

THE NCO JOURNAL

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A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

20 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE NCO CORPS

1991 - 2011



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**THE NCO
JOURNAL**

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From the SMA

20 Years of Your NCO Journal

One of the first things you realize when you become a division command sergeant major is that disseminating information to our junior Soldiers can be extremely difficult. As a brigade command sergeant major, you have an esprit de corps run once a month or bring your battalion command sergeants major together for a weekly meeting to discuss and disseminate new information, policies and other brigade business.

It is a very rare opportunity to bring an entire division or a dispersed organization together at one time. So, you quickly learn the importance of internal information channels and your local public affairs office. You rely on your public affairs Soldiers to disseminate your messages in the form of unit publications and internal Web pages.

It does not get easier as you move to positions of increased responsibility. As the sergeant major of the Army, I travel around the world talking to Soldiers at dozens of posts, camps and stations. Even with all the town hall meetings and Soldier forums, it is impossible to reach everyone, there is no silver bullet.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of your *NCO Journal*. This publication has a special meaning to me personally as I reflect on the impact our *NCO Journal* has had on our NCO Corps over the past two decades. It is my hope that as each of you reflect on the past *NCO Journal* issues, that you will find there are those special articles that provided knowledge, wisdom and insights and helped broaden your perspective while benefiting you and your Soldiers.

The articles in this 20th anniversary edition reflect back to a time when Gen. Carl E. Vuono, chief of staff of the Army, and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius W. Gates fostered the growth of an idea and made it a reality. This was a time when we were an Army at war supporting a nation at war. With the rapid defeat of Iraq's army, we had much to celebrate and much to capture in lessons learned, especially our NCO Corps.

I still have a copy of the inaugural issue in my archives and remember using this first publication for several NCO professional development forums while serving as first sergeant of A Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry, deployed to Kuwait in the spring and summer of 1991. I still use the three pillars of developing NCOs in my talks today that Gen. Vuono introduced in that inaugural publication.

That time in our Army was filled with great uncertainty as force reductions of 300,000 active-duty Soldiers would have significant impacts on our NCO Corps structure. *The NCO Journal* provided us with a venue to reflect on what we had accomplished over our 216-year history at that time, and provided us a focus on the core NCO competencies as we prepared for the future.

Today we are an Army engaged in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. We deployed troops this past year in response to three humanitarian disasters: the earthquake in Haiti, the floods in Pakistan and the *Deep Water Horizon* oil spill cleanup. We have seen many changes in our Army over the past nine years impacting all facets of Army service.

The NCO Journal's original charter still remains as true today as it did 20 years ago. From the study conducted by the Army's NCO Leader Development Special Task Force in 1989, recommendation number 17 stated; "NCOs should have a professional journal or other forum that focuses on leader development issues."

In the words of former editor-in-chief Sgt. Maj. Lisa Hunter, the *NCO Journal* should be the "Reader's Digest for NCOs." Over the years, the challenge we have always had and still have today, is keeping our NCO Corps current with the latest changes in doctrine, policies and techniques.

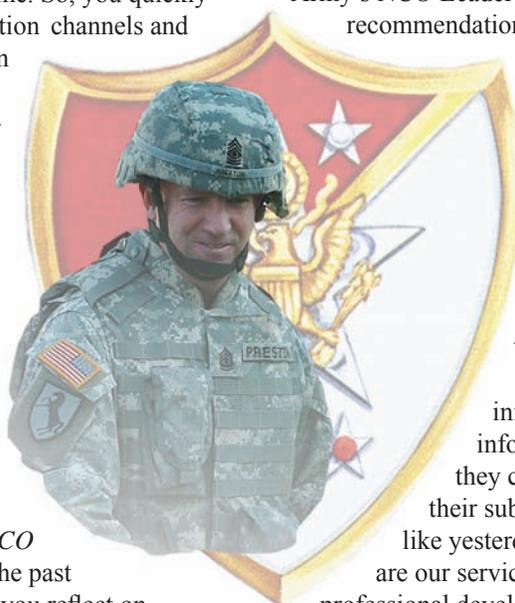
NCOs have always wanted a source of information that provides current and relevant information to them in the field. Information they can use to teach and professionally develop their subordinate NCOs and Soldiers. Today, just like yesterday, the underpinnings of our NCO Corps are our service creeds, our seven Army Values and our professional development forums.

The *NCO Journal* has grown and evolved since the inaugural issue in the spring of 1991. During our celebration of the Year of the NCO in 2009, we were able to add more staff, increase the size of the publication and the frequency of publication to monthly.

But the challenges of 1991 are still the challenges of 2011. For our *NCO Journal* to stay relevant and connected with our NCOs deployed to 80 countries around the world, we need your contributions. My challenge to each of you, especially our senior NCOs, is to write and have an article published as a first sergeant or master sergeant. We owe it to ourselves, our NCO Corps and our Army, to tell the Soldier's story.

Today I am proud to reflect on the history of *The NCO Journal* and all those leaders who contributed to institutionalizing and making this publication world renown. The *NCO Journal* continues to be the foremost publication for our NCOs, and it has been an honor to be a small part of the *Journal's* accomplishments. Here is hoping for 20 more productive years of our *NCO Journal*.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Ken Preston



Our Thoughts

Your NCO Journal — 20 years of excellence

I have had the privilege of being part of *your NCO Journal* for the last eight years, and I must say that it is a privilege I cherish.

In preparing to celebrate 20 years of service to the NCO Corps, I spent a lot of time reading historical documents that outline the steps taken to get *your* magazine off the ground. What I have discovered is a newfound appreciation for the hard work and tenacity of those who set the stage for the Army's best magazine, serving the greatest corps on earth — noncommissioned officers.

Much of the early success of the magazine can be attributed to a few individuals — the visionaries — Gen. Carl Vuono, former chief of staff of the Army, and former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius Gates. It was their foresight and leadership more than 20 years ago that set into motion the events that ultimately brought *The NCO Journal* to life.

There are the contributions of Sgt. 1st Class John D'Amato, then the public affairs NCO for the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas. He did the majority of the legwork in researching and obtaining the necessary information to make sound decisions on staffing, budget, content and frequency of the publication. Because of his efforts, leadership had plenty to look at before making the final decision as to what *your Journal* would ultimately be. He is also credited with writing 90 percent of the stories for the inaugural issue.

