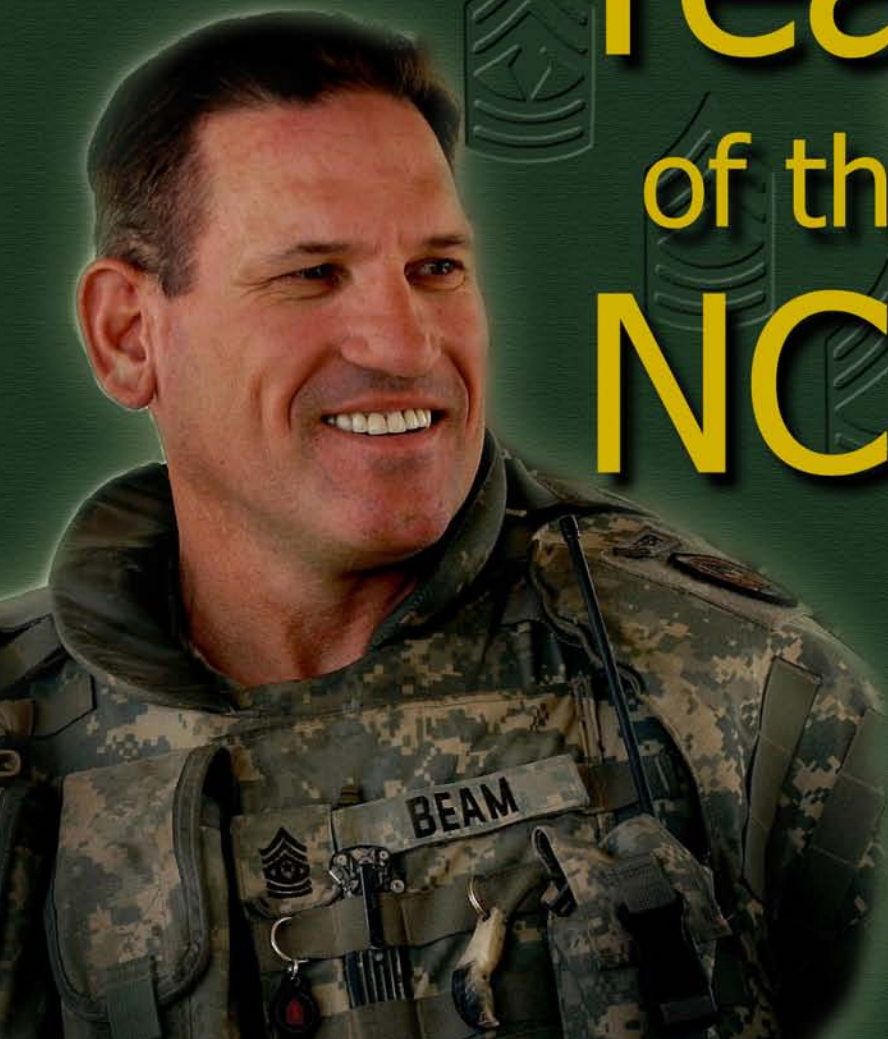


# THE NCO JOURNAL

VOL: 18, ISSUE: 1 Winter 2009

A QUARTERLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Year of the NCO



New Section

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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 SMA

## Importance of Physical Fitness



The key to a successful, healthy lifestyle relies on the right combination of diet, rest and exercise. All Soldiers and leaders must make the time for these components of fitness every day. Current operations around the world put emphasis on strength, stamina, agility, and coordination for Soldiers in all occupational specialties.

Leaders are responsible for the physical condition of their Soldiers just as they are responsible for all other aspects of Soldier training. For this reason it is essential that leaders know the importance of all components of physical fitness and those activities and methods where we train and educate our Soldiers and ourselves. Leaders must lead by example in all physical training activities.

*Field Manual 21-20* states that physical fitness is the ability to function effectively in physical work, training, and other activities and still have enough energy remaining to handle any emergencies which may arise. This manual identifies the components of physical fitness as cardiorespiratory (CR) endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Improving the first three components of fitness has a positive impact on body composition and will result in less fat. Excessive body fat detracts from the other fitness components, reduces performance, detracts from appearance, and negatively affects one's health and self image. Soldiers with excess body fat and weight compound their problems when they add body armor and equipment, making them more susceptible to muscular and skeletal injuries.

Speed, agility, muscle power, eye-hand coordination, and eye-foot coordination are components of "motor" fitness. These five components directly influence the Soldier's survivability on the battlefield. The Army's fitness program seeks to maintain or improve all the components of physical and motor fitness through sound, progressive, mission specific physical training for individuals and units.

Fitness training programs are successful when structured around the four factors of fitness; Frequency, Intensity, Time, and Type (FITT). *Army Regulation 350-15* specifies commanders will plan for vigorous physical fitness training 3 to 5 times per week to provide the needed frequency. For optimal results, leaders must strive to conduct 5 days of physical training per week. Ideally, three of these exercise sessions should target CR fitness, muscle endurance, muscle strength, and flexibility each week to maintain and improve fitness levels. Training at the right intensity for a minimum sustained period is the principle fault found in unit fitness programs. Intensity should vary with the type of exercise being done to achieve proper balance. CR improvement requires an exercise(s) strenuous enough to elevate the heart rate between 60 and 90 percent of the heart rate reserve. Doing an exercise "correctly" means moving the weight steadily and with

proper form without getting help from other muscle groups by jerking, bending, or twisting the body.

Like intensity, the time spent exercising depends on the type of exercise conducted. Soldiers require 20 to 30 continuous minutes of intense exercise to improve cardiorespiratory endurance. For muscular endurance and strength, exercise time equates to the number of repetitions done. For the average soldier, 8 to 12 repetitions with enough resistance to cause muscle failure improves both muscular endurance and strength. Muscle failure is the point where the Soldier can no longer maintain proper form and control during the exercise. Going beyond the point of muscle failure to the point of collapse is one of the principle reasons behind muscular and skeletal injuries of Soldiers in our units. As soldiers progress, they will make better strength gains by doing a minimum of two to a maximum of four sets for each resistance exercise.

Type refers to the kind of exercise performed. When choosing the type, the commander should consider the principle of specificity. The basic rule to improve performance, one must practice the exercise, activity, or skill they want to improve. For example, to be good at push-ups, one must do pushups. No other exercise will improve push-up performance as effectively. This is one strength conditioning exercise that is easily included in those strength training sessions. To be strong and resilient at lifting heavy material like ammunition, one must train these muscles groups using an exercise(s) to target those muscles used.

Success in combat is dependent on our physical strength and endurance. Our strength and endurance could prove to be the deciding factor between life and death for leaders and Soldiers when combat actions require extreme physical exertion. All Soldiers must constantly hone their physical abilities to withstand and overcome the demanding rigors of combat.

Physical fitness must become a part of our daily life.

I appreciate our leaders who realize the importance of peak physical fitness. However, I realize there are also leaders who are not living up to their health and fitness potential. I expect leaders and Soldiers to maintain a high level of physical fitness. Every Soldier is critical to the completion of the thousands of missions we execute around the world; we need all leaders and Soldiers physically capable of performing at the highest level.

For more information of physical fitness, visit the US Army Physical Fitness School Web site at <http://www.bct.army.mil/pfs.aspx>. Their mission is to research and develop Army physical readiness training doctrine, establish Soldier physical performance standards, and provide training assistance to leaders and units. Their programs help commanders and trainers develop a strong physical training program and ensure compliance with Army Physical Training Standards.

Thanks for all that you do to keep Soldiers safe and to keep our Army Strong as we remain the Strength of the Nation. Army Strong! Hooah!

*Samuel O. Reston*

# William G. Bainbridge:

## The quintessential farmer who helped grow the Corps

By David Crozier →

The harvest is in and the daily chores have been completed. It is now time for everyone to rest and make ready for the next season. For former Sergeant Major of the Army William G. Bainbridge, that next season will be one of oversight from above as his time to till the soil has come to a close.

The Fifth Sergeant Major of the Army passed away just two days after Thanksgiving and the Corps that he loved has much to be thankful for in what he accomplished during his lifetime. Born the son of a railroader and farmer in rural Illinois on April 17, 1925, Bainbridge learned early on in life that doing things right the first time around was the only way to do business, because if you didn't there would be consequences.

He took this belief with him throughout his life, learning more on the way through his many mentors and experiences in the Army. His first experience came as a young man during World War II when at the age of 18 he volunteered for the draft and was inducted into the Army in June 1943. He went through basic training and AIT at Camp Wallace, just 20 miles north of Galveston, Texas, where he would meet someone that would have a profound influence on him – his platoon sergeant – a buck sergeant named Simpson from Denora, Pa.

He remarked in his oral history that Simpson taught him, “you have to take care of Soldiers and you can't do it by lip service because they will find out in a heartbeat. It has to come from the heart. If it isn't genuine they will know it in a minute.” And Bainbridge was genuine to a fault.

Throughout his 30-year career Bainbridge took care of Soldiers, more importantly, he took care of the Corps. His experiences taught him that training and education were vital to ensuring the success of a unit. His days as a prisoner of war during World War II taught him humility and love of country.

He was discharged after the war, but stayed with the Army joining the U.S. Army Reserves. At the same time he returned to his roots as a farmer with his new wife Hazel, whom he had known since grade school.

It was June 1950, Bainbridge was in his third year of working his farm. The couple had a big mortgage to pay off, 200 head of hogs, 12-15 milk cows, 30 cattle, 300 chickens, two little girls and a crop ready to be harvested. Bainbridge got the call to come back on active duty. He was allowed to remain on the farm to get his crop in and sell his stock and off he and the family went, for a military career that would not stop again until June 18, 1979.

Rising through the ranks everywhere he went, Bainbridge spent the entire Korean Conflict stateside in a variety of personnel and administrative positions seeing to the training of Soldiers. He left the Reserves to become regular Army as a sergeant first class and soon found himself as the first sergeant of Fifth Army's

Food Service School at Fort Riley, Kan. In those days, there was company punishment that was handed out for transgressions and a book that kept track of all transgressors. The unit commander noticed the book was somewhat empty of names. Confronting Bainbridge, the commander asked what was going on and he remarked that he need not worry, “he was taking care of it.”

He never stopped taking care of it.

Bainbridge found himself again a veteran of war when Vietnam broke out. Here he served as the battalion sergeant major for the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division eventually being deployed to War Zone C north of Saigon. He later became the sergeant major of the newly created II Field Force in Vietnam. Throughout his service however, Bainbridge never varied from his desire to do the right thing, take care of Soldiers and ensure that necessary training was an integral part of unit success. In Vietnam he earned the reputation of always being with his men during field operations. He observed how training had improved and worsened since World War II, particularly with the replacements that were coming to Vietnam. This led to his support of the Noncommissioned Officer Candidate School – the Shake and Bake Sergeants – to help solve the problem.

He later became the sergeant major of the Infantry Training Center at Fort Benning, Ga., where he continued his pursuit of improving life in the Army for Soldiers and the Corps. From Benning, Bainbridge moved on to Fort Gorge Meade, Md., with First Army then on to be the sergeant major of U.S. Army Pacific. It is here that he established a good working relationship with the father of the Sergeants Major Academy, Gen. Ralph E. Haines, Jr., then USARPAC commander.

His dedication later earned him the distinction of being named one of the first command sergeant majors in the Army – along with William Wooldridge, George Dunaway, Silas Cope and Leon Van Autreve – all future sergeants major of the Army. This, also led to his being selected as the first command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas, working alongside Col. Karl Morton, the academy's first commandant. For three years, Bainbridge helped to develop what is today the capstone of education for the Corps. It wasn't until he became the fifth sergeant major of the Army, however, that he was able to do what he believed was his greatest achievement throughout his career – secure permanent funding for the burgeoning Noncommissioned Officer Education System.

Even after his retirement, Bainbridge continued to serve the Corps as a member of the Council of Trustees for the Association of the United States Army – continuing to fight for what is right for the Soldier, their families and the Corps. After more than 65 years of service in and out of uniform, the crops are finally in. It is time to rest and let the fruits of his labor feed the future of the force.

SMA Bainbridge, mission complete!



Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army  
William G. Bainbridge

# Army transforming NCOES

By Chris Gray-Garcia  
Army News Service

A redesign of the Army's non-commissioned officer education system will bring its curriculum closer to what has been taught to officers in the past, said Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Chandler.

Chandler and the staff at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA), Fort Bliss, Texas, have the lead in making changes to courses taught at the Army's 30 NCO academies worldwide. He said the changes are on schedule to be implemented by September 2009.

The changes include renaming the Army's intermediate-level NCO courses. The Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, known as BNCOC, will become the Advanced Leader Course. The Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course, or ANCO, will become the Senior Leader Course.

**“We’ve got a better-educated NCO corps than ever before. So we’ve had to update the curriculum to take advantage of that higher education level, to support the full spectrum of operations in this era of persistent conflict.”**

The updated courses will better prepare Soldiers for greater decision-making and leadership responsibilities required in the global war on terror, Chandler explained. He said the new NCOES curriculum will focus more on the kind of critical thinking and problem-solving skills formerly reserved for officer-level instruction.

USASMA is the Army agency charged with implementing the NCOES transformation. As the academy's command sergeant major, Chandler has been at the forefront of that effort.

The new curriculum is being tested now at Fort Knox, Ky., and Fort Benning,



Photo by Sgt. Mary E. Ferguson

Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Chandler, of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, challenges more than 150 commandants and senior NCOs from NCO academies throughout the Army to share their experiences during the 2008 Commandants Workshop held at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Ga., and Chandler said it is expected to be ready for all of the Army's NCO academies by September.

