

THE NGO JOURNAL

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A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SPECIAL OPS DIVER



PG 10



ON THE COVER

Students at the Combat Diver Qualification Course in Key West, Fla., conduct open-circuit system training during Week One, October 2010. CDQC instructors (wearing all-black wet suits) evaluate the students for safety and competency before they move on to closed-circuit system training during Week Two.

Photo by Linda Crippen



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around the world.*

**THE NCO
JOURNAL**

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From the SMA

We are professionals

During the annual Association of the United States Army Conference last October, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army, asked Soldiers to reflect on the Army profession and what it means to be a professional.

Capitalizing on that directive, I had the opportunity to meet with approximately 280 nominative command sergeants major and sergeants major at this year's Nominative Command Sergeant Major and Senior Enlisted Advisor's Conference at Fort Bliss, Texas, in January and talk about that very topic. More specifically, we discussed "The Profession of Arms and the Professional Noncommissioned Officer."

During the conference, we emphasized several new initiatives that will strengthen our NCO Corps. But, Gen. Casey's question of what it means to be a professional cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. Is the Army a true profession or a loose bundle of different military occupational specialties aimed at the same goal? If it is a profession, then what constitutes an Army professional? What skills, education and attributes do Soldiers need to be considered Army professionals?

Generally, a professional is a person performing to high standards of skill, competence and character. Easily recognizable professions include medical, dentistry, nursing, law, engineering, architecture, social work and accounting. Professions often have three common components that separate them from a common laborer or unqualified employee working in the civil sector. Professions require specialized knowledge, a service-before-income outlook and a code of professional ethics.

While each profession is different, all professions have a common thread that sets the individuals working in these career fields apart from individuals merely working a job. The opposite of the words "profession" or "professional" is amateur. The earning of a educational degree, coupled with a certification process, is generally what sets amateurs apart from their professional counterparts.

I believe there are many linkages that define the profession of arms as a true profession and further identify Soldiers as professionals in our profession. I think the best way to ensure our Soldiers are truly part of the Army profession is through civilian and military education.

The presentations at the Nominative Conference focused on the broad spectrum of education initiatives for the force. These education initiatives included promotion and assignment management changes that will grow broader-focused and more experienced NCOs throughout their Army career.

Changes in education discussed included the concept of promoting life-long learning and formalizing the connections be-

tween education, promotions and career advancement. As part of an NCO's career advancement, presentations also included those education concepts and subject areas where we as an institution expect our NCOs to be the subject-matter experts in their respective organizations and units.

I believe the Army is now moving forward with a host of education initiatives that will further define our alumni as professionals over the course of a career. With the education we are now providing in Initial Entry Training, Structured Self-Development I and the Warrior Leader Course, we now have universities recognizing the value of this education. The certification process is underway to allow Soldiers to attain two years of college during their first enlistment. With the follow-on education opportunities in an NCO's career while attending the Advanced and Senior Leader Courses, and the associated Common Core and SSD 3 instruction, sergeants first class now have the opportunity to attain an undergraduate degree. This helps build a command team between a platoon leader and a platoon sergeant so both have the critical thinking, communication and writing skills to lead platoon-size organizations in the most demanding missions in our history.

The life-long learning of our senior NCOs should culminate with achieving a graduate-level degree upon graduation from the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas. In terms of providing Army commanders with the best leaders to run complex organizations executing complex missions, teams of experts within these organizations will ensure our future success.

I believe this structured move toward life-long learning over a Soldier's career will further prove that we are professionals serving in the profession of arms. Just as other professions have entry level or apprentice, mid-level or journeyman, and senior or expert levels within their professions, we have levels of competence within the Army. The Army's levels could include basic, foundational, intermediate, advanced and expert, based on promotion and career advancement with a qualification requirement that would include military education, operational assignments, qualifications, self-development and self-study, and civilian education credentials. I believe linking education back to promotions and setting the minimum requirements — the floor — for all Soldiers to advance in their careers will take us to a new level of professionalism and expertise.



Sergeant Major of the Army

Editor's Note: This is Sgt. Maj. of the Army Preston's last column for The NCO Journal before his retirement.



USASMA's CSM Chandler named next sergeant major of the Army

Army News Service

Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond F. Chandler III will serve as the 14th sergeant major of the Army, the service's senior leadership announced Feb. 7.

Chandler currently serves as the 19th commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas. He enlisted in the Army in 1981 as an armor crewman. He will replace Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston as the Army's senior enlisted advisor and spokesman of the enlisted corps.

Chandler will be sworn into the new position March 1 in a ceremony at the Pentagon.

"We have the utmost confidence in Command Sgt. Maj. Chandler and look forward to having him join our leadership team," said Secretary of the Army John McHugh. "He has the right qualities and credentials to assume this vitally important duty that Sgt. Maj. of the Army Preston has skillfully and adeptly performed for the last seven years."

During his nearly 30-year career, Chandler has served in tank crewman positions and has had multiple tours as a troop, squadron and regimental master gunner.

"I am humbled and excited about the opportunity," he said. "We'll see what the future holds, and what Soldiers and families tell me we need to look at, and I'll work that with Army leadership to try and make those changes that best support them."

Chandler said some of the challenges he'll help the service face as sergeant major of the Army are the same with which it is now contending: maintaining and reconstituting the force, and building resiliency among its Soldiers.

"We have got to maintain the combat-seasoned force that we have been so successful at sustaining over the past nine years," Chandler said. "We have an Army that is unparalleled in its lethality and its willingness and ability to conduct operations around the world. So, I think that is the first thing, to maintain the combat-seasoned force."

Chandler also said he knows it's important for Soldiers to have more dwell time with their families.

"This has been a very difficult and long war the Army has been in, and we have some work to do to help it reconstitute as we build dwell time over the next couple of years," he said.

Chandler is also impressed with efforts the Army is making at building resiliency into the force, particularly with the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program.



Photo by Sgt. Samuel Phillips

Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond F. Chandler III

"Programs like CSF and the new Master Resilience Training that we are developing and producing for the Army, along with the Army Family Covenant, are going to help us build a more resilient force for the long term," he said.

Chandler also said he's fortunate to have participated in developing some of the concepts driving non-commissioned officer development, including the advancement of Structured Self-Development, while at the Sergeants Major Academy.

Chandler said he'll serve at the discretion of the chief of staff.

"I have no priorities at this point, except to provide predictability for Soldiers and their families. I serve at the whim of the CSA and he is going

to tell me what he wants me to focus on, and from there I move forward," he said.

Chandler will likely serve the bulk of his time as sergeant major of the Army alongside Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, currently the commander of Training and Doctrine Command. Dempsey has been nominated to be the next chief of staff of the Army.

Chandler and Dempsey share a working relationship today: Chandler's position as commandant of USASMA falls under Dempsey's TRADOC. The two have also worked together as part of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. There, Dempsey was Chandler's regimental commander, while Chandler served as a first sergeant in the regiment.

Chandler was chosen as the next sergeant major of the Army by Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

"I never thought in my wildest dreams I would ever even be in a position to be considered for the SMA," Chandler said. "I was a squadron command sergeant major in combat. And that is what I aspired to do. Since that time I have had a series of other assignments that have challenged me and helped me to grow as an NCO and as a person."

Chandler said his new role will not distract him from what he is at his core.

"I am a Soldier, and I happen to be a sergeant major," Chandler said. "But that doesn't change the fact that I came from the same rank and the same position that those young privates and sergeants and first sergeants are in today. That's the tie that binds us together, those shared experiences. There is a responsibility to represent the Army at various events and engagements. But at the end of the day, my place is with the Soldiers and their families in the Army, and that's where I intend to be."

Safety video competition open

U.S. Army Combat Readiness/
Safety Center

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center and the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program are calling all Soldiers to put their best safety stories on camera for a chance to become a “safety star” and win the third annual Peer to Peer Safety Video Competition.

“The power of peer influence, especially among our Soldiers, is truly something we need to harness to help us prevent accidents and save lives throughout our Army,” said Col. Scott Thompson, the center’s deputy commander.

Open through June 30, the competition encourages Soldiers to make short videos highlighting off-duty safety topics, including driving motorcycles and handling privately owned weapons.



“A good video captures your attention, evokes emotion and makes you think,” said Dr. Patricia LeDuc, director of the center’s Human Factors Task Force and Peer to Peer competition facilitator.

Submitted videos will be judged on concept, message effectiveness and

creativity, with the top three entrants sharing a \$4,000 prize package to benefit their local BOSS programs.

LeDuc said the partnership with BOSS helps the center expand the video competition to reach all corners of the Army.

The Army lost 129 Soldiers to off-duty accidents during fiscal year 2010, mostly fatalities resulting from privately owned vehicle and motorcycle accidents attributed to speeding, alcohol and lack of personal protective equipment.

Thompson said he knows every Soldier has a favorite “there I was” story and is encouraging all troops to put their story on video.

“During my career, I have come across many Soldiers who are fantastic storytellers, and I am looking forward to seeing what great safety stories our troops are going to tell during this competition.”

‘Don’t ask’ repeal process outlined

American Forces Press Service

During a press conference in January, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates described the Pentagon’s process for preparing to allow gays to serve openly in the military services.

“Our goal here is to move as quickly, but as responsibly, as possible,” Gates said. “I see this as a three-step process. The first is to finalize changes in regulations and policies and get clearer definition on benefits.”

The second phase is to prepare training materials for use by personnel specialists, chaplains, commanders and other leaders, and those who are in daily contact with service members, he said.

The third phase is the actual training for service members.

“My hope is that it can be done within a matter of a very few weeks, so that we can then move on to what is the real challenge, which is providing training to 2.2 million people,” he said.

President Barack Obama signed the repeal legislation into law in December after the House and Senate passed a bill on the issue.



Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Jerry Morrison

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates talks about the “don’t ask, don’t tell” implementation process during a Jan. 6, 2011, Pentagon news conference with Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Gates said Clifford L. Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, is leading the effort.

“I have asked Undersecretary Stanley to accelerate the first two phases of this process ... so that we can get on with the training process,” Gates said.

“Don’t ask, don’t tell” has been in effect since 1993 and remains so until the process is complete.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, who also participated in the press conference, said the legislation specifies that the repeal will take effect only after he, Gates and

Obama certify that new policies and implementing regulations are consistent with standards of military readiness, effectiveness, unit cohesion and retention.

“From my perspective,” Mullen said, “now is not the time to come out, if you will,” noting that even after the required certification takes place, the present law will remain in effect for 60 more days.

“We’ll get through this. We’ll do it deliberately,” he said. “We certainly are focused on this, and we won’t dawdle.”

DoD: \$150 billion reinvestment

Department of Defense

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates announced in January a series of efficiency decisions designed to save the Department of Defense more than \$150 billion over the next five years, primarily by reducing overhead costs, improving business practices and culling excess or troubled programs.

Most of the savings will be used by the services to invest in high-priority programs that strengthen warfighting capabilities.

Gates launched a comprehensive effort in May 2010 to reduce the department's overhead expenditures. The goal was to sustain the military's size and strength over the long term by reinvesting those efficiency savings in force structure and other key combat capabilities.

Specifically, the military services were directed to find at least \$100 billion in savings to shift to higher priority programs.

"Meeting real-world requirements. Doing right by our people. Reducing excess. Being more efficient. Squeezing costs. Setting priorities and sticking to them. Making tough choices. These are all things that we should do as a department and as a military regardless of the time and circumstance," Gates said.

The service departments achieved savings in several areas, including the number and size of headquarters staffs, base operations, energy consumption and facilities sustainment. At the same time, the service leaders undertook the normal process of setting priorities and assessing risks in preparing the fiscal year 2012 budget request – a process that led to the recommended termination or restructuring of a number of troubled or unneeded weapons programs.

The bulk of the savings will be used by the service departments to make key investments in areas such as ship building, long-range strike, missile defense, intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance, and wounded warrior care and facilities.

The Army would use its savings to

- Provide improved suicide prevention and substance abuse counseling;
- Modernize its battle fleet of Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles and Stryker wheeled vehicles;
- Accelerate fielding to the Soldier level of the Army's new tactical communications network;
- Accelerate procurement of the most advanced Grey Eagle Unmanned Aerial Vehicles; and
- Buy more MC-12 reconnaissance aircraft to support ground forces and begin development of a new vertical unmanned

air system to support the Army in the future.

The Army proposed \$29 billion in savings over five years to include:

- Terminating the SLAMRAAM surface to air missile and the Non-Line of Sight Launch System, the next-generation missile launcher originally part of the Future Combat System;
 - Reducing manning by more than 1,000 positions by eliminating unneeded task forces and consolidating six installation management commands into four;
 - Saving \$1.4 billion in military construction costs by sustaining existing facilities; and
 - Consolidating the service's e-mail infrastructure and data centers, which should save \$500 million over five years.
- Of the \$100 billion identified, approximately \$28 billion will also be used over the next five years by the services to deal with higher than expected operating expenses such as fuel, maintenance, health care and training.

"This department simply cannot risk continuing down the same path – where our investment priorities, bureaucratic habits and lax attitudes toward costs are increasingly divorced from the real threats of today, the growing perils of tomorrow, and the nation's grim financial outlook," Gates said.

ERRATA

The NCO Journal *strives for accuracy. However, we regret the following errors in recent issues:*

➤ In the "NCO Stories" section of the January 2011 issue, a photograph of Medal of Honor recipient Staff Sgt. R. Hooper was inadvertently flopped. The photograph at right is the correct version.

➤ Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky L. Haralson is the first woman to lead the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., the Army's largest NCO academy. A story in the December 2010 issue incorrectly characterized her appointment in academy leadership.



Staff Sgt. Joe R. Hooper

Retroactive stop loss deadline extended

Department of Defense

The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay has been extended to March 4, allowing personnel more time to apply for the benefits they've earned under the program guidelines.

"There was a surge of applicants as we approached our earlier deadline, but there may still be more out there who have yet to apply," said Lernes Hebert, director, Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management.

Outreach efforts will continue through March. To apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay, visit <http://www.defense.gov/stoploss>.

Commission to recommend allowing women in combat

American Forces Press Service →

A commission of current and retired officers, senior noncommissioned officers, and civilians charged with evaluating Defense Department policies to ensure they promote equal opportunity plans to recommend lifting the ban on women in combat.

The nonpartisan Military Leadership Diversity Commission will make 20 recommendations to President Barack Obama and Congress to increase diversity and inclusiveness and develop “a demographically diverse leadership that reflects the forces it leads and the public it services,” according to a predecisional draft document posted on the commission’s website.

The final report is expected in March.

Calling the military a leader in providing opportunities to all service members, regardless of their racial and ethnic background, the group concluded that it’s time to eliminate gender barriers.

Current U.S. military policy prohibits women from serving in combat units below the brigade level. And although women make up 14.6 percent of the military, they and minority members still are underrepresented in leadership posts, the commission noted.

“Increasing the racial, ethnic and gender diversity of senior leadership requires eliminating barriers that disproportionately affect the advancement of women,” the draft report said.

This can be done on two levels, the commissioners said, beginning with the education and mentoring required to ensure all service members are equally prepared to manage their careers.

Retired Lt. Gen. Julius W. Becton Jr., a commission member, announced last week at a military professionalism conference that the group had agreed to recommend that women be allowed to serve in combat.

“What we are saying is that women may be assigned to any job they are qualified for,” Becton said, adding it will be up to the American people to decide if they will support seeing women in combat billets.

“It was the opinion of the 32 members of the commission – and we listened to quite a few of our women: Soldiers who have been in combat, lost limbs, helicopter pilots and everything else – that once they demonstrate what can be done, the country will go along with them,” he said.

The Defense Department will review the commission’s recommendations when the final report is issued, a Pentagon spokesman told reporters last week.

Congress repealed the combat exclusion laws in the 1994 National Defense Authorization Act, but requires the services to submit proposed changes to existing assignment policy to Congress for review, he explained.



UAS, Gray Eagle supply to grow

Army News Service →

The Army is speeding up delivery of some of its newer Unmanned Aircraft Systems, including the Gray Eagle, and expanding the size and range of its overall fleet.

“We will accelerate the Gray Eagle from two companies per year to three companies per year,” said Tim Owens, deputy project manager for UAS.

A Defense Acquisition Board in February is expected to confirm the addition of two more Low Rate Initial Production Gray Eagle systems, each consisting of 12 air vehicles, five ground control stations and five additional attrition vehicles, Owens said.

Owens was among Army leaders speaking at the Association of the U.S. Army Aviation Symposium and Exposition, which brought more than 500 military, government and industry professionals together to discuss how to best sustain and acquire the required materiel to directly support the aviation warfighter and combatant commander during combat operations.

The UAS garnered much interest with its ability to save lives on missions that are often referred to as too dull, dirty or dangerous for manned aircraft.

“We also expect to be funded to fill our needs for both video and wide-area surveillance capability,” Owens said.

The Gray Eagle, one of the largest programs managed by UAS, will provide combatant commanders a much-improved, real-time responsive capability to conduct long-dwell, wide-area reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition, communications relay and attack missions.