Col. Fredrick Van Horn, then commandant of USASMA, and his command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Bill Mock, were instrumental in providing leadership and guidance along the way. They ensured the process of creating *The NCO Journal* remained on track and kept Vuono and Gates informed of the magazine's progress. Their input was also instrumental in molding the content and design of *your Journal*.

Mock can also be credited with the selection of Master Sgt. Gil High as the first editor of the magazine. Mock grabbed High away from *Soldiers* magazine, which I am sure was a great loss to its staff.

After Mock came Command Sgt. Maj. Ronnie Strahan, who used video conferencing to spread the word about the *Journal* and to garner support and stories from the field. Because of his efforts he was able to increase the readership of and contributors to the magazine.

Another success story during the *Journal's* early years was the hiring of Jim Collins as the managing editor. Van Horn called that move one of the best things to happen to the magazine, because Collins gave the *Journal* continuity and stability, something rotating *Soldiers* could not do.

Another major contributor to maintain consistency through-

out its inaugural year was Sgt. Maj. Bill Lopez, who after graduating from the Sergeants Major Course Class 37, became the editor-in-chief. His leadership inaugurated a team of seasoned professionals who continued to improve the *Journal*.

To look back and comprehend what they did is to realize they accomplished much in what would be deemed today as an antiquated and archaic system. They didn't have the high-speed computers and desktop publishing programs we do today. Photoshop software hadn't even been created yet; each story had to be typeset and sent to a contractor who printed it for pagination and paste-up. There was no such thing as sending a complete magazine, graphics and all, over the Internet to be printed. The magazine had to be sent in bits and pieces with photographs and text handled separately. Many in the industry today can't even fathom how laborious that whole process was, never mind not being able to do it all on a computer.

Since those early days, *The NCO Journal* has had numerous editors, managing editors, staff writers and graphic artists — too many to mention — but each brought something new to *your Journal*, which resulted in constant improvements throughout its 20-year history.

I know that with just my eight years of working at the *Journal*, I have witnessed some of the Army's best public affairs Soldiers and multimedia illustrators place their mark on the magazine. In every case, they left it better than they found it. So true it was for those who came before, and so true it will be for those who come after.

Many may not know that *your Journal* almost went totally by the wayside. Back in 1998 and 1999, *The NCO Journal* could only be found online. No hard copies were produced. It lost much of its readership and interest from the corps. That was until Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley insisted that it come back in print in 2000. Since then, it has remained as such. Besides Tilley's leadership in keeping the *Journal* alive, much of what your magazine is today can also be attributed to Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr. and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston. They led the charge in making 2009 the Year of the NCO, which resulted in your magazine reaping some of that recognition — we were able to grow the staff of professionals who write the stories, increase the page count and frequency of publication, and produce innovative products for use in the field.

The NCO Journal has come a long way and is befitting of a grand celebration for 20 years of service to the corps. I hope that you will still be reading it 20 years from now as well.

From the staff of *your NCO Journal*, thank you for your support. 🙏



David Crozier

Army evaluating portable, solar-powered shades, tents

Army News Service

The Army is evaluating a host of flexible, portable, lightweight solar-powered shades and tent-like technologies.

The products are designed to allow expeditionary units to deploy with transferrable, exportable electrical power that can charge batteries, computers and other essential gear without needing fuel or a generator, officials said.

Using a fast-evolving technology known as flexible photovoltaics, or PV, the solar-powered tent structures convert light energy into electricity, thus removing the need to haul generators and large amounts of fuel.

“They are ideal for charging batteries, making sure your (communications), night-vision goggles and computers are powered up. You don’t want a generator on top of a mountain, and you don’t want to have to bring fuel to a generator or haul batteries,” said Katherine Hammack, assistant secretary of the Army for installations, energy and environment.

Technological advances in the area of PVs have made it possible to build



Photo courtesy U.S. Army

Using flexible photovoltaics, the Power Shade shelter depicted can generate up to 2 kilowatts of electricity from solar power.

lightweight, portable materials which are flexible and can easily travel with dismounted units.

The Army has already deployed some of these technologies to forward locations around the world for additional evaluation, sending some to places such as Afghanistan, said Steven Tucker, a senior engineer in the Shelters Technology, Engineering and Fabrication Directorate at the Natick, Mass., Soldier Research Design and Engineering Center. In addition, Hammack said the Army is hoping to deploy more of the solar-powered tents in the near future.

Some of the flexible PV products being evaluated are military shelters of various sizes and configurations which use flexible solar panels to harness light energy and convert it into transferable electricity, Tucker explained.

“The technology we are using is called amorphous silicon. ... It takes the energy from the sun — photons. [Photons] go into the PV materials and they essentially knock loose electrons. Those electrons are then gathered and utilized for power, converting solar power to electrical power.”

One of the tents, called the TEMPER Fly, is roughly 16-by-20 feet and able to generate 800 watts of electricity. A QUADrant is smaller, able to generate 200 watts of power, and the ones known as Power Shades are capable of generating up to 3 kilowatts of power.

“Alternative energy sources are really going to shine in mission scenarios where you don’t want to use a generator because you don’t want the noise or heat signature that goes along with it, or where re-supplying that generator with fuel doesn’t make sense,” Tucker said.

Flame-resistant uniforms fielded

Army News Service

The Army has begun to deploy special high-tech flame-resistant uniforms engineered to safeguard Soldiers who could be exposed to fire and flames during an attack in their aircraft or armored vehicles, officials said.

Called the Fire Resistant Environmental Ensemble, or FREE, the uniforms are manufactured with specially knit, flame-resistant fabrics designed to provide lightweight protection and safeguard Soldiers from flames, wind and extreme temperatures.

“In addition to providing all-weather

capability in terms of keeping our Soldiers warm and comfortable and able to operate in any environment, it has very high levels of flame protection,” said Col. William Cole, project manager for Soldier Protection and Individual Equipment, the office which buys body armor and uniforms for the Army.

“If Soldiers are in a flash fire in an armored vehicle or aircraft, they are protected. They won’t be burned,” Cole said.

The first uniforms are designed in the standard Universal Camouflage Pattern. Aviators slated to deploy to Afghanistan will be issued MultiCam FREE uniforms in the next few months.



Photo courtesy PEO Soldier

A Soldier wears the new FREE uniform.

Non-deployable rate could reach 16 percent by 2012

Army News Service

By the time the Army meets its goal to have Soldiers spend twice as much time at home as they are deployed, the service could face the problem of having nearly one in five Soldiers unavailable to deploy.