“What we’ve been charged with is providing a cadre of flexible and adaptive leaders,” said Fort Benning's Henry Caro NCO Academy commandant, Command Sgt. Maj. Zoltan James.

“A lot of these guys are leaders who have been in combat, they know what the fight is, and it gives them a forum for capturing and sharing that knowledge,” James said about the new curriculum. “We put NCOs into situations where they need to think for themselves, instead of providing them answers based upon a training plan. We have changed our training culture, by using that process.”

Curriculum at the USASMA is also being adapted to reflect the curriculum at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan., said Chandler.

“CGSC has made its entire curriculum available to USASMA, which is in the process of adapting our curriculum to meet their needs,” said CGSC deputy director, Marvin L. Nickels. “Adapting applicable portions of our curriculum will save them time. More importantly, it

makes lots of sense for the Army's field-grade leaders and most-senior noncommissioned officers to share a common frame of reference. “

Sharing that frame of reference, Chandler said, is exactly what the updated sergeants major course aims to facilitate.

“We have a very large gap between what CGSC teaches its majors and what we’ve been teaching sergeants major,” he said. “We want to marry those two skill sets together to capitalize on both their experiences to better support the commander.”

While the NCOES redesign aims to meet the needs of the Army in the global war on terror, it focuses equally on the professional development needs of Soldiers.

With the new curriculum, said Chandler, “They are a better and more educated Soldier when they graduate, which is an immediate impact on their organization and their unit. It makes them more effective.”

“But the increase in the curriculum will also provide the Soldier more college credits,” he said, “which will support them in their personal education goals while they’re in the Army and after the Army.”

# CAL releases Leadership Transition Handbook

*Army News Service* - The Combined Arms Center and Center for Army Leadership, Fort Leavenworth, Kan., has released a new handbook aimed at formalizing procedures for one of the most difficult periods any leader might encounter - transitioning into a new position of leadership.

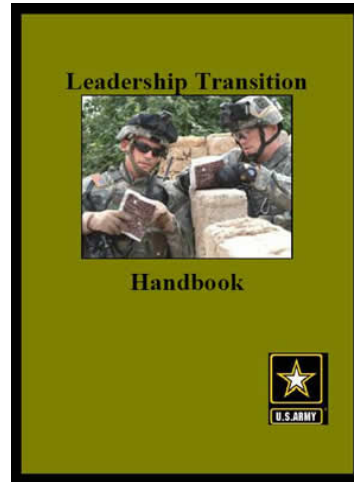
The Leadership Transition Handbook provides leaders at all experience levels a systematic approach to transitioning into a new position, according to officials at the Center for Army Leadership. They said the book provides an approach that can be tailored to meet the needs of both new and experienced leaders.

"The challenges of leadership are often greatest when there is a leadership transition, resulting in a shift in roles and responsibilities," said Col. Bruce J. Reider, director of the Center for Army Leadership. "While the Army transitions leaders with regularity, it has not formalized this significant event in its leader development process. It is imperative that leadership transitions occur efficiently and effectively

particularly during this era of persistent conflict and high operations tempo."

Preparing to take command or to transition to any new position of responsibility is a natural progression for Army leaders and is something that has always been taken seriously by those designated for it, but there has not been a systematic or standard approach that is taught or used to guide young leaders during this period of transition.

Conducted properly, the transition period can lay the groundwork and provide a framework for action that helps minimize uncertainty and create the conditions for success, CAL officials said.



Having a plan for the transition ensures leaders can maximize the opportunities and mitigate the challenges that arise during the process, they said, adding that the new Leadership Transition Handbook will help to make these transitions more successful.

Sections in the Leadership Transitions Handbook include:

- understanding yourself and the organization
- conducting an initial assessment and building credibility
- team building and establishing routines
- sustaining organizational operations.

The Handbook is currently available at the Center for Army Leadership AKO Web site at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/376783>, on LeaderNet at <https://leadernet.bcks.army.mil/>, and on the Combined Arms Center's public access CAL Web site.

## TSGLI expands benefits for traumatically injured

*Army News Service* - More troops may now qualify for benefits under Traumatic Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance because of newly expanded coverage following a review by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The purpose of the review was to find whether additional injuries/losses should be covered, whether the program was operating effectively, and whether other improvements could be made that would allow more servicemembers to benefit from TSGLI, officials said.

Through the review's findings, the TSGLI Schedule of Losses was simplified, making it more usable for each branch of service and allowing for easier interpretation by the general public, according to officials at the Army's Human Resources Command.

Existing TSGLI qualifying loss definitions on the schedule, such as those for sight, burns and amputations were expanded and additional qualifying losses were added, including uniplegia, limb salvage, facial reconstruction, and a 15-day hospital stay.

"The TSGLI benefit expansion helps us further the mission and spirit of the program," said Col. John F. Sackett, chief of the Army's TSGLI Branch at HRC. "With these changes we can offer assistance to even more men and women who have so bravely served our country."

Servicemembers that have already submitted a claim in the past do not need to resubmit, Sackett said. He said the VA and TSGLI offices for each service will conduct a reachback of previously denied claims to see if they qualify for payment

under the new guidance. Notifications will be sent to the servicemember if an additional award is due.

TSGLI is a Congressionally-mandated program that applies to members of all branches of service and all components - Active, Guard, and Reserve, who incur a traumatic, physical injury based on an external force of violence.

For more information about TSGLI, including a complete list of the new schedule of losses, eligibility requirements, and claim submission instructions, servicemembers should contact their branch of service using the contact Army Human Resources Command, Attn: TSGLI, 200 Stovall Street, Alexandria, VA 22332, by phone at 1-800-237-1336, or on the Internet at [www.tsgli.army.mil](http://www.tsgli.army.mil).

# Bush lauds Wounded Warrior for serving other troops, families

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

President George W. Bush presented a prestigious award to a severely wounded warrior at Fort Campbell, Ky., Nov. 25, who mentors other wounded troops and their families and volunteers at the post's Fisher House.

Bush presented the President's Volunteer Service award to Staff Sgt. Josh Forbess, praising him for serving his nation in uniform, and going the extra measure to serve others in need.

The president lauded Forbess during a pre-Thanksgiving Day visit to Fort Campbell, noting that he'll greatly miss the opportunities he's had as commander in chief to spend time with those who serve the country in uniform.

Forbess is one of just five 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division Soldiers who survived a fiery Black Hawk helicopter collision over Mosul, Iraq, in November 2003. Then Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, who commanded the "Screaming Eagles" at the time, called the crash that killed 17 of his Soldiers a gut-wrenching low point for the entire division.

"The loss of 17 Soldiers in one night when two helicopters collided over Mosul was just a blow beyond belief," he told American Forces Press Service after the division had redeployed in March 2004. "It's like losing 17 children. It's almost beyond comprehension – a terrible, terrible blow to the organization and the individuals in it."

Forbess, who didn't wake up from the incident until eight weeks later, lost an ear and half of his nose and received broken bones, extensive burns and smoke inhalation injuries.



Photo by Donna Miles

Staff Sgt. Joshua Forbess, seriously injured in a fiery Black Hawk helicopter collision over Mosul, Iraq, in November 2003, said he was motivated during his recovery to do everything in his power to return to full duty. President George W. Bush presented Forbess the President's Volunteer Service award Nov. 25, 2008, for his work with other wounded warriors.

The accident launched his long, painful and heroic return to recovery as he struggled to return to duty and help his fellow wounded Soldiers.

As he recovered, the 29-year-old Decatur, Ill., native called the opportunity to return to active duty the driving force that kept him motivated. "I love my job. I love training Soldiers," he told American Forces Press Service as he was undergoing treatment at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. "There's nothing else I could do that I would enjoy as much as that."

He expressed no doubt that he'd achieve his goal. "As long as you have heart, there's nothing to stop you," he said. The driving force behind his efforts to recover fully and return to full duty in the military is "all in here," he said, tapping his chest.

Today, Forbess is back on duty as senior noncommissioned officer at Fort Campbell's Soldier and Family Assistance Center. He's also been a volunteer at the post Fisher House since it opened in 2006, leading wounded warrior meetings and providing an example of what's possible for other wounded troops.

On hearing of the honor he would receive, Forbess told a local reporter "just to be nominated is great." He said he expected to be speechless when he received the award.

Bush created the President's Volunteer Service Award in 2002 to recognize Americans who make a difference through volunteer service. He has presented more than 650 of the awards.

## Year of the NCO Suggested Reading

**The Long Hard Road, Experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq** - available for download at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/9735660>.

**The Shake and Bake Sergeant** - written by Jerry Horton and available at <http://www.shakenbakesergeant.com/>.

**The History of the NCO** - written by Larry Arms and available for download at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/138349>.

**Top Sergeant** - written by William G Bainbridge and Dan Cragg and available at many online bookstores.

**U. S. Army Sergeants Major Academy: The Founding** - written by William G. Bainbridge and Karl R. Morton and available for download at <http://www3.ausa.org/webint/DeptArmyMagazine.nsf/byid/CCRN-6CCSFQ>.

**The Story of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps: The Backbone of the Army** - available through the Center of Military History or online bookstores.



# Army releases FM 7-0

By John Harlow  
TRADOC

The Army released the new field manual FM 7-0, Training for Full Spectrum Operations, at the Training General Officer Steering Committee conference at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., Dec. 15. Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, commanding general of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, introduced the new manual.

The new manual replaces the 2002 edition of FM 7-0, Training the Force.

“Today’s full-spectrum operations environment demands more from our men and women in uniform than ever before, and nothing is more important than training to ensure their success,” said Caldwell. “This manual will have a direct impact on our Soldiers - codifying our current doctrine directly into training the full breadth and complexity of today’s missions, to include offensive, defensive and stability operations.”

This is the first time the Army has synchronized the manuals for operations and training.

“Now is the right time to release the new training manual,” said Brig. Gen. Robert B. Abrams, director of the Combined Arms Center-Training. “We’ve been at war a little over six years, and our last training manual was published just after 9/11. A lot has changed since then. The operational environment has changed, and we now have a force that is the most combat-experienced in the history of the country. There are many factors that went into the need to update FM 7-0.”

In 2008, the Army has released three important field manuals. FM 3-0, Operations, changed the way the Army operates, with the focus of the Army being on offensive, defensive and stability operations. FM 3-07, Stability Operations, went into detail of how the Army will perform its mission when called upon as a stabilizing force. FM 7-0 provides training guidance to prepare the Army to train the way it will fight.

“FM 7-0 is almost entirely driven by FM 3-0,” said Abrams. “This is the first time in recent doctrinal history that our Army’s capstone operations manual FM 3-0 has been at the forefront of our training manual. They have been related before, and FM 7-0 has embraced the operational concepts in some degree or another, but in this particular case, the starting of FM 7-0 was about six months behind FM 3-0.”

“The two writing teams have been nested from the beginning so that for the first time, all the operational concepts and the most important concept, that we are a full-spectrum Army, means that offense, defense and stability operations are our core concepts as an Army,” Abrams continued. “These concepts are now nested

throughout our training manual so that we train to be a full-spectrum Army, not just in name, but in reality.”

FM 7-0 challenges leaders to train as they will fight - train as a full-spectrum force but not lose sight of the first priority of the Army, which is to fight and win our nation’s wars.

FM 7-0 sets out to change the Army mindset. The manual states that the Army cannot return to its pre-9-11 focus of training for offensive and defensive operations in major combat operations. Army leaders must think differently about training and leader development in an Army that must be capable of conducting simultaneous offense, defense and stability or civil-support operations.

The manual’s four chapters address the breadth and depth of Army training concepts - the “what” of Army training. The Web-based Army Training Network will address the “how” of Army training. It will provide examples of concepts in FM 7-0; training lessons, examples and best practices for implementing the 7-0 concepts; and solutions to training challenges.

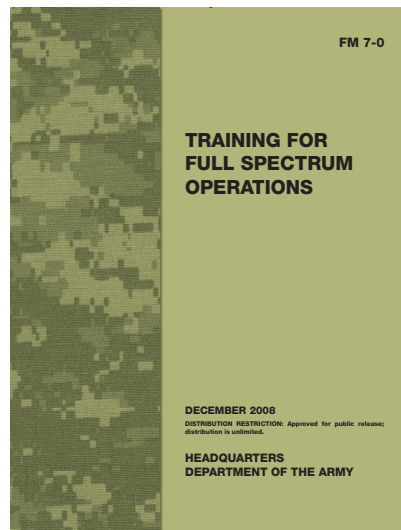
“We are using emerging technologies and leveraging the power of the Web. We are going to take what has been previously published in FM 7-1, Battle Focused Training, and we’re going to take those concepts and put them on the Web as the Army Training Network,” said Abrams. “It is going to have the same format

and same fundamentals you would see in FM 7-1 in terms of techniques for conduct of training management. What we want to show with the power of the Web is that we can get constant updates from the field and input on best practices.”

The operational concept requires the Army to be ready to conduct simultaneous offense, defense and stability or civil-support operations anywhere along the spectrum of conflict, from general war to stable peace.

FM 7-0 is designed to help develop an expeditionary Army, comprised of Soldiers and civilians, experienced and knowledgeable enough to be comfortable with operating anywhere along the spectrum of conflict in any type of operation, under any conditions. Its principles and concepts are intended to produce agile leaders who can rapidly and easily adapt to changing, ambiguous situations.

To download FM 7-0, go to [www.leavenworth.army.mil](http://www.leavenworth.army.mil).



