacting with active Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve nurses — respectively known as COMPO 1, 2 and 3 in U.S. Army vernacular.

"It's nice to hear how different compos interact, and how you can get bits and piece from every other compo other than your own. It's a dysfunctional functional family that I never knew existed," Truesdell said.

Truesdell, who previously was a wheeled vehicle mechanic with an additional skill identifier in wheeled vehicle recovery operations prior to her officer commission, said ANC ONE gave her an awakening in expectations and to nurture a proactive mindset.

"It makes you expect the unexpected, and it makes you pre-

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NEWS

Fort McCoy workforce members receive Army Civilian Service Achievement Medal for exceptional performance

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Ten Fort McCoy workforce members from multiple directorates received the Army Civilian Service Achievement Medal during a special presentation Oct. 1 in a storage facility for excess equipment on the cantonment area at Fort McCoy.

The awards recognized the employees for their contributions to a comprehensive garrison-wide information technology (IT) equipment turn-in effort that improved property accountability, helped clear space in work areas, and ensured excess equipment could be properly processed.

According to the U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy award citations for each recipient, "these individuals demonstrated outstanding dedication and diligence during a comprehensive garrison-wide information technology equipment turn-in effort."

The Army Civilian Service Achievement Medal recognizes noteworthy achievements that fall below the level recognized by the Civilian Service Commendation Medal. According to Army Regulation 672-20, the award may recognize sustained superior service, an achievement that warrants recognition, or both. The medal acknowledges civilian employees whose contributions make a meaningful difference to their organization and the Army mission.

The following individuals received the award for exceptional performance while serving with U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy from June to September 2026:

— *From Fort McCoy Directorate of Emergency Services* — **Laura Maggio** and **James Kelly**.

— *From Fort McCoy Religious Support Office* — **Dale Gibson**.

— *From Fort McCoy Resource Management Office* — **Travis Todd** and **Dan Torres**.

— *From Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works* — **Sarah Morrow**.

— *From Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security* — **Mary Jones**, **Danielle Anderson**, **Dylan Dearman**, and **Ed Sosa**.

Those present to receive their awards during the presentation were Maggio, Gibson, Torres, Morrow, Anderson, and Sosa. They received their awards from members of the garrison command team, including Col. Sarah Fraticelli, garrison commander; Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison command sergeant major; and Cameron Cantlon, deputy to the garrison commander.

Riddle read the award citations, which detailed the employees' work coordinating with the Garrison Information Management Office to identify and process excess IT equipment.


Laura Maggio


Dale Gibson


Dan Torres


Sarah Morrow


Danielle Anderson


Ed Sosa

"Working in direct coordination with the Garrison Information Management Office, they meticulously identified excess and obsolete (information technology) IT assets, reconciled and cleaned directorate hand receipts, and safely transferred hundreds of pieces of equipment to the warehouse for proper disposal," Riddle read from the citation.

"Their tireless efforts and attention to detail significantly enhanced garrison property accountability, streamlined resource allocation, and ensured full regulatory compliance. Their hard work, professionalism, and devotion to duty reflect great credit upon themselves, United States Army Garrison-Fort McCoy, and the Department of the Army."

Cantlon thanked the recipients for their work and emphasized the importance of determining the best way to handle equipment the installation no longer needs.

"But more importantly, we're emptying out our office spaces, our warehouses, our workspaces, of equipment that we're no longer needing," Cantlon said. "The best thing to do with it is to either send it to someone who needs it … or repurpose it in the Army, or somewhere else in the government, or in some cases, de-mail it and get it turned in."

Cantlon said the presentation recognized a representative group of employees who contributed to the broader installation effort.

"I just wanted to say thank you on behalf of the garrison and installation for doing these things, and I appreciate the collective effort," he said. He also encouraged leaders to continue supporting the work, noting, "We're not done yet."

Fraticelli said her visit to the equipment storage area helped her better understand the challenges involved in turning in excess equipment across the installation. She compared the effort with her own experience dealing with computer equipment while serving in battalion command during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I learned how actually difficult it is for you guys to turn stuff in, and kind of the reason why there is such a lack with turning all this excess equipment in," Fraticelli said.

She thanked the employees for taking on the work, explaining that properly processing excess equipment helps the garrison improve its accountability and prepare for future needs.

"And maybe someone else can use it but just getting it off the books and cleaning up our own garrison to make sure that we can make way for new equipment when we get it," Fraticelli said.

The turn-in effort involved identifying excess and obsolete equipment, reconciling property records, and transferring hundreds of items for appropriate disposition. Depending on the equipment and its condition, items may be repurposed or transferred for reuse, while other equipment is processed for disposal in accordance with applicable requirements.

The work also supports the installation's efforts to maintain accurate property records, use resources responsibly, and keep workspaces and storage facilities organized, officials said. The recognition also highlighted the coordinated work of employees across multiple directorates in supporting the garrison's mission.

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Fort McCoy personnel meet with La Crosse Chamber leaders; enhance community engagement relationships

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL & MELISSA DUBOIS
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy's Deputy Garrison Commander Lt. Col. Chad Holder and other Fort McCoy staff met with leaders of the La Crosse (Wis.) Chamber of Commerce and La Crosse County officials Sept. 29 to enhance community engagement relationships, discuss regional needs, and explore opportunities to strengthen connections between the installation and surrounding communities.

The Fort McCoy delegation met with La Crosse Chamber of Commerce Director Sam Scinta; Kathleen Stewart, director of land services for La Crosse County; Sara Koopman, associate county administrator of the Administrative Center for La Crosse County; and Sam Bachmeier, community development specialist for La Crosse County, at the La Crosse County Administration Office in downtown La Crosse.

"The purpose of this meeting was to introduce key leaders and discuss changes coming to the region due to the Army Transformation Initiative," officials said. Holder highlighted the continued need for adequate housing and child care as well as the current military spouse hiring initiative that includes La Crosse Chamber.

The county hosts quarterly municipality meetings, and Fort McCoy leaders will be considered for future attendance, according to meeting after-action determinations. La Crosse County officials also discussed a housing survey they conducted and said they would share the results with Fort McCoy at a future time.

Both sides noted the meeting as successful and are working to continue engagements.



Economic impact reaches throughout region

The meeting also reflects the importance of maintaining strong relationships between Fort McCoy and the communities that support its mission. The installation's economic activity, workforce, training operations, and contracting needs create connections that extend throughout western Wisconsin and beyond.

According to Fort McCoy's latest publicly reported total economic-impact figures, the installation generated an estimated $1.6 billion in economic impact during fiscal year 2024, which ran from Oct. 1, 2023, through Sept. 30, 2024. That figure was up from $1.38 billion in FY 2023, according to information compiled by Fort McCoy's Plans, Analysis and Integration Office.

The FY 2024 figures included a workforce of 1,934 personnel: 1,061 civilian employees, 495 military personnel, and 378 contract employees. Approximately 66 percent of the workforce lived in Monroe County, demonstrating how installation employment supports households and communities close to the post.

The reported civilian and military workforce payroll for FY 2024 was $270.4 million. Operating costs were $170 million, covering expenses such as utilities, physical plant maintenance, repairs and improvements, construction projects, supplies, and services. Other reported expenditures totaled $21.2 million, including approximately $511,296 in payments to local governments and $20.7 million in discretionary spending in local communities by service members training and residing at Fort McCoy. Military construction on the installation exceeded $92.6 million that fiscal year.

Fort McCoy used a gross multiplier index of 4.0 to estimate the overall economic effects of expenditures in the local economy. The index measures how money circulates within a region and was developed by the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and validated by the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater's Fiscal and Economic Research Center.

The economic-impact estimate reflects more than direct spending at the installation. Money spent on construction, supplies, services, housing, food, retail purchases, and other needs can circulate through businesses and households, helping sustain employment and economic activity in communities across the region.

More recent training figures also underscore the installation's continuing role in the regional economy. Fort McCoy supported 109,962 troops during FY 2025, according to installation reporting. Service members training at the post rely on a broad network of facilities and support services, while their presence can bring additional customers to businesses in nearby communities.

Community partnerships help address shared needs

For Fort McCoy and its neighboring communities, regular engagement provides an opportunity to discuss how changes in military missions and regional growth may affect housing, transportation, childcare, employment, and other services.

Adequate housing and child care are particularly important considerations for communities seeking to attract and retain workers. These resources also matter to military families and employees who need dependable options close enough to balance work and family responsibilities.

The military spouse hiring initiative discussed during the meeting provides another opportunity for cooperation. Connecting military spouses with regional employers can help qualified candidates find work while giving businesses access to additional talent. Continued communication among Fort McCoy, chambers of commerce, workforce-development organizations, and local government can help identify job opportunities, explain hiring resources, and address potential obstacles to employment.

Housing information is another area in which cooperation can support long-term planning. Once La Crosse County shares the results of its housing survey, Fort McCoy and community leaders will have an additional source of information to consider when discussing regional housing needs and the effects of future changes.

These conversations are valuable because the needs of an installation and those of nearby civilian communities often overlap, officials said. A strong workforce benefits employers, while sufficient housing, reliable child care, and accessible employment opportunities help families establish stable lives in the region.

Building long-term relationships

Continuing engagement also gives local leaders opportunities to learn about Fort McCoy's mission and anticipated changes, ask questions, share community concerns, and identify areas in which organizations can work together.

For Fort McCoy, these relationships can improve awareness of regional resources and challenges as installation requirements evolve. For community partners, direct communication provides opportunities to plan for potential impacts, connect with installation representatives, and better understand how military operations contribute to local and regional prosperity.

The Sept. 29 meeting established another point of contact between Fort McCoy and La Crosse-area leaders. Future participation in municipal meetings and the exchange of housing survey findings are among the potential next steps.

Through continued communication and collaboration, Fort McCoy and its regional partners can work toward communities that are better positioned to support military readiness, meet residents' needs, strengthen the workforce, and sustain economic opportunities throughout western Wisconsin.

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to learn more about installation operations, ask questions, and better understand the coordination required to support military training and readiness.

Fort McCoy's relationship with surrounding communities is an important part of its continued success. The installation relies on regional infrastructure, businesses, services, and a skilled workforce to help support its mission, while its operations contribute to economic activity throughout western Wisconsin.

Fort McCoy's economic impact has been substantial locally. The installation reported an estimated $1.6 billion economic impact for fiscal year 2024, up from $1.38 billion in fiscal year 2023.

Workforce payroll, operating costs, and other expenditures accounted for more than $398 million in fiscal year 2024, illustrating the connection between the installation's operations and the regional economy.

Community engagement events also help local leaders gain a clearer picture of how Fort McCoy operates and how its military mission connects with surrounding communities, according to the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office's Melissa Dubois, public affairs specialist for community relations. These visits also provide opportunities for installation leaders to hear directly from community representatives and continue building relationships with local governments, chambers of commerce, and other regional partners.

The Oct. 15 event concluded with a luncheon at McCoy's Community Center, where participants had additional opportunities for discussion and engagement with installation leadership, including Maj. Gen. Kevin Meisler, commanding general of the 88th Readiness Division and senior commander of Fort McCoy; Col. Sarah Fraticelli, commander of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy; Lt. Col. Chad Holder, deputy garrison commander; Command Sgt. Maj. James Riddle, garrison senior enlisted leader; and numerous garrison and tenant organization leaders and directors.

At the luncheon, Holder opened the remarks, "This is the first event we've had like this in five years, so it's good to kind of get this back together and get you guys here to kind of see what we're doing at Fort McCoy and how the growth at Fort McCoy is impacting your communities.

Each leader of the respective chambers of commerce spoke about their organization, and Holder described what followed those introductions.

"We'll introduce our senior leaders, and they'll describe what their vision is for the next year or so and then their vision for long term for Fort McCoy and how that impacts our communities," Holder said.

Meisler discussed a variety of subjects.

"I came from Redstone Arsenal in Alabama. Prior to that, I was in Hawaii for a couple of years," Meisler said.

"So, over the next two years … we are expanding," he said. "We have multiple new units coming on board. By March, I should have 80 additional families coming on. By probably next October, I'll have an additional, just in my headquarters, about another 30, 35."

The Fort McCoy senior commander further described more of the installation's capabilities and related issues and information affecting local communities. Meisler thanked everyone for being a part of the event.

"We appreciate everybody being out here," Meisler said. "I look forward to working with everybody over the next two years."

The Community Leader Engagement event was supported by multiple Fort McCoy directorates and staff members who helped coordinate the tour, demonstrations, facilities, and other activities throughout the day.

"Fort McCoy PAO conducted this first Community Leader Engagement event in five years on with participation from four local cities," Dubois said. "Our partnerships with local communities is vital to Fort McCoy. This event helped foster growing relationships with La Crosse, Black River Falls, Sparta, and Tomah.

"Through our collaboration we will create meaningful connections for our service members, their families, our civilian workforce, and our leadership," Dubois said. "Key takeaways from our attendees were the need for housing, childcare, schooling, and healthcare in our neighboring communities as Fort McCoy experiences huge growth in the next few years thanks to the Army Transformation Initiative. We look forward to our next Community Leader Engagement in the spring."

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(All photos, above and below) Community leaders from Sparta, Tomah, La Crosse, and Black River Falls Chambers of Commerce and respective cities in Wisconsin participate in a Community Leader Engagement event Oct. 15 at Fort McCoy. The group were able to visit various sites at the installation, meet with leaders of U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy and the 88th Readiness Division, and engage in learning about Army ops with simulations training practice. The event was coordinated by the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office and garrison leadership with extensive support from garrison directorates.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online athttps://home.army.mil/mccoy, on Flickr at https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi, and on DVIDS by visiting https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/FMPAO on DVIDS.

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NEWS

Fort McCoy Wellness Fair draws strong participation in 2026

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

More than 100 people visited the business showcase, and approximately 50 people participated in a two-mile wellness walk during the 2026 Wellness Fair held Oct. 14 at Fort McCoy.

The event, organized by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR), brought members of the installation community together to explore health and wellness resources, connect with organizations, and participate in activities promoting healthy lifestyles.

DFMWR Director Scott Abell and DFMWR officials said the event went well, with great participation in the business showcase and the two-mile walk. The turnout provided an opportunity for people to learn about available resources while taking part in an event focused on personal wellness and community engagement.

The fair's business showcase was a central part of the event. More than 100 people visited the showcase to discover resources available on and off the installation to support their well-being. The showcase allowed attendees to connect with participating organizations and businesses, ask questions, and gather information about services and opportunities that could benefit them and their families.

Informational events such as the showcase help make people aware of resources they might not otherwise know are available. Wellness encompasses more than physical fitness; it also includes finding information and support that can contribute to overall quality of life.

The two-mile wellness walk offered another way for participants to engage with the fair.

Approximately 50 people took part in the walk, making physical activity a key component of the day's activities. The walk provided an opportunity for participants to incorporate exercise into their day while supporting the event's emphasis on wellness.

According to the event announcement, participants received a complimentary T-shirt while supplies lasted. The fair also included a door-prize drawing scheduled for 1 p.m. An American Red Cross blood drive was held separately at Building 905 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Wellness Fair also was held at the renovated Rumpel Fitness Center, Building 1122, giving participants the opportunity to attend the event in one of Fort McCoy's primary fitness and recreation facilities.

The center reopened May 1, 2024, following an extensive, multimillion-dollar renovation that took approximately 18 months to complete. Originally built in 1966, the facility received substantial exterior and interior improvements designed to modernize the building and improve its fitness and recreation spaces.

Exterior work included new siding, roofing and sidewalks, along with a storage addition. Interior improvements included redesigned locker rooms, cardio and exercise areas, offices, a new entrance and vestibule, fresh paint, and a redesigned swimming pool. The project also provided improved lighting, expanded cardio space and new fitness equipment.

Rumpel Fitness Center serves as a key resource for physical fitness and readiness at Fort McCoy. The renovated facility provides space and equipment for a variety of fitness and recreational activities, supporting Soldiers, civilian employees, families, and other authorized users of the installation's programs and services.

Holding the Wellness Fair at the center reinforced the connection between the facility and the broader goal of promoting healthy lifestyles. The event brought together opportunities for physical activity and access to information, demonstrating how DFMWR programs can support wellness in multiple ways.

The strong participation in both the business showcase and the walk helped make the 2026 fair an opportunity for members of the Fort McCoy community to connect with resources and focus on their well-being, DFMWR officials said.

For more information about Fort McCoy programs and services, visit https://home.army.mil/mccoy or the Fort McCoy Army MWR website at https://mccoy.armymwr.com.

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(Above and below) Fort McCoy community members participate in the 2-mile Wellness Walk on Oct. 14 during the 2026 Wellness Fair at Fort McCoy.

2026 Fort McCoy Wellness Fair business showcase gave event-goers wide variety of wellness information

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

More than 100 people visited the business showcase during Fort McCoy's 2026 Wellness Fair on Oct. 14 at the renovated Rumpel Fitness Center — providing an opportunity for members of the installation community to learn about resources that support health, fitness, and overall well-being.

The showcase was part of the annual event organized by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR). The fair was designed to connect attendees with resources available on and off the installation to help them make informed decisions about their health and wellness.

DFMWR Director Scott Abell and DFMWR officials said the event went well and had great participation. The turnout for the showcase demonstrated the value of bringing organizations and community resources together in one location where people could ask questions, gather information, and learn about services available to them and their families.