Today, nearly 14.5 percent of Soldiers in a brigade combat team are unable to deploy by the unit's latest arrival date in theater, or LAD. That number is up from a little more than 10 percent from 2007. By 2012, it's expected the number will be as high as 16 percent, said Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, the Army's deputy chief of staff, G-1.

"We don't want it to grow, but the reality is, we're tracking what's happening with our Soldiers, and we're making our best assumptions and assessment of what's going to happen in the future," Bostick said.

The general spoke during the Association of the United States Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C., in October, as part of a presentation on Army personnel. He said medical issues are a prime factor for the increase of non-deployable Soldiers.

"Some of it is temporary medical, where we fix the Soldiers and they are not ready to go at the deployment time," Bostick said. He also said about 68 percent of those injuries are musculoskeletal issues, including knees, backs or muscles, for instance.

The Army's leadership asked the secretary of defense for a temporary end-strength increase in 2009 to help alleviate problems associated with non-deployable Soldiers. As a result, about 22,000 additional Soldiers were approved above and beyond the Army's congressional mandate of 547,400.

The Army added about 5,000 of those Soldiers in 2009, and another 10,000 in 2010, using up to 15,000 of the extra slots authorized. Bostick said he expects the Army to take advantage of the remaining 7,000 temporary authorizations and will ultimately achieve an Army force size of more than 569,000.



Photo by Spc. Luther L. Boothe Jr., Task Force Currahee Public Affairs
Task Force Currahee Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, leave Forward Operating Base Khayr-Khot Castle on a joint patrol with the Afghan National Army to the city of KKC. Injuries and other factors could leave as many as 16 percent of the Army's Soldiers non-deployable by 2012.

Also adding to the roster of non-deployable Soldiers is the elimination of stop-loss. That policy allowed the Army to extend Soldiers' enlistment beyond their end-of-service date, so they could deploy with their unit. Without stop-loss, some Soldiers stay behind when their unit deploys.

"We have to make up for those losses," Bostick said. "They are on our books, and we have an end strength. So, we can't recruit against them. You have to find a way to have three-to-one, about 12,000 Soldiers, to make up for 4,000 that might be stop-lossed."

The need for additional Soldiers can also

be attributed to the service's Wounded Warrior program, Bostick said. The number of Soldiers in that program is increasing.

"We thought that number was going to actually start coming down. But with what is happening in Afghanistan, the number is going the other direction," he said.

Today, there are about 9,000 Soldiers in the Wounded Warrior program from both the active-duty and Reserve components, Bostick said.

The general said the temporary end-strength increase is not forever.

By September 2011, the Army will have to drawdown again to 547,000, the end strength prescribed in law.

Bostick said a challenge with such a temporary increase is balancing the growth needed at the time with the cuts that might be needed at a later time, and having to tell Soldiers who want to stay that they can't.

Maj. Gen. Donald Campbell, commander, U.S. Army Recruiting Command, said the service is working to fill gaps and targeting recruiting efforts to find the kind of Soldiers it needs. He said the Army is ensuring recruiting is supporting the Army Force Generation model.

Campbell said the Army's recruiting mission for fiscal year 2011 is 67,000 new Soldiers. With some 33,276 already in the entry pool, nearly half the mission is complete, he said.

Ranger posthumously named USASOC Medic of the Year

75th Ranger Regiment Public Affairs

“Fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession,” is a phrase from the Ranger Creed, but one that Sgt. Jonathan K. Peney, 22, lived and died by as a Ranger combat medic.

Peney, who was assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., was on his fourth combat rotation as the company medic when he was killed by enemy forces.

For his actions on and off the battlefield, Peney was posthumously named the 2010 U.S. Army Special Operations Command Medic of the Year and the Special Operations Medical Association Medic of the Year.

Peney’s mother, Sue Peney, and his wife, Kristin, accepted the awards on his behalf at two different ceremonies in December.

“Jon was always very compassionate and curious from the start of his life to the end of his life,” his mother said. “He loved being a Ranger medic. He knew what had to be done. I know in spirit he stands by his wife and me, and most importantly, the men he loved in his unit.”

Capt. Andrew Fisher, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment physician assistant, said Peney was a devoted and “extraordinary Ranger medic.”

When Peney’s company deployed ahead of the battalion, he volunteered to deploy with it.

Peney had just nine days to recover after graduating from the grueling U.S. Army Ranger School and left his new bride of just a few months.

“Sgt. Peney could not stay back and watch his platoon deploy to a combat zone without him,” Fisher said. “This is a testament to his selfless service.”

While on his final deployment in support of the war on terrorism, Peney reacted and treated casualties from two separate enemy engagements.

The first engagement was a complex attack at an airfield in Afghanistan. A Soldier stepped on a land mine, and Peney applied a tourniquet and stopped the bleeding before directing the



Courtesy photo
Sgt. Jonathan K. Peney (pictured as specialist)

“Sgt. Peney could not stay back and watch his platoon deploy to a combat zone without him. This is a testament to his selfless service.”

indirect fire, his responsiveness and his expert application of trauma management.”

Peney’s last full measure of devotion was given on June 1 in Kandahar province, Afghanistan.

His platoon had successfully conducted a search and attack operation a couple of days earlier and secured a strongpoint for the day. Shortly after sunrise, the enemy attacked the strongpoint from three directions with an intense barrage of small arms, rocket-propelled grenades and sniper fire.

During the initial volley, a team leader sustained two gunshot wounds and was critically wounded.

“Without hesitation and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, Sgt. Peney ran through effective automatic weapons fire to get to his wounded Ranger,” Fisher said. “He was killed by enemy fire while moving under heavy fire to provide aid to the Ranger.”

Soldier’s evacuation to a higher level of medical care.

In the second engagement, without regard to his own safety, Peney reacted to an effective enemy indirect fire outside his barracks area. With his medic aid bag hung over his shoulder, he was the first to respond to the scene and immediately identified and triaged five international workers wounded in the attack.

“Sgt. Peney immediately conducted casualty triage and determined the most critical patient to be a man with an amputated leg,” Fisher said.

“In addition to stabilizing this patient, Sgt. Peney directed the other medics on the scene to stabilize their patients and move them inside to the casualty collection point that he had established.”

Like the seasoned combat veteran and medic that he was, Peney took charge and controlled the chaos in the room.

