

THE NGO JOURNAL

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A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCING THE NEW SMA

PAGE 20



Also: The New Army Physical Readiness Test

PAGE 12



ON THE COVER

Raymond F. Chandler III was sworn in as the 14th sergeant major of the Army on March 1.

Photo illustration by Linda Crippen and Spc. David M. Gafford



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THE NCO JOURNAL

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From the SMA



Are you leading by example?

Leaders, Our Soldiers, and especially our noncommissioned officer corps, are the envy of every Army in the world. This kind of respect does not happen overnight. However, this respect and trust breaks down when we, as senior noncommissioned officers, fail to meet the charge to uphold the Army standard and live the Army Values.

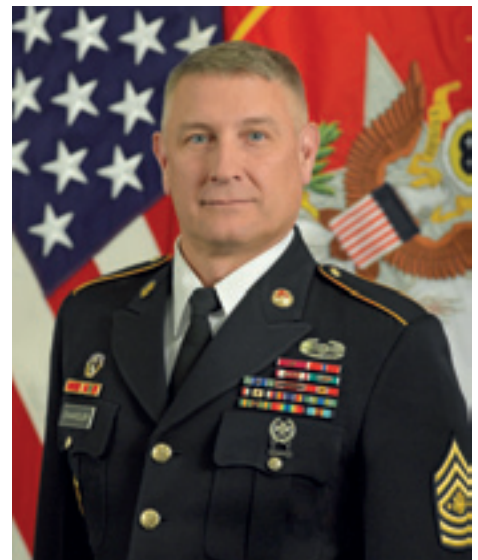
Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage are not just a group of individual ideals, but a collective ethic. These values are at the core of what makes us a profession and serve as our moral compass.

This is why it pains me to see senior noncommissioned officers punished for gross incompetence and negligence. Sexual assault and harassment, driving under the influence, and contract fraud are just a few of the major issues I see across my desk on a daily basis. These are not junior NCOs breaking the law. It is our senior NCOs with many years of service — the ones our junior Soldiers look to for guidance, mentorship, and counseling — who are not upholding our Army standard.

I do not doubt for a second that most of these incidents could have been stopped earlier in the process. Most of the time, a peer sees or hears something, but turns a blind eye. It takes Personal Courage for an NCO to pull a peer aside and say, “I saw what you did, and it needs to stop now. You are compromising your values.” “I will not leave a fallen comrade” does not just apply to the battlefield. This part of the Warrior Ethos applies to our everyday life. We must police our own.

We cannot expect our Soldiers to live by the Army Values when their leaders and mentors are not upholding the standard. These values form the framework of our profession and are nonnegotiable. Values, plus the Warrior Ethos, guide the way we conduct ourselves as an Army and as a profession of arms. We must be the uncompromising standard-bearers for our Soldiers. Leadership is the key ingredient. Are you leading by example?

Army Strong!



Raymond F. Chandler III
Sergeant Major of the Army

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

Casey: Budget will help sustain Army's balance after decade of war

By C. Todd Lopez
Army News Service →

For years the Army's chief of staff has said the service was "out of balance," but he believes next year's budget request will keep it on the right footing despite 10 years of war.

During testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on March 2, Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. told lawmakers the Fiscal Year 2012 Army budget submission, now moving through Capitol Hill, marks a "transition point" between restoring balance to the force and sustaining that balance.

"This budget enables us to sustain the balance that we have restored into this great Army," Casey said, adding that "sustaining that balance is critical because this war is not over."

Casey told lawmakers "after a decade of very hard work, we have a force that is the right size, that is organized in versatile modular formations on a predictable rotational cycle, and that has sufficient time at home to begin training for the full range of missions and to recover from a decade of war."

The Army's recent growth, plus the drawdown in Iraq, Casey said, have enabled the service to improve dwell time for Soldiers.

"This is a critical component of sustaining an all-volunteer force," Casey said. "For the better part of five years, we were returning Soldiers to combat after only one year at home. We knew that was not sustainable and have been working to bring dwell to two years at home as quickly as possible."

Now, the general said, the Army has reached that goal — a two-year dwell for Soldiers.

"Given what we know about the projected demands, our active units who deploy after the first of October will deploy with an expectation of having two years at home when they return," Casey said. Guard and Reserve units will deploy with an expectation of having four years at home when they return.

"We've worked very hard to get to this point, and it's a significant accomplishment," Casey said, adding that the Army will continue to work toward a goal of providing a three-year dwell time to active units.

Casey said this year the Army will complete the organizational transformation of the Army, will finish the modular conversion of all but "a handful" of the service's 300 brigades and finish rebalancing some 150-160,000 Soldiers out of Cold War skills to skills more relevant to today's conflicts.

Secretary of the Army John McHugh confirmed for legislators the Army's successes in working to meet the Iraq withdrawal deadline.

"As we continue to drawdown our forces to meet the Dec. 31, 2011, deadline, we've already closed or transferred more than 80 percent of the bases we maintained to the Iraqi authorities," he



Photo by Myles Cullen

Secretary of the Army John McHugh and Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. testify during a House Armed Services Committee hearing in Washington, D.C., March 2.

said. "We've reduced the number of U.S. personnel by more than 75,000 and we've redeployed some 26,000 to other operations."

Along with the drawdown in Iraq, McHugh said the Army has surged an additional 30,000 Soldiers to Afghanistan to help defeat the al-Qaeda terrorist network and the Taliban insurgency.

"The surge enabled our Soldiers and our Afghan partners to seize multiple sanctuaries in the traditional insurgent heartland of southern Afghanistan," the secretary said.

McHugh told lawmakers U.S. forces have trained some 109,000 Afghan National Army soldiers and 41,000 Afghan National Police.

McHugh and Casey were on Capitol Hill to explain to Congress the Army's portion of the president's Fiscal Year 2012 budget. The Army's portion of that budget includes funding for a 1.5-percent pay raise for Soldiers, a 3.1-percent increase in housing allowance, and a 3.4-percent increase in subsistence.

The Army base budget request for Fiscal Year 2012 amounts to \$144.9 billion, an increase of just \$1.5 billion over the Fiscal Year 2011 request.

The Army also requested an additional \$71.1 billion for the overseas contingency operations budget — to fund operations in Afghanistan and to wrap up operations in Iraq.

The OCO budget request was \$31 billion less than the Fiscal Year 2011 request because Operation New Dawn in Iraq will end in December 2011. Overall, the Army is asking in Fiscal Year 2012 for about \$29.5 billion less than it did in Fiscal Year 2011.

Dempsey confirmed as new Army chief of staff

Army News Service

Gen. Martin E. Dempsey was confirmed by the Senate March 16, for assignment as the next chief of staff of the Army.

He will succeed Gen. George W. Casey Jr., who plans to retire this month after serving as the Army's chief of staff since April 10, 2007.

Dempsey was scheduled to be sworn in as chief of staff April 11 at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va. His most recent assignment was serving as commanding general of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command at Fort Monroe, Va. He has headed TRADOC since December 2008.



Army file photo

Gen. Martin E. Dempsey

Before that, he was acting commander of U.S. Central Command, and from August 2005 to the summer of 2007, he commanded the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

Dempsey is a 1974 graduate of West Point, where he was commissioned as an armor officer.

During testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee March 3, Dempsey answered questions

about how he would serve as the next chief of staff of the Army, a position he was nominated for in January by President Barack Obama.

"I sit before you today with confidence that whatever challenges confront us in the future, your Army will respond with the same courage and resolve that has characterized it for the past 235 years," Dempsey said.

He told senators that he will work hard every day as chief of staff to earn the trust of Soldiers by ensuring they have what they need.

"I will work to match their drive, their sacrifice and their resolve," Dempsey said, "and I will partner with the Congress of the United States of America and this committee in particular, to ensure we remain worthy of the title 'America's Army.'"

Lt. Gen. Robert Cone, commander of III Corps and Fort Hood, Texas, has been nominated to take over for Dempsey as commander of TRADOC.



Army file photo

Army armors more heavy tactical trucks

By Kris Osborn
Army News Service

The Army has introduced modular, add-on armor capability to key portions of its fleet of heavy tactical trucks to include the new M915-A5 line-haul tractor, palletized load system PLS-A1, and heavy equipment transporter HET-A1, service officials said.

"These vehicles are designed so you can take off armor during peacetime to reduce the burden on the platform itself — as well as drive down the peacetime operating costs," said Col. David Bassett, project manager for tactical vehicles.

The move toward scalable armor for medium and heavy tactical vehicles is part of the Army's Long Term Armor Strategy articulated in its recently released 2011 Tactical Wheeled Vehicle Strategy, a document that lays out the Army's plans for its 290,000 vehicle-strong tactical fleet through 2025.

"The truck fleet that the Army has and is continuing to field today is really different than the one we went into these conflicts with. We've gone from having what was almost a completely unarmored fleet to one in which every vehicle that is used operationally overseas today is armored against the threats that our Soldiers face. We've rapidly modernized our fleet," Bassett said.

These new armored trucks represent the most recent additions to a large fleet already equipped with modular armor, including the new family of medium tactical vehicles and heavy expanded mobility tactical trucks, known as HEMTTs.

The modular armor approach allows a truck with a small amount of built-on integrated armor to accept additional add-on armor when dictated by the threat environment.

"We are going to procure trucks that are adaptable so that they can be used in many different environments. They will have the ability to accept armor and then relinquish that armor when it is no longer needed," said Maj. Gen. Tom Spoehr, director of force development, Army G-8.

SEMICENTRALIZED PROMOTIONS

Changes redistribute promotion points

By Master Sgt. Christina Steiner
Human Resources Command

Active-component Soldiers interested in promotion to sergeant or staff sergeant should immediately update their personnel and training records before the Army implements its revised promotion system June 1.

“Revisions to the semicentralized promotion system will help the Army and the Army Reserve promote the best-qualified junior-enlisted Soldiers,” said William Wright, the chief of junior-enlisted promotions at the Adjutant General Directorate, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Fort Knox, Ky.

The revisions are designed to focus on Soldier skills and ensure fairness, Wright said. The active component will go live with an automated promotion-point worksheet, or DA Form 3355, May 2. The Army Reserve will adopt the automated system simultaneously but will use a revised hard-copy promotion-point worksheet until automated support becomes available, he added.

“It will also level the playing field by ensuring Soldiers receive points for verified data entered in the Army Training Requirements and Resources System and the Electronic Military Personnel Office,” he said.

In order for Soldiers to receive correct promotion points under the revised system, promotable active-component junior-enlisted Soldiers must visit their human resources or personnel specialists section, military personnel divisions (known as MPDs), or unit administrators and ensure their personnel and training records are up to date no later than May 8.

The revisions of the semicentralized promotions system affect several key areas:

- First, promotion points will be redistributed for promotion to sergeant and staff sergeant. Points calculated for sergeant focus on Soldier skills, while those for staff sergeant focus on leadership.
- Second, the new system eliminates commander and selection-board points. The elimination of these points does not minimize the chain of command’s role in the promotions process, because the chain of command must recommend the Soldier to the next grade. The promotion board will then provide the promotion authority a recommendation (go/no-go) based

on each Soldier’s potential.

- Third, Soldiers will only receive promotion points for completed correspondence courses instead of earning points for completion of sub-correspondence courses.
- Fourth, promotion points will be awarded for combat deployments. For the active component, Army-level enterprise systems, including ATRRS, will provide promotion data automatically to update the revised automated promotion point worksheet.

These systems have been redesigned to award points based upon the new criteria. The automatic feed of promotion data will reduce human-resources service-support requirements for S-1s and military personnel directorates.

Soldiers should ensure their promotion points are accurate and their records reflect creditable promotion-point data, according to Sgt. Maj. Debra J. Sturdivant, chief, enlisted promotions, in the TAGD. Soldiers who fail to do this and don’t meet the cutoff score because of it, won’t receive an exception to policy for addition to the by-name list. Failure to update records is considered lack of due diligence and not a valid justification for an exception to policy, she said.

The new promotion system is a win-win situation, Sturdivant said. It reduces paperwork, and it’s faster and more accurate. The 800-point format will remain in place, and the revision of the system won’t reduce the number of monthly promotions the Army has forecast.

Inquiries should be sent to hrc.tagd.jr.enlistedpromotions@conus.army.mil or call 1-888-ARMY-HRC (276-9472).



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson

Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. promotes Spc. Rossina Marshall, an awards noncommissioned officer with the 335th Signal Command, to the rank of sergeant along with ten other Third Army Soldiers during his visit to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, last December.

ARCI: Smartphone pilots are promising

Army News Service

It's not written in stone that every Soldier will get an iPhone or an Android phone — but signs are pointing to it.

During a bloggers' roundtable Feb. 24, Lt. Gen. Michael Vane, director of the Army Capabilities Integration Center, discussed the latest developments in how the Army is evaluating smartphone technologies and software applications to provide Soldiers the ability to learn anytime and anywhere.

The general said it was too soon to say if all Soldiers would one day carry smartphones to enhance both training and operations, but he did say that in the next six to eight months, the Army would have had time to look at assessment results from pilot programs it is currently running involving smartphone technology.

"Whether or not we recommend that all Soldiers carry a smartphone would be sort of out in front of the conclusions," he said. "Though many people are already suggesting that that's a possibility. Even I have said there's a long-term vision here that would say, if we can figure out the smart cost-beneficial way of doing this, this probably does make sense in the long run."

Vane did say, however, that successes with smartphone technology are more evident in the training environment than in



Photo by C. Todd Lopez

the operational environment. He said in six to eight months the Army would finish cost-benefit assessments and be able to provide recommendations to Army senior leadership.

Challenges with smartphone technology are twofold, Vane said. First, there are cultural challenges. Those who decide how to spend money in the Army are not nearly as savvy with the technology as those who want to be able to use it — those he describes as "digital natives."

There are also concerns about security, Vane said. In some cases, the value of accessing perishable data immediately may outweigh the risk posed of handling it over an unsecure network.

In Afghanistan, the enemy is already using cell phones successfully, Vane said. The Army can make the "risk decision" associated with information assurance to decide when is the right time to use an unsecure network to transfer a particular kind of information.

"One of the most significant feedbacks you get from Soldiers in theater is they look at their Afghan army compatriots or the Taliban guy who has a cell phone, and then the Army guy looks at his [radio]. ... We want to deny that capability to our own Soldiers even though the enemy is using them?" Vane asked.

Conference helps federal agencies hire disabled vets

Army News Service

Hiring representatives from two dozen federal agencies gathered Feb. 23 at Fort Belvoir, Va., for a two-day event designed in part to help them meet new requirements to increase hiring of veterans and disabled Americans.

"We structured the event to educate our federal agencies about the wounded warrior programs, about how we're organized and what our missions are," said Col. Gregory D. Gadson, director of the U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program, known as AW2. "We are starting out just from an education standpoint. It's important for federal agencies to understand the services' wounded warrior programs."