The Gray Eagle addresses an ever-increasing demand for greater range, altitude, endurance and payload flexibility. At 3,200 pounds, this UAS has improved take-off and landing performance, coupled with the flexibility to operate with or without satellite communications data links.

TRICARE for young adults introduced

Department of Defense

The Department of Defense has introduced the premium-based Tricare Young Adult Program, or TYAP, which extends medical coverage to eligible military family members to the age of 26.

Expected to be in place later this spring, TYAP implements the National Defense Authorization Act of fiscal year 2011. Premium costs for TYAP are not yet finalized, but the NDAA specifies rates must cover the full cost of the program.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 required civilian health plans to offer coverage to adult children until age 26. Tricare previously met or exceeded key tenets of national health reform, including restrictions on annual limits, lifetime maximums, "high user" cancellations, or denial of coverage for pre-existing conditions — but did not include this expanded coverage for adult children.



Dependent eligibility for Tricare previously ended at age 21 or age 23 for full-time college students.

The fiscal 2011 NDAA now gives the DoD the authority to offer similar benefits to young adults under Tricare.

"Fortunately for our beneficiaries concerned about health care coverage for their adult children, the law signed by the President includes opportunities for military families to elect this new premium-based plan retroactive to Jan. 1," said Tricare deputy director Rear Adm. Christine Hunter.

Beginning later this spring, qualified, unmarried dependents up to age 26 will

be able to purchase Tricare coverage on a month-to-month basis — as long as they are not eligible for their own employer-sponsored health coverage.

"This program has the potential to extend coverage to several hundred thousand additional beneficiaries," Hunter said.

Initially, the benefit offered will be a premium-based Tricare standard benefit. Eligible family members who receive health care between now and the date the program is fully implemented may want to purchase TYAP retroactively and should save their receipts. Premiums will have to be paid back to Jan. 1, 2011, in order to obtain reimbursement.

Adults who are no longer eligible for Tricare may wish to explore the Continued Health Care Benefit Program, a premium-based program offering temporary transitional health coverage for 18 to 36 months. Coverage must be purchased within 60 days of loss of Tricare eligibility.

Information: <http://www.Tricare.mil/>

Vietnam War's 50th anniversary commemoration announced

Department of Defense



The Department of Defense has announced its program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. The program will

- Thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action, for their service and

sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans;

- Highlight the service of the armed forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the armed forces;

- Pay tribute to the contributions made on the homefront by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War;

- Highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War; and

- Recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the al-



Photo courtesy Department of Defense

Slide show photo from the U.S. Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration web site. To learn more, visit <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/>.

lies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

The DoD will coordinate with other federal agencies, veteran groups, state, local government and non-government organizations for their input in Vietnam War commemoration activities.

GOING DEEP



at the Combat Diver Qualification Course

Story and Photos by
LINDA CRIPPEN

from **The Sea and the Hills**
by Rudyard Kipling

Who hath desired the Sea? Her excellent loneliness rather
Than forecourts of kings, and her outermost pits than the streets where men gather
Inland, among dust, under trees — inland where the slayer may slay him —
Inland, out of reach of her arms, and the bosom whereon he must lay him —
His Sea from the first that betrayed — at the last that shall never betray him:
His Sea that his being fulfils?
So and no otherwise — so and no otherwise — hillmen desire their Hills.

The sea, the water can be most unforgiving, and those who dare navigate its shielding envelopment for the purpose of military missions are among the Special Forces' elite: the combat diver.

The grueling seven-week Combat Diver Qualification Course at the Special Forces Underwater Operations School in Key West, Fla., is neither for the weak heart, nor the idle mind. It is as intense mentally as it is physically, with an attrition rate that truly begins before each class cycle does. In order to be accepted to the course, candidates are required to pass as intense physical fitness and swim test at their home units, which must be documented by their command. So, getting there is only half the battle. For those who do make it into the course, one out of every three will never finish.

Esteemed by many as the toughest military school to endure, CDQC is run by C Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. CDQC is open to Special Forces- and Ranger-qualified NCOs, and course objectives include training personnel in surface and subsurface waterborne infiltration methods.

The SF Underwater Operations School administers two other courses between its combat diver sessions: the Combat Diving Supervisor Course and the Diving Medical Technician Course.

IN THE BEGINNING ...

In true Special Forces tradition, the school was birthed in an autonomous fashion and today is a self-sufficient organization with an administrative and training facility, barracks, dining facility, classrooms, parachute-drying tower, hyperbaric chamber, boat maintenance shop, docks, the largest pool in Key West, and a dive tower equipped with a nuclear submarine lockout trunk.

Three Soldiers were sent to Florida from the JFK Special Warfare Center Scuba Detachment, Fort Bragg, N.C., in the summer of 1964 with the objective to locate a site for a new underwater operations school. They selected Fleming Key, and during the

next 20 years, the site grew from tents to an advanced maritime special operations training facility.

Early dive technology can also be attributed to military contributions. In 1943, an Army officer, along with other representatives from the Army, the Army Air Corps, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, helped develop a recirculating oxygen rebreather, the Lambertson Amphibious Respiratory Unit, or LARU, which gave divers the ability to travel underwater farther and for longer periods of time. Setting the stage for underwater and airborne tactical maneuvering, this infiltration method grew to become another platform for Special Forces to get to work.

Known for using cutting-edge technology, the school served as field tester in the 1970s for a rebreather unit that used mixed gas in a closed-circuit system. Of course, there are several types of equipment available now, but the school utilizes the Draeger LAR-V, which is a design based on the original LARU apparatus from the 1940s.

Master Sgt. Shane Minnick, assistant operations sergeant at SFUWO, explained that self-contained underwater breathing apparatus or scuba diving is an open-circuit system. "When you exhale underwater, the air, the bubbles come up to the surface. Those bubbles are easily detected."

Granted, a portion of the course is dedicated to familiarizing students with open-circuit equipment; however, the ultimate objective during that part of the training is to prepare them for closed-circuit diving.

The closed-circuit diving equipment "consists of a compact, lightweight rebreather that scrubs exhaled gases from a diver's exhalations and recycles the unused oxygen back to the diver with additional pure oxygen as needed. There are no bubbles, so the system is undetectable from the surface," Minnick said.

Aside from concealing divers, there are other advantages in using a closed-circuit rebreather. Because it is so efficient in recycling and rationing oxygen, the rebreather allows combat divers to remain underwater for four hours straight. This extended amount of time allows combat divers to infiltrate strategic locations far from off-shore.

There's also a noticeable difference in buoyancy. Since the pressure of the compressed gas is reduced to fit in the tank of an open-circuit system, the air the diver breathes in is at a higher volume than it was inside the tank; hence, the diver becomes a little more buoyant with each inhalation. Alternatively, he'll descend ever so slightly with each exhalation.



Left: Combat Diver Qualification Course students rush to formation, while cadre prepare them for training in the pool, October 2010.

Opposite page: A CDQC instructor inspects a students' equipment during open-circuit training in the pool.



Above: Sgt. 1st Class Steven Coleman supervises students performing their first open bay surface swim. **Below:** Students conduct remedial training in the pool after failing to meet standards for donning their equipment. **Opposite page:** Instructors observe CDQC students during open-circuit training in the pool, which prepares them for the more advanced closed-circuit apparatus that is most often used by combat divers.

tion. This discrepancy in buoyancy won't happen with a closed-circuit system because the gas re-circulates at a constant volume between the diver's lungs and the breathing bag.

ELITE COURSE

The curriculum for the CDQC has changed throughout the years. About 10 years ago, it went from a four-week course to a six-week course, incorporating pre-scuba training into the first two weeks.

Within the last year, the school underwent a review, and instructors decided to revamp the course so they could implement more valuable material that would make graduates more of an asset to their teams back home.

The most recent change now makes the course seven weeks long, which includes a "Zero Week" that puts candidates through a series of training and testing events that are conducted in the controlled environment of the pool.

One of the tests includes swimming underwater for 50 yards on just a single breath. Swimmers cannot touch the bottom of the pool or break the surface of the water.

Perhaps the most challenging test is drown-proofing, which

instructors say is a test of confidence and control. They advise that the key to passing it is not to panic but to remain calm, which for some students is easier said than done.

Drown-proofing requires swimmers' hands and feet to be bound with Velcro straps. First, swimmers must bob up and down in 10 feet of water for 5 minutes. If they break the straps or touch the sides of the pool, they fail.

Swimmers must maintain a rhythm while doing this portion of the test. When they bob up to the surface and take in a breath of air, it must be a controlled breath. Taking in too much air will make them too buoyant, causing them to descend slower to the bottom of the pool, meaning they'll run out of air. Furthermore, if they push off the bottom of the pool too strongly, they run the risk of breaking their restraints, which cadre says is a salient form of panic.

Next, swimmers must float on the surface for 2 minutes, followed by a 100-yard swim around the pool. All of these activities are in succession, and hands and feet remain bound. Once the swim is complete, students must perform a front flip and back flip underwater in the deep end of the pool, without touching the bottom or sides for assistance. Swimmers must be careful to not



deplete themselves completely, as the toughest portion of the test still remains.

As soon as candidates have completed the flips, they must grab a face mask located on the floor of the pool ... with their teeth. Once the face mask has been secured, swimmers must perform five more bobs while holding the mask in their teeth. Dropping the mask, breaking their restraints, touching the sides of the pool, or not completing the five bobs appropriately means failure.

Students are given a second chance if they fail to complete a test correctly. However, should they fail a second time, they are recycled to the next iteration of the course. Once the initial tests are completed, the course moves on at full speed.

Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Tabberer, an instructor at CDQC who was nominated as instructor of the year, explained that the course goes from zero to 60 very quickly. "Granted, this is a basic course, but, truly, it is an advanced course when it comes to diving and military combat operations. There is no advanced combat diver school. There is a dive supervisor course, which focuses on running a dive and making sure the divers stay safe. In essence, this course is basic, intermediate and advanced all in one."

Once the pre-qualification tests are done, candidates get familiar with open-circuit equipment and do some open-water swims in the bay. Instructors say Week One weeds out those who aren't meant to be combat divers.

Weeks Two and Three are devoted to closed-circuit training, navigational diving, buddy breathing and tactical swims in full gear and equipment.

Week Four includes boat and watercraft training. For example, combat divers often use diver propulsion devices, DPDs, small, open submarines capable of carrying two divers. Minnick said that the DPD, combined with the closed-circuit rebreather, extends divers' capabilities, and they can be dropped off farther away from shore.

"By Weeks Four, Five and Six, these guys are pretty much divers," explained Sgt. 1st Class William C. Plag Jr., who is senior instructor at SFUWO. "So at that point, they need more team training. That team training is more than just two-man buddy teams; they're operating as an entire element, a 10- to 12-man element, depending on class size. This gives the students the opportunity to work as a detachment," as they would with their groups.

With Week Five comes insertion training. This week brings together all the previous training throughout the course. Students will perform helocasts from helicopters and navigate their way by Zodiac inflatable boats to their points. Instructors said their location offers challenging navigational tests, as there are many shallow passages around the Florida Keys.

Finally, Week Six puts everything the students have learned into practical application by conducting a 48-hour field training exercise. The infiltration includes a mission for an entire team, and the instructors serve as the opposing force. Upon successful

completion of the FTX, the students take part in a 9-mile run the following morning, and the final three days of the course are dedicated to cleaning and maintenance.

As one can imagine, the elation of completing such a grueling school renders the new combat divers overjoyed. The senior combat divers who teach at the school emphasize that the graduates are now, truly, the best of the best.

"The school has really come a long way. It's no longer a gateway. Graduates go back to their groups with skill sets and knowledge that run deeper than those who graduated years ago," Minnick said.

ELITE STANDARDS

Elite status can't be purchased or secured through a handout. To be elite, one must endure the hardships that tough training requires. One must train beyond the limits of what is considered the norm. One must excel.

In the military, those among the elite have paid certain dues and performed to such a level that they can now be considered the top 1 percent.

The main reason combat diver qualification is so tough, Tabberer explained, "is when you take a human being, a common air-breather, put him under the water and take away his source of air — it can make the biggest, meanest, baddest human being become very weak, panic-stricken. It drains the will to survive. We're looking for people who can overcome those pitfalls and remain confident."

The school is intentionally regimented. "We're very tight on the students. We try to identify those people who need to be here and those who don't. Usually the water does the choosing for us. We don't have to choose anything. Most of the students decide it's just not for them," Tabberer said, adding, "I know some awesome operators I would go to combat with any day, and they're



not combat divers. They tried the course and decided it wasn't for them."

But don't be fooled; for many students, the toughest part of the course takes place in the classroom. Master Sgt. Matthew D. Smith, chief instructor in charge of the curriculum, said that a lot of what takes place at the school involves academics.

Having a medical background might help a student in this course, but most who attend do not have that luxury. In order to fully understand the dangers involved with diving, the types of injuries that could occur and how to prevent them, students must understand basic anatomy and physiology. The academic portion of the course, essentially, "explains what can kill these guys," Smith said solemnly.

"We go over it with a fine-tooth comb. A lot of times, we have to really break it down in laymen's terms. The problem is we've got a lot of 10-pound craniums walking around here who understand it in-depth. So, we spend a lot of time talking with each other about the best teaching methods. For example, we're not going to waste time by using a bunch of Latin terms that the students aren't going to understand. We put it into the simplest terms to get the highest level of understanding," Smith said.

"Sitting in on a class is like Valium for the ears," he joked. "These poor guys train all day and then go sit in the classroom at night. We do a lot of testing, a lot of study hall to make sure these guys understand. If one of these guys falls below 75 percent in their academics, they are placed on restriction. They must maintain a 75 percent or better, just to be able to go downtown and get a cheeseburger."

Overall course standards require an 85 percent or higher before students can qualify as divers. "We can't just send them out of here with a 70 percent and think, 'Oh, they're probably good enough.' That's not going to work," Smith emphasized. "That kind of complacency will get a guy killed."

ELITE SOLDIERS

While virtually every instructor or staff member at the CDQC will humbly say that what they do is just another way to get to work, indeed there is something that sets apart the Special Forces combat diver from the standard Green Beret.



Furthermore, not just anyone can be selected to teach at the course.

Emphasizing that making such a statement is based on pure opinion, Sgt. Maj. Roberto Oquendo, company sergeant major and the senior enlisted advisor to the commander, said, "What truly sets apart the Special Forces combat diver from the already elite Special Forces Soldier is determination and drive to be better than everyone else. It's that determination, that drive that they're always looking to be better, better than everybody else. You hear it in Special Forces and around Rangers. And you can probably find a consensus about the CDQC course as one of the hardest — mentally and physically demanding — in the Army."

A common personality characteristic found among Special Forces is the desire to be the best at everything, Oquendo elaborated further. He said that a lot of people on the street believe that being a combat diver means you're one of the best of the best. For a lot of guys, that's what they want to be. He said occasionally some will jump into it without knowing what they're getting into exactly, but the majority knows precisely what to expect. They researched and asked around. They learned about the history of combat diving and what the school has to offer.

"I want to choose my words very carefully here, because this isn't for everybody, just like Airborne School is not for everybody. Not everyone who is Special Forces is [high altitude/low opening]-qualified. Of course," Oquendo pointed out, "not everyone enjoys jumping out of a plane at 13,000 feet in the air at night with equipment, and that's okay. These specialties are one notch above the standard SF. We need that, which is why we have these specialty teams, like dive teams and HALO teams."

Cadre members agree that potential candidates for the course must be mature, disciplined, intelligent. They must have the desire to be part of the elite 1 percent of Special Forces combat divers. Instructors say that the desire to be part of that 1 percent serves as motivation in and of itself.

While all the instructors happily convey they've enjoyed their time at this assignment and teaching at the school, every single one makes no bones that they'd rather be out with their groups conducting missions. The experience of teaching at one of the most difficult courses throughout the military, helping train and create new combat divers is an opportunity that even less than 1 percent of the Special Forces combat divers will ever have. Truly, many of these instructors are heroic. But, the mission always comes first.

ELITE PROFESSIONALS

The Special Forces combat dive community — Army, Navy, Air Force — has

Left: Sgt. Eddy Rojas, CDQC instructor, adjusts his breathing apparatus in between pool training sessions.

Opposite page: Sgt. 1st Class Thomas N. Talmadge, CDQC instructor, conducts dive supervisor personnel inspections on students before they perform a surface swim test in the open bay off the Key West, Fla., coast.



contributed more than its share to the war on terrorism, having lost several men during the course of the last few years. While they may not be called on for dive missions in the Middle East, these combat divers are fighting professionals.

In fact, most candidates who enter CDQC usually have four to seven deployments under their belts. But, it's more than special operations training and capabilities that make these men professionals. It's the heart; it's the drive; it's their sense of duty, loyalty and honor.

Having spent 10 years as an engineer in the regular Army, Tabberer decided to go Special Forces, but he said he had never considered being a diver. He explained that it was SF autonomy that pushed him through the qualification course, and prestige attracted him to dive school.