“He issued calm and clear directives to three medics, a physician’s assistant and a physician,” Fisher said. “He triaged and organized the evacuation of all the patients based on their priority. All of the patients lived as a result of Sgt. Peney’s courage under

Wounded staff sergeant selected for extreme home makeover

3rd BCT, 1st Cavalry Division PAO →

ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" has selected Staff Sgt. Patrick Zeigler, who was wounded during the Fort Hood, Texas, shootings last year, to receive a home makeover.

A Soldier with the 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Zeigler was surprised with the news at Fort Hood in December. Soldiers stood in formation at the 1st Cavalry Division Museum to cover the surprise.

With Zeigler in attendance, two Bradley fighting vehicles roared to a stop near the formation and dropped their ramps to reveal Ty Pennington and Paul DiMeo.

"This is our chance to honor a man who's sacrificed a lot for his country," said Pennington. "It's a miracle he's here today."

Zeigler, who was shot multiple times in the head, has been working on his recovery alongside his fiancée, Jessica Hansan, the past year.

The couple talked about the shooting, the extensive recovery and their need for a home to start a family. After the initial surprise, Zeigler, Hansan and the design team loaded onto the show's bus to take a tour of the build site.

The delight on the faces of everyone there was contagious, and by the end of the day, conversations buzzed with excitement over the upcoming events.

Zeigler and Hansan said they couldn't be more thankful and honored to be recognized.

"I'm ready to move out and move in and get started!" Zeigler said. "It's one of those things where I want to push the pause button and enjoy it, but I also can't wait to see the end result."

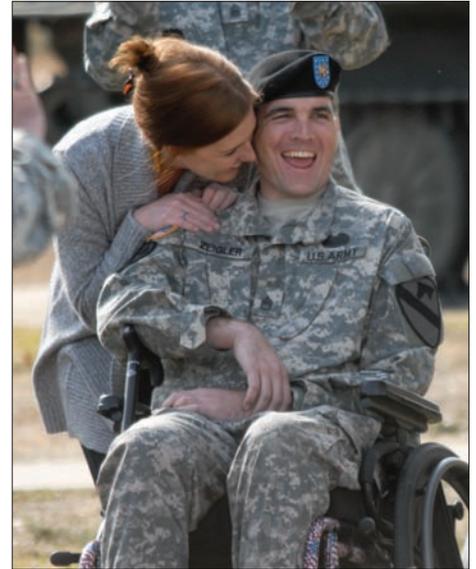


Photo courtesy 3rd Brigade Combat Team
Staff Sgt. Patrick Zeigler and his fiancée, Jessica Hansan, will receive an "extreme" home makeover.

New system speeds disability evaluation

American Forces Press Service →

A pilot program that eases medical separation and speeds benefit payments for service members too wounded, sick or injured to stay in the military will soon roll out to the entire force.

"We are proud that the disability evaluation system is making progress," said John R. Campbell, defense deputy undersecretary for wounded warrior care and transition policy.

"Our people are committed to not only expanding this faster disability system, but making it even faster and fairer for our transitioning service men and women," he said. "Our work here is not done."

Campbell said the Integrated Disability Evaluation System is a joint effort between the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments.

The program will expand to all

military medical sites across the services by October 2011, he said.

In the past, separating service members got end-of-service physicals and final military treatment from local military medical clinics while still on active duty.

After separation, troops seeking disability compensation would have to repeat the same tests at VA facilities, and then wait weeks or months for a disability determination before they could request disability benefits.

The new program brings together VA and military medical separation processes while service members are still on active duty.

Under the new system, wounded, ill or injured service members receive medical evaluations by VA-certified doctors using VA guidelines, while DoD uses these exams to determine if a service member is able to continue in uniform.

The pilot program has been operating at 27 sites.

For service members, the process is faster, with only one set of examinations to complete, and is fairer than the previous system, Campbell said, with all evaluations done through one set of protocols.

Campbell said the net result for medically-separated service members is they can receive a disability rating while still on active duty, and receive disability compensation after their first full month in veteran status, the earliest allowed by law.

Results from the test sites have been great, he said.

"We're getting much higher satisfaction ratings from discharged service members and their families," Campbell said. "[They say] this system is just far superior to the legacy system."

THE NCO JOURNAL

A MONTHLY FORUM FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

20 Years

of Service

to the Corps

1991 - 2011

NCO Journal celebrates milestone

By David Crozier

"The NCO Journal is something I am very proud of. It is a publication that can touch every noncommissioned officer in the U.S. Army, certainly, with pertinent information — not only with issues that are primarily an NCO's concern, but an Army concern."



— Former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius Gates during his oral history interview in 1994

The year is 1989. Soviet troops withdraw from Afghanistan; the Berlin Wall falls; Vietnamese troops leave Cambodia; Intel introduces the 486 microprocessor; the comic strip *Dilbert* debuts in U.S. newspapers; *Doogie Howser, M.D.* debuts on television; Gilda Radner of *Saturday Night Live* fame dies of cancer; "Like a Virgin" by Madonna, "Eternal Flame" by The Bangles, "Another Day in Paradise" by Phil Collins, "The Look" by Roxette and "Love Shack" by The B-52s are the year's biggest hit singles; serial killer Theodore "Ted" Bundy is put to death via the electric chair in Florida; and the U.S. Army declares it as the Year of the NCO.