President Barack Obama signed executive orders in November 2009 and July 2010 that focused on increasing federal

employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities.

Gadson said he hopes federal employers at the event came away with a better understanding of how to and why they should look to wounded servicemembers when fulfilling the requirements of Obama's executive orders.

"At the end of the day, I hope that the federal agencies in attendance can develop their operational and tactical plans to try to meet these executive orders," Gadson said.

Kelly S. Woodall, a veteran employment program manager at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, also attended the event. She retired as a master sergeant after having served 27 years.

She said she notices that veterans often don't know how to translate their skills from the Army into something the federal workforce is looking for.

"They don't clearly articulate the vast amount of skills they bring, especially some of the soft skills, the leadership skills, and things of that nature," Woodall said. "I say, take me through your typical day. Then, we take that information, and we plug it into a résumé format."

She said a truck driver in the Army, for instance, doesn't just drive a truck. They also are responsible for ensuring preventative maintenance on those vehicles, for planning routes, and for understanding and complying with Occupational Safety and Health Administration and Department of Transportation regulations.

"If you understand all that, when a job requirement says you need to demonstrate knowledge of federal regulation, well, you do," she said.

"When you drive a truck you follow OSHA and DOT regulations."

University study: Some Soldiers' brain damage same as boxers'

Army News Service

Soldiers can have some of the same brain damage as boxers, according to one researcher who presented at the Soldier Protective Conference on Feb. 17 in Washington.

Dr. Ann McKee, a neural pathologist from Boston University, discussed her team's research into chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or CTE, during an Army conference set up to discuss ways to protect Soldiers' brains.

McKee said CTE is a "progressive neurodegeneration" disorder and the symptoms have a slow "insidious onset" and tend to develop in mid-life.

Symptoms include memory loss, "irritability, agitation, and a short fuse," she said.

Boxers have shown particular susceptibility to CTE and have a particular form called "dementia pugilistica."

The bulk of the 66 brains in her team's "brain bank" are from boxers and football players who had experienced repeated blows to the head during their careers. But she also has in her collection the brains of five former Soldiers. The disease, CTE, is the result of repeated trauma to the head.

"This disease does develop in military veterans — it really has been described in many different types of mild traumatic injury," McKee said.

"This is the challenge I think with any discussion about helmet and equipment. How do we protect the brain from the long-term damage we are seeing in these players and Soldiers?" she said.

31st ADA Brigade offers PT program during pregnancy

By Marie Berberea
U.S. Army Fires
Center of Excellence

Soldiers and physical training go hand-in-hand. But when the Soldier is pregnant, the program has to be altered. At the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade, Fort Sill, Okla., that's where Sgt. Stacey Dawes, 31st ADA medic and noncommissioned officer in charge, comes in.

"[Our sergeant major] said we really needed a program that was brigadewide," she said. Knowing Dawes had just been an exercise leader for a pregnancy and postpartum PT program for about six months, he asked her to do the same for the unit.

While sometimes the women literally hit the ground running, they also execute different exercises to make sure their flexibility and strength are maintained during the course of the pregnancy and beyond.

"Every month, I try to do a diagnostic Army Physical Fitness Test so they can kind of gauge, this is where it's going and this is what we need to improve," she said.

Spc. Angel Kenyi, an early warnings system operator, said although she is pregnant with her fourth child, exercising while pregnant is new to her.

"I like it better than not working out," said Kenyi.

Kenyi said she can tell the difference and although it can become quite uncomfortable, she feels it will benefit her in the long run.

"I honestly think the muscle strengthening helps me a lot in just making sure when I come back, I won't be weak when I have to do push-ups."

Dawes said exercising during pregnancy also benefits the baby, with less preterm births and healthier birth weights.

Sgt. Mindy Venable, the brigade's human resource sergeant, said it has been extremely helpful as this is her first child. She also said she likes being able to push herself at a pace she is comfortable with while in her third trimester.

According to AR 40-501, *Standards of Medical Fitness*, pregnant Soldiers have 180 days after giving birth to get back to



Photo by Marie Berberea

Sgt. Mindy Venable and Spc. Angel Kenyi (in civilian attire) stride it out at Fort Sill's Prichard Field as part of the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade's pregnancy and postpartum physical training.

regular PT standards. As the women are encouraged to decrease their cardio after the first trimester, there are other factors that make working out more challenging.

"Whether you had natural childbirth or Caesarian, your abs are going to suffer a little bit for it, and it takes a little bit to climb back into it and be successful in knocking out sit-ups," said Dawes.

To be proactive against losing that ability, they do modified sit-ups such as curl-ups and curl-downs, depending on how far along they are in their pregnancy. They also do modified push-ups on their knees or by pushing off a wall.

"Results have been good so far. For postpartum, I've had a 100-percent success rate returning them back to their unit — not only in pre-pregnancy condition, but they could pass tape and their APFT," Dawes said.

NEW EQUIPMENT

Individual Gunshot Detector deployed

By Kris Osborn
Army News Service

U.S. Army forces in Afghanistan will begin receiving the first of more than 13,000 gunshot detection systems for the individual dismounted Soldier later this month, service officials said.

“We’re really trying to ensure that every Soldier is protected,” said Brig. Gen. Peter Fuller, Program Executive Officer Soldier.

The Individual Gunshot Detector, or IGD — made by QinetiQ North America — consists of four small acoustic sensors worn by the individual Soldier and a small display screen attached to body armor that shows the distance and direction of incoming fire.



Photo courtesy QinetiQ

A Soldier demonstrates how the Individual Gunshot Detector is worn. The first of 13,000 of these systems will be sent to Afghanistan later this month.

pounds, Schneider said. The idea is to strategically disperse the systems throughout small, dismounted units to get maximum protective coverage for platoons, squads and other units on the move, he explained.

Over the next 12 months, the Army plans to field up to 1,500 IGDs per month, he said.

In the future, the Army plans to integrate this technology with its Land Warrior and Nett Warrior systems. These are network-situational-awareness systems for dismounted units, complete with a helmet-mounted display screen that uses GPS digital-mapping-display technology, Fuller said.

“How about, if you get shot at, not only do I know where that came from, but others know where it came from because I can network that capability. It’s about how to leverage technology to improve your survivability and situational awareness,” he said.

Survey to explore Profession of Arms

By Mike Strasser
West Point Public Affairs

A survey was released March 21 to thousands in the Army community asking them to take an introspective look at the service as a profession.

More than 200,000 Soldiers and civilians are receiving an email from the Army Chief of Staff to participate in the Profession of Arms survey.

The survey is part of the yearlong Profession of Arms campaign, which Training and Doctrine Command launched in January with TRADOC commander Gen. Martin E. Dempsey leading the effort on behalf of the Army. The campaign was mandated by the secretary of the army and the chief of staff of the Army to assess the state of the Army and take a critical look at how the last nine years of war have impacted the profession of arms.

A broad community of practice was designated to create the anonymous study, comprising subject-matter experts from several institutions including the Army War College and the Army Civilian University. The survey is essentially a diagnostic focusing on six attributes of the profession of arms which will be assessed at individual, unit and institutional levels. The survey is available at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/651660>.

Self-assessment is nothing new in the Army and is required of every profession, according to Col. Sean Hannah, director of the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, the lead agency for the campaign.

“One of the main indicators of a healthy profession is internal assessment and also self-regulation,” Hannah said. “It’s necessary because we as a profession need to better define what makes us a profession and then reinforce those mechanisms that make us a profession.”

The campaign focuses on three fundamental questions: 1) What does it mean for the Army to be a profession of arms? 2) What does it mean to be a professional Soldier? 3) After nine years of war, how are we as individual professionals and as a profession meeting these aspirations?

Hannah said the Profession of Arms campaign is probably the most far-reaching and in-depth assessment the Army has ever launched in its history.

“This is something being done in a unique way because we have mobilized the entire Army. The secretary of the army and the chief of staff of the Army don’t sign too many Terms of Reference during their tenure, so you know this is a major Army engagement and these are things they want us to focus on,” Hannah said.

Basic trainees now getting ASUs



Army file photo

By Marie Berbera
U.S. Army Fires Center of Excellence

Basic trainees have emerged from hard training not only “Army green” but wearing the latest set of Army blues. The Army Service Uniform, or ASU, is the latest standard-issue dress uniform and is meant to replace the others by 2015.

“The uniform looks a lot more professional to me now,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Lindsey of the 434th Field Artillery Brigade at Fort Sill, Okla. “At graduation, you can really tell the difference.”

Trainees began receiving ASUs in October, but they have been available to Soldiers in military clothing sales stores since 2009.

The blue material was a decision rooted in the Army’s history dating back to 1779 when Gen. George Washington prescribed blue coats with different facings for the various state troops, artillery, artillery artificers and light dragoons of the Continental Army.

Besides carrying on tradition, the uniform also streamlines Soldiers’ closets and reduces the burden placed on their wallets since the ASU can be worn for different affairs.

“I really like what they did as far as the idea of coming out with one uniform you can wear to a formal, DA photos, Class-A inspections or whatever the case may be,” Lindsey said.

New ASU policies announced

An All-Army Activities message Mar. 11 announced a new date that mandatory possession of the new Army Service Uniform will be required, allowing a two-year extension.

Soldiers now must have the ASU on hand by the first quarter of fiscal year 2016 and can continue to wear the older Army Green Service Uniform until the end of September 2015.

Additionally, the service cap is now an optional wear item for male and female corporals and above.

The fabric of the new blue ASU consists of a 55-percent wool and 45-percent polyester blend, which is heavier and wrinkle-resistant compared to the former dress blue uniform. As Lindsey said, the “sharp look” of the uniform can also be attributed to the athletic cut of the coat, meant to improve fit and appearance.

“I cannot say enough good things about this uniform. Now when you see that gold stripe running down the leg, you know that’s an officer or an NCO. It also probably gives that young Soldier something to shoot for down the line,” Lindsey said.

Army Combatives Championship moving to Fort Hood

By Vince Little, The Bayonet

For the first time since its inception in 2005, the U.S. Army Combatives Tournament will be staged somewhere other than Fort Benning, Ga. This year’s installment is headed to Fort Hood, Texas, which was given the opportunity to host after III Corps won the Lacerda Cup as team champion at Fort Benning last fall. The 2011 All-Army showdown is set for July 20-23.

“Whether we do it at Fort Hood or Fort Benning or wherever, it still remains the Army Combatives Championship,” said Staff Sgt. Iako Kalili, chief trainer for the Army Combatives School. “For us, it’s just another event. We’re just doing it somewhere else this time.”

“The idea is, you win it, you host it,” said III Corps combatives director Kris Perkins. “We’re super excited. We think the Army will be impressed with what we have available at Fort Hood. It’ll be a great change and a great tournament.”

The event remains under the direction of the Combatives School, which is responsible for functions such as setup, bracketing and providing referees, Kalili said.



Photo by John D. Helms

In winning the Lacerda Cup last fall, Fort Hood, Texas-based III Corps also gets the opportunity to host the 2011 All-Army showdown July 20-23.



“If you follow what’s in the manual, then the day you take the test will be your easiest day of training.”

THE NEW APRT TEST

Inside the development of the Army’s
first new physical fitness test in 30 years.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

To give you an idea of how long Soldiers have been doing the current Army Physical Fitness Test, Olivia Newton-John was crooning “Let’s get physical” on cassette tapes when the three-event APFT was released in 1981. In the three decades since, the way people exercise and the way the Army fights have changed so much that the Army’s assessment of physical fitness now seems as quaint and dated as, well, music on cassette tape.

The Army’s attempt to revise its physical training regimen began last August with the official release of Training Circular 3-22.20, *Army Physical Readiness Training*, which replaced the old PT manual, FM 21-20. Packed with progressive workouts that correlate directly to the physical demands of 21st-century combat operations, the new APRT doctrine was designed to develop Soldiers’ strength, endurance and mobility while reducing injuries during training.

Overhauling doctrine was just the start. On March 1, the Army unveiled a new five-event Army Physical Readiness Test that is more than merely a change in semantics, said Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, then the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command’s deputy commanding general for Initial Military Training. (Days later, Hertling was confirmed by the Senate as the new commanding general of U.S. Army Europe.)

“The key difference is between ‘readiness’ and ‘fitness,’” Hertling said. “If you talk to anyone in the exercise community, there is a nuanced meaning between both of those words. It’s one thing to be fit and have anaerobic and muscular fitness, it’s quite another thing to be ready for the

things you're being asked to do. In our case, Soldiers are being asked to become tactical athletes."

Unlike the old test, the five new events — a 60-yard progressive shuttle run, a 1-minute rower, a standing long jump, a 1-minute push-up and a 1.5-mile timed run — test strength, endurance and mobility throughout the entire body, upper and lower. The result is a better assessment of Soldiers' capacity to endure physical demands downrange, Hertling said.

"The APFT that was established in the late 1970s and incorporated in the early 1980s was meant to be just a snapshot. It was not meant to be linked to what we were trying to do to prepare our Soldiers for combat. Unfortunately, in some cases, it's become a be-all, end-all — if you

could train to the test and pass the test, gosh you must be in great shape! But, none of the current things we do in the APFT are linked to the kinds of stresses we put ourselves through in combat."

In many units, scoring well on the PT test took precedence over the unit's mission requirements. As a result, many PT regimens focused solely on the test events — 2 minutes of push-ups, 2 minutes of sit-ups and a 2-mile timed run.

"But, the focus needs to be on training and not on testing," said Frank Palkoska, the director of the U.S. Army Physical Fitness School at Fort Jackson, S.C., which developed both the new APFT manual and test. "The training piece is now more functional in nature than the old training in FM 21-20 was. It is based around and sup-

ports what Soldiers have to do when they perform combat operations; it's focused on the Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills."

The new test is based on years of research and was developed with the help of an advisory board of subject-matter experts from inside and outside the Army. Physiologists, kinesiologists and representatives from the Air Force and Marine Corps helped shape the new test using the most current science.

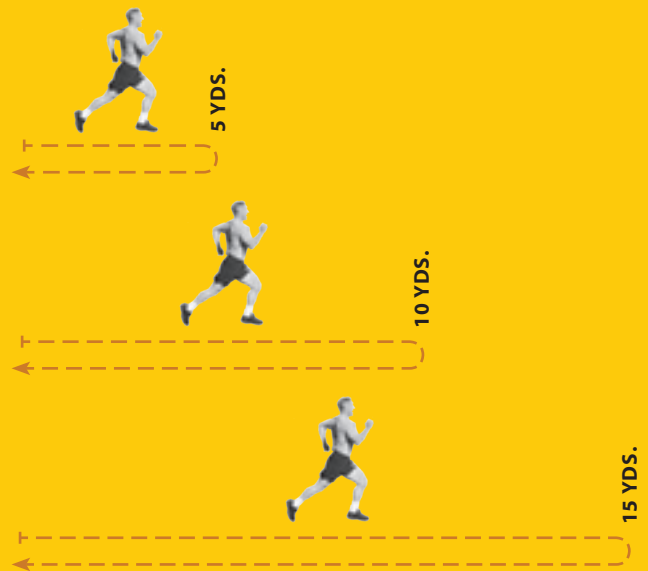
"The big thing about this test is that it's scientifically proven to work," said Sgt. 1st Class Gabriel Lopez, the quality assurance senior drill sergeant leader at the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School at Fort Jackson and the advisory board's only NCO. "That's the biggest thing — it's vetted. FM 21-20 was really just a civilian

Event 1: 60-yard Progressive Shuttle Run



ASSESSES: Lower-body muscular strength; anaerobic endurance; and speed, agility and coordination.

