Press Release

Release No: 2409-02

September 23, 2024

Fort Drum Public Affairs

Fort Drum welcomes retiree community for day of appreciation, support

FORT DRUM, N.Y.  –   Retirees gathered Sept. 21 outside Clark Hall for the annual Retiree Appreciation Day ceremony at Fort Drum, where they were thanked for their service to the nation and for their contributions in advocating for the military.  
  
Lynn Peterson, Army Retirement Services Program manager, served as guest speaker, and she informed the audience about policy updates, retiree benefits, and ways they can stay connected to the military community.  
  
Peterson said retirees can inspire and influence the next generation of service members, which is much needed considering current recruiting challenges  
  
“This is why we keep saying, ‘Tell your Army story,’” she said. “Let them know what your service has been like and how you’ve benefited from service, and how your family members felt about your service.”  
  
Maj. Gen. Scott M. Naumann, 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, said he is inspired by the way retirees have embraced a unique call to service.  
  
“You may have taken off the uniform, but your service hasn’t ended,” he said. “It’s simply taken a new form of service, and I think that’s really important. Whether that is volunteer work through a community organization or a veteran service organization, or simply being a role model for countless generations to follow in your footsteps, you all continue to make an incredibly positive impact in our communities.”  
  
Naumann challenged the audience to keep sharing their military stories with others.  
  
“We need you to reach out and expose people to the wonders of this career, the wonders of this profession, and tell your story in a personal way of what it meant to you,” he said. “This is important for our country, and you are the right people to do that.”  
  
Following the RAD ceremony, retirees and their family members attended a benefits update briefing inside Clark Hall. Afterward, they were directed to the offices for assistance with identification cards, wills, powers of attorney, and other personnel services.  
  
Attendees also visited the Post Exchange for an information fair and military equipment display, and LeRay Mansion and the 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Museum were open for tours.  
  
“Providing quality priority support like ID card renewal, legal services, benefit programs information updates, and special events like military vehicle and equipment displays, and K-9 demonstrations, helps us show our appreciation and respect for our military retiree community,” said James Shinholt, Fort Drum retirement services officer.  
  
Shinholt said planning for the RAD is practically a year-round effort among dozens of agency representatives, volunteers, garrison and division staff members, and veteran service organizations.  
  
“The RAD provides an opportunity for past, present, and future Soldiers to share their experiences of life and service,” he said. “Our hope is the retired Soldiers will return home and want to share their story in their community and inspire others to serve. It all boils down to taking care of our retired Soldiers and their families, keeping the promise that the Army is still here for them and serving them as they have served this great nation.”  
  
A day earlier, members of the Fort Drum Retiree Council (FDRC) sat with Col. Matthew Myer, Fort Drum garrison commander, for their bi-annual meeting to discuss issues important to retired military members and their families.  
  
FDRC members are volunteer retired service members from the Fort Drum area of responsibility, appointed by the garrison commander for a four-year term.  
  
“The FDRC makes recommendations concerning improvements to benefits, privileges, assistance, quality of life, and morale for the retired community,” Shinholt said. “These recommendations make their way all the way up to the Chief of Staff of the Army’s Retiree Council, who then further considers these issues and then forwards them to the chief of staff of the Army with their recommendations.”  
  
Last year’s RAD included a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the relocation of the Fort Drum Retirement Services Office on the first floor inside Clark Hall. The Retirement Services Office staff provides support to nearly 80,000 retirees throughout New York, and in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, as well as seven Canadian provinces.  
  
The Fort Drum Retirement Services Office provides a weekly pre-retirement benefits and survivor benefits plan briefing, as well as mandatory pre-retirement survivor benefits plan counseling for all active-duty Soldiers and spouses.  
  
The RSO staff also publishes the Fort Drum Retired Army Newsletter, advises and supports the Fort Drum Retiree Council, develops public support of Army programs, and informs the retiree community about events of interest.  
  
The Fort Drum Retirement Services Office is located on the first floor inside Clark Hall, Bldg. 10720 on Mount Belvedere. For more information, call (315) 772-6339, email [usarmy.drum.rso@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.drum.rso@army.mil) or visit [https://home.army.mil/drum/about/Garrison/directorate-human-resources/MPD/retirement-services-office-rso](https://usg01.safelinks.protection.office365.us/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhome.army.mil%2Fdrum%2Fabout%2FGarrison%2Fdirectorate-human-resources%2FMPD%2Fretirement-services-office-rso&data=05%7C02%7Clisa.r.albrecht.civ%40army.mil%7Caf7b6bde3ad74c0f21f608dcdbdce7cd%7Cfae6d70f954b481192b60530d6f84c43%7C0%7C0%7C638626989529670704%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TE4ROYT45fvTua7eIiLwmcOSz9H0hHviO%2Faekib18KE%3D&reserved=0).

###

Media with questions regarding this press release should contact Fort Drum Public Affairs, Katie Wright, 315-772-9043 or [katherine.e.wright12.civ@army.mil](mailto:katherine.e.wright12.civ@army.mil)

Photo Captions –

RAD 2024 1: Military retirees gathered outside Clark Hall on Sept. 21 for the annual Retiree Appreciation Day ceremony at Fort Drum, which included remarks from Lynn Peterson, Army Retirement Services Program manager. Afterward retirees attended a benefits briefing and personnel services. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

RAD 2024 2: Several support organizations and agencies set up information booths inside the Post Exchange, Sept. 21, in support of Retiree Appreciation Day at Fort Drum. Representatives from Army Emergency Relief, Department of Veterans Services, and the Wounded Warrior Project, among others, spoke with retirees and veterans and answered their questions. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

RAD 2024 3: Maj. Gen. Scott M. Naumann, 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, addresses the audience during the Retiree Appreciation Ceremony, Sept. 21, at Fort Drum. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)