"Being regular Army, a commander makes your decisions. If he wants you to roll, you're rolling. But on an ODA, you talk about it, use all your heads and brains and decide your own destiny as a team. That's what influenced me to go SF. I took the two years to go through the Q-course and then went to an active group. I saw the caliber of Soldiers and the caliber of divers, and that's what I wanted to be," he said.

Prior to then, Tabberer had never considered going to dive school. "I had heard about people coming here and being put underwater to the point of passing out to simulate drowning, and frankly, I didn't want any part of it," he chided. But after working with combat divers in his group, he changed his mind. He said he wanted to be part of that elite force.

Most of the instructors at CDQC have multiple deploy-

ments as well, and some of them have given more than just time to the Global War on Terrorism. Sgt. 1st Class Thomas N. Talmadge, CDQC instructor, was injured during his last deployment to Afghanistan, where he and his team came under heavy fire in the middle of the night. Talmadge's left leg was severely injured by a direct hit from a rocket propelled grenade. He didn't merely catch shrapnel from the blast. Literally, the grenade hit his leg, and the unexploded round had to be yanked out of his tissue by a teammate during the firefight.

Talmadge said the chaos of the firefight made finding cover a difficult task, but once he was in a better position, the medic applied several tourniquets and called for a medevac. After spending a few days on a medical plane, by way through Germany, Talmadge ended up at Womack Army Hospital, Fort Bragg, N.C.

"That medic did everything; he saved my life," he said, adding that he's had approximately 40 surgeries to repair damage and reconstruct his leg. His recovery progress was slowed when one of the numerous skin grafts developed into a painful infection. But, Talmadge said that he has intentionally, and sometimes forcefully, taken an active part within his own recovery process, which has helped him maintain a positive outlook.

"It was life changing, especially in the beginning. You start out at the top of the food chain, but after the injury, I was at the bottom of the chain. I felt like a little bottom-sucker. Not to mention ... family comes to see you in the hospital, and you can't do anything for yourself. So, everybody's trying to help you, take care of you. It brings you down. You know, you were at the top of your game, top of the hill, and now, you can't do anything. Most of the time, I had a pretty good outlook on things," he confessed. "I thanked God that I was alive, but there were times that I got pretty down."

As Talmadge began regaining strength and mobility, he did laps around the nurses' station. He knew staying hydrated was extremely important, adding that he was on a liquid diet for a very long time.

Once released from the hospital, Talmadge wasn't sure about taking another regular assignment that might put him in the field. "I could just see myself walking through a field, stepping in a hole and busting my leg open, and I'd lose all the progress I'd made so far in rehab. One of my buddies suggested I come here to CDQC as an instructor, which would allow me to continue my rehab, especially swimming," he explained.

Still walking with a cane when he first arrived to CDQC, Talmadge began swimming, and with help from the other cadre, he began running again. "I'm almost back to the same level I was at before the injury," he said proudly, ready to get back in the fight. "I've got my feelers out there, seeing what's going on back at group, so I can get back on a team, get back to training and the daily grind."

Talmadge advises anyone who might be interested in attending or becoming an instructor at CDQC to get the ball rolling. "Especially if you're already a diver and looking to do instructor time, this is the place to do it. Hopefully, one day, you can enjoy some of this, because it's a really good gig." 🇺🇸

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100 YEARS OF QUARtermaster SCHOOL



Left: The Philadelphia Depot was the home of the U.S. Army Quartermaster School in 1910-1941.

Below: The Army Logistics University is one of the many buildings that make up the Sustainment Center of Excellence at Fort Lee, Va., where the U.S. Army Quartermaster School resides today.

Courtesy Photos



By Sgt. Samuel J. Phillips

For the last 100 years, the Quartermaster School has been training the Soldiers who work behind the scenes to keep the Army rolling along. In that time more than half a million Soldiers from at least nine different military occupational specialties have graduated the school.

The U.S. Army Quartermaster School first opened its doors on March 1, 1910, with a 14-week course for quartermaster sergeants at the Philadelphia Depot. After a short time, the curriculum expanded to include officers as well as senior NCOs.

On Oct. 6, 1941, the school relocated again to its new home – Fort Lee, Va. Once there, the Quartermaster School took root and blossomed.

In 1958, representatives from the installation, including the post commander, school commandant and the education advisor, went before both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and argued that the school, which was then housed in a building constructed during World War II, was in need of a new facility. The committees agreed and approved \$3.4 million in construction funds, said Steven F. Anders, former Quartermaster School historian.

On March 17, 1959, the school broke ground on the 143,000-square-foot facility, Anders said. It took two full years to complete the three-story building that housed a wide variety of classrooms capable of accommodating nearly 700 students,

offices for upwards of 415 staff and faculty, bookstore, mailroom, barber shop, 300-plus-seat cafeteria and a main auditorium with more than 500 seats.

As one of his last official duties as the Army’s quartermaster general, Maj. Gen. Andrew T. McNamara traveled to Fort Lee on May 19, 1961, to dedicate the new building in honor of the first Quartermaster General, Thomas Mifflin. “I don’t know what Pennsylvania has done about perpetuating the memory of Tom Mifflin,” McNamara said in his dedicatory remarks, “but I think it is singularly appropriate that we should inscribe his name upon this great new headquarters of the Quartermaster School, symbolizing as it does our highest aspiration in quartermaster training and service.”

“Mifflin Hall became the hallmark of Fort Lee, an institution within itself,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Douglas Washington, the current 262nd Quartermaster Battalion sergeant major. “When you speak of Fort Lee, you speak of Mifflin Hall in the same terms.”



Above: After pouring a fuel sample through a filter, Spc. Juan Rodriguez-Cano, a petroleum lab technician in Company A, 615th Aviation Support Battalion, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, carefully pulls the filter off so it can be placed in an oven and later be weighed at Camp Taji, Iraq, Dec. 29, 2010.

Photo by Sgt. Travis Zielinski

Left: Sergeant Eloyes Ratliff, petroleum supply specialist in Company E, 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, Task Force Diamond Head, refuels a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, Feb. 5, 2010.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Alberts

For nearly 50 years, “Old Mifflin” more than fulfilled her primary mission of training quartermaster Soldiers and developing logistics leaders for the 21st century, Anders said. The school has spawned new graduates on virtually a daily basis.

As part of recommendations from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, the Quartermaster School was combined with the Transportation Center and School, and the Ordnance Center and School to form the U.S. Army Sustainment Center of Excellence located at Fort Lee. With this move, the decision was also made to tear down Mifflin Hall. However, to keep the tradition alive, the new SCoE headquarters building is scheduled to take the name that has been a trademark of the Quartermaster School for nearly half of its existence.

Though many were saddened by the loss of Mifflin Hall, it is the Quartermaster School’s ability to evolve with the advancements within their fields that has made it such a success, Washington said.

Today, the 23rd Quartermaster Brigade, the proponent of the Quartermaster School, is the largest Advanced Individual Training brigade within the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. More than 23,000 Soldiers, airmen, Marines, civilians and members of

foreign countries go through the training each year.

Personnel attend courses ranging from 5 weeks to 13 weeks in length and receive training using the latest doctrine and newest equipment in their fields, consisting of automated logistical



Photo by Pfc. Justin Naylor

Sgt. David Perez, a petroleum supply specialist with Alpha Company, 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, delivers pallets of water to Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, July 30, 2010. Perez is part of a team of Soldiers that delivers water nearly every day, rain or shine, to ensure Soldiers stay properly hydrated.

WE ARE QUARTERMASTER SOLDIERS

92A - Automated Logistical Specialists are primarily responsible for supervising and performing management or warehouse functions in order to maintain equipment records and parts.

92F - Petroleum Supply Specialists are primarily responsible for supervising and managing the reception, storage and shipping of bulk or packaged petroleum-based products.

92G - Food Service Specialists are primarily responsible for the preparation and in field or garrison food service operations. Food service specialists prepare all types of food according to standard and dietetic recipes, as well as ordering and inspecting food supplies and preparing meats for cooking.

92L - Petroleum Laboratory Specialists are primarily responsible for supervising or conducting laboratory tests on petroleum, oil and lubricant products.

92M - Mortuary Affairs Specialists perform duties relating to deceased personnel to include recovery, collection, evacuation, establishment of tentative identification. They also inventory, safeguard and evacuate personal effects of deceased personnel. They also serve as team members and recovery specialists at the U.S. Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii.

92R - Parachute Riggers supervise or pack and repair cargo and personnel parachutes, and rig equipment and supply containers for airdrop. Parachute riggers are primarily responsible for repairing textile and canvas items, webbed equipment and clothing.

92S - Shower/Laundry and Clothing Repair Specialists are primarily responsible for supervising and performing laundry, shower, personnel and clothing decontamination functions.

92W - Water Treatment Specialists inspect facilities and food supplies for the presence of disease, germs or other conditions hazardous to health and the environment. Water treatment specialists are primarily responsible for supervising or performing the installation and operation of water purification equipment, as well as dealing with water storage and distribution operations and activities.

92Y - Unit Supply Specialists are primarily responsible for supervising or performing tasks involving the general upkeep and maintenance of all Army supplies and equipment.



Photo by Daren Reehl

Staff Sgt. Joseph Dinuzza, a member of the U.S. Army Europe culinary team, puts the finishing touches on a dish during the practical and contemporary hot food cooking competition. Dinuzza was participating in the 35th U.S. Army Culinary Arts Competition at Fort Lee, Va. It is the largest culinary competition in the United States.

specialists, petroleum supply specialists, food service specialists, petroleum laboratory specialists, mortuary affairs specialists, parachute riggers, shower/laundry and clothing-repair specialists, water treatment specialists, and unit supply specialists.

However, it's not just AIT Soldiers that the Quartermaster School focuses on. Many sergeants and staff sergeants also come through the school, said Sgt. 1st Class Abique Greene, a small group leader at the Quartermaster School. Many of these young NCOs have gotten away from the basics, she said.

"Since the war began, Soldiers have not been focusing on the regulations as much," Greene said. "Downrange Soldiers do what needs to be done to get the mission accomplished. But,



Photo by Staff Sgt. Tramel S. Garrett

Sgt. Wayne D. Salas, a supply sergeant with the Special Troops Battalion, V Corps, reviews his turn-in paperwork Nov. 3, 2010, before handing it to Spc. William J. Lewis, an automated logistics specialist with the 21st Theater Sustainment Command.

Sgt. Kevin D. Westberry, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the renovation shops with the 506th Quartermaster Company out of Fort Lee, Va., repairs a uniform at the renovation shop Oct. 3, 2010, at Contingency Operation Location Marez, Mosul, Iraq.

Photo by Sgt. Ryan Twist



Photo by T. Anthony Bell

Sgt. 1st Class Geronimo Blancaflor, a rigger instructor with the Quartermaster School's Aerial Delivery and Field Services Department, inspects the new T-11 parachute worn by Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Vogt prior to an airborne operation Oct. 8, 2010, at Fort Lee, Va. The occasion marked the first time the new parachute was used at Fort Lee.

a lot of them don't know how to do their jobs the way it's supposed to be done."

In the courses, these NCOs are taught the right way to do things, Greene said. The courses get them away from that tactical mind set and prepare them for the garrison environment.

On the other hand, there are a lot of experiences and lessons learned that these NCOs bring with them from having served in combat that can influence the Quartermaster School.

"On a regular basis, we have to review and rewrite the programs of instruction," said Sgt. Maj. Todd F. Shippy, the petroleum and water department sergeant major. "We take these opportunities to bring in that feedback from those staff sergeants and sergeants first class that have been in Iraq and Afghanistan and incorporate it into what we teach at the school."

This allows the school to teach Soldiers how to be more effective in a field environment while maintaining the standards that are required back in-garrison, Shippy said.

The POIs are not the only thing at the Quartermaster School that are constantly being updated. The way the courses are taught is also continuously evolving with changes in equipment and technology.

"Seeing [from how] the Quartermaster School started to [what] it is today is truly amazing. In my 26 years of service, the equipment has improved, the technology has advanced and the training has progressed tremendously," Washington said.

Washington said even the way they distribute information is transforming to come into the 21st century. "We're getting ready to give them iPods and other hand-held devices to do their schooling versus having to have backpacks, a hundred books and papers all over the place."

Also, with the Quartermaster, Transportation and Ordnance Schools co-located on Fort Lee, quartermaster Soldiers are able to do training that was not always possible in the past, Washington said. This training leads to a better understanding of and increased

communication with those outside the Quartermaster Corps.

This understanding will greatly aid Soldiers when they get to their duty stations, Shippy said. If quartermaster Soldiers know how transportation and other sections do things, they will be able to adjust how they operate to minimize hang-ups and accomplish the mission in the fastest time possible.

"All-in-all, the Quartermaster School is in a position today to go further than it ever has before," Washington said. "We will continue to look to the future and do everything we can to produce the best quartermaster Soldiers possible."

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Photo by T. Anthony Bell

Spc. John Hall of 54th Quartermaster Company, 240th QM Battalion, 49th QM Group, studies a mock bone fragment after it was unearthed at a clandestine gravesite during the Unidentified Human Remains Seminar that took place April 12-15, 2010.

Advocate RESERVE

A tradition of family members serving their country and an 'urge' to serve have driven Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Gipe to excel as the senior enlisted advisor for reserve affairs.

BY ANGELA SIMENTAL

Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Gipe, the 9th senior enlisted advisor to the assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs, comes from a long line of service members. Although it took him longer than his siblings to hear his calling, once he was in the military, he committed full-heartedly to the profession.

"My dad was a Guardsman, and most of my family has served in the military," Gipe said. "So, I was instilled with those values from a young age."

It was in his second year of college — when he saw his older brother at a family reunion — that he realized what he truly wanted to do.

"He had joined the Marines, and I saw what it had done for him," he said. "I thought, 'That's what I want to do.'"

Gipe went back to college in 1981 with the idea of becoming an officer in the Marine Corps and flying — just like his brother did. But fate caught up to him before he could join the corps.

"I had a bad knee injury playing intramural football. The team's doctor, also a former Marine officer, told me that I could no longer medically qualify to fly in the Marine Corps. He said, 'But you could be an infantry officer.' It took me a while to find out how I could walk but not fly with a knee injury," Gipe said with a laugh. "That bummed me out so much that I ended up dropping out of college at the end of the semester." But, the urge to serve was still in the back of his mind.

His cousin, a Kentucky Guardsman who is 12 years his senior, convinced Gipe to give the Kentucky National Guard a shot. "And, I did," he said. "I became a cavalry scout in 1982."

Gipe's 28-year career as an Army National Guard Soldier, along with his experience as command sergeant major of the Kentucky National Guard from 2002 to 2005 and command sergeant major of the Army National Guard from 2005 to 2009, has given him the knowledge and perspective needed to excel in his current position. He represents 1.2 million men and women serving in the reserve component of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. He also serves as the chairman of the Department of Defense Reserve Forces Senior Enlisted Advisory Council.

"Obviously you have the generic job description — to work within the Department of Defense to develop policies that support the reserve component and to provide advice to the secretary on enlisted and family issues. But, basically I work with the deputy assistant secretaries and provide advice to them on enlisted issues," he said. "As they are working [on] policies, letters of instruction and training programs, they get an enlisted perspective from me, so they include that perspective. Another big piece of my job is

THE FOR THE RESERVES

supporting the seven reserve component senior enlisted leaders in working any issues they have within DoD. It's a great job. We have people with a wealth of knowledge about the reserve component. We are helping make good, solid recommendations for the future of the reserve component."

WITNESSING CHANGE

When the Kentucky native joined the National Guard, the reserve component was a force of last resort. Gipe has seen the Guard and Reserve become an integral part of the Army's total force, deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan along with their active-duty counterparts.

"I had a traditional career for the first 19 years [drilling one weekend a month and two weeks at annual training]," he explained. "During that time, I never deployed, because the Guard and Reserve seldom did that back then."

Although a small number of reserve component units deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield in the 1990s, the role of the reserve component changed after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Gipe said.

At that time, Gipe was serving as the commandant of the 238th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), as well as the command sergeant major of Kentucky's regional training site, where he was tasked to help train Kentucky National Guards-

men for deployment.

"There were a lot of changes going through the Guard," he said. "After Desert Shield, things really started to change quickly to make us a much more professional force. But, we were still considered a strategic reserve. We were still just the response if the Russians came through the Fulda Gap. That's what

all of our training was all about. That's the doctrine we went under. Of course, 9/11 changed all of that and for the better. We have a very well-trained and combat-ready force in the reserve component."

Gipe, then a platoon sergeant, participates in training at Fort Stewart, Ga., in 1989. The photo is one he rescued from a flood in 1997.

Courtesy photo



GOALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

When asked what achievements he is most proud of, Gipe responds with silence, then his characteristic humble laugh.

“That’s not something I do very well,” he said.

A few minutes later, he jumps in with an unexpected answer.

“Of all the things I am proud of, I am most proud of my daughter. She’s 24 and about to finish her second degree. I’m very proud of her. She is a smart, beautiful and self-confident young lady and is going to make an outstanding teacher.” he said. “I am also extremely proud of the great young men and women serving our country today – they have answered the call in an outstanding fashion.”