HOW TO DO IT: The Soldier runs forward 5 yards, grabs a block of wood, turns and runs back to the starting line, placing (not throwing) the block on the ground. The Soldier then repeats, picking up blocks that are 10 yards away, then 15 yards away. The total distance is 60 yards.



MEASUREMENT: Total time to run the 60-yard course.

program that was kind of adopted by the Army. But, we've come a long way in 30 years, especially in physical fitness. So many people are so much smarter about this than they were back then."

The working group was guided by several principles when recommending the events for the new test: Events had to be performed by Soldiers of any age and both genders, had to be easy to administer anywhere, had to be based on exercises already featured in the training circular, and couldn't require any new equipment.

"You're going to be testing 17-year-olds in basic training, but you're also going to be testing old guys like me — 57-year-olds — as they do their thing in the operational force," Hertling said. "So, it's got to be something that everybody

can do, and also something we can do easily, not only at places that have equipment, but places removed that don't have equipment. One of the things discussed was we couldn't incur a bill to buy things in order to administer the test."

The events were also selected to help reduce injuries, Hertling said.

"Some of the things we've seen over the last several years — the high-speed repetitions, the excessively long runs — have caused injuries in our force, frankly. We think it's time to do something about that. One of the pieces of guidance I asked [the Physical Fitness School] to incorporate as they analyzed a new test and prepared to pilot a new test was to take into account a testing protocol that does not cause injuries, and they've done that."

The new events are challenging but more combat-relevant, said Staff Sgt. Luis Hernandez, an instructor at the Physical Fitness School.

"On the rower, after the 30th one, you really start to feel it. The purpose of that exercise is to strengthen your core — your abs, your obliques — because when Soldiers are out there carrying all that battle rattle, they need a strong core."

The running events were also retooled to mimic the types of running Soldiers are doing downrange, said Staff Sgt. Danica Foster, also an instructor at the Physical Fitness School.

"Compared to the old test, the new test is a better measurement tool of your anaerobic fitness. Anaerobic is when you need to move short distances, like bursts

Event 2: 1-minute Rower



ASSESSES: Total-body muscular endurance and coordination (not just one's trunk).

HOW TO DO IT: The Soldier starts on his or her back with arms extended shoulder-width overhead and palms facing inward. The Soldier begins by sitting up while swinging the arms forward and bending at the hip and knees. At the end of the motion, the arms will be parallel to the ground with palms facing inward, and the feet will be flat and together on the ground.

1



2



MEASUREMENT: Number of repetitions in 1 minute. Resting at any point will end the test.

of speed; aerobic is for long distances. So, the 60-yard progressive shuttle run is good for anaerobic.”

That is the reason the 2-mile run was shortened, Hertling said.

“Scientific research has shown the threshold going from anaerobic to aerobic, where your body systems catch up and you actually get into a steady state, happens at about the 11- or 12-minute mark. That equates to the average mile-and-a-half run time. The 2-mile run was a totally aerobic event that allowed the body’s systems to catch up, and those aren’t the same systems you use in combat.”

“We want to change the Army’s mind set on how we run,” Palkoska added. “It’s not about long-distance, sustained running. It’s shorter distance, but higher intensity.”

Another feature of the new APRT is that it is considered a test you can’t train for. Since the events measure such a wide gamut of the body’s muscular and energy systems, the easiest way to score well is to just do what the manual prescribes, Palkoska explained.

“The old test was something you could train for. In my 36 years in the Army, I can tell you there’s been quite a few instances of me hearing people say, ‘Oh heck. The PT test is coming next month. I’ve got to really start training for it.’ So, they start cranking out push-ups and sit-ups, and go on 2-mile runs. Well, these new tests will hopefully ensure that our Soldiers know that physical readiness and physical resilience is a 24/7/365 requirement. Because you can’t train for

these tests, there’s going to be more of an emphasis on maintaining your condition and trying to improve your condition at all times. If you follow what’s in the manual, then the day you take the test will be your easiest day of training.”

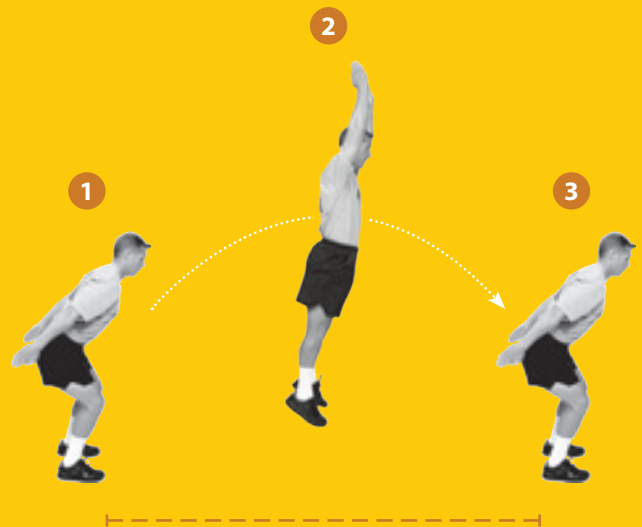
While the Army now knows what the test events are and how to administer them, one facet still being developed is scoring. Over the next few months, between 7,000 and 10,000 Soldiers in at least eight locations Armywide will pilot the tests, and their scores will be analyzed this summer to create norms for the test’s official release. Also likely is the simplification of the age groupings to five categories: under 30, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, and 60 and above. Men and women will continue to have different sets of scores.

Event 3: Standing Long Jump



ASSESSES: Lower-body muscular strength and power.

HOW TO DO IT: The Soldier begins at the starting line in a straddle stance, with the shoulders, knees and feet forming a straight vertical line. The Soldier then jumps as far forward as possible, landing on both feet and maintaining balance. The distance is measured from the heel or other body part that lands closest to the starting line.



MEASUREMENT: Furthest distance out of three jumps. Scores will likely be based on the Soldier’s height.

Though a Soldier's APRT scores are important, Hertling hopes to put greater emphasis on the non-scorable aspects of a Soldier's physical abilities, especially how they might relate to performance in combat.

"We've got a lot of folks who believe that if you score 290 or above on the APFT, you are in great shape and prepared for any combat mission," Hertling said. "We're here to tell you that's not the case. For every person who scores 300, I can show you an individual who can't do the job in combat because they can't carry a load, or they can't hump at high altitudes. At the same time, there are some guys who only score a 220 on the current test who are exactly the ones you want to hump the loads and go up the side of a mountain, be-

cause they might not be fast on that 2-mile run, but man, they'll go all day long like a mountain goat."

A desire to assess these more wide-ranging physical skills led the Physical Fitness School to devise a second test, the Army Combat Readiness Test, which focuses on the combat-specific tasks Soldiers are required to perform when deployed. Similar to West Point's legendary Indoor Obstacle Course Test and the Marines' Combat Fitness Test, yet rooted in the exercises found in the Army's new PRT manual, the ACRT is designed to be used by units about to deploy or by other units wanting to assess their Soldiers' readiness for combat. Its events — a 400-meter run, individual movement techniques, a shuttle sprint while carrying two loaded ammuni-

tion boxes, a 180-pound casualty drag, and an agility sprint — are to be conducted in the Army Combat Uniform while carrying a weapon and wearing a helmet.

"When the focus turned to the combat physical fitness test, the question was, now what are you trying to measure? What aren't you capturing in the first one?" Lopez said. "It had to be something you can gear to any Soldier, regardless of [military occupational specialty], regardless of age or gender. That was a big issue — how do we come up with a test that can accurately measure this for every Soldier? And, again, you shouldn't have to train up for it, because everything should already be in play within the PRT program."

"For what one test lacks in assessing a component [of readiness], this other

Event 4: 1-minute Push-Up



ASSESSES: Upper-body muscular endurance and trunk stability.

HOW TO DO IT: The Soldier starts in the front-leaning rest position and begins the exercise by lowering the body until the upper arms are at least parallel to the ground. The Soldier then returns to the front-leaning rest position. The body must remain rigid and generally straight.

1



2



MEASUREMENT: Number of repetitions in 1 minute. Resting at any point will end the test.

test makes up for it,” Palkoska said. “The APRT is a more generalized measurement and assessment of fitness, whereas the ACRT is more combat-focused, testing the ability to get up, get down, stop, start, change direction, quick rushes — all of those are Soldier tasks that we must do in combat in order to be successful.”

Soldiers demonstrating the ACRT at Fort Jackson in March found it to be an invigorating, demanding course.

“It’s an awesome challenge, it really is,” said Staff Sgt. Timothy Shoenfelt, an instructor at the Physical Fitness School, as he gasped for air just after demonstrating the test at full speed for the first time. “All the stuff Soldiers do every day in the mornings for their PRT sessions, it’s implemented out here. I’d like to think


I’m in great shape, but it challenges a lot of muscle groups that haven’t really been challenged before. It’s a smoker.”

“Whether you’re infantry or a mechanic or a medic, somewhere down the line, if you’re on a patrol, you might end up having to do one of these drills,” said Sgt. 1st Class Cornelius Trammell, also an instructor at the Physical Fitness School. “So, I think it’s very important every Soldier get involved with this training.”

Indeed, units should be diving head-first into the PRT manual now, before both tests become official, Lopez said.

“If units do the PRT program the way they’re supposed to do it, you’ll be OK with either test. But, that’s the issue right now; NCOs have to read the TC, they have to go on the Physical Fitness School

website and see the videos, then put it all together. You should not have to attend any class or any specific school in order to understand how to do PRT. It’s pretty simple; the book tells you to do step 1, step 2, step 3.”

“The doctrinal manual is foundational; it’s where you start, not where you end,” Palkoska said. “But, don’t get yourself hurt. More is not better; *better* is better. And, that’s the foundation of that book: It’s better training.” 

For an overview of TC 3-22.20, the new PRT manual, read the August 2010 issue of The NCO Journal, available at <http://j.mp/ncoj-prt>.

To contact Michael L. Lewis, email michael.lewis73@us.army.mil.

Event 5: 1.5-mile Run



ASSESSES: Lower-body muscular endurance, aerobic capacity, speed, stability and posture.

HOW TO DO IT: The Soldier runs 1.5 miles along a pre-determined course. The 1.5-mile distance is considered the scientific “gold standard” to measure aerobic capacity.



MEASUREMENT: Time to run the 1.5 mile course.

Army Combat Readiness Test **Events**

COURSE: 60 yards by 20 yards laid out on an open field. **EQUIPMENT NEEDED:** Weapon, 30 cones, 2 low hurdles, 2 high hurdles, 180-lb. stretcher, 4 ammo cans, 3 balance beams, aiming guide rail, shooting target. **SCORE:** Based on total time.



400-meter Run

with weapon

ASSESSES: Upper-body muscular endurance, anaerobic power, coordination, speed and stability.



Individual Movement Techniques

Low Hurdle, High Crawl, Under & Over, Balance Beam Ammo Can Carry, Point-Aim-Move

ASSESSES: Upper- and lower-body muscular endurance, agility, balance, coordination, speed, and stability.



Casualty Drag

about 20 yards with 180-pound stretcher

ASSESSES: Total-body muscular strength, endurance, agility, coordination, speed, stability and power.



100-yard Shuttle Sprint

carrying 2 30-pound ammunition boxes

ASSESSES: Total-body muscular strength, endurance, agility, coordination, speed, stability and power.



Agility Sprint

weaving through cones with weapon

ASSESSES: Lower-body anaerobic power and speed.



Looking ahead with the new SMA



*Raymond F. Chandler III
takes the reins as the new
sergeant major of the Army*

STORY BY LINDA CRIPPEN

At a small, rather quiet ceremony that was standing-room-only in the Pentagon Auditorium on March 1, Raymond F. Chandler III was sworn in as the 14th sergeant major of the Army. Friends and family members filled up several rows of seats, and special guests included Secretary of the Army John McHugh; Undersecretary of the Army Joseph Westphal; Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, the vice chief of staff of the Army; Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, commander of Army Materiel Command; and Holly Petraeus, wife of Gen. David Petraeus, commander of U.S. Forces Afghanistan.

Photo by Linda Crippen



Then-commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond F. Chandler III (left), presents a retirement gift to then-Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston in January. The gift is a knob for Preston's dump truck as he intends to return to his farm.

Photo by Sgt. Samuel J. Phillips

"I will obey my first order that the chief gave me this morning, which is to be brief," Chandler joked in his address to the crowd after Gen. George W. Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army, administered the oath of office to the new SMA. "Gen. Casey, thank you very much for your faith in me, and I promise I will not let you down," Chandler said.

"We have the utmost confidence in Command Sgt. Maj. Chandler and look forward to having him join our leadership team," McHugh said. "He has the right qualities and credentials to assume this vitally important duty that Sgt. Maj. of the Army [Kenneth O.] Preston so skillfully

and adeptly performed for seven years."

"Many of the great command sergeants major and sergeants major who serve around the Army today are products of Command Sgt. Maj. Chandler's leadership and development efforts," said Preston, Chandler's predecessor. "He brings a broad breadth of experience, and I have no doubt he will provide the strategic vision and professionalism long associated with this position."

For the last three years, Chandler, who joined the Army in 1981, has served at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas. He served as the command sergeant major of the academy

before being appointed as its 19th commandant, making history as the first enlisted commandant of the institution. Prior to that assignment, he was the command sergeant major at the U.S. Army Armor School at Fort Knox, Ky.

Casey said he chose Chandler because of his great wealth of experience and talent. "He knows the operational side, the installation side, the institutional side, and reserve component side. He's very, very well-prepared, and it's great to have someone with that depth and breadth of experience leading our NCO Corps. I know he will be a great help to the secretary and me as we go forward."

Acknowledging that several mentors and Soldiers with whom he had previously served were in attendance at the ceremony, Chandler said, "I am humbled. I am a product of your leadership. I am here because you had faith in me, counseled me, coached me and helped me to develop into being a professional."

Referring to the Army as a family, the new SMA emphasized that the entire community must look out for one another and wrap its hands around those Soldiers and families who bear the burden of these men in boots.