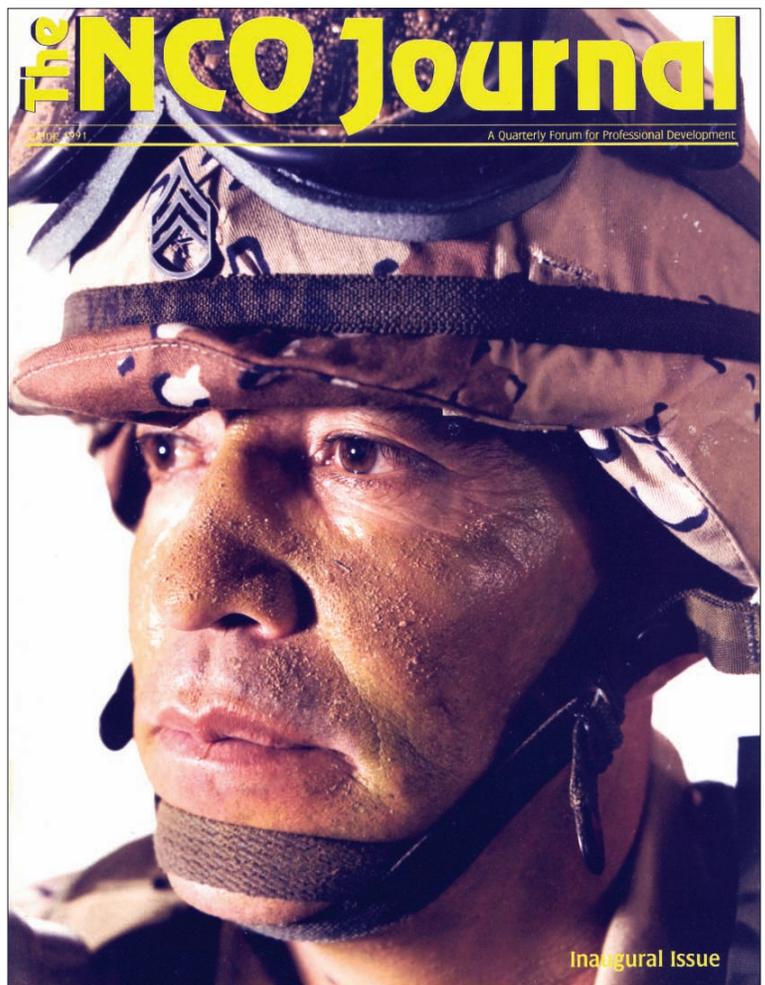
It was a time of change and reflection — a time when the Army needed to address the role of the noncommissioned officer as a trainer of and caregiver to Soldiers and how the complexities of that role changed throughout its more than 200-year history.

As such, Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, then the commanding general of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, called for the chartering of an NCO Leader Development Special Task Force to develop a strategy and action plan for improving the Army's NCO leader development system.

The task force was made up of 21 senior leaders (see inset on page 10) led by the deputy commanding general of TRADOC, Lt. Gen. John S. Crosby. The U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy was designated as the site for the study with the majority of the task force members coming from within its ranks. Oversight of the task force was provided by a senior advisory group that consisted of the senior officers and command sergeants major representing TRADOC, Forces Command, Eighth U.S. Army, U.S. Army Europe, Logistics Center, the National Guard Bureau, Combined Arms Command, Office of the Chief of Army Reserves, Soldier Support Center, Army Materiel Command and the sergeant major of the Army.

The task force completed its study in June 1989 and came up with 18 recommendations that set the stage for the future development and education of the NCO Corps. Recommendation 17 stated, "NCOs should have a professional journal or

other forum that focuses on leader development issues." It recommended the "establishment of an NCO leader development forum to be published as a part of 'Sergeant's Business.'"



The inaugural issue came out in March 1991 and contained seven stories focusing on team building, Operation Desert Storm, School of Sand, Soldiers and the Press, and a history on the American Revolution and NCO tradition.

Even though space had been dedicated in Sergeant's Business for the discussion of NCO leadership, Gen. Carl Vuono, then chief of staff of the Army, and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Julius Gates said it was not enough and called for a separate journal to be published.

"After the Vietnam War, we had to rebuild the NCO Corps. It was obvious to me and to Sgt. Maj. of the Army Bill Gates that the NCO Corps was really the key building block to training in the Army that we wanted," Vuono said. "So in order to develop and retain what I believed was a highly professional corps of NCOs, it was appropriate that we had some kind of a professional journal that would resonate with the emerging NCO Corps."

Vuono added, not only did leadership view the NCO Corps as the backbone of the Army, but also thought it should be deeply committed to the development of training for the ready Army.

"It seemed to me and Bill Gates that it was critical that we had some kind of forum for the NCOs in order to exchange ideas and so forth, a professional development tool for the corps."

Gates agreed, and from there it was decided that the magazine should be based out of USASMA. But, things did not go as planned, according to the transcript of Gates' 1994 oral history interview after his retirement.

"We ran into roadblocks with the [Department of the Army] Public Affairs office, TRADOC and even the Academy. DA Public Affairs wanted to publish the thing, and then it would have turned into another public affairs publication. The same thing with TRADOC," Gates said. "For some reason, the Sergeants Major Academy felt that they could not handle the additional responsibility. So, it was a total roadblock."

Gates said in his interview that he entertained the thought

of not doing the journal altogether and broached that idea to Vuono at his residence one evening. Gates informed Vuono that DA Public Affairs didn't want any other organization to publish the

magazine, TRADOC didn't want to support the idea and the Academy didn't think they had the capability to produce it.

Gates recalled his discussion with Vuono: "By the way, we have a deficit of about 26,000 [expletive] dollars that nobody seems they can find throughout this Army establishment. So, recommendation 14, we ought to just throw it in the damn trash," Gates said.

Vuono, according to Gates' interview, hit his desk and



"I think from the very first issue on, we hit a home run and, of course, the ultimate mission of success was the target audience, the NCO Corps. We were careful to poll the NCO Corps back in those days to get their views. In the best traditions of the after-action report system, they made adjustments in the first publication year. I think the result of the first issue and subsequent issues, that first year, as we looked at the comments and so forth, made the path of the journal right up to today."

— Gen. (Ret.) Carl E. Vuono

said, "Damn it! Do you want a journal?"

Gates replied, "Yes sir, I want a journal."

"Then why in the hell can't you get it?" Vuono asked.

"I just got through telling you the reason why I couldn't get it. Everybody and his brother don't want it. The only people that want the damn journal is you and all of the NCOs in the Army," Gates said.

Vuono then informed Gates in no uncertain terms that he would have the journal. It would be funded and it would be based out of USASMA.

From there, according to USASMA history documents, in August 1989 the Academy public affairs officer, Sgt. 1st Class John D'Amato, began exploring what it would take to publish *The NCO Journal* at the Academy. On June 1, 1990, Col. Frederick Van Horn, then commandant of USASMA, officially tasked D'Amato with the development of the total concept involving the creation of the magazine. Within a week, and with the help of the Academy's Resource Management office, D'Amato put together a decision paper containing recommendations on proponenty, staff, budget, format, content, printing and distribution.