Wellness extends beyond exercise alone, experts say. Access to health information, preventive care, community support, and resources that help people make healthy lifestyle choices can all contribute to long-term well-being.

The business showcase offered attendees an opportunity to explore resources from medical and community organizations and learn more about services that can support different aspects of wellness. Such opportunities can help people become more familiar with available services and identify resources they may want to use throughout the year.

The event also included a two-mile wellness walk, which attracted approximately 50 participants. An American Red Cross blood drive was held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Building 905, adding another health-focused activity to the day's offerings. The business showcase ran from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



Fort McCoy community members participate in business showcase on Oct. 14 during the 2026 Wellness Fair at Fort McCoy.

Wellness is a year-round commitment

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) emphasizes that regular physical activity is important for maintaining health and reducing the risk of chronic disease. Its Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans and Move Your Way initiative encourage people to incorporate activity into their regular routines rather than treating fitness as an occasional goal.

According to the HHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week, along with muscle-strengthening activities on at least two days each week, to obtain substantial health benefits.

Walking briskly, cycling, swimming, dancing, and other activities that increase the heart rate can contribute to weekly aerobic activity, officials note. Strength-building activities can include lifting weights, using resistance bands, or performing body-weight exercises.

HHS also emphasizes that people do not need to complete all their activity in one session. Shorter periods of movement throughout the day can add up, and even small increases in physical activity can provide health benefits. People who are beginning an exercise routine can start with manageable activities and gradually build consistency based on their abilities and needs.

Regular physical activity can improve cardiovascular health, strengthen muscles and bones, support brain health, improve sleep, and help reduce stress, HHS officials said. Consistently meeting physical activity recommendations over time can also lower the risk of several chronic conditions.

The department's guidance encourages Americans to move more and sit less, making physical activity a regular part of everyday life. The goal is to establish sustainable habits that continue beyond a particular event, season, or fitness challenge.

Community wellness events such as Fort McCoy's annual fair can help reinforce that message by bringing people into contact with resources and information that support healthier decisions. A visit to a showcase may help someone learn about a service, while a walk can provide a starting point for incorporating more physical activity into a weekly routine.

Supporting wellness at Fort McCoy

The 2026 Wellness Fair took place at Rumpel Fitness Center, Building 1122, a central facility for fitness and recreation at Fort McCoy.

The center reopened May 1, 2024, following an approximately 18-month, multimillion-dollar renovation. The improvements included redesigned locker rooms and exercise areas, updated cardio and stretching spaces, a redesigned swimming pool, a new entrance and vestibule, and exterior improvements.

The renovated facility supports a variety of fitness and recreation activities, reinforcing Fort McCoy's commitment to maintaining resources that help Soldiers and other authorized members of the installation community stay active.

By combining the business showcase with a wellness walk and other health-related activities, DFMWR offered attendees several ways to engage with the event.

The participation in the showcase also underscored the importance of connecting people with resources that can help support their well-being throughout the year.

For more information about Fort McCoy programs and services, visit https://home.army.mil/mccoy or the Fort McCoy Army MWR website at https://mccoy.armymwr.com.

NEWS

Post continues to support diverse military training throughout September 2026

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Military aircraft operated over Fort McCoy, Soldiers attended professional military education courses, institutional training organizations continued developing technical and medical skills, and military units conducted weekend readiness activities throughout September 2026, demonstrating the breadth of training supported at the installation.

The month's activities included additional U.S. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II training, C-130 Hercules aircraft operations, courses conducted through Fort McCoy's Regional Training Sites (RTS), training at the Fort McCoy Noncommissioned Officer Academy, and recurring training by Army Reserve and National Guard units.

Together, these activities illustrate how Fort McCoy supports different military services, career fields, and levels of readiness at the same time. From individual Soldiers developing technical skills in a classroom to aircrews maintaining proficiency in military aircraft, the installation provides training opportunities designed to prepare service members for future missions.

Aircraft training continues

Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft conducted additional training at Fort McCoy during September, including activity observed Sept. 17. The training followed A-10 operations Aug. 17–21, when A-10C aircraft from the 303rd Fighter Squadron at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., conducted specialized bombing and low-level flight training at the installation.

According to Fort McCoy's Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS), the August training included missions toward the installation's impact area and provided pilots with opportunities to maintain and sharpen their flying and weapons-delivery skills.

The September activity continued the presence of the A-10 at Fort McCoy, DPTMS officials said.

The A-10, designed primarily to provide close air support to ground forces, benefits from an environment that combines extensive airspace, varied terrain and designated training areas. Fort McCoy's impact area and aviation facilities provide options for training that supports a range of military aviation requirements.

C-130 Hercules aircraft also conducted training at Fort McCoy on multiple days in September, including Sept. 16.

The C-130 is a versatile military transport aircraft used for tactical airlift, personnel and cargo transport, airdrop operations and other missions. Its ability to operate in a variety of environments makes it an important aircraft for supporting military forces.

Fort McCoy has regularly supported C-130 training over the years. The installation's airspace, training lands and aviation facilities, including Young Air Assault Strip and the Sparta-Fort McCoy Airport, have provided opportunities for aircrews to practice mission-related skills. Previous training at the installation has included airdrop operations and other activities designed to maintain aircrew proficiency.

The September aircraft activity reinforced Fort McCoy's role in supporting joint-service training, DPTMS officials said. Air Force training takes place alongside Army activities, illustrating how the installation's infrastructure can accommodate different missions and training requirements.

Institutional training builds technical, leadership skills

Aircraft operations represent only one part of Fort McCoy's training mission. Throughout the year, the installation also supports institutional training through organizations such as Regional Training Site-Maintenance, Regional Training Site-Medical and the Fort McCoy NCO Academy.

These organizations provide structured instruction that develops specific military occupational skills and prepares service members to perform their duties at their home stations and during future assignments.

RTS-Maintenance supports technical training for Soldiers in maintenance and sustainment fields. Its courses help develop the knowledge and practical skills needed to maintain military equipment and support operational readiness.

RTS-Medical provides a training environment for medical personnel to develop and maintain skills needed to support service members in a variety of operational settings. Such training is an important part of ensuring that military medical personnel can perform their duties when called upon.

Fort McCoy's NCO Academy provides professional military education for enlisted Soldiers, including the Basic Leader Course and the Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer Course. Through classroom instruction, practical exercises and field-based assessments, Soldiers develop leadership, planning and decision-making skills they can apply when they return to their units.

This institutional training complements the field training conducted by operational units. While Soldiers may practice tactical tasks and collective operations during weekend or annual training, formal courses provide dedicated time to develop technical expertise and leadership competencies.

The combination gives service members opportunities to improve individual performance while also strengthening their ability to contribute to larger unit missions.

Weekend training remains an important part of readiness

September also included weekend training by Army Reserve, National Guard, and other military personnel.

Battle assembly training, commonly conducted over weekends, gives reserve-component units opportunities to maintain individual skills, conduct collective training, complete readiness requirements and prepare for future missions.

Depending on the unit and its mission, these activities can include tactical exercises, equipment preparation, communications, medical readiness, sustainment tasks and other military training requirements.

Fort McCoy's training areas, ranges, facilities and support infrastructure allow units to conduct activities that go beyond what may be available at their home stations. Units can use the installation's resources to practice tasks in a field environment while coordinating the personnel, equipment and logistical support needed to accomplish their objectives.

This recurring training, DPTMS officials noted, is particularly important for Army Reserve and National Guard forces, whose service members balance military responsibilities with civilian employment and other commitments. Scheduled training periods provide opportunities to sustain readiness and strengthen teamwork between drills and longer annual training periods.

Institutional courses and weekend training also serve complementary purposes. Soldiers who complete professional education can bring their knowledge back to their units, while collective training allows leaders and service members to apply that knowledge in practical settings.

A training mission shaped by more than a century of service

The diversity of September's training activities reflects Fort McCoy's updated motto for 2026: "Training the Total Force and Shaping the Future since 1909."

The motto was introduced as part of the installation's 2026–2030 Five-Year Strategic Business Plan. According to Fort McCoy's Plans, Analysis, and Integration Office, the wording recognizes the installation's history while emphasizing its continuing role in preparing military forces for future requirements.

The updated motto also reflects a mission that extends beyond supporting any single military service or training event.

Fort McCoy's mission statement says the installation 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 the nation's wars.

That mission encompasses the full range of activities taking place at the installation. Aircrews maintain aviation proficiency, technical schools develop specialized skills, the NCO Academy prepares future enlisted leaders, and operational units use the installation's training areas to improve collective readiness.

Each activity contributes to a broader objective: ensuring service members and units can perform their assigned missions when needed.



(Above and below) Training operations are shown throughout September at Fort McCoy. Thousands of troops trained on post during September.













The installation's history demonstrates the enduring importance of that role. Established in 1909, Fort McCoy has supported generations of service members from the Army, Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Air Force and other military organizations, as well as government and civilian partners.

In fiscal year 2025, Fort McCoy supported training for 109,962 troops, according to DPTMS Range Officer Brooks Lundeen. That total reflected the installation's support for annual training, weekend battle assemblies, institutional courses and exercises. The fiscal year total provides broader context for the volume and variety of training Fort McCoy supports, although it does not represent a September 2026 count.

September's combination of aircraft operations, institutional education, and recurring unit training demonstrates how that mission continues in practice. The installation supports both specialized training requirements and the everyday work of maintaining military readiness.

As Fort McCoy moves forward under its updated motto, its ability to support different services, organizations and training requirements remains central to preparing the Total Force for future missions.

Located in the heart of the upper Midwest, Fort McCoy is the only U.S. Army installation in Wisconsin. For more information, visit https://home.army.mil/mccoy or the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office page on DVIDS at https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/FMPAO.

NEWS

Army Reserve Field Hospital Team brings nutrition expertise to Connelly Competition

STORY AND PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. MIKAYLA FRITZ
807th Theater Medical Command



Photos by Staff Sgt. Mikayla Fritz

Army Reserve Soldiers grab drinks, desserts, snacks and condiments from a table outside the containerized kitchen while other Soldiers eat in the background during the Connelly competition at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, Aug. 26. The Philip A. Connelly Award is the U.S. Army's oldest logistics readiness award. This competition recognizes excellence in Army food service.



Army Reserve 68M Nutrition Care Specialists representing the 311th Field Hospital, 806th Hospital Center, 307th Medical Brigade, 807th Theater Medical Command, serve food to other Soldiers on Aug. 26 during the Connelly competition at Fort McCoy.

The smell of food cooking in a containerized kitchen at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, may sound like an ordinary Army field-feeding operation, but the Soldiers preparing those meals during the Philip A. Connelly competition Aug. 25-26 brought a different perspective to the mission.

They were 68M Nutrition Care Specialists representing the 311th Field Hospital team, bringing their training in nutrition and patient care into an Army competition designed to test field-feeding readiness.

"I believe it's important that the field hospital competes in these, alongside the 92Gs, because we don't get as much representation," said U.S. Army Sgt. Deltann Pape, a 68M Nutrition Care Specialist assigned to the 256th Field Hospital. "A lot of people have misunderstandings of what our role is."

The Philip A. Connelly Award is the U.S. Army's oldest logistics readiness award. Established in 1968, the annual competition evaluates field-feeding teams on food preparation, nutrition, sanitation, safety, tactical site operations, administration, convoy operations and equipment readiness.

For Pape and the other 68Ms on the 311th Field Hospital team, the competition demonstrated that their role extends beyond preparing meals for Soldiers.

"The difference between the 92G Culinary Specialist and a 68M Nutrition Care Specialist is we do attend 92G school, but also go to further training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to learn more about the actual nutrition components of the food," Pape said.

That additional training prepares 68Ms to support patients with specific dietary needs while also supporting the nutritional needs of Soldiers in the field.

"In a field setting, we provide the patient trays to the hospital," Pape said. "So if they have a patient who can only have a blended diet, we work with our dietitian to provide a meal for that person."

The same nutritional focus carries into field operations.

"We are able to provide that to them and make sure that they are taken care of in any way possible, while also providing any tips and tricks while we're out in the field, making sure people are getting the proper nutrition that they need," Pape said.

That connection between nutrition and readiness was evident throughout the competition.

During the first phase, the team conducted briefings, convoy operations and equipment inspections before establishing its containerized kitchen and food sanitation center. The second phase tested the team's ability to execute the feeding mission, from preparing and serving meals to maintaining accountability and documentation and providing patient trays.

Pape said the team also had to adapt quickly because its members came from different units, including those within the 256th, 325th, 921st and 311th field hospitals.

"The most challenging part of this competition has been the fact that we are all from different units," Pape said. "One of the biggest parts of being in the military is being able to work with different counterparts and being able to still get the mission completed."

"It was definitely a lot of learning and adapting and overcoming," she said. "We just about every day had some bumps in the road, but we all worked together. We stayed calm and we found a solution to that."

For Spc. Pedro Machado, a 68M Nutrition Care Specialist assigned to the 311th Field Hospital, the competition brought together Soldiers with different experiences and areas of expertise.

Machado said he chose the 68M career field because it aligned with his background in nutrition, including a master's degree in exercise physiology and experience as a strength coach.

"I have that background and that passion to make others better, whether it be teaching them how to eat better or perhaps providing them a better quality of foods so that they can be the best that they can be," Machado said.

Machado was responsible for preparing salads and vegetables during the competition. He said the experience also reinforced how quickly Soldiers from different units can combine their knowledge and experience.

"Even though we come from different units, we were trained by the same professionals," Machado said. "And now we can just come together as a unit, as a whole, as a team."

"In just a few days, we're able to bring our own experiences and our own expertise together and be able to do what the competition was asking for," he said.

For Pfc. Samantha Gray, a 68M Nutrition Care Specialist assigned to the 421st Medical Detachment, 311th Field Hospital, the competition provided a first-year Soldier with an opportunity to put her training into practice.

Gray had only been working in her MOS since December 2025 and had been in the Army for about a year when she was selected to participate.

"I just relearned everything that I was taught," Gray said.

"But, first-hand experience of how to actually use it instead of reading it from a book."

Gray was also selected as the person in charge, or PIC, of the containerized kitchen.

"I was the only one with a ServSafe manager's license," Gray said. "That's how I got that role as PIC," which qualified her to oversee the kitchen's operation.

Despite being the team's most junior Soldier, Gray said the experience gave her the opportunity to lead while learning from more experienced members of the team.

"They're just bouncing knowledge off of me and they're like, 'So this is how you're going to do it,'" Gray said. "I was like, ok. and that's just how it was. It was a big learning experience for me."

The competition also demonstrated how nutrition supports more than physical requirements.

Pape said the team considered morale when selecting and preparing the menu, even while working with the limitations of unitized group ration, heat-and-serve meals.

"The biggest part with the food is it really is that morale boost," Pape said. "So it keeps energy high. It keeps people in the hospital motivated to continue working those long days, those long hours, while again still getting the nutritional value that they need to continue the mission."

For Machado, the work behind the serving line is easy for customers to overlook.

"Some of them don't get to see what happens in the background," Machado said. "It's a lot of hard work."

However, the result is what matters.

"I'm most proud that we were able to put a product out in a short period of time that was a quality product and up to the standards that the Army sets forth," Machado said.

For the 311th Field Hospital team, the Connelly competition was an opportunity to demonstrate that nutrition care remains part of the Army's operational mission whether supporting a patient with a specialized diet or helping sustain Soldiers through long days in the field.

(Editor's note: The Philip A. Connelly competition is an annual program conducted throughout the year, with participating units evaluated at separate events. Since the competition is not conducted as a head-to-head event, results are not immediately available following individual evaluations and will be announced after the competition cycle is complete.)

NURSE CORPS

from Page 1



Capt. Asmita Gurung, a medical-surgical nurse assigned to the Camp Bullis, Texas-based 273rd Medical Detachment, a downtrace unit of the 807th Theater Medical Command hierarchy, checks on the vitals of a simulated patient Sept. 17 during hands-on training exercises as part of the third iteration and third day of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps Operational Nursing Event held at Regional Training Site-Medical at Fort McCoy.

pared," said Truesdell. "It's better to be overprepared than underprepared, and this gives me the opportunity to think, plan and execute prior to any executions that are being taken care of."

RTS-Medical at Fort McCoy, along with satellite locations at Parks Reserve Forces Training Area, Calif., and Fort Gordon, Ga., are subordinate organizations of the San Antonio-based Medical Readiness and Training Command.

RTS-Medical facilities enhance both individual and collective unit readiness in the U.S. Army Reserve with training documentation and implementation, along with medical simulations and logistics.

Pescatore said it is greatly beneficial for Army nurses through all components to enroll in ANC ONE whenever the opportunity arises in their career glide paths.

"This is a phenomenal course and highly recommended," said Pescatore.

"Each one of our nurses should try to attend this at some point within their careers."

ANC ONE augments medical force generation and readiness with its multi-faceted approach in education and training platforms to ensure synchronicity in operations across all Army components — in support of large-scale combat operations and large-scale mobilization operations.

NEWS

A-10 aircraft return to Fort McCoy for additional training in September

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff



A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft are shown conducting a training mission Sept. 17 at Fort McCoy, Wis. Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft conducted additional training at Fort McCoy during September 2026, continuing the aircraft's training activity at the installation following a week of specialized training in August.

Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft conducted additional training at Fort McCoy during September 2026, continuing the aircraft's training activity at the installation following a week of specialized training in August.