"As the Army's sergeant major, I will serve as a scout to conduct reconnaissance for the chief and provide you with information that you can turn into intelligence with the secretary to make informed decisions for our families and Soldiers, so that we can best serve our nation. I will do my best," Chandler vowed.

As the seniormost enlisted Soldier, the SMA typically travels extensively, averaging about 270 days of travel per year. His travels include observing training and speaking with Soldiers and family members throughout the Army. The SMA serves as an advisor to the chief of staff of the Army about all matters concerning enlisted Soldiers. According to protocol, the SMA is considered higher in precedence than three-star generals.

“As the Army’s sergeant major, I will serve as a scout to conduct reconnaissance for the chief and provide you with information you can turn into intelligence.”

The SMA also sits on several different boards and panels, and oversees other recurring events that take place throughout the year, for example, the Best Warrior Competition. He also provides congressional testimony periodically; Chandler’s first took place at the end of March. He’ll spend the first few weeks in office preparing for this single event, Pentagon officials said. And, the new SMA already made his first trip, speaking with the Precommand Course seminar at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., on March 4, where he was joined by Casey and their wives, Sheila Casey and Jeanne Chandler.

Noting that he has some big boots to fill, Chandler assumed the role of sergeant major of the Army following a 7-year tour of duty by Preston, the 13th SMA, whose retirement ceremony was just hours prior to Chandler’s swearing in.

As Preston visited the Sergeants Major Academy often during his tenure as SMA, Chandler said he got to know the man from a professional and personal perspective. Furthermore, he’s come to admire and enjoy working with him.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. John Sparks (left), director of the Institute for Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, congratulates Chandler after he was sworn in as sergeant major of the Army on March 1 at the Pentagon.

Photo by Linda Crippen

“He lives the Army values,” Chandler said. “There isn’t an Army value you can name that SMA Preston doesn’t live every day. One of the biggest things is selfless service.”

Pointing out that Preston was always on the road — meeting with Soldiers, families and personnel outside the Army, telling the Army story, bringing back information, helping make needed changes — Chandler said that Preston’s service has been incredible.

“He’s done that selflessly,” Chandler said. “He’s put the Army and Soldiers ahead of himself. I really didn’t come to grasp that as much until the last year or so, when I started to think about how often he came to USASMA. He was here almost

every month for at least a couple of days ... always waking up in a strange bed, in a strange hotel, visiting quarters, moving from time zone to time zone. That’s tough; it really is. You never see [Preston] flustered; you never see him short-tempered. He’s an incredible person, and someone whom I aspire to be like one day.”

NO TIME TO CELEBRATE

Chandler interviewed for the SMA position in November 2010, and after the interview process was complete, Casey called him with congratulations in February. But, the new SMA says there really isn’t much time for celebration right now.

“I’m still kind of in shock a little bit, and I’m trying to work through all the



things that need to be done in order to move my family and get settled. It's kind of an overwhelming feeling — anxious, nervous. It's an incredibly humbling thing to know that you're going to be able to serve Soldiers and families."

Stepping into the role of SMA with eyes wide open, Chandler said he's careful to not think that he needs to make immediate changes. He said he doesn't have an agenda and likens institutional change to that of changing the course of a battleship. Turning the direction of a ship takes time and effort; it's not immediate.

Chandler said he has no intentions of changing anything that Preston initiated. Foremost, he said he must understand two things before really beginning his work as SMA: "Number one, what the chief of staff of the Army wants me to do; and number two, what currently is being done. If I can understand those two things, then I

Gen. George W. Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army, opens the ceremony for administering the oath of office to the new sergeant major of the Army on March 1. Seated in the front row are Chandler, his wife Jeanne and their family members.

Photo by Linda Crippen

can determine, if anything, what I need to change or just sustain the current momentum," he explained.

A couple of the initiatives that Preston was heavily involved with were leader development and education. Chandler is very familiar with both since they are crucial elements within the Sergeants Major Academy, the lead for all NCO education throughout the Army.

Leader development and education is "obviously something I've done at USASMA," he said. "I think, from an overall perspective, that will be something I continue with. It's a program that's developed and moving forward in the process. I want to see that continue to move forward."

The SMA takes direction from the Army chief of staff, and Chandler said he anticipated learning what Casey will want him to work on. The chief iterated to him a few things in the brief conversations they had after Chandler was named the next SMA: maintaining the combat edge, building resiliency and sustaining the force.

Casey, who has served as Army chief of staff since April 2007, is scheduled to retire this month. Gen. Martin E.

Dempsey, most recently the commander of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, was expected to be sworn in as Casey's successor on April 11. Chief of staff is the highest-ranking position in the Army and also is part of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Chandler and Dempsey have a shared history; their working relationship began in 1997. In fact, Chandler said this would be his fourth time working with the general.

"My first experience with Gen. Dempsey was when he was a regimental commander in the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Hood, Texas. When he came on as the regimental commander, I was the regimental master gunner. We had a fairly close relationship."

Chandler also served with Dempsey during a deployment to Iraq with the 1st Cavalry Division. Dempsey "was the 1st Armored Division commanding general, and we were in a transition period there," Chandler said. "It was a two- or three-week process when his division was in charge, and we were subordinate to them. Then, when 1st Cavalry Division took charge, 1st Armored Division moved out



Then-commandant of USASMA, Chandler addresses attendees at the 2009 Nominative Sergeants Major and Senior Enlisted Advisors Conference at Fort Bliss, Texas, about the redesign of the Warrior Leader Course. USASMA is the lead for all enlisted military education.

Photo by Sgt. Russel C. Schnaare

of the area, but we stayed in touch from time to time after that,” he said. Of course, while at USASMA, Chandler also worked closely with TRADOC.

In fact, Dempsey played a role in recommending Chandler as the first noncommissioned officer commandant of USASMA. In a January 2010 interview with *The NCO Journal*, Dempsey and other TRADOC officials explained the importance of assigning a command sergeant major as commandant. In fact, the general said, doing so wasn't just a mere investment, it was a definitive statement to the Army that NCOs are responsible for NCO education.

“In my view, what we [did was] elevate the prestige and the sort of aura of USASMA,” Dempsey said. “And, it's our intent in the future to bring about the sort of change in support of USASMA — that they are recognized, they are resourced. It's acknowledged that we have to make a commitment with this organization.”

Chandler expressed gratitude about Dempsey's faith and confidence in him. “Obviously, I'm honored that he thinks of me that way, and I look forward to having an opportunity to serve with him again,” Chandler said.

Knowing your commander and being able to anticipate his or her thoughts is integral to the NCO profession. Chandler said that from an NCO perspective, you've got to know what your commander's mind is, how he thinks, what his concerns are, his strengths and his weaknesses. And ultimately, it's about the relationship.



In fact, if you already know the person, there's no need for the “feeling-out process” in order to understand where they're coming from, he said. Explaining that he's a straightforward kind of guy, Chandler said he just needs to know what the task is and its purpose, and he can figure out how to get it done. At this level — not only as SMA but also for sergeants major in general — he said there are no worries about getting promoted. This autonomy allows senior NCOs to give candid feedback to their commanders.

The fact that Dempsey and Chandler have served together in the past gives them a professional rapport that puts them

at an advantage, despite neither having served in the Pentagon before.

“There are ways that we have to [learn and] understand the environment in which we're going to operate. If there's one less distraction, or one less thing we're trying to understand — in this case, each other — then we'll be more effective and efficient,” Chandler said.

Speaking of the Pentagon, the new SMA confessed that he's a bit nervous and anxious about going there. As it is the highest echelon in the Army, decisions are made there that affect every single Soldier.

→ *story continues on page 28*

“It's kind of an overwhelming feeling — anxious, nervous. It's an incredibly humbling thing to know that you're going to be able to serve Soldiers and families.”

The Sergeants



1st

◀ **WILLIAM O. WOOLDRIDGE**, the first sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on July 11, 1966, and served until his term ended in August 1968. This World War II and Vietnam War veteran infantryman was born in Shawnee, Okla., on Aug. 12, 1922.



2nd

◀ **GEORGE W. DUNAWAY**, the second sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on Sept. 1, 1968, and served until his term ended in September 1970. This Special Forces WWII and Vietnam veteran was born in Richmond, Va., on July 24, 1922 and passed away Feb. 6, 2008.

▶ **SILAS L. COPELAND**, the third sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on Oct. 1, 1970, and served until his term ended in June 1973. Originally a tanker, this WWII, Vietnam and Korean War veteran was born in Emburyfield, Texas, on April 2, 1920, and died Dec. 4, 2001.



3rd



4th

◀ **LEON L. VAN AUTREVE**, the fourth sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on July 1, 1973, and served until his term ended in June 1975. This WWII and Vietnam infantryman veteran was born in Eeklo, Belgium, on Jan. 29, 1920, and died March 14, 2002, in San Antonio.

▶ **WILLIAM G. BAINBRIDGE**, the fifth Sergeant Major of the Army, was sworn in on July 1, 1975, and served until June 1979. This WWII and Vietnam infantryman veteran was born in Galesburg, Ill., on April 17, 1925, and died on Nov. 29, 2008.



5th



6th

◀ **WILLIAM A. CONNELLY**, the sixth sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on July 2, 1979, and served until his term ended in June 1983. This tanker is a Vietnam veteran and was born on June 2, 1931, in Monticello, Ga., where he currently resides.

▶ **GLEN E. MORRELL** was the seventh sergeant major of the Army. He was sworn in on July 1, 1983, and served until July 1987. This Special Forces/Ranger Vietnam veteran was born in Wick, W.Va., on May 26, 1936. He currently resides in Cocoa Beach, Fla.



7th



Major *of the* Army

▶ **JULIUS “BILL” GATES**, the eighth sergeant major of the Army was sworn in on July 1, 1987, and served until his term ended in June 1991. This Special Forces Vietnam veteran was born in North Carolina on June 14, 1941. He currently works as a liaison for the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.



8th

◀ **RICHARD A. KIDD**, the ninth sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on July 2, 1991, and served until his term ended in June 1995. This tanker is a Vietnam veteran and was born in Morehead, Ky., on June 24, 1943.



9th

▶ **GENE C. MCKINNEY**, the 10th sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on July 1, 1995, and served until October 1997. He was born in Monticello, Fla., on Nov. 3, 1950.



10th

◀ **ROBERT E. HALL**, the 11th sergeant major of the Army, was sworn in on Oct. 21, 1997, and served until June 2000. This air defense artilleryman is a Desert Storm veteran and was born in Gaffney, S.C., on May 31, 1947.



11th

▶ **JACK L. TILLEY** was sworn in as the 12th sergeant major of the Army on June 23, 2000, and served until Jan. 15, 2004. Originally a tanker, this Vietnam veteran was born in Vancouver, Wash., on Dec. 3, 1948.



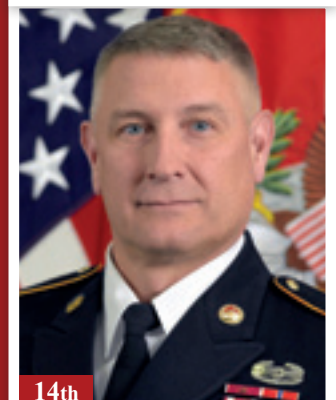
12th

◀ **KENNETH O. PRESTON** was sworn in as the 13th sergeant major of the Army on January 15, 2004, and served until March 1, 2011, as the longest-serving SMA. This tanker is a Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran and was born on February 18, 1957, in Mount Savage, Md.



13th

▶ **RAYMOND F. CHANDLER III** was sworn in as the 14th sergeant major of the Army on March 1, 2011. Before serving as the first enlisted commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, this armored cavalry NCO had multiple deployments. Chandler was born in Whittier, Calif.



14th



Chandler, then USASMA's commandant, speaks with then-Sgt. Maj. Terry Burton and his family before an awards ceremony at USASMA last June.

Photo by Sgt. Russel C. Schnaare

story continued from page 25

"It's not an environment I'm comfortable with," he said. "Most people aren't comfortable outside of their comfort zone. It'll be all right, though. I won't spend much time in that building anyways."

FOR THE FUTURE

When asked where he sees himself or the status of things a year or two from now, Chandler said the Army can't overlook the challenges it is faced with.

"We've got an opportunity over the next couple of years to do some good things, to re-energize and focus on things we've lost sight of," Chandler said. "The reason we lost sight of them is because the Army has been so busy during a protracted period of time, and we really need to focus on those pertinent issues in order to accomplish them. Because of deployment cycles, those things that we do when we return home have had to be subordinate to preparing for the next rotation."

Beginning this October, he said, the Army will have some of its first units experiencing two years' dwell time before they deploy again. That extended time at home will allow Soldiers more opportunities for professional education, unit training, as well as much needed quality time with families. It will also allow the Army to implement some programs that have been put on the back burner because of time constraints.

Another issue close to Chandler's heart is leader development. "We need to re-focus, making sure that we are building the bench of leaders that we need for the next 20 years. That's really our investment," he said. "The Soldiers we assess today, we've got a plan to get them to be sergeants major. The development of those individuals has to come in not only operational assignments, but also institutional, education and self development. We've got to focus on their futures."

Training for full-spectrum operations is another focal point, as the new SMA ex-

plained that the force may be called upon to fight wildfires in the western U.S. or perhaps another major combat operation. Within that training, he said, the Army must incorporate building blocks to develop the agile, adaptive, critical, creative thinkers that NCOs should be.

Chandler said the Army also needs to focus on incorporating Comprehensive Soldier Fitness across the force and with families and the civilian workforce. "It's hugely important that we build on this thing we call resiliency in the overall fitness we want for Soldiers and families. You can only get so far with the time that you have available. Hence, if you have more time available, we can build more resiliency into the force."

The SMA said it's crucial that the Army deals with the root issues that stem from the long-term deployment cycle it's been in, for example, "suicides, Soldier-on-Soldier violence, discipline issues, etc.," he said. "Those are some of the things I hope to play an active part in within two years of becoming SMA. I hope to help the Army see itself — both good and bad — and really focus on taking care of each other and this institution so we can fight and win our nation's wars," Chandler said.

Chandler's three-year tenure at the Sergeants Major Academy will likely reverberate for some time. Indeed, he leaves some unfinished business that he confessed he would have liked to see through to conclusion. One is a large contract for Sergeants Major Course instructors. Academy officials have been working with TRADOC to get funding and budget approval from the Department of the Army.

The second loose end, he said, is the in-sourcing of USASMA contractor positions to Department of the Army civilian positions. Chandler explained that the conversion is part of the academy's overall reorganization.

"It's really the second in a three-step process to get the academy where it needs to be," he said. "We started off with reorganizing what we could with what we had.

We contracted some positions that we are now going to convert to DA civilian positions. And now, we need to start working on the funding for those other positions that we couldn't contract for."