Gipe has had many accomplishments in his career, including teaming up with retired Command Sgt. Maj. Leon Caffie to convince Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston to allow the National Guard and Army Reserve to provide their own individual qualifiers for the U.S. Army Best Warrior Competition.

“He listened to us, and within two years of implementing our program, the Guard won the NCO of the Year award and the Army Reserve won the Soldier of the Year.”

When it comes down to the business of explaining the goals for the reserve component, he is straightforward.

“One of the goals is to present a viable set of options for a strategic plan within the comprehensive review,” he said. “We need to work hard to ensure we remove all obstacles that exist which prevent the Guard and Reserve from supporting and participating in any and all missions.”

The comprehensive review is an attempt to provide a holistic view on the possible uses of the reserve component in future years to support the active component as a total force solution for the National Military Strategy, Gipe explained.

Gipe explained that the reserve component should be used for recurring and predictable missions.

“For example, instead of stationing an active component artillery brigade in Korea, we can rotate a reserve component fires brigade over there. In some situations and under certain circumstances, using the Guard and Reserve to fulfill this type of role makes sense. It can reduce overall costs within the Department of Defense, help build strategic depth and help the active component reach their targeted dwell time. These are all great ideas, but in order to make them happen, some things will have to change, both in law and policy – and people’s mind set,” Gipe explained. “It is a whole new concept of how to use the reserve component.

It helps integrate them as part of the total force. It allows us to be more flexible with our missions.”

Gipe said the mind set of the services and the Department of Defense has changed since he joined.

“I have talked to thousands of service members, and none want to go where we used to be – ‘the weekend warrior.’ There is not a service member in the Guard or Reserve today that didn’t enlist or re-enlist knowing they were going to deploy – they want to deploy. They want to do their country’s bidding and be an integral part of the team – and they are. Although not always the case, there are some missions where the reserve component is better suited than the active component – and if there is a

mission in which that is the case, the Guard and Reserve should be looked at first.”

Making the transition from active-duty to reserve a simple process is one other goal Gipe wants to achieve.

“We need to make it easy for people to transition back and forth and not make it such a headache,” he said. Gipe explained that is necessary to simplify the transition of active duty service members who would like to join the Reserves or those who want to go back to active duty. “Continuum of service is the term we use. We have a very small part of the population that serves. Moving from one service to another or from the active to the reserve component should be seamless. You or your family shouldn’t fall out of the database when you transition from one status to another – we’ve been at this for 10 years now – how that still happens is beyond my scope of imagination,” he added.

He also said that more needs to be done to ensure Soldiers and their families are taken care of before and after deployment.

“When we send folks overseas, they are 100 percent ready to go. When they come back home, they need to be 100 percent ready to go back to work,” Gipe said. “They need to be ready to resume their civilian jobs. We owe it to them to help them, and also make sure we take care of their families.”

GETTING INSPIRED

Gipe boasts proudly about the Soldiers he has served with, and when he travels to any of the 68 countries where the reserve component is deployed, it’s “nothing but humbling to see such dedicated individuals,” he said.

“I grab my inspiration from the young folks,” Gipe said. “We, as a nation, are blessed to have this level of commitment from these patriots.”



Gipe, second to last, stands as a staff sergeant with his siblings, who have all served in the military.

Courtesy photo

He vividly recounts the story, from his time as the command sergeant major of the Kentucky National Guard, of how a young medic, specialist [now Staff Sgt.] Jason Mike, wanted to join the unit he was assisting during Close Quarters Marksmanship training. "This young medic told me, 'Sergeant major, I have to deploy with these guys.' When I asked him why, he told me he was impressed with the level of leadership from their NCOs, and he felt he had to go with them. Unfortunately at the time, the unit had a full contingent of medics already assigned. He said, 'I'll cook, I'll do maintenance. I'll do whatever I have to do to go with these guys.' I told him, 'I appreciate your enthusiasm, but be careful what you ask for.' I gave him a coin and walked out," he said. "I hadn't walked 30 yards when I ran into the company commander, and he told me, 'They just lost three people due to medical issues.' I asked, 'Sir, what MOSSs?' He said, 'two MPs and a medic.' I took him back and hooked him up with then-specialist Mike. This young man ended up going with them, and while deployed, earned a Silver Star."

Among the NCOs that inspired Mike were Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester, one of the team leaders, who became the first woman to earn in Silver Star in combat, and his squad leader, Sgt. 1st Class Tim Nein, who earned the Distinguished Service Cross. Soldiers like these are what drive Gipe to work hard every day.

His career has also been filled with peers who have mentored and helped him become a better leader, he said. Several senior NCOs came to his mind as being an integral part of his development as a Soldier, including retired Command Sgts. Maj. Richard Bogle, his predecessor as the Kentucky National Guard, and Edgar Satchwell. Also, his forerunners at the Army National Guard, retired Command Sgts. Maj. Al "Airborne" Hunt, Larry Pence, John Leonard and Frank Lever.

"Whenever you come into a new organization, you have to have your own goals and objectives. You work to accomplish those goals, as well as support the goals of your commander," he said. "It is always helpful to have a lifeline you can call if you have a problem you need advice on. My mentors have all been willing to answer all of my questions. They'll pat me on the back when I'm doing something right – and they'll smack me when I'm doing something wrong. They have provided me with great mentorship. I've been very fortunate to have folks like them."

LOOKING BACK AND INTO THE FUTURE

Gipe said that many young NCOs often ask him how he became the command sergeant major of the Army National Guard or the senior enlisted advisor to the assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs.

"There is no magic button," he responds.

He said he believes hard training, upholding standards and having self-confidence are key, not to just top the ranks, but to simply be a good service member.

"You need to be willing to do the jobs other people don't want to do," he said. "I did that a couple of times in my career. Once, I was asked to become sergeant major of an organization that nobody else wanted to take. It wasn't really where I wanted to go with my career at that point, but it turned out to be very beneficial for me. You also have to be willing to put yourself out there. In a lot of cases, people don't have enough confidence in themselves to say, 'I can do this.' And, unless you take the chance, you won't know."

Gipe added that the way service members are trained and educated today makes it easier for them to tackle the jobs and challenges they face as they climb up through the ranks.

"The way we promote based on excellence, I don't think there is a job at the next level that a Soldier can't handle," he said. "As a first sergeant, I knew I was prepared to be a command

sergeant major at the battalion level. It's always a little scary because it's new ground, but if you don't take that chance, you'll go through life thinking, 'What if?' I don't want to be a 'what if?' I always want to give it my best shot."

Another thing Gipe advises younger NCOs to do: find time for education.


"One thing that I will do when I get the chance is finish college. In today's environment, that is something I would encourage everybody to do. I'm really glad to see the Army moving toward that direction. What they are doing with Structured Self-Development, for example, intertwining [education] with the Soldier's career is phenomenal," he said. "I just want to make sure that they have a plan to address Reserve members who don't have access to technology, so they don't get left behind. There are areas of the country where you don't get fast, wireless Internet; they have dial-up. Hope

is not a plan. I want to see something in writing that says you are going to take care of the reserve component."

Gipe said that in many cases, the reserve component has access to more educational opportunities than the active component.

"Many states have their own tuition-assistance programs. Since the reserve component also has access to the post-9/11 GI Bill and opportunities like the Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs, they have a ton of support in getting an education, and there is no reason not to do so," he said.

Gipe has changed, grown and evolved along with the role and importance of the reserve component. He said he knows how the policies being made impact the lives of Reserve service members because he is one of them.

"I'm extremely proud of my title as an Army Guardsman," Gipe said. "I am proud of how the reserve forces have matured over the past 10 years and the role they play now. Any time I talk to service members, I can't help but be proud." 

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Courtesy photo

Command Sgt. Maj. Gipe, the 9th senior enlisted advisor to the assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs.

HIGH-RISK BEHAVIOR; FATAL CONSEQUENCES



By Cindy Ramirez

A screen shot from the Army's suicide prevention video, "Shoulder to Shoulder: No Soldier Stands Alone."

Ilicit drug use, binge drinking and criminal activity are among the high-risk behaviors endangering Soldiers' lives — often leading to relationship problems that can culminate in suicide, according to a recent Army report.

It's a trend that's been on the upward swing, and 2010 seems to have been no exception — 301 suicides were reported among active-duty, National Guard and Reserve Soldiers, compared to 242 in 2009.

UPS & DOWNS

"While we achieved modest success in reducing the number of suicides of these Soldiers on active duty, we saw a significant increase in the number of suicides of Soldiers not serving on active duty," said Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli during a January press conference at the Pentagon.

Statistics revealed six fewer active-duty Soldiers took their lives in 2010 than in 2009. The National Guard, however, reported 101 suicides in 2010 — nearly twice as many as the previous year. In the Army Reserve, 44 Soldiers took their lives in 2010, a dozen more than in 2009.

"We've got two obvious questions. First of all, what happened, and second, we have to be able to respond and tell people what we are doing about it," Maj. Gen. Ray Carpenter, acting director of the Army National Guard, said at the press conference.

Carpenter noted a large portion of last year's suicides were not directly related to multiple or extended deployments: 50 percent of the Soldiers who committed suicide in 2010 had never deployed. Ongoing investigations into Soldier suicides reveal a majority of those who killed themselves were experiencing relationship problems, he said.

Chiarelli added that conflicts in romantic, family and other relationships aren't necessarily the root stressors driving Soldiers to suicide. Drug and alcohol abuse, anger management issues and financial troubles lead to relationship breakdowns, which further stress and depress Soldiers, he said.

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT

Poor adherence to Army policies and lack of accountability in disciplinary reporting processes may be keeping Soldiers from receiving the care — and the discipline — they need to remain resilient when faced with adversity, according to the Army's Health Promotion, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention Report released in summer 2010.

Though specifics for 2010 are not yet available, statistics indicate nearly one-third of suicide victims from 2005 to 2009 were subjects of a prior law enforcement investigation, including alleged offenses of driving under the influence, aggravated sexual assault or cocaine use.

Moving forward, the Army Campaign Plan for Health Promotion and Risk Reduction, or HP&RR, tackles the challenges of promoting health and reducing risk Armywide.

PROGRAMS, POLICIES & PEOPLE

“This will require the full dedication of leaders across the force to ensure compliance with existing policies, programs and processes, and to set conditions for the next wave of Army solutions,” Chiarelli stated in the report.

“We must also recognize that on occasion, we need to do the right thing for both the Soldier and the Army through firm enforcement of discipline, retention and separation policies,” continued Chiarelli. “This will require compassionate, fair but firm leaders who understand when to mentor Soldiers and when to accept that they will not meet Army standards.”

Chiarelli and other officials said the report exposes gaps in how leaders mitigate disciplinary problems among Soldiers.

“We have got to get our NCOs back to basics, leading by example, ensuring they’re doing everything they can and everything they’re supposed to be doing to take care of their Soldiers,” said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston during the 2011 Nominative Sergeants Major and Senior Enlisted Advisors Conference at Fort Bliss, Texas, in January.

“Our NCOs need to demonstrate what right looks like,” Preston said. “And when Soldiers aren’t living by those Army values, following rules and regulations, it’s our NCOs who need to put them back on track.”

Preston noted the 2011 “Profession of Arms” campaign will be key to that mission. The yearlong effort encourages a recommitment to a culture of service, responsibilities and behaviors that are articulated in the Army’s values and ethics.

As part of the campaign, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, in conjunction with the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, will review how the force has changed over the past decade of persistent conflict; Soldiers’ understanding of what it means to be in the profession; and the policies needed to sustain the force for the next 10 years.

Unprecedented operational tempo has dictated that leaders be primarily focused on preparing for their next deployment, said retired Sgt. Maj. Walter Morales, a member of the Army Vice Chief of Staff’s Suicide Prevention Task Force.

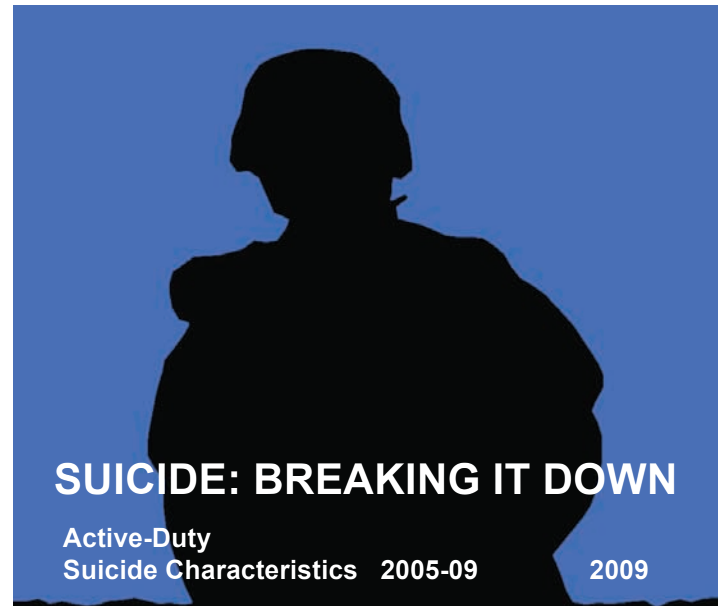
“We have been at war for 10 years now, and we have lost touch of how to lead our Soldiers back in garrison,” Morales said. “We’ve got to get back to basic soldiering and basic leadership: counseling, visiting with and calling our Soldiers and their families, and getting them any assistance they may need to remain safe, strong — and alive.”

Echoing Chiarelli and Preston, Morales said he encourages leaders to be “strict but fair,” an approach that provides “the Soldier and the Army with what’s best for both.”

“Nonetheless,” he added, “we’re not closing the doors on our Soldiers as far as providing them the care they need. Instead, we’re working to balance keeping them safe and alive with maintaining a strong operational force.”

The HP&RR recommends various actions to curb high-risk behaviors, and ultimately, suicides. They include enhancing policies to better report and track alcohol and drug abuse, enforcing separation actions for Soldiers when warranted, and consolidating criminal and misconduct databases to improve situational awareness for commanders, law enforcement agencies and service providers.

An array of other initiatives are already in place, including expanding behavioral health screening and resiliency training, improving access to medical and behavioral health care providers, and providing suicide intervention training.



SUICIDE: BREAKING IT DOWN

Active-Duty Suicide Characteristics	2005-09	2009
Location of Suicide		
USA	72.9%	80.0%
In theater	22.8	17.0
Other	4.3	3.0
Method		
Gunshot	67.5	62.0
Hanging	19.8	23.3
Overdose	4.6	6.2
Stressors (can be more than one)		
Relationship	55.8	55.8
Military/work	49.6	57.4
Physical health	20	23.2
Substance abuse.....	15.8	16.7
Alcohol or Drug Involvement		
Alcohol	19.8	17.6
Drug	9.8	5.7
Primary Motivation		
Unknown	41.2	47.2
Emotional relief	15.2	16.7
Depression	12.2	11.1
Avoidance/escape	7.5	4.6

Source: U.S. Army Health Promotion, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention Report 2010

“When Soldiers aren’t living by those Army values, following rules and regulations, it’s our NCOs who need to put them back on track.”
 — Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston

“It’s not until you sit down with these people who have been through so much pain and suffering ... that you get a better sense of the consequences of suicide and high-risk behaviors.”

— Retired Sgt. Maj. Walter Morales

The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, which kicked off in 2009, is meant to help equip Soldiers with coping and resiliency skills.

Part of the CSF is the Global Assessment Tool, or GAT, an online survey that assesses a Soldier’s four dimensions of strength — emotional, social, spiritual and family. Self-guided online courses then help strengthen Soldiers in those areas. More than 1 million Soldiers have taken the mandatory survey since 2009, a milestone reached in January.

Nearly 3,000 Soldiers have completed the Master Resilience Course, an initiative of the CSF program. The 10-day course teaches Soldiers to use positive psychology when faced with adversity — learning to see the positive in life and taking proactive measures to avoid making poor choices.

“These programs allow us to give Soldiers the skills they need to not get in the dark place we sometimes do,” said Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr. during the Fort Bliss sergeants major conference.

In talking about CSF and resiliency, Casey said strength is not just physical.

“You can do all the push-ups you want, but if you don’t get mentally fit, you’re not going to make it,” he said.

The Army has made significant progress in a number of other areas, specifically:

- **In partnership with the National Institute of Mental Health**, the Army Study to Assess Risk and Resilience in Service members, or STARRS, is the largest study of mental health risk and resilience ever conducted among military personnel. The five-year study began in 2010. Starting this month, researchers will assess Soldiers’ psychological and physical health; events encountered during training, combat and non-combat operations; and life experiences to determine how these factors affect resilience, mental health and risk for self-harm.

- **A new online system gives medical review officers** improved access to drug and alcohol information systems, resulting in better identification of prescription or illicit drug use and potential dependency or abuse.



- **Commanders have been issued a compendium of Army policies** emphasizing the service’s methods for surveillance, detection and response to high-risk behavior across the force, which must to be re-enforced to improve compliance.

