

THE NCO JOURNAL

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A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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Into Place

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ROLL CALL

We honor the men and women who have sacrificed their lives in current operations around the world.



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From the CSM

Mentoring NCOs in Africa

In December 2008, the U.S. Army Southern European Task Force transformed into U.S. Army Africa, the Army service component command to U.S. Africa Command. As we engage partner nation militaries in Africa, our NCOs face new challenges on the continent.

To help Africans make NCOs more effective, U.S. Army Africa NCOs must understand that our way is only, “a way.” This is an idea Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Ripka, U.S. Africa Command’s senior enlisted leader, often talks about with our NCOs.

Our way forward lies in our ability to merge the needs of our African partners with our NCO’s outstanding talents, creating a bridge to more capable militaries to support security, stability and peace on the continent.

When I meet with various African military leaders and discuss developing their NCO corps, my mind goes back three decades to when I was a young enlisted Soldier, learning about leadership and the importance of strong NCOs.

Our NCO corps didn’t become great overnight. We had our struggles. In fact, it took our Army nearly 237 years to have an NCO corps like we do today.

In the 1970s, our Army realized the need to professionalize our NCOs. At that time, NCOs were not given authority for even basic tasks. But changing enlisted leadership culture took time.

As a specialist, I attended the primary noncommissioned officer course. After the course, I went back to my unit where some NCOs did not want to hear what I had learned. That was 1979. Eventually, poor NCO leadership was flushed out, and the knowledge from NCOES made its way back to units.

Some African militaries understand what they want from NCOs. Others are not yet sure. Most, however want what we have or something similar. And they want it now, right away.

We explain to our African partners that our NCO system took years to grow. So they should not worry if it takes time. They are often a lot further ahead than they think. Plus, they can learn from our struggles.

Some African NCOs are well ahead in the process. For example, Rwanda and other African nations have sent senior warrant officers – the equivalent of a senior U.S. Army NCO – to the nine-month U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy.

But Africa poses new challenges. Each of the 54 countries on the continent is different. Right now, we have partnerships with about three dozen of those.

U.S. Army Africa partnerships revolve around “train the trainer.” We’ll be by their side, assisting them to take the lead. If they need something, we’re right there until they are comfortable.

Our NCOs recently led what we call a “train the trainer” session in Rwanda. The bread and butter task was to clear build-

ings using the “four stack.” One evening, our NCOs worked with Rwandan NCOs. By the next morning, Rwandan instructors were in the lead, mentoring their own troops in the task. That’s a great example of what we expect of U.S. NCOs in Africa.

Some efforts that are already showing success are those that incorporate the culture and experience of our partner nations.

For example, U.S. Army NCOs in Liberia mentor their counterparts within the Armed Forces of Liberia under the U.S. State Department-led Security Sector Reform program.

In Ethiopia, we’re working to build a strong curriculum for their senior NCO academy.

In East Africa, partner nations are making strides toward a regional NCO academy – an effort we will support and help grow.

In some cases, African NCOs simply need resources to study regulations and field manuals on their own, to hone their skills outside the normal duty day.

Stability in Africa requires strong, responsible armies. Those armies need professional mid-level management – NCOs.

Many African nations, however, focus on their officers. Doing that simply perpetuates a professional officer corps at the cost of under-developing the NCO support structure.

In Africa, military systems reward outstanding enlisted members with an officer’s commission. For African soldiers to retire with a pension great enough to support a family, they often join the officer ranks.

Forming parallel, professional NCO systems can create opportunities for African soldiers to choose to remain enlisted, earn roles of greater responsibility and achieve compensation adequate for their role.

As leaders, we must prepare ourselves and our Soldiers, should we have the privilege to represent the U.S. military in Africa. Take time beforehand to prepare – even if you just learn a little about the culture and languages of our partner nations.

We are engaging smart, talented people in Africa. They know what they want and the direction they want to go, so we have to keep it real and engage them as equals.

Many Africans think the U.S. has the most professional military and has the best NCOs. They watch everything we do because they see NCOs as something to emulate.

Therefore, as NCOs, we must continue to represent the NCO Corps as ambassadors in every single engagement on the continent – leaders of a team like no other.



**Command Sgt. Maj.
Gary J. Bronson**

Command Sgt. Maj. Gary J. Bronson assumed his duties as the command sergeant major for U.S. Africa Command during an assumption of responsibility ceremony held Aug. 7, at Caserma Ederle, Vicenza, Italy.

Beyond the Year of the NCO

With this issue we bring to a close the Year of the NCO – a year that has seen many great things come about. It began officially in January when Secretary of the Army Pete Geren joined Chief of Staff of the Army George W. Casey Jr. and Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston at a press conference held at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas. The location of the kickoff announcement was particularly fitting as during this same time Preston was hosting his annual Nominative Command Sergeants Major Conference. At this conference, Preston updates the senior NCOs about hot button issues for the Army and nothing was hotter in 2009 than the Year of the NCO – at least in the Corps' eyes.

But the Corps need not bring to an end celebrating the Year of the NCO just because the Army's focus is not specifically on it. In fact, the Corps needs to take the initiatives that have been started and move them beyond the Year of the NCO. We need to take the initiatives "outside the wire" so to speak and continue to make positive strides to improve the Corps in every aspect outlined in the Year of the NCO initiatives – education, fitness, leadership and pride in service.

In the education arena, we need to continue to move forward to improve programs in both the military and civilian sectors – Structured Self Development, College of the American Soldier, Warrior University, Institute of NCO Professional Development and so on. We need to consistently look at our schools, both brick and mortar, and distance learning, and ensure they stay relevant – Warrior Leader Course, Advanced Leader Course, Senior Leader Course, Battle Staff NCO Course and the Sergeants Major Course. And we need to continue the push for life-long learning. The future of the Corps demands this, and the future of our Army requires this. New technology alone does not win wars. It is the educated Soldier.

To survive in today's asymmetric world Soldiers also need to be fit both physically and mentally. The strides achieved in removing the stigma for seeking help for post traumatic stress disorder can only be maintained if the Corps puts their seal of approval on it. It shouldn't be a bad thing to seek help to improve one's mental health. The Corps needs to embrace the SMA's initiatives concerning the Master Fitness Program, delivered through SSD. Another area of emphasis is the new Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program. In order for this to succeed, the Corps needs to take the lead.

That brings us to leadership. It has always been well known that a good NCO is worth his or her weight in gold. Now it has been articulated and recognized the world over. One doesn't have to explain to a good NCO what leadership is or means. They live it every day. But those same good NCOs need to remember from whence they came and "pay it forward" for the future of the Corps by mentoring those young aspiring Soldiers who show


promise and by weeding out those who don't. The Corps has been recognized for its value and has taken on increased responsibilities and capabilities since 9/11 and as such should ensure the responsibility bestowed upon it is not lost by those who fail to rise to the occasion.

Finally, the yearlong recognition of the Corps and its accomplishments brought about a renewed pride in service, not to mention getting your *NCO Journal* published on a monthly basis, something the staff here has been working feverishly on since we were given the go ahead. But, besides the magazine, one can see throughout the Army a renewed emphasis on time-honored ceremonies – reenlistment, NCO Induction, awards and recognition, drill and ceremony and so forth. There has also been a renewed interest in the history of the Corps, its rank structure and its creed:

"No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as 'The Backbone of the Army.' I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to

attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

"Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind – accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my soldiers. I will strive to remain tactically and technically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

"Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!" 

David Crozier
Editor



David Crozier

New Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program

By J.D. Leipold
Army News Service

Soldiers who do not agree to extend their enlistments in units scheduled to deploy on or after Jan. 1, 2010, may be involuntarily separated up to three months early.

The new Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program will affect active-duty Soldiers scheduled to separate during the first six months of their unit's deployment. These Soldiers will be asked to re-enlist or extend so they can stay with their unit through its full deployment and two months after returning.

Soldiers who participate in the Deployment Extension Incentive Program will receive an extra \$350 or \$500 for every month extended. Those who extend at least six months before deploying will receive the full \$500 per month.

Those who do not re-enlist or extend will not deploy and, subsequently, will be separated up to three months prior to their contractual separation date, according to Maj. Jennifer Walkawicz, personnel policy integrator, Army G-1.

The involuntary separation program applies only to regular Army enlisted Soldiers with more than 36 months of active service but less than 71 months of total service, Walkawicz said, when they have an ending term-of-service date during their unit's first six months of deployment.

Soldiers with a scheduled separation date that falls during the last six months of their unit's scheduled deployment will still deploy but simply return early to out-process if they choose not to re-enlist or extend, she said.

Walkawicz estimated that EIESP will result in 1,350 to 1,450 Soldiers being separated early with an annual cost savings of about \$8.5 million.

"The Army is implementing this program now as part of the Stop Loss Reduction plan," she said, explaining that the Stop Loss program will be phased out beginning Jan. 1, 2010, in favor of voluntary extensions or early separations.

"This program allows the Army to identify separating Soldiers who will not deploy with their unit, then provide replacements for those Soldiers prior to the unit's deployment date," Walkawicz said.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Smith

A Soldier scans a ridgeline from an observation post near Combat Outpost Munoz in the Paktika Province of Afghanistan. Under a new Army policy, Soldiers who don't agree to extend their enlistments in units slated to deploy on or after Jan. 1, 2010, may be involuntarily separated up to three months early.

She said the new guidance allows time for newly reporting Soldiers to train on individual and collective tasks and settle in their families. Those Soldiers who have decided to leave the Army are generally first-term enlistees and will not lose any entitlements.

She also said separating Soldiers who choose not to re-enlist or extend for the deployment duration will retain all rights, privileges and benefits such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit. However, EIESP Soldiers will not be entitled to pay and allowances for the period not served.

The involuntary early separation does not apply to Soldiers facing courts-martial or who are under investigation for Uniform Code of Military Justice offenses.

The Army has mandated that battalion commanders notify affected Soldiers at least 90 days prior to their adjusted date of separation. Due to the 90-day written notice requirement, Human Resources Command will phase in the EIESP.

As the program is phased in, Soldiers with a separation date between April 1-30, 2010, will be separated one month earlier than their scheduled date, Walkawicz said. Soldiers with a separation date between May 1-31, 2010, will be involuntarily separated two months earlier. Soldiers whose separation date is on or after June 1, 2010, will be separated three months earlier than their contract stipulates, she said.

Army develops global network

By Joshua L. Wick
U.S. Army Public Affairs →

In the future, Soldiers should be able to access the Army's global network anywhere in the world using capabilities similar to a Blackberry or iPhone, said the Army's chief information officer, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Sorenson, who presented "Army Modernization and the Network" at the Association of the United States Army's Institute of Land Warfare breakfast series Nov. 12.

Sorenson talked about getting to a state, "where Soldiers would have universal access to the network, wherever they deploy, with a single e-mail and a single phone number. Global access is important," he said, "and clearly the network infrastructure needs to be there."

Future network users should be able to use their Common Access Cards for global access, he said, and the chip in the CAC would work similar to a Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) card in a cell phone.

The Global Network Enterprise Construct will create a "sustainable network capable of supporting an expeditionary Army," according to guidance from the chief of staff of the Army received March 2.

GNEC will help centralize LandWarNet from "many loosely-affiliated independent networks into a truly global capability that



Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Sorenson, the Army's chief information officer, speaks to the Association of the United States Army's Institute of Land Warfare breakfast series about the Global Network Enterprise Construct.

Photo by Joshua L. Wick

is designed, deployed and managed as a single integrated enterprise," according to the CIO.

With this transformation, GNEC will refocus the outcome objectives and "operationalize and improve overall LWN security, realize economies and efficiencies, while improving effectiveness and enable Army interoperability and collaboration with mission partners," he said.

"Challenges lie ahead," Sorenson said. However, with help through the application-certification process and doing front-end integration of application, everyone is going to see the network in the same way, he said.

"We got to make it easier" for the Soldier, he said.

DoD and VA expand Disability Evaluation System pilot

By Department of Defense →

The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs announced that beginning in January 2010, the Disability Evaluation System pilot will expand to an additional six installations across the country.