The recommendations

Task Force Organization

Sponsor	Gen. M.R. Thurman, CG, TRADOC
Director	Lt. Gen. John S. Crosby, DCG, TRADOC
Executive Agent	Col. Kenneth W. Simpson, Cmdt, USASMA
Members	Lt. Col. Marvin Taylor
	Maj. David E. Robinson
	Mr. Warren P. Rucker
	Command Sgt. Maj. Chesterfield Hargrove Jr.
	Sgt. Maj. Linda K. Boggs
	Sgt. Maj. Manley P. Bush
	Sgt. Maj. John D. Gilland
	Sgt. Maj. Delphus H. Weissenbach
	Master Sgt. Hendrik J. Bos
	Master Sgt. Reynaldo Castaneda
	Master Sgt. Allyn D. Harper
	Master Sgt. Joseph E. Joyner
	Master Sgt. Donald G. Martin
	Master Sgt. Ronald D. Paris
	Master Sgt. Bobby L. Skinner
	Sgt. 1st Class Lorraine K. Brown
	Ms. Marilou A. Roy
	Ms. Diane Solls

were that the magazine should be a DA publication with the Academy as the action agency. The volume and frequency of publication were recommended — 100,000 copies and quarterly distribution — which allowed for approximately 1-in-5 NCOs in the active and reserve components to get a copy. It had the same distribution as *Soldiers* magazine, but in less quantity. The length and format were recommended as 48 pages on glossy paper with four-color process printing. The content was to include letters to the editor; a top NCO column; a guest officer column; world affairs; feature articles; spotlights on NCOs; news from around the Army, in-reserve, on-guard, the schoolhouse, military personnel center and the sister services; self-development; NCO history; and book reviews. Staffing was suggested to be four civilians — editor, assistant editor, illustrator and secretary. Funding was estimated to be \$266,000 for fiscal year 1991 and \$454,000 every year thereafter.

Eventually, the Academy floated four proposals — a 48-page full-color quarterly as stated above; a 24-page two-color semi-annual publication with a staff of two military members and two civilians at a cost of about \$270,000 per year; staffing with only two military and publishing semi-annually at a cost of \$96,000; or continue to piggyback on Sergeant's Business and expand the section to a four-to-six-page pullout.

What eventually came out of lengthy discussions with leadership at all levels, including Vuono and Gates, would be that *The NCO Journal* would be a DA, 24-page, full-color quarterly publication based out of the Academy.

Vuono said he insisted on the magazine being based out of USASMA for a few reasons.

"All of the different branches of the military had their journals in their proponent schools, and the Academy to me was the logical place for *The NCO Journal*," he said. "It is the key, the pinnacle of NCO development in terms of institutional training, and the academy had all the right attributes, which I thought, were needed to support the *Journal*."

Vuono said the *Journal* would benefit from the forward thinking and experience of the students and cadre who walked the

Academy's halls. He added it was also the best place to network with the senior NCO corps.

The first proposed issue was presented to Vuono and Gates on Nov. 5, 1990. It featured three stories by students of the Sergeants Major Course; a skills, knowledge and attitudes column which focused on team building at the sergeant E-5 level; an NCO history article on the first Purple Heart; and a self-development piece titled "Why we should study military history." Because of time constraints, all of the non-student articles were written or co-written by the academy PAO.

In viewing the first issue, Vuono and Gates made several changes. They wanted a sergeant major to be the editor; said the articles were too academy-centric and they wanted a broader list of contributors to be more representative of the whole Army; and finally, Vuono wanted the *Journal* to focus on one theme per year for at least the first year.

"We wanted to ensure it was a professional journal, and the NCOs who read it benefitted by it being a professional publication. So, we wanted each issue to have a central theme ensuring continuity and covering the basic themes that the NCO leaders needed to address," Vuono said. "Bill Gates and I wanted to ensure that the themes the *Journal* stressed were what I believed were the four basic roles of the NCO — an NCO is a leader, a trainer, a role model and

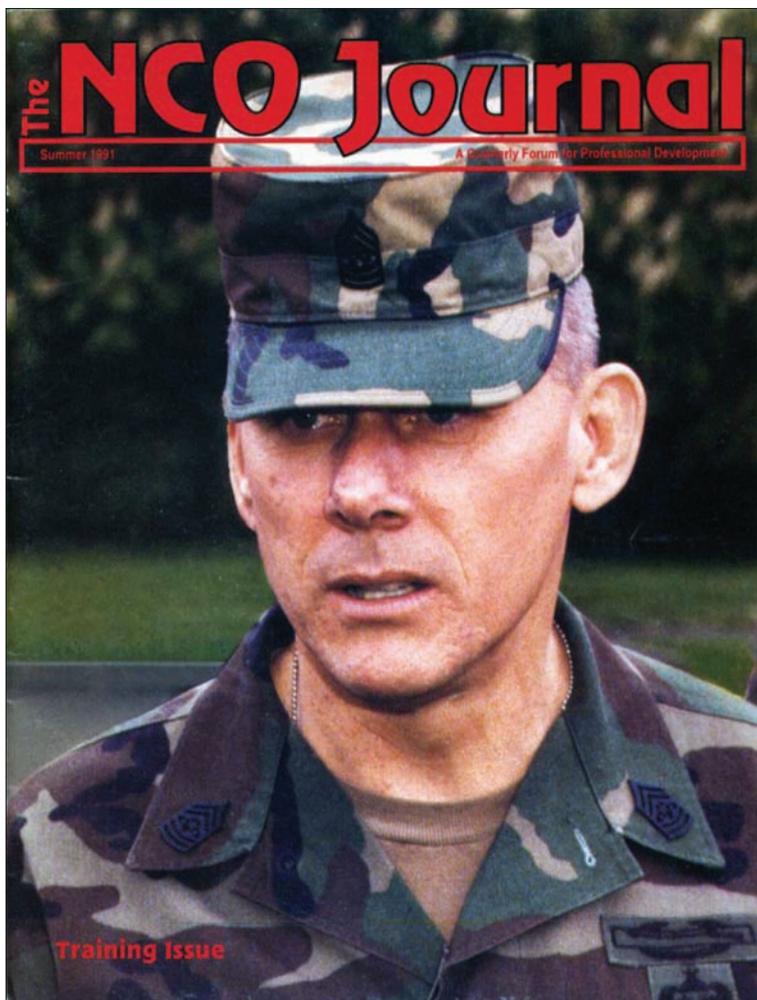
they are the standard bearer. It was important that these fundamental roles were played out in the *Journal*."

With the format and frequency decided, the next steps were for the Academy to find the pieces of the puzzle needed to engineer the publication.

Master Sgt. Gil High, then editor of *Soldiers* magazine, was selected on short notice to become the new editor-in-chief of the yet-to-be published *NCO Journal*. The local civilian personnel office began looking for a managing editor while D'Amato began searching for new authors. Van Horn selected "Desert Warfare" as the theme for the first issue.