A-10 aircraft were observed conducting training activity over Fort McCoy during September, including Sept. 17. The additional activity highlighted the installation's continued role in supporting Air Force training requirements and providing an environment for aircrews to maintain their operational proficiency.

The September activity followed training conducted Aug. 17–21, when A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft from the 303rd Fighter Squadron at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., returned to Fort McCoy for specialized bombing and low-level flight training.

According to Fort McCoy's Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, the August training included missions toward the installation's impact area and provided pilots with valuable flight time to maintain and sharpen their skills.

Fort McCoy's combination of extensive airspace, varied terrain and designated training areas makes the installation a valuable location for military aviation training. Its large impact area supports air-to-ground training, while the surrounding training environment allows aircrews to practice flight profiles associated with their operational missions.

The A-10, officially known as the Thunderbolt II, is designed primarily to provide close air support to ground forces. Its capabilities include low-altitude maneuverability, extended time over operational areas and accurate employment of air-to-ground weapons. The aircraft's design emphasizes survivability and the ability to operate in challenging conditions while supporting troops on the ground.

Fort McCoy has supported A-10 training for several years. Previous training documented by Fort McCoy included bombing operations in September 2024 and takeoff and landing training at Young Air Assault Strip in September 2023. The installation has also supported A-10 training in other years, demonstrating its continued value as a location for specialized Air Force training.

Although specific unit information and training objectives for the September 2026 activity were not confirmed, the additional A-10 operations reinforced Fort McCoy's role in supporting training across the military services.

Fort McCoy, the only U.S. Army installation in Wisconsin, supports active-duty, Reserve and National Guard forces through a combination of training areas, ranges, airspace, facilities and other infrastructure. Its mission is to strengthen Total Force readiness by serving as a training center, mobilization force generation installation, and strategic support area.

The continued use of Fort McCoy by military aviation units reflects the installation's ability to support a variety of training requirements while helping service members maintain readiness for future missions.

Learn more about Fort McCoy online at https://home.army.mil/mccoy, on Flickr at https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi, and on DVIDS by visiting https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/FMPAO on DVIDS. 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."

C-130 Hercules crews return to Fort McCoy for September 2026 training

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff



U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft conducted training at Fort McCoy on multiple days in September 2026, continuing the installation's long-standing role as a training location for military aircrews preparing to move personnel, equipment and supplies in support of military operations.

Previous Fort McCoy Public Affairs reports document C-130 training at the installation over several years, including airdrop operations, flights over South Post, and takeoffs and landings at Young Air Assault Strip. The recurring training demonstrates how Fort McCoy's airspace, drop zones and aviation facilities support tactical airlift training for Air Force units.

According to the U.S. Air Force's C-130 Hercules fact sheet, the aircraft was designed to perform tactical airlift missions and operate from rough, unimproved landing areas. Its ability to transport troops and equipment while using relatively short runways has made it an important part of U.S. military air mobility capabilities for decades.

The Air Force states that the original C-130 design specification was issued in 1951, with deliveries of the first production model, the C-130A, beginning in December 1956. Since then, successive versions have incorporated improvements in engines, performance and mission capabilities. The service reports that the modernized C-130J entered the Air Force inventory in February 1999.

The aircraft continues to serve in multiple Air Force organizations, including Air Mobility Command, Air Force Special Operations Command, the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command, according to the Air Force fact sheet. Although tactical airlift is its primary mission, the C-130 family also supports airdrops, aeromedical evacuation, disaster relief, resupply missions and aerial firefighting.

The aircraft's rear loading ramp and cargo compartment allow crews to transport palletized cargo, military vehicles and personnel. Depending on the model and configuration, a C-130 can carry as many as 90 combat troops or 64 paratroopers, according to the Air Force. These capabilities allow military forces to move personnel and equipment to locations where ground transportation is limited or established airfields may not be available.

Fort McCoy has provided a training environment for C-130 crews for years. In an Aug. 3, 2020, article titled "Photo Essay: C-130 Hercules training operations at Fort McCoy," published on the U.S. Army website, Fort McCoy Public Affairs documented training by the 109th Airlift Squadron, part of the Minnesota Air National Guard's 133rd Airlift Wing. The report described airdrop operations and takeoffs and landings at Young Air Assault Strip on South Post.

In a March 25, 2025, article by the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office again documented C-130 aircraft and crews conducting training over South Post. The report highlighted operations involving austere landings and airdrop practice, demonstrating the continued use of Fort McCoy for tactical airlift training.

The training continued in 2026. In an article published June 5, 2026, on the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service website, Fort McCoy Public Affairs reported that Airmen with the Air Force Reserve's 934th Airlift Wing and the 435th Training Squadron used Fort McCoy's training environment during May.

The article, "Air Force personnel leverage Fort McCoy's unique training environment during May 2026 operations," identified Young Air Assault Strip, Sparta-Fort McCoy Airport and the surrounding airspace as resources used during the training, which included airdrop practice.

The C-130 aircraft operating at Fort McCoy on multiple days in September 2026 continued this established pattern of training. The earlier reports document the regular occurrence of C-130 operations at the installation, although the specific unit and activities associated with the September flights should be attributed only when confirmed by the relevant training records or unit representatives.

A key facility supporting these operations is Young Air Assault Strip. In an Oct. 6, 2021, article titled "Young Air Assault Strip at Fort McCoy provides austere training," the Army reported that the strip opened in October 1984 and was constructed by the 618th Engineer Company, 360th Engineer Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division. The strip was named in honor of Pfc. Raphael Young, a member of the company who died while training on heavy equipment in September 1984, before the construction mission.

The report describes Young Air Assault Strip as a facility that has supported multiservice training for decades. Its austere-airfield environment gives units opportunities to practice aircraft operations and the movement of personnel, cargo and equipment under conditions different from those at larger, established airfields.

Fort McCoy's Badger Drop Zone also supports tactical airlift training. In an Aug. 5, 2024, U.S. Army photo story titled "Photo Story: Airdrop training at Fort McCoy," Fort McCoy Public Affairs documented a C-130 from the 934th Airlift Wing conducting an airdrop over the drop zone. The report described Fort McCoy as a regular training location for Air Force mobility forces and noted the availability of airspace suitable for airdrop operations.

An earlier U.S. Army photo essay, "Photo Essay: Fort McCoy hosts Air Force airdrop training ops," published July 22, 2022, also documented airdrop training by the 934th Airlift Wing at Fort McCoy. Together, the Army reports provide a multiyear record of C-130 training at the installation and its use for air mobility operations.

These training resources allow aircrews to practice skills that support the movement of personnel and equipment, including operations requiring coordination between aircraft and ground forces, McCoy officials state. Airdrop training, for example, requires crews to coordinate aircraft positioning and delivery procedures so personnel or cargo can reach the intended drop zone.

The recurring C-130 activity also can possibly be seen as one example of Fort McCoy's broader role in supporting military readiness. The installation's combination of maneuver land, ranges, aviation facilities, drop zones and support infrastructure allows units from different services and components to conduct specialized training and prepare for operational requirements.

The C-130 Hercules has supported the U.S. military for nearly seven decades, adapting to changing mission needs while retaining its central tactical airlift role. Its recurring presence at Fort McCoy, including training on multiple days in September 2026, reflects the continued need to prepare aircrews to transport and deliver personnel and equipment in a variety of operating environments.

Fort McCoy's motto beginning in 2026 is "Training 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 athttps://home.army.mil/mccoy, on Flickr at https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi, and on DVIDS by visiting https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/FMPAO on DVIDS. 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."



NEWS

Fort McCoy conducts FY 2026 Integrated Protection Exercise

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy conducted its fiscal year 2026 Integrated Protection Exercise, or IPE, on Sept. 29 at the installation, providing garrison personnel an opportunity to practice emergency response procedures and test the capabilities of the Fort McCoy Installation Emergency Operations Center.

Led by the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security, or DPTMS, the exercise brought action officers and other key personnel together at the IEOC to respond to a simulated emergency scenario.

During the exercise, action officers and staff reported to the IEOC as the scenario developed, working through information requirements, communicating with leadership and coordinating potential responses. Other Fort McCoy personnel participated in response activities associated with a simulated vehicle-train accident at the installation.

Integrated Protection Exercises are designed to test an installation's ability to respond to and recover from emergencies and other all-hazards incidents. The exercises provide opportunities to evaluate emergency procedures, communication, coordination and decision-making while identifying areas that can be improved for future incidents.

Fort McCoy has conducted similar exercises for many years, with Fort McCoy DPTMS serving as the lead organization. Previous IPEs have included scenarios involving active-shooter incidents and natural disasters, with exercise objectives focused on installation response capabilities and IEOC operations.

The FY 2026 exercise provided an additional opportunity to exercise the IEOC and its personnel while allowing Fort McCoy's senior leadership to observe the emergency operations process.

Kurt Bruggemeyer, chief of the Fort McCoy DPTMS Mobilizations Branch, said the exercise accomplished important objectives for the installation.

"I believe IPE '26 successfully exercised the Fort McCoy Installation Emergency Operations Center (IEOC) and its personnel while providing a valuable opportunity for newly assigned senior leadership (senior commander and garrison commander) to observe IEOC operations as well as an opportunity to provide their respective guidance for future IEOC operations and exercises," Bruggemeyer said.

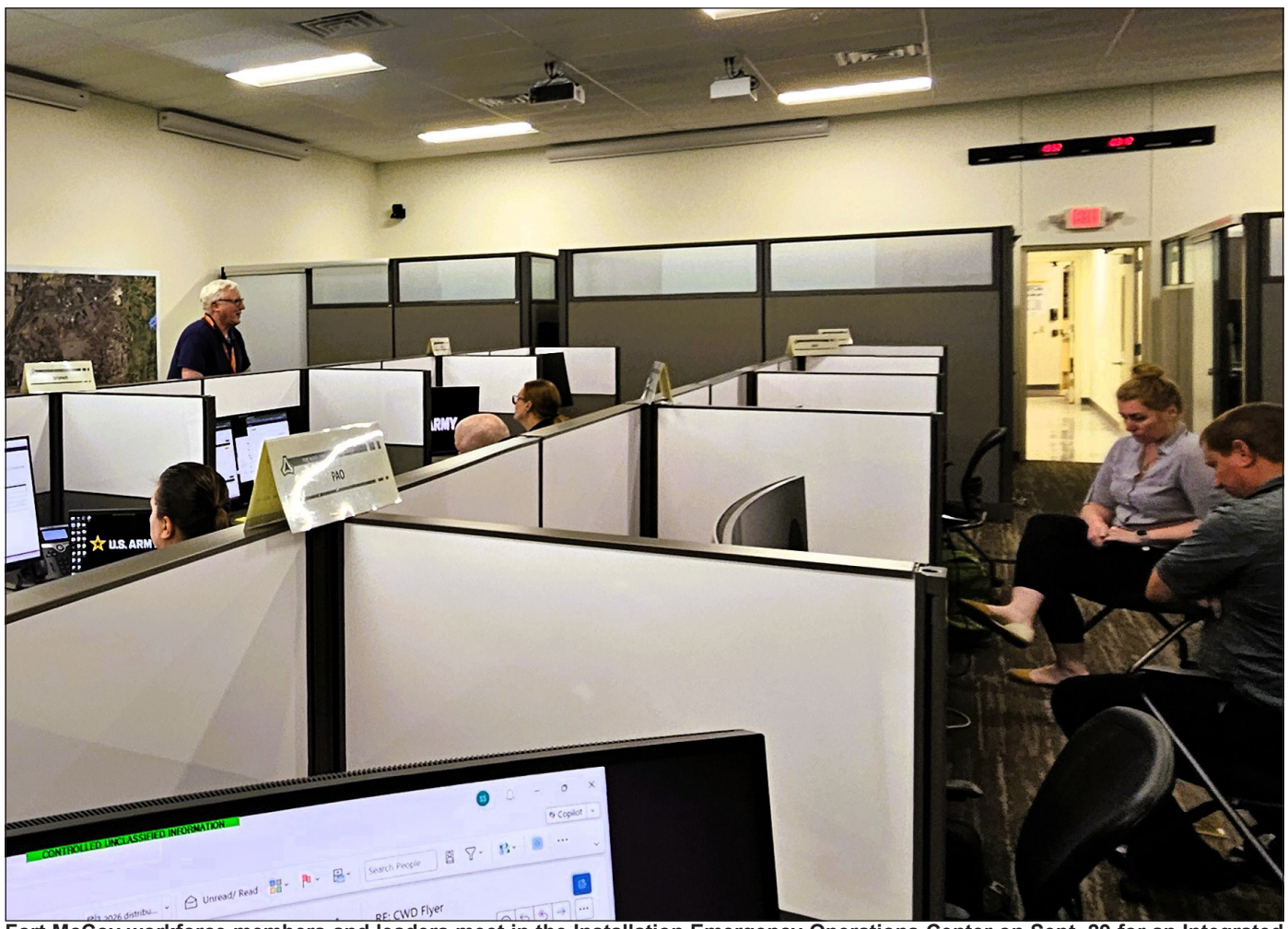
The exercise also provided personnel an opportunity to practice working together during a rapidly developing emergency. Action officers received and processed information, communicated with appropriate leaders and staff, and worked through the actions necessary to support installation response efforts.

The IEOC serves as a central location for coordinating information and response activities during an emergency. Past Fort McCoy exercises have emphasized the importance of communication and information sharing among garrison directorates, tenant organizations and other partners.

Following the exercise, Fort McCoy leadership recognized the efforts of the personnel who participated and supported the training.

Cameron Cantlon, deputy to the garrison commander, thanked those involved in the exercise.

"Thank you for your effort and your time. We're appreciative of your efforts to support this exercise today. … Good job today," Cantlon said.



Fort McCoy workforce members and leaders meet in the Installation Emergency Operations Center on Sept. 29 for an Integrated Protection Exercise being held at Fort McCoy.

The exercise also provides DPTMS and Fort McCoy leadership with information that can be used to identify strengths, weaknesses and potential improvements in emergency response procedures.

Previous Fort McCoy IPEs have included formal after-action reviews to evaluate exercise performance and capture lessons learned. DPTMS officials have noted that these observations help guide improvement plans and future training designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of installation emergency response operations.

The FY 2026 IPE continues Fort McCoy's ongoing effort to maintain a trained and prepared workforce capable of responding to emergencies, supporting the installation community and maintaining essential operations during challenging circumstances.

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Learn more about Fort McCoy online athttps://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."

Fort McCoy SOHAC meeting focuses on winter safety, fire prevention

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Fort McCoy leaders and safety representatives gathered Oct. 20 for a meeting of the installation's Safety and Occupational Health Advisory Council (SOHAC), focusing on seasonal safety, fire prevention, home maintenance, and risk reduction as winter approaches.

The meeting was chaired by Maj. Gen. Kevin F. Meisler, commanding general of the 88th Readiness Division and Fort McCoy's senior commander. Also attending were Lt. Col. Chad Holder, Fort McCoy deputy garrison commander, and Cameron Cantlon, deputy to the garrison commander.

The Fort McCoy Installation Safety Office organized and managed the meeting, with Installation Safety Manager Ed De Leon leading the safety briefing. Unit safety representatives also delivered updates on safety matters affecting their respective organizations.

De Leon discussed home fire hazards, smoke and carbon monoxide detection, heating equipment maintenance, fireplace and wood stove safety, workplace space heaters, and seasonal household maintenance. He also reviewed preparations for the end of daylight-saving time and provided information on the next installation SOHAC meeting.



(Above and below) Scenes from the Oct. 20 meeting of the Fort McCoy Safety and Occupational Health Advisory Council are shown at McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy.



Preparing for winter fire hazards

De Leon highlighted the increased risk of residential fires during the winter months, when heating systems and other equipment are used more frequently.

The briefing identified December, January, and February as peak months for home fires, with approximately 46 percent of home fires occurring during that period, according to the presentation. The highest number of incidents occurs between 4 and 9 p.m., while the overnight hours from midnight to 8 a.m. carry the highest risk of fatalities.

Cooking was identified as the leading cause of home fires, followed by heating equipment. Electrical malfunctions also contribute to thousands of structural fires annually, with incidents peaking during winter months and overnight hours.

De Leon emphasized the importance of maintaining working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Residents should test smoke alarms monthly and ensure smoke detectors are installed on every level of their homes and near sleeping areas.

Carbon monoxide detectors should also be installed on every level and near sleeping areas. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, invisible, toxic gas that can be produced by fuel-burning equipment, including furnaces and other heating systems.

The presentation also encouraged households to establish emergency evacuation plans and ensure family members understand what to do in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Heating equipment and fire prevention

De Leon reviewed several precautions for maintaining heating systems and reducing fire risks at home and in the workplace.

Homeowners should schedule professional inspections and tune-ups for furnaces, boilers, and heat pumps to help ensure equipment operates properly. Furnace filters should be cleaned or replaced every one to three months during the peak heating season to prevent dust buildup and restricted airflow.

Utility areas should remain clear of combustible materials, including flammable liquids, rags, and cardboard boxes.

The briefing also covered fireplace and wood stove safety. De Leon recommended having chimneys professionally cleaned and inspected annually to remove creosote, a highly flammable byproduct of burning wood.

Protective metal screens or glass doors should be used to contain sparks and rolling logs. Fireplace ashes should cool for 24 to 48 hours before disposal, then be placed in a tightly covered metal container, doused with water, and stored outside away from the home or deck.