The new locations will include Fort Benning, Ga.; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Lewis, Wash.; Fort Riley, Kan.; and Portsmouth Naval Medical Center, Va., bringing the total number of military facilities using the pilot to 27.

"The decision to expand the pilot was based upon favorable reviews focusing on the program's ability to meet timeliness, effectiveness, transparency and customer and stakeholder satisfaction," said Noel Koch, deputy under secretary of defense, Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy.

In November 2007, DoD and VA implemented the pilot test for disability

cases originating at the three major military treatment facilities in the national capital region. Testing a new process, the pilot design eliminates the duplicative, time-consuming and often confusing elements of the two current disability processes of the departments. Key features of the DES pilot include one medical examination and a single-sourced disability rating. Since November 2007, more than 5,431 service members have participated in the pilot.

"Streamlining our disability claims system and working closely with DoD to care for today's generation of heroes are among VA's top priorities," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "We will never lose sight of the fact that veterans and military personnel have earned their benefits from VA and DoD by virtue of their service to the nation."

In October 2008, DoD and VA approved expansion of the program to 18 sites beyond the three initial sites. This process

was successfully completed on May 31, 2009, and the six-site expansion is estimated to be complete March 31, 2010.

"This expansion encompasses an additional 20 percent of the total service member population enrolled in the program to achieve 47 percent overall enrollments, which will allow us to gather and evaluate data from a diverse geographic area, prior to determining worldwide implementation," Koch said.

The Defense Authorization Act of 2008 authorized the pilot, stemming from report recommendations by the Task Force on Returning Global War on Terrorism Heroes, the Independent Review Group, the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors (the Dole/Shalala Commission) and the Commission on Veterans' Disability Benefits.

Oliver North's film 'War Stories' shot at Fort Bliss, Texas

By Wesley Elliott
FFID Public Affairs

Soldiers of the Army Evaluation Task Force demonstrated several pieces of new equipment Nov. 3 in combat scenarios for camera crews from the *Fox News* channel.

The footage will be used in an upcoming piece on retired Marine Corps Col. Oliver North's television show "War Stories."

Using McGregor Range's newest shoot house, which was fielded in May of this year, the AETF Soldiers of 5th Brigade, 1st Armored Division, executed Military Operations in Urban Terrain, or MOUT, such as cordon and search procedures.

The AETF Soldiers incorporated the Small Unmanned Ground Vehicle, or SUG-V, and the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle into their search of the shoot house, giving them the ability to keep soldiers safe from potential improvised explosive devices and enemy threats.

During the simulated attack, the UAV hovered overhead relaying video of targets to the command. The Fox News camera crew was granted access to the command center and equipment to get a firsthand look at how the new systems can benefit different size commands and provide the Soldiers on the ground with pertinent information to make quick decisions based on data they wouldn't have had previously.

In addition, the crew was given a tour of the new Non-Line-of-Sight Launch System and told how it is to be fielded in combat operations. The NLOS-LS is a self-contained guided missile system which can be fired and controlled remotely.

The new shoot house, which is run by Raytheon employees under the Warrior Training Alliance Contract, is capable of hosting live-fire maneuvers on MILES 2000 equipment, along with audio playback, intercom and video surveillance to review the training unit's procedures during their after-action report.

Robert Pepin, the program manager for HITS (Homestation



Photo by Wesley Elliott

Spc. Nathaniel Williams and Spc. Andrew Hartman, 5th Brigade, 1st Armored Division, monitor the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle controls in preparation for the filmed launch.

Instrumentation Training system) and the shoot house explained, "The new shoot houses on McGregor and White Sands are capable of recreating a more realistic training environment while providing the documentation to allow units to critique and perfect their skills in a safe environment."



Year of the NCO Stories

Have a great NCO story? We want to see it and help you spread the word. Need a topic or an idea to get you started? Visit the Year of the NCO Web site at <http://www4.army.mil/yearofthenco/home.php> and click on the "initiatives" tab. There you will find a host of information about your year. Send your story to: NCO Journal, USASMA, 11291 Sgt. E Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002, or e-mail them to ATSS-SJ-NCOJOURNAL@us.army.mil. If submitting photographs, please identify all individuals in the picture. We reserve the right to edit your story based on length, content and grammar.

Changes in myPay will ramp up user security

Defense Finance and Accounting Service →

MyPay, the Web-based, pay-account management system operated by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service for all U.S. military personnel and many federal civilian employees, is beefing up its security by implementing a new access strategy, according to e-mail correspondence from Jan Wittry, public affairs specialist, corporate communications, DFAS Cleveland. The new upgrade will require users to establish new user names and passwords.

In the past, myPay account access required a user's social security number and a DFAS-provided personal identification number to establish a myPay permanent PIN. Later enhancements allowed the user to change the user name or login identification from the social security number to one of their own making. While the user names were masked (actual letters, numbers and symbols were not visible on the computer screen), more sophisticated "key logging" spyware could potentially provide this information to identity thieves should a user's computer become compromised.

An earlier security upgrade required the use of a virtual keyboard when entering a PIN. The virtual keyboard uses mouse clicks rather than keyboard entry to enter a PIN and access a user's account.

According to myPay officials, customized login IDs and passwords will allow customers more flexibility and opportunities to increase the security of their personal information. Login IDs will require six to 129 alphanumeric characters that will be unique to one user only. Should a user attempt to create a login ID that is already in use, they will be prompted to create another login ID.

Login IDs must meet the following requirements:

- Must be between 6 and 129 characters.
- Cannot use SSN or nine numbers only.
- Contain letters, numbers and the following special char-

acters: @ (at sign), _ (underscore), - (dash), . (period), ' (apostrophe)

Rather than using a myPay PIN, users must create passwords to accompany their customized login IDs.

Passwords must meet the following requirements:

- Must be between 8 and 15 characters.
- May not include the last four numbers of the user's SSN.
- May not match the user's login ID.
- May not match any of the user's previous 10 passwords for myPay access.
- Must contain at least one letter and one number.
- Must contain at least one of 10 special characters.

Accounts with a restricted access PIN, which allows persons authorized by the primary user to access account information without the ability to make changes, will also be prompted to establish a limited access ID and password using the same requirements. A virtual keyboard must still be used to enter a user's password.

Use of the myPay interactive voice response system, which allows telephone access to certain pay information, may still be accessed by using the SSN and PIN.

While this security enhancement is intended to help secure private information and prevent unauthorized access to pay accounts, myPay officials urge users to never share login IDs and passwords with anyone and recommend storing them in a lockable and secure place, memorizing them and destroying any written record.

Wittry explained that users will receive an e-mail notification when the upgrade takes effect. Users will be prompted to change their Login credentials when they access myPay for the first time after the new security enhancements are implemented.

For further instructions on creating Login IDs and passwords, visit the myPay Web site at <http://mypay.dfas.mil/>, or call the Customer Support Unit at 888-332-7411.

Year of the NCO Suggested Reading

Fehrenbach, T.R. *This Kind of War: A Study of Unpreparedness*. Washington D.C.: Brassey's Inc., 1994.

Galula, David. *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*. New York: Praeger, 2005.

Habeck, Mary. *Knowing the Enemy: Jihadist Ideology and the War on Terror*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

Keegan, John. *The Face of Battle*. New York: Penguin Books, 1985.

MacPherson, James M. *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Strassler, Robert, ed. *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*. New York: Free Press, 1998.

Tough. Intense. Challenging.

Sergeants Major Course Overhauled

By Cindy Ramirez

The pinnacle of military training for noncommissioned officers, the Sergeants Major Course has been upgraded to help elevate Soldiers' educational attainment and overhauled to focus on operational and strategic aspects for a variety of missions.

Conducted at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas — the Institute of NCO Professional development lead for Warrior Leader Course, Advanced Lader Course common core, and the Sergeants Major Course — the course is a requirement for promotion to sergeant major.

“These lessons help us to think critically and with depth and breadth,” said SMC Class 60 student Master Sgt. Ricky Davis. “This course is giving us the tools to be armed intellectually for any war, operation or mission.”

In short, students in the Sergeants Major Course are facing a tougher and more intellectually challenging curriculum

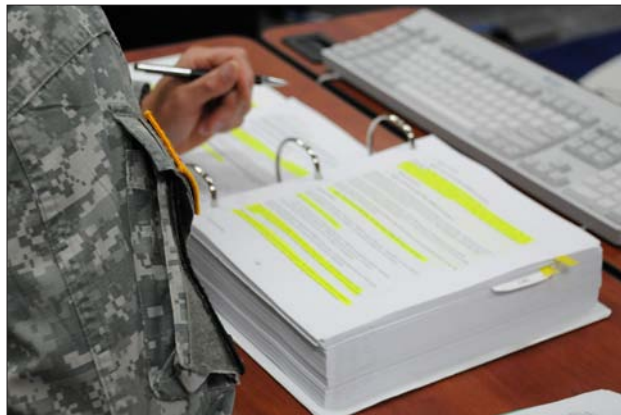


Photo by Cindy Ramirez

An instructor consults the Sergeants Major Course study guide.

that is heavy on critical thinking and problem solving. Intense college-level reading and challenging writing assignments have replaced the old multiple-choice approach to learning, said Sgt. Maj. David L. Yates, director of the course at USASMA.

The changes to the course mark its first major overhaul since 1995, when it was expanded from six to nine months with Class 46. The course has graduated 20,557 students since 1973.

Key to the transformation is “evolving

from training for the known to educating for the unknown,” Yates said, adding that the changes are part of the overall redesign of the Army’s NCOES approved by TRADOC in 2005.

“This isn’t like the old military classes where you highlighted some reading and then took a test with an open book,” said SMC Class 60 student Master Sgt. Luis Figueroa, who has served in recruiting commands most of his Army career.

“This has been pretty challenging. Everything you had heard in the past and expected it to be, it isn’t.”

Davis and Figueroa are among nearly 600 students who comprise Class 60 of the SMC — the first to tackle the new curriculum. Lessons now closely parallel with those for officers at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and the Army War College, Carlisle, Pa.

“The old is out; the new is in,” said Master Sgt. Timothy Alston, who was with the Stryker/Bradley New Equipment Training Company, Fort Benning,



Photo by Cindy Ramirez

From left, Master Sgts. Jim Robertson, Phil Lakner and Mason Bryant discuss a mock military operation during the Operational Design and Operational Art lesson in Class 60 of the Sergeants Major Course at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.



SMC Common Core Foundations

- Strategic environment
- Joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational capabilities
- Doctrine
- Joint functions
- Rise of the western way of war
- Developing organizations and leaders
- Managing Army change

Photo by Cindy Ramirez
 At left, Class 60 student Master Sgt. Luis Figueroa (standing), said the Sergeants Major Course has opened up “a whole new spectrum of knowledge.”

Photo by Sgt. Russel Schnaare
 Below, Class 59 candidates in spring 2009 participated in combative excercises, which are part of the Sergeants Major Course full spectrum operations curricula.

Ga., before coming to USASMA. “It’s definitely tough, but that’s the way it should be.”

Alston said the numerous reading and writing assignments, coupled with invigorating class discussions, are preparing him for more than just a higher rank.

“We’re becoming critical thinkers, analytical thinkers,” Alston said. “As sergeants major, we can go out and contribute to the planning process of any war, and be on par with any officer, thanks to what we’re learning in this course.”



SMC Full Spectrum Operations

- Operational warfighting
- Division operations
- Leadership applied (including combatives)
- Brigade combat team operations
- Military innovations in peace and war
- Roots of today’s operational environment
- Mandatory training (suicide prevention, sexual harassment, safety, etc.)

No Status Quo

With the exception of the history portion, SMC lesson blocks contain all-new curricula that focus on joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational operations; counterinsurgency; force management and advanced warfighting.

The common core portion includes lessons on strategic environment and doctrine and planning, among others. The second portion consists of full-spectrum operations such as division and combat team operations and military innovations in peace and war.

For example, a November common core lesson titled “Operation Design and Operation Art,” gave students a mock

military scenario for which they planned and prepared creative strategies to employ joint forces in the conflict zone using the Joint Operation Planning Process.