## Year of the NCO Stories

Got a great NCO Story, we want to see it and help you spread the word. Send your story to: NCO Journal Magazine, USASMA, 11291 SGT E Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002. If submitting photographs, please identify all individuals in the picture. We reserve the right to edit your story based on length, content and grammar.

# 2009 - The Year



# *ar of the NCO*

- **Talking with the SMA**
- **A Short History**
- **A Sergeant's Perspective**
- **NCO Stories**



# Noncommissioned Officers: *The 'Glue' that sustains the Army*

By David Crozier

It has been 20 years since then Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh, Jr., introduced America to the Army's Noncommissioned Officer Corps by officially naming 1989 as the Year of the NCO. Since that time much has changed and today's NCO Corps is not quite the mirror image of what it used to be.

Still the backbone of the Army, today's NCO Corps, as noted in a recent speech by Army Chief of Staff General George W. Casey, Jr., is the "glue that has kept that Army together" during a challenging time in the Nation's history. On October 6, Secretary of the Army Pete Geren set the stage to reintroduce the backbone of the Army to America and the world over by announcing at the Association of the United State Army Conference that 2009 is the Year of the NCO. As the Army's top NCO, Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O.

Preston said the recognition is befitting a Corps that has helped to transform the Army to where it is today.

"I think the significance of this, is when you look at the challenges of the nation, the challenges of the Army with this ongoing Global War on Terror, it has been our noncommissioned officer corps that has kept it all together," said Preston. "They and their families have sustained us with the pace and tempo that we have had to contend with – the deployments that Soldiers and families have endured over the past eight years. It has really been the NCO that has been the glue to keep it all together."

In declaring 2009 as the Year of the NCO, Preston explained that Army leadership wanted to recognize the contributions of the noncommissioned officers and their families while at the same time reach out to the American public, to members of Congress, and the leadership of the country to show them the value of what a noncommissioned officer does. Today the NCO is not only just a leader, but is also an educator, mentor, and an authority figure.

"I call it a big brother. You take a lot of our young sergeants out there. They are 21 – 22 years old, they are really not much different in age from the Soldiers they are leading," Preston said. "So I kind of look at it like a big brother, big sister. They are there to look out for their Soldiers to teach them and show them right and wrong, know what they are doing when they are out by themselves; you look out for their welfare.

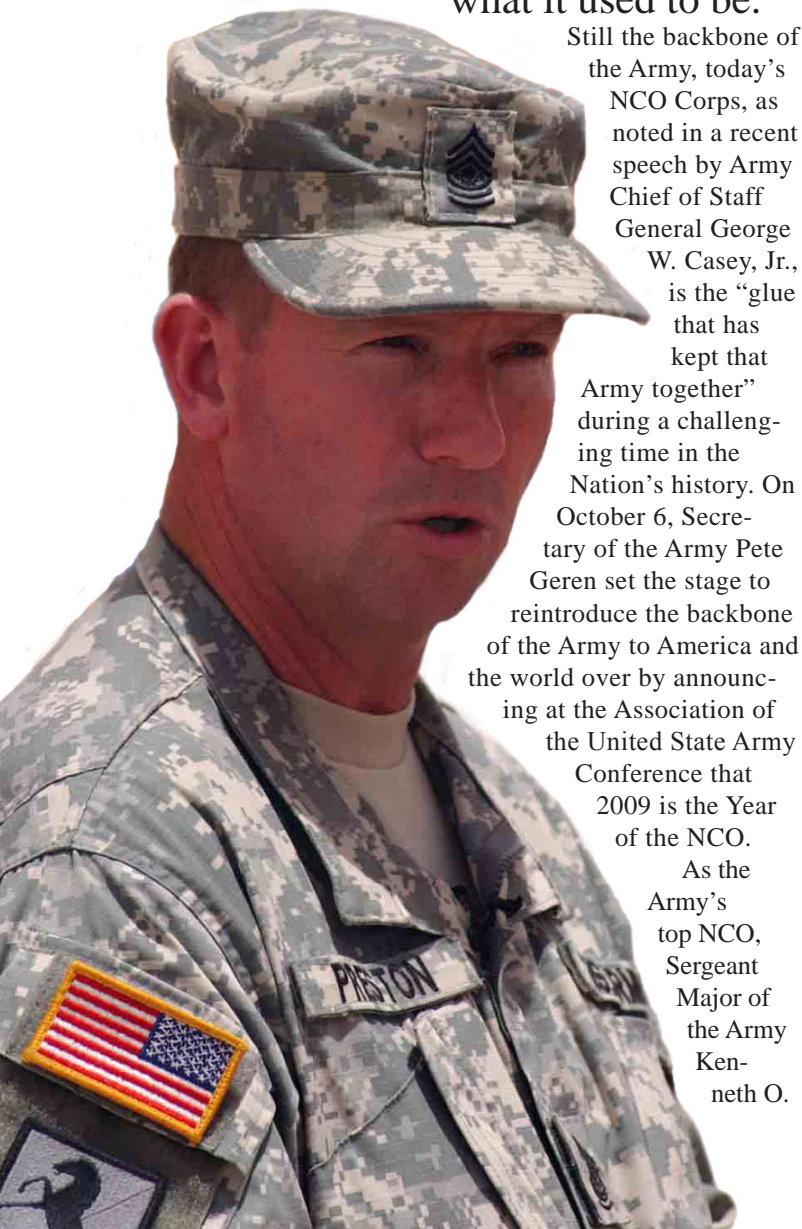
"We expect that of NCOs. We want them to know their Soldiers. We want them to know where their Soldiers go in the evenings and what they do on the weekend. We want them to identify risky behavior and to really sit their Soldiers down and counsel them, talk to them about safety as an example. Kind of like that big brother figure as we have always done. NCOs are our trainers, they teach our officers. They teach our Soldiers. NCOs are the technical subject matter experts of what we do every day. They are the backbone of our Army."

It is that message that Preston hopes America and the youth of today hear.

"It is more than just a recruiting campaign. It is more than just getting to the recruiters out there. We want Americans out there who are aspiring to be a Soldier to think beyond that. To think beyond what the Army can do for them to help them grow and be leaders in society," Preston said. "We want them to not only aspire to be a Soldier, but we want them to aspire to be a noncommissioned officer."

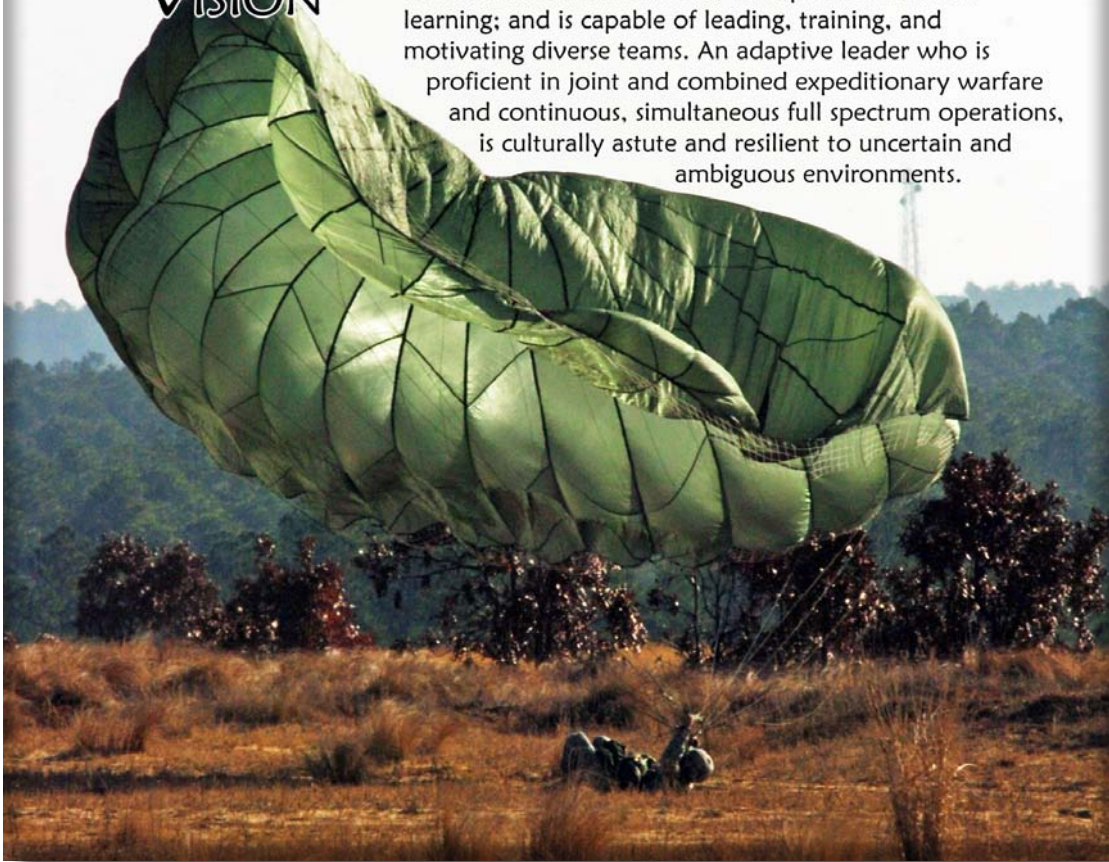
When asked what he feels about celebrating the Corps he loves, Preston said he has great pride, pride in all of the NCOs that serve today.

"I look at it from a historical perspective of where we've been, where we are, and where the Army is going in looking at the roles and responsibilities, and the professional development of NCOs," he said. "We have come a long way when you put it into perspective of where we started; where I started my Army career."



## NCO VISION

An innovative, competent professional enlisted leader grounded in heritage, values, and tradition who embodies the Warrior Ethos; champions continuous learning; and is capable of leading, training, and motivating diverse teams. An adaptive leader who is proficient in joint and combined expeditionary warfare and continuous, simultaneous full spectrum operations, is culturally astute and resilient to uncertain and ambiguous environments.



In celebrating 35 years of the all-volunteer force this past year, Preston said the Nation has come to realize that for everyone who wears the uniform today, for all services, those that are serving do so because they want to be there. They serve and take on increased roles and responsibilities because they want to – they want to contribute not only to the organization where they serve, but to the country they love.

Their story, however, is not as well known as it should be and Preston wants the Corps to change that during the Year of the NCO.

“I want them to tell their story. I want them to tell the Soldier story. When they go back to Hometown USA, whether that is coming back on R&R leave from mid tour combat deployment, or if it is the end of a deployment or just taking a vacation and going home, I want them to tell the Soldier story,” Preston said. “I want them to talk about their roles and responsibilities as a Soldier and NCO in the Army. I want them to talk about not just their occupational specialty, but also as a noncommissioned officer to talk about how they were grown and mentored, and given increased responsibility, and of course what their roles and responsibilities are within their organization.”

He said when American people see a Soldier in uniform they see the Army. His hopes, however, is for them to see beyond what the Army does to take a young man or woman, bring them

in and train and develop them, to become that Soldier they see.

“We want them to see how through life-long learning, through professional development, we grow them to be noncommissioned officers,” he said. “Not only do they serve as leaders and mentors and developers of Soldiers for the future, but as they leave the Army and go back out to society, they serve as role models and leaders in our communities.”

Preston said celebrating the Year of the NCO is more than just an educational campaign for America and its leaders, it is an opportunity to enhance the Corps with new programs and initiatives.

“The purpose of this year’s recognition for the year of the NCO is three-fold. We want to *recognize* the leadership, professionalism, commitment, courage, and dedication of our NCO Corps. We want to *inform* and educate Congress, government, institutions and the American people of the roles and responsibilities and quality service that our NCO corps provides. And we want to *enhance* our NCO corps’ education, fitness, leadership development and pride in service through the implementation of programs and policies that support the sustainment and growth of the Corps,” he said. “Within that, there are four strategic imperatives – *education, fitness, leadership, and pride in service.*”

Under education the Army is looking at sustaining and enhancing the NCO corps through increased access to improved



Photo by Dave Melancon

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston talks with Soldiers from the 529<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company during a breakfast meeting at Patton Barracks in Heidelberg, Germany. He said his message is simple wherever he goes to visit soldiers - "I want them to tell the Soldier Story. I want them to talk about not just their occupational specialty, but also as a noncommissioned officer to talk about how they were grown and mentored, and given increased responsibility, and of course what their roles and responsibilities are within their organization."

military and civilian education programs and through a structured self development process.

"One of the top priorities under education is the Army Career Tracker which is currently under development and will be rolled out over the course of this year and the year that follows," he said. "We not only want to get the Army Career Tracker fielded, but then tie it in with all those things that are tied to education – structured self development Phases I and II, guided self development, Warrior University, College of the American Soldier, and the transformation of the NCOES. Then we want to continue to

expand some outreach programs under the education process."

Underneath fitness, Preston said, the Army wants to implement Phase I of the Master Fitness Course into structured self development.

"The goal is to have every noncommissioned officer as they serve in the Army throughout their career, to be a master fitness trainer. We want them to be able to teach fitness and nutrition to their Soldiers. For a Soldier that serves in the Army this will be part of their professional development to be a master fitness trainer. We want to develop Phases II and III of the Master Fitness Course and get that into structured self development and then along with fitness there is the mental health courses that we also want to put into structured self development."

Looking at leadership, Preston said the Army plans on continuing to develop the NCO management and utilization system as well as work on some new initiatives for mid-grade NCOs.

"We are working some things right now to better identify at the sergeant, staff sergeant and sergeant first class levels, how to best utilize them in those positions outside of their mainstream occupational specialties," he said. "How do you select drill sergeants and recruiters, and how do you know who is best to serve in those kinds of positions."