The last thing Chandler would have liked to have seen come to fruition while at USASMA was the completion of the redesign for the Battle Staff NCO Course, which is currently being revamped.

"I'll keep an eye on those things as sergeant major of the Army," he said. "There are things at the academy level, TRADOC level and DA level. Obviously, I'll be an advocate for those things that come to the DA level. But, I don't want to run USASMA from the SMA office."

INFLUENTIAL MENTORS

Over the span of almost 30 years, one can imagine the number of significant leaders and mentors a Soldier might experience throughout his or her career, and Chandler confesses that he's had several.

He credits retired Command Sgt. Maj. John Sparks, the director of TRADOC's Institute for Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development, for helping him "become the person he is today."

Sparks was the command sergeant major of 1st Squadron, 3rd Armor Cavalry Regiment, when Chandler was a first sergeant. "I've known him since 1996. He's really has been a mentor and my best friend. He's served as a guide for me and epitomizes what it means to be a mentor in my personal and professional life."

Another important person in Chandler's past was Gen. Robert Williams, who was the commanding general at Fort Knox, Ky. When his boss left for another assignment, Williams put Chandler in charge of the Armor School.

"He told me, 'Ray, you're in charge. Just tell those folks down there what to do, and if you run into any problems, let me know.' I learned what it meant to really have the trust of a very senior officer to do what noncommissioned officers do best, which is to act," he said.

As Chandler's face grew serious, he took a long breath and let out a deep sigh

while looking down at his wrist. "I wear this bracelet. It has five names. ... They're all Soldiers who were with me in 1-7th Cavalry who didn't come home. I put it on and take it off every day," he explained in hushed tones.

"For each of those names, I remember the exact moment we found out they had been killed. Each of them serves as a role model for me. They are part of who I am. I think about the sacrifices they made, the sacrifices their families made, and it serves as a guide to me to really understand what it means to be a Soldier."

And then there's Jeanne, the SMA's wife. "She is my personal hero," he said. "She didn't know anything at all about the Army before she married me. She had a wonderful career; she definitely didn't need to marry me, but she chose to.

"It's a hard life to be the spouse of a Soldier. A lot of people don't have any real idea. Soldiers get the accolades, the handshakes in airports. The spouse and children have to deal with mommy or daddy coming or going, the constant low-level anxiety when they're deployed. Something may happen, or there may be a knock at the door. That's a hell of a burden to carry around," he said somberly.

Chandler said his personal message to Soldiers out in the force is to be true to yourself. Your leadership style will naturally develop as you grow and learn more, but he emphasized to always be true to yourself.

He also stressed that being willing to listen more than

wanting to be heard is crucial.

"Be open-minded ... and care. People have a tremendous willingness for wanting their leaders to succeed. They want to see you do well. Let them help you do so."

Furthermore, Chandler said that having a confidant, someone with whom you can speak candidly, is a necessity.

"You need to be able to have a frank discussion with yourself and someone else whom you believe will be honest with you if you are running into a point where you might be compromising your values. You have to be able to talk openly and honestly. You may not have the best answer on your own, so find that person you can talk to, who can be an honest broker for you. Be true to yourself, and listen more than you speak." ❧

To contact Linda Crippen, email linda.crippen@us.army.mil.



Chandler and his wife, Jeanne, speak at the Spouse Orientation Course last August. The course is held each year for spouses of the students who attend the 10-month Sergeants Major Course.

Photo by Sgt. Russel C. Schnaare

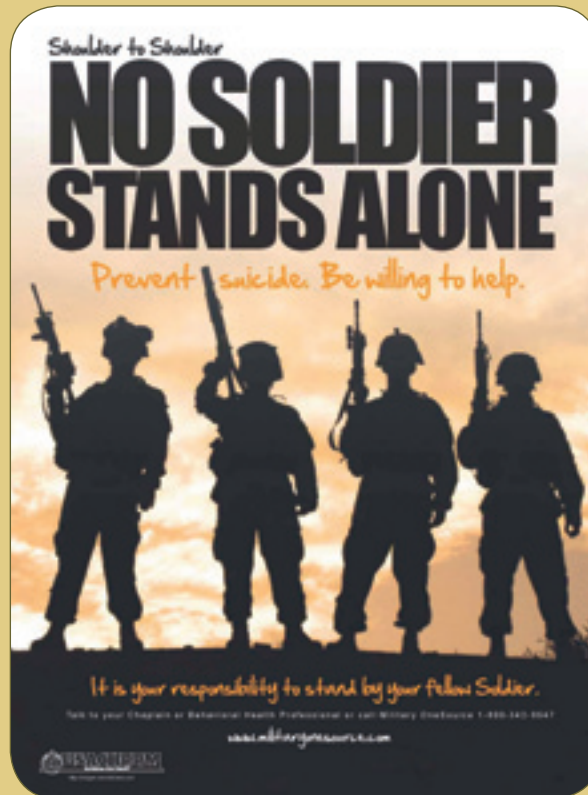
Suicide Prevention

As the Army continues to make sense of the increasing numbers of Soldiers who are taking their lives — 301 Soldiers committed suicide in 2010 versus 242 the year before — the oft-repeated bottom line remains the same: Even one suicide is too many.

“Suicide can dip in to any age group, any rank, from a private to our most senior officers,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, senior enlisted advisor for the deputy commanding general for operations, United States Forces-Iraq, and the XVIII Airborne Corps command sergeant major. “Regardless of who you are, you need someone to talk to. Service members need some type of way to communicate their issues and concerns so that we can get them help. It’s about protecting the force, protecting our Army and doing what’s right for our Army.”

While all Soldiers are tasked with being an “ACE” for their battle buddies — Asking those exhibiting the warning signs of suicide about their intentions, Caring for them by listening and removing means for them to inflict injury upon themselves, and Escorting them to get the proper help — first-line supervisors are best able to detect changes in their Soldiers’ personalities, demeanors and reactions to stressors. As such, it is often their responsibility to identify individuals who may be considering ending their lives. The Warrior Leader Course lesson on suicide prevention educates these young NCOs about suicide’s risk factors and the tools available to help prevent such a tragedy from occurring in their unit.

RISK FACTORS: In many cases, suicidal behavior is tied to intense feelings of loss, loneliness, worthlessness, hopelessness, helplessness and guilt. While many people may experience such feelings, those considering suicide lack the means to cope with these overwhelming emotions, and see ending their life as the only means of escape.



To people experiencing such depression, which can be rooted in personal loss, heredity or even body chemistry, life may seem unbearable, says TRADOC Pam 600-22, *Leaders Guide for Suicide Prevention Planning*, one of the sources for the WLC lesson. “Depressed people see things in a very negative way and have a difficult time generating effective ways of dealing with problems.”

Since depression is a factor in 75 to 80 percent of all suicides, identifying those suffering from depression and getting them the proper assistance — from chaplains, behavioral health or medical professionals — is key to reducing the rate of suicide.

CHARACTERISTICS: People rarely commit suicide without first exhibiting warning signs. Leaders should be aware of these and know how to respond appropriately.

So too, leaders must pay closer attention to Soldiers who have just experienced a “triggering event.” While not causes of suicide in their own right, events like these may be the “straw that breaks the camel’s back.” A negative counseling statement, a bad break-up, financial problems, humiliation, rejection or legal issues are just a few of the many things that can push vulnerable individuals over the edge.

Building resiliency — giving Soldiers the tools and resources to become mentally and emotionally fit to adapt to life’s challenges — is the easiest way to prevent suicide since not all stresses are avoidable. Leaders are thus called to help bolster their Soldiers’ support systems and individual strengths.

“We have to know and understand our Soldiers,” Rice said. “There is a way to fix their problems, and we can do that by communicating, working together as a team, and utilizing all the resources we have to address and find a solution.”

Spc. Paul Holston, XVIII Airborne Corps, contributed to this story.



WHAT TO DO, WHAT NOT TO DO

There may be times when unit leaders or peers find themselves with a suicidal Soldier. According to the U.S. Army Public Health Command, here is what you should do:

By phone:

- ✓ **Establish a helping relationship;** quickly express that you are glad the Soldier called.
- ✓ **Find out the Soldier's location** and get the person's phone number in case you are disconnected.
- ✓ **Get as much information as you can** about the Soldier's plans, access to means of self-harm and intent.
- ✓ **Listen** and do not give advice.
- ✓ **Keep the Soldier talking** talking as long as possible until help can arrive, but avoid topics that agitate, such as talking about his unfair supervisor, or cheating spouse.
- ✓ **Follow up** and ensure the Soldier is evaluated.

In person:

- ✓ **Find out** what is going on with the Soldier. Ask open-ended questions such as, "How are things going?" or "How are you dealing with ... ?"
- ✓ **Share concern** for her well-being.
- ✓ **Be honest** and direct.
- ✓ **Listen** to words and emotions. Repeat what he says using his words.
- ✓ **Ask directly** about her intent, i.e., "Are you thinking about suicide?" This will not put new ideas in her head; that is a myth.
- ✓ **Keep the Soldier safe;** DO NOT leave the Soldier alone. Have a capable person with him or her at all times.
- ✓ **Remove potential means** of self-harm including firearms, pills, knives, and ropes.
- ✓ **Involve security** if the Soldier is agitated or combative. The Soldier should be escorted to a treatment facility or emergency room.

- ✓ **Follow up** and verify that the Soldier was evaluated. If psychiatric hospitalization is required, talk to the staff about what assistance is needed (e.g., arranging for necessary belongings, child care, or pet care).
- ✓ **Monitor the Soldier** until you are convinced he is no longer at risk.

What not to do:

- ✗ **Don't leave** the Soldier alone.
- ✗ **Don't minimize** the problem.
- ✗ **Don't ask**, "Is that all?"
- ✗ **Don't overreact.**
- ✗ **Don't create a stigma** about seeking mental health treatment.
- ✗ **Don't give simplistic advice** like, "All you have to do is ...," or tell the Soldier to "suck it up" or "get over it."
- ✗ **Don't make the problem** a source of unit gossip. Involve others on a need-to-know basis.
- ✗ **Don't** delay a necessary referral.

Warning signs: What to look out for

People closest to the Soldier (fellow Soldiers, family, friends) are in the best position to recognize changes due to distress and to provide support. Look for:

- Comments** that suggest thoughts or plans of suicide
- Rehearsal** of suicidal acts
- Giving away** possessions
- Obsession with death**, dying, etc.
- Uncharacteristic behaviors** (e.g., reckless driving, excessive drinking)
- Significant change** in performance
- Appearing overwhelmed** by recent stressors
- Depressed mood;** hopelessness
- Withdrawal** from social activities

RESOURCES

Army OneSource Crisis Hotline: Call **1-800-342-9647** (toll-free) or **484-530-5908** collect from outside the U.S.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**.



NCO Stories

A selection of Valor



Sergeant receives Silver Star after six-hour attack

By Sgt. Blair Neelands
10th Mountain Division

A 10th Mountain Division Soldier with the 1st Brigade Combat Team received the Silver Star Medal, the nation's third highest award for valor in combat, during a ceremony Feb. 16 at Forward Operating Base Khilligay in northern Afghanistan.

Sgt. Joshua R. Labbe, from Stonington, Conn., an infantry squad leader with 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, is credited with saving the life of one Soldier and protecting numerous other Soldiers during a complex attack that lasted more than six hours.

"We are here to recognize the sacrifice and courage of the Soldiers and leaders in Shafi Khel on Oct. 6," said Lt. Col. Russell Lewis, 1-87 Infantry's commander, during the ceremony.



"Sgt. Labbe is a hero; he didn't go out ... to earn an award, he just did his job — except his job that day called for extraordinary actions, and he stepped up and helped his comrades."

Labbe's platoon was conducting a joint combat patrol in the village of Shafi Khel, in Baghlan province, with its Afghan National Security Force partners.

While establishing an observation post on a hilltop, Labbe and Soldiers from 1st Squad as well as the mortar team came under enemy fire. Initially, the enemy attacked the Soldiers of 3rd Platoon with rocket-propelled grenades.

"One truck of ours was hit by an RPG," Labbe said. "When I saw that truck get hit, I [immediately] started suppressing with the mortar system."

Over the next four hours, the platoon came

under RPG and small-arms fire. Labbe directed Soldiers on the hill to return fire with multiple weapons systems. The hilltop then came under sniper fire, forcing Labbe and the other Soldiers to take cover in holes they had dug.

Later, Labbe was told to collapse their position on the hilltop and return to the base of the hill where the remainder of his platoon was located.

"I had to get out of my hole and run to the other hole where the mortar system was," he said. "When I got to the hole, I got everyone one up, got them on line and got everybody ready. As soon as we got out of the hole, we got sniper fire again."

With three of the five Soldiers making it safely across the hill to the other hole, Labbe and Pfc. Parker Radatz were forced to return to the mortar hole due to the accuracy of the sniper fire. Labbe and Radatz gathered themselves and attempted to get across the hill again.

"I ran to my hole thinking he was right beside me; little did I know, he had actually tripped and fell," Labbe said. "I turned around, and I saw him trying to get his composure to get back up. But, he couldn't because there were multiple rounds impacting all around him."

With complete disregard for his own safety, Labbe ran across the exposed hilltop to the fallen Soldier through enemy fire, picked him up and took him to safety.

"I just did what I had to in that situation," Labbe said. "He has people who care for him and love him; I knew I had to go pick him up and get him to safety. It's my job to take care of my men."

Later, as the platoon moved down the road, the tow bar pulling the battle-damaged vehicle snapped. While Labbe and three Soldiers began repairing the tow bar, once again the platoon came under small-arms fire from nearby rooftops and walls. Labbe immediately returned fire with his M4 rifle.

The small-arms fire stopped for a moment, allowing Labbe to run back to his vehicle to retrieve an M249 squad automatic weapon. He moved to a position that allowed him to provide security down an alley and the walls from which they had received fire. At this point, enemy fighters hopped over the walls and began engaging the platoon again.

With the enemy less than 20 meters away, Labbe stood completely exposed on the road and continued to shield the recovery crew as he fired the machine gun from his shoulder. After expending the 200-round ammunition pouch, he had to resort to using his 30-round M4 rifle magazines.

"I engaged them for roughly two minutes and continued to pull security until the tow bar was fixed," he said.

Once the vehicle was recovered, 3rd Platoon Soldiers continued down the road until they were ambushed. While still in close contact with the enemy, another convoy vehicle suddenly plunged into an irrigation ditch. Labbe immediately dismounted and moved under fire to the stuck vehicle.

He coordinated the evacuation and recovery of the vehicle while still being engaged with RPG and machine-gun fire from compounds and tree lines less than 100 meters away. Labbe remained exposed to the enemy until the rest of the platoon re-



Photo by Sgt. Blair Neelands

Sgt. Joshua R. Labbe, from Stonington, Conn., and an infantry squad leader with 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment from the 10th Mountain Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team, received the Silver Star during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Khilligay, Afghanistan, Feb. 16. Labbe is credited with saving the life of one soldier and protecting numerous soldiers during a complex attack which lasted more than six hours.

covered the vehicle and mounted back in their trucks.