The reading and discussions leading up to the assignment were challenging, students said, adding that several factors contributed to their understanding of the purpose and goal of the exercise.

“I expected to come here and work with the status quo course, and that is not the case,” said Master Sgt. Brian Mainor, adding that students’ diverse backgrounds, military occupational specialties and service branches add flavor and context to the course.

The restructured learning format has also allowed students to gain a greater perspective of the bigger picture – even when the subject matter is less than clear.

“We ask ourselves constantly, ‘What are we learning this for?’ Then by the end of the week, we say, ‘Ah, that’s why,’” Mainor said. “Monday, the lessons are foggy. By Friday, it’s all clear.”

Yates said students should have trust in the system and the changes until they get those “aha” moments of clarity, which may come days later in the classroom or years later in their duties as sergeants major.

“Those who see the bigger picture and understand change is necessary are the ones who are getting the most out of it,” Yates said.

Instructors say the course’s increased intensity has impacted them as well as the students.

“The students tell you they are being tasked,” said Sgt. Maj. Stanley Gore, a graduate of Class 57 who is in his second

year of teaching at USASMA. “So are the instructors. All of us have to capture and retain more information than ever before, and everything has changed, from preparing to teaching to evaluating.”

As the lesson content and delivery have changed, so too, have the assessment and evaluation of students. Instructors now evaluate performance based on classroom participation, writing, speaking and presentations – not just multiple-choice tests.

The overhaul is right on track to better prepare NCOs for today’s Army, Gore said. “It’s increasing the students’ ability to adjust to difficult situations.”

Other lessons include critical thinking and problem solving; introduction to working with the media; and interagency cooperation, where students learn about

the doctrine, mission and capabilities of the U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy, Coast Guard and special operation forces.

SMC Class 60 student 1st Sgt. Jean-Paul Courville of the U.S. Marine Corps said the course leverages the relationship between NCOs and officers and reinforces communication among military peers. In short time, he said, the Sergeants Major Course has elevated his knowledge – and his confidence.

“Already in four months, I’ve learned to look at things through a different perspective,” Courville said. “It gives us comfort in our uncomfortable zone.”

Fellow student Master Sgt. Jim Robertson agrees. “I can go out and not hesitate to voice my opinion because I’ve been given the skills to do that.”

U.S. interagency partners in Iraq, reports the American Forces Press Service.

For these operations, each brigade will have to formulate its own plan tailored to specific environments based on the capacity of local security forces, the maturity of the local government and the politics within that area, reports say.

NCOs need skills beyond what they would learn in combat operation training to support such missions, Yates said. Leaders need to be well-educated on how to think critically and how to develop a strategic and specific course of action not specified in any military manual.

SMC instructor Sgt. Maj. Larry Ladell Fegans said it boils down to “symmetry.”

“Communication is key and we all have to speak the same language and be on the same page ... basically, to have symmetry across the board,” he said.

NCOs in the course say they welcome the upgrades and the challenge.

“At our level, we already know how to do training,” Robertson said. “What we’re learning here is really expanding our experience and our education to make us feel more comfortable and on par with officers, to be able to stand in the same room and communicate effectively with our officers and leaders.”

Class 61 and Beyond

Yates said future students can expect even tougher standards. Starting with Class 61, which begins in August 2010, the course will run 42 weeks, a month longer than the current class. Class sessions will run six hours a day, rather than four hours. In fact, one group of Soldiers is currently piloting the extended-day model.



Photo by Cindy Ramirez

“It’s definitely tough,” said Sergeants Major Course Class 60 student Master Sgt. Timothy Alston, left, who is also pursuing a bachelor’s degree in business management from TUI University.

Applied Knowledge

Applying this knowledge to the real world is not limited to warfighting, Yates said. For example, the first “advise and assist” brigades are training and mentoring Iraqi security forces, focusing less on traditional combat operations.

They will also conduct coordinated counterterrorism missions and support the State Department’s provincial reconstruction teams and other

Senior NCO Management / Utilization

In the near future, all SGM and CSM positions will be grouped into three tiers:

- Skill level 6: Lieutenant colonel/battalion level; maintains core competency MOS
- Skill level 7: Colonel/brigade level; maintains core competency MOS
- Skill level 8: General officer; assigned MOS 00Z; groomed for future consideration as sergeant major of the Army

CSMs serving at the brigade level or lower will be awarded a Professional Development Proficiency Code.

Command Sergeant Major Appointments

Starting in 2011, CSM appointments will be determined through a centralized board selection. CSMs and SGMs, including graduates of Class 60, will be collectively considered for selection and appointment to CSM battalion-level vacancies.

CSMs will be eligible for appointment in:

- Operations command
- Strategic support command
- Recruiting and training command
- Installation command

Source: Year of the NCO Web site, Gerald J. Purcell, directorate of military personnel management

“The curriculum has grown so much, we’ve had to shape lessons to fit the time,” Yates said, adding that the move to 42 weeks also better aligns the course with the Soldiers’ children’s K-12 school year.

About 450 students have been selected for Class 61, and are expected to graduate in June 2011, Yates said.

Current students said the most important advice they can offer future students is this: Keep the bottom line in mind.

“At the end of the day, it’s about being a better NCO,” said SMC Class 60 student Master Sgt. Angela Delancy, a human resources specialist.

Delancy offers this practical advice for future SMC students: “Know your military history, get with an operations officer for background on that, and just read, read, read.”

Nonresident Course

That advice is also suitable for Soldiers who enroll in the nonresident distance learning Sergeants Major Course, instructors said.

Nonresident students will have two years to complete the course, including the 16-day resident phase available every month.

However, starting in 2010, the curriculum for the nonresident course, which primarily serves members of the Reserve, will be aligned with the resident course. Class 38 begins in summer 2010.

NCO Management

Yates said SMC students should also be aware of changes to the Command Sergeant Major/Sergeant Major Management and Utilization Program — the way in which the Army assigns and uses its NCOs to satisfy their professional development while providing maximum flexibility and capability in staffing.

Starting with Class 60, those who complete the SMC must spend two years working in their military occupation specialties before they’re eligible to compete for a command sergeant major position, provided they are selected by the Command Sergeant Major Selection Board. The board for battalions will meet annually beginning in October 2010; the brigade command board will meet annually beginning in January 2011.

In the near future, all sergeant major and command sergeant major positions will be grouped into three tiers: skill levels 6 to 8, with those in the highest group eligible for future consideration as sergeant major of the Army.

Command sergeants major serving at the brigade level or lower will be awarded a Professional Development Proficiency Code, according to the directorate of per-



Photo by Cindy Ramirez

“It’s about being a better NCO,” said Sergeants Major Course Class 60 student Master Sgt. Angela Delancy, a human resources specialist.

sonnel management.

The command sergeant major course moved from USASMA two years ago to align better with the school for their commissioned counterparts, the Command and General Staff College. The week-long course is now part of the command team seminar at the School of Command Preparation at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

“In the past, the model was select, promote and train,” Yates said. “But today, it is train, select and then promote.”

The Graduates

- The United States Army Sergeants Major Academy has graduated 20,557 senior NCOs from the Sergeants Major Course since 1973, including members of the active Army, Reserve, National Guard, other service branches, and international students from around the globe.
- In May 2010, about 600 Soldiers will graduate from Class 60, which began instruction in August. Class 60 includes 42 international students from 36 nations.
- Class 61 will begin in August 2010 and is expected to graduate about 450 Soldiers in June 2011.



Photo by Sgt. Russel Schnaare

A graduate of the Sergeants Major Course, Class 59, is congratulated by former U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy Commandant Col. Donald E. Gentry in May 2009.

n: the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation

Morals

n: moral practices or teachings; modes of conduct

Ethics

By David Crozier

The Ethical NCO: *Leading through 'colorless' eyes*

“
A

s this nation continues to be confronted with persistent conflict or what the Bible terms as ‘wars and rumors of war’ throughout the world, men and women are increasingly placed into ethical dilemmas driven by the larger moral issues ... That the United States will continue to engage in military action seems certain as the global ‘flattening’ of the world continues to occur ... Military ethics helps to anchor the ‘management of violence’ within the realm of hope for a more civilized and humane world. Values, morals and faith often contribute to the defining of personal and institutional behaviors. The standardized teaching of ethics also assists the average soldier with critical decision making

in a world where competing value systems can quickly fade into moral colorlessness. While assisting uniformed men and women in their personal conduct, ethics also provides the professional and rational framework for pulling the trigger and taking another human life. Ethics becomes a factor in the psychological well-being of Soldiers who must kill in the line of duty.”

n: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage

Army Values Standards

n: a set of principles that applies differently and usually more rigorously to one group of people or circumstances than to another

The preceding statement was taken from a December 2008 article by Chaplain (Maj.) Mark R. Johnston, former ethics instructor at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas. His article outlines the history and need for ethics as a course of instruction within the Noncommissioned Officer Education System.

As Johnston states, with war come dilemmas of ethical and moral consequences. Combine this with a person's upbringing, religious background and personal values and one can see clearly that the lines of ethical decision making can be blurred, especially on the battlefield.

"In garrison, it is pretty black and white. There are hard rights and easy wrongs. Integrity plays a role in you choosing the hard right," said Sgt. Maj. Russell Faulkner, Class 59 student at USASMA. "It gets a little bit different when you get into combat. How you were raised and the way you [look up to] your role models as you grow up in the Army is going to influence how you react to ethical decisions."

Even that, though, may not give you all the answers, Faulkner added. One's upbringing doesn't necessarily answer all questions because you also run into ethical dilemmas where there doesn't seem to be a right answer and there doesn't seem to be a wrong answer. That's where you have problems.

"What that boils down to," said Class 59 student Sgt. Maj. David Bass, "is doing what is right or what makes sense at that time. Sometimes what might be the right decision in everybody else's eyes just won't fit [the] situation [at hand]. So it is kind of doing what is right even if nobody else is watching or looking. Without getting into the dictionary, [ethics] to me is, 'What is the common sense thing to do in this situation?' If it makes sense,



"No one is more professional than I."

then it is probably the right thing to do."

Sgt. Maj. Mike Kupper, USASMA faculty advisor, said he believes ethics are based on Army guidelines.

"We have guidelines – the Army Values, the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer – so doing everything right means you are doing it in accordance with those guidelines," he said.

NCOs are the standard bearers for the Army. As such, they ensure Soldiers at all levels adhere not only to the Army standards, but as Kupper stated, the core values that set the U.S. Army apart from its counterparts – Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage. It is from these principles that the ethical behavior of Army personnel is derived and the NCO takes the lead on ensuring the values are adhered to.

"I always think ethics is doing the right thing even when nobody is looking. Because in this job we are in a position, especially in [the Global War on Terrorism, where] we've got a whole lot of firepower, and we could probably get away with a lot of stuff legally. But ethically, does it make sense?" said Class 59 student Sgt. Maj. Curt Cornelison.

"We have to put a face on [things] and think,

'How would I want my family treated?' and 'If I was a young fighting-age male how would I view this?' That's how I use ethics in ethical reasoning."

When those decisions get blurred, how does the ethical decision-making process come about? Where is that done? And how do NCOs teach and mentor that process, so Soldiers don't make unethical decisions?

"I had a battalion commander say that everything we do should give us an advantage over the enemy. Everything we do

we should be able to leverage. Sometimes you look at actions and you think as a bystander, ‘How in the world is that ever going to help us out?’” said Cornelison. “Even if the guy is crooked as a dog’s leg, or doesn’t have a moral compass, you think, ‘How can that possibly help our mission out? [Doing] that is going to hurt us.’ A lot of times I explain to young [Soldiers], I don’t care if your heart is black as a well, you are not going to do that stuff because that is going to hurt us in the long run – 50 years from now when your daughters or sons are over here – because this [war] got prolonged, because we’re over here doing some stupid stuff instead of doing the smart thing.”

Bass agrees.

“I’ll tell you something that I tell my Soldiers, and I think it applies. I call it the four don’ts, and it can apply to everything in life,” he said. “Don’t do anything to embarrass yourself. Don’t do anything to embarrass the unit. Don’t do anything that would embarrass the Army, and don’t be ‘that guy.’”