Pride in service is the outreach program that Preston explained is where the Army will acknowledge the value

## The NCO must always:

- Lead by example
- Train from experience
- Maintain & enforce standards
- Take care of Soldiers
- Adapt to a changing world

of NCO leadership and service to the Nation by increasing the public's knowledge of NCO roles and responsibilities and showcasing contributions of the Corps and their families throughout the history of the Army. Some of the key initiatives being looked at are: the second publication of the Long Hard Road – stories about Iraq and Afghanistan written by NCOs; the creation of the Year of the NCO Web, to name a few.

Part of that pride in service, Preston explained, begins with the NCO Creed and the NCO Vision.

“As I look back on my career, each generation of NCO year after year, progressively has become far more competent and far more capable than we have ever had before. And we have had 233 years of learning to get to the point of where we are today,” he said. “It goes straight to the NCO Creed, and it is still relevant today – No one is more professional than I.”

From the Creed, Preston added, a vision is born – *An innovative, competent professional enlisted leader grounded in heritage, values, and tradition who embodies the Warrior Ethos; champions continuous learning; and is capable of leading, training, and motivating diverse teams. An adaptive leader who is proficient in joint and combined expeditionary warfare and continuous, simultaneous full spectrum operations, is culturally astute and resilient to uncertain and ambiguous environments.*

“It really defines what we want from the future, what is expected of our noncommissioned officer corps,” Preston said. “The NCO vision really helps to define the direction that our professional development institutions are going. It really helps to define the very broad scope of responsibilities and missions that our NCOs in the future will have to face.”

Looking back on his 33 plus year career, Preston said he learned an important lesson early on – that as NCOs you are expected to be the educators of the force – that you have to teach from a position of experience.

“When I was a young sergeant I had a first sergeant named Gary Pastine. He knew his role as a first sergeant and what needed to be done to build the team of NCOs in the company.

## The NCO is a:

- Critical and Creative Thinker
- Warrior Leader
- Leader Developer
- Ambassador
- Resource Manager

I was very fortunate to be part of a great platoon. Of all the platoons in the company we had the best platoon, but first sergeant didn't want to have one great platoon, he didn't want to have two or three other platoons that were just okay. He wanted all the platoons to be great. To get there, one of the things he was very religious about was conducting one hour of NCO professional development every week. It was four hours a month about everything we did as NCOs and, everything we were expected to do, how to conduct ourselves on and off duty, and what was expected of us in relationship to our Soldiers, he taught us,” Preston said. “So the message I want to get out there to the Corps is senior NCOs are expected to teach your junior NCOs. Just as we expect our junior NCOs to teach and train their Soldiers. Professional development continues throughout a Soldiers' career.”

It is that experience, dedication, commitment, value and the “glue” the NCO and his or her family brings to the Army that Preston hopes that everyone takes heed of during this Year of the NCO.

“It is our year. It is time for us to tell our story and I want all NCOs to get out there and engage with the American people.” 🇺🇸



# The NCO: A Short History

By L. R. ARMS  
NCO Museum Curator

*Illustrations/photos provided by NCO Museum*



*The Battle of Guilford Courthouse, Thursday, March 15, 1781*

**W**illiam Wooldridge, the first Sergeant Major of the Army, can remember his first sergeant just prior to World War II carrying a black book with the names of everyone in the company.

It included all kinds of information on each soldier – AWOLs, work habits, promotions, and so forth. The book passed from first sergeant to first sergeant, staying with the company and providing a historical document of each soldier.

As a young soldier, he did not understand that maintaining the descriptive book had been a duty of every first sergeant for more than 150 years – from the time of the first standardization of NCO duties in 1778 by General Friedrich von Steuben in his *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*. Later in his career, he learned to appreciate the history and traditions of the NCO Corps that had grown from those early beginnings.

In 1778, the *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*, commonly called the Blue Book, set down the duties and responsibilities of corporals, sergeants, first sergeants, quartermaster sergeants, and sergeants major which were the NCO ranks of the period. It also emphasized the importance of selecting quality soldiers for NCO positions.

The duties of the NCO, as set forth by the Blue Book were:



*Civil War 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. with NCO sword*

The sergeant major served as the assistant to the regimental adjutant. He kept rosters, formed details, and handled matters concerning the “interior management and discipline of the regiment.”

The Quartermaster sergeant assisted the regimental quartermaster whose duties he assumed during the quartermaster’s absence. He also supervised the proper loading and transport of the regiment’s baggage when on the march.

The first sergeant enforced discipline and encouraged duty among troops; he maintained the duty roster, made morning reports to the company commander, and kept the company descriptive book. This document listed the name, age, height, place of birth, and prior occupation of every enlisted man in the unit.

Sergeants and Corporals instructed the recruits in all matters of military training, including order of their behavior in regard to neatness and sanitation. Outbreaks of disturbances were to be punished. Listings of the sick were to be forwarded to the first sergeant.

In battle, NCOs closed the gaps caused by casualties and encouraged men to silence as well as to fire rapidly and true. The development of a strong NCO Corps helped sustain the Continental Army through severe hardships to final victory.

After the American Revolution, the numbers of Army troops were reduced to the bare minimum. The American government relied heavily upon militia and volunteer units to prevent uprisings and quell Indian disturbances. During times of war, the Army expanded, the professional soldier forming the basis for the expansion. This policy prevailed for much of the next century until world commitments and the stationing of troops overseas required the nation to maintain a strong professional force.

As the nation and the Army expanded westward, the Army assumed the responsibility for maintaining a number of isolated government-sponsored trading posts, called fur factories, used to facilitate trade with the Indians. NCOs assumed greater care and responsibility in the daily lives of their troops. They ensured their men’s cleanliness through inspections and closely monitored their activities with five role calls per day. Often, soldiers assisted



the government-appointed civilian with loading and unloading goods, building or repairing the factory, and on occasion, beating and packing the furs for shipment.

In 1825, the Army adopted the first attempt to establish a systematic method for NCO selection. Under this system, the appointment of regimental and company NCOs remained the prerogative of the regimental commander. The regimental commander usually accepted the recommendation of the company commander unless there were overriding considerations.

The *Abstract of Infantry Tactics*, published in 1829, provided instructions for training NCOs. The purpose of this instruction was to ensure that all NCOs possessed “an accurate knowledge of the exercise and use of their firelocks, of the manual exercise of the soldier, and of the firings and marchings.”

Field officers ensured that company officers provided proper instruction to their NCOs, and the sergeant major assisted in instructing sergeants and corporals. Newly-promoted corporals and sergeants of the company received instruction from the first sergeant.

In 1832, Congress added to the ranks of NCOs, creating the Ordnance Sergeant.

This was a specialized position, with duties centering on receiving and preserving the ordnance, arms, ammunition, and other military stores of the post to which the ordnance sergeant was assigned.

During this period, post gardens provided a source of nutrition outside the daily rations. In an effort to lower the cost of sustaining an Army, many posts grew vegetable gardens. Enlisted men planted, hoed, and watered the gardens as fatigue duty. Other posts, in addition to growing gardens, maintained herds of cattle. Many commanders and enlisted men disapproved of such duty, regarding it as unmilitary.

Considered by many to be more military, hunting proved popular on the frontier; it had a practical function as well, supplementing the daily ration. One commander went so far as to declare that the Army would save a great deal of money and train troops if soldiers were organized into hunting parties, instead of spending endless hours on fatigue duty.

During this period soldiers, spent leisure time in a variety of pursuits: card games, horse races, and billiards. Despite occa-



*Badge of Military Merit, American Revolution*

sionally being frowned upon, these activities filled many hours at the frontier post. In contrast, the Army supported reading, letter writing, and prayer groups. Moderate and large posts established libraries whose holdings included books of fiction and nonfiction, journals, and newspapers. Enlisted men and officers received separate rooms or reading times. Another common feature of the frontier post consisted of the drama group with both male and female characters played by the soldiers.

In addition to the troops needing to maintain peace among different Indian tribes, the opening of the Santa Fe trade trail in the 1820's created a need for mounted troops in the Army. In 1832, Congress created a battalion of mounted rangers. These

militia units, not part of the Regular Army, proved expensive to maintain. As a result, in 1833, Congress created two dragoon regiments.

Daily life for dragoons while in garrison consisted of reveille at daybreak, stable call 15 minutes later, breakfast, guard mounting, and mounted drill. Afterwards, dragoons drilled on foot with a carbine until 11 a.m., and then an hour of saber exercise. Next, soldiers ate dinner from 12 to 1 p.m. with a 30-minute mounted drill before sunset and an hour-long stable call before supper. After supper the men cleaned their accoutrements and pursued leisure pleasures. Taps sounded at 9 p.m.

Dragoons, considered elite troops, were required to be native-born American citizens at a time when the Army consisted of many foreign-born soldiers. To show their elite position in the Army, Dragoons reintroduced the chevron for NCO use. The chevrons pointed down in a “V” shape.

Immigration dramatically changed the Army

from 1840 onward. Irish and German immigrants composed large numbers of many units. Ulysses S. Grant estimated that more than half the Army during this period consisted of men born in foreign countries. Many of these immigrants sought to escape the ethnic or religious persecution common in the United States during this era. Newspapers in the Northeast often captioned help-wanted ads with, “Irish need not apply.” Immigrants who previously worked as teachers, merchants, or lawyers enlisted in the Army as a means of escaping persecution and incorporating into American society.

In 1840, NCOs adopted a distinctive standardized sword.



*Model 1840 NCO Sword*

Based primarily on a sword used by the French Army, the model 1840 NCO sword proved somewhat heavy-hilted and ill-balanced.

**B**oth the annexation of Texas in 1845 and the American desires for California led to war with Mexico in 1846. The war, unpopular in some areas of the United States, required large numbers of troops to serve outside the nation's borders for the first time.

During the Mexican-American War, the United States enlisted more than 115,000 troops; of these 73,000 were volunteers. Each volunteer received a promise of 160 acres of land when they completed their enlistment. Raised in local areas of particular states, the volunteers elected their officers and NCOs by popular vote. This often led to a lack of discipline among the troops, but their spirit more than compensated for their lack of discipline.

One volunteer unit, the First Regiment Missouri Mounted Volunteers, achieved considerable acclaim. Composed of eight companies from different Missouri counties, the regiment totaled 856 men which included farmers, businessmen, teachers, lawyers, and other elements of Missouri society.

The volunteers marched with the Army of the West, leaving Fort Leavenworth on June 26, 1846. Marching in detachments to ensure that they would find enough forage and water, they maintained a pace of 35 miles per day. In August, they captured Santa Fe without a fight. They then turned southward, as the main Army marched west, and engaged the Navajo. In November, the Navajo signed a peace treaty, and the Missourians headed for El Paso. Following a brief battle the Missourians captured El Paso and continued southward, engaging another Mexican army near Chihuahua. After defeating this army, they continued to march on.

Several months and many miles of marching later, the Missourians reached Matamoros; where they boarded ships and returned home. They had marched 3,000 miles without ever being paid and seldom supplied. Two Mexican armies and the Navajo had fallen to their guns.

The Mexican-American War ended with the addition of vast territories by the United States. In the years that followed, a major portion of the Army's responsibilities centered on protecting the Oregon and California emigrant trails. The large area covered by these trails and the small size of the Army, required small detachment operations. NCOs often led the small detachments sent out from frontier forts to discourage Indian attacks and assist settlers along the trails.

In October 1849, a young Massachusetts

farm boy named Percival Lowe joined the U.S. Army's Dragoons. A few days after enlisting, the Army sent Lowe to Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania and then to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He learned quickly how to keep his horse in sound condition while campaigning. He also learned the ways of the Plains and the various Indian tribes that lived there. More than anything, however, he learned about the individual soldiers in his unit, and how to lead them. He received a promotion to corporal, and then sergeant. In June of 1851, a little over two years after he had enlisted, Lowe became the first sergeant of his company.

Maintaining discipline always constituted a major problem on the frontier. Lowe viewed whiskey as a primary source of discipline problems for enlisted men. He often talked with other noncommissioned officers about this and cautioned each to give personal attention to his men to assure they were not drinking to excess. Drunk soldiers brought before Lowe were sometimes locked in the storeroom until they sobered up. Offenders received extra duty as punishment.

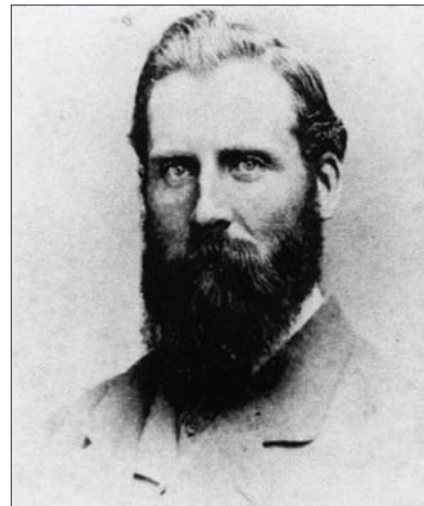
Lowe and the NCOs of the company established the "company courts-martial" (not recognized by Army regulations). This allowed the NCOs to enforce discipline for breaking minor regulations without lengthy proceedings. In the days before the summary court martial, it proved effective to discipline a man by the company court-martial and avoid ruining his career by bringing him before three officers of the regiment.

**T**he Civil War marked a radical change in American warfare: it brought the total war to America. This war required a large number of draftees and the launching of massive campaigns. It ended in the trench warfare outside Petersburg, Virginia.

