



- [Fayetteville Online](#)
- [Back to Search page](#)

*Thank you for using NewsLibrary*

10 articles matching "red-cockaded woodpecker AND date(last 6 months)" were found.

June 11, 2006

## For Fort Bragg, a red-cockaded salute

Section: Perspective  
Charles Broadwell

By Charles Broadwell

Publisher

I drove to McKellar's Lodge on Wednesday morning for a ceremony celebrating a milestone in the recovery of the endangered **red-cockaded woodpecker** population on Fort Bragg.

The drive along Gruber Road, there and back, evoked a number of impressions. Mostly, they were of an Army post that's bursting at the seams as it tries to serve a dynamic force during wartime.

There's little doubt what the "official" bird on Fort Bragg would be, if the post had such a distinction. It would be this little woodpecker, which makes its home inside old longleaf pines, and which almost brought the giant installation to its knees but instead inspired an environmental partnership that's truly worth cheering.

Yes, the mighty woodpecker. The other prominent bird on post these days — in a half-baked notion that struck me as I passed a busy site near Zabitosky Road — would be a type of crane.

This would be the construction crane. It's a towering variety that you'll be sure to spot as the Army builds first-class, four-story brick barracks and offices for the future of Fort Bragg.

More birds — as in colonels — will be landing, too. Not to mention the generals: As we reported in Wednesday's Observer, Fort Bragg will become the home of about 32 generals sporting 50 stars in the next five years.

It all comes down to space.

In the woods, can the **red-cockaded woodpecker** thrive amid the Army's vital training needs?

So far, so good.

It hasn't been easy. To save the woodpecker required a partnership among the Army, environmental groups and nearby landowners.

"Fifteen years ago, let's just say we didn't love one another," said Dale Hall, the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Wednesday morning, under a shelter shaded by pines, they shared a red-cockaded group hug.

Now, back to the nearby scene along Gruber Road: Can Fort Bragg build fast enough to accommodate its growing population?

As Garrison Commander Al Aycock said last week, it's an exciting time, a new era in the history of the post.

On Gruber Road, you can find yourself alongside trucks carrying soldiers with rifles at the ready. Maybe they're headed off to train in the woodpecker-friendly woods.

You can also find yourself, as I did, behind a pickup truck with four soldiers in the back. Clad in gray T-shirts, they were talking, joking, and one of them broke out in a laugh.

Back from deployment, maybe? Or enjoying some precious downtime before flying off again? For our soldiers, as for the woodpeckers, it's all about home.

Publisher Charles Broadwell can be reached at

[cbwell@fayettevillenc.com](mailto:cbwell@fayettevillenc.com)

or 486-3501.

---

*All archives are stored on a library system from NewsBank Media Services.*