The military as a whole is a people business, Bass added, and because of that, the military has to deal with people who come from all sorts of backgrounds and who have had their ethical and moral values molded long before they joined the military.

“Those things that influence [the] young Soldier, Marine, sailor or airman – from the time they were born until they were 18 years old or whatever age they are when they come in – that plays a role. You can teach them the right way, you can show them the right way, you can even be there in the garrison environment, in a training environment, and be right there with that person and try and help them through that decision. But, how you were raised sets the base,” he said.

Faulkner agrees.

“When you are raised, you have a core set of values that you were taught by your parents. That is very hard to change, very hard to break down,” he said. “Going from that into the Army, how do you influence that? Through leadership.”



“I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike.”

The basis of that, many an NCO would say, lies in the Creed of the NCO.

“No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of Soldiers,” starts the Creed. “I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country



“I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself.”

regardless of the situation in which I find myself.”

That second statement, Faulkner said, is the impetus for the NCO to be the one person Soldiers look up to.

“Everybody [who] comes into the military is looking for a role model because they don’t know what to expect,” Faulkner said. “If you can be that guy they look up to and want to be like, they will do anything they can to not disappoint you. If you are that kind of leader, you can have influence over what people will do and won’t do, and you can contain things such as Abu Ghraib, indiscriminate killings, indiscriminate shootings, things like that. Those things won’t happen if you are that type of leader.”

Grays on the battlefield

“In garrison, it is black and white. Over there, it is not necessarily the same. That gray line gets bigger depending on the length of time you have been there,” Faulkner said. “Nobody really wants to talk about it, but the longer you are there, the more rotations you have, the bigger that gray gets. You have to keep it in the back of your mind, ‘If I make this decision, will it be good for my Soldiers now, and will it be good for Soldiers a month from now, a year from now, two years from now; whoever may happen to be here? Is it going to make things better, or is it just going to fix it for right now?’ It is a tough process.”

Some in the military believe that “gray” is complacency, but Faulkner disagrees.

“No, you have a couple of things. You have desensitization because of all the things that you have seen and all the things that have happened,” he said. “I don’t know if it ever really bothered

me to see what happened to insurgents, but to see my own Soldiers, that's what got to me and that's where I had to bring myself in. Because all of a sudden, fair isn't black and white, what's appropriate isn't black and white. Having to police up those Soldiers, that's where it gets tough."

You are also dealing with people who don't have the same ethical values that you have, he added.

"As a society we are raised with King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table – integrity, honor, loyalty – but we are dealing with a culture that was raised on Sinbad the Sailor and Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves – where, if I can manipulate you, if I can lie to you and get away with it, that's good. That is acceptable," he said. "That is not so in our society. So we have clashing ethics. You are trying to stay on the high ground and it is not necessarily that way with the people you are combating. It makes that gray area a little fuzzier."

Bass agrees, adding that the majority of the American public has a distorted ideal of what a Soldier is.

"People think we join the Army because, '[We] want to kill people.' That is not what Soldiers want to do. That is something you see in the movies," Bass said. "For the most part, whether it is Iraq or Afghanistan, Soldiers are going out in patrols, meeting and greeting people, ensuring security is maintained. As long as nothing happens, nothing is going to happen. Where it starts to get difficult is when you go out on patrol and all of a sudden the road blows up in front of you. The vehicles that were in front of you are gone; there's seven, eight, nine of your buddies and you can't find two or three of them."

"That gets hard because what you are trying to do – in your country's eyes, our government's eyes – is help these people, provide security for them, stabilize their country and so forth; yet they do these things. It goes back to how you were raised. You have to be able to say, 'What they are doing is not right, but we have got to continue to do the right thing in order to influence them in a positive manner.'"

Building the moral compass

"There were some things that we used to do in the past – NCO Mess, NCO Call – where the NCOs would get together and would form that organization which sets the ethical environment for the unit. And we don't do a lot of that anymore," said Class 59 student Sgt. Maj. Sean Kelly. "When I was a private, I remember

all the NCOs had to take off to whatever event the sergeant major had planned, and I think you have to build the foundation in the junior NCOs before you send them out to where they are making decisions that will affect the entire unit.

"Sometimes that guy has only four or five years in that unit, and all of a sudden he is in charge of making decisions which might come off in the press that this battalion did this. So we have to build [the moral compass] in the training environment before we go to theater so we have that foundation. I think we do that through those NCO events."

Cornelison said that as sergeants major, they are the institutional memory of the organization and can relate to junior NCOs and Soldiers about ethical decisions they have seen go bad. They also have a sphere of influence and know who should, or should not, lead a mission based on observations.

"We have input on advising the commander, who is the right person for this mission. In some organizations, you always have people who are overzealous, and that may not be the best guy to put on a particular

mission," he said. "That is part of our responsibility to ensure the right people are picked for missions. I know when I was a first sergeant I had team leaders who had no business being point men because I knew that something bad was going to happen."

Training is paramount

"In the military institution, people have forgotten what training is. Training is introducing a stimulus over and over again to meet a desired response. And when you start talking about making that split decision, when, if you have to look at somebody and actually pull that trigger and it starts to go through your mind, 'That is another human being,' you [want that training to kick in]," Faulkner said. "You are training the Soldier over and over again, that when you acquire the target and identify them, look at their hands. If there is something that poses a threat to you or your fellow Soldiers, put two in the chest. If you do that over and over again, they don't have time to think. They don't have time to make that decision. [Through training] you try to take it out of their hands. If there is not something in [the enemy's] hands, then you don't pull the trigger. But it is when you miss the training aspect as an NCO corps, we are already setting our Soldiers up for failure."

Bass agrees.

"That is what gets a Soldier through; any Soldier at any



"I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage."

level, any rank. If he or she has been taught the right way and has done it over and over again, and then sees something, identifies it, acquires the target, [recognizes] ‘that is the enemy, they are posing a threat, that weapon is pointing toward me and my Soldiers’ – sometimes it is easy. Sometimes it is not,” Bass said.

Setting the example

While Faulkner said training is important, leading by example is the key to setting the moral compass of a unit or organization.

“It is not just a matter of teaching; it’s also a matter of living. If you live [ethically], and you are going to force somebody else to live [ethically], it will become a way of life. I think the

Army does a good job of doing that. The thing is, it is ‘that guy,’” Faulkner said. “You have 150 kids in this company and they are doing great things, except for that one guy. Then all of a sudden that company is crap because that one guy went out and did [something wrong] and then everyone gets the perception that the Army has ethical problems. When you have that many people, somebody is going to be unstable. It is just the law of averages. But we can always do better. We are not perfect. You can’t have a class on it and all of a sudden become ethical. You have to live it and enforce it every day.”

Bass explained, the further you move up the chain of leadership and responsibility, the tougher it is to maintain the standard.

“There is more of a spotlight on you. I am not saying it becomes more difficult to do the right thing, but the reason it [is] difficult because we are all human beings – you will make a mistake,” he said. “However, at our level, master sergeants and sergeant majors, now you have 150 to 500 Soldiers, thousands of Soldiers, [whom] you lead. If you are ‘that guy’ you just became the bad influence on all those Soldiers.”

Bass added that when you as a Soldier get to the point where you feel you are above the law, then “you have got no business conducting Army business.”

Maintaining the standards

“If you see it, you have to correct it right then, not during the after-action report,” said Bass. “On the battlefield, the situation may call for you to delay, but the very first opportunity for you to



“I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders”


address the issue, you should do it.”

Cornelison said, even with training there will still be those individuals who just don’t get it. Those are the ones of whom NCOs need to be cognizant.

Command Sgt. Maj. David Yates, director of the Sergeants Major Course at USASMA, said ethical issues need to be taught at the unit level, with NCOs leading the charge of maintaining the ethical compass of the unit.

“It all goes back to the attitude of the NCOs leading those Soldiers in the units. Their choices took them to where they are,” Yates said. “It is the attitude of the unit. If it is a tight unit and nobody gets away with anything no matter what, you don’t run into any problems. You look at a unit that has high morale, very good discipline, and all the first sergeants and sergeants major talk to each other, then you will never have any problems.”

“It is all a common sense thing,” Bass said. “All we can do is train the Soldiers, coach them, teach them, dress them up and send them to school, so to speak. And when they are in a situation, you have got to hope they make the right decision.

“It all comes down to this: Don’t embarrass the two names that appear on your uniform. Can you go back home and live under your name? Don’t forget the name that is over your heart, you’ve lived it, you’ve taught it and you have led by example.” 

Editor’s note: The interviews for this article took place in May 2009 with faculty advisors and members of Class 59, Sergeants Major Course, U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

ARMY VALUES

Loyalty

Bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other Soldiers.

Loyalty is the big thing, the greatest battle asset of all. But no man ever wins the loyalty of troops by preaching loyalty. It is given him by them as he proves his possession of the other virtues.

— Brig. Gen. S. L. A. Marshall

I go anywhere in the world they tell me to go, any time they tell me to, to fight anybody they want me to fight. I move my family anywhere they tell me to move, on a day's notice, and live in whatever quarters they assign me. I work whenever they tell me to work... And I like it.

— James H. Webb

Duty

Fulfill your obligations.

Respect

Treat people as they should be treated.

The discipline which makes the Soldiers of a free country reliable in battle is not to be gained by harsh or tyrannical treatment. On the contrary, such treatment is far more likely to destroy than to make an army. It is possible to impart instruction and to give commands in such manner and such a tone of voice to inspire in the Soldier no feeling but an intense desire to obey.

— Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield

...[A]sk not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.

— John F. Kennedy

Selfless Service

Put the welfare of the Nation, the Army, and subordinates before your own.

Honor

Live up to all the Army Values.

War must be carried on systematically, and to do it you must have men of character activated by principles of honor.

— George Washington

No nation can safely trust its martial honor to leaders who do not maintain the universal code which distinguishes between those things that are right and those things that are wrong.

— Gen. Douglas MacArthur

Integrity

Do what's right—legally and morally.

Personal Courage

Face fear, danger, or adversity (physical and moral).

The concept of professional courage does not always mean being as tough as nails, either. It also suggests a willingness to listen to the Soldiers' problems, to go to bat for them in a tough situation and it means knowing just how far they can go. It also means being willing to tell the boss when he is wrong.

— William Connelly

You asked for it; you got it!

New T-11 personnel parachute system to replace 54-year-old T-10

By Linda Crippen

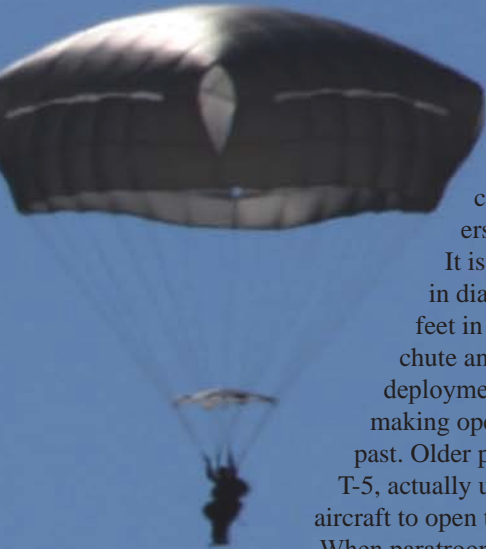
Airborne, that outstanding parachute landing fall (PLF) may just get a bit easier and safer to execute! The U.S. Army is currently implementing a new parachute system, the T-11 Advanced Tactical Parachute System, which will replace the half-century-old T-10 entirely by November 2014, according to news releases.

What started out as a request from Soldiers back in the early 1990s has been developed, tested, modified, retested and is now being fielded. Many prototypes were made, and only one stood out. Simply put, testers say, the T-11 is the best parachute for Soldiers doing mass-attack airborne operations, and surprisingly, this parachute system is only number five for the Army since the inception of airborne paratroopers in 1940.