By the end of 1990, Jim Collins joined the magazine as the managing editor and Sgt. 1st Class Bill Horner as a staff writer.

The inaugural issue came out in March 1991 and contained



The Summer 1991 issue carried a reworked Fort Knox, Ky., Advanced NCO Course graduation speech originally written for Command Sgt. Maj. Bill Mock, the USASMA command sergeant major, titled "Building the Force: Skill, Will and Teamwork." The issue also included an article from Master Sgt. Michael Bates, a Sergeants Major Course Class 36 student titled, "Tricks of the Trade."

seven stories focusing on team building, Operation Desert Storm, School of Sand, Soldiers and the Press, and a history on the American Revolution and NCO tradition.

When asked why it took more than a year to get the first issue on the street, Vuono said that, as with anything new, you always want to make the first impression a good one.

"It just takes some time to do that. Bill Gates and I were absolutely anxious to get it started as fast as we could, and we changed a bit of the bureaucracy of the process. But, we wanted to get it right," he said. "It was a brand new journal that was designed to run out of the professional NCO Corps, the likes of which no Army had ever seen before. We wanted it to be professional in every way."

Van Horn agreed, adding that during the first year of the *Journal*, the hardest part to overcome was obtaining articles from the field.

"It didn't take us long to put the first issue together, and in looking at the first issue, you can see that John D'Amato was the guy who really put his leg-work into it. But, the real problem was getting people to write articles for the magazine. It was a chore," he said. "It got easier after that, but the first two issues, the hardest thing was finding quality articles suitable for publication. Also, getting the format down for the first issue was a challenge because we didn't want to have to backtrack or suffer too much criticism from the field for the way it looked."

Van Horn lauded the hard work of High and D'Amato during the initial publication, but said the selection of Collins as the managing editor was, in his opinion, the best thing that happened. It gave the *Journal* a dedicated manager and Collins made it look easy over the years, Van Horn said.

The Summer 1991 issue carried a reworked Fort Knox, Ky., Advanced NCO Course graduation speech originally written for Command Sgt. Maj. Bill Mock, the Academy command sergeant major, titled "Building the Force: Skill, Will and Teamwork." The issue also included an article from Master Sgt. Michael Bates, a Sergeants Major Course Class 36 student, titled, "Tricks of the Trade." This article became the first authored by

an NCO not in a public affairs-related job.

The Fall 1991 issue, and the last issue for the year, featured an article from a Class 37 student titled, "How Do You Set Their Souls On Fire." This article took center spread of the magazine and provided a unique look at leadership from the follower's perspective.

According to the 1991 USASMA history report, in addition to the challenge of producing the magazine's content, equally challenging hurdles had to be overcome, such as letting contracts for typesetting and printing, and developing funding protocols to include postage.

Monarch Litho Inc. in California and Processing Plus in El Paso, Texas, received spot contracts for printing and typesetting, respectively. They would continue under contract for the balance of the year.

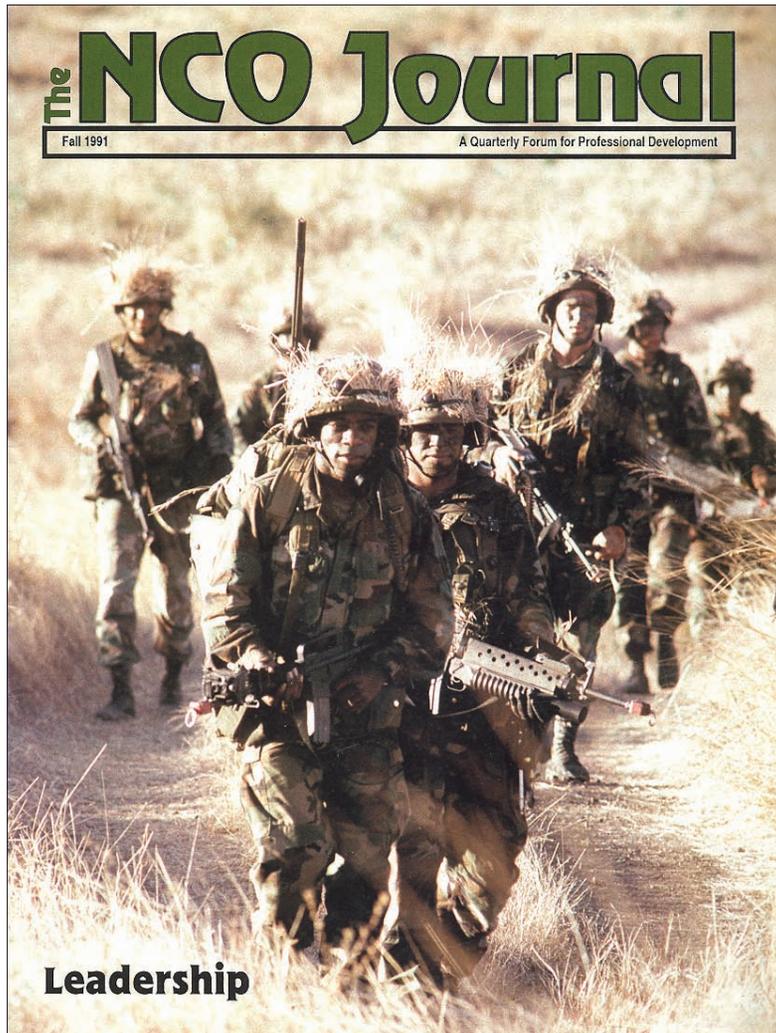
Late in 1991, a desktop publishing system was installed, but was too late to produce in-house typesetting and pagination before year's end. A second-class mailing permit, saving thousands of dollars, was obtained in time to mail the Fall issue.

During the inaugural year of *The NCO Journal*, Command Sgt. Maj. Ronnie Strahan was selected as the Academy's 10th command sergeant major and soon found himself immersed in the business of *The NCO Journal*.

"The decision on going with *The NCO Journal* was made before I got to the Academy. So when I got there, we were just trying to get it together. It was basically flying by the seat of its pants for the first couple of issues," Strahan said. "We had a temporary facility for the *Journal* staff to work out of, so we had to work on that."

But the hard work was just about to begin, Strahan noted.