"I feel honored to receive the Silver Star," he said. "However, I don't think just my actions alone allowed us to be victorious that day. It was the whole platoon. Everyone who was out there that day played an important role in getting everyone back here alive. I couldn't have done what I did that day without my brothers in 3rd Platoon."

Over the course of more than six hours of close combat, Labbe went above and beyond the call of duty as a squad leader, Lewis said.

"Today we recognize his actions because they are not common," he said. "His actions that day distinguished him from others and truly impacted the outcome of the fight in Shafi Khel."

Soldier is second female to receive Silver Star since WWII

By Sgt. Micah E. Clare
4th BCT, 82nd Airborne Division

Heroes are made, not born. And a hero like Army Sgt. Monica Brown is no different.

Then-Spc. Brown, recognized for her gallant actions during combat in Afghanistan in 2007, is the second female soldier since World War II to receive a Silver Star, the third-highest award given for valor in enemy action. She received the medal from Vice President Richard B. Cheney at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, during a ceremony March 20, 2008.

It was dusk on April 25, 2007, when Brown, a medic from the 82nd Airborne Division's 782nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, was on a routine security patrol along the rolling, rocky plains of the isolated Jani Khail district in Afghanistan's Paktika province when insurgents attacked her convoy.

"We'd been out on the mission for a couple of days," said Brown, who at the time was attached to the brigade's 4th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment's Troop C. "We had just turned into a wadi, an empty river bed, when our gunner yelled that the vehicle behind us had hit an improvised explosive device."

The Soldiers looked out of their windows in time to see one of the struck vehicle's tires flying through the field next to them. Brown had just opened her door to see what was going on when the attack began.

"I saw smoke from the vehicle when, suddenly, we started taking small-arms fire from all around us," she said. "Our gunner starting firing back, and my platoon sergeant yelled, 'Doc! Let's go.'"

Brown and her platoon sergeant, Staff Sgt. Jose Santos, exited their vehicle, and while under fire, ran a few hundred meters to the site of the downed humvee.

"Everyone was already out of the



burning vehicle," she said. "But even before I got there, I could tell that two of them were injured very seriously."

In fact, all five of the passengers who had stumbled out were burned and cut. Two Soldiers, Spcs. Stanson Smith and Larry Spray, suffered life-threatening injuries.

With help from two less-injured vehicle crewmen, Sgt. Zachary Tellier and Spc. Jack Bodani, Brown moved the immobile Soldiers to a relatively safe distance from the burning humvee.

"There was pretty heavy incoming fire at this point," she said.

"Rounds were literally missing her by inches," said Bodani, who provided suppressive fire as Brown aided the casualties while injured. "We needed to get away from there."

Attempting to provide proper medical

care under the heavy fire became impossible, especially when the attackers stepped up efforts to kill the Soldiers.

"Another vehicle had just maneuvered to our position to shield us from the rounds now exploding in the fire from the humvee behind us," Brown said. "Somewhere in the mix, we started taking mortar rounds. It became a huge commotion, but all I could let myself think about were my patients."

With the other vehicles spread out in a crescent formation, Brown and her casualties were stuck with nowhere to go. Suddenly, Santos arrived with one of the unit's vehicles, backed it up to their position, and Brown began loading the wounded soldiers inside.

"We took off to a more secure location several hundred meters away, where we were able to call in the medical evacuation," Brown said.

She then directed other combat lifesaver-qualified Soldiers to help by holding intravenous bags and assisting her in preparing the casualties for evacuation.

After what seemed like an eternity, Brown said, the attackers finally began retreating, and she was able to perform more thorough aid procedures before the helicopter finally arrived to transport the casualties to safety.

Two hours after the initial attack, everything was over.

In the darkness, Brown recalled standing in a field, knee-deep in grass, her only source of light coming from her red headlight, trying to piece together the events that had just taken place.

"Looking back, it was just a blur of noise and movement," the Lake Jackson, Texas, native said. "What just happened? Did I do everything right? It was a hard thing to think about."

Before joining the Army at the age of 17, the bright-eyed young woman said she never pictured herself being in a

situation like this. Originally wanting to be an X-ray technician, she changed her mind when she realized that by becoming a medic, she'd be in the best place to help people.

"At first, I didn't think I could do it," she said. "I was actually afraid of blood. When I saw my first airway-opening operation, I threw up."

She quickly adjusted to her job and received additional training both before and during her deployment to Afghanistan.

"I realized that everything I had done during the attack was just rote memory," she said. "Kudos to my chain of command for that. I know with training like I was given, any medic would have done the same in my position."

"To say she handled herself well would be an understatement," Bodani said. "It was amazing to see her keep completely calm and take care of our guys with all that going on around her. Of all the medics we've had with us throughout the year, she was the one I trusted the most."

Earning trust with a combat unit is not something easily earned, said Capt. Todd Book, Troop C's commander at the time of the attack. But, it was something Brown had taken upon herself to prove long before the Jani Khail ambush.

"Our regular medic was on leave

at the time," Book said. "We had other medics to choose from, but Brown had shown us that she was more technically proficient than any of her peers."

Having people call her "Doc" means a lot to Brown because of the trust it engenders.

"When people I've treated come back to me later and tell me the difference I was able to make in their life it's the best part of this job," she said.

During her rest and recuperation leave in May 2008, Brown visited Spray in the hospital and met his mother.

"I almost cried," Brown said. "Spray's mother was so thankful, and she hugged me. That was the moment that made me feel the best about what I did."

Even though she felt proud when she was informed that she was going to receive a Silver Star, she considers her actions to be the result of effort put into her by everyone she's worked for.

"While I'm not scared to get my hands dirty, I have to say that I never fully became a medic until I came over here and did it first hand," she said. "I just reacted when the time came."

Due to her quick and selfless actions, both Smith and Spray survived their injuries.



Opposite page: Then-Spc. Monica Brown gets awarded the Silver Star at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, by Vice President Dick Cheney for her actions on April 25, 2007, during a combat patrol.

Photo by Pfc. Scott Davis

Above: Brown, a medic from 782nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, is the second woman since World War II to earn a Silver Star award for gallantry in combat.

Photo by Spc. Micah E. Clare

Left: Brown takes an Afghan boy's blood at the hospital in Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.

Photo by Spc. Micah E. Clare



36TH ANNUAL CULINARY ARTS COMPETITION

ARMY CHEFS

SOUP UP

THEIR SKILLS

By C. Todd Lopez
Army News Service

It's not likely what was being cooked up at Fort Lee, Va., last month will ever show up on the menu in a dining facility downrange. But, the Soldiers manning the skillets there are certain to deploy, and when they do, they'll take with them the skills they demonstrated in March.

"There's probably not a lot of *pâte à choux* being served in Afghanistan right now, except for maybe ... some decorating around Christmas or Thanksgiving," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Russell Campbell of the delicate pastry dough frequently seen at the 36th Annual Culinary Arts Competition, held March 3-9 at Fort Lee. He served as the show chair for the event.

"But, the competencies these chefs and service members train for and prepare for to come here do correlate directly to the service they provide to their service members if they are in Iraq

and Afghanistan. It builds their pride in their profession, and helps their skills and creativity," Campbell said.

The competition pitted military food service professionals against themselves and each other to showcase the best skills.

Inside the field house where the competition was held, two mobile Army containerized kitchens — stainless steel boxes, like trailer homes outfitted with everything needed to cook hot meals for an Army in the field — stood against one wall.

In one of the two kitchens, a team of Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea prepared an Asian-themed meal featuring a Thai-style sweet-and-spicy seafood soup, chicken adobo with citrus rice, and a dessert featuring a chocolate torte and a mouse of pomegranate and lime.

About 30 feet away in the second containerized kitchen, Soldiers from other units in Korea — part of the U.S. Forces Korea team — prepared a meal featuring items like a seafood bisque, an apple forcemeat-stuffed pork loin, potato gnocchi, sautéed green beans wrapped in prosciutto, and a dessert with bread pudding, bananas Foster and a peanut butter mousse.

The two teams each had four hours to prepare from scratch meals for 80 paying customers as part of the field competition. Spectators were allowed to purchase tickets to become customers in the "restaurant" that was built in front of the mobile kitchens.

Sgt. Brian Baker of the 557th Military Police Company, Camp Humphreys, South Korea, was one of the military chefs competing as part of the USFK team. He was responsible for preparing the team's entree, the pork loin. He said timing was the most difficult thing for him in this part of the competition.

"It was 80 servings of pork loin, and I couldn't do any prep for that," he said. "I had to fabricate my proteins here on site. I had to trim off the fat and stuff I didn't want to use, remove some to make my forcemeat, butterfly it out and pound them out, and line them with spinach."

Baker piped the forcemeat, a paste of pork trimmings and apple, onto the pork loin and spinach, then rolled them up and tied them with a string in preparation for browning and baking in the mobile kitchen.



Sgt. Michelle Carville hurries her dishes out to the judges' table during the Culinary Arts Competition at Fort Lee, Va., last month.

Photo by T. Anthony Bell



During the competition, the power went out in the USFK kitchen. “But we adjusted best we could and kept trucking,” Baker said. “We were able to pull it out.” The team came away from the competition with a silver medal.

Their competitors from the 2nd Infantry Division, however, took gold. Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Blanchette, the team’s manager, said teamwork was critical to their success. “If you have a great team, no matter what equipment you’re cooking on, you can do well,” Blanchette said.

At the center of the competition were the cold food displays — probably the most time-intensive, detail-oriented part of the competition. Each team’s table represented about 24 hours worth of nonstop work, theme-oriented displays of hors d’oeuvres, appetizers, desserts, entrees and buffet platters. Nearly every piece of food on the table looked like a tiny, glazed piece of artwork.

It “represents their skills and abilities to present an artistic display of food, their development of menus, compositions, desserts — even their detail they do in their petit four work,” said Sgt. Maj. Mark Warren, sergeant major of the Joint Culinary Center of Excellence at Fort Lee. “This is one of the best examples of paying attention to details.”



Above: A judge converses with Sgt. Marc Susa, who is stationed at Fort McPherson, Ga.

Photo by C. Scott Lopez

Left: Sgt. Stanley Mickens of Team Fort Bliss places chunks of venison on a searing plate during the field cooking competition.

Photo by Spc. Phil Kernisan

Staff Sgt. Michael Bogle, assigned to the Army Executive Dining Facility at the Pentagon, earned a silver medal for his contribution to his team’s table.

His platter featured five tiny dessert items — small cakes and pastries — all under the team’s “farm to table” theme.

“We used ingredients from around Virginia; Washington, D.C.; and Maryland,” he said. “This is actually a Maryland Smith Island cake, done to a small scale.”

The tiny cake pieces, all six of them, were arranged on a granite slab along with four other types of dessert pieces he had created — a total of about 30 pieces in all, each meant to be consumed in about one bite, he said.

Attention to detail required for the competition becomes apparent when considering the amount of time it took Bogle to make just those six tiny pieces of cake:

“Just this one, from start to finish, [took] about five hours,” he said. “You have to make sure the cuts are exactly the same. You have to make sure the sugar is the same.”

The competition showcases the talents of military chefs from all branches of the armed forces and includes the most junior service members in the culinary arts profession, such as those with less than one year of service, to those with as much as 20 years’ experience. This year, more than 20 teams composed of 248 individual competitors participated in more than 638 different individual or team competitions.

“It continues to build on their profession and what they know, and there’s a lot of pride in the competition,” Campbell said. “They can go back to their friends and family and leadership and show what skills they didn’t know they had or maybe their leadership didn’t know. And we do a lot of training here as well.”

陸上自衛隊

INCREASING INTEROPERABILITY THROUGH CULTURAL EXCHANGE

アメリカ陸軍

Editor's Note: Following the devastating Mar. 11 earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan, joint Japanese-U.S. disaster-relief efforts were aided by the 50-year partnership between the two countries, frequent bilateral exercises and participation in the cooperative work program detailed in the story below, which was written before the quake. While the current co-op group departed early to assist the disaster relief, both armies say they are "100 percent committed" to continuing the program after aid efforts have completed.



Photo courtesy U.S. Army Japan

Sgt. Shuichi Chiba of the 4th Engineer Group, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, and a U.S. Army Japan/Ground Staff Office Cooperative Work Program participant, practices setting a Claymore mine during Sergeants Time training recently.

By Amanda Kraus
U.S. Army Japan

Thirteen Japanese soldiers are speaking in hushed tones in a conference room at U.S. Army Japan's headquarters at Camp Zama. Only the keenest observer would notice that their quiet speech masks overwhelming culture shock and excitement as they begin a 90-day immersion into American and U.S. Army culture. Elsewhere, 13 U.S. Army NCOs study faces and names, worrying over correct pronunciation and making a positive first impression as they make their way to the same conference room.

Eventually, the two groups converged, introductions were made and the first of many speeches given. Perhaps knowing that this journey is vital to the bilateral mission of both sides gave the Japanese

soldiers courage to leave behind all that was familiar to them — friends, family, daily routines and their native language.

The U.S. Army Japan-Ground Staff Office, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, Cooperative Work Program is an integral part of the bilateral mission in Japan. (Japan's GSO is akin to the Department of the Army headquarters in the United States.) Japanese soldiers spend 90 days living on Camp Zama, working side-by-side with U.S. Army personnel. Each is assigned to a host unit, department and individual sponsor, who will be their teacher, co-worker, leader, comrade and in many cases, a life-long friend.

Classes are small — less than 20 individuals per class — which can mean

low visibility for the program. But it packs a big strategic punch according to U.S. Army Japan's command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffery Nall.

"The program benefits both armies by ensuring that we build a strong bilateral relationship at every level," Nall said. "The young NCOs from both sides will learn the significance of that, and ten years from now, they will be tomorrow's leaders and continue to uphold the U.S.-Japan security alliance with unwavering commitment."

Bilateral partnerships require interoperability, understanding and flexibility. According to Nall, all of these are woven into the

program itself.

At first glance, one might question the impact that a small group spending three months writing English diaries, going to morning physical training and giving briefings would have on U.S. Army NCOs and the significant mission they support — stability in the Pacific region. But, according to Sgt. 1st Class Chris Pasion, the NCO in charge of host-nation affairs for U.S. Army Japan, its value is clear.

"The co-op program provides a longer duration of exposure. It's important to improving interoperability and cultural understanding. The NCOs share their experiences as citizens and soldiers. They train together, work together and learn from each other."

The growing familiarity, observation, questions and a little friendly competition lead to understanding and camaraderie, Pasion said. “That understanding and appreciation grows exponentially as the NCOs share their experience with their home units.”