The original parachute was the T-4, which was worn by the early pilots of the Army Air Corps during World War II. By 1943, the T-5 became standard for pilots and the new airborne paratroopers, though one of its downfalls was that it lacked a quick

Photo by Eve Meinhardt, Paraglide

release to remove the harness once the trooper hit the ground. Parachute riggers began modifying the T-5s with a quick release, and these modified parachutes became the precursor to the T-7, also introduced during World War II. The T-10 replaced its predecessor in 1955, becoming the longest serving parachute for the Army.



WHAT'S NEW

The T-11 canopy is cruciform in shape and gathers at a slight point at the apex. It is also a larger canopy, 35 feet in diameter versus the T-10's 26.9 feet in diameter. A drogue parachute and slider device assist in the deployment and opening sequences, making opening shock a thing of the past. Older parachutes, like the T-4 and T-5, actually used the prop blast from the aircraft to open the canopies.

When paratroopers exit a fixed-wing aircraft with the T-10, they are trained to count to four one-thousand (four seconds) and then check to ensure the canopy has opened properly. Usually, a jerking opening shock indicates everything is functioning appropriately, but that opening shock can rattle the body and literally leave burn marks on the neck and shoulders. With the T-11, Soldiers will notice a minimized opening shock, while counting to six one-thousand before checking their canopy. The old saying, 'riser burns are worth the opening shock' will no longer be valid.

Additionally, the four corners of the canopy each have an air vent, helping to prevent oscillation. 1st Sgt. John Coomer, who is part of the new equipment training team at the U.S. Army Advanced Airborne School, Fort Bragg, N.C., explained that oscillation can cause serious injuries, especially to jumpers' hips.

When jumping with combat equipment, such as a loaded rucksack, weapon, interceptor body armor, etc., some of the items must be lowered before hitting the ground; otherwise, the jumper runs the risk of injury. For example, the rucksack is attached to the jumper by an equipment lowering line. At approximately 100 feet above ground level, the paratrooper must release the lowering line so the rucksack will hit the ground first, but Coomer explained problems can arise during this sequence when jumping the T-10.

"When you lower your combat equipment on a T-10, it'll start oscillating back and forth. That can be hazardous, because if you happen to be hitting the ground as you're coming down out of the oscillation or the pendulum, you can hit your hips. That's why some people break their hips on a jump," he said. The new ventilation slots help maintain stability from the time the parachute opens until the jumper lands.

Since the parachute is larger, it requires more energy to perform a slip on the T-11. Slipping is not the same as steering a parachute, but it does allow jumpers to use the wind for movement. Typically, jumpers slip into the wind right before landing, or they may run with the wind to avoid collisions. The T-11 is

non-steerable, just as the T-10; however, the design of the T-11 includes hand assist loops so performing a slip will be easier.

"There's a loop sewn into each of the risers that you stick your hand into and pull down to give you assistance," Coomer said. "There are also hand assist tabs, which are the three tabs sewn onto the main lift web to use as a handhold to pull down and assist you in slipping as well. The loops are rather high, almost a full meter above your head. So, if you have smaller arms you may not be able to reach it right off the bat," he said, explaining that jumpers can use those assist tabs like a hand line to pull the riser down and stick their hands in the hand assist loop. "The parachute is large, so it takes about eight seconds for it to react. You have to hold that slip longer, which is why they put those tabs and loops on there so your hands don't wear out as quickly," he added.

Another difference Soldiers will experience is what they do after executing an outstanding PLF. "With the T-10, you could actually pull one canopy release assembly and [the canopy] would collapse," Coomer said. "Because of the slider and the size of the T-11, you have to activate both canopy release assemblies for the parachute to collapse. So that's [another difference] from the Soldier's standpoint; where they used to only do one, now they have to do two."

Prior to the T-10, parachute systems did not have canopy releases, making it difficult sometimes for paratroopers to collapse the canopy and remove the parachute harness. But these aren't the only changes paratroopers will encounter on the T-11.

THE RESERVE

The T-11 main parachute system is accompanied by a newly designed reserve. Training documents describe the reserve as a multi-conical design with a diameter of 20 feet. It has air scoops and skirt assist lines to ensure the canopy opens as quickly as possible. Upon activation of the reserve parachute, an ejector spring throws the extractor chute away from the jumper's body, pulling the first third of the canopy and the air scoops into the airstream; the canopy then rapidly inflates.

During high-speed deployments, the skirt assist lines break away from the canopy. During low-speed deployments resulting from a partial malfunction, the skirt assist lines remain attached, and the canopy inflates quickly. The reserve sits slightly higher on the body, as to disperse the opening shock throughout the torso and can be deployed by using either hand. The parachute's approximate rate of descent, or ROD, is 26 feet per second, or fps, and can support a total jumper weight, or TJW, of 400 pounds.

The new reserve, a design based on the current British Low Level Parachute reserve canopy, has improved structural strength and enhanced deployment techniques. The reliability rate is also significantly improved over the old T-10 reserve, with a 99.6

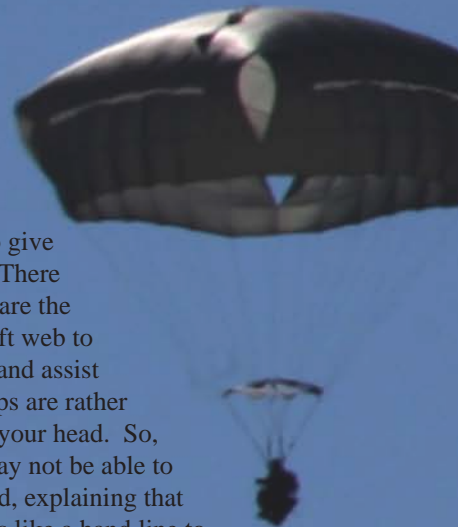




Photo by Michael Lewis

Sgt. 1st Class Jose Cervera (center), control & issue platoon sergeant and Staff Sgt. Sharon Cameron, operations sergeant, E Company, 1-507th Infantry Regiment, 199th Infantry Brigade, Fort Benning, Ga., practice packing the new T-11 parachute.

percent effective rating. As with the main canopy, the design of the reserve is intended to mitigate oscillation. The total system weight for the T-11 main and reserve is 52 pounds, slightly heavier than the T-10 counterpart at 45 pounds.

OTHER CHANGES

Parachutes are not the only things to have changed since the 1940s and 1950s. The paratroopers themselves are different. The body mass index for the average American has grown over the past few decades. Men and women now have larger body sizes than they did in 1950. According to the report “Mean Body Weight, Height, and Body Mass Index, United States 1960-2002,” published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2005, adult men and women are roughly an inch taller than they were in 1960 and nearly 25 pounds heavier on average as well.

Furthermore, the combat load of the airborne Soldier has changed drastically. Coomer explained that a Soldier back in the 1950s had a TJW under 300 pounds. TJW includes the weight of

the jumper and all combat equipment combined. Today, the average Soldier is jumping approximately 350 pounds TJW and even exceeding that weight sometimes.

When the T-10 was designed, “the rate of descent was 18 feet per second. Today’s Soldier is falling about 23.5 fps (in the T-10),” Coomer explained, because more weight has been added. “With the T-11, we’ve lowered that rate of descent back down to 18.5 fps,” he said, and now the TJW can be up to 400 pounds.

An obvious change came when Pvts. Joyce Kutsch and Rita Johnson successfully completed airborne training in 1973, becoming the first female airborne paratroopers. As diverse as the civilian population can be, so too are the body types of men and women in the military. Previous parachutes were more or less one-size-fits-all. The new T-11 harness can be adjusted to accommodate the shortest (approximately 5 feet tall) and tallest (approximately 6 1/2 feet tall) Soldiers.

“The previous parachute harness on the T-10 was only adjustable [to a certain extent],” Coomer said; however, the new T-11 offers “a harness main lift web that is adjustable in three different sizes,” allowing Soldiers to fine-tune the harness for comfort.

NEW EQUIPMENT — A PROCESS

Immeasurable amounts of planning and work go into fielding new Army equipment. From concept to design, then prototype to testing and fielding, many minds and hands work tirelessly to improve today’s Army. When Soldiers have ideas about new pieces of equipment, entire organizations go into overdrive to make these ideas a reality.

“In the field, Soldiers are saying, ‘Hey, we need something that does this.’ And they send up that idea, and it goes to the engineers and [designers]. They come up with these great ideas and then they ask the field, ‘If it did this, would that work?’. And they come up with a concept. It goes from concept to actual prototype; from prototype it goes to design. It takes time. It’s an eye opener for me, and to actually be a part of it is one of the highlights of my career,” explained Sgt. 1st Class Wayne Schandelmeier, the senior airdrop equipment noncommissioned officer for the Aerial Delivery Equipment Group, U.S. Army Tank-Automotive Command, Integrated Logistics Support Center, Natick, Mass.

Think tanks and serious planning began years ago to replace or enhance the U.S. Army’s personnel parachute system. Organizations like Natick Soldier System Center and Program Executive Office Soldier are specifically dedicated to designing, developing and testing equipment for the Army.

Obviously, before equipment — especially parachutes — is handed to Soldiers to use, it must undergo extensive safety testing. Before airborne troops Armywide begin using the parachutes, a select few groups and units have been designated to test the T-11. Yet the extent of testing and implementation does not stop there. Field manuals, instructional materials, maintenance and repair manuals must also be written, tested and formatted according to military standards.

Schandelmeier is responsible for such technical and field manuals for all things airborne and has worked on the T-11 manuals since the beginning of the project, ensuring materials are written in a way that Soldiers in the field can read them, understand

them and perform the tasks. He makes “sure [materials are written] in a way that is consistent with [what is] trained in school as far as the proper lingo, the proper names, nomenclature. If there are nomenclature changes, [we] make sure they’re in there,” he said.

In conjunction with the manuals, Schandelmeier also participated in the testing phase, working with specific repair and packing procedures to ensure they are accurate, standardized and consistent. Initially, he and his team began with the manufacturer’s documentation, which was well-written but lacking in military uniformity and cohesiveness.

For example, he explained the importance of the parachute rigger’s view, which means the rigger stands in a certain place at the table, and everything to the left is considered “rigger’s view left.” The upper end is away from the rigger, and the lower end is toward the suspension lines, or toward the risers, or toward the rigger, so that there is a definite orientation. Some manuals may state “pick up the line on your left.”

“Well, depending on which way you’re standing, your left could be the wrong side,” Schandelmeier said. “We put it into a standardized language, and then we’ll perform the procedures. If it says you can sew these two pieces of material together, we’ll put those two pieces of material together and actually sew it just to see if it can be done.”

He and his team scrutinize the language being used. “As far as measurements, [the manufacturer’s manual may indicate] to cut a 9-inch piece of material; we’ll see if it actually takes a 9-inch piece or if it takes a 9¼-inch piece because of sewing take-up. We’ll test out each procedure ourselves, with the initial submission of the technical manual,” he said.

Additionally, as a courtesy, he and his team evaluate training materials for each of the schoolhouses to certify and confirm the integrity of the technical information.

“We do look at the accuracy of the material going into it and correct it in the pre-phase of them getting it, so that we make sure they’re getting the proper information,” explained Schandelmeier, whose contribution extends into training and education support areas.

TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION

A great shift or transition takes place when new equipment is introduced into the Army, and an integral part to the entire endeavor is the role of the NCO. At every level of the process, NCOs are vital to the success of fielding new equipment and training Soldiers to properly utilize and maintain it.

As Schandelmeier explained, many people worked on the T-11 project — civilians, NCOs and officers — and they all deserve due credit. “The guys who developed this parachute — smart guys — my hat’s off to them,” he said, lauding

their contributions in safety and parachuting. NCOs are necessary to get equipment into the Soldiers’ hands and train them to a specific standard.

Over the course of the next few years, NCOs will introduce and train airborne paratroopers on this piece of equipment. In fact, training has already begun for certain units and will begin soon for specific schools.

Coomer’s team and other NCOs are gearing up to train airborne Soldiers and jumpmasters. The three-week Basic Airborne Course, located at Fort Benning, Ga., trains and certifies qualifying servicemen and women from all military branches to perform airborne operations. “Beginning in January [2010], one of the five (qualifying) jumps will be with the T-11,” Coomer said.