During the Civil War, noncommissioned officers led the lines of skirmishers that preceded and followed each major unit. NCOs also carried the flags and regimental colors of their units. This crucial, but deadly, task maintained regimental alignment and allowed commanders to define the locations of their units on the field during battle.

As the war progressed, organizational and tactical changes led the Army to employ more open battle formations. These changes further enhanced the combat leadership role of the NCO.

In the post-Civil War era, the Artillery School at Fort Monroe, Va., reopened to train both officers and NCOs. In 1870, the Signal Corps established a school for training officers and NCOs. These schools were the first to be established, because both the Artillery and the Signal Corps required men to possess advanced technical knowledge in order to operate complex equipment and instruments. Efforts to provide advanced education for NCOs in



*1st Sgt. Percival Lowe*



*Color Sgt. Samuel Bloomer*



10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, circ. 1894

other less technical fields, however, failed to attract supporters. Many felt that experience in the field, not the classroom, made good infantry and other sergeants.

The Indian Wars of the 1870s to 1890s saw the Army involved in a long series of engagements. These wars often consisted of numerous scattered skirmishes over wide areas, without any substantial battle or engagement to determine the war's end. This type of war led to the further enhancement of the NCOs role as small unit leader. Often fighting in small detachments, troops relied heavily on the knowledge and abilities of NCOs.

The war with Spain in 1898 and the years that followed demonstrated the need for a more modern Army. During the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the increased use of technology which accompanied modernization greatly affected the NCO Corps. The number of NCO ranks grew rapidly; each advent of technology created another pay grade. The Army competed with industry for skilled technical workers. In 1908, Congress approved a pay bill rewarding those in the technical fields in order to maintain their services. Combat men, in contrast, suffered an inequity of pay. A Master Electrician in the Coast Artillery made \$75-84 per month. This constituted a good payday which most civilians failed to match. In contrast, The average In-

fantry battalion sergeant major with 20 to 25 years of service made \$33 per month. The average sergeant of the Signal Corps with five years of service received \$37 per month.

The Army clearly defined the duties of the noncommissioned officer during this period. The five or six pages of instructions provided by von Steuben's *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* in 1778 grew to 417 pages when the *Noncommissioned Officers Manual* was written in 1909. Contained in the work were two chapters, one of 15 pages for the first sergeant and another of 54 pages for the sergeant major. These chapters included forms to fill out and maintain, a description of duties, what should and should not be done, customs of service, and things of special interest.

World War I required the first massive training of men since the Civil War. NCOs trained more than 4 million men and the Army sent more than a million men to fight overseas. A typical training day started at six, with breakfast at seven o'clock. Training assembly began at eight, and the workday ended at four. Corporals served as the primary trainers, teaching lessons that emphasized weapons and daytime maneuvers. Troops received 12 hours of training on the proper use of the gas mask, this included a trip to the gas chamber.

After viewing the differences in American and foreign NCO prestige, General Pershing suggested the establishment of special schools for sergeants as well as separate NCO messes. The performance of noncommissioned officers in the American Expeditionary Force seemed to validate these changes.

After World War I, NCO grades were reorganized within five ranks: master sergeant, technical sergeant, staff sergeant, sergeant, and corporal. First sergeant became a position comparable in rank to technical sergeant. Pay from any one of 231 vocational skills could add \$3 to \$35 to the enlisted man's monthly pay.

During the late 1930's, technicians were created in grades 3, 4, and 5, equivalent to staff sergeant, sergeant and corporal, with chevrons marked with a "T." NCOs constituted only those who were recognized leaders of soldiers. The technician ranks resulted



The battle of San Juan Hill, circ. 1898



Harlem Hellfighters in action. Here, the men of the 369<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment are depicted wearing the American Brodie helmet; however, after being detached and seconded to the French, they wore the Adrian helmet, while retaining the rest of their American uniform.

in a rapid growth of promotions for the technical personnel, not matched by noncommissioned officers. In 1948, the Army discontinued the technician ranks and in 1955, created the specialist ranks.

During World War II, mobilization combined with other factors created a staggering growth in the percentage of noncommissioned officers in the Army. The proportion of noncommissioned officers in the Army increased from 20 percent of the enlisted ranks in 1941 to nearly 50 percent in 1945. This lessened the prestige for many NCO ranks.

In addition to the growing numbers of NCOs, the Army also saw a change from the eight-man Infantry squad to the 12-man squad. First, the sergeant replaced the corporal as squad leader. By 1942, the staff sergeant replaced the sergeant as squad leader. Thus, the rank of corporal came to mean very little, even though he served in theory, and by tradition, as a combat leader.

**B**asic training in World War II centered on hands-on experience instead of the classroom. NCOs conducted all the training of recruits. After basic training, an enlisted man went to his unit for further training. The rapid expansion of the Army led to a decrease in experienced men in the NCO ranks. If a man showed potential, he received a promotion, with privates quickly becoming corporals and corporals becoming sergeants.



Courtesy photo

Anti tank crew in Holland, WWII

In post-World War II era, the Army developed two programs affecting NCOs: a Career Guidance Plan and professional schools for NCOs. The Army discontinued technical ratings and service-wide standards for NCO selection, and training received new emphasis.

Education also received a new emphasis. Due to the continued growth of technology, the Army stressed education as a way of preparing young troops for advancement.

On 17 December 1949, the first class enrolled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Constabulary Brigade's NCO school located in Munich, Germany. Two years later, the U.S. Seventh Army took over the 2<sup>nd</sup> Constabulary functions, and the school became the Seventh Army Noncommissioned Officers Academy. Eight years later, Army Regulation 350-90 established Army-wide standards for NCO academies. Emphasis on NCO education increased to the point that by 1959, more than 180,000 troops attended NCO academies located in the continental United States.

In 1950, an ill-prepared United States found it needed to commit large numbers of troops to a nation a half a world away. The North Korean attack on South Korea, America's ally, stressed American responsibilities overseas in the post-World War II era. It became clear from this point forward that American commitments in Asia, Europe, and the Pacific required a strong and combat-ready, professional Army.

**D**uring the Korean War, the noncommissioned officer emerged more prominently as a battle leader than he had in World War II. The deeply eroded hills, ridges, narrow valleys, and deep gorges forced many units to advance as squads. The NCO ranks were reorganized once more, and the sergeant first class became the squad leader. The master sergeant and first sergeant became equal in pay. However, few promotional possibilities existed for senior NCO, as the Regimental Sergeant Major was only one pay grade above the squad leader.

To address this problem, in 1958, the Army added the ranks of staff sergeant and sergeant major to the NCO Corps. This provided for a better delineation of responsibilities in the enlisted structure and offered senior NCOs the chance for promotion. An added benefit for the Army consisted of the retention of good NCOs. At this point, the NCO ranks consisted of corporal, sergeant, staff sergeant, sergeant first class, master sergeant/first sergeant, and sergeant major.

In 1965, the first Ameri-

can ground-troops landed in Vietnam. The American policy of containment required the United States to hold the line against Communist aggression. The Vietnamese proved an enemy determined to fight a long, drawn-out war meant to wear down American forces. No clear battle-lines existed, and often friend and foe were hard to tell apart.

With decentralized control, the fighting in Vietnam centered on both the leadership of junior officers and noncommissioned officers. Much of the burden of combat leadership fell on the NCO. Needing large numbers of NCOs for combat, the Army created the Noncommissioned Officers Candidate Course. The Army established three branches of the course at Fort Benning, Ga., Fort Knox, Ky., and Fort Sill, Okla. After a 10-week course, the graduate received promotion to sergeant; the top 5 percent to staff sergeant. After an additional 10 weeks of practice, the NCO went to combat in Vietnam. The program received mixed feelings from senior NCOs, many of whom felt it undermined the prestige of the NCO Corps.

In 1966, Army Chief of Staff Harold K. Johnson chose Sergeant Major William O. Wooldridge as the first Sergeant Major of the Army. The SMA served as advisor and consultant to the Chief of Staff on enlisted matters. He sought to identify problems affecting enlisted personnel and recommended appropriate solutions.

During the following year, in 1967, General Johnson established the position of Command Sergeant Major. This position served as the commander's enlisted assistant to commanders at and above the battalion level.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the United States found itself involved in conflicts in Grenada, Panama, and Somalia. In addition, the United States as a world power found itself trying to maintain peace in Rwanda, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. These actions required a strong and ready NCO Corps for a successful mission accomplishment. Training and preparation for action in times of peace became critical to success in times of conflict.

In August 1990, Iraqi forces marched into Kuwait, setting off a chain of events that as of yet have not reached a conclusion. The United States responded by building a coalition of allies, deploying troops to Saudi Arabia, conducting a relentless air bombardment, and striking hard and fast in a desert campaign that crushed the Iraqi forces after 100 hours of ground combat. This operation,



Operations in Vietnam

Courtesy photo

named Desert Storm, displayed that the training and preparation of troops by NCOs were essential in the Army's success.

On 11 September 2001, members of the al-Qaeda terrorist network attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. These acts plunged the United States into a war with Islamic fundamentalists. Seeking to destroy one haven for the terrorists, the United States launched attacks on Afghanistan. Afghanistan's government, a radical Islamic fundamentalist group known as the Taliban, openly supported the terrorist al-Qaeda organization. They wrongly assumed that their landlocked Central Asian country was impenetrable to attack by the United States and its allies.

In October 2001, the first insertion of Special Forces teams in Afghanistan occurred; within hours, these teams started assisting the Northern Alliance, an ally of the US, and directed air strikes against Taliban positions. In the passing days, the teams split into three-man sub-teams to cover a greater area. As the collapse of the Taliban began, the Northern Alliance approached the key northern city of Mazar-e Sharif.

By 5 November, the Special Forces units and their Northern Alliance allies had readied their assault on Mazar-e Sharif. At a key position in the defense of the city Tangi Gap, the Taliban and their foreign allies massed for a determined fight. However, Special Forces called in devastating airstrikes. These airstrikes allowed the Northern Alliance to charge forward with horses, foot soldiers, and troops mounted in trucks to crush the Taliban and foreign forces with ease.

The Taliban and al-Qaeda forces reeled in defeat. On Nov. 13, 2001, the capital city Kabul fell to the Northern Alliance. The remnants of the Taliban and al-Qaeda forces fled the country or sought refuge in the mountains.

After crushing the Taliban in Afghanistan, the United States turned its attention to the unresolved issue of Iraq. In preparing for the Second Iraqi War, the United States formed a coalition



Courtesy photo  
Staff Sgt. Clifford Sims, Vietnam



Photo by Spc. Johanchaires Van Boers



Courtesy photo

Above, 89<sup>th</sup> MP Brigade in Iraq. Left, Soldiers from 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Apache Troop, 2-5 Cav, 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT, 1<sup>st</sup> Cav Div move tactically as they enter and clear their objective during combat operations in Fallujah, Iraq.

with Britain, Spain, and a number of other nations.

In the opening months of 2003, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division deployed to Kuwait in preparation for the invasion of Iraq. After months of preparation, on March 19, 2003, the United States plunged into war against Iraq with devastating air strikes. On the next day, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division and the Marine Expeditionary Force streamed across the border and captured the Iraqi oilfields in Rumaila intact. By March 22, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID crossed the Euphrates River streaming northward. In the days that followed, the Iraqis crumbled without major resistance, and the operation slowed due to high winds and dust storms. In places called Najaf and Nasiriya, Iraqi forces found it

impossible to match American soldiers training and preparation in the use of firepower and technology.

Following the defeat of the Iraqi Army, a guerilla war ensued. Insurgent forces adopted the car bomb as a major means of inflicting carnage. As the insurrection continued, militia groups took control of many areas and the situation in Iraq deteriorated. In early 2007, the US responded, with a “surge” of troops, to purge all militia and insurgent groups from Baghdad and other key areas in Iraq. By the end of 2008, this effort proved successful, and the situation in Iraq stabilized.

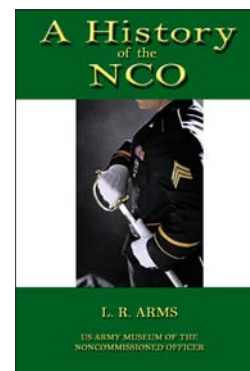
Today, noncommissioned officers lead their troops in combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan. These NCOs continue the history and traditions of those who went before them. They retain the duties and responsibilities given to them during the American Revolution and the role as a small unit leader received on the Western Plains. They are leaders that train and prepare their soldiers for combat as they did in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm.



Photo by Spc. Gul A. Alisan

Staff Sgt. Tonya Floyd uses a stethoscope to listen to an Afghan woman's breathing during a civil medical assistance mission conducted by the Joint Civil Military Operations Task Force team from in Jalalabad Province, Afghanistan. Floyd is assigned to the 452nd Combat Support Hospital.

*For a more in-depth history of the NCO written by Larry Arms, visit the NCO Journal Web site on AKO at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/138349>. There you will be able to download a PDF version of his article.*



# The NCO Creed - how it came to be

*Editor's note: the following is an excerpt from the Origins of the Noncommissioned Officer Creed, written by Sgt. Maj. Dan Elder and Sgt. Maj. Felix Sanchez in May 1998.*

It started on the fourth floor of Building 4 at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1973 with a plain white sheet of paper and three letters; N-C-O. From there begins the history of the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer.

The Creed has been around for many years in different forms and fashions. Sergeants can recall reading the *Creed* on the day they were first inducted into the NCO Corps.