- **Six installations have initiated a Confidential Alcohol Treatment and Education Pilot** program to provide opportunities for Soldiers to seek help. Under this program, commanders are notified only when there’s risk to the Soldier or others, officials said.

- **Revised policies require a comprehensive medical review** of patients who are receiving four or more medications when at least one is a psychotropic or antidepressant.

- **An additional 72 chaplain positions** were created, and the process for them to help identify and refer Soldiers and their families to behavioral health care providers was streamlined.

- **The TRICARE Assistance Program** is a free, anonymous online counseling program that allows Soldiers and their families to video chat and instant message licensed counselors. Counselors also help users learn about other TRICARE benefits for which they are eligible. **Information:** <http://www.tricare.mil/TRIAP>

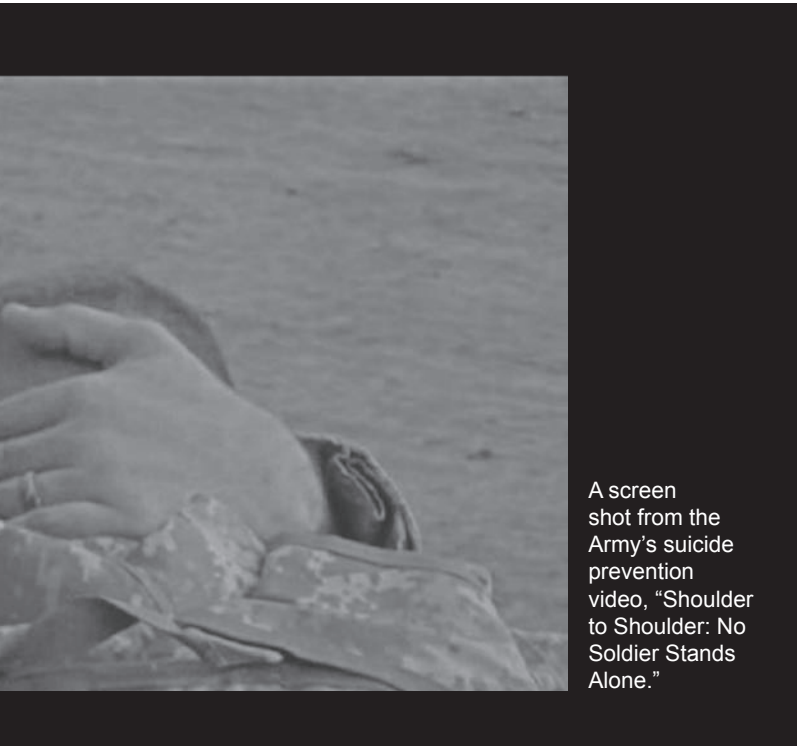
- **Programs such as Applied Suicide Intervention Skills**

WHAT’S BEING DONE

The Army has expanded behavioral health screening, improved access to providers, created additional chaplain positions and is piloting confidential alcohol treatment programs.

TRACKING PROGRESS

More than 1 million Soldiers have taken the Global Assessment Tool, and some 3,000 Soldiers have completed the Master Resilience Training Course.



A screen shot from the Army's suicide prevention video, "Shoulder to Shoulder: No Soldier Stands Alone."

SYNCHRONIZING EFFORTS

Bringing all these programs together to avoid duplication of services is the work of Community Health Promotion Councils now formally established under the Public Health Command in a dozen installations across the nation. Within a few years, all installations should have a council charged with streamlining all health promotion, risk reduction and suicide prevention programs.

"The goal really is to synchronize all the assets — garrison, medical and tactical," said Tameka A. Owens, the Fort Bliss health promotion officer.


"In the past, there was a lot of operating in silos. And in the past, that might have been fine," Owens continued. "But when we think about the optempo our Soldiers are experiencing, as well as the mandates from the vice chief of staff of the Army, it can't be business as usual."

The bottom line, Owens said, is to provide commanders with information to pass down to their Soldiers.

"It's a more coordinated approach to avoid confusing Soldiers who are trying to navigate through all the different resources," she said.

Morales praised the efforts of the councils, saying they're necessary to align the vast number of programs and initiatives aimed at reducing suicides among Soldiers.

However, he said, leadership is what's most important for those efforts to be effective.

"The resources are there," Morales said. "But we can't just point to them and say, 'There they are.' We need to stay proactive in learning about our Soldiers' lives, in keeping them safe. We have to be tuned in. It's not being intrusive. It's caring, and it's our job." 

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Training and Ask, Care, Escort are being offered to an increasing number of Soldiers Armywide to teach them how to intervene when a person is considering taking his or her life.

• **Training and awareness continues through videos** such as "Shoulder to Shoulder: I Will Never Quit on Life," and most recently, "The Home Front," which integrates scenarios to teach viewers how to confront and help suicidal persons.

"Every time we do these videos, it really, really hits home," Morales said, adding that the third installment of the "Shoulder to Shoulder" series will be out late this summer.

The videos drive home a number of messages through the voices of those who have overcome adversity, helped save a comrade's life — or are having to live with the devastation left behind by someone who took their life, Morales said.

"We're putting a face to the issue. We tend to concentrate on strategies, programs and services and how to fund the different initiatives. ... But it's not until you sit down with these people who have been through so much pain and suffering ... that you get a better sense of the consequences of suicide and high-risk behaviors."

ALCOHOL & DRUGS

From FY 2005 to 2009, nearly one third of Soldier suicides involved alcohol or drugs; and nearly half of accidental or undetermined deaths involved a drug overdose.

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

ARMY SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

www.preventsuicide.army.mil

ARMY REGULATION 600-63 (HEALTH PROMOTION)

www.army.mil/usapa/epubs/pdf/r600_63.pdf





The 'Dogface Soldiers' of the 3rd Infantry Division

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

Now advising and assisting Iraqi Security Forces as part of United States Division-Central, many of the Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division are on their third, fourth and even fifth deployment overseas. But, 93 years ago, when U.S. Soldiers had never before been sent to fight on another continent, it was 3rd Division Soldiers who acquainted the world with the tenacity of the American warfighter. In the process, they earned honor, distinction and the three stripes that appear on their unit insignia patch.

The American Expeditionary Forces sent to France in April 1918 were untested and had never experienced combat. Rushed to bolster French defenses during what would be Imperial Germany's last major offensive, the 28,000 3rd Division Soldiers impressed their French and British counterparts. But, the massive German "Peace Storm" designed to end the war once and for all overwhelmed the Allies, pushing their defenses all the way to the Marne River on the outskirts of Paris.

Staff Sgt. Ditson Abraham of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, forms up with his squad along a roadway leading to Ali Shaheen village, Iraq, in March 2008. His military transition team advised Iraqi soldiers as they conducted a clearing operation.

Photo by Sgt. Timothy Kingston



Above: A painting from the collection of the U.S. Army Center of Military History depicts 3rd ID Soldiers holding a German offensive during the Second Battle of the Marne in World War I. The division's refusal to retreat earned it the nickname, "Rock of the Marne."
 Left: American Soldiers cross the Marne River via a pontoon bridge.

Courtesy photos

At the village of Château-Thierry, where the 3rd Division was entrenched, French commanders urged the American forces to retreat again. But, division commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Dickman barked back, "*Nous resterons la!*" — "We shall remain!"

On the morning of July 18, 1918, the division's 30th and 38th Regiments launched a surprise counterattack on the German forces, defeating their attempt to break through the Allied lines. Gen. John J. Pershing later wrote, "On this occasion ... the 3rd Division wrote one of the most brilliant pages in our military annals. It

prevented the crossing at certain points on its front, while on either flank, the Germans who had gained a footing pressed forward. Our men, firing in three sections, met the German attacks with counterattacks at critical points and succeeded in throwing two German divisions into complete confusion."

The battle turned the tide of the entire war; within four months, it was over. For their steadfast refusal to budge from the banks of the river, the division earned the nickname, "Rock of the Marne," and Dickman's words became the division motto. Its eventual participation in three

major World War I operations — Marne, Saint-Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne — inspired the design of its insignia patch: three white stripes on a field of blue, signifying "loyalty, steadfastness and undying devotion to the principles of right and justice by the American Soldier."

In the nearly 100 years since, the division's dogged determination has never lagged. With more Medal of Honor recipients than any other division, more combat deaths in World War II than any other U.S. division, and the distinction of liberating Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom, new 3rd ID Soldiers are told they're "in the big leagues now," said Walter "Buck" Meeks III, the director of the Fort Stewart Museum at the installation in Georgia the division now calls home.

"The 3rd Division is to the military profession what the New York Yankees are to professional baseball. We are the class of the league every year; we are where the best players gravitate to because they want to play with the best players. That's how we look at it. Is it true? Is it false? Well, I have the evidence all around me here: 51 recipients of the Medal of Honor," he said, pointing to rows of portraits on a wall.

For its NCOs, the division's immense history serves to motivate and inspire.

"The 3rd ID has an awesome history; you've got that as a starting point. But, that just gets you in the door and explains the patch on your shoulder," said 1st Sgt. Chad Brown of D Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd ID. "We take that 3rd ID mentality, that strength of history, then tell the Soldiers to come and create their own history. That creates a drive in them to be successful."

It also prompts today's Soldiers to compare their mettle with that of 3rd ID Soldiers of yesteryear, said Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Altman, 4th IBCT's command sergeant major.

"When I was a young Soldier and a young sergeant growing up in light infantry units, I used to look back at our history. Those guys survived the Bataan Death March, but I can't do a 25-mile movement? I suck! I shouldn't even sit at the same bar with them. Soldiers in Korea during the Korean War lost limbs to frostbite, but I'm sniveling because I'm a little wet and a little cold? During hard



Above: Scott Daubert, deputy director of the 3rd Infantry Division Museum, Fort Stewart, Ga., displays a vintage 3rd ID patch sewn onto a uniform worn during World War I. The makeshift patch had three stripes of white ribbon affixed to a square of blue velvet.

Right: Perhaps the most well-known 3rd ID Soldier, Audie Murphy, seen here shortly after being awarded the Medal of Honor in 1945.

Photo by Michael L. Lewis (above); Courtesy photo (right)

times when I was younger, I used it to get strength and motivation to know what 'hard' really was."

That indomitable spirit sparked perhaps 3rd Division's most well-known moniker: Dogface Soldiers. The term was originally applied to all infantrymen during World War II. But in 1965, then-commander Maj. Gen. Albert O. Conner asked Walt Disney to design a mascot for the 3rd ID that would "mirror the qualities of the Dogface Soldier: heroic but humble; fierce but gentle; quick-witted and wise; with a confidence and dignity that comes from having proved oneself."

Legend has it that Disney himself drew the now-famous cartoon of Rocky, the canine mascot that graces nearly every place 3rd ID Soldiers call home. Disney sold the division the rights to reproduce the drawing for \$1.

Then there's the song.

"That's how we start our day," said 1st



Sgt. Christopher Williams of 4th IBCT's 6th Battalion, 8th Cavalry Squadron. "Being the first sergeant standing up front, you can tell how well the day is going to go based on how well they're singing."

"The Dogface Soldier Song" was written by Cpl. Bert Gold and Lt. Ken Hart in 1942 about all infantrymen. It was adopted as the official song of the division later that year and ends with the lyrics: "I'm just a Dogface Soldier / With a rifle on my shoulder / And I eat raw meat / For breakfast E'V'RY day / So feed me ammunition / Keep me in 3rd Division / Your Dogface Soldier's A-OK."

3rd ID timeline

1917 Nov. 12: The 3rd Division is constituted at Camp Greene, outside Charlotte, N.C.

1918 July: 3rd Division Soldiers hold back a German offensive at the Marne River at Château-Thierry, France, earning the nickname, "Rock of the Marne." In the fall, 3rd Division Soldiers take part in the Saint-Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne operations.

1942 Aug. 1: The division is reorganized as the 3rd Infantry Division. In October, 3rd ID Soldiers land in North Africa to take part in Operation Torch.

1944 Jan. 10: 3rd ID lands on the beaches of Anzio, Italy, then drives toward Rome, liberating it in May. On Aug. 15, they invade southern France, reaching the Rhine River in November.

1945 January–February: 3rd ID takes part in the Colmar Pocket offensive, during which Audie Murphy's actions earned him the Medal of Honor and the division a Presidential Unit Citation. The division captures the German cities of Nuremburg and Munich in April. By the end of the war in August, 3rd ID is the only U.S. division to have fought Germany on all fronts.

1950 Elements of the division, now based at Fort Benning, Ga., arrive in Korea to fight in the Korean War. After capturing Seoul the next year and holding off relentless Chinese assaults, they are called the "Rock of Seoul."

1958 April: As part of the build up of U.S. forces in Europe during the Cold War, 3rd ID moves its headquarters to Würzburg, West Germany.

1991 Jan. 16: Units of the 3rd ID enter Iraq as part of the coalition force battling Saddam Hussein's regime following his invasion of Kuwait the year before.

1996 With Germany reunited and the Cold War over, the 3rd ID moves its headquarters to Fort Stewart, Ga., as part of the drawdown of U.S. forces in Western Europe.

2003 April 5: During its "Thunder Run," the 3rd ID enters Baghdad, capturing the capital on April 9. Over the next eight years, the division deploys three more times in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn.



Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division take up firing positions during an enemy approach on their position at Objective Rama, in southern Iraq, March 24, 2003, during the initial days of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photo by Sgt. Igor Paustovski

a battlefield commission to first lieutenant and went on to command a company in northeastern France.

There in January 1945, with Murphy's unit at an effective strength of 19 out of 128 men, the company engaged German soldiers outside the hamlet of Holtzwihr. Climbing atop a flaming tank destroyer, Murphy used its .50-caliber gun to kill dozens of enemy soldiers, spending nearly an hour alone in his position while Germans fired at him from three sides. For these actions, Murphy was awarded the Medal of Honor that summer. By the end of the war, he was the most-decorated U.S. Soldier, having been awarded every medal in the Army at least once.

Thanks to Murphy's own recollections, Meeks was able to track down the carbine Murphy used in the war, which had been collecting dust in an Alabama depot. It's now a centerpiece display at the museum.

"In his autobiography, he wrote, 'Losses are inevitable. You learn not to get too friendly with anybody. One way or another, people come and go,'" Meeks said. "Murphy is talking about the incredible losses that 3rd Division was taking. 'You don't remember the guys' names, but you remember that #1108783 is the serial number of your rifle.' We found that in the War Reserves stocks in Anniston, Ala.; we just did a computer search, and there it was."

The museum's collection also contains objects associated with the division's most recent Medal of Honor recipient, Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith, who was honored posthumously after being killed in Baghdad during the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition to his load-bearing vest and machine gun, the museum also has the armored personnel carrier on which he lost his life.

"The Smith story, I predict, will be a teaching point in NCO professional development for the rest of the U.S. Army's history," Meeks said. "The senior guy in charge used every weapon system available, was confronted with hurt Soldiers and had casualties. So, he has to balance getting his wounded to help [at an aid

Rocky's units: 3ID



1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team "Raiders"

- 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment
- 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment
- 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment
- 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery Regiment
- 3rd Brigade Support Battalion
- 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion

2nd Heavy BCT "Spartans"

- 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment
- 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment
- 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment
- 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment
- 26th Brigade Support Battalion
- 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion

3rd Heavy BCT "Sledgehammers"

- 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment
- 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment
- 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment
- 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery Regiment
- 203rd Brigade Support Battalion
- 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion

4th Infantry BCT "Vanguard"

- 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment
- 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment
- 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment
- 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery Regiment
- 703rd Brigade Support Battalion
- 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion

Combat Aviation Brigade "Falcon"

- 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment
- 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment
- 3rd Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment
- 4th Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment
- 603rd Aviation Support Battalion

3rd Sustainment Brigade "Heart of the Rock"

- 260th Quartermaster Battalion
- 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion
- 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion
- 3rd Special Troops Battalion
- Division Special Troops Battalion

"Of course, while we're doing it, you hear, 'Man, why do we have to sing this song?'" Brown said. "But, when we were at the National Training Center and they played that over the loudspeaker, everybody cheered. It's something identifiable. You go on the Internet and play that song, and anyone who has ever had to sing it once is right back singing it again."

The song had its public debut in 1955 as part of the soundtrack of *To Hell and Back*, the movie that starred perhaps 3rd ID's most famous Soldier, Audie Murphy, playing himself in his life story. Eager to enlist at the start of World War II, the baby-faced Murphy was rejected by the Navy for being too skinny, by the Marines and Army paratroopers for being too short, and had to alter his birth certificate to seem old enough to enter the infantry. Assigned to the 3rd ID in early 1943, he first saw action in Sicily, and was promoted to corporal after killing two enemy soldiers. After holding off an enemy squad at Salerno, Italy, he was promoted to sergeant.