Jumpmaster school is more advanced and trains personnel to oversee airborne operations. Specifically, jumpmasters are responsible for determining when jumpers exit the aircraft, ensuring all safety procedures are followed during the airborne operations and inspecting personnel equipment, among many other duties. In short, jumpmasters are responsible for every airborne paratrooper on the aircraft. Among the strict requirements for course attendance, potential candidates must be an E-5 or



U.S. Army photo

An airborne paratrooper tests the new T-11 personnel parachute system. Notice the deflated drogue parachute and the fully deployed slider mechanism.



Courtesy photo U.S. Army

Hand assist loops and tabs featured on the new T-11 personnel parachute system will assist jumpers in performing slips.

Personnel Inspections on a T-11,” Coomer said, emphasizing the need to be proficient on both systems. “Future jumpmaster candidates will go through the T-10 Jumpmaster Course first, which is 15 days long. Upon graduation, the following week they’ll start the T-11, which is a five-day course.” For those who are already jumpmaster certified, only the five-day course on the T-11 will be required, and Coomer and his team are doing all they can to help facilitate training.

“Here at the school, I can teach classes of 100 at a time, so we can chug through it fairly quickly,” he said. Jumpmasters will also be required to jump the new parachute, because, he continued, “if you’re not familiar with the mechanics of it then it’s hard to be a subject matter expert, like a jumpmaster should be.”

JUMPING AND TESTING

It’s been said, “the skies are a dark mistress and more unforgiving than land or sea,” a phrase familiar to Basic Airborne Course graduates. When things go wrong on land or out at sea, odds are there’s still something to hang on to. But when something malfunctions in midair, what do you do? Even pilots who claim to fly perfectly good aircraft keep their parachutes close by for emergencies. Airborne, it’s you and the chute — no room for error.

The men and women involved in testing often risk their own lives to ensure the safety of Soldiers who will one day use the new piece of equipment. Test experts typically create malfunction scenarios under all sorts of conditions to purposefully try to make equipment fail. The good news about the T-11 is that the malfunction tests have proven successful.

Sgt. 1st Class Scott Lee Sharp, parachute rigger NCO in charge, 56th Troop Command, Rhode Island National Guard, has been a rigger his entire 19 1/2 years in the Army, making him a perfect candidate for the T-11 project testing and development.

Between 1995 and 2000, the design team “really started to

above and have at least 12 static-line jumps under their belt. Present and future jumpmasters must be intimately familiar with the T-10 and T-11, so new candidates will have to become a T-10 jumpmaster before certifying on the T-11.

“Right now, both systems are out there. So one day you may be doing a T-10, and the next day you may be [performing] Jumpmaster

buckle down on trying to get a concept and a final development for the T-11 parachute system, spending a lot of time out in Yuma, Ariz., testing prototype parachute systems from a C-130 aircraft to make sure it was what we were looking for,” Sharp said. “We were looking for a reduced opening shock of the parachute, a reduced rate of descent. We were concerned with developing a parachute system so the jumper could land without being injured and complete his or her mission. I was fortunate enough to work with the testing.”

Sharp, who has test-jumped the new parachute system 12 times, described his experience as a little tense at first.

“It’s pretty nerve-racking when you strap on a new parachute system [and] jump out of a perfectly good airplane. It’s not natural for a lot of people. Some of us Soldiers love that; I do,” he said. But Sharp’s nervousness seemed to be put to ease quickly.

“Once you get out there and the parachute open[s], it’s amazing. It feels like you’re really not moving in the air [as] you’re floating down. Hands down, it’s better than the T-10 on any day. When you get ready to land, you (slip) into the wind and you do a parachute landing fall as you normally do. As you get closer to the ground, it seems like the thermals from the ground actually slow down the canopy. It’s amazing. Obviously, we have (paratroopers) do PLFs for safety reasons. You can almost do a stand up landing with this parachute system every time. It’s a unique experience going from the T-10 to the T-11 parachute system. It’s a different world,” Sharp said.

A critical aspect to testing the T-11 was determining how it would react when malfunctions were introduced. Purposefully packing different types of malfunctions into the canopies, Sharp and other testers were challenged to make this parachute system fail.

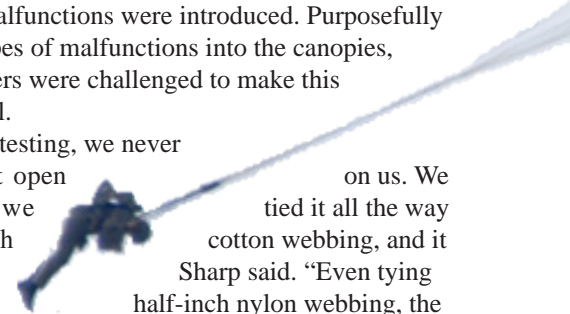
“During all this testing, we never had a parachute not open on us. We tied up the T-11; we tied it all the way up using quarter-inch cotton webbing, and it actually opened,” Sharp said. “Even tying the skirt shut with half-inch nylon webbing, the parachute was still able to get enough air to land. A real jumper might have had a hard landing but would not have been hurt. A real jumper would have pulled the reserve, obviously.”

Another test included tying the slider into the skirt of the canopy and using 600-pound dummy jumpers.

“It was amazing that the parachute opened. You’d think it would just freefall to the ground,” Sharp said, but “the canopy opens up enough to provide lift, enough lift to bring that jumper or dummy down without serious injury.”

Testers also discovered benefits resulting from jumpers’ errors or poor aircraft exits. During one test session, a jumper managed to situate himself on top of another jumper’s canopy in midair. The top jumper’s canopy started to slightly collapse, but the lower canopy was able to provide enough lift to safely land both of the jumpers without any injuries. The lower jumper pulled his reserve, but the top jumper did not. The one reserve was able to land both jumpers without injury.

Sharp explained that if this same scenario happens with the T-10, the two jumpers are in serious trouble. Either the canopies



will leapfrog or entangle and then start spinning. If a jumper steps on a T-10 canopy in midair, it just collapses, which leads to jumpers getting wrapped up in the parachute making for a dangerous situation.

“It’s impressive that [the T-11] reduces the possibility of a malfunction or injury to a jumper by reducing incidents. It’s a massive improvement over the T-10. Watching some of the malfunctions we introduced into the parachute system just to see what would happen, we’re looking at the aspect, ‘What if a rigger left something in (the parachute), a packing weight — all those scenarios. We looked at all aspects of it,’” Sharp explained.

The test results point to a new and improved parachute system. “We had over 3,000 live jumps that were safe, without failure,” Sharp said. “This is a safer parachute than what the generations had before. It’s going to make our Soldiers safer, and that’s what it’s all about.”

NCO CONTRIBUTIONS

As with most military operations, collaboration is a necessity.

NCOs, officers and civilians have and still are participating in the T-11 parachute system project. As

Shandelmeier explained, “It’s no different [in] the new product side of the house or new development and fielding side that the NCO and the officer are together mak[ing] a mission successful. It takes a team; no matter what you do, it has to be a team effort. And the same is in the field.” NCOs have a specific role in the operation, as well as officers, and both must do their part or the mission won’t be successful. He continued, “There are so many people who have been involved in this. Without the entire team and without the entire input from every single team member, the T-11 may have not made it to the field.”


But what sets NCOs apart is their firsthand experience, so they can train from that experience. They don’t have to read a manual or teach out of a manual. “He or she has physically touched that parachute. So when you say the material is slip-

pery, if you’ve never touched slippery, you don’t know what that means,” Schandelmeier said. “The NCO who has been there can actually teach from firsthand experience. Anybody can talk about war, but to really feel it — they have to have experienced it.”

Coomer believes NCO involvement ensures continuity to the process. “If you find [several years of airborne experience] at the officer level, he [or she] is at that time a senior lieutenant colonel, if not a [full] colonel,” Coomer said, explaining the hierarchy of it all. “He or she’s not really down in the decision-making process of boots on the ground. As an NCO, even a sergeant major, you’re still giving advice; you’re with that piece of equipment and in a position to make changes or give advice to make the changes. You’re the voice of reason.”

Sharp also believes that NCOs being involved in the program makes a big difference. “We’re looking at it from the level that we were once there as Soldiers to pack the things and maintain them. When you’re at the other level of managing a program — staff officers, program managers — you’re not looking at it from the perspective from the rigger’s (or Soldier’s) view. The NCO adds a lot to the table.”

For instance, it was an NCO’s idea to put the assist loops on the parachute. Before, there were just little tabs on the risers, and your hand would just slide over those, he explained. “It was an NCO who said, ‘Hey, why don’t we try this.’ They implemented it, and his input provided a value to all of us. So it’s an added value to have those folks looking at it. When we have NCOs there — they’re our trainers. They’re out there training Soldiers how to use this equipment, not your officer-level or program managers. They aren’t looking at it from a Soldier’s perspective,” Sharp said.

Coomer, Schandelmeier and Sharp, who possess a combined airborne experience of more than 50 years, all share a common goal — improving our Army and training our Soldiers. So, Airborne, when you take your first jump in that new T-11, while reaching up on the risers to pull a slip and perform an outstanding PLF — be sure and whisper a silent thanks to all the NCOs who contributed to that new and improved, and safer, parachute system. 

T-11 Advanced Tactical Parachute System at a Glance

- Conical canopy shape
- Inflated diameter: 30.6 feet
- Handles TJW of 400 pounds
- Rate of descent (ROD) approx. 18 fps
- Reduced ROD results in 40% reduction of impact
- Design minimizes opening shock
- Ventilation slots minimize oscillation
- Adjustable harness for small, medium and large body types
- Hand assist loops and tabs incorporated into the risers
- T-11R: new and improved reserve design
- Main and Reserve total weight: 52 lbs

Caffie bids farewell to

By Command Sgt. Maj. Leon Caffie

I was just 20 in 1970, when I was drafted into the U.S. Army and deployed to Vietnam. Our nation was embroiled in a long, unpopular war, and I answered the call to duty with mixed emotions.

More than 35 years later, when I was selected to be the Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Reserve, my emotions were equally mixed. I faced the challenges of moving my home and building an effective staff to lead a force that was in the midst of the most extensive and complex transformation since WWII. However, I welcomed the chance to have real impact on the lives and careers of young Soldiers and the Army I'd served for much of my life.

Now, as I'm wrapping up a final tour of duty that was almost as grueling but far more gratifying than my first, I can say that, under the leadership of Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, the Army Reserve has arrived.

We can take "Weekend Warrior" out of our lexicon. Today's Army Reserve is no longer a strategic reserve; instead, it is an operational force and an integral part of the world's greatest Army. Our men and women are valued members of the best trained, best led, and best equipped fighting force our Nation has ever fielded. They have worked hard to achieve the Army Reserve's vision and to accomplish its transformation, and today, they can point to much success.

Over the past three years, Army Reserve recruiters, our Warrior-Citizens and our recruiter assistants succeeded in growing the end strength of the Army Reserve by almost 20,000 Soldiers. Despite a competitive recruiting market, we achieved our authorized end strength of 206,000 in April 2009.

At the same time, we've cleaned up the force and continue eliminating non-performers, Soldiers who can't – or won't – meet standards.

Additionally, we addressed a critical component of our manning strategy, the proper management of personnel losses. By creating a command culture of awareness of the consequences of uncontrolled losses, especially in critical skill areas, we were able to stabilize attrition from the force and allow our recruiting initiatives to reach full potential.

Over time, full manning of the Army Reserve will reduce operational tempo for active and reserve components and enhance functional, predictable combat-support, and combat-service-support capabilities that are in high demand in today's security environment.

As we delivered creative recruiting programs, targeted incentives, and new personnel policies to sustain the force, we studied a key personnel program that provides full-time Soldiers to lead, recruit and train Troop Program Unit Soldiers: the Active Guard Reserve.

