Press Release

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Fort Drum Public Affairs

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- Col. Jeffery P. Lucas assumed command of the Fort Drum garrison from Col. Kenneth D. Harrison during a ceremony July 26 at Sexton Field.

Lucas previously served as assistant chief of staff (G1) for 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) and in the U.S. Army Special Operations Command G1 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Before that, he was assigned to MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, as the secretary joint staff for U.S. Special Operations Command.

He arrived at Fort Drum with his wife, Lenore, and two daughters after being named a distinguished graduate from the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

“We heard a great deal about this assignment and this post,” he said. “We were told from those who served here previously how much they liked the area … and most importantly, I think, how friendly and genuine the people are. They also mentioned that it snows a little bit here.”

Lucas said that, like many other Army families about to move to a new installation, they put in a call to Fort Drum to ask a few questions.

“The person helping us emphatically told Lenore that Fort Drum may have cold winters, but the people are very warm,” Lucas said. “We have found that is certainly true. We’ve been welcomed here on post and in the community less like first-time residents of the North Country and much more like friends who are returning after a long absence.”

Speaking to members of the Fort Drum garrison in attendance, Lucas said that the top priority will continue to be supporting the readiness of the 10th Mountain Division (LI) Soldiers and their families.

“In fact, I’ve already witnessed your commitment during my first visits to many of your work areas across the installation,” he said. “And there’s no doubt in my mind that each of you will continue to provide excellent service to the Soldiers, families, civilians and retirees who rely on the Fort Drum garrison each day. I look forward to serving with you, and we are excited to be members of this team and of this community.”

Harrison extended his personal thanks to the Fort Drum garrison workforce and its many leaders – fiercely loyal and outrageously competent, in his words – for making his job easy.

“I could have done nothing in this job for the last two years, and Fort Drum would be great,” he said. “The workforce and its leaders are that good.”

Brenda Lee McCullough, director of Installation Management Command – Readiness, officiated the change of command ceremony and thanked Harrison for being an accomplished and resourceful leader.

“Col. Harrison would tell you that all of the incredible accomplishments achieved during his command here at Fort Drum is due to a team effort of the installation and enterprise partners,” McCullough said. “However, Col. Dean Harrison played a critical role and is a driving force behind the many successes within the last two years.”

McCullough credited Harrison with overseeing the deployment and redeployment operations of more than 20,000 Soldiers and 15,000 pieces of rolling stock from the installation in support of training and contingency operations. Additionally, his $1.2 million investment in range enhancements validated by over 160,000 active-duty service members, 27,000 Reserve Soldiers and foreign military members using Fort Drum training ranges over the tenure of his command.

She also applauded his leadership during one of the worst winters in history that saw over 160 inches of snow falling within 200 days.

Maj. Gen. Brian J. Mennes, 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, also thanked Harrison and his wife, Suzie, for their dedication to the community over the past two years.

“They say the sun never sets on the 10th Mountain Division because we’re deployed across the globe, but my guess is the sun doesn’t set on our great garrison team, particularly the work ethic that they give me 24/7,” he said. “It’s that team that helps drive this engine, and Dean, I can’t thank you enough for what you have done. You and Suzie have been inspirational to us, leading these great Americans.”

Prior to the change of command ceremony, Mennes and McCollough presided over an awards ceremony that began with the presentation of the Army Community of Excellence streamer. This was the final year for the ACOE program, which recognizes excellence in installation management, and Fort Drum has been awarded this honor several times in the past.

Mennes presented Harrison with the Legion of Merit and his wife received the Meritorious Public Service Medal in front of a small audience of garrison and division staff.

“It’s appropriate that I’m receiving the highest award of my career with all of you, because it belongs to all of you,” Harrison said.

Harrison’s next assignment will be at the Installation Management Command Headquarters in San Antonio, Texas.

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Media with inquiries regarding this press release should contact Julie Halpin, Fort Drum Public Affairs, julie.a.halpin2.civ@mail.mil, or 315-772-8286.

Captions:

Col. Jeffery P. Lucas addresses the crowd of Soldiers, Families, civilians and North Country community members after assuming command. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

Col. Jeffery P. Lucas accepts the Garrison Flag, assuming command of the Fort Drum garrison from Col. Kenneth D. Harrison during a ceremony July 26 at Sexton Field. Brenda Lee McCullough, director of Installation Management Command – Readiness, officiated the change of command ceremony. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

Col. Kenneth D. Harrison, outgoing Fort Drum garrison commander; Brenda Lee McCullough, director of Installation Management Command – Readiness; and Col. Jeffery P. Lucas, incoming garrison commander, walk onto Sexton Field for the change of command ceremony July 26 at Fort Drum, New York. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)