When he saw his best friend get shot and killed by German soldiers feigning surrender in a machine-gun nest in southern France, Murphy flew into a rage, single-handedly killing all inside and using the German machine gun to neutralize other nearby fortifications. For this, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Shortly thereafter, he was awarded

station 100 meters away] versus keeping guys with him to continue the mission.

“But, he made it the mission to get his guys some help. He chose to stay, to not give up a key piece of terrain. He had the situational awareness to know that, if you let the enemy get into the courtyard where he was, they would have a fort from which they could engage the docs in the aid station who were working on his people — guys with their backs to the fight. That’s the key thing about Smitty — service way above self, situational awareness far beyond just the sight of his rifle.”

Today, 3rd ID’s key role in the 2003 invasion of Iraq continues to resonate. The division entered Baghdad on April 5 during its famous “Thunder Run;” the city fell two days later.

“We were the liberation force,” Brown said. “For all the guys coming in now, all the stories they hear are from the guys who liberated Iraq. So, every rotation we go back, we’re living up to that initial history of being the first ones there. Now, with this deployment coming up, there’s a lot of people talking about being there for the beginning and now for the end.”

Brown, who is currently deployed in Iraq with the rest of the brigade as part of the last contingent of U.S. troops, said he takes special pride in the fact that the stripes of the 3rd ID insignia are readily recognized on the streets of Iraq.

“The best compliment I ever got in my life was during my second deployment. We were walking down what was considered the worst street in Baghdad, and we hadn’t had anything happen. The battalion that our company replaced had 181 Purple Hearts, so we knew we were getting into it. But, we get there, and everybody’s scurrying from us. We finally cornered some

Iraqis and asked them, ‘Hey, what’s going on?’ And they said, ‘You’re 3rd Infantry Division! You whipped our butts in the liberation. We’re not doing anything against you guys because you’re the best.’”

Meeks finds that the traditions of the division are so strong, Soldiers identify with the 3rd ID long after their service. Returning from one temporary duty assignment, Meeks was stopped in the airport by an elderly gentleman who recognized the 3rd ID patch Meeks was wearing. “Hey you! Third Division!” the man yelled before regaling Meeks with the tale of how he fought with the 3rd ID for a few weeks at Anzio, Italy, in World War II only to be

sent home “with a wound in the keister.”

“But, he so profoundly still identifies himself as a 3rd Division Soldier,” Meeks said. “If I can get somebody out of here thinking, ‘I am a Marine Soldier — don’t just call me one. I am a Dogface Soldier,’ you can see their chests puff out. You hear them say, ‘We’re rolling with the 3rd Division! We put dictators out of business.’ And, it’s true. We put the Kaiser out of business. We put Hitler out of business. We put Saddam Hussein out of business. That’s what we do.”

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Top: More than 400 Eastern Redbud trees line the sidewalks of the Warriors Walk memorial at Fort Stewart, Ga. Each is dedicated to a 3rd ID Soldier who died in Iraq or Afghanistan and blooms a vibrant red every spring around the anniversary of the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Bottom: A visitor points to an exhibit at the 3rd Infantry Division Museum at Fort Stewart. The display in the foreground is dedicated to Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith, killed during the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and features his load-bearing vest and rifle.

Photos by Michael L. Lewis



Health & Fitness

Part 3: Spiritual and Mental Fitness

Being “Army Strong” is much more than just being physically fit. Lessons learned during the last decade have prompted the Army to refocus on the mental and spiritual attributes of Soldiers’ well-being, in addition to their physical and material needs. While the latter center on one’s medical condition, diet, shelter and finances — concrete requirements that are easy to measure and provide for — mental and spiritual fitness are frequently dismissed as too intangible or unimportant to impact Soldier readiness.

But, as the Warrior Leader Course lesson on health and fitness explains, good spiritual and mental health is not optional for Soldiers. Rather, deficiencies in these areas often result in poor physical health, unsafe behaviors and mission ineffectiveness. It is the responsibility of junior NCOs to gauge their Soldiers’ spiritual and mental fitness; what is gleaned from these lessons will ensure both leaders and their Soldiers are resilient and ready for any challenge.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS: Spiritual fitness encompasses more than just being religious; it involves anything that buoys the spirit. This can include individuals’ search for meaning, purpose and truth in their lives, as well as the beliefs and values that guide daily living.

“We all have a need for intimacy or for love. We all have a need for purpose and destiny,” Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Douglas Carver, Army chief of chaplains, told a forum of Family Readiness Group leaders in Washington last October. “That’s what spiritual resiliency



Photo by Laura Kreider

Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team bow their heads during the invocation at a colors casing ceremony last November at Vicenza, Italy. Spiritual fitness is one of the elements needed to build Soldiers’ overall well-being.

is all about.”

People express their spiritual beliefs in many ways: through relationships, religion, music, art, community service, enjoying nature and consciously living their values. Proper focus on this dimension of overall fitness ensures one has healthy personal values that harmonize well with the shared values of the Army.

MENTAL FITNESS: As the Roman poet Juvenal once said, people should desire “a sound mind in a sound body.” The two are so closely linked that good mental health can sometimes speed recovery from and even prevent medical illnesses, research has shown.

Attitudes, beliefs and emotional states — from love to compassion, from fear to anger — can trigger chain reactions that affect blood chemistry, heart rate and the activity of the digestive and immune

systems. Thus, learning how to handle their own and their Soldiers’ emotions, worries and moods is an important skill for junior leaders to know and practice.

While everyday stressors are relatively easy to mitigate with the right tools and techniques, persistent anxiety may require other resources. Soldiers with post-traumatic stress disorder, for example, require professionals like those in the Army Wounded Warrior Program to assist their healing; they should not be perceived as weak or poor Soldiers.

Other times, Soldiers resort to abusing drugs or alcohol, which puts them, their families and fellow Soldiers at risk. In these cases, leaders’ familiarity with the Army Substance Abuse Program may save a life. Indeed, ASAP’s deterrence and education programs should be used to prevent problems before they start.



MANAGING STRESS

Stress is defined as a feeling of emotional or physical tension. Emotional stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry or anxious. But, what is stressful for one person isn't necessarily the same for another. Based on the Army's "Hooah 4 Health" website (<http://www.hooah4health.com>), here are some tips on how to manage the stress and stressors you or your Soldiers may encounter:

Considerations:

- ✓ **Some stress is normal:** Part of everyday life, stress is actually good in small quantities, motivating you and helping you to be more productive.
- ✓ **But, too much stress is harmful:** It can set you up for poor health; illnesses like infection, heart disease or depression; anxiety; or unhealthy behaviors like overeating and abusing alcohol or drugs.
- ✓ **Anxiety often presents physical symptoms:** For example: twitching or trembling, muscle tension, headaches, dizziness, diarrhea, irritability, sleeping difficulties or sexual problems.

What to do:

- ✓ **Find and address the source:** This is the most effective step but isn't always possible.
- ✓ **Take an inventory:** List the things you think might be "stressing you out." What do you worry about most? Does anything in particular make you sad or depressed? Keep a journal of the experiences and thoughts that seem to be related to your anxiety.
- ✓ **Find someone to listen:** Often, just talking with a friend, loved one or member of the clergy is all that is needed to relieve anxiety.
- ✓ **Find healthy ways to cope:** Eat a well-balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise regularly, limit caffeine and alcohol, don't use recreational drugs, learn and practice relaxation techniques like yoga or meditation, take breaks from work, balance fun activities with your responsibilities, and spend time with people you enjoy.
- ✓ **Know when to seek help:** Chaplains, social workers, psychologists, doctors and other mental health professionals may be needed for therapy or medication. The key is recognizing that seeking help is a smart thing to do and not a sign of weakness. Sometimes, it takes a strong person to ask for help, or recognize possible signs and symptoms of a larger problem in a Soldier in his or her care.



Supporting wellness: Two programs that assist Soldiers

ARMY WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAM

AW2 assists and advocates on behalf of **severely wounded, injured and ill Soldiers and their families**, "wherever they are, for as long as it takes." An AW2 advocate is assigned to **personally assist** Soldiers and connect them with various benefits and services to help them **recover physically, prepare financially and build their skills** for a rewarding career.

<https://www.aw2.army.mil>

ARMY SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM

ASAP is a command program that emphasizes readiness and personal responsibility in the Army's effort to **eliminate alcohol and drug abuse**. Major elements of the program include **deterrence, detection, prevention education, intervention and rehabilitation** when necessary.

<http://acsap.army.mil/>

Top: Sgt. Maj. Brent Jurgensen, former sergeant major of the Army Wounded Warrior Program, exercises in 2007. Jurgensen's leg was amputated after being injured during a 2004 attack in Iraq.

Photo by Virginia Reza

Bottom: Sgt. 1st Class Len Taylor tries to keep his eyes on a moving pen as part of a field sobriety test. Taylor volunteered to drink alcohol so that Fort Jackson, S.C., police officers taking a training course could practice making alcohol-related traffic stops.

Photo by Steeve Reeves

NCO Stories

A selection of Valor



Sgt. William W. Seay

Citation to award the Medal of Honor

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, Sgt. William W. Seay distinguished himself while serving as a driver with the 62nd Transportation Company, on a resupply mission on Aug. 25, 1968.

The convoy with which he was traveling, carrying critically needed ammunition and supplies from Long Binh to Tay Ninh, was ambushed by a reinforced battalion of the North Vietnamese Army. As the main elements of the convoy entered the ambush killing zone, they were struck by intense rocket, machine-gun and automatic weapon fire from the well concealed and entrenched enemy force.

When his convoy was forced to stop, Seay immediately dismounted and took a defensive position behind the wheels of a vehicle loaded with high-explosive ammunition. As the violent North Vietnamese assault approached to within 10 meters of the road, Seay opened fire, killing two of the enemy. He then spotted a sniper in a tree approximately 75 meters to his front and killed him.

When an enemy grenade was thrown under an ammunition trailer near his position, without regard for his own safety, Seay

left his protective cover, exposing himself to intense enemy fire, picked up the grenade, and threw it back to the North Vietnamese position, killing four more of the enemy and saving the lives of the men around him.

Another enemy grenade landed approximately three meters from Seay's position. Again, Seay left his covered position and threw the armed grenade back upon the assaulting enemy.

After returning to his position he was painfully wounded in the right wrist; however, Seay continued to give encouragement and direction to his fellow soldiers.

After moving to the relative cover of a shallow ditch, he detected three enemy soldiers who had penetrated the position and were preparing to fire on his comrades.

Although weak from loss of blood and with his right hand immobilized, Seay stood up and fired his rifle with his left hand, killing all three and saving the lives of the other men in his location.

As a result of his heroic action, Seay was mortally wounded by a sniper's bullet.

Seay, by his gallantry in action at the cost of his life, has reflected great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.



Ambush at Ap Nhi

By Richard E. Killblane
Transportation Branch Historian

August 25, 1968, was a typical monsoon season day. The clouds hung low, making flying helicopters dangerous, while intermittent, hard rain drenched the area.

A large resupply convoy of 81 trucks from the 48th Transportation Group departed Long Binh Post, near Bien Hoa, Vietnam, to resupply the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, located just seven miles from the Cambodian border.

At 11:45 a.m., the convoy entered the quiet village of Ap Nhi. The convoy passed what looked like a column of Army of the Republic of Vietnam soldiers marching along the north side of the road adjacent to the Ben Cui Rubber Plantation, known locally as Little Rubber.

The lead vehicles of the convoy had started to leave the village, and the ammo and fuel vehicles were alongside the column when the supposed-Army of the Republic of Vietnam soldiers opened fire on the convoy. The soldiers turned out to be Viet Cong.

Two fuel tankers began to burn. In front of them, 30 trucks sped away, following standard operating procedure, leaving 51 trucks stranded in the mile-long kill zone. The enemy then set two ammunition trailers on fire at the rear of the convoy, sealing the trucks in place. The drivers climbed out of their vehicles and took up defensive positions either behind their trucks or in a ditch along the road.

When the convoy stopped, Spc. William W. Seay, a 19-year-old driver from the 62nd Transportation Company, who later earned the military's highest honor for his actions, immediately jumped out of his truck and took a defensive position behind the left rear dual wheels of his truck. Spc. David M. Sellman, also of the 62nd, in the truck behind Seay, followed. Another driver joined them, and the three battled the enemy fighters.

When the North Vietnamese assault reached to within 10 meters of the road, Seay, who was the closest, opened fire, killing two of the enemy soldiers. Sellman shot one enemy soldier just 15 meters in front of him before his M16 rifle jammed. The Soldiers, however, had successfully turned back the first enemy assault.

Then, Seay spotted a sniper in a tree approximately 75 meters to his right front and killed him. Within minutes, an enemy grenade rolled under the trailer within a few feet of Sellman.

Without hesitation, Seay ran from his covered position while under intense enemy fire, picked up the grenade and threw it back to the North Vietnamese position. Four enemy soldiers jumped up from their covered position and tried to run when the grenade explosion killed them.

Minutes later, another enemy grenade rolled near the group of Soldiers. Sellman kicked it off the road behind him. After it exploded, another enemy grenade rolled under Seay's trailer.

Again, Seay left his covered position and threw the armed grenade back at the enemy. At the same time, Sellman shot an enemy soldier crawling through the fence. After returning to his



Courtesy photo

U.S. Army helicopters land in a field during the Vietnam War.

position, Seay and Sellman killed two more North Vietnamese Army soldiers trying to crawl through the fence.

Suddenly, a bullet shattered the bone in Seay's right wrist. Seay called for Sellman to cover him as he ran back to the rear looking for someone to treat his wound.

Seay located Lt. Howard Brockbank, Spc. William Hinote, and four other drivers in a group.

One man applied a sterile dressing on the wound, but it did not stop the bleeding. Hinote then tied a tourniquet around Seay's wrist with his shirt. Seay continued to give encouragement and direction to his fellow Soldiers.

Hinote mentioned his concern about Seay's shattered wrist. Seay told him to stay alive and not to worry about him.

"Take it easy!" Seay admonished the Soldier. "Don't waste your ammo — we may run out. What will we do then; stand up and fight them with our fists? I wouldn't be any good at that!"

Weak from the loss of blood, Seay moved to the relative cover of a shallow ditch to rest. After another half-hour of fighting, Hinote brought him some water.

Then, Seay noticed three enemy soldiers who had crossed the road and were preparing to fire on his comrades. He raised to a half-crouch and fired his rifle with his left hand, killing all three. Suddenly, a sniper's bullet struck Seay in the head, killing him.

The battle continued for nearly nine hours. Around 9 p.m., an armored cavalry troop finally arrived at the rear of the column and forced the enemy to withdraw.

Seven drivers lost their lives in the ambush, 10 more were wounded and two were taken prisoners. Of the relief force, 23 were killed and 35 wounded. This was the first large-scale ambush for the 48th Group.

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action, Seay was posthumously promoted to sergeant and awarded the Medal of Honor.

Silver Star recipient says talking helps counter PTSD

By Virginia Reza
Fort Bliss Monitor

“Alcohol, drugs and partying are not the answer; it just makes things worse,” said Silver Star Medal recipient Staff Sgt. Omar Hernandez. “Talking really helps.”

Hernandez, who underwent treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder after he returned from his third tour in Iraq in 2007, said he hesitated to seek mental help because he did not want to be perceived as crazy or weak. He serves with B Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas.

Hernandez’s courageous actions on the battlefield June 6, 2007, earned him a Silver Star Medal. His citation read, “For gallantry in action against a determined enemy, Sgt. Hernandez’s exem-



Photo by Virginia Reza

Silver Star Medal and Purple Heart recipient Staff Sgt. Omar Hernandez of B Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, shows the wound he sustained on June 6, 2007, during his third tour in Iraq.

plary bravery under fire and a complete disregard for his own safety, enabled him to single-handedly pull two members of the Iraqi National Police Force to safety despite having already been severely wounded himself. The gallant actions of Sgt. Hernandez are in the finest traditions of military heroism.”

Hernandez said most service members who witnessed atrocities in Iraq have either mild or severe cases of PTSD but do not want to admit it. He was once in the same situation. He suffered from insomnia and was very angry for getting shot and leaving his comrades behind. He was unable to cry, and experienced an emotional roller coaster, he said. Finally, he decided to “let it all out,” which lifted a huge weight off his shoulders.

“Talking about it helped so much,” Hernandez said. “Soldiers should talk about experiences they encountered down-range. It’s about making themselves better in their heads and hearts.”

Staff Sgt. Brandon Falls, Hernandez’s platoon sergeant in Iraq, said he was very proud of him.

“I’ve been in the Army a while, and Hernandez is one of the top team leaders I’ve ever had,” Falls said.

Falls also agreed Soldiers should talk about their experiences as soon as they return from deployment. He said if it were up to him, he would make it mandatory for all Soldiers to get some kind of counseling until “they get it all out of their system.”

“When I came back, I wanted to talk about everything that happened, and it helped me. After a while, I was happy,” Falls said. “If I had waited, I probably would have developed PTSD.”

Born in Jalisco, Mexico, and raised in Houston, Hernandez was granted his U.S. citizenship during his second tour in Iraq. The ceremony took place in one of Saddam Hussein’s palaces, which was an unforgettable experience, he said.