To ensure senior enlisted AGR Soldiers serve in positions that require their skills, authority level and experience, Lt. Gen. Stultz signed a memorandum that assigned responsibility for



Photo by Tim Hale

Command Sgt. Maj. Leon Caffie began his military career on April 2, 1970, when he was drafted into the United States Army. On August 29, 2006, Caffie was sworn in as the command sergeant major of the Army Reserve.

their career management to the commanding general of the Human Resources Command, Alexandria, Va. Additionally, these standardized manning policies ensure that almost 1,000 command sergeants major and sergeants major in the AGR program have the opportunity to serve in assignments they need for career development.

That meant giving senior enlisted AGR Soldiers the same opportunity for deployment as TPU Soldiers to develop them for greater responsibility. Today, AGR command sergeants major and TPU sergeants major receive orders because they are the best qualified for the job. Soon, career development for master sergeants and sergeants first class will be managed in the same way to ensure that when units deploy, our Soldiers have the best

the Army Reserve

possible leadership we can provide. We have an obligation to provide the best possible coaches and mentors for the young men and women we're sending off to war, and that's been my focus.

To further support our manning strategies, we established additional positions for senior enlisted AGR Soldiers in units that needed full-time leadership. A significant part of their mission is to improve retention and reduce non-participation by mentoring, coaching and providing Soldiers with interesting, challenging training.

Another top priority was to ensure our promotion system was fair, that Soldiers were promoted on their own merit and that we promote the best qualified. In 2008, we made a giant step toward achieving that when we changed the composition of the board to reflect the population of the Army Reserve.

At the same time, we are working to ensure that only Soldiers who have deployed are training Soldiers who are preparing to deploy. I'm a firm believer that you have to walk the walk before you can talk the talk.

We are also making sure that Soldiers who have walked the walk are recognized for their service at the right time and in the right place. During the last three years, three Army Reserve Soldiers who earned the Silver Star medal came to Washington, D.C., to engage with media at all levels, hear praise from Army senior leaders and officials from military service organizations, visit elected officials and attend special events.

To provide Army Reserve Soldiers the opportunity to earn the recognition I knew they deserved, we fundamentally changed the way our men and women were selected for Army's Best Warrior Competition. After we got authority to nominate our own candidates, we built a competition much like those in other Army components and commands. It was fair, honest and grueling. Our first event in 2008 gave our Soldiers the chance to show what they could do, and they did not disappoint. It was a proud moment when then-Spc. David Obray of the 492nd Engineer Company, was named Army Soldier of the Year.

Although we've accomplished much in the last three years, more must be done. We must create a command culture in which leaders focus more on taking care of Soldiers and their families, especially when Soldiers are incapacitated, wounded or in financial distress. We must change some aspects of TRICARE, travel and lodging.

I'm proud of what we have accomplished, but I can claim no success as mine alone.

Tens of thousands of Soldiers have contributed to our success with commit-

ment and devotion, and I thank them and their families for their support and their sacrifices.

As I traveled around the world, our junior Soldiers told me what they thought and they allowed me to bring their problems to the forefront. They helped me to give them a voice, and I am honored by their trust.

Soldiers must continue to push the envelope and challenge the status quo. The U.S. Army Reserve belongs to them, and they will take it forward. They must buy-in to the organization and work to change it from within.

I will miss the young faces and the opportunity to serve them. They kept me young and taught me something new every day. They are our greatest resource, and I charge Army Reserve leaders to care for them, to listen to them and to do their best to equip them properly, to train them properly and to supervise them properly.

I owe a great deal of gratitude to my wife, Sylvia, who has been a large part – about 99 percent – of my success. She's my biggest supporter, and she's also my worst critic. She's calm, cool and collected, and I turned to her often because she makes great decisions. She put her life on hold to support me in this, and she's been a trooper about it.

Sylvia and I are moving back to Gainesville, Fla., where we'll take a couple of months off to decide what we want to do with the rest of our lives.

Finally, I thank Lt. Gen. Stultz for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime. He gave me few parameters beyond, "Take care of our Soldiers," and he never told me how to do that. I greatly appreciate his support and faith.



Photo by Tim Hale

Command Sgt. Maj. Leon Caffie's last day in office was in October with his official retirement ceremony held on Dec. 20 in Atlanta, Ga.

NCO Stories

A selection of Valor



Cpl. Calvin Pearl Titus

Teddy Roosevelt honors chaplain assistant

By Michael L. Lewis

As the only chaplain assistant to be awarded the Medal of Honor, Calvin Pearl Titus is often cited as a model of bravery and selflessness. Yet, his award for daring gallantry – during combat in China when he was a corporal – actually came at the start of a long Army career of assisting chaplains in ministry, whether as an official chaplain assistant or not.

Titus was born Sept. 22, 1879, to Calvin and Cora Smith Titus in the eastern Iowa hamlet of Vinton, but moved to Oklahoma at age 11 after his parents died. There, he lived with his aunt and uncle, both evangelists with the Salvation Army and later with the Pilgrim Holiness movement.

Titus learned to play various instruments as a part of his uncle's traveling church band. During one church meeting in Vermont in 1898, Titus learned of the sinking of the battleship USS *Maine*, which prompted him to join the 1st Vermont Volunteer Infantry as a musician during the Spanish-American War. His

unit, however, never deployed before the war ended.

After the war, hearing troops were needed in the Philippines, Titus enlisted in the regular Army and was assigned as a bugler to E Company, 14th Infantry Regiment, based near Manila. "When they discovered that I played the cornet," he wrote, "I was in. 'We're needing a bugler, and you're it.'"

With his ministerial background, Titus was able to form a long friendship with the unit's chaplain, Leslie R. Groves Sr., a Presbyterian minister from New York. Titus recalled in a letter to Groves more than 60 years later that they "took to each other at once and became fast friends." At companies around Manila, Titus became Groves' unofficial assistant and provided music for services. "I got a violin," Titus wrote, "and played the tunes for the songs sung at each place."

In 1899, the Society of Righteous and Harmonious Fists, known as the "Boxers," began attacking foreign missions in China, killing hundreds of missionaries and thousands of Chinese Christians. Their rebellion eventually made its way to the capital,



Peking (modern day Beijing), where the group focused its efforts on destroying the part of the city housing foreign embassies and legations. A coalition force of nearly 50,000 Soldiers from eight countries was sent to rescue the city and to help quash the insurrection.

On Aug. 14, 1900, Titus and the rest of the 14th Infantry Regiment arrived at the Tung-Pien Gate along Peking's eastern outer wall and immediately encountered heavy fire from atop the wall and adjacent Fox Tower. Needing troops to scale the 30-foot fortification and lay down suppressive fire, the unit's commander, Col. Aaron S. Daggett, called for volunteers. Titus immediately stepped forward, saying, "I'll try, sir!"

Carrying a rope, Titus began climbing the jagged wall. "I took off all my equipment: haversack, canteen, pistol, belt and hat, and started up," he recalled later. "The wall was made of brick of some kind ... the mortar had fallen out in places making it possible for me to get finger and toe-holds in the cracks. About halfway up, a convenient bush grew out of the bricks and that also helped some. At last, I got to a point where I could look through one of the notches or firing ports at the top of the wall. It was empty. I slid over the top and onto the floor behind. To my surprise, I saw no one."

Daggett later described watching the treacherous climb from below. "With what interest did the officers and men watch every step as he placed his feet carefully in the cavities and clung with his fingers to the projecting bricks! The first 15 feet were passed over without serious difficulty, but there was a space of 15 feet above him. Slowly he reaches the 20-foot point. Still more carefully does he try his hold on those bricks to see if they are firm. His feet are now 25 feet from the ground. His head is near the bottom of the embrasure. All below is breathless silence. The strain is intense. Will that embrasure blaze with fire as he attempts to enter it? Or will the butts of rifles crush his skull? Cautiously, he looks through and sees and hears nothing. He enters, and as good fortune would have it, no Chinese are there."

After reaching the top unharmed, the rest of his company followed, hauling up their rifles and ammunition belts by a rope made of rifle slings. Soon after, the American colors were hoisted atop the wall, inspiring the allied Soldiers to complete their assault, overtake the gate and enter the city.

Although both Titus and Groves were recommended for the Medal of Honor for heroic actions during the siege, only Titus was awarded the accolade; Groves received an "honorable mention." Yet, that did not faze the chaplain, who continued to praise

his de facto assistant. "He is," Groves wrote to his wife, "a modest chap, fine looking and afraid of nothing but wrongdoing."

Titus' fearlessness soon earned him an appointment to the United States Military Academy, where as a first-year cadet, he was presented the Medal of Honor by President Teddy Roosevelt during West Point's centennial celebration in 1902. The citation simply read, "[For] gallant and daring conduct in the presence of his colonel and other officers and enlisted men of his regiment; was first to scale the wall of the city."

"Now, don't let this give you the big head!" Roosevelt reportedly said. After the ceremony, a second-year cadet named Douglas MacArthur approached Titus, looked at his medal and commented, "Mister, that's something!"

Upon graduating in 1905, Titus returned to the 14th Infantry in the Philippines as a second lieutenant. He later followed in his mentor's footsteps, becoming an ordained minister in 1909.

His desire to become an Army chaplain was thwarted, however, as his denomination was not yet recognized by the Army. Instead, he made the decision to, as an officer, change his career field to chaplain assistant in order to continue in ministry to Soldiers; the occupational specialty was officially introduced the year he was ordained. Nearly six decades after Titus' decision, his church would merge to form



"I'll Try, Sir!", a painting by H. Charles McBarron Jr., depicts Cpl. Calvin P. Titus atop Peking's outer wall during the 14th Infantry Regiment's siege of the city in August 1900.

the Wesleyan Church in 1968, now among the more than 200 denominations recognized in the U.S. armed forces.

Groves' son, Leslie R. Groves Jr., would go on to lead the Manhattan Project as a lieutenant general. Titus himself spent 32 years in the Army, including fighting forest fires in Montana, chasing Pancho Villa through northern Mexico, rebuilding France after World War I and teaching Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, just miles from his hometown. He retired in 1930 as a lieutenant colonel and died at the Veterans Hospital in San Fernando, Calif., on May 27, 1966, at the age of 86. He is buried at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in the Hollywood Hills section of Los Angeles.

Titus' famous reply – "I will try, sir!" – became the rallying cry of the 14th Infantry Regiment, and the official motto of the 5th Infantry Regiment. Also in his honor, the Military Sealift Command named a container ship, the *MV Ltc. Calvin P. Titus*, which is used to carry sustainment cargo to U.S. military units around the globe.

The ship is based in Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands, the closest major port in the United States to where its namesake earned the Medal of Honor a century earlier.

3 Soldiers in same Fort Campbell platoon awarded Silver Stars

By Paul David Ondik
4th Brigade Combat Team, 505th
Infantry Regiment Public Affairs

More than 200 Silver Stars have been awarded for Operation Iraqi Freedom since it began in 2003, and three of them now belong to Soldiers from the same platoon in Fort Campbell, Ky.

When a barrage of small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades pierced the night silence in Ramadi, Iraq, on March 13, 2006, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Wilzcek, Spc. Jose Alvarez and Spc. Gregory Pushkin of the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, discovered how they would react in an intense, deadly situation.

"I immediately freaked out," said Alvarez, who was able to regain his composure upon seeing his comrade, Staff Sgt. Marco Silva, become incapacitated in the middle of the street.

Alvarez left cover and ran into the kill zone. He covered his buddy's body with his own and returned fire on the enemy. "I snatched him up and started dragging him away," Alvarez said.

While Alvarez dragged Silva to the safety of cover, two pieces of shrapnel plunged into his leg. "I was pretty laid out," he said.

Nevertheless, Alvarez quickly returned to the fight after receiving battlefield aid.

Pushkin and Wilzcek also darted into the line of fire, risking their lives to retrieve wounded comrades. Pushkin kicked down the door of a home to provide cover for injured troops reeling from the intensity of the ambush. He laid down suppressive fire, then, he and Wilzcek pushed their way to a pair of troops pinned down and injured.

"Training took over," Pushkin said. "My mind just shut down, and I focused on what was in front of me. I had no sense of time at all."

After receiving their Silver Stars from 101st Airborne Division Commander Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Schloesser at Lozada Gym at Fort Campbell recently, the three heroes were still humble about the actions that earned them the award for "gallantry in action."