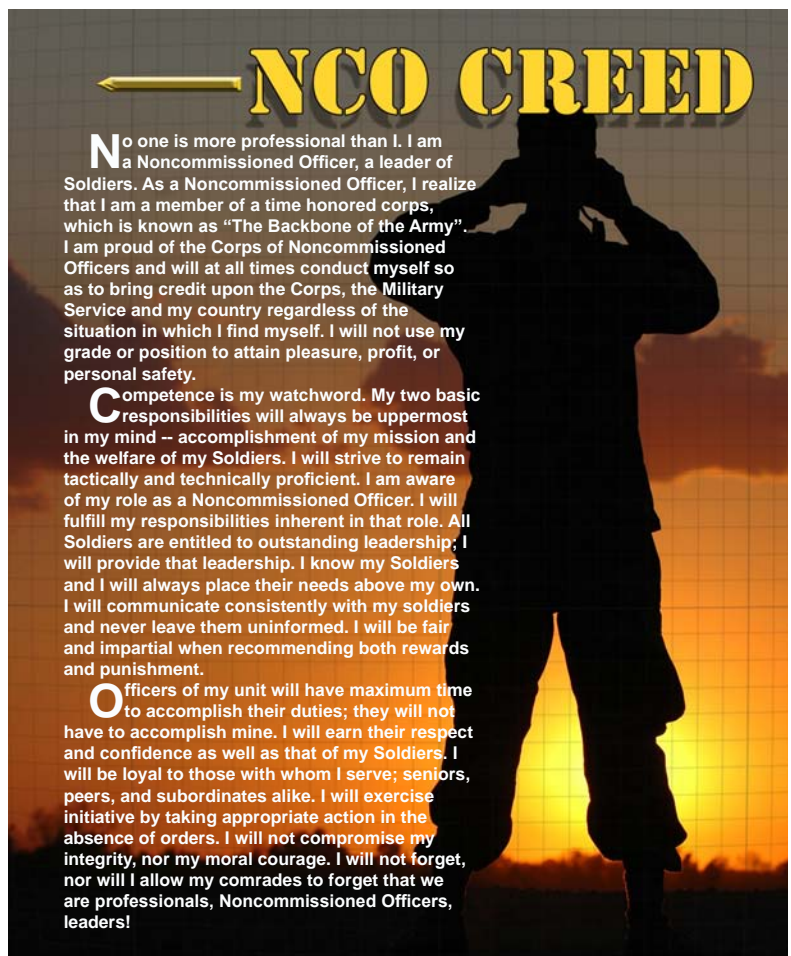
The earliest mention of the Creed in official and unofficial publications seemed to be in the year 1989, but the Creed is older than that. The problem centered on which Creed? In the early 1980's the Army started seeing NCO Creeds produced by various commands. Though similar in nature, they differed in detail." Research has also turned up different versions of the Creed. A reprint of the *Sergeants Book*, prepared in 1982 by then 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Haga, discusses the *Creed*.

But where did the Creed come from. In an article written by Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Michael T. Woodward that appeared in the Jul-Aug 1975 issue of the *Infantry* magazine he wrote that, "The Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer was developed by the NCOs of the NCO Subcommittee, Command and Leadership Committee, Leadership Department U.S. Army Infantry School," at Fort Benning, Ga.

By 1973, the Army (and the noncommissioned officer corps) was in turmoil. Of all the post-Vietnam developments in American military policy, the most influential in shaping the Army was the coming of the Modern Volunteer Army. With the inception of the Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course, many young sergeants were not the skilled trainers of the past and were only trained to perform a specific job, squad leaders in Vietnam. The Noncommissioned Officer System was under development, and the Army was re-writing its *Field Manual 22-100, Leadership*, to set a road map for leaders to follow.

Of those working on the challenges at hand, one of the only NCO-pure instructional departments at the U.S. Army Infantry School was the NCO Subcommittee, of the Command and Leadership Committee, Leadership Department. Besides training Soldiers at the Noncommissioned Officer's Academy, these NCOs also developed instructional material and worked as part of the team developing model leadership programs of instruction.

Serving on this team were Master Sgt. John Cato, Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Classes Earle Brigham and Jimmy Jakes, and Staff Sgts. Raymond Brown and Lester Cochran. Michael Woodward would soon join them. They worked under the direction of the Chief of the Command, Staff and Leadership Department, Col. Nathan Vail. During one of their many "brainstorming sessions," Brigham recalls writing those three letters on a plain white sheet of paper ... N C O. From those three letters they began to



## NCO CREED

**N**o 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.

**C**ompetence 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.

**O**fficers 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!

build the Creed. The idea behind developing a creed was to give noncommissioned officers a "yardstick by which to measure themselves." There was an oath of enlistment for incoming enlistees and an oath of commissioning for the officers, yet the noncommissioned officer had nothing that recognized their induction into the NCO Corps.

The NCO Subcommittee's first drafts did not make it through the Infantry Center's editors, and they rewrote the Creed numerous times. When it was ultimately approved, the Creed was designed on a scroll, and printed on the inside cover of the Special Texts issued to students attending the noncommissioned officer courses at Fort Benning, beginning in 1974. Though the Creed was submitted higher for approval and distribution Army-wide, it was not formalized by an official Army publication until 11 years later.

Though re-written many different ways, the Creed still today begins its paragraphs with those three letters, N C O. It continues to guide and reinforce the values of the new generation of noncommissioned officers. At the time of its development, the sergeants of the NCO Subcommittee were unaware of the impact the Creed would have in the coming years. However, the goal of providing a tool for measuring the competencies of a non-commissioned officer was achieved, and is forever a part of our history.

## A Long Time Coming

# 2009 - The Year of the NCO

Sgt. Jared M. Tracy  
68<sup>th</sup> MEDDAC

On Oct. 6, 2008, the Honorable Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army, pronounced 2009 “The Year of the Noncommissioned Officer.” This is the second time the NCO Corps enjoyed such an honor. The Honorable John Marsh made a similar designation in 1989. Within these 20 years the NCO Corps, and the Army generally, have experienced both continuity and profound change. The Army’s mission, “to fight and win the nation’s wars,” has not changed. Neither has the sergeant’s business: “to lead and train Soldiers.” But the ever-shifting geopolitical environment has demanded reevaluations in the ways the Army fights, and consequently the ways NCOs lead and train Soldiers. Since 1989, as throughout their history, NCOs have accepted these challenges and shouldered the burden of leading and training Soldiers in a constant environment of change.

“No one is more professional than I.” In many ways the professionalization of the NCO Corps grew out of strategic imperatives. From an educational standpoint NCOs benefitted from the Cold War which began in the late-1940s. In the early days of the Cold War the Army set up a Noncommissioned Officer Academy at the U.S. Constabulary in Germany. This was significant because Germany was the dividing line between East and West, and it was the nation where both the United States and the Soviet Union believed the next major war would start and be fought. Beginning in the 1950s forward-looking officers and NCOs worked to build, standardize, and improve NCO academies throughout the Army. These academies trained NCOs in combat tactics and maneuvers.

During the Vietnam Conflict the Army “produced” well-trained, educated NCOs in the Noncommissioned Officers Candidate Course. President Richard Nixon’s creation of the all-



Illustration by Larry Selman

### Never Forget

volunteer Army in 1973 added further impetus to the professionalization of the NCO Corps. In the early-1970s the Army began the Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES), the Basic and Advanced Noncommissioned Officers Course (BNCOC and ANCOC), and the Sergeants Major Academy. In the late-1970s a primary NCO leadership course was implemented, along with the Enlisted Personnel Management System (EPMS), the latter of which was designed to standardize NCO career progression throughout the Army. Into the 1980s and ‘90s the NCOES and EPMS experienced growing pains and underwent many changes to include requiring attendance in the Primary Leadership Development Course, BNCOC, and ANCOC for promotion to the corresponding ranks. Beginning in 1980, the Noncommissioned Officer Development Plan (NCOBP) supplemented the NCOES in ensuring NCOs’ task proficiency and appropriate skill level training. From the Constabulary NCO Academy in the 1940s and ‘50s to the NCOES in the 1970s and ‘80s, it is clear that the specter of war with the Soviet Union contributed greatly to the professional development of the U.S. Army NCO.

But this bipolar international system did not last. A series of events in the late 1980s brought the end of the Cold War, as well as the end of the Soviet Union and many of its communist allies. The U.S. Army had emerged victorious. But now conflicts in underdeveloped nations seemed more complex, and no longer just proxy wars for the two superpowers.

In the 1990s the United States engaged in numerous intermediate- and low-level conflicts, peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, stability operations, and some that fell somewhere in between. The heaviest combat occurred in 1990 – 1991 when a United Nations coalition, led by the United States, ousted Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Throughout the decade many Army contingents deployed for major relief operations in countries in nearly every continent. The U.S. Army assisted and established its



Illustration by Larry Selman

### Echoes Thru Time - History of the Sergeant Major



presence in such countries as Somalia, Haiti, Honduras, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Although the United States utilized its military for similar missions throughout American history – e.g. in Cuba and the Philippines – in the post-Cold War world the military became the premier government instrument for political, economic, and humanitarian assistance. Since 1989 the nation expected its military to adapt to the changing geopolitical circumstances, and the Army expected its NCOs to adapt as well. Between the two “Years of the NCO,” 1989 and 2009, the Army has constantly reevaluated its strategies, and has entrusted its NCOs to not only learn new warfighting technologies and methodologies, but to pass their knowledge down to the next generation of leaders. During these years NCOs forced themselves “to remain technically and tactically proficient.”

The Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, the worst in American history, plunged the United States into the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The attacks emphasized a previously underestimated threat – Non-State Actors (NSAs), in this case radical Islamic terrorists. It was one thing to train NCOs in European-style conventional combat as was the case during the Cold War; it was another to prepare NCOs and Soldiers for fighting faceless enemies that hide among their own populations in mountainous and urban terrain. It was also important to reiterate to these tactical leaders the importance of the Laws of War, even as terrorist insurgents refused to abide by the same rules of warfare. Although the United States Army had fought non-conventional wars before, the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts involved high and low intensity conflict, counter-insurgency warfare, humanitarian operations, and nation-building, all in one. The complexities of these campaigns placed added burdens on its low- and mid-level leadership, including junior and senior noncommissioned officers. While the old adage states that the Army always “trains to fight the last war,” NCOs have been astonishingly adaptive when training for and conducting missions in these newer, more complicated operational environments. This has been achieved by doctrinal flexibility, technological advancements and proficiency, increased intelligence and information integration, and good ol’ fashioned grit and guts.

Prior to the Cold War, the Army was an expeditionary force. For example, in the two world wars the military met manpower needs through selective service drafts and, of course, volunteers. Although the astronomical increase in defense expenditures during World War II slowed in the late 1940s and 1950s, policy makers generally believed that only a large military and a sizeable defense budget could contain the spread of communism. This belief remained until almost the end of the Vietnam Conflict and the all-volunteer military was reinstated. Although President Ronald Reagan increased defense spending substantially in the 1980s, the military experienced significant downsizing the following decade. Even in the GWOT, the trend is toward military “individualization” – we now have the most “professional” Army in American history. Gone are the days of division or corps sized



Illustration by Larry Selman

June 6, 1944, Normandy, France, 7:20 a.m. . . . Soaked, bloodied, and exhausted, Army Rangers breach the German defenses at Pointe-du-Hoc in search of five 155mm cannons that threaten the invasion beaches. As elements of Companies D, E, F, and HQ storm the heights, 1st Sgt. Leonard Lomell returns fire while Pfc. Leonard Rubin snags Pfc. Robert Fruhling at the cliff face. Lomell would later find and disable the cannons, earning the DSC. After two days of vicious combat, only 50 of the 225 Rangers who landed at Pointe-du-Hoc remained able to fight.

elements (or entire armies) charging across No Man’s Land or launching offensives across channels against a continental adversary. In the GWOT, fire teams, squads, platoons, and companies are the real movers and shakers. In this model, the professional and intellectual wherewithal of the individual Soldier, NCO, and officer is much more pronounced. In today’s media-rich environment, squad-level tactical operations can have very important operational, even strategic, implications.

The Army counteracts numerical inferiority with Warrior Task training, NCOES, NCOEP, MOS-specific specialty identifiers, and various professional incentives. The result is a smaller, but more lethal and efficient, Army and NCO Corps. Today’s highly trained and educated Noncommissioned Officer stands ready to face the challenges inherent in a nation at war. NCOs continually keep pace with technological and doctrinal changes while training their subordinates to maintain technical and tactical proficiency. They are, after all, the Army’s next generation of leaders. We as NCOs must not only carry the mantle passed to us from our predecessors, but we must ensure that it is placed safely in the hands of our subordinates. We are honored to celebrate 2009 as the Year of the NCO. But we are also aware that we are part of a much larger tradition that rests on a foundation of patriotism, selflessness, and sacrifice.