From the moment the Japanese soldiers arrive at Camp Zama, an English-only rule goes into effect. Each day they participate in PT with their sponsors, turn in English diaries for corrections and report for sponsor-time training, tours and classes about U.S. Army Japan units, policies, procedures and leadership.

Though Japanese law prohibits JGSDF personnel from firing U.S. Army weapons and practicing certain medical procedures, such as inserting an IV, other training opportunities give the Japanese broad experience. Some examples include briefings, demonstrations, domestic violence response, conducting vehicle security checks and troop movements.

“Sergeants Time training is a very good experience for me,” said Sgt. Shuichi Chiba, protocol NCOIC for the 4th Engineer Group, Eastern Army, JGSDF, and a former co-op participant. “Young NCOs lead training; they have the whole responsibility from planning to execution. This is very different than [in the] JGSDF.”

“Rappelling with 35th [Combat Service Support Battalion] at Camp Fuji was my favorite training,” said Chiba. “It was the first time I’ve done such training, and I was so impressed.”

For Sgt. 1st Class Masayuki Ambo



JGSDF photo by Sgt. Shuichi Chiba
U.S. NCOs of the 35th Combat Service Support Battalion prepare JGSDF members for rappelling at the Camp Fuji training area.

of the 25th Infantry Regiment, Northern Army, JGSDF, and the current co-op group NCOIC, military working dogs offered the most interesting training. But, the real value of the program is improving communication, he said.

“It’s a great opportunity to speak a different language. It’s rare for most of us to be able to talk with native English speakers,” Ambo said. “We have bilateral exercises, but we don’t have as many chances [to talk], because they’re only one or two weeks in duration.”

For U.S. NCOs, becoming a co-op sponsor is both a communication chal-

lenge and intense commitment, say program coordinators. Co-op members have basic English speaking and writing abilities, but experience varies.

“There’s a lot more to this than just going out to dinner once in awhile,” said Sgt. 1st Class Eric Rodriguez of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, U.S. Army Japan. “They (JGSDF members) are very inquisitive. Our lifestyles and thought processes are completely different. A sponsor has to be willing to be a diplomat, a patient teacher and a squared-away Soldier above all,” he said.

U.S. NCOs receive an invaluable education and experience as well, Nall said.

“Both sides get a new perspective and learn new approaches to problem solving,” he said. “It helps us learn, too. We recognize areas where we can improve,” Nall said.

Pasion’s learning experience also included the realization of how much the two countries’ NCOs have in common.

“I’ve worked a lot with the JGSDF soldiers and was surprised at how similar we are; the soldier/warrior mentality is the same. Both armies emphasize training, safety and accountability,” Pasion said.

“The Japanese army has a higher level of discipline when it comes to rank and structure,” he observed. “They’ve reminded me how important it is to treat both superiors and subordinates with respect. That also comes with a sense of deep humility. That discipline, both up and down the chain, has made me more aware of my actions and example,” Pasion said.



Photo courtesy U.S. Army Japan

Japanese soldiers participating in the 90-day co-op program immerse themselves in activities like combat-focused physical training.

NCOS AND THE WAR ON

SUICIDE

By Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Egan
Fort Campbell MEDDAC

Throughout the history of the U.S. Army, there has been one constant: When a mission needs to get done, officers plan it and NCOs execute. Thanks to the hard work of those NCOs and the Soldiers they lead, the mission is accomplished.

As an NCO, it saddens me to say that we are failing to follow this simple formula when it comes to the current rate of suicide in the Army. Currently, the Army's suicide rate is at a staggering level — in the past two decades, we have lost the equivalent of two battalions of Soldiers to suicide. This trend is unacceptable, and as the Army fights the war against suicide, it is up to the NCO Corps, as the backbone of the Army, to execute and win this fight.

The Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer is at the very core of the NCO Corps. This is the blueprint for success for all NCOs. The first sentence in the second paragraph is vital in our battle against suicide: "My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind; the accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers."

How can we accomplish any mission if we do not look after the welfare of our Soldiers? Both must be viewed simultaneously; without Soldiers, we cannot accomplish any mission.

NCOs are taught to live by the NCO Creed, as it is the cornerstone of our profession. It provides the guidance a non-commissioned officer needs to accomplish the mission of leading, training and taking care of Soldiers. It spells out the ways in

which NCOs can properly do so. It does this by giving NCOs tools in how to act as well as how to honor their profession.

There is a perceived stigma for Soldiers seeking mental health care in the Army. While this stigma has diminished, it is still more intense than it should be. At the Department of the Army-level of leadership, they recognize the magnitude of this issue. They have implemented many different strategies and programs to help address the misperceptions that often prevent individuals from seeking assistance.

One simple act was renaming "mental health" to "behavioral health." Such a semantic change was an effective way to help reduce the stigma for those individuals seeking help. Posters, videos and public service announcements have been produced to help spread this message and ensure its delivery to the troops.

Nonetheless, the campaign to reduce the stigma of behavioral health has not had the success in the lower ranks it has had in the higher levels of the Army. Soldiers in line units are still masking behavioral health problems, where in the higher echelons of Army leadership, they are speaking out against the stigma.

"One of our challenges is to lower the stigma of [Soldiers] getting follow-on counseling," Lt. Gen. Eric Schoomaker said during a media roundtable in 2009. "We are working in every venue we can to do that. The Army leadership, recognizing that stigma is a major part of that, has undertaken in the last two years very aggressive top-to-bottom sensitization and education of the force."

The stigma surrounding behavioral health and its effect on the numbers of

Soldiers committing suicide is an NCO problem. It is at the NCO-level of leadership that both problems — of stigma and suicide — reside. It is at this level where the battle must be fought and won.

It is at the NCO-level of leadership where attitudes toward behavioral health care are fostered. If the NCOs in Soldiers' chains of command do not support behavioral health care, then their Soldiers will not seek the help they need.

While the chief of staff of the Army makes the policies Soldiers must uphold and abide by, he is not with the troops on a daily basis. The first-line leader, squad leader and platoon sergeant are with the Soldiers on a daily basis. This is where the policies need to be enforced; policies have no merit if they are not enforced by NCOs. It is an NCO job to enforce and maintain the standards, not to pick and choose what they will support.

As a senior behavioral health NCO, I believe wholeheartedly that reducing the stigma of behavioral health treatment will save lives. I am the tip of the spear in this "War on Suicide." We as NCOs must address this issue and fix the problem of Soldiers not seeking behavioral health care.

The NCO Creed is the blueprint to solving this problem. If the NCO Corps truly follows the words of the creed, it will help eliminate this problem.

So how do NCOs begin to fix it? The first step is dispelling the belief among our Soldiers and, more importantly, ourselves that those who seek behavioral health care are weak. Instead, NCOs need to foster the idea that Soldiers who seek help are actually strong, insightful and courageous for recognizing they may need help.

NCOs need to set the example for their Soldiers by showing they care and will not judge anyone for seeking help and utilizing the tools available to them. When NCOs are having an issue, they too need to seek help. If a leader will not seek help, the Soldier won't either.

For instance, if an NCO were to fall during a run, would the NCO not seek help for physical health? Then why, if NCOs were having emotional distress, would they not seek assistance from behavioral health?

NCOs should want their Soldiers to talk to them about anything and everything. In remaining open and open-minded, NCOs can catch problems before they get so far out of hand that tragedy happens. NCOs can do this by counseling their Soldiers monthly, and by getting to know their Soldiers.

This is accomplished through "pine-tree counseling." Pine-tree counseling is the daily counseling that leaders have with their Soldiers on day-to-day life issues. The Army always represents itself as a family, and families take care of one another regardless of the issue or situation. NCOs must know their Soldiers and be involved with their lives.

NCOs should feel that taking care of their Soldiers is an honor, not a job. This is a belief that must be fostered to win the war on suicide. It would be nice if Soldiers had issues that only occurred between 0900 and 1700. But as NCOs, we know this is not the case.

Teamwork, too, is a concept that has carried the Army throughout its existence. Through teamwork, NCOs can solve any problem. This is where NCOs get their strength — not from what rank they wear, but from the teamwork they inspire. Contrary to popular belief, no NCO has

ever been promoted on his or her accomplishments alone. They were promoted based on their Soldiers, hard work and the NCO's ability to foster teamwork.

Soldiers in the Army base their beliefs and values on the Army Values, the bedrock on which the Army functions. If NCOs look at these values in terms of Soldiers seeking behavioral health care, it will help eliminate the stigma of behavioral health care.

However, as a whole, the NCO Corps is terrible at dealing with the issue of suicide and behavioral health. Soldiers treat suicide prevention as a check-the-block type of task. In my last ten years of service, witnessing this from the front lines, it is very obvious. Too many times I have asked a unit with which I was conducting a suicide prevention briefing, "Why are we having this briefing?" The most

common and most frequent answer is, "Because the Army says so," or "Because it's a yearly requirement."

When mission planning, NCOs are fully active in the process. NCOs do not miss details; they thrive on them. By treating suicide as an enemy, we can defeat it. NCOs are the tip of the spear in any mission the Army has ever done. In the area of suicide, NCOs are still the tip of the spear.

I believe the sergeant or staff sergeant is the most important NCO in taking care of Soldiers and their welfare. It is the first-line supervisor who is with the Soldier every day. It is the job of that first-line supervisor to teach Soldiers that it is OK for them to seek help. It is their job to recognize when their Soldiers need help. It is their job to be involved in their everyday life.

The war on suicide is a war that can be won. However, it can only be won if the NCOs in today's Army stand together and fight this enemy. Instead of just memorizing the Army Values and NCO Creed for a board, live the Army values and live by the NCO Creed.

As anything in the Army, there are tools or weapons for whatever battle the Army faces. The greatest weapon in the arsenal of the U.S. Army is the American Soldier. It is a weapon that has to be protected at all costs.

NCOs have the tools and weaponry to accomplish this task. It is up to the noncommissioned officer to do this. It is the calling and duty of every NCO. NCOs need to stand up and say to the world, "I will accept this mission, and I will accomplish this mission."

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Egan is a behavioral health NCO in charge at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital, Fort Campbell, Ky. To contact him, email christopher.egan1@us.army.mil.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Carlos Burger

RECRUITING “THE all-volunteer” FORCE

By 1st Sgt. Terrence Hynes
Minneapolis Recruiting Company

Today, while working my way through a school assignment, an argumentative essay, I came across the topic, “Should the military be allowed to recruit in high schools?”

As a recruiter, I was a little perturbed that my university decided this topic was even debatable. Recruiting is a series of rejections and negative speculation by others, so I didn’t let it bother me long. Instead, I began to ponder a thesis statement and started developing the paper.

I began to write about the all-volunteer force that our armed services have boasted since mid-1973. At some point, though, I stopped writing and just began thinking about that term — “all-volunteer force.”

“All-volunteer force” must have been coined by someone, somewhere, who never spent a few years or even a few days in U.S. Army Recruiting Command. The term is misleading in that it implies that a literal army of good citizens wakes up every morning and stands in line at the local recruiting station in eager anticipation of the doors opening, so they can get a uniform and set about the business of defending our Constitution.

Terminology better suited to describe our military would be “all-recruited force.” Believe me, there is a huge difference. No matter the branch of service in question, I assure you that no recruiter has ever been forced to sit at his or her desk and call out numbers — “... Now serving number 43” There is, I’m afraid, a little more to it than that.



Photo by Sgt. Carl Hudson

Staff Sgt. Roger L. Whaley speaks with Phillip McDonald about the possibility of becoming an Army journalist or x-ray technician at the U.S. Army Recruiting Station in Radcliff, Ky., in September 2008. McDonald, now a specialist, is a multimedia illustrator with the 1st Special Forces Group, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

This leads me back to the original irritating question — “Should the military be allowed to recruit in high schools?” I wonder if my university would find less debate about the draft. Somehow, I doubt it!

It’s not as though recruiters are going into schools with caveman clubs and dragging students to Military Entrance Processing Stations, holding up their right hand for the oath. Most recruiters spend their time in high schools fostering long-term relationships designed to provide

students with facts and options should they chose to select a military career after graduation.

Those who join while they’re still in high school do so because they — together with their parents — see benefits in that option. Parents typically like the sense of purpose it instills and having a reason to graduate on time. They like that someone is mentoring their child and providing a moral compass outside the home.

Most students who enlist, though, will

Celebrating 20 Years 1991 - 2011

Where ‘backbone of the Army’ came from

Editor’s Note: The following excerpt was originally published in the Summer 1991 issue of The NCO Journal.

By Dr. Robert H. Bouilly
USASMA

No doubt about it, the 1939 movie *Gunga Din* is an entertainment classic — the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* of its time. About three British sergeants serving in India, the movie is loosely based on a poem written by Rudyard Kipling, a man who wrote a lot about men of action — especially sergeants.

You may remember other Kipling stories that later became movie favorites: *The Jungle Book*, *The Man Who Would Be King* and *Captains Courageous*. But, chances are you didn’t know that Kipling is the man who coined one phrase familiar to every Soldier: “The NCO is the backbone of the Army.”

Kipling first said it in 1895, in a poem called “The ‘Eathen.” The poem, written in a Cockney accent, contains 19 stanzas. The famous phrase about NCOs comes at the end of stanza 18:

*The ‘eathen in ‘is blindness bows
down to wood an’ stone;
‘E don’t obey no orders unless they
is ‘is own.*

*The ‘eathen in ‘is blindness must
end where ‘e began,
But the backbone of the Army is the
Non-commissioned Man!*

After the poem first appeared in 1896, Americans quoted the phrase frequently because by then, as a world-renowned writer, Kipling had married an American woman and was living in the United States. After finding a niche in the American vocabulary, the expression evolved into the form we know today.

The poem is really a ballad which emphasizes that discipline and leadership are the keys to military success. The story starts with a description of the hassle endured by trainees:



Rudyard Kipling

*The cruel-tyrant-sergeants they
watch ‘im ‘arf a year;
But then the tale turns to discuss
how sergeants care for their men:
An ‘when it comes to marchin’ he see
their socks are right,
An ‘when it comes to action ‘e shows
‘em how to fight.
‘E knows their ways of thinkin’ and
just what ‘s in their mind;
‘E knows when they are takin’ on an’
when they’ve fell be ‘ind
The poem continues about leaders:
‘E’s just as sick as they are, ‘is ‘eart
is like to split,
But ‘e works ‘em, works ‘em, works
‘em till he feels ‘em take the bit;
The rest is ‘oldin’ steady till the
watchful bugles play,
An ‘e lifts ‘em, lifts ‘em, lifts ‘em
through the charge that wins
the day!*

Beyond Kipling’s great storytelling, his stories focused on people who lived by values such as courage, candor and commitment to duty. The next time you hear yourself referred to as “the backbone of the Army,” give a thought to the British author with an American bride.