"I feel honored to be recognized, but there are a lot of people



Photo by Paul David Ondik

From left, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Wilzcek, Spc. Jose Alvarez and Spc. Gregory Pushkin were recently presented Silver Stars by Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Schloesser, commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division, during an awards ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky.



in Iraq doing the same thing," Wilzcek said.

Though the three downplay their acts of courage, Sgt. Michael Row has a much different take on the events of that night. "I was trapped in the street, and they pulled me out of there," Row said.

"All three men risked their lives numerous times to come to the aid of their comrades," said Lt. Col. Ron Clark, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment commander.

Schloesser also awarded 14 Bronze Stars for valor to other unit members during the same ceremony. In all, nearly 200 awards were given to the band of brothers, including 87 Purple Hearts and 91 Army Commendation Medals with "V" devices.

The Silver Star is awarded to a person who, while serving with the Army, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Sergeant gets Bronze Star for valorous actions during Afghanistan firefight

By Pfc. Christina Sindera
ISAF-East Public Affairs

A sergeant with the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team's 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry, was awarded a Bronze Star for valor on April 24, 2008, at Fire Base Naray in Kunar province for his actions in combat in Afghanistan.

Sgt. Ryan P. Inabnet received the medal from Brig. Gen. Mark Milley, Combined Joint Task Force 101 deputy commanding general for operations, for saving more than a dozen Soldiers' lives during a combat operation in Kunar province July 27, 2007.

That fateful day, the Quick Reaction Team with which Inabnet was on duty was called out to reinforce International Security Assistance Forces engaged in combat with insurgents.

"We first set out after receiving word that four [Soldiers] on the ground were injured and two [of the injuries] were serious," recalled Inabnet, who served as a wheeled vehicle mechanic at the time.

"Once we arrived, we got the four injured [Soldiers] in the vehicles and dropped them off at the [medical evacuation] site," he explained.

Shortly afterward, Inabnet provided first aid to a wounded Soldier from his team.

"Once we had all the equipment and personnel, we started to head back," Inabnet said.

"That's when we started [receiving rocket propelled grenade] and small-arms fire."

As the group tried to break contact, several Soldiers were wounded and put into Inabnet's vehicle.

"My main goal was to get these guys back to the helicopter landing zone so they could survive," Inabnet said.

"I ended up staying up for hours until we got all our guys back inside the [forward operating base]."

That one afternoon would prove to make an impact that would last a lifetime.

"That day will be with me for a long time," he said. "I would like to thank the Lord above and all my brothers who were in that fight with me."

The Bronze Star is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army of the United States, distinguishes himself or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy; or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

The bronze "V" device identifies the Bronze Star award as resulting from an act of combat heroism or valor, thus distinguishing it from meritorious achievement awards.



Photo by Pfc. Christina Sindera

Brig. Gen. Mark Milley, Combined Joint Task Force 101 deputy commanding general for operations, pins a Bronze Star for valor on Sgt. Ryan P. Inabnet of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team's 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry, at Fire Base Naray, Afghanistan, April 24, 2008. Inabnet was credited with saving more than a dozen Soldiers' lives during a July 2007 firefight.



SERGEANTS' CORNER

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

Army Leadership

Leadership: It is the reason for being of all noncommissioned officers. Constant reminders of its importance are everywhere – in the seven Army Values, throughout the NCO Creed and as part of the name of three of the four NCO Education System courses.

Indeed, for students in the foundational Warrior Leader Course, instruction in the leadership module begins on Day 1, when soon-to-be junior NCOs learn how to mesh their understanding of leadership in general with the Army's specific expectations for its leaders of Soldiers.

"At this age – as a young E-5 – it's teaching your Soldiers to buy into your leadership, to get a Soldier to want to follow you," explained Staff Sgt. Russell Lane, a small group leader at the Fort Bliss, Texas, NCO Academy.

Learning how to inspire and influence your Soldiers is covered over the first third of the 17 days in the new WLC program of instruction. In order to graduate, students must also demonstrate their leadership knowledge and abilities by passing a written exam and two practical evaluations.

The entire course is based largely on the Army's keystone leadership manual, FM 6-22. Course instructors recommend future students read up on the field manual to prepare for the lesson, which is divided into four main parts:

DESCRIBING THE ARMY LEADER:

Students learn that the process of influencing Soldiers is based on providing purpose, direction and motivation. The process is continual, a part of a unit's operations, and is geared toward organizational improvement. To be successful,



Sgt. Christianna Jones, right, directs classmate Sgt. Randall Malone during her leadership evaluation at the Warrior Leader Course situational training exercise at the Fort Bliss NCO Academy in September.

students adopt the Be-Know-Do model – learning that leaders must *be* persons of character; *know* interpersonal, conceptual, technical and tactical skills; and be men and women of action, *doing* what needs to be done.

RESOLVING ETHICAL PROBLEMS:

Leaders must know and be able to apply core Army values to discover moral solutions to diverse problems. This process involves both quick thinking and critical reasoning, as no stock formula will work every time. By embracing Army values, understanding regulations and orders, learning from experiences and applying

sound ethics, leaders can prepare themselves to face tough calls in situations that aren't black-and-white.

THE MILITARY PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS: The NCO leader will continually face situations that involve uncertainties, questionable or incomplete data and several possible solutions. Leaders must recognize when a decision is necessary, arriving at solutions using clear, unemotional analysis of all facts and assumptions relating to the situation. NCOs shouldn't be afraid to ask for input from subordinates, for the team will benefit if everybody is a stakeholder in accomplishing difficult tasks.

TEAM-DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES: Upon assignment to a leadership position, NCOs need a plan to develop their team. A quick assessment of their team members will aid in developing a plan of action, as will a clear understanding of the stages of team development.

Course instructors say the lessons' mix of concrete tools and fresh perspectives makes the course one of their students' favorites.

"We deliver things that they haven't heard before or in a different light," Lane said. "Sure, when you go back to the unit, you always see the Army Values posted on every corner. But, when you come in and talk about the academics of leadership and look at leadership from the psychological point of view, a lot of them sit up and say, 'Okay. I've never heard it put that way before.'"

Editor's note: While initially scheduled to begin in January, Army leadership is postponing full implementation of the the new 17-day WLC program of instruction until later in 2010.

A monthly spotlight on the lessons of the new Warrior Leader Course



ARMY LEADER ATTRIBUTES

The Army's Leadership Requirements model consists of two major areas that all Army leaders must possess: **Attributes** and **Core Leader Competencies**. Together, they center on what a leader is and what a leader does. Leaders' attributes, explained here, enable them to master the Core Leader Competencies at right.

A Leader of Character:

- ✓ **Exemplifies Army values:** Trust develops when leaders demonstrate Army values in leading and when Soldiers demonstrate Army values in following and working together.
- ✓ **Is empathetic:** Army leaders must be able to know, understand and be sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of those around them.
- ✓ **Imparts the Warrior Ethos:** If the Warrior Ethos is part of your being, your subordinates will know it by your actions as well as your words.

A Leader with Presence:

- ✓ **Has good military bearing:** A good leader possesses a commanding presence and projects a professional image of authority.
- ✓ **Is physically fit:** Having sound health, strength and endurance makes you able to excel and support your team, even during prolonged periods of stress.
- ✓ **Is confident:** Leaders project self-confidence and certainty in their

Soldiers' ability to succeed while demonstrating composure and an outward calm through steady control over their own emotions.

- ✓ **Is resilient:** Model leaders display a tendency to recover quickly from setbacks, shock, injuries, adversity and stress while maintaining a mission and organizational focus.
- ✓ **Is mentally agile:** Being flexible and adaptive during uncertain or changing situations shows the ability to improvise when faced with conceptual impasses.
- ✓ **Shows good judgment:** Leaders demonstrate the capacity to assess situations or circumstances shrewdly and draw sound conclusions, even when all facts are not available.
- ✓ **Is innovative:** Creativity and an ability to introduce new ideas in the face of challenging circumstances allow leaders to contribute ideas that are original and worthwhile.
- ✓ **Displays interpersonal tact:** Good leaders must be aware with how others see them and have the capacity to sense how best to interact with others effectively.
- ✓ **Shows domain knowledge:** Leaders need to possess facts and understanding in relevant fields. These areas include technical, tactical, joint operational and geopolitical.

Core Leader Competencies: What an Army leader does

LEADS

This category includes four subcompetencies. Two focus on who you lead and with what degree of authority and influence: **Leads others** and **extends influence beyond the chain of command**. The other two leading competencies address the ways by which leaders convey influence: **Leads by example** and **communicates**.

DEVELOPS

The leader must create a **positive environment** that fosters teamwork, promotes cohesion, and encourages initiative and acceptance of responsibility. Leaders also **prepare themselves**, seeking self-improvement and fostering a commitment to lifelong learning. Thirdly, they invest adequate time and effort to **develop subordinates** and build effective teams.

ACHIEVES

A Warrior Leader's duty is to accomplish the mission and **achieve the desired results** of the organization. You get results by providing guidance and managing resources, as well as performing the other competencies above. Your focus is on consistent and ethical task accomplishment through supervising, managing, monitoring and controlling of the work you and your subordinates perform.



Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

Operation Iraqi Freedom

Pfc. Derrick D. Gwaltney, 21, Cape Coral, Fla., Nov. 29, 2009 ♦ *Pfc. Jaiciae L. Pauley, 29, Austell, Ga., Dec. 11, 2009* ♦ *Pfc. Michael A. Rogers, 23, White Sulphur Springs, Mont., Nov. 27, 2009* ♦ *Pvt. Jhanner A. Tello, 29, Los Angeles, Calif., Dec. 10, 2009* ♦ *Sgt. Briand T. Williams, 25, Sparks, Ga., Nov. 22, 2009* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Ryan L. Zorn, 35, Upton, Wyo., Nov. 16, 2009*

Operation Enduring Freedom

Pfc. Brian R. Bates Jr., 20, Gretna, La., Oct. 27, 2009 ♦ *Staff Sgt. John J. Cleaver, 36, Marysville, Wash., Nov. 19, 2009* ♦ *Sgt. Daniel A. Frazier, 25, Saint Joseph, Mich., Nov. 19, 2009* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Dennis J. Hansen, 31, Panama City, Fla., Dec. 7, 2009* ♦ *Sgt. Brandon T. Islip, 23, Richmond, Va., Nov. 4, 2009* ♦ *Spc. Joseph M. Lewis, 26, Terrell, Texas, Nov. 17, 2009* ♦ *Spc. Jason A. McLeod, 22, Crystal Lake, Ill., Nov. 23, 2009* ♦ *Sgt. Kenneth R. Nichols Jr., 28, Chrisman, Ill., Dec. 1, 2009* ♦ *Sgt. James M. Nolen, 25, Alvin, Texas, Nov. 22, 2009* ♦ *Staff Sgt. Matthew A. Pucino, 34, Cockeysville, Md., Nov. 23, 2009* ♦ *Sgt. Elijah J. Rao, 26, Lake Oswego, Ore., Dec. 5, 2009* ♦ *Sgt. Benjamin W. Sherman, 21, Plymouth, Mass., Nov. 4, 2009* ♦ *Pfc. Marcus A. Tynes, 19, Moreno Valley, Calif., Nov. 22, 2009*

*You are not
forgotten*



Editors note: This is a continuation of the list that was started with the October 2003 issue of the NCO Journal and contains those names released by the Department of Defense between Nov. 16, 2009, and Dec. 16 2009.

GEAR UP! FOR THE FIRE!



WHERE THERE'S SMOKE...

- Follow the directions on the package if you use man-made logs. Never break a man-made log apart to quicken the fire.
- Never close the damper with hot ashes in the fireplace and be sure the fire is out before retiring for the evening.
- Always use a sturdy screen when fireplaces are in use.
- Burn only wood. Paper or pine boughs can float out the chimney and ignite your roof or neighboring homes. Also, plastic, charcoal or Styrofoam can produce toxic gases!
- Make sure the fire is out before leaving the house or going to bed.



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