Space heaters also require careful use. De Leon emphasized keeping anything that can burn at least 3 feet from heating equipment, plugging electric space heaters directly into wall outlets rather than extension cords or power strips, and turning heaters off when they are not being monitored. He also advised using equipment with recognized safety certifications and avoiding oil-filled or kerosene heaters in workplace settings.

The presentation included information about carbon monoxide exposure, reinforcing the importance of proper detection equipment and the dangers associated with fuel-burning appliances and vehicle exhaust.

Seasonal maintenance and daylight-saving time

With the end of daylight-saving time scheduled for Nov. 1, De Leon reviewed household safety checks and maintenance tasks that can help people prepare for the colder months.

Recommended safety checks included testing smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, replacing batteries as needed, checking emergency kits, reviewing family fire escape plans, and disposing of expired medications while replenishing medical supplies.

The briefing also covered energy efficiency and routine home maintenance. Residents were encouraged to change or clean furnace and air-conditioning filters, schedule professional heating-system maintenance, and inspect windows and doors for drafts. Fresh caulk or weather stripping can help seal gaps and improve energy efficiency.

Other seasonal tasks included clearing leaves and debris from gutters, cleaning dryer vents to reduce fire hazards, and draining water heaters to remove sediment buildup and maintain efficiency. De Leon also reviewed the proper seasonal direction for ceiling fans to support winter airflow.

The guidance encouraged personnel to complete these tasks before winter weather and colder temperatures increase demands on home heating systems.

A long-standing installation safety council

Fort McCoy's SOHAC has served for more than two decades as an installation-wide forum for discussing safety and occupational health concerns. The council brings together installation leadership, safety professionals, garrison directorates, tenant organizations, and other representatives to identify hazards, share information, and develop solutions to improve workplace safety.

The council was already established when Randy Eddy became Fort McCoy's installation safety manager in May 2005. At that time, attendance was relatively small, with approximately six or seven participants, according to a 2026 Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office account of the council's history.

During Eddy's tenure, participation expanded to include representatives from organizations across the installation. By the time he retired in July 2023, quarterly meetings routinely attracted approximately 35 to 40 participants.

The council's collaborative approach has helped address installation-wide concerns. One example involved representatives raising concerns about inadequate street lighting in an area of Fort McCoy. Discussions through the council helped bring the issue to installation leadership's attention, resulting in additional lighting being installed.

Today, the SOHAC continues to provide a forum for reviewing safety trends, discussing mishaps and near misses, sharing lessons learned, and coordinating efforts to reduce risks for Soldiers, Army civilians, contractors, and visitors.

Unit safety representatives' participation in the Oct. 20 meeting continued that tradition of sharing information and encouraging organizations to take an active role in preventing accidents and maintaining safe working environments.

Looking ahead

The next installation SOHAC meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 13, 2027, during the third quarter of fiscal year 2027.

Through the Oct. 20 meeting, Fort McCoy leadership and the Installation Safety Office reinforced the importance of proactive risk management and shared responsibility for safety. The seasonal briefing encouraged personnel to inspect equipment, maintain their homes, review emergency plans, and remain alert to potential hazards as winter approaches.

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NEWS

Fort McCoy tenant organizations share updates during October meeting

BY SCOTT T. STURKOL & JOBI SPOLUM
Public Affairs Staff



Photos by Jobi Spolum

(Above and below) Personnel from organizations throughout Fort McCoy participate in a Garrison-Tenant Staff Meeting on Oct. 20 in McCoy's Community Center at Fort McCoy. Through these recurring discussions, according the Lt. Col. Chad Holder, deputy garrison commander who chairs the meetings, Fort McCoy organizations can coordinate services, communicate upcoming events, and strengthen the partnerships that support the installation's training mission and the broader military community.



Fort McCoy tenant organizations and garrison representatives gathered Oct. 20 at McCoy's Community Center for a Garrison-Tenant Staff Meeting to share installation updates, discuss upcoming events, and coordinate activities and services supporting the installation community.

The meeting provided an opportunity for representatives to exchange information about recreation, housing, personnel services, training, community outreach, and upcoming visits by senior Army leaders.

Among the topics discussed were planned facility renovations, opportunities for community participation in events, and efforts to improve access to services for Soldiers, families, retirees, and other members of the Fort McCoy community.

Housing, recreation, facility updates

Representatives discussed a housing town hall scheduled for Nov. 4, with the Retirement Services Office (RSO) planning to hold a fish fry in conjunction with the event.

The Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) also discussed efforts to establish a partnership with Mount La Crosse to explore additional recreational opportunities for the Fort McCoy community.

McCoy's Community Center is expected to undergo an extensive renovation, with the facility potentially closing for approximately a year and a half. Officials are hoping the renovation can begin in 2027. The center also has five new computers available for use.

The United Service Organizations (USO) is planning to relocate its conex storage containers as part of ongoing facility and operational coordination.

Upcoming community events and services

Several upcoming events and programs were highlighted during the meeting.

The Wisconsin Challenge Academy is scheduled to conduct a ruck march Oct. 30, with community members invited to participate. The academy also plans to hold an open house Nov. 10.

A hunter education course is scheduled for Nov. 14-15, with additional information expected to be provided.

The meeting also included information about upcoming Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) training. SHARP leaders are scheduled to conduct classes Nov. 18 and Dec. 15.

Representatives also discussed access to the Retirement Services Office. Personnel seeking assistance were encouraged to call RSO staff members on their cellphones, as direct calls may be the most effective way to reach them.

Installation operations, leadership engagement

Representatives discussed positive feedback the Directorate of Emergency Services (DES) has received from the community regarding its interactions at the installation gate through the installation's gate-access procedures.

The meeting also included an update on Army Reserve organizational designations, with the organizations previously identified as the 13th and 100th being redesignated as the 5th and 80th, respectively.

Another topic was a planned visit to Fort McCoy by First Army in January. The 88th Readiness Division was asked to obtain additional details for its commanding general regarding the visit.

Public affairs and outreach

The 88th Readiness Division Public Affairs Office discussed Veterans Day observances and reminded attendees that Fort McCoy's Triad symbol is a registered trademark.

Representatives also discussed the installation's Speakers Bureau and its role in connecting knowledgeable speakers with community organizations and other groups seeking information about Fort McCoy and its mission. The deputy to the garrison commander addressed the Speakers Bureau during the discussion.

The October meeting continued Fort McCoy's longstanding practice of bringing garrison and tenant organizations together to share information, identify opportunities for cooperation, and keep representatives informed about activities and changes affecting the installation.

Through these recurring discussions, according the Lt. Col. Chad Holder, deputy garrison commander who chairs the meetings, Fort McCoy organizations can coordinate services, communicate upcoming events, and strengthen the partnerships that support the installation's training mission and the broader military community.

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Fort McCoy Recycling Program exceeds $1.1 Million in FY26 revenue through massive diversion efforts

STORY & PHOTO BY ASHLEY BRADFORD
Office of the Chief, Army Reserve



Fort McCoy's Qualified Recycling Program (QRP) recycled a staggering 140 tons of scrap brass shell casings in FY26 to net a total of $1,098,958. QRPs enhance the marketability of waste products to prevent landfill buildup, reduce disposal costs, and generate revenue for the installation.

In a benchmark year for environmental stewardship and resource management, Fort McCoy's Qualified Recycling Program (QRP) achieved monumental reuse and recycling milestones during Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. Through strategic partnerships across directorates, the Army Reserve-funded installation's program diverted tons of material from landfills while generating substantial revenue to support base operations.

Under the Department of War framework and 10 U.S.C.§ 2577, aQRP is an organized, installation-level initiative designed to recover, segregate, and sell recyclable scrap materials from the military waste stream. Rather than treating these materials as standard trash, QRPs enhance the marketability of waste products to prevent landfill buildup, reduce disposal costs, and generate revenue for the installation.

"Fort McCoy's recycling mission is fueled by teamwork and a shared commitment to stewardship," said Nathan Sobojinski, Operations and Maintenance Division Chief, Directorate of Public Works. "Every directorate we partner with plays a direct role in helping us safeguard resources, reduce waste, and return value back to the installation."

The most lucrative success of FY26 came directly from the ranges. The QRP teamed up with the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (DFMWR) to tackle the heavy accumulation of spent ammunition casings generated during standard training operations. Together, the directorates collected, processed, and recycled a staggering 140 tons of scrap brass shell casings. To ensure the best return on value for the government, the QRP conducted five separate, openly competitive sales. This rigorous market approach paid heavy dividends and netted a combined total of $1,098,958.

Working in close coordination with the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS), the Fort McCoy QRP also evaluated a large inventory of land and sea shipping containers previously utilized as range training aids. Through this joint effort, the team identified and diverted nearly 40 tons of containers that were no longer servable. After confirming they could not be reused, the material was responsibly diverted for recycling, generating $6,383 to support the program.

Even more importantly, the team assessed an additional 1,161 tons of containers and determined that they remained fully serviceable. Instead of sending these assets to scrap, they were turned into the Defense Logistics Agency for strategic reuse across the enterprise. This approach demonstrated a strong commitment to maximizing the lifecycle of government property, reducing waste, and preventing unnecessary procurement.

"FY26 proved that when we treat recyclable materials as strategic assets, not waste, we unlock major funding opportunities for Fort McCoy," Sobojinski added. "The revenue we generate strengthens installation services and directly benefits the Soldiers and Families who rely on this community every day."

By law, every dollar generated flows directly back into the installation, enabling Fort McCoy to offset the costs of operating the QRP, expand sustainability efforts, and strengthen community DFMWR programs. The FY26 results underscore how powerful cross-directorate collaboration can be, demonstrating that when teams unite around shared environmental and fiscal priorities, the installation delivers measurable, mission-focused success.

NEWS

Navy Reserve chief selectees explore Fort McCoy history during scavenger hunt

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

A couple dozen members of the Navy Reserve Center Madison Chiefs' Mess visited Fort McCoy's Commemorative Area on Sept. 16 for a scavenger hunt designed to challenge and engage newly selected Navy chief petty officers while giving them an opportunity to learn about the history of the installation.

With sunny skies and pleasant weather providing ideal conditions for an outdoor activity, the Navy Reserve group explored the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area, working through a series of scavenger-hunt activities that encouraged participants to observe, investigate and learn about the historical displays throughout the site.

For the participants, the event provided more than an opportunity to compete. The scavenger hunt also became a hands-on history lesson, introducing the group to Fort McCoy's long history as a military training and mobilization installation.

The Commemorative Area is located in Fort McCoy's historic 900 block and encompasses a collection of preserved World War II-era buildings, the Fort McCoy History Center, Equipment Park and Veterans Memorial Plaza. Together, the sites tell the story of Fort McCoy from its establishment in 1909 through more than a century of military training and service, according to the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office.

Several of the preserved buildings date to the World War II-era expansion of Fort McCoy's cantonment area. The buildings help visitors understand what life was like for Soldiers during the 1940s, with displays featuring barracks rooms, bunk beds, footlockers, uniforms, a World War II-era chapel and other period items.

The group also had the opportunity to experience the Fort McCoy History Center, which opened in 1999 and contains artifacts, photographs, memorabilia, and exhibits documenting the installation's role in conflicts and operations ranging from World War I and World War II to the Korean War, Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm, Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and other missions.

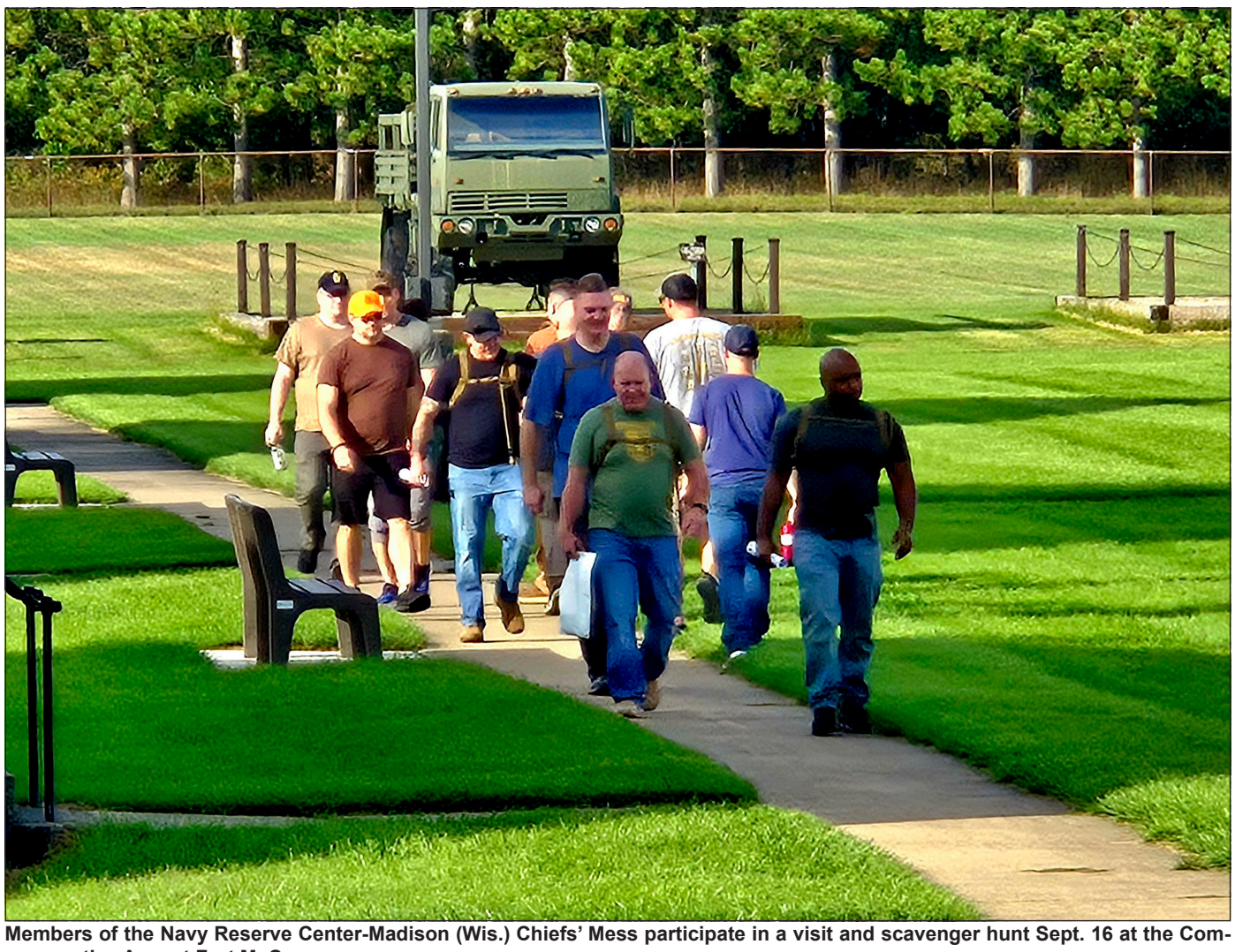
Another major attraction is Equipment Park, an outdoor display featuring approximately 70 pieces of historic and contemporary military equipment representative of the types of systems used at Fort McCoy. The collection includes vehicles, artillery pieces, helicopters and other equipment.

The participants also explored Veterans Memorial Plaza, which honors generations of men and women who served during the various eras represented in Fort McCoy's history. The plaza was formally dedicated June 13, 2009, during Fort McCoy's centennial observance.

The Commemorative Area began taking shape in the early 1990s as Fort McCoy leaders sought to preserve representative World War II-era buildings during a period of modernization. Between 1992 and 1995, five adjoining World War II-era buildings were preserved for historical and commemorative purposes. The site eventually expanded into the larger historical campus that exists today.

For the Navy Reserve chief selectees, learning that history while moving through the exhibits added another dimension to the day's activity.

Participants said they enjoyed the scavenger hunt and had fun exploring the Commemorative Area together. The activity provided an opportunity for the group to work as a team, compete in a relaxed setting and discover pieces of Fort McCoy history along the way.



Members of the Navy Reserve Center-Madison (Wis.) Chiefs' Mess participate in a visit and scavenger hunt Sept. 16 at the Commemorative Area at Fort McCoy.

The visit also demonstrated how Fort McCoy's historical resources can serve as an educational and team-building destination for military organizations from across the Total Force.

For those taking part, the Sept. 16 visit combined camaraderie, competition, and history — giving the future Navy chiefs an opportunity to learn about another military service's history while enjoying a beautiful Wisconsin day at Fort McCoy.

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Fort McCoy Commemorative Area draws nearly 150 visitors during September

STORY & PHOTOS BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Nearly 150 people visited Fort McCoy's Commemorative Area during September 2026, making the month one of the busiest periods of the year for the installation's history-preservation, and community outreach site.

The September visitors included military retirees and their families, Navy Reserve chief selectees, Wisconsin State FFA officers and their advisors, and members of the public who attended open days on Sept. 11 and 25.

The variety of visitors demonstrated the many ways the Commemorative Area can be used — from military heritage education and professional development to community engagement and simply learning more about Fort McCoy's history.

The month began Sept. 11 with Fort McCoy's 2026 Retiree Appreciation Day. Several dozen military retirees and family members attending the annual event visited the Commemorative Area, where they could explore the Fort McCoy History Center, historic buildings, Equipment Park, and Veterans Memorial Plaza.