*Sgt. Tracy is a Medical Laboratory NCO assigned to the Medical Activity, Fort Leavenworth, Ks. He joined the Army at the age of 30. He already possessed two degrees at the time, a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in History from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is a General William DePuy contest award winner for a paper he wrote on Ethical Challenges in Stability Operations. That paper will appear in the next issue of the NCO Journal.*

# NCO Stories

*A selection of Valor*



## *Citation to award the Medal of Honor*

*The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of Congress the Medal of Honor to*

*Sergeant First Class Paul R. Smith  
United States Army*

*For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:*

*Sergeant First Class Paul R. Smith distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with an armed enemy near Baghdad International Airport, Baghdad, Iraq on 4 April 2003. On that day, Sergeant First Class Smith was engaged in the construction of a prisoner of war holding area when his Task Force was violently attacked by a company-sized enemy force. Realizing the vulnerability of over 100 fellow soldiers, Sergeant First Class Smith quickly organized a hasty defense consisting of two platoons*

*of soldiers, one Bradley Fighting Vehicle and three armored personnel carriers. As the fight developed, Sergeant First Class Smith braved hostile enemy fire to personally engage the enemy with hand grenades and anti-tank weapons, and organized the evacuation of three wounded soldiers from an armored personnel carrier struck by a rocket propelled grenade and a 60mm mortar round. Fearing the enemy would overrun their defenses, Sergeant First Class Smith moved under withering enemy fire to man a .50 caliber machine gun mounted on a damaged armored personnel carrier. In total disregard for his own life, he maintained his exposed position in order to engage the attacking enemy force. During this action, he was mortally wounded. His courageous actions helped defeat the enemy attack, and resulted in as many as 50 enemy soldiers killed, while allowing the safe withdrawal of numerous wounded soldiers. Sergeant First Class Smith's extraordinary heroism and uncommon valor are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the Third Infantry Division "Rock of the Marne," and the United States Army.*

# Biography - Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith

*Editor's Note: The following information is taken from the Stories of Valor section of the Army.mil Web site.*

Sergeant First Class Paul Ray Smith was assigned to Bravo Company, 11<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division at the time of his death. He received the Medal of Honor posthumously during a White House ceremony April 4, 2005.

He enlisted in the Army in October 1989 and completed Basic and Advanced Individual Training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo. His assignments included 82<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Battalion, Bamberg, Germany, 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion, Fort Riley, Kan., 317<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Fort Benning, Ga., 9<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Schweinfurt, Germany, and 11<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Fort Stewart, Ga.

Smith was a veteran of the Persian Gulf War, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Operation Iraqi Freedom

The personal character of Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Smith is best described through some anecdotes his sister related in a speech about her brother:

"Paul Ray had an incredible love for the troops under his command. One Christmas, the wife of a Soldier in Paul Ray's platoon had just had surgery and the Soldier and his wife were unable to provide a Christmas for their family. So, Paul Ray collected food from the company Christmas party, and he and Birgit bought presents for the children, and they took them to the Soldier's home."

Paul Ray's family never heard of this until recounted to them by friends after his death.

"Another ... very descriptive event that showed Paul Ray's concern for his men involves another Soldier whose baby daughter was unexpectedly admitted to the hospital with a serious illness. Paul Ray would drive an hour out of town every night to give his support to this Soldier and his wife."

In the last letter that Paul Ray wrote to the parents from Iraq, he told them "Now that he was a father himself, he realized just how much they had sacrificed to make his life a good life and he thanked them for that special effort. He spoke of being prepared to give – as he said – 'all that I am, to ensure that all my boys make it home.' In that same letter, he told our parents how proud he was of the 'privilege to be given 25 of the finest Americans we call Soldiers to lead into war' and he recognized their fears and his responsibilities for their welfare."

Paul Ray Smith was born on September 24, 1969, in El Paso, Texas. At the age of nine, his family moved to South Tampa, Florida, where he attended public schools. He enjoyed sports, liked cats, skateboarding, riding bicycles, and playing pranks with friends and his younger sister Lisa. He particularly enjoyed

football, which instilled the importance of being part of a team and motivated his natural leadership abilities.

He developed an interest in carpentry while in high school and was employed part-time as a carpenter assistant. Paul Ray had an interest in old cars – he enjoyed taking things apart to see how they worked. He restored a dune buggy with a friend. He liked to collect things from the sea, rocks in general, marbles. His family remembered that as far back as they could recall, when anyone would ask what he wanted to do as an adult, he always said, "I want to be a Soldier, get married, and have kids."

Upon graduating in 1988 from Tampa Bay Vocational Technical High School, he joined the Army and attended Basic Training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo. As his mother wrote in his biography

for a dedication ceremony in Orlando, he had begun living his dream ... he was assigned to Germany, met and married his wife, Birgit, had two children, and was "doing what he was born to do ... Lead American Soldiers." Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Smith served as a combat engineer and was deployed to Kuwait during the Persian Gulf War, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and finally to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Smith joined the 11<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion in 1999 and immediately became an integral part of Bravo Company. When he deployed with his platoon to Kosovo in May 2001, as part of

the KFOR 3A rotation, Smith was responsible for daily presence patrols in the highly populated town of Gnjilane. In the spring of 2002, he was promoted to sergeant first class and completed the Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course in August 2002.

In January 2003, Smith returned from leave to prepare his men for rapid deployment to Kuwait as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division buildup for Operation Iraqi Freedom. Smith took a strict approach to training his men, ensuring that his platoon was proficient in handling weapons and prepared for urban combat.

Bravo Company crossed the border on March 19 and traveled more than 300 kilometers in the first 48 hours of the war as part of the lead company in support of Task Force 2-7 Infantry. Passing through the Karbala Gap, Smith and his men pushed through the night of April 3, towards Baghdad Airport where Bravo Company, 11<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion of Task Force 2-7 were involved in a firefight with Iraqi forces. Sgt. 1st Class Smith's heroic actions and tragic death are described in more detail in the battlescape section of this Web site (<http://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/smith/battlescape/index.html>) and in his Medal of Honor Citation (previous page)

For more information on Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith, visit the Web site at <http://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/smith/index.html>.



**Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Paul Ray Smith**

# Distinguished Service Cross recipient chooses third Iraq deployment

By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
Army News Service

He served in Iraq twice before. He was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross for his actions as a squad leader here. He didn't have to come back.

But Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Nein is back, on his third deployment in Iraq, and his fourth overseas tour this decade. The first was in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2001.

Only the Medal of Honor trumps the DSC among awards for valor in battle. Nein was the first member of the Guard to receive the award and only the fourth servicemember during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The DSC was an upgrade from the Silver Star Medal that Nein was originally awarded for his actions as a squad leader with the Kentucky National Guard's 617<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company during a March 20, 2005, ambush.

Nein and the National Guard's Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester - the first woman awarded the Silver Star for direct combat action against an enemy - led a counterattack that saw 27 insurgents killed, seven captured and no deaths in their unit. Two Soldiers were wounded.

Nein still leads in Iraq, where he's now serving with the Kentucky National Guard's 223<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Company.

"I probably didn't have to be here this time, but I don't think that I would have missed it," Nein said. "I feel honored to be a part of this."

This time, he is a platoon sergeant providing escorts for the 18<sup>th</sup> Military Police Brigade's Iraqi Police Transitional Team.

Nein has seen five years of change firsthand. He first deployed here with the initial liberation force in 2003. He was back in 2005.

"I've seen a huge difference from 2005 to where we are now," he said. "I can remember thinking in 2005, looking back at 2003, how much different it was. I can't believe we've come as far as we have as far as getting their economy going. The violence is down greatly. It's unbelievable how much different it is."

Nein said the United States took many years to get where it is today -- in Iraq, he said, the country did a turnaround in less than a decade.

"The great life that we live in the United States -- people look at that and think that it's always been that way -- but it hasn't. Just 40 or 50 years ago we were still fighting the civil rights movement. We have fought for 232 years to get to where we're at. Yet in five years [Iraqis] have gone from a dictatorship to the ability to vote for who they want."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Nein, 39, with the Kentucky National Guard's 223<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Company, at Camp Taji, Iraq on Oct. 18, 2008. He is now serving on his third deployment.

Nein said the National Guard has played an essential role in Iraq's transformation. One example is his own unit's mission.

"We're helping transform the Iraqi police to be a more relevant force and a more professional force," he said. "We're out there every day evaluating their leaders, evaluating their recruits, evaluating their police stations to make sure that they're up to par so that we can hand this mission over to them and they can take control."

From Clark County, Ind., Nein enlisted in the National Guard in 1996. "I wanted to give something back to the people that have given me so much," he said.

He has strong feelings about the Guard. "It's one of the best assets the United States Army has," he said. "It's a relevant and ready force. We have gone in the last five years from a great force to an outstanding force. We can pick up and be anywhere in the world and accomplish a mission just like any other unit in the United States and perform to the equivalent level. I can't say enough about the Guard."

Despite Nein's intense Guard pride, he sees all servicemembers here as a joint team. "I don't see National Guard," he said. "I don't see Reserve Soldiers, and I don't see active-duty Soldiers, because we're all doing the same mission and we're keeping up the great professionalism ... meeting every bit of the same standards across the board."

But Nein said the National Guard is unique because the Citizen-Soldier or Citizen-Airman balances family, a civilian career and their military service.



Continued on Page 29



# NCO gets Soldier's Medal for rescue of Filipina students

By Lt. Col. Joe Allegretti  
Joint Special Operations  
Task Force-Philippines

An American noncommissioned officer deployed to the U.S. Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines was awarded the Soldier's Medal Nov. 27 for risking his life to save three Filipino college students from drowning last year.

Staff Sgt. Ruben D. Gonzalez heard calls for help Sept. 30, 2007, along the shores at Naval Station Zamboanga in the Southern Philippines, and he sprang into action.

Arthur M. Atilano witnessed the events. He said, "One of the kids got pulled by the current and brought him in the deep area below the pier. Then, two teenagers tried to save the kid. The two teenagers were also pulled to the deep water. That was when they started calling for help."

Students and staff of Zamboanga's MEIN College were enjoying a day at the beach, celebrating the college's "Foundation Day," when the three students got caught in the dangerous current and were dragged into deep, unsafe water.

"The water current that day was incredibly strong; even the LCT (a 65-ton naval vessel) could not dock at the pier," said Sgt. Sausha T. Jones of the JSOTF-P.

Gonzalez was in the area performing logistics work. Seeing and hearing the situation begin to unravel, he quickly dove headfirst into the water and went for the most exhausted swimmer first.

Grabbing the victim around the chest, Gonzalez swam him to the nearest pier piling, which served as a makeshift life-preserver. Telling the student to hold the piling as tightly as possible, Gonzalez swam back out for the other two distressed swimmers, pulling them both through the current to the nearest pier piling.

"I was so tired and exhausted, I could not hang on [to the pil-



Photo by MC2 Aaron D. Burden

Col. Bill Coultrup, commander of Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines, pins the Soldier's Medal on Staff Sgt. Ruben D. Gonzalez as part of a ceremony Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27. Gonzalez was awarded the medal for risking his life to save three Filipino students from drowning.



ing] and accepted that I was going to die," said the first swimmer Gonzalez rescued.

Seeing Philippine Navy personnel throwing flotation devices down to the distressed swimmers, Gonzalez shouted out words of encouragement to hang on a little longer.

Upon reaching the beach, Philippine Navy medics tended to the victims. After it was clear the students were ashore and in good hands, Gonzalez left the growing crowd of onlookers, unnoticed. He got back in his vehicle and, despite several cuts on his arms, hands, legs, and feet, returned to duty.

"Knowing the danger on putting his life at risk to rescue my students is a heroism act that forever will be embedded in our hearts, for without him that very moment, my students would have died," said MEIN College teacher and eye-witness, Margie Janda. "Thank God for giving us Mr. Gonzalez."

# Soldier earns Silver Star for actions in Iraq

By David Crozier

On Sept. 4, 2007, then 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Eric Geressy of Company E, 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 2<sup>nd</sup> Stryker Cavalry Regiment assigned to Multi-National Division-Baghdad, Iraq, wasn't contemplating being a hero in any way shape or form. He was more concerned with ensuring his Soldiers were ready to defend the Combat Outpost (COP) they had assumed control of in Al Hadar, Baghdad; in the middle of Sunni and Shia sectarian violence; just two days earlier. He worked his Soldiers - many on their first combat tour in Iraq - day and night; fortifying positions; placing weapons systems in strategic locations; sandbagging windows; emplacing first responder kits and litters where they could be easily gotten to; rehearsing response scenarios - preparing for the "worst case scenario."

His insistence in fortifying the COP and preparing his Soldiers was just "what the doctor ordered," because on that infamous day, minus his company commander, fire support officer and executive officer who were all back at Forward Operating Base Falcon attending meetings and seeing to the retrofitting of the unit's Strykers for service in the sector, Geressy would lead his unit in a fierce 6 ½ hour firefight against enemy forces; fearlessly exposing himself to direct enemy fire while instilling confidence in his men, directing key weapons systems on enemy positions, and evacuating a wounded Soldier out of harm's way.

Sept. 5, almost one year to the day, now Master Sgt. Geressy, a student of the Sergeants Major Course Class 59, U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas, was recognized for those valorous actions as he stood center stage before a capacity crowd in the Academy's East Auditorium, and was awarded the Silver Star Medal. On hand to witness the award were members of Geressy's family including his mother Mary Ann, his grandfather, Mitchell Rech, World War II veteran from the 504<sup>th</sup> Paratroop Regiment, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division who has three combat jumps under his belt. Members of his former units were also in attendance. His former brigade commander from the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, Col. Michael Steele, who commanded Geressy during his second combat tour in Iraq was the guest speaker for the ceremony.

"It is a real honor for me to be here; truly an honor for 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Geressy," Steele said as he recounted the discussions from the night before as the two reminisced about days gone by. Steele noted during the discussions that many others present were wearing black bracelets containing the names of fellow warriors who had paid the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mary Ferguson

World War II veteran Mitchell Rech shakes the hand of his grandson, Master Sgt. Eric Geressy, after pinning the Silver Star Medal on his uniform while Col. Michael Steele, Deputy G3 Training, U.S. Army Forces Command and Geressy's former brigade commander with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division looks on. Geressy was awarded the medal during ceremonies held Sept. 5 at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas, where Geressy is a member of Class 59.