Dr. Robert H. Bouilly is the historian at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy. To contact him, email robert.bouilly@us.army.mil.

do so a full two years after graduation. They will enlist after having had a go at college or the workforce. They will enlist when they want to get married and need better benefits. If passing on information to those who ask for it within the walls of a school is a negative thing, it should be considered the same way regardless if it is an employer, a college or the military who is providing that information.

Do educators at my university think so little of high school students that they presume to know what is best for every one of them? I have news for them — the military pays for plenty of college degrees! Most military students have a 3.6 or higher GPA compared to a community college that is lucky to even retain 20 percent of its first-year students.

Truth be told, most recruiters probably only enlist a small number of high school students who literally beg to join, as young people often are a bit of challenge in that their minds change frequently. I wonder if those who find it questionable that recruiters spend time in high schools know the military only expects about 20 percent of its total enlistments to come from high school recruits.

I’m quite certain schools enjoy collecting federal dollars, but do they support the brave souls who protect their right to collect that money? Perhaps that would be a better topic for an argumentative essay!

You can probably detect that it annoys me when someone, anyone, questions the value in what Soldiers do every day. It irritates me when the Soldier profession is called into question by someone who undoubtedly never served in the military.

After my head cleared, I decided this topic doesn’t even really deserve a well-reasoned answer at all. A question such as this could only come from the clouded judgment of a fool — one with the freedom to ask such a silly question in the first place.

Today, I will stay in the Army because I love being among the few who dare face such ignorance in the performance of their day-to-day duties. I will stay another day and continue to lead them in our effort!

First Sgt. Terrence Hynes is first sergeant of the Minneapolis Recruiting Company. To contact him, email terrence.hynes@us.army.mil.



Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Lindsey

Staff Sgt. Nelson Perkins draws lines in the dirt to show a soldier of the Djiboutian Army's 1st Quick Reaction Regiment his sector of fire during a training scenario at Camp Ali Oune, Djibouti, Feb. 2.

U.S. Soldiers mentoring elite Djibouti rapid-reaction force

By Maj. Khalid Cannon
Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa

Earlier this year, nearly 200 members of the Djiboutian Army's elite 1st Rapid Action Regiment honed their infantry skills, mentored by members of the U.S. Army National Guard's 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment.

The training included instruction on squad movements, convoy operations, contact drills, camp security and marksmanship, and was part of a one-month course which began Jan. 16 and culminated with a graduation Feb. 10. The instruction included mortar crew training and a combat engineering course, according to U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Nelson Perkins, mission commander and member of Charlie Company.

"Our mission here is to mentor the Djiboutian military as they prepare for upcoming missions. We're trying to help them so they are capable of preventing conflict, establishing regional stability, and protecting coalition interests here," said Staff Sgt. Travis Elder, an infantry squad leader with the 137th, who is a sheriff's deputy in his hometown located near Topeka, Kan.

"My team and I are out here mentoring the soldiers and helping them along, basically giving them more tools for their toolbox. We're showing them things that have helped us; we want to help them so they can get through their future missions without any problem," he said.

The Djiboutian regiment, which was established in 1991 and is comprised of a number of 20-year combat veterans, is the first unit called to deploy during a contingency. The regiment also provides border security on the Somaliland border located approximately seven miles from the camp.

Wash.-bound Strykers first get a decontamination bath

By Sgt. Daniel Wallace
501st Sustainment Brigade

Most businesses are closed and most of the service members occupying Osan Air Base, South Korea, are asleep at 1 a.m. But at Building 1332 in early March, the lights were being turned on, the bay doors were being opened, and Soldiers prepared to complete a task that is an important part of their job.

Soldiers from the 194th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 501st Sustainment Brigade, who specialize in protecting against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats, completed decontamination procedures on Stryker armored combat vehicles and other equipment of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Staff Sgt. James Masterson, the NCO in charge of the CBRN section at 19th CSSB, said the mission was to decontaminate Strykers and shipping containers that are going back to Joint Base Lewis-McChord with a bleach solution to combat the hoof-and-mouth disease currently plaguing farmers across the Korean peninsula.

Masterson said that practicing decontamination procedures helps CBRN Soldiers maintain proficiency in their profession and ensures they are ready to execute their mission if called upon. For added training value, Masterson and his Soldiers performed the cleaning wearing complete sets of CBRN equipment — gas masks, protective pants, tops and boots. The equipment restricts some movement ability for the Soldiers.

"It gives the Soldiers confidence in their abilities," Masterson said of wearing the extra equipment.



Photo by Sgt. Daniel Wallace

Sgt. Cynthia Malone of the 194th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, sprays a bleach-water mix on a Stryker armored fighting vehicle at Osan Air Base, South Korea, Mar. 10.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Daniel Elmlblad

Sgt. Buddy Stratton of 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, operates an electrocardiogram during a level-two care training exercise Mar. 3, at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Medics broaden their life-saving skills at Camp Liberty

By 2nd Lt. Daniel Elmlblad
2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division

Some people fear the sight of blood or even the hint of a needle, but not the medics of 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. They jump at every opportunity to improve their medical and life-saving skills.

All the medics of the squadron are trained to level-one care standards, per Army regulations. These level-one skills allow the Soldiers to set up and run an independent aid station at the squadron to treat injuries, especially those that threaten life, limb, or eyesight. However, when a patient comes into the aid station with a condition that requires more advanced skills, the patient must be sent off to a level-two care facility.

Fortunately, for the “Saber” medics, the squadron is advantageously situated next to Witmer Troop Medical Clinic, at Camp Liberty, Iraq, a level-two care facility.

“Being next to this level-two aid station has given us a unique opportunity to cross-train on a new set of skills that will allow us to better treat the troopers of the squadron,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Casto, a treatment NCO.

Troopers took advantage of this opportunity by setting up a level-two training program with the Soldiers of the 546th Area Support Medical Company, who operate the facility. This teaches the Soldiers new medical skills in the areas of lab work, dental, electrocardiogram (EKG) and X-rays.

“It is important to learn these skills because ... we may not always be next to a level-two care facility like this,” said Sgt. Buddy Stratton, a treatment NCO.

Reservists learn combat lifesaving techniques

By Spc. Glenn M. Anderson
221st Public Affairs Detachment

As rounds fly overhead and mortars slam into the ground, a Soldier defending his position turns and sees that his battle buddy has been seriously injured. The Soldier screams in a panic into the night, “Medic! Medic!”

Soldiers from the 7th Civil Support Command, Europe’s only Army Reserve command, headquartered in Kaiserslautern, Germany, attended a combat lifesaver course Feb. 18-21 at Grafenwöhr, Germany, to help Soldiers learn combat lifesaving techniques. Soldiers from the 196th MSU taught the CLS course.

As portrayed in the scenario above, 90 percent of combat deaths occur on the battlefield before the casualties can be transported to a medical treatment facility. However, many conditions — such as bleeding from an extremity, collapsed lung and airway problems — can be treated on the battlefield.

“Soldiers can learn the basics from CLS in case they are going to be in a combat situation, to save a life,” said Staff Sgt. Nieu Tirmoveanu, a CLS instructor with the 196th Medical Support Unit from Mannheim, Germany, and a licensed practicing nurse in his civilian job.

“This CLS class helped me with keeping up with the latest [tactical procedures] that are changing because of the battlefield,” said Staff Sgt. Patrik Ram, a Warrior Leader Course instructor with the 7th Warrior Training Brigade. “I am very confident that this class and the knowledge I have gained ... will ensure I can provide casualty care to my students during [training exercises].”



Photo by Spc. Glenn M. Anderson

Soldiers from the 7th Civil Support Command evaluate and treat a casualty as part of a final exam during a combat lifesaver course Feb. 18-21 at Grafenwoehr, Germany.

PHOTO JOURNAL





Ranger Training Class 4-11 begins the Mountain Phase by learning lower mountaineering skills including rappelling (on the 30-foot tower and 60 foot rock face) and various knot tying at Camp Merrill, Dahlonega, Ga.

Photo by John D. Helms

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PHOTO JOURNAL



▲ Sgt. Felix Camacho (left), a Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 7th Sustainment Brigade orderly room NCO in charge, and Sgt. Nicholas Denoncour, a 7th Signal Company, 7th Sustainment Brigade signal team chief, hang targets during range qualification at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, Feb. 19. *Photo by Sgt. Edwin J. Rodriguez*

► Sgt. Cullen Wurzer, a Soldier of 1st Squadron, 113th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Redhorse, scans a nearby mountain range during a search of a village on Feb. 21. *Photo by Staff Sgt. Ashlee Lolkus*



▼ Soldiers from the Pennsylvania National Guard's Recruit Sustainment, Detachment 4, are led in physical training by Sgt. Edward Zink at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., March 7.

Photo by Pfc. David Strayer



▲ Sgt. David Smitt maintains watch during an air-assault patrol with U.S. Soldiers and British gunners in Afghanistan's Kandahar province on Feb. 10, 2011.

Photo by Sadie Bleistein



▲ Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Bush of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, directs U.S. Soldiers out of the landing zone as a UH-60 Black Hawk lands prior to an Iraqi army live fire exercise on Tealeaf Island near Basra, Iraq, on Feb. 14, 2011.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael L. Casteel

Roll Call

OF THE FALLEN

Operation Enduring Freedom

*Spc. Jonathan A. Pilgeram, 22
Great Falls, Mont., Feb. 17, 2011*



*Staff Sgt. Bradley C. Hart, 25
Perrysburg, Ohio, Feb. 17, 2011*



*Sgt. Robert C. Sisson Jr., 29
Aliquippa, Pa., Feb. 21, 2011*



*1st Lt. Daren M. Hidalgo, 24
Waukesha, Wis., Feb. 20, 2011*



*Staff Sgt. Jerome Firtamag, 29
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, Feb. 24, 2011*



*Cpl. Andrew C. Wilfahrt, 31
Rosemount, Minn., Feb. 27, 2011*



*Spc. Brian Tabada, 21
Las Vegas, Nev., Feb. 27, 2011*



*Sgt. Kristopher J. Gould, 25
Saginaw, Mich., Feb. 27, 2011*



*Spc. Christopher G. Stark, 22
Monett, Mo., Feb. 28, 2011*



*Spc. Rudolph R. Hizon, 22
Los Angeles, Calif., Feb. 28, 2011*

*Staff Sgt. Chauncy R. Mays, 25
Cookville, Texas, Feb. 28, 2011*



*Spc. Jason M. Weaver, 22
Anaheim, Calif., March 3, 2011*



*Staff Sgt. Mark C. Wells, 31
San Jose, Calif., March 5, 2011*



*Pfc. Kalin C. Johnson, 19
Lexington, S.C., March 8, 2011*



*Spc. Andrew P. Wade, 22
Antioch, Ill., March 9, 2011*



*Cpl. Loren M. Buffalo, 20
Mountain Pine, Ark., March 9, 2011*



*Staff Sgt. Eric S. Trueblood, 27
Alameda, Calif., March 10, 2011*



*Pfc. Andrew M. Harper, 19
Maidsville, W. Va., March 11, 2011*



*Sgt. 1st Class Daehan Park, 36
Watertown, Conn. March 12, 2011*



*Staff Sgt. Travis M. Tompkins, 31
Lawton, Okla., March 16, 2011*

You are not forgotten

Editor's note: This is a continuation of a list that was started in the October 2003 issue of The NCO Journal and contains those names released by the Department of Defense between Feb. 17, 2011, and March 12, 2011.

SOLDIERS
LEADERS
CIVILIANS
FAMILIES

Take **5**
before cycling!

Take Off the Training Wheels

- Stay off roads when possible and use approved bicycle trails
- Always use a headlight and taillight when riding during periods of reduced visibility
- Wear a reflective upper body garment
- Do not wear headphones
- Always use a Consumer Product Safety Commission-approved helmet and other safety equipment



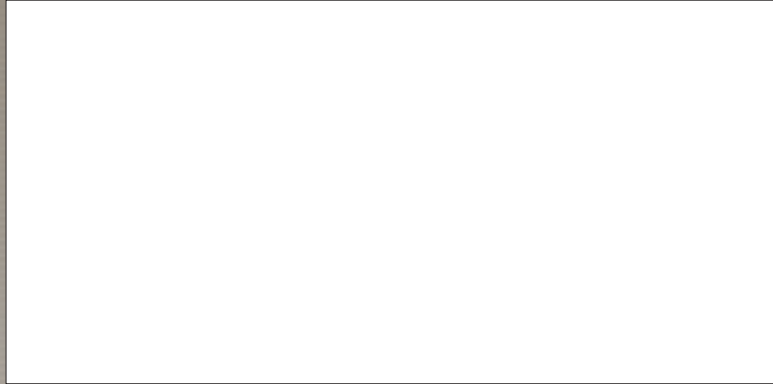
What Have You Done
to Save a Life Today?



ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG

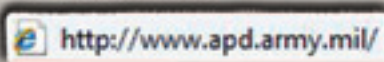


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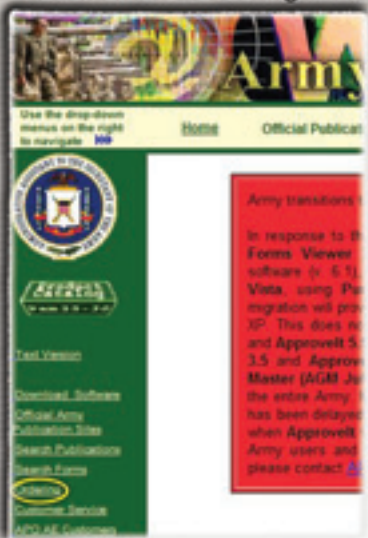


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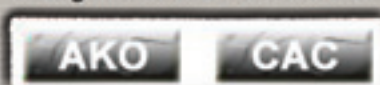
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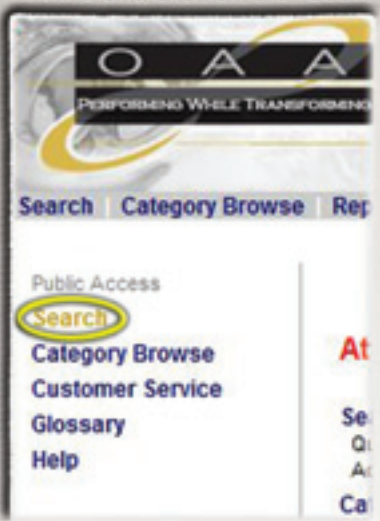
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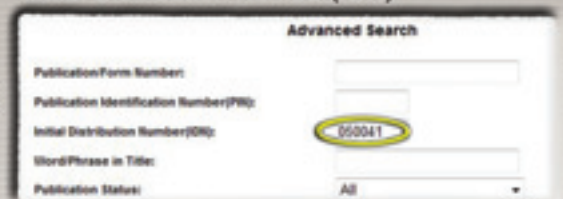
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THE US ARMY, COMMANDANT.	EA 000	07/01/1992	Available
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