The RAD event, organized by the Fort McCoy Soldier for Life Retirement Services Office within the Directorate of Human Resources, included open hours at the Commemorative Area as part of its full day of activities.

The Sept. 11 visit was particularly appropriate because Veterans Memorial Plaza provides a place to remember those who served. The plaza's five Soldier statues represent major periods of military service associated with Fort McCoy: World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Global War on Terrorism.

The words "TO HONOR ALL WHO HAVE SERVED" are etched into the plaza and have also served as the backdrop for Fort McCoy observances, including a 2021 ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

On Sept. 16, about two dozen members of the Navy Reserve Center-Madison Chiefs' Mess visited the Commemorative Area for a historical scavenger hunt. The activity encouraged the chief selectees to explore the area and learn about Fort McCoy's history while working together as a group. Fort McCoy Public Affairs documented the visit and later reported on the group's experience.

On Sept. 23, Wisconsin State FFA officers and their advisors visited Fort McCoy as part of a career-focused tour of the installation. The college-aged students were interested in careers connected to areas including environmental and engineering fields, medical operations and other professional opportunities.

The FFA group also visited the Commemorative Area, giving the students an opportunity to learn about Fort McCoy's history while visiting an installation that provides career opportunities extending well beyond traditional military occupations.

An important part of the FFA visit was the opportunity to hear from Fort McCoy employees who are FFA alumni. The former FFA members discussed how their original interests in agriculture and farming continued to influence their education and career choices.

"The FFA officers and their advisors welcomed the opportunity to hear Fort McCoy FFA alums share how that original interest in agriculture/farming continues to matter in their current career choices," Melissa Dubois, a Fort McCoy Public Affairs specialist, wrote in a Sept. 23 follow-up message.

Dubois also noted that the visit provided an opportunity to explore developing a broader relationship between Fort McCoy and Wisconsin FFA.

"We are excited to see how we might develop/grow this into a partnership with the state and local chapters," Dubois wrote.

The September activity concluded with a Commemorative Area open day Sept. 25, when nearly 20 members of the public visited the site. Visitors were able to explore the historical buildings and exhibits, Equipment Park and Veterans Memorial Plaza.

The Commemorative Area is located in Fort McCoy's historic 800 and 900 blocks and the surrounding area. The site includes five World War II-era buildings that are representative of facilities found in the cantonment when it was constructed in 1942. Three of the buildings — an administrative facility, dining facility and barracks — are arranged to depict Soldier life during the 1940s. Displays include a World War II chapel, bunk beds, footlockers, mannequins and potbelly stoves. Other buildings contain displays highlighting World War II events, modern military training venues and training aids.

The Fort McCoy History Center expands the story beyond World War II. Its displays contain memorabilia reflecting the installation's role during World War I, World War II, the Korean War, Cuban Refugee Resettlement Center operations, Operation Desert Storm, and other periods of Fort McCoy history.

The Equipment Park adds another dimension by allowing visitors to see military equipment rather than only reading about it. The park is designed to display more than 70 pieces of historical and present-day equipment, including helicopters, howitzers, trucks and trailers. Veterans Memorial Plaza provides the memorial component of the area and recognizes the service and sacrifice of men and women who served during the various eras of Fort McCoy's history.

The Commemorative Area's purpose extends beyond displaying old buildings and equipment. According to Fort McCoy's installation guidance, the area is administered as an official Army Museum Activity under Army museum and historical artifact policies. Its purpose is to collect, identify, preserve, study and interpret artifacts relating to Fort McCoy's establishment and history since 1909. The Equipment Park and Veterans Memorial Plaza are open year-round.



Visitors check out the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area on Sept. 25 during a Commemorative Area Open Day at Fort McCoy.

Fort McCoy's Public Affairs Office manages the History Center and Commemorative Area as part of its community outreach and engagement responsibilities. The installation's current visitor information states that the Commemorative Area is available by appointment to civilian groups and military units Monday through Friday throughout the year, while the Equipment Park and Veterans Memorial Plaza are available daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., weather permitting. Self-guided visits encompassing the History Center, Commemorative Area buildings, Equipment Park and Veterans Memorial Plaza generally take about one to 1½ hours.

The site's history as a public educational resource extends well beyond September 2026.

Fort McCoy records show that from 2015 through 2019, the Commemorative Area hosted 236 tours involving 8,153 visitors, in addition to larger crowds attending annual Armed Forces Day Open House events.

September 2026 added another chapter to that history, with nearly 150 people using the area in a single month for different reasons but with a common purpose: to see, experience, and learn about the people, places, equipment, and events that shaped Fort McCoy.

For retirees, the area offered an opportunity to reconnect with Army history. For Navy Reserve chief selectees, it became an interactive learning experience. For Wisconsin FFA officers, it provided an educational connection between their interests, potential careers and the history of a major military installation. And for members of the public, the Sept. 25 open day provided an opportunity to step inside Fort McCoy's history.

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Visitors check out the Fort McCoy Commemorative Area on Sept. 11 during a Commemorative Area Open Day at Fort McCoy.

OUTDOORS

Fort McCoy 2026 youth, disability deer hunts yield 14 deer despite warm October weather

BY SCOTT STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

Hunters participating in Fort McCoy's 2026 youth gun-deer hunt and gun-deer hunt for hunters with disabilities harvested 14 deer during the two-day seasons Oct. 10–11, continuing the installation's longstanding efforts to provide hunting opportunities for people of different ages and abilities.

Despite unusually warm weather during the weekend, hunters with disabilities harvested nine deer, while youth hunters harvested five, said Kevin Luepke, wildlife biologist with the Fort McCoy Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch.

"Very warm!!! We ended up with 14 deer harvested, nine by disabled hunters, five by youth hunters. So given the weather, not too shabby," Luepke said. The combined harvest was comparable to the previous year, when 16 deer were harvested during the hunts.

Fort McCoy issued 32 permits for the hunt for hunters with disabilities, with 27 permits sold. For the youth hunt, 42 permits were issued, with 27 sold. Across both hunts, 74 permits were issued and 54 were sold.

The harvest breakdown for hunters with disabilities included three fork-horned bucks, one spike buck, four adult antlerless deer and one buck fawn. Youth hunters harvested one fork-horned buck, three adult antlerless deer and one doe fawn.

Although the number of deer harvested is one measure of success, Luepke said the combined hunts offer benefits that extend beyond the harvest. The weekend provides an opportunity for youth hunters and hunters with disabilities to share the outdoors, interact with one another, and develop a greater appreciation for different members of the hunting community.

"The weekend is a great opportunity for both the disabled and youth hunters to intermingle," Luepke said.

Holding the disability hunt early in the fall allows hunters to spend more time outdoors in warmer temperatures, which can be beneficial for participants who may face additional challenges during a hunt. The camaraderie between hunters with disabilities and their assistants is also an important part of the experience, Luepke said.

"The camaraderie between the hunters with disabilities and the assistants is great to see, and probably one of the top reasons the hunters participate in this hunt," he said.

Hunting assistants can help participants access hunting areas and provide support throughout the experience. Fort McCoy's previous reporting has highlighted the importance of volunteers, family members and friends in helping hunters with disabilities participate in the annual event.

The youth hunt provides a different but equally important opportunity. Conducting it before Wisconsin's nine-day gun-deer season allows younger hunters to learn from a parent, relative or family friend before more hunters enter the woods during the statewide season.

"As for the youth hunters, it allows some time for them to be mentored by a family member or friend of the family before the woods are filled with other hunters during the nine-day gun-deer season," Luepke said.

Pairing the two hunts also gives participants an opportunity to recognize the common interests they share, regardless of age or physical ability.

"Being able to pair the hunts together, I believe allows the hunters to gain respect for a different part of the hunting community," Luepke said.

He added that the experience shows young hunters that people with different abilities can share the same goals, whether they are hunting to provide meat for their families or hoping to harvest a trophy deer.

"It definitely shows the youth hunters that even though they may be very different, both hunters with disabilities and youth hunters are out there with a common goal," he said.

Fort McCoy has conducted its special gun-deer hunt for hunters with disabilities since 2002. The installation added the youth hunt, and the two events have been held together since 2020, according to previous Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office reporting.

The installation's hunting program also contributes to wildlife-management efforts. Fort McCoy natural resources personnel use information collected from harvested deer to help monitor the installation's deer herd. Previous hunts have included biological data collection and opportunities for Chronic Wasting Disease sampling.

The installation's hunting program is managed through Fort McCoy's natural resources staff in coordination with its hunting permit operations. Participants must meet applicable eligibility requirements and follow installation-specific hunting and harvest-reporting rules.

For more information about hunting opportunities, permits and regulations at Fort McCoy, visit the installation's iSportsman website at https://ft-mccoy.isportsman.net.

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



Contributed photos

William (Bill) Schmidt (above) and Jason and Greg Beck (below) are shown with harvested deer Oct. 10 at Fort McCoy during the special hunt for people with disabilities.



Goats continue to make a difference in fight against invasive species in 2026

STORY & PHOTOs BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

What began as an experiment at Fort McCoy has grown into an important tool in the installation's ongoing fight against invasive plant species.

Since first testing goat grazing in 2023, Fort McCoy's Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division Natural Resources Branch has continued evaluating how targeted goat browsing can be combined with mechanical removal, herbicide treatments, biological controls, monitoring, and other methods to manage invasive vegetation.

By 2026, the results were becoming increasingly evident.

Natural Resources Specialist Jessica Salesman said the goats have made a noticeable difference in invasive-species control, both in Fort McCoy's cantonment area and across its military training areas.

"The goats really made a difference," Salesman said. "We've seen them make a difference both in the cantonment and out on the ranges."

The use of goats is one part of Fort McCoy's larger integrated approach to invasive-species management. Rather than relying on one treatment method, Natural Resources Branch personnel combine multiple techniques based on the species being treated, the location, the density of the infestation and the needs of the area.

That approach is particularly important at Fort McCoy, where invasive woody plants can form dense stands that interfere with training, alter habitat and crowd out native vegetation.

Goats are particularly useful because they browse vegetation that many other livestock generally avoid, including woody plants and weeds. At Fort McCoy, they have been used to repeatedly defoliate invasive shrubs and consume smaller stems and regrowth.

The goal is not simply to have goats eat invasive plants once.

Repeated browsing places stress on the plants by removing leaves and young growth. Over time, repeated stress can deplete the plants' stored energy and reduce their density, making it easier for natural-resources personnel to conduct follow-up treatments.

Salesman said that approach has become increasingly productive as Fort McCoy has learned how best to prepare areas for the goats.

The installation initially tested goat browsing in fall 2023 in wooded blocks heavily affected by glossy buckthorn near the track and Building 1147. The effort expanded into training areas in 2024. In 2025, goats began working in Training Area C-04 near Firing Point 417 before moving through designated blocks in C-15 and C-16. They also worked in the cantonment area.

During the 2025 season, Fort McCoy personnel were still evaluating the program and determining how best to make goat browsing effective in different vegetation conditions. One challenge was that some invasive stems had become too tall and dense for the goats to reach the tops of the plants effectively.

Wisconsin Conservation Corps crews and Challenge Academy cadets assisted by cutting vegetation back, encouraging new growth that was at a height the goats could more easily browse. That experience helped refine the process.

In 2026, goat grazing continued in Training Areas C-04, C-15 and C-16. The work became one of several ongoing components of Fort McCoy's extensive invasive-species management program.

During July alone, goat-grazing treatments covered approximately 37.6 acres. The work addressed invasive species including autumn olive, garlic mustard, glossy buckthorn and honeysuckle, officials reported. When the individual species treatments are counted separately, the effort represented approximately 55.1 species-acres of treatment.

The goats also moved from training areas into the cantonment during July, continuing their role in areas where invasive vegetation has been identified.Salesman said seeing the goats work in b oth environments has helped demonstrate their value.

The cantonment and range areas present different management challenges, but goat browsing provides Fort McCoy with another way to put pressure on invasive vegetation without relying solely on herbicides or mechanical equipment, NRB officials said. That is an important benefit of the program.

Invasive-species management can require substantial amounts of labor, equipment and chemical treatment. Fort McCoy's natural-resources personnel therefore look for ways to make each treatment method complement the others.

Wildlife Biologist Kevin Luepke previously explained that the goats are intended to be part of that integrated approach. Vegetation can be mechanically cut or shredded, allowed to resprout, browsed by goats and then treated with herbicide during a later growing season. The repeated stress makes the plants more vulnerable to subsequent treatment.



(Above and bottom center) Goats feast in a fenced-off area at Fort McCoy as part of an effort to curb invasive plant species at the installation on Aug. 13.

"The goats will be used in an integrated approach," Luepke said in 2025. "This will put a stressor on the invasive shrubs multiple times."

The approach also can reduce the amount of herbicide required. Salesman previously noted that goat grazing is not intended to provide complete control of invasive species by itself. Instead, it makes follow-up work more efficient and can dramatically reduce herbicide use. Goat-grazing contractors in the Upper Midwest generally recommend multiple browsings over several years, depending on the species and site conditions.

That long-term approach remains important because Fort McCoy manages a wide variety of invasive plant species across nearly 60,000 acres of military training land.

The installation's broader invasive-species program includes herbicide applications, hand pulling, mechanical removal, biological controls, mapping, monitoring, early detection and prevention. In July 2026, for example, natural-resources personnel treated approximately 1,865.8 acres through herbicide applications and hand-pulling activities, addressing numerous invasive plant species.

Goat grazing therefore represents one specialized tool within a much larger program.

Fort McCoy's natural-resources staff also continue working with the Monroe County Invasive Species Working Group and other partners to share information and coordinate invasive-species management throughout the region.

The installation hosted the 2026 Monroe County Invasive Species Working Group Summer Field Day in June, bringing together natural-resource professionals, land managers, agency representatives and private citizens to discuss invasive-species identification, treatment and restoration.

The need for that work extends beyond environmental stewardship. Invasive vegetation can alter habitat, reduce biodiversity, interfere with training areas and create additional management and safety concerns. Fort McCoy's natural-resources program works to maintain healthy forests, prairies, wetlands and other habitats while ensuring the installation's lands remain available for military training.

The goat program demonstrates how Fort McCoy can use an unconventional method to help meet both goals.

What started in 2023 as a test involving areas heavily affected by glossy buckthorn has developed into a continuing management practice that is now being applied across both cantonment and training areas.

For Salesman, the value of the program is found not simply in the number of acres grazed, but in what the goats allow Fort McCoy's natural-resources team to accomplish afterward.

The goats remove foliage and young growth, put repeated stress on invasive plants and make remaining vegetation more accessible to follow-up crews and treatments.

The work will continue.

Fort McCoy officials expect invasive-species management to remain a long-term effort, requiring repeated treatments and continued monitoring. As the installation gains more experience with targeted grazing, the goats will remain one of the tools available to natural-resources personnel as they work to reduce invasive vegetation and protect Fort McCoy's diverse natural habitats.

At Fort McCoy, sometimes fighting an invasive species means bringing in a crew with chainsaws or herbicide. Sometimes it means using biological controls or prescribed fire.

And sometimes, the solution has four legs, horns, and an appetite for buckthorn. The strongest factual update from the 2026 material is the transition from "we're still testing this" in 2025 to documented, continuing use across C-04, C-15, C-16, and the cantonment in 2026, with the July acreage figures to demonstrate the scale.

Fort McCoy's motto beginning in 2026 is "Training 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 athttps://home.army.mil/mccoy, on Facebook by searching "ftmccoy," on Flickr at https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi, and on X (formerly Twitter) by searching "usagmccoy." Also try downloading the My Army Post app to your smartphone and set "Fort McCoy" or another installation as your preferred base. Fort McCoy is also part of Army's Installation Management Command where "We Are The Army's Home."



THIS MONTH IN FORT MCCOY HISTORY

Fort McCoy was established in 1909. Here's a look at the installation's history from October 2026 and back.

80 Years Ago — October 1946

FROM THE OCT. 4, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Troop questionnaires will provide experts information (By Newspaper Staff)* — Officers of AGF Board No. 3 have revealed that the individual soldier will give experts a great deal of the information they require to make a success of Task Force Frost.

Innumerable questionnaires will be distributed to the men and the answers they give will help to shape developments of future Army equipment and to modify equipment already in use. Skilled testing officers will prepare data which will then be sifted by Army and civilian technicians in Washington, where conclusions will be derived as to the worth of the item in question. In cases of outstanding faults, immediate and often on the spot modifications will be attempted. One such modification already made permits the firing of an M1 rifle while wearing mittens.

The questionnaires will be provided with a space for suggestions and in this way a man may aid testing officers in revising important equipment for his own and his buddies good.

As a rule, equipment will be highly praised by 2½ percent of the men, and condemned by another 2½ percent, while the majority take middle of the road views.

However, the deciding factor will not be the number of men disliking an item but the experience of the men, and the valid reasons they can give for the decision. In this way, testing officers will evaluate the questionnaires and, if their judgment warrants it, a special control test will be held. A control test is one in which all material factors will be controlled entirely and the human element controlled as closely as possible.

For example, in-the-field use of ammunition containers, difficulties are encountered in removing ammunition from one particular type container at night. A group of men will be taken out at night and timed as they remove ammunition from the various type containers. This exercise will be repeated until an average time for each type container is determined. Throughout the exercise the men will be observed and interviewed to determine the cause of the difficulty.