"I could hear the discussion in the background but my mind averted to those bracelets and I couldn't help but think of the phrase, 'Freedom isn't free.' And as best I know President [Ronald] Reagan is the one that coined that phrase," Steele said. "Freedom isn't free and no one knows that better than the Soldier because he is the one who has to fight for it. Freedom has a flavor that the protected will never know. Freedom can't be given; it has got to be earned. It can't be inherited; it has to be earned by each and every generation."

Steele explained that Soldiers pay for the price of freedom. That payment comes in the form of blood and as "we come to these award ceremonies to reward gallantry and heroism; we must also come to remember and recognize the men and women who epitomize selfless service and heroism; men who build and establish a legacy of honor and distinction; men who believe in the Latin motto: Ne Desit Virtus - let valor not fail."

He challenged those present to continue to remember and refocus - gain strength courage and confidence from those examples of heroism.

"When we see a medal for gallantry put on a man's chest, we ought to be challenged to live up to the legacy, the reputation



and the standards of the men who have won that award; men like Eric Geressy,” Steele said. “My number one wish at this point in my life is that when my son takes the oath of office in 18 months and becomes a platoon leader that he has a platoon sergeant and a first sergeant and a command sergeant major like Eric Geressy. I don’t know anything I could say more about a man than to say I want my only son to walk shoulder by shoulder into combat with a man like Eric Geressy.”

Following Steele’s remarks, Rech placed the medal on the chest of his grandson, shook his hand and gave him a tearful hug.

“This is out of this world,” said the combat veteran and Bronze Star recipient. “It is really the highlight of my life to be able to put that Silver Star on him. It is just great.”

Geressy’s mom, who said when the Staten Island, N.Y., native joined the Army some 20 years ago, she only gave him two weeks and he would be back home.


“When he was a teenager he was a handful and I figured Oh my God, he’s going to come back in chains, but he surprised us all and no one more than me,” Mary Ann said. “I’m on cloud nine, like it’s a dream; a dream for him - recognition - for me it’s being a great mom, but for him it is recognition that he is just a great Soldier. He’s got his head on his shoulders; he is dedicated to the Army, to his men, to his friends, to his rela-

tives. He’s a stand up guy, a born leader.”

Geressy’s name now becomes a piece of history, joining the names of other notables for whom gallantry is synonymous - former Sergeant Major of the Army William O. Wooldridge, Gen. George Patton, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, Corporal Pat Tillman, 1st Lt. Audie Murphy and General Omar Bradley to name a few. But for all the accolades, handshakes, hugs and congratulations, Geressy himself doesn’t think he did anything to deserve the recognition.

“I am humbled. I don’t think I did anything to deserve this. To me the number one priority for us was establishing the defense - make our position one we could fright from,” Geressy said. “And I know everybody was mad at me at first because I made them work like dogs preparing for the worst case scenario, but I wanted them to be prepared.”

The firefight on that third day in country was their immediate introduction to the critical mission that lay ahead; transforming one of Iraq’s deadliest sectors into a place where barbeques and a life of community became the norm.

Geressy’s story continues as he attends the Sergeants Major Academy, preparing himself for greater leadership responsibilities - one, he is already a seasoned veteran of - preparing today’s Soldiers for the fights of the future. 

## Nein *continued from Page 26*

“We’ve got Soldiers that aren’t just Soldiers -- this isn’t all they’ve ever done,” Nein said. “We might have guys that have been in the National Guard for 20 years and have three and four deployments and have a lot of world experience, but they also have other careers that they’re able to expand on in the Guard.”

Nein sees the benefit of those civilian-acquired skills in his own unit. “I’ve got guys that are in law enforcement. I’ve got welders. I’ve got college students.”

Nein’s unit includes some stop-loss Soldiers. “They didn’t complain one bit,” he said. “They said, ‘This is my job, and this is what I’m going to go do.’ And that’s the heart of a U.S. Soldier, and that’s the heart of the United States citizen.”

When Nein looks at his own unit, he sees a microcosm of the Guard, a mosaic built from different life experiences and shared Soldier skills that gives the unit an ability to adapt to change.

“I see the best of the best,” he said. “I see the typical U.S. citizen who stands up to come here and leaves their homeland - just like with an active duty Soldier - to come and make a better place in the world without a complaint.”

Before this latest deployment, Nein took a leave of absence from the paper products company where he’s worked two decades to go full time with the Guard as a training NCO.

On the ground, after-action reviews are a key part of how Nein leads, seeking ways for himself and his Soldiers to improve.

“Even if it’s just a standard escort mission that we do a thousand times while we’re here, every day’s going to be different, and every day we’ve got to try and make it better, and that’s how I look at every mission,” he said.

Out on escort missions, Nein thinks like his enemy. “I’m looking for how, if I was a bad guy, how I would kill me, the entire time out there,” he said. “I’m looking for where I would put an improvised explosive device, where I would set up an

ambush, and how I would do it if I was the bad guy.”

He passes that mentality along to his Soldiers as they scan for threats. “Don’t look at the actual object,” he tells them, referring to IED placement. “Look past it. Look at how you would set it up in the area - and you’ll see it way before you would if you were just looking for an inanimate object.”

He hopes other Soldiers will look at the day his unit was ambushed for lessons. “What did we do right?” he said. “Why were we able to survive something that we shouldn’t have been able to survive?”

“I didn’t make up any of the tactics that we used. We took everything that the Army taught and that Soldiers before me had used and we developed it and we implemented it from day one. Anytime that a technique, tactic and procedure could have been better, we worked on it.

“It’s not what I did that made the day go right. It’s what the people before me did, that taught me and mentored me on battle tactics and TTPs and just doing the right thing each and every day. Because if you do that - the right training, the right leadership and the right equipment - there’s nothing that we can’t accomplish.”

Nein has been married for 19 years. The couple has two children.

“If it wasn’t for a good support channel, as far as my family being able to support me to allow me to go do these things, then I wouldn’t be able to do it,” Nein said. “My ability to do my job and not worry about what’s going on at home is because I have a great family and a great wife.”

March 20, 2005, might have ended differently for Nein and his squad, who were outnumbered five to one. Every day he serves here, Nein still faces risk.

“This is my job,” he said. “This is what I chose to do, and it’s what I’ll continue to strive to do. I love what I do.”

# PHOTO JOURNAL

Welcome to another edition of Photo Journal, the place where everyone has the opportunity to put their favorite photos on display. The guidelines for submitting pictures are as follow: the picture should depict NCOs in action, whether they're leading Soldiers in the field, conducting training, or just plain taking care of business. You don't have to be a professional photographer to enter. When submitting photos, please include the names of individuals in the photo, a brief description of the action to include location and of course your name and unit.

Photos may be submitted in either hardcopy or digitally. If you plan on e-mailing a digital photo, make sure it is at least 300 dpi. Mail photos to The NCO Journal, Commandant, USASMA, ATTN: ATSS-SJ, Editor, 11291 SGT E Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002 or e-mail the electronic version to [ATSS-SJ-NCOJOURNAL@conus.army.mil](mailto:ATSS-SJ-NCOJOURNAL@conus.army.mil).

Photo by Sgt. Susan Wilt



Two paratroopers from the 407<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, attach a Humvee by harness to the bottom of a UH 60 Black Hawk helicopter during sling load training.

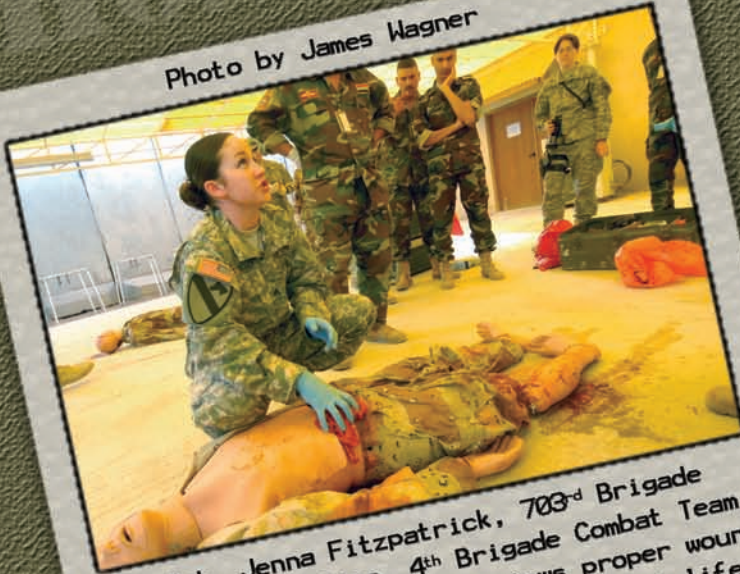
Photo by Spc. Chase Kincaid



A U.S. soldier from Bravo Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, interacts with local Iraqi kids from, Jabr Al Ansari.



Photo by James Wagner



Sgt. Jenna Fitzpatrick, 703<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, reviews proper wound dressing techniques used in combat life saving for Iraqi soldiers at Forward Operating Base Kalsu.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeff Lowry



Indiana National Guard Soldiers with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 293<sup>rd</sup> Infantry shake hands with VIPs as they arrive home at the Indianapolis Intl. Airport. The Soldiers spent nine-months in southwest Asia in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photo by Sgt. Kani Ronningen



Aaron Tippin keeps the crowd entertained during his concert at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq during the Thanksgiving holiday. Tippin is just one many entertainers who takes time to entertain troops around the world.

Photo by Staff Sgt. JoAnn Makinano



U.S. Soldier from Crazy Horse Troop, 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment, looks across the Tigris River while providing security during a visit to the ancient city of Ashur, the site is now known as Qalat Shergat, Iraq.

# Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

## Operation Iraqi Freedom

Cpl. Aaron M. Allen, 24, Buellton, Calif., Nov. 14, 2008 ♦ Spc. Christopher A. Bartkiewicz, 25, Dunfermline, Ill., Sept. 30, 2008 ♦ Chief Warrant Officer Donald V. Clark, 37, Memphis, Tenn., Nov. 15, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Michael K. Clark, 24, Sacramento, Calif., Oct. 7, 2008 ♦ Spc. James M. Clay, 25, Mountain Home, Ark., Nov. 13, 2008 ♦ Pfc. Bradley S. Coleman, 24, Martinsville, Va., Oct. 29, 2008 ♦ Spc. Armando A. De La Paz, 21, Riverside, Calif., Nov. 13, 2008 ♦ Pfc. Cody J. Eggleston, 21, Eugene, Ore., Oct. 24, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Reuben M. Fernandez III, 22, Abilene, Texas, Oct. 11, 2008 ♦ Spc. Christopher T. Fox, 21, Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 29, 2008 ♦ Pfc. Theron V. Hobbs, 22, Albany, Ga., Nov. 6, 2008 ♦ Chief Warrant Officer Christian P. Humphreys, 28, Fallon, Nev., Nov. 15, 2008 ♦ Spc. Geoffrey G. Johnson, 28, Lubbock, Texas, Oct. 12, 2008 ♦ Spc. Christopher A. McCraw, 23, Columbia, Miss., Oct. 14, 2008 ♦ Staff Sgt. Scott J. Metcalf, 36, Framingham, Mass., Oct. 29, 2008 ♦ Spc. Heath K. Pickard, 21, Palestine, Texas, Oct. 16, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Joseph Regalado, 23, Los Angeles, Calif., Nov. 12, 2008 ♦ Sgt. William P. Rudd, 27, Madisonville, Ky., Oct. 5, 2008 ♦ Spc. Justin A. Saint, 22, Albertville, Ala., Oct. 15, 2008 ♦ Pfc. Tavarus D. Setzler, 23, Jacksonville, Fla., Oct. 2, 2008 ♦ Spc. Corey M. Shea, 21, Mansfield, Mass., Nov. 12, 2008 ♦ Staff Sgt. Timothy H. Walker, 38, Franklin, Tenn., Nov. 8, 2008 ♦ Spc. Adam M. Wenger, 27, Waterford, Mich., Nov. 5, 2008

## Operation Enduring Freedom

Spc. Cory J. Bertrand, 18, Center, Texas, Oct. 14, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Federico G. Borjas, 33, San Diego, Calif., Oct. 16, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Nicholas A. Casey, 22, Canton, Ohio, Oct. 27, 2008 ♦ Capt. Richard G. Cliff Jr., 29, Mount Pleasant, S.C., Sept. 29, 2008 ♦ Cpl. Scott G. Dimond, 39, Franklin, N.H., Oct. 13, 2008 ♦ Spc. Stephen R. Fortunado, 25, Danvers, Mass., Oct. 14, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Kevin D. Grieco, 35, Bartlett, Ill., Oct. 27, 2008 ♦ Maj. Robert D. Lindenau, 39, Camano Island, Wash., Oct. 20, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Preston R. Medley, 23, Baker, Fla., Oct. 14, 2008 ♦ Pvt. Colman J. Meadows III, 19, Senoia, Ga., Dec. 16, 2008 ♦ Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jamie S. Nicholas, 32, Maysel, W.Va., Sept. 29, 2008 ♦ Sgt. John M. Penich, 25, Beach Park, Ill., Oct. 16, 2008 ♦ Spc. Jonnie L. Stiles, 38, Highlands Ranch, Colo., Nov. 13, 2008 ♦ Spc. Deon L. Taylor, 30, Bronx, N.Y., Oct. 22, 2008 ♦ Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Gary J. Vasquez, 33, Round Lake, Ill., Sept. 29, 2008 ♦ Sgt. Daniel W. Wallace, 27, Dry Ridge, Ky., Oct. 31, 2008 ♦ Spc. Jason E. von Zerneck, 33, Charlotte, N.C., Oct. 2, 2008

*Editor's 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 October 1, 2008 and December 18, 2008.*

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