As a young boy, Hernandez liked to watch combat movies, especially *Rambo*, which he jokingly said inspired him to join

the military. He began his military career in the Army Reserve. He was deployed to Iraq for six months as an engineer during the initial invasion of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After redeployment, he enlisted in the active Army as an infantryman to better serve his country, he said. He attended airborne school at Fort Bragg, N.C., and thereafter deployed with the 519th Military Intelligence Battalion for 12 months.

During his deployment, he pulled security for interrogators. He was then reassigned to 4th BCT, 1st AD, and deployed for seven months versus 12 due to a severe wound to his leg. He is now attached to the protocol section.

Hernandez said his wound hurts on occasion, especially when the weather changes. His friends often tease him by asking if it’s going to rain.

“The guys ask if I sit on my front porch and predict what the weather will be like today: ‘Is your leg aching?’ they ask,” Hernandez said. “They give me a hard time, and I love it.”

After six months of physical therapy and some training, he is now able to run McKelligon Canyon in El Paso’s Franklin Mountains while carrying a 50-pound rucksack. Hernandez’s injuries include loss of 30 percent in his quadriceps, three inches of girth and nerve damage to his right thigh. He still has shrapnel in his leg.

Hernandez said what still haunts him is the sad and fearful expressions on the faces of the Iraqis. He can’t forget the children running around without shoes.

“Some don’t even have a mom and dad who can give them a hug,” Hernandez said. “It’s pretty hard on them and pretty hard on us to see. ... That’s why I want to go back, to help the Iraqi people acquire the same rights we have in the United States.”

“People who want to pull out from Iraq should walk a mile in my shoes and see the things I saw,” he added. “I’m sure they would change their minds immediately.”

Ironhorse trooper takes Silver Star with ounce of humility

By Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp
1st BCT, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs

Riding in a Humvee down a dusty road, Sgt. Ken Thomas sat in the front passenger seat saying he never in a million years thought he would receive a Silver Star Medal while deployed to Iraq.

When the Humvee stopped, Thomas, a team leader and cavalry scout for Troop C, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, got out and walked from house to house along a road in a neighborhood in the Baghdad Gardens area near Taji. Members of his platoon also walked with him, as they worked to build relationships with the local people and gathered census information.

Thomas was presented the medal during a ceremony at Camp Liberty in western Baghdad on Aug. 11, 2007.

As he waved to an Iraqi man on the street, Thomas explained the experience he and his platoon had when they were ambushed while they floated down the Tigris River near Falahat, Iraq, on Feb. 16, 2007. Iraqi police accompanied the platoon on the patrol boats to keep the waterways clear of possible insurgents trafficking weapons, Thomas said.

Thomas was in the second boat and his platoon leader was in the first boat, two other boats not far behind. Not too far down the river, the Soldiers and Iraqi police found themselves sailing through a hail of bullets.

“People were lining the banks to shoot at us. At first, we were just suppressing fire, but once we started fixing on where everyone was, we started picking targets,” he said “We were in a complex linear ambush. The enemy was taking advantage of the terrain, and we were vastly outnumbered. We were pretty sure we were going to die.”

Once the heavy fire began, Thomas’s platoon leader, 1st Lt. John Dolan, ordered the boats to turn around. By that time, however, it was too late.

“After the firing started, we saw the first boat, the lieutenant’s, get hit and saw them crash into an island,” Thomas said. “Then we hit a sandbar and our boat got stuck, so we were like sitting ducks. We were getting hit pretty hard and there wasn’t much cover in the river.”

The Iraqi police on the boat were stuck, pinned down in a corner of the boat by the heavy fire. So Thomas, taking action, manned the boat’s PKC heavy machine gun and began firing, continuing to reload until he ran out of PKC ammunition.

Believing they would most likely die, Thomas and fellow Soldiers decided to abandon the boat and float or try to swim to a small island, which was harder than it sounded.

As the Soldiers entered the water, weight lifted from the boat and it was freed from the sandbar. The two Iraqi police officers decided to take the boat and find another route out.

The Iraqi police saw no safe way to make it out of the area, so they pulled the boat around to the east side of the island. Then, the Soldiers got back on the boat and they were able to take it to a riverbank where they planned to get away, jumping a fence.

There was just one obstacle — downed power lines were running across the fence and sparks were flying.

Thomas ran back under fire and cut a hole in the fence using wire cutters, all the while receiving small jolts of electricity. While his fellow scouts made their way through the fence, Thomas pulled security and then crawled through himself.

Once they made it through the fence, they ran to a house where there was better cover and continued engaging the enemy until helicopters from the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1st BCT, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs

Sgt. Ken Thomas, right, a team leader with Troop C, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, talks with local Iraqi residents near Taji, Iraq, during an Oct. 6, 2007, foot patrol. Thomas received the Silver Star Medal for his actions during an enemy ambush in February 2007.

Division, arrived on the scene to evacuate the Soldiers and Iraqi Police.

The crew in the first boat, including Dolan, the platoon leader, had fought its way to a clearing where Dolan, who was wounded, had called in the air assets.

The ambush lasted for a little over two hours, Thomas said. Dolan and two Iraqi police officers were the only wounded. An Iraqi police officer in Dolan’s boat later died from wounds received in the ambush. Twenty-two enemy fighters were killed in the engagement, while more than 50 were wounded. No Soldiers were killed in the ambush.

Celebrating African-American heritage:

Buffalo Soldiers AT SAN JUAN HILL

By Dr. Frank N. Schubert

Finding the middle, where the truth sometimes rests, requires you to know the edges. When it comes to responsibility for the victory of the U. S. Army at San Juan Heights, Cuba, on July 1, 1898, the edges are easy to find. On one side, there is the Teddy-centric view, first and most clearly expressed in the writings of Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt of the 1st Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, the legendary Rough Riders. Roosevelt's memoir of Cuba so emphasized his own role that Mr. Dooley, the barroom pundit, created by humorist Peter Finley Dunne, said the book should have been called *Alone in Cuba*.

Roosevelt augmented his campaign of self-promotion by carrying along his personal publicist. Richard Harding Davis' dispatches from the front, picked up by many newspapers and magazines, spread the word of Roosevelt's heroics. They also followed a time-honored tradition: George Custer had taken a reporter on the 1874 expedition that discovered gold in the Black Hills, and Nelson Miles had had one along to record his exploits against the tribes of the southern plains. Now Davis, of the *New York Herald*, did the same, providing Roosevelt with public relations.

The view that Roosevelt dominated the battle at San Juan Heights still has adherents. I saw first-hand evidence, when I made a presentation for African-American History Month at Oyster Bay, N.Y., the great man's home. The press release announced that I would talk about Medal of Honor heroes among Buffalo Soldiers, the black regulars who had served on the frontier and who also fought in Cuba. The notice went on to assert that these Soldiers had "assisted" Roosevelt in achieving victory at San Juan Hill. Clearly, the text implied the more than 2,000 black troopers dodging bullets and pushing their way resolutely forward in the Cuban sun were merely supporting players. Roosevelt still got top billing.

Lately, a competing view has emerged to challenge Teddy-centric claims. This new assertion puts the Buffalo Soldiers at the center of the fighting, relegating Roosevelt to a supporting role. Most recently, this view was stated by Edward Van Zile Scott in his 1996 book, *The Unwept*. According to Scott, "in the Spanish-American War of 1898, veteran black troops ... were more responsible than any other group for the victory."

The new interpretation replaces one extreme position, represented by the emphasis on Roosevelt, with another, focusing on the contributions of African-American Soldiers. These competing viewpoints represent the edges but don't help us understand what happened on the battlefield.

For that, we have to look at the order of battle, read the reports of the commanders and follow the movements of all units on maps of the campaign. The record shows that about 15,000 American troops of Maj. Gen. William R. Shafter's Fifth Army Corps participated in the battles near Santiago, Cuba, on July 1, 1898. About 13,000 of them were white; 2,000 or so were black. Of the 26 regiments in this force, three were volunteer organizations; the vast majority was regular. More than 200 Soldiers were killed in action, and nearly 30 of those who fell were from the four black Regular Army regiments, the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry.

There were two major battles that day, one at El Caney and one on San Juan Heights. Both objectives were east of the city, with El Caney the more northerly of the two. Brig. Gen. Henry W. Lawton commanded his own 2nd Division and the Independent Brigade, a force of about 6,500, which took El Caney. Lawton's troops included more than 500 men of the black 25th Infantry. This regiment was in the thick of the four-hour fight, and one of its members, Pvt. Thomas Butler of Baltimore, was among the first to enter the blockhouse on the hill.

The main objective was San Juan Heights and was attacked

by 8,000 troops of Brig. Gen. Jacob F. Kent's 1st Division and the dismounted Cavalry Division, commanded on this day by Brig. Gen. Samuel S. Sumner. San Juan Heights had two high spots along its north-south axis, one called San Juan Hill and the other later named Kettle Hill by the troops. Both were part of the same objective.

San Juan was a stage for Roosevelt, of whom it was said that he never attended a wedding without wishing he was the bride or a funeral without wishing he was the corpse. The commander of his regiment, Col. Leonard Wood, had been conveniently promoted out of the way, so Roosevelt had the Rough Riders all to himself.

He did not have the battle for San Juan Heights all to himself. There were, after all, 8,000 men in the operation, a total of 13 Regular Army regiments and two regiments of volunteers, including Roosevelt's Rough Riders. The force included about 1,250 black troopers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry in Sumner's Cavalry Division and the 24th Infantry in Kent's 1st Division.

Critics have complained that Roosevelt erroneously and undeservedly claimed credit for the victory at San Juan Hill, when he actually was involved in the assault on Kettle Hill. In fact, he did play a prominent role in the fight for Kettle Hill. His volunteers, part of Sumner's dismounted cavalry force, reached the top of Kettle Hill alongside black and white regulars. The actions of Color Sgt. George Berry of the 10th Cavalry, who carried the colors of the white 3rd Cavalry up that hill along with his own regiment's standard, reflected the shared nature of the operation, with black and white regulars, and Rough Riders fighting together and with one group sometimes indistinguishable from the others.

Once Roosevelt reached the top of Kettle Hill, he watched Kent's troops overrun their objective on San Juan Hill. Still eager for a fight, he urged the men around him to follow him into the fray on San Juan. That's when he found out what happens when you sound a charge and nobody comes. Only a handful of Soldiers heard the great man, and he found himself at the head of an assault that consisted of five Soldiers. Roosevelt retreated, regrouped and assembled a more respectable force that reached the Spanish trenches in time to participate in the last of the fight. "There was," he said, "very great confusion at this time, the different regiments being completely intermingled — white regulars, colored regulars, and Rough Riders."

Roosevelt's observation accurately characterized the mix of troops in the battle for the heights. Overall, the great majority of these Soldiers were regulars; the rest were volunteers. "Their battles," Timothy Egan wrote in an article titled "The American Century's Opening Shot," in the *New York Times*, June 6, 1998, "were sharp, vicious crawls through jungle terrain in killing heat." Regulars and volunteers, blacks and whites, fought side by side, endured the blistering heat and driving rain, and shared food and drink as well as peril and discomfort. They forged a victory that did not belong primarily to Roosevelt, nor did it belong mainly to the Buffalo Soldiers. It belonged to all of them.

Despite the fact that these groups shared the victory and despite the attention that gravitated toward Roosevelt, the post-battle spotlight shone brightly on the Buffalo Soldiers. Since the Reorganization Act of 1866, their regiments had mainly served in the remotest corners of the West. They had fought against the Comanches and Kiowa in the 1860s and 1870s, and the Apaches

Buffalo Soldiers
prepare for Battle at
San Juan Hill in 1898.
Courtesy photo

Opposite: 10th
Cavalry Buffalo
Soldiers, 1894.
Photo courtesy of Montana
Historical Society



between 1877 and 1886. They had seen service in the Pine Ridge campaign of 1890 to 1891. Most of this duty had been performed in obscurity. But Cuba was different. All eyes that were not on Roosevelt seemed to focus on the Buffalo Soldiers. For the first time, they stood front and center on the national stage.

A number of mainstream (that is, white) periodicals recounted their exploits, nurses in the yellow fever hospital at Siboney as well as on the battlefield, reviewed their history, mostly favorably. Books by black authors recounted the regiments' service in Cuba and in previous wars and reminded those who cared to pay attention that the war with Spain did not represent the first instance in which black Soldiers answered the nation's call to arms.

In an age of increasing racism that was hardening into institutionalized segregation throughout the South and affecting the lives of black Americans everywhere, the Buffalo Soldiers were race heroes. Black newspapers and magazines tracked their movements and reported their activities. Poetry, dramas, and songs all celebrated their service and valor.

As Rayford Logan, dean of a generation of black historians, later wrote, "Negroes had little, at the turn of the century, to help sustain our faith in ourselves except the pride that we took in the 9th and 10th Cavalry, the 24th and 25th Infantry. Many Negro homes had prints of the famous charge of the colored troops up San Juan Hill. They were our Ralph Bunche, Marian Anderson, Joe Louis and Jackie Robinson."

Almost 100 years passed before the nation rediscovered the Buffalo Soldiers. The process started with the 1967 publication of William Leckie's *The Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Black Cavalry on the West* and culminated in 1992, with the dedication by General Colin Powell of the Buffalo Soldier statue at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. For the Buffalo Soldiers, "the American century" is ending the way it had started. In a period of increasing informal segregation, growing dissatisfaction with affirmative action, and the spreading emphasis on a separate African-American minority culture, now books, plays, movies, and even phone cards celebrate the service of these troopers. In what appears to be a disconcertingly similar setting of deteriorating race relations, the Buffalo Soldiers have returned to take their place among America's heroes.

Dr. Frank N. Schubert, a Vietnam veteran, was chief of joint operational history in the Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Schubert's many years as a Department of Defense historian include 13 with the Army Corps of Engineers (1977-1989).

IN-THEATER mTBI RESTORATION

By Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder
101st Airborne Division

Concussive events are not new, but the military hadn't really paid much attention to these injuries until recently. When we began intensive ground combat operations, leaders did not understand the lasting impacts of concussive events — which are mostly caused by improvised explosive devices — and medical providers didn't have the experience or capacity to treat the number of Soldiers suffering from such injuries.

A report by the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center estimates almost 96,000 Soldiers have been treated for mild traumatic brain injury, or mTBI, since 2003. For the past seven years, I have seen great advances in the way we train, track and treat Soldiers with these injuries.

I assumed my duties as a command sergeant major in November 2003 and was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, in Mosul, Iraq. I watched Soldiers involved in concussive events continue with their normal activities. That was the expectation. As long as no physical signs of injury were present, Soldiers were returned to duty.

After our redeployment from combat, our unit was reorganized as a cavalry squadron and deployed to southwest Baghdad in October 2005. The Army had adjusted to the IED, the enemy's weapon of choice, by placing armor on our vehicles. The enemy responded by constructing IEDs with more powerful explosives.

Being in armored vehicles

caused an overpressure effect that magnified the concussive effect of blasts. At that time, we began to understand and accept that concussions were injuries which needed treatment and documentation in medical records. However, treatments were rudimentary. The Army started conducting Mild Acute Concussive Evaluation testing, but very few Soldiers suffering from concussions were evacuated to higher levels of care.

It wasn't until after a unit redeployed that leaders really saw in their Soldiers the effects of multiple exposures to concussive events. I watched as a great first sergeant, with a great amount

of potential, was forced into retirement due to injuries from his previous deployment. He had been struck by five IEDs.

After the deployment, I was assigned a new driver from the engineer company who had been involved in 12 or 13 IED blasts as part of the route-clearance platoon. I watched as this Soldier began to struggle with simple tasks at work. He also struggled to perform life skills. I saw unit leaders become frustrated with previously solid-performing Soldiers like him whose performance began to diminish, and with Soldiers who had physically limiting profiles due to treatment and medication. Even though we did not yet



Pvt. Scott Charging, center, of 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, bandages another medic and Sgt. Sabrina Watts, right, fills out a mild traumatic brain injury survey card during training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., last May. MTBI is one of the most common battlefield injuries these medics will encounter in Iraq.

Photo by Pfc. Jennifer Spradlin

fully understand the scope of the problem, we began to see more Soldiers diagnosed with concussions. In 2005, 12,192 Soldiers were treated for mTBI, nearly doubling to 23,160 in 2007.

I deployed to Baghdad with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, as the BCT command sergeant major (from August 2007 to November 2008). By this time, we better understood the effects of concussive injuries. We integrated training on protocols and treatment into our combat training center rotation and conducted leader mTBI-awareness training. The unit also conducted Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metric testing to get a “mental baseline” prior to the deployment. We understood the possible consequences of concussions and treated Soldiers for mTBI. The installation opened an mTBI clinic in October 2008 to focus on treating these injuries. Soldiers showing symptoms were evacuated from theater; very few of these Soldiers returned. Accordingly, many Soldiers, especially leaders, involved in concussive events avoided treatment because they didn’t want to be evacuated.