Thus soldiers of the future will owe much to those now taking part in Task Force Frost, and men of the Task Force who expect to remain in the Army are helping to ensure better clothing and equipment for themselves as a result of their participation in the tests.

FROM THE OCT. 4, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *McCoy to discharge personnel; initial group of 44 enlisted men alerted, processing begins Oct. 7th (By Newspaper Staff)* — A directive received from Fifth Army Headquarters, Chicago, today alerted Camp McCoy officials to prepare to again institute separation facilities and procedures at this station.

According to the announcement all military personnel at McCoy becoming eligible for discharge in the future will be separated here along with all personnel from surrounding installations where medical facilities do not exist. This latter statement has been interpreted to include such activities in the area as recruiting stations, and other units utilizing small numbers of operating personnel.

Discharge own personnel as they become eligible

A subsequent telephone conversation engaged in between Col. Newton G. Bush, post commander, and Fifth Army Headquarters disclosed that separation proceedings will become effective at McCoy on Oct. 7. It was further pointed out that this change in policy also affects every Class I installation in the entire country. Hereafter, the existing separation centers will discharge only overseas returnees, and the remaining posts designated will handle separation of their own personnel plus smaller activities in their respective areas.

There are approximately 44 enlisted men scheduled for separation immediately after the new operation begins. The Camp McCoy station is one of six additional separation points in the Fifth Army area now set up in addition to the Fort Sheridan separation center.

FROM THE OCT. 11, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *GIs may wear 'civies' off duty (By Newspaper Staff)* — Multi-colored garb now authorized: Many a GI's dream is coming true. Now Joe can put on his best suit of "civies" and strut down the street with the best of civilians — and still draw that Army pay. Civilian clothes may now be worn by Soldiers during off-duty hours, the War Department announced.

In announcing the new privilege, the Army said that the order applied to military personnel in "the United States, the balance of the Western Hemisphere, including Greenland, and overseas possessions of the United States."

Not worn on post on duty

Col. Newton G. Bush, post commander, in clarifying the order as it relates to Camp McCoy, stated that civilian clothes may not be worn on the post between the hours of Reveille and Retreat.

Civilian clothes will be allowed to be worn on the post by personnel on their way out of camp or returning from off post to their quarters. Civilian clothes will not be worn to the PXs, messhalls, or theaters on the post during duty hours. Civilian clothes may be worn on the post after 5 p. m. GIs in civilian clothes must carry their class A passes with them at all times.

The Army made it very plain, in the civilian clothes announcement, that the reduced furlough travel rates would be available to men in uniform only. Simultaneously with the Army's action, the Navy granted the privilege of wearing civilian clothes to Navy personnel in the Western hemisphere and all United States possessions.

FROM THE OCT. 11, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Gen. Craig to arrive next week; inspect task force — task force review scheduled, all units to participate (By Newspaper Staff)* — Maj. Gen. Louis A. Craig, deputy commander of the 5th Army, will be in Headquarters in Chicago, will arrive at Camp McCoy on Tuesday, Oct. 15, for an inspection of Task Force Frost.

A review will be held in the general's honor and in the afternoon several demonstrations will take place. Mass firing of small arms, firing of recoilless shoulder weapons, an infantry tank attack, and Artillery firing by "B" Battery, 92nd Arm'd Field Artillery will be among the special events.

Inspected force earlier

General Craig made a rapid tour through inspection of Task Force Frost early in September when he watched members of Co. B, 6th Tank, and Co. "C", of the then 2nd Infantry Regiment, perform in the field, and then visited orderly rooms, warehouses, and repair shops.

The general commanded the 9th Infantry Division in the ETO during the war. At the end of hostilities, he became commander of the 20th Corps. He returned to this country last fall and assumed command of the 7th Service Command at that time.

General Craig holds numerous foreign decorations from Belgium, France, England, Russia, and Ecuador. Some of the decorations he is entitled to wear are the World War ribbon with 4 stars, the ETO ribbon with 4 battle stars, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star.

FROM THE OCT. 11, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: Model plane meet scheduled (By Newspaper Staff) — Plane enthusiasts, Staff Sgt. Thomas Henshelts, Pfc. Anthony Boss, Sgt. Wilfred Wierman and Clemens C. Bigger have been working on plane models in the gymnasium on 11th and P Streets and have completed some.

Their club started at Camp Hood, Texas. It was reorganized here at Camp McCoy and will welcome new members. They do most of their work during off-duty hours.

This club is always in contact with a very active club at La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Everyone is invited to attend the model exhibition at the athletic field behind the theater, October 27th. Dogfights, stunts, and speed exhibitions by radio-controlled planes, and planes with control lines are all Club specialties.

At this time the club is working on a radio-controlled scale model piper cub plane with a 7-foot wingspan.

FROM THE OCT. 11, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Radio men at work (By Newspaper Staff)* — Headquarters' radio section has been very busy in the last three months here at Camp McCoy, attending classes, going out on field problems, and ironing out kinks in radio operation for the Task Force Frost winter operations.

Most of the men in this section are experienced in this field. Communications chief, technical Sgt. James E. Watson has been men in his section. Master Sgt. Mallokin Koch and Wallis L. Buckner are instructors.

Tech. Sgt. George M. Glowjack is the radio repair man, and Sgt. Daniel chief radio operator. Other radio operators are T-5 Demara Hewitt, Pfc. Anthony Bosco, T/5 Willifred M. Hush, T/5 John Stazil, Pfc. Donald McGowan, T/5 Henry D. Metzger. Most of these men are C.W. operators.

Because of tHe great importance of communications in the Task Force, Headquarters radio section will have a large role in the winter test operations.

FROM THE OCT. 18, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Post library offers much (By Newspaper Staff)* — Did you ever get that certain feeling that you would like to just sit down with a good book or magazine, and spend an evening at ease? You can quench that desire at the Post Library, located in Service Club 1.

There you will have at your disposal daily newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals. You can even consult the "Career Monograph Papers" to decide what you will do with your life when you are discharged. And after you choose your career, you can pick the college you will attend from a complete collection of college catalogues. For a select book, maybe one of the following will suit your taste.

Top Books Offered

— "Last Chapter"— by Ernie Pyle — An accumulation of all Ernie Pyle's notes as a war correspondent.

— "Stop or I'll Scream"— And before me, you will scream when you read this album of Collier's famous cartoons.

— "The Unforseen"— by Dorothy McCardle — As mysterious as it sounds, is this novel of the supernatural . . . predicting the unpredictable!

— "Mixture for Men" — These compiled stories are entirely different . . . elaborating on unheard of personages who have affected our civilization.

— "Psychopathic Dog" — by John Phillip Sousa — A tale of a beer-drinking dog . . . both "amoozin and confoozin."

Don't waste your time fellows. Spend a profitable evening at the post library!

FROM THE OCT. 18, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *1,200 men expected by Oct. 31; to be reassigned from here (By Newspaper Staff)* — If current reports prove to be correct — the very near future may see a hustle and bustle of activity in the 1700 block at Camp McCoy.

Door blocks will be taken down, lights turned on, smoke will start curling from the chimneys and an echo of voices will be heard throughout the area.

According to information received this week by Col. Newton G. Bush, post commander, from the G-1 section of Fifth Army Headquarters, Chicago, a group of men may be sent to Camp McCoy prior to Oct. 31 for quarters and rations.

The group … will be made up mostly of new inductees and a few short-term men who have yet to serve less than six and more than three months.

Men classified here

These men are being diverted by the War Department from overcrowded training centers. They will be classified as qualifications, be given MOS numbers, and then be sent in groups to other installations to replace men who are being discharged or sent overseas. It is expected that some of the men will be used for replacement here for those Regular Army men eligible for overseas service.

Although there is as of yet no definite assurance that the men will be sent to McCoy, it seems likely from information received that such action will be taken. It is expected that the school for Bakers and Cooks, Ft. Sheridan, Ill., will furnish men.

Officers of the post complement will be used to classify the men and act as interviewers. It is anticipated that the former counseling building will be utilized for testing procedures.

FROM THE OCT. 25, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *FROST IN FIELD; Troops return today or Saturday (By Newspaper Staff)* — Men of Task Force Frost will return from the field Friday night or early Saturday morning to close the second five days of Task Force maneuver draws to a close.

On Tuesday, all units participating in a 9-mile conditioning march from their McCoy Co. C, 6th Infantry Regiment maneuvering … and others in the 92nd A.F.A. conducted an ASP. Meanwhile, an armor attack and advance and attack was staged by troops of the 6th Tank Co., 1st Tank Bn., and McCoy, Cav. and 1st Platoon, 6th "C" LST.

Wednesday, a Tank-Infantry attack was held with troops of "C" Co., 7th Inf. and the 6th Tank Co. participating, along with the 92nd A.F.A. lending support.

Also active during the maneuvers proved were Firing "A," and "C" Co., 10th Engineer; 3rd Ammunition Platoon of the 38th Ordnance, and the Med. Clearing Platoon.

Friday morning all units participating in a coordinated attack of infantry, tanks, and artillery. As time passes, and the weather grows colder, maneuver periods will be lengthened, for the majority of items will be tested.

It will be then that the men of the Task Force will be called upon to give opinions and suggestions concerning their equipment and the information they give to testing officers will greatly influence future development of Army Ground Force cold weather clothing and equipment.

FROM THE OCT. 25, 1946, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: *Army accepts disabled vet enlistments (By Newspaper Staff)* — In another move to bring skilled personnel into the United States Army and also to offer the Army as a career to many men heretofore barred from such an opportunity because of disability caused by honorable service, the War Department announced today that certain categories of disabled veterans would be accepted for enlistment in the Regular Army.

5,000 to be accepted

Recognizing that many men disabled in service are desirous of an Army career and that many of these men have proven themselves able and skilled by winning over their handicaps, the War Department has directed that an initial 5,000 partially disabled veterans will be accepted for service in the Regular Army.

The disabled enlistee is needed to fill the positive need for skilled manpower in the Army, and in its utilization will allow the Army to release physically-fit Soldiers for more strenuous duties.

The action also permits the War Department to accomplish material with the Army the rehabilitation placement of certain disabled veterans, a program it has long sponsored in civilian placement.

May go overseas

A portion of those qualified disabled men may go overseas for duty. Enlistment of other than the physically perfect admittedly has its disadvantages but the War Department study of the project indicates that the advantages provided by such enlistments far exceed the disadvantages, and afford the Army the opportunity of repaying in part those men who sacrificed their health when our nation was at war.



Official Signal Corp Photo

Colonel Rudolph W. Broedlow, commanding officer of Task Force Force Frost, is shown with men who served overseas in his division during the war and are now stationed with Task Force Frost. Left to right, Cpl. Willis Diercks, Hqs. Btry., 92nd A. F. A. (Cannon Co. 362nd Inf., 91st Div.); S/Sgt. Charles H. Reilley, 31st Ordnance (1st Bn. Hqs. Co., 361st Inf., 91st Div.); Colonel Broedlow; T/4 Edward J. Brown, 31st Ordnance ("B" Btry., 916th F. A. Bn., 91st Div.); and T/5 Bruce W. Anderson, 3rd Med. Bn. (F Co. 361st Inf. 91st Div). Col. Broedlow commanded the 361st Infantry which fought in the long and bloody Italian campaign.

U.S. Army Historical Photos

80 YEARS AGO: A news clip from the Oct. 18, 1946, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper is shown. The Soldiers shown supported Task Force Frost training at then-Camp McCoy.

75 Years Ago — October 1951

FROM THE ARMY HISTORY ARCHIVES: The U.S. Army's official Fort McCoy history records that Camp McCoy again became a reassignment and separation center in October 1951.

The installation continued serving in this capacity until January 1953. During that period:

— More than 15,000 service members were separated from military service.

— Another 18,000 service members were reassigned to other posts.

— The camp was also supporting the Army's Korean War-era training and mobilization mission.

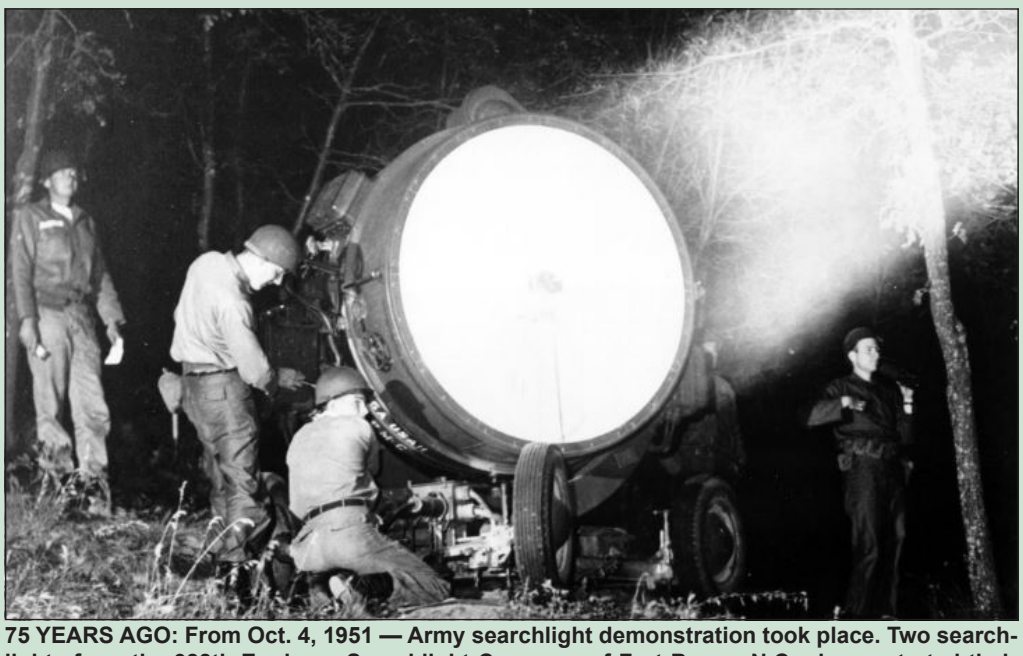
— *Oct. 4, 1951* — Army searchlight demonstration took place. Two searchlights from the 988th Engineer Searchlight Company of Fort Bragg, N.C., demonstrated their capabilities at Camp McCoy. The Army described the equipment as an 800-million-candlepower searchlight capable of illuminating a battlefield or projecting a beam nearly 20 miles into the night.

— *Oct. 27, 1951* — Civilian workforce reductions canceled. Camp McCoy canceled planned discharges for 100 civilian employees, keeping them on the payroll. Another 80 employees previously discharged under a civilian workforce reduction had found private-sector jobs and were not to be replaced, according to civilian personnel director Franklin Skogstad.

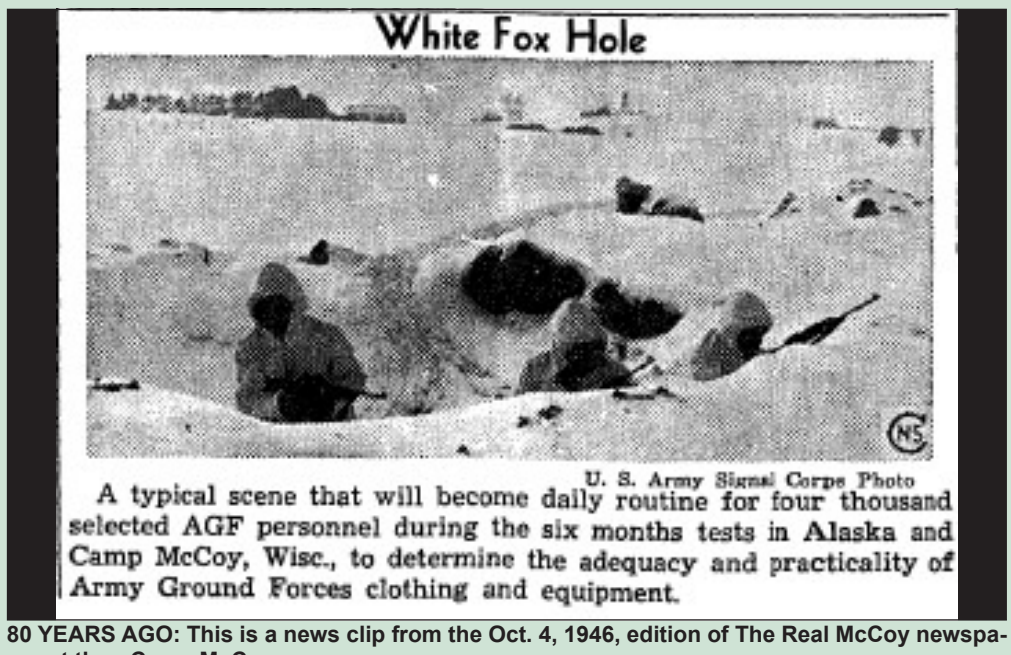
40 Years Ago — October 1986

FROM THE OCT. 30, 1986, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: U.S. Army Garrison-Fort McCoy Command Group — Accomplishments (fiscal year 1986)(By Newspaper Staff) — Fiscal year (FY) 1986, the year of contingency studies, reviews and what could possibly happen next. As I will point out, numerous very positive objectives were accomplished in FY 86, despite the impacts of the National Guard study, Army Reserve Readiness Training Center (ARRTC) and Civilian Personnel Office relocation studies, German-Rudman-Hollings budget cuts, changes in the Federal Retirement program and fluctuating civilian employment levels which caused an environment of great

(See **HISTORY**, Page 15)



75 YEARS AGO: From Oct. 4, 1951 — Army searchlight demonstration took place. Two searchlights from the 988th Engineer Searchlight Company of Fort Bragg, N.C., demonstrated their capabilities at Camp McCoy. The Army described the equipment as an 800-million-candlepower searchlight capable of illuminating a battlefield or projecting a beam nearly 20 miles into the night.



White Fox Hole

U. S. Army Signal Corps Photo

A typical scene that will become daily routine for four thousand selected AGF personnel during the six months tests in Alaska and Camp McCoy, Wisc., to determine the adequacy and practicality of Army Ground Forces clothing and equipment.

80 YEARS AGO: This is a news clip from the Oct. 4, 1946, edition of The Real McCoy newspaper at then-Camp McCoy.

HISTORY

from Page 16

uncertainty throughout the Fort.

The analogies of Alvin Toffler's 1975 best-seller "Future Shock" caught up with Fort McCoy in 1986. Stress and anxiety factors became an area of genuine concern throughout the workforce early in the fiscal year. Then steadily and surely we began to confront the great instabilities and continued to turn in one of the best installation performance records in Forces Command (FORSCOM) while supporting the highest-tempo training densities in Fort McCoy's history — 17,000 more than the record-setting 103,000 soldiers in 1985.

Last year it was stated that, "we're going to have to do more with less and do it better."

We have done more:

— We supported the greatest number of troops in our history—the equivalent in excess of one million training man-days.

— We responded to an extraordinary number of external staffing requirements.

— We made significant progress in the Commercial Activities process.

— We justified the prioritization of 28 military construction projects over the next five years totaling $81 million in new facilities including:

— a new self-contained ARRTC school complex;

— a multi-purpose training range;

— a central vehicle wash facility;

— a 65-unit housing complex;

— a commissary;

— a child care center;

— a vehicle maintenance center;

— an electrical substation;

— an airfield central fuel storage;

— an automated data processing and maintenance facility.

— We made numerous improvements to current facilities such as the Main Gate, roads, signs, and upgraded 52 buildings on post.

— We conducted formal technical, supervisory and self-improvement training for the greatest number of employees in Fort McCoy history.

— We have done it with less.

The Fort McCoy FY 86 base operating budget was virtually the same as allocated in FY 85.

The number of military and civilian personnel in support of the mission has increased 10 percent.

We are doing it better. In keeping with the Army philosophy of leading, caring, training and maintaining, the installation has proven itself by:

Leading

— We are the largest reserve component mobilization station in the Army.

— We have the largest off-post support mission which includes the second largest Finance and Accounting Office in the Army.

— We have the best Standard Installation Management System in the Army.

— We have the most profitable club system in the Army.

— We won the FORSCOM Fourth Estate Award for Journalism Excellence.

— A Fort McCoy soldier was selected as FORSCOM's NCO of the Year.

Caring

— We have the lowest Military Personnel Records (SIDPERS) production/processing error rates in FORSCOM.

— We have the lowest Civilian Personnel Records (CVPERSINS) production/processing error rates in FORSCOM.

— We have the lowest Reserve Pay error rate in FORSCOM.

— We have the lowest individual and overall crime rate in all categories among FORSCOM installations.

Training

— We provided support and training opportunities to approximately 120,000 soldiers during FY 86.

— We supported a record number of students through the Army's only Reserve Readiness Training Center.

— We provided direct support to the largest Reserve Component exercises in the Army: (REFORGER 86, Sentry II—dependent, TAMEX 86, and Bold Cactus II).

Maintaining

— We were a first place winner of the Department of the Army's 1986 Energy Conservation Award.

— We support the Army's largest Equipment Concentration Site (ECS).

— We have the best Base Operations (BOS) program in terms of low cost per rates and production ratios.

— We have the best stock fund section in productivity and accuracy in FORSCOM.

— We have the FORSCOM model warehouse and maintenance facility for the complex Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES).

— The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office (old Property Disposal Office) is an annual contender for World's Best.

(All accomplishments listed per the garrison commander.)

30 Years Ago — October 1996

FROM THE OCT. 11, 1996, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: *Members of McCoy-based unit to support U.S. efforts in Bosnia (By Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt, Triad Staff)* — Family members, friends, and media members gathered Sept. 23 at the Sparta/Fort McCoy Airport for a brief ceremony to say goodbye and good luck to four soldiers departing the installation in support of Operation Joint Endeavor, the Bosnian peacekeeping effort.

Four members of the Fort McCoy-based Company B, 2nd Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment departed the installation at noon for their mobilization site, Fort Benning, Ga. At Fort Benning, they will undergo final preparations for deployment to either Heidelberg, Germany, or Naples, Italy, where they will serve nine-month tours of duty.

Company B, 2nd/228th, is a 16-member unit that recently was reassigned to Fort McCoy from Glenview Naval Air Station, Ill. The unit's stateside mission is to provide fixed-wing aircraft support for a variety of military missions using C-12 fixed-wing aircraft, the newest of its type in the Army fleet.

The unit already has eight of its personnel deployed in support of Operation Joint Endeavor, said Capt. M. Brian O'Tu'el, unit commander. "The soldiers deploying today will be able to walk right into the mission and help," he said.

Personnel departing Fort McCoy Sept. 23 were Capt. Mark Smith, Warrant Officer 4 Bruce Anderson, Warrant Officer 4 Paul Herrick and Warrant Officer 3 John Schmidt.

Installation Commander Col. Harold K. Miller Jr., who addressed the gathering at the airport, said the Soldiers' deployment was another example of how the Army Reserve increasingly is being relied upon for its expertise and talents in support of military missions worldwide.

Each year, approximately 20,000 Army Reserve Soldiers deploy, Miller said, citing Army Reserve support to missions such as Uphold Democracy in Haiti as well as Joint Endeavor. These missions and many others, both stateside and OCONUS (outside the continental United States), clearly demonstrate the nation's reliance on the Army Reserve.

"Army Reservists are Citizen-Soldiers, all volunteers, who take pride to keep America free. Today's Army Reserve is trained, ready and willing. We are all grateful men and women who answer the call to the colors."

FROM THE OCT. 11, 1996, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: *Archaeological study examines post's soil (By Rob Schuette, Triad Staff)* — Someone digging below the surface of Fort McCoy today would find the soil composition very similar to what it was 9,000 to 10,000 years ago.

Ty Sobin and Garry Leonard Running IV, employees of the U.S. Geological Survey, presented the findings of their research project Sept. 18 at Fort McCoy. The project was done to determine those areas of Fort McCoy that may need further archaeological studies.

The data indicated that only about the top one-meter of Fort McCoy soil has changed very much during the past 9,000 years, Running said.

"The area has a lot of sand," Running said. "You can't farm it. The military training during the past 90 years hasn't affected the underlying soil composition. In short, this is a good place for a fort, and it can support the Army's training mission."

The fact that only the top one-meter of the soil has changed much during the past 9,000 to 10,000 years also has made it an excellent site to study the history of the area, he said.

Dell Greek, Fort McCoy archaeologist, said he knew something special was happening several years ago when he found 9,000-year-old stone artifacts near modern ordnance on the soil surface and at shallow soil depths.

"It's common to find artifacts about 400 to 1,000 years old in these locations," Greek said. "I knew it was out of the ordinary to find material 9,000 years old (in those areas)."

At the time Greek found the 9,000-year-old materials, the USGS was helping Fort McCoy with a survey for petroleum contaminants. Greek presented his findings to the U.S.G.S personnel and asked for their assistance to make a geomorphical map/model of the post that shows how the land formed over time.

Geomorphic surveys are done with existing information, field surveys using a geoprobe drilling technique into the soil, and laboratory analysis of the results. Among the results the study found about soil composition at Fort McCoy were:

A solid, underlying bedrock formation has resisted weathering or other significant changes for the past 10,000 years.

Much of the post is lowlands, although it does have abrupt slopes and mountainous-type land.

The soil is covered with mostly sand that is only a few meters thick. Some areas on post have small sand dunes.

An abundance of green grass cover. This has helped keep the slopes stable and protected them from erosion.

20 Years Ago — October 2006

FROM THE OCT. 27, 2006, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: *General Purpose Warehouse facility construction approved (By Newspaper Staff)* — Construction of a new General Purpose Warehouse, which will replace World War II-era warehouse buildings in the 2100 block at Fort McCoy, has been approved.

Solicitation bids are being accepted through Nov. 21. The project is estimated to have a price tag between $10 million and $25 million and will be paid for by Military Construction, Army Reserve funding. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) will oversee the project, which is a designed facility.

Roy Brewer, the ACOE resident engineer for the Fort McCoy district, said project construction should tentatively begin in the spring of 2007 with a construction time of about 18 months.

The project will include 80,000-square-feet of floor space, enclosed in a three-story high building, said Dave Gundlach, Directorate of Support Services (DSS) project manager.

Administrative offices will be located to the front of the facility on a single level. The warehouse will be a high bay storage area and is designed to allow several tenants to divide and securely store their items.

The storage areas will have a flexible partition system that will allow the space to be adapted for current and future needs, Gundlach said.

The building will be of tilt-up concrete panel construction, according to the Federal Business Opportunities listing.

Gundlach said the facility also will include a loading/unloading dock and a large outside open storage area, which will be enclosed by a fence.

Rick Whitley, installation chief of Supply and Services for DSS, said the facility will house various DSS tenants, including Retail Supply, Classification, Transportation, Training Support Section, Engineer Supply, and Services for DSS.

FROM THE OCT. 27, 2006, EDITION OF THE TRIAD NEWSPAPER: *Engineer unit to support Iraqi Freedom (By Loni Witscheber, Triad Contributor)* — After three months of training at Fort McCoy, the 186th Engineer Company (Combat Support), an Army National Guard unit headquartered in Dothan, Ala., is prepared to provide support for Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

The unit is made up of approximately 160 Soldiers, with 30-percent of the unit being cross-leveled from the 877th Engineer Battalion and 1151st Engineer Battalion. A smaller number of Soldiers also are from Georgia, Florida, and Mississippi.

"The unit has integrated very well," said Capt. Clay S. Strickland, commander of the 186th. "We have worked closely with the 877th before, so our Soldiers already knew one another prior to our arrival at Fort McCoy."

The unit's in-theater mission will consist of such work as building berms, roads, fuel points, entry control points, parking lots, and motor pools at Forward Operating Bases (FOB).

"This unit has been deployed together for various missions before, such as Hurricanes Rita and Katrina," said Master Sgt. Martin S. Tillery, a member of the 186th. "This is the first time that this company itself has been mobilized."

To prepare for its mission in-country, the unit has undergone long days of Theater Immersion training. Theater Immersion is a training approach advocated by First Army Commanding General Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré, and it is the cornerstone for priming Soldiers for deployment. Theater Immersion training places Soldiers in an environment with situations that replicate, as realistically as possible, those they will experience overseas.

To mirror the FOB environment that Soldiers will occupy in country, the unit lived in tents at Tactical Training Base (TTB) Freedom and TTB Liberty, which were surrounded by concertina wire, entry control points and guard towers.

Soldiers traveled in convoys and encountered role players posing as civilians on the battlefield or opposing forces.

Scenarios practiced during training used the latest law-enforcement-specific tactics, techniques, and procedures.

"This also was a great opportunity to build our team skills," Sharp said.

The team used barracks space for lodging while at Fort McCoy. Sharp said the accommodations, training venues, and support from the installation staff were excellent.

"It was nice to be able to come here and take advantage of your nice facilities," Sharp said. "They worked out perfectly for our training scenarios."

Law-enforcement personnel regularly conduct urban-style training at Fort McCoy.

The facilities used often include two fully instrumented urban training sites, a 25-building Combined Arms Collective Training Facility, a 20-building Collective Training Facility, and three wireless-instrumented Combat in the Cities facilities.

5 Years Ago — October 2021

FROM THE OCT. 22, 2001, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: 116,053 troops train at Fort McCoy during fiscal year 2021 (By Scott T. Sturkol, Newspaper Editor) — Nearly doubling the troop training total from fiscal year 2020, Fort McCoy supported the training of 116,053 troops on post during fiscal year 2021.

During fiscal year 2020, 60,054 troops trained at Fort McCoy because training was scaled back due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During fiscal year 2021, with existing COVID-19 mitigation measures in place, the installation brought back training levels to beyond 100,000 troops.

Larry Sharp, chief of the Fort McCoy Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS) Training Coordination Branch, 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 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 2021, training included several Cold-Weather Operations Course (CWOC) sessions; battle-drill (weekend) training; annual training; mobilization; institutional training; and numerous exercises, including a Warrior Exercise, Combat Support Training Exercise, Diamond Saber, Global Medic, and the level III Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) mobilization exercise Pershing Strike '21.

Pershing Strike included an Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise (EDRE), two units preparing for deployment, and additional units completing training to "stress" Mobilization Force Generation Installation (MFGI) capabilities, said Fort McCoy DPTMS Director Mike Todd.

"This exercise enables Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) to prepare their system for a unit to deploy," Todd said in July, noting it helps the command and units make sure everything such as personnel and equipment are ready for a deployment while at the same time helping refine the MFGI capabilities.

DPTMS Mobilization/Demobilization Branch Chief Kurt Bruggemeyer, who directly supported Pershing Strike '21, said in many cases an EDRE, which was held the second week of July at Fort McCoy and Volk Field, and a mobilization exercise are held separately. But for Pershing Strike '21, the EDRE was intertwined with the exercise.

"Mobilization exercises vary in levels, with some only being table-top exercises and others integrating numerous units that may or may not actually be deploying into a theater of combat operations," Bruggemeyer said. "During this mobilization exercise Pershing Strike, FORSCOM injected an EDRE into the mobilization exercise flow of units to do several things. First, it tested and evaluated the deploying unit's ability to deploy/redeploy. And secondly, the EDRE unit's Soldiers helped to stress the Fort McCoy MFGI enterprise's ability to support mobilization operations on a larger scale."

DPTMS personnel document the training statistics each month of the fiscal year, Sharp said. This involves combining numbers of the entire transient training population, which encompasses reserve- and active-component military forces as well as other training agencies, such as law-enforcement agencies or the Wisconsin Challenge Academy.

10 Years Ago — October 2016

FROM THE OCT. 14, 2016, EDITION OF THE REAL MCCOY NEWSPAPER: Law-enforcement team practices scenarios at Urban-Assault Course (By Scott T. Sturkol, Newspaper Editor) — An Illinois law-enforcement team made a three-day visit to Fort McCoy in late September to train at the Range 41 Urban-Assault Course on the installation's North Post.

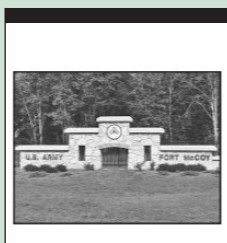
The team of 13 officers combined from the Lee County Sheriff's Office and Dixon Police Department is called the Joint Operations Group. Its purpose is similar to a special-weapons-and-tactics team, said Officer Lincoln Sharp, a team member with the Dixon Police Department.

"This was our first trip to Fort McCoy as a team," he said.

The team trained almost exclusively at the Urban-Assault Course. The course has several stations and structures for personnel to train with blank ammunition, Simunitions (detergent-filled training ammunition), and live-fire rounds, said Range Scheduling Supervisor Mark Stelzner with the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS).

Sharp said the course was "exactly what they needed" to complete their training.

"We don't have structures like this available for us to train where we are, so this (was) new to us and a nice surprise," Sharp said.



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FY 2006 training totals surpass 107,000 personnel

BY ROB SCHUETTE
Triad Staff

Fort McCoy registered more than 5,000 additional personnel training at the installation during fiscal year 2006 (FY 2006) compared to FY 2005 totals, according to statistics compiled by the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security (DPTMS). This was the 22nd consecutive year the installation has trained more than 100,000 personnel.

A total of 107,668 personnel trained in FY 2006 compared to 102,191 for FY 2005. The FY 2006 statistics included 66,380 personnel conducting extended combat training (two weeks or more, including mobilizing units), and 41,288 personnel attending battle drill assembly training.

Highlights of the training year included integrated training with the Patriot Exercise in June, a Global Patriot Exercise in July and the Red Dragon Homeland Defense Exercise in August, said Gene Nall, DPTMS chief of Range Operations. It was the first time the Patriot Exercise had come to Fort McCoy and the second time for the Global Patriot Exercise. New training also included a Department of Energy exercise and the testing of the Breech Assault vehicle.

These exercises brought a mixture of personnel to Fort McCoy including Army, Air Force, Marines and federal civilian and contracted personnel, said Mark Stelzner of the DPTMS Scheduling Section. Global Patriot and Red Dragon continued to grow in the number of troops involved, he said.

Fort McCoy continued to strive toward meeting its goal of providing total force training by training more than 2,000 Marines, 2,500 Naval personnel and almost 4,000 U.S. Air Force personnel at Fort McCoy during FY 2006.

"These units and personnel that come here tell other personnel and units about our ranges and training facilities, such as the newly opened Simulation Facility," Stelzner said. "We have picked up additional training by word-of-mouth about the facilities we have and the good customer service and support the entire work force provides to training."