In the past, the health care provider relied on the event history given by Soldiers to make their assessment. Unfortunately, in many cases, these Soldiers were rendered unconscious by the blast. Others reported blast exposures that never occurred. Without additional data to base decisions upon, the medical providers deferred to the history provided by the Soldier. These discrepancies are compounded if the Soldier’s leadership transitions soon after redeployment, because no one is available to confirm the Soldier’s account. Finally, because providers also don’t have access to a Soldier’s performance record, there is no information on a Soldier’s pre- and post-incident performance to make a comparison.

Today in Afghanistan, we are treating Soldiers right off the battlefield at BCT Level II medical facilities. The first of these facilities I visited was at Forward Operating Base Shank under the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team. I was immediately impressed with the program, and we pushed to have all of our Level II facilities replicate its capability. The purpose of this facility is to get Soldiers off the battlefield and get them rest. Rest is the immediate and most important treatment for Soldiers who have been exposed to a concussive event. Going to the clinic also keeps Soldiers from going on patrols before they are ready. The effects of a successive injury are much greater if the patient hasn’t fully recovered from the previous one. Before returning to duty, patients receive comprehensive screenings and exertional testing to

ensure they are 100 percent when they return to their units.

Since January 2010, Level II facilities in Regional Command-East, Afghanistan, have treated 1,023 Soldiers. Our Level II facilities have a 98 percent return-to-duty rate. Two years ago, when we did not have this capability, a large percentage of these Soldiers would have been air-evacuated from theater.

We have also pushed for our theater to have a Level III mTBI facility at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan. This facility allows Soldiers with more significant concussions and those who are not improving at our Level II facilities to remain in-theater for continued treatment.

The Level III mTBI facility incorporates a neurologist and neuropsychology testing, allowing us to screen Soldiers who have experienced multiple blasts in-theater without being evacuated. All care is recorded in the Medical Communications for Combat Casualty Care hardware and Armed Forces Health Longitudinal Technology Application.

Our providers have regular meetings among the Level II mTBI facilities, Level III mTBI facility and the mTBI clinic at Fort Campbell, Ky. They discuss patient’s treatments and have access to Soldiers and their leadership. There have been 25 Soldiers referred to our Level III facility at Bagram which started operation in October 2010. Our Level III facility has an 88 percent return-to-duty rate.

There are several benefits to these in-theater facilities. They work because unit leadership is confident only Soldiers needing higher levels of care are evacuated. The result of this is more Soldiers are screened and treated. With MC4 and ALTHA, Soldiers’ treatments are recorded, affecting short- and mid-term care as well as ensuring Soldiers are eligible for long-term benefits. Treating in-country reduces the stress on our already overwhelmed Physical Evaluation Board system and our Warrior

Transition Units. Finally, treatment in-theater ensures that the Soldiers remain connected to their primary source of support — the Soldiers with whom they fight.

Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder currently serves as the command sergeant major for 101st Airborne Division and Combined Joint Task Force-101/Regional Command-East in Afghanistan. He has completed multiple combat deployments with extensive exposure to combat-related injuries.

Level II Medical Facilities

- + Sleep (goal of 8 hours/night)
- + 1-3 day stay, can be up to 21 days
- + Persistent symptoms evacuate to Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan
- + 1023 treated w/mTBI related situation
- + 25 evacuated to Level III facilities
- + 98% return to duty, approximately 2% evacuated to Bagram
- + “Acute” demographic
- + Return-to-duty restrictions rare
- + Continuity of care: unit liaisons, RTD guidance
- + Limits load on already overwhelmed Personnel Evaluation Board System

Level III Medical Facilities

- + Sleep hygiene
- + Length of stay: 10 to 30 days; average: 13 days
- + Specialty care: neurology, neuropsychology
- + Deteriorating symptoms evacuate to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany
- + 31 patients
- + 25 return to duty (83%)
- + 3 evacuated from theater (9.6%)
- + “Chronic” demographic
- + RTD restrictions common
- + Additional care available: imaging, neuropsychology, cognitive testing, physical therapy, combat stress control and group sessions

ACU 'Fashion'

The dos and don'ts for this season and every season

By Sgt. Maj. Lisa Hunter
USAREUR Public Affairs

This winter seems to have come with some new Army Combat Uniform fashion trends. Surely, you've seen the green microfleece cap with edges rolled, or the Gore-Tex jacket unzipped for a more casual look.

Of course, that's not how they're supposed to be worn. For that matter, ACU fashion trends should be pretty simple. After all, it's a uniform; that means we all dress alike. But some Soldiers like living on the cutting edge of ACU fashion, which means they are not following regulations.

To help those who may be confused about what's in vogue this year (e.g., what's authorized) before the "uniform police" nab them, I consulted U.S. Army Europe's subject-matter expert on this matter: Command Sgt. Major Thomas Capel, USAREUR's command sergeant major. I also did a little research, such as reading over the USAREUR Uniform and Appearance Policy Standards Memorandum, dated Dec. 9, 2010, and — of course — Army Regulation 670-1, *Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*, the absolute bible on Army uniforms. Here's the "Cliff's Notes version" of what the experts say are the dos and don'ts for today's ACU ensembles.

First we'll look at the basic uniform. It's hard to go wrong here. The ACU shirt should be zipped and Velcro fasteners closed. Sleeves should never be rolled or cuffed. All the basic items — rank insignia, nametape, unit and combat patches, etc. — are still the standard accoutrements. In the case of trousers, length is not an issue. Soldiers can go "old school," wearing the pants legs tucked into their boots, or they can blouse the pants legs using commercially procured "blousers" or the ACUs' convenient built-in drawstrings. Regardless of which method you choose, blousing the trouser legs below the third boot eyelet is definitely a fashion "don't."

From there we move onto outerwear. You'll see the Gore-Tex jacket and the Generation II and III items, such as black or green fleece jackets, everywhere this year. They are all "in style"

this winter, which means they are authorized for wear. The black fleece might be last year's fashion, but it's still authorized. Soldiers who insist on being seen in nothing but the very latest styles can stop by their local Central Issue Facility and make the change to the green fleece.

No matter which jacket you go for this season — even if you decide to mix and match — remember that the snaps are to be fastened and the zipper should be zipped up to the neck. As for accessories, Soldiers can wear either pin-on or embroidered slip-on rank in the center of the jacket. The nametape — in quarter-inch block letters — should be worn on the left sleeve pocket only. Do not have your name embroidered directly on the jacket pocket. This takes away from the style — and it's not authorized. U.S. Army tape, nametape and rank are to be worn on the fleece jacket.

Now, let's move on to headgear. The beret is the hat we will all be seeing this year, as it's the only authorized headgear for garrison wear. No matter how much you like your patrol cap, keep it on the shelf for special occasions, such as performing maintenance in the motor pool or training events. The commander can authorize the wear of the patrol cap in transit to training events, but trips to the post exchange are not considered training. Authorization to wear the PC is clearly one of those cases of, "It's better to get permission first, than to ask forgiveness later." When you wear your patrol cap, rank insignia should be affixed to the front and the nametape should be worn on the back. When it comes to the PC, less is more, specifically when it comes to adding fashion accessories like "cat eyes" reflective strips. The only Soldiers authorized to sew cat eyes on the back of the PC are observer/controllers. And even O/Cs are only authorized to wear them while they are "in the training box," Capel said.

Now we get to the most misunderstood uniform item to come along in a long time: the green microfleece cap. The green microfleece cap is a "do" when worn with the Improved Physical Fitness Uniform. It's also a great ACU accessory to wear when pulling prolonged duties, such as guard duty, in freezing temperatures. But it's not



the fashion statement for short walks, say, from your car to the PX. Like the patrol cap, it needs to stay on the shelf most of the time. When authorized to wear it, the cap should be pulled down snugly on the head. And, don't roll the ends — not authorized!

Of course, no ensemble is complete without the right accessories. We'll start with jewelry. The rule to remember is to leave the bling with your civilian wardrobe. Soldiers are authorized to wear two rings (a wedding set counts as one); a wristwatch and an identification bracelet, such as a medical alert bracelet and missing in action/prisoner of war bracelets (in black or silver only), with only one item worn on each wrist. When it comes to body piercing, the Army just says "no," at least while you're in uniform and/or on an Army installation or other facilities under Army control. That means do not "attach, affix or display objects, articles or ornamentation to or through the skin." (AR 670-1 states that the term "skin" includes "the tongue, lips, inside the mouth, and other surfaces of the body not readily visible.")

Last but not least, we'll cover eyeglasses and sunglasses.

Yes, glasses can and do make a fashion statement, but when you're in uniform, make sure you're making the right statement. Soldiers are not authorized to wear glasses that are considered trendy, like those with initials, designs or other adornments on the lenses or frames. Eyewear is not authorized for wear on top of your head. As for sunglasses, lens colors should stay on the conservative side, in gray, brown or dark green.

The big question for sunglasses is where to put them when you're not wearing them to protect your eyes. The short answer is where not to put them: Don't hang them off of your uniform, and don't hang them from chains, bands or ribbons down the front of the uniform while in garrison.

These tips take only seconds to apply, which is far less time-consuming than being the subject of an on-the-spot correction. You'll know you've achieved the look if you are dressed the exact same way as every other Soldier in your unit. Apply these simple guidelines, and you'll be sitting at the height of ACU fashion this season: a neat and Soldierly appearance.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SMA Gates molded me

Your story of SMA Gates was great!

I served under him in the early 1980s as his driver when he was division command sergeant major. I've followed his career to this day.

Boy was he a great Soldier! He taught me so much and I have applied that to both my past military and current civilian life. I have some great stories during those three years. I spent a great deal of time each day with him. My best "teachable" memories were when we'd sleep out in the rain with no tent during a field exercise because that's what the rest of the Soldiers were doing (while the officers slept in buildings and ate on china). Or inspecting an arms room guard at 1am on a Saturday morning, 30 miles away from division headquarters..

Besides my late father, SMA Gates has inspired me the most in life even though I haven't seen him in 20 years.

He was a 100 percent total warrior, and I'll never forget it. I act like him to this day.

He molded me.

Thank you.

*Rob Holtzhauer
Prince William County, Va.*

A thought on technology

I'm not certain who would be best to approach concerning this so I thought *The NCO Journal* would be the best place to start or at least get an idea I have put out to the people it concerns.

My idea encompasses the prevalence of electronic media. In particular, smartphones, and how we should start changing with the times.

We NCOs always carry a Leaders Book, some as small as a pocket notebook or so large you need a backpack to carry it. We need to create a Leaders Book app that can be uploaded onto smartphones as well as other electronic media, such as the iPad or Palm devices, that has all the information we need from our commonly reference publications: a height/weight/body fat calculator; ribbon rack builder; as well as a way to input information that changes on a regular basis such as Soldier information, phone numbers, command philosophies, and company, platoon and squad taskings. If someone can make this a reality, I know it will assist NCOs in their day-to-day duties no matter where they may be.

This is only a thought, but the Army has already created two different applications for mobile devices and put out a request for other apps. Unfortunately, I have not seen any that can do the job. There are some that do a little of what I have described but are more generic towards the military as a whole, not to the Army in particular.

*Christopher Ernst
SSG, USA*

PHOTO JOURNAL





Escorted by dozens of children, Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Cesaitis of Provincial Reconstruction Team Zabul's security force, exits the site of a future park in Qalat, Afghanistan, during a site visit Oct. 28.
Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Brian Ferguson

GOT A PHOTO TO SUBMIT?
SEND IT TO ATSS-SCN@US.ARMY.MIL

PHOTO JOURNAL



▲ Staff Sgts. Latif Tariq and Theodore Cooper, Fort Rucker, Ala., NCO Academy students, slide a wooden board forward in an attempt to make a bridge during the academy's Leadership Reaction Course on Dec. 3.
Photo by Russel Sellers, Army Flier Staff



▲ Sgt. Antonio Burch, a mechanic with the 574th Quartermaster Support Company in Grafenwoehr, Germany, secures the parachute of a Container Delivery System during sling load training Oct. 28.
Photo by Gertrude Zach

► Sgt. James Small, right, helps Spc. Andreas Plaza climb a hill in the Towr Gahr Pass, Nangarhar province, Afghanistan, Nov. 6.
Photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Matson





◀ Staff Sgt. Amy Wieser Willson, left, of the 231st Brigade Support Battalion, North Dakota National Guard, visits with a resident of the North Dakota Veterans Home in Lisbon, N.D., Dec. 15 during the home's annual Christmas party.

Photo by Air Force Senior Master Sgt. David H. Lipp



▲ U.S. Soldiers and Afghan police move out on a foot patrol in the Isa Khan region of Afghanistan's northern Kunduz province Dec. 28.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class John Queen

Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

Operation New Dawn

Spc. Jose A. Delgado Arroyo, 41, San Juan, Puerto Rico, Jan. 2, 2011 ♦ *Sgt. Michael P. Bartley, 23, Barnhill, Ill., Jan. 15, 2011* ♦ *Maj. Michael S. Everts, 41, Concord, Ohio, Jan. 17, 2011* ♦ *Spc. Martin J. Lamar, 43, Sacramento, Calif., Jan. 15, 2011* ♦ *Sgt. Jose M. Cintron Rosado, 38, Vega Alta, Puerto Rico, Jan. 2, 2011* ♦ *Spc. Jose A. Torre Jr., 21, Garden Grove, Calif., Jan. 15, 2011*

Operation Enduring Freedom

Sgt. Omar Aceves, 30, El Paso, Texas, Jan. 12, 2011 ♦ *Sgt. Michael J. Beckerman, 25, Ste. Genevieve, Mo., Dec. 31, 2010* ♦ *Sgt. Zainah C. Creamer, 28, Texarkana, Texas, Jan. 12, 2011* ♦ *Spc. Sean R. Cutsforth, 22, Radford, Va., Dec. 15, 2010* ♦ *Spc. Ethan L. Goncalo, 21, Fall River, Mass., Dec. 11, 2010* ♦ *Sgt. Ethan C. Hardin, 25, Fayetteville, Ark., Jan. 7, 2011* ♦ *Pfc. Conrado D. Javier Jr., 19, Marina, Calif., Dec. 19, 2010* ♦ *Spc. Jarrid L. King, 20, Erie, Pa., Jan. 12, 2011* ♦ *Spc. Joshua T. Lancaster, 22, Millbrook, Ala., Jan. 19, 2011* ♦ *Pfc. Ira B. Laningham IV, 22, Zapata, Texas, Jan. 7, 2011* ♦ *Spc. Kelly J. Mixon, 23, Yulee, Fla., Dec. 8, 2010* ♦ *Maj. Evan J. Mooldyk, 47, Ranch Murieta, Calif., Jan. 12, 2011* ♦ *Pfc. Benjamin G. Moore, 23, Robbinsville, N.J., Jan. 12, 2011* ♦ *Pfc. Robert J. Near, 21, Nampa, Idaho, Jan. 7, 2011* ♦ *Sgt. Eric M. Nettleton, 26, Wichita, Kan., Jan. 5, 2011* ♦ *Sgt. 1st Class Robert W. Pharris, 48, Seymour, Mo., Jan. 5, 2011* ♦ *Spc. Christian J. Romig, 24, Kenner, La., Jan. 5, 2011* ♦ *Pfc. Zachary S. Salmon, 21, Harrison, Ohio, Jan. 12, 2011* ♦ *Pfc. Amy R. Simkler, 23, Chadbourne, N.C., Jan. 20, 2011* ♦ *Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Venetz Jr., 30, Prince William, Va., Jan. 28, 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 Dec. 18, 2010, and Jan. 31, 2011.

GEAR UP!

FOR WARM FIRES

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



ARMY SAFE
FALLWINTER
NO TIME TO CHILL



ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG



OFFICIAL BUSINESS



How to get *The NCO Journal* at your unit.

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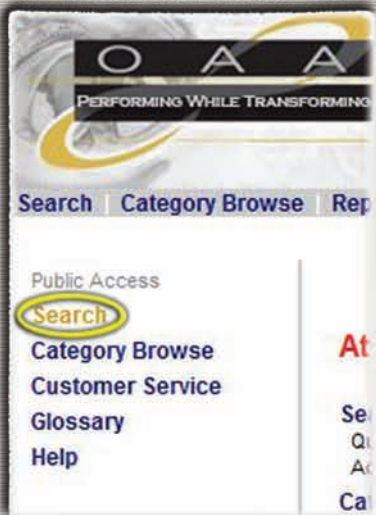
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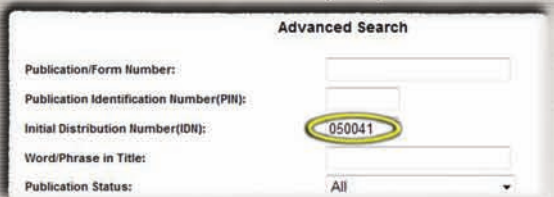
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THE U.S. ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA 000	12/01/2009	Available
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THE US ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA 000	07/01/1992	Available
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THE US ARMY, COMMANDANT,	EA 000	01/01/1993	Available

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We are also on AKO
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