Another highlight of FY 2006 was Troop Projects work continuing on the Young Air Assault Strip to prepare it for landing/take-off testing of the C-17 cargo aircraft, which will supplement the C-130 aircraft. The project is expected to be completed in 2007 and will make Fort McCoy one of only three Army installations that offer a tactical (dirt) runway that can accommodate C-17 aircraft.

"This will bring us a lot of attention from units that have this aircraft," Stelzner said. "They have to be trained on how to take off and land on tactical runways if they're deployed, so we expect that will bring us additional training."

Stelzner said another factor that attracts training to Fort McCoy is even though it is a power-projection platform, it also handles extended combat and battle assembly training.

Some of the locations that handle mobilization training won't take this training or won't provide good customer service support to it, he said.

Nall said Fort McCoy continues to seek all the training it can attract in the current training environment, which continues to be heavily inclined toward mobilization training. The 2nd Brigade, 85th Division (Training Support Battalion) provides much training assistance to the mobilizing units.

"We have a large mobilization/demobilization mission going on here that has helped keep our training numbers up," Nall said.

Other training highlights for FY 2006 included the 84th U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Command, Regional Training Site-Maintenance and Regional Training Site-Medical all reporting robust training and/or class loads during FY 2006 at Fort McCoy.



Photo by Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt

More than 107,000 personnel, including mobilized medics (above), trained at Fort McCoy in FY 2006.

U.S. Army Soldier Show at McCoy Oct. 13-14

The U.S. Army Soldier Show cast will hold performances at Fort McCoy's Rumpel Fitness Center, building 1122, at 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 13 and at 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 14.

The free performances, which are approximately 90 minutes long, are open to the public. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Doors will open one hour before the performances. Refreshments will be sold by the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program.

The Rumpel Fitness Center gymnasium, racquetball courts, free weight room and cybex room will be closed Oct. 13.

The Fitness Center Cardio Room and locker rooms will be open from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., and the pool will be open from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. that day. The entire Fitness Center will be closed Oct. 14, and return to its normal hours of operation at 5 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 15.

For more information, call the Soldier Show point of contact Bob Baldwin at (608) 388-3200.

FEHBP Annual Health Benefits Fair Oct. 26

The annual Health Benefits Fair for members of the Fort McCoy work force will be held from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 26.

Representatives from several organizations that provide coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), including BlueCross and BlueShield, are scheduled to be present and answer questions and have hardcopy material available. The Health Benefits Fair will be held in building 220 on 12th East Ave., which is northeast of the installation headquarters, building 100.

The 2006 FEHBP open season will run from Monday, Nov. 13 through Monday, Dec. 11. New enrollments or changes in insurance will be effective in January 2007.

(See FEHBP, page 11)

U.S. Army Historical Photos

20 YEARS AGO: This is a news clipping from the Oct. 13, 2006, edition of The Triad newspaper that highlighted the number of troops training at the installation at the time.

Members of McCoy-based unit to support U.S. efforts in Bosnia

By Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt
Triad Staff

Family members, friends and media members gathered Sept. 23 at the Sparta/Fort McCoy Airport for a brief ceremony to say goodbye and good luck to four soldiers departing the installation in support of Operation Joint Endeavor, the Bosnian peacekeeping effort.

Four members of the Fort McCoy-based Company B, 2nd Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment departed the installation at noon for their mobilization site, Fort Benning, Ga. At Fort Benning, they will undergo final preparations for deployment to either Heidelberg, Germany, or Naples, Italy, where they will serve nine-month tours of duty.

Company B, 2nd/228th, is a 16-member unit that recently was reassigned to Fort McCoy from Glenview Naval Air Station, Ill. The unit's stateside mission is to provide fixed-wing aircraft support for a variety of military missions using C-12 fixed-wing aircraft, the newest of its type in the Army fleet.

The unit already has eight of its personnel deployed in support of Operation Joint Endeavor, said Capt. M. Brian O'Tu'el, unit commander. "The soldiers deploying today will be able to walk right into the mission and help," he said.

Personnel departing Fort McCoy Sept. 23 were Capt. Mark Smith, Warrant Officer 4 Bruce Anderson, Warrant Officer 4 Paul Herrick and Warrant Officer 3 John Schmidt.

Installation Commander Col. Harold K. Miller Jr., who addressed the gathering at the airport, said the Soldiers' deployment was another example of how the Army Reserve increasingly is being relied upon for its expertise and talents in support of military missions worldwide.

Each year, approximately 20,000 Army Reserve soldiers deploy, Miller said, citing Army Reserve support to missions such as Uphold Democracy in Haiti as well as Joint Endeavor. These

very grateful to your families — your spouses and your children — who shoulder this burden of your absence and who support your endeavor of making the



Photo by Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt

Members of Company B, 2nd/228th Aviation Regiment take a moment for pictures with friends and relatives prior to departing for their mobilization station.

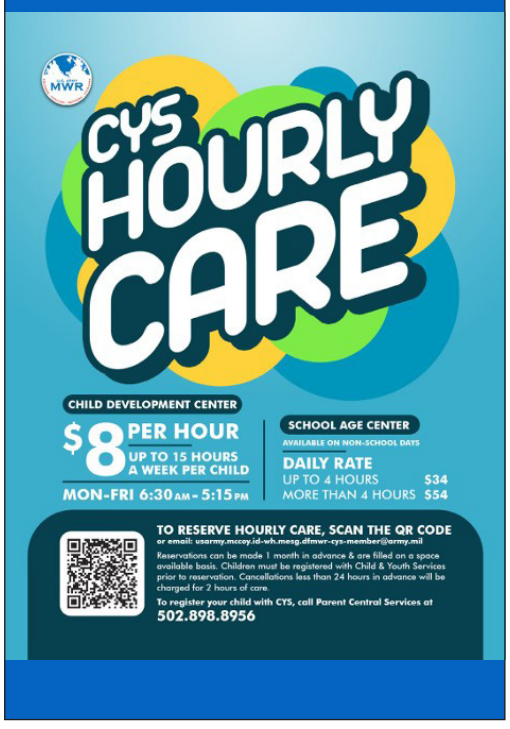
30 YEARS AGO: This is a news clipping from the Oct. 11, 1996, edition of The Triad newspaper at the installation.

NEWS NOTES/FACILITIES













Next issue of The Real McCoy

The November 2026 edition of The Real McCoy will be published Nov. 20, 2026. The deadline for submissions or article ideas is Nov. 13, 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.

facilities services

This schedule is projected through Aug. 21, 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.

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.

Recreation

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

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

iSportsman: Portal for outdoor recreational activities; registration and check-in required. Register, apply for permits, and sign in or out of recreation areas at https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net.

McCoy's Community Center: Building 1571. Offers books, arcade, gaming area, and bowling. Open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tues.-Fri. and 4-10 p.m. Sat. (Bar, food, bowling). Call 502-898-7060.

Bowling Center: Open 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Tues.-Fri. and 4-10 p.m. Sat.
Leisure Travel Services Office: Open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 502-898-3011.

Pine View Campground/Recreational Equipment Checkout Center: Campground opens May 1. Building 8053. Call 502-898-2619/3517.

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

Rumpel Fitness Center: Building 1122. Open 5 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Fri. and 6 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat.-Sun. 24/7 access available. Call 502-898-2290. Use designated parking areas.

Sportsman's Range: Closed for the season. Call 502-898-9162 for information.

Tactics Paintball/Laser Tag: By appointment only; 2-day notice required. Call 502-898-3517.

Whitetail Ridge Ski Area: ***Closed for Season.*** Call 502-898-4498 or 502-898-3517 for more information.

Services

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

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

Car Wash: Building 1568. Offers self-service and automatic bays and vacuums. Open 24/7. May close during extremely cold weather. Accepts cash or credit cards. Call 502-898-4161.

Commissary: Building 1537. Open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Mon.-Sat. Call 414-977-5332.

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: Education/Learning Center: Building 50, room 123. Open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Email rebecca.j.janiszewski.ctr@army.mil to schedule tests. Email nelson.f.caleno.ctr@army.mil or call 502-898-7311 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.
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.aesmp.army.mil or call 502-898-4520.

Official Mail Distribution Center: Building 1009 (by Gate 20). Open 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Call 502-898-3205.

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

Permit Sales: Building 2168. Hunting, fishing, and firewood permits. Open 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Check https://ftmccoy.isportsman.net for updates. Call 502-898-3337.

Personal Property Processing Office: Building 200. Open 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Call 502-898-3060, fax: 502-898-5634, email: usarmy.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.

Child Development Center: Building 1796. Open: M-F: 6:30 am - 5:15 pm. Call: 502-898-2238. Childcare requests should be made at https://public.militarychildcare.csd.disa.mil/mcc-central/mcchome.

Housing Office: Building 6158. Open 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. Family Housing, Single Soldier Housing, and referral services. Self-Help Warehouse open 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 stojalowskyl@magellanhealth.com and 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.

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 or email justdave49@centurylink.net.

USO Wisconsin at Fort McCoy: Building 1501. 10th Ave. For more information or to volunteer, call 414-477-7279 or email esokol@uso.org.

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



GIANT VOICE EMERGENCY-NOTIFICATION SIGNALS

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

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The Real McCoy

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Editorial Content 502-898-4128

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

98TH ARRTC from Page 1

Collins, commander of the 98th ARRTC, said the organization's activation represents both a new beginning and a continuation of the experience and traditions built by generations of Soldiers who served in the 98th Division.

"We do not start from scratch," Collins said. "We stand on the bedrock of established excellence."

He emphasized that institutional training has been central to the organization's identity for more than 60 years and pointed to the experience of instructors and drill sergeants who deployed to Iraq to train security forces in a combat environment.

Those experiences, he said, demonstrated that institutional training is not simply an administrative function but an essential part of preparing forces to meet operational demands.

"It's an expeditionary weapon that should be embraced," Collins said.

Collins also discussed the significance of the unit's insignia and the history represented by its colors, connecting the organization's past with its renewed mission as the 98th ARRTC.

The center carries forward the heritage of the 98th Infantry Division, an organization with roots dating to World War I that later developed an extensive institutional training mission. That legacy provides a foundation for the new training center as it brings together multiple training organizations under a unified command.

The ceremony's uncasing of the colors formally marked the transition to the 98th ARRTC identity and the beginning of its mission under the new organizational structure.

In his invocation, McCall offered prayers for the new organization, its mission, and its leadership. He asked for wisdom and strength for Collins and the command team as they establish a foundation of excellence and lead the Soldiers and instructors responsible for training the force.

The activation also builds on earlier efforts to bring the organization together. On Aug. 28, 134 personnel participated in a patch ceremony and foot march associated with the formation of the 98th ARRTC. The event brought together members of the headquarters and subordinate training organizations, including personnel participating remotely from other locations.

The Oct. 21 activation represents the next milestone in that process, formally establishing the center and bringing its diverse training responsibilities under the 98th ARRTC command. For Fort McCoy, the activation reinforces the installation's role in supporting Army readiness through training, leader development, and professional military education.

As the new organization begins its mission, its leaders and personnel will be responsible for maintaining the standards and traditions associated with the 98th Division while preparing Soldiers and leaders for the demands of service across the Total Army.

Child congratulated the command team and members of the organization, expressing confidence in what the 98th ARRTC will accomplish at Fort McCoy and throughout the Army Reserve and Total Army.

Fort McCoy's motto beginning in 2026 is "Training 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 athttps://home.army.mil/mccoy, on Flickr at https://www.flickr.com/photos/fortmccoywi, and on DVIDS by visiting https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/FM-PAO on DVIDS.

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."



(All photos) Scenes from the 98th Army Readiness Training Center activation ceremony is shown Oct. 21, 2026, in Building 50 at Fort McCoy.





First commander looks forward to growing 98th ARRTC mission at McCoy

STORY & PHOTO BY SCOTT T. STURKOL
Public Affairs Staff

For Lt. Col. Brandon Collins, becoming the first commander of the 98th Army Reserve Readiness Training Center (ARRTC) represents both a significant leadership responsibility and an opportunity to bring multiple training organizations together under a unified mission at Fort McCoy.

The 98th ARRTC officially activated Oct. 21 during a ceremony in Building 50 at Fort McCoy, marking a new chapter in the organization's long history of training Soldiers and developing leaders. Collins said he is looking forward to building the organization, strengthening its connections, and continuing the legacy of the 98th Division.

"It's an extremely honoring and humbling experience, especially as the very first commander of this organization," Collins said.

The activation brings together established training organizations under the 98th ARRTC, creating a unified structure to support institutional training across the Army Reserve and the Total Army.

Collins said the organization is part of the Army's broader transformation efforts. Although the activation marks a new organizational chapter, the schools under its command have already been conducting training.

"The really interesting part of this is that these schools work," Collins said. "They have been running. But what this organization did is they took those schools that I talked about. They brought them together. They're one group."

Collins said he arrived at Fort McCoy in June and began working to bring the organizations together. The activation ceremony, he explained, symbolized the transition toward operating as one school organization under a common command.

The 98th ARRTC includes the Noncommissioned Officer Academy and training organizations at Fort McCoy, along with additional training centers at Fort Devens and Fort Hood, Texas, and the Engineer and Chemical Training Center at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Its responsibilities encompass a variety of training programs designed to prepare Soldiers for increased responsibilities and leadership positions.

At Fort McCoy, the training mission includes civil affairs, psychological operations, personnel services, ordnance training, and noncommissioned officer education.

Collins said the center will help enlisted Soldiers progress through their careers by providing the knowledge and skills expected at each level of responsibility.

"They learn the job that's expected of that rank," Collins said. "And as they move on, they go back to their unit, and they're able to train their soldiers on how to be that job."

He summarized the mission as Soldiers training Soldiers, with the knowledge gained through institutional training carried back to units throughout the force. The training is intended to provide Soldiers with a foundation in Army doctrine, standards, and responsibilities that they can apply in different operational environments. Collins said that foundation helps Soldiers adapt to changing situations and continue developing their skills after they return to their units.

"We come here, we learn doctrine," Collins said. "We learn what is expected of us."

He said Soldiers can then apply those lessons in their units, reinforce them through continued training, and return to institutional courses as they advance in rank and responsibility.

The 98th ARRTC's establishment is also intended to complement other training conducted at Fort McCoy, including larger collective training exercises. Collins compared institutional education to a continuing progression of schooling, with courses building the skills Soldiers need throughout their military careers.

The organization currently has approximately 200 Soldiers, Collins said, with plans to grow to about 270 personnel as the formation develops. In addition to assigned personnel, the center anticipates supporting approximately 400 to 600 students at a time, potentially more. Collins said the organization's current training requirements encompass approximately 6,000 to 7,000 Soldiers.

Along with developing the center's training mission, Collins said he wants to preserve and carry forward the organization's historical legacy.



Lt. Col. Brandon Collins, commander of the 98th Army Reserve Readiness Training Center (ARRTC), speaks to attendees to the 98th ARRTC activation ceremony Oct. 21 at Fort McCoy.

The 98th ARRTC inherits the heritage of the 98th Division, whose history dates to World War I and evolved over time into an institutional training mission. Collins said that history provides a foundation for the new organization rather than something separate from its current responsibilities.

"We're not starting from new," Collins said. "We're taking the 98th Training Division. It has a long history from World War I. We're continuing that mission. We're continuing that legacy."

Collins also highlighted the connection to the organization's alumni and historical associations in New York, describing his opportunity to lead the 98th ARRTC as an important link between the unit's past and future.

The unit's shoulder sleeve insignia also represents the importance of bringing different organizations together. Collins said the symbolism reflects how distinct elements of the Army can unite around a shared mission and purpose.

For him, preserving that heritage means more than recognizing historical milestones. It also means building an organization in which Soldiers and training professionals understand their place in the larger Army mission.

During the activation ceremony, Col. Michael Child, deputy commanding officer of the 102nd Training Division, emphasized that institutional training provides the technical foundation and professional education Soldiers carry back to their formations. He challenged Collins and Command Sgt. Maj. Justin Tranberg, the center's first command team, to establish high standards, develop personnel, and build a culture of professionalism and disciplined execution.

Collins said the activation represents an important step in bringing the training organizations together, but the work of building the command will continue as the center grows and develops.

With the formal activation complete, Collins is focused on helping the 98th ARRTC establish itself at Fort McCoy, support the Soldiers who attend its courses, and maintain the standards associated with its history.

The goal, he said, is to ensure Soldiers leave training better prepared for their responsibilities and able to carry those skills back to their units.

Through the combined efforts of its training organizations and personnel, the 98th ARRTC should continue its mission of developing Soldiers and leaders while contributing to readiness across the Army Reserve and the Total Army.

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COMMUNITY

FALL 2026 SCENES AT FORT MCCOY



Photos by Scott T. Sturkol

Fall colors can be seen in the foreground of the American flag on the Fort McCoy Garrison Headquarters flag pole Sept. 30, 2024, at Fort McCoy. Fall colors generally hit their peak at Fort McCoy in mid-October.



This photo, taken Sept. 30 shows the La Crosse River as it flows through the Pine View Recreation Area and over Trout Falls at Fort McCoy.



A scene of Equipment Park is shown with fall colors Oct. 9 at Fort McCoy. Equipment Park is inside the installation's historic Commemorative Area. The Equipment Park is an outdoor display of historic and present-day equipment representative of the types used on the installation. The design of the park allows for display of 70 pieces of equipment, ranging from helicopters and howitzers to trucks and trailers. Contact the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office for more information about Equipment Park and the Commemorative Area.