"We went on a monthly basis to one of the major commands or major installations, say Fort Hood. And, I contacted the sergeant major and told him we wanted to have a video-teleconference; that I would have staff from the academy [available] if he could get NCOs from throughout [his or her] major units on Fort Hood. [I explained] that what we wanted to do was give them the opportunity to talk to our staff and get an update on the Noncommissioned Officer Education System," he said. "So, we would do these teleconferences and they were really beneficial. We tried



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"If it wasn't accomplishing the purpose it was originally set out to do, I think like anything else, it would have gone by the wayside. You either succeed or you fail. So I think it is a real testament to the staff there that continues to write and [obtain] articles, get it published and get it out to the NCO Corps."

— Command Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Ronnie Strahan

to spread it around the Army and we asked for articles about lessons learned that could be put out to the rest of the NCO Corps through the *Journal*."

Looking back at the creation of *The NCO Journal*, Van Horn said it was a vital part of the growth of the professional NCO.

"As evidenced by the fact that the chief of staff of the Army made a decision to put this *Journal* on the ground — I mean it wasn't somebody downstream — it was the chief of staff that made that decision," Van Horn said. "After Gen. Vuono, Gen. Gordon Sullivan stood four-strong behind it. Both of those chiefs [of staff of the Army] during my time at the Academy were personally interested in the *Journal*."

Van Horn said it was not uncommon for either chief to talk about the *Journal* during public events, and that both the chief and sergeant major of the Army would send him letters about articles with constructive criticism.

"But, that is just how important it was to the people at the top of the Army," Van Horn said. "*The NCO Journal* has earned its place in the Army. Senior NCOs had to have a way to communicate with each other, have a way to voice their opinions [about] the important things going on in the Army. They have to have a way to demonstrate their competence when doing professional writing as a corps. There are probably many good reasons as to why the *Journal* was important then and remains important today, but those are the ones I regard as most important."

Van Horn added that he believes senior NCOs have always struggled with expressing themselves simply because of the circumstances in which they find themselves, but believes *The NCO Journal* helps to bridge that gap and provides them a means to get their voices heard.

"I think the *Journal* for me was seeing Sergeants Major Course students use their opportunity in the course to sit down and do some reflection and translate that into words and articles for the *NCO Journal*," he said. "It was an opportunity I think, had it not been for the Sergeants Major Course, that they would not have taken advantage of [doing that], the Army would not have been able to benefit from their thinking otherwise."

Reflecting on starting *The NCO Journal* and how it has fared since then, Vuono said the *Journal* has always met his intent.

"I think from the very first issue, we hit a home run and, of course, the ultimate mission of success was the target audience, the NCO Corps," he said. "We were careful to poll the NCO Corps back in those days to get their views. In the best traditions of the after-action report system, they made adjustments in the first publication year. I think the result of the first issue and subse-

quent issues that first year, as we looked at the comments and so forth, made the path of the *Journal* right up to today."

Gates considers *The NCO Journal* one of his best efforts during his tenure as the sergeant major of the Army.

"The *NCO Journal* is something I am very proud of. It is a publication that can touch every noncommissioned officer in the U.S. Army, certainly, with pertinent information — not only with issues that are primarily an NCO's concern, but an Army concern," he said.

Strahan said the success of the *Journal* is a testament of its benefit to the Army.

"If it wasn't accomplishing the purpose it was originally set out to do, I think, like anything else, it would have gone by the wayside," he said. "You either succeed or you fail. So, I think it is a real testament to the staff there that continues to write and [obtain] articles, get it published and get it out to the NCO Corps."

Vuono also lauded the *Journal's* longevity.

"Today, the requirements of the NCO at the small-unit level and above are much more complex than [they have] been over the past 20 years since starting the *Journal*. I think the *Journal* is relevant today because you provide the NCO Corps with information, perspectives, practical experience and directions they all need to take," Vuono said. "This kind of high [operational] tempo that the Army has today as we try and go forward and fight two wars at the same time and continue to develop our leaders, the *Journal* has a key role in filling some of the developmental gaps that NCOs aren't getting. So I think the *Journal*, frankly, is more important today than when we first started it a couple of decades ago."

Today, *The NCO Journal* is published on a monthly basis and has grown from a 24-page four-color magazine, to a 48-page four-color magazine, all thanks to the current chief of staff and sergeant major of the Army and the second Year of the NCO celebration in 2009. 📄

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Editor's note: The NCO Journal staff plans to write a history piece for each of this year's issues that will chronicle 20 years of NCO Journal publication. We are also looking for stories from the field on how articles from *The NCO Journal* helped you in conducting your NCO duties and responsibilities. Send articles to ATSS-SCN@conus.army.mil.

‘Supporting Victory’ throughout history



Photo by David B. Crozier

A display depicts Soldiers of an amphibious truck company unloading rations from a DUKW amphibious truck on Omaha Beach in Normandy to resupply Soldiers of an assault division who have just won a foothold in Europe. The Normandy invasion was the largest amphibious assault in history and DUKWs proved to be critical to the even flow of supplies from ship to shore.

By Spc. Samuel J. Phillips

From the moment you walk into the U.S. Army Quartermaster Museum at Fort Lee, Va., you feel like you are traveling through time. With displays that span the last 236 years – every turn puts you in another scene in time that depicts the vital role of the Quartermaster Corps.

“Since 1775, the Quartermaster Corps has been responsible for keeping Soldiers on the front lines supplied to complete their mission,” said Sgt. Wilfurd Piper, museum operations NCO in charge. “Their role during times of war is often the key to the Army’s success.”

One of the most notable displays takes you to June 9, 1944 – three days after the Allied invasion of Normandy: Soldiers of a

quartermaster service company unload rations on Omaha Beach to resupply Soldiers of the assault divisions who have just won a foothold in Europe. This shipment is only a small portion of the more than 750,000 rations of all sorts that have been brought to shore since the campaign began.

Through operations like the Normandy Campaign, where hundreds of thousands of tons of supplies such as clothing, fuel, equipment and ammunition were provided by quartermaster Soldiers to sustain combat Soldiers, it is easy to recall the efforts of the Quartermaster Corps. However, other contributions of the corps are not always as straightforward.

Another exhibit at the museum depicts some of the remaining members of the 7th Cavalry Regiment attempting to gather water from the Little Bighorn River after being besieged by an



A display illustrates volunteers from what remained of the 7th Cavalry Regiment after Custer's Last Stand as they attempt to gather water from the Little Bighorn River after being besieged by an estimated 3,000 Sioux and Cheyenne warriors for three days on the bluffs above the river. Four men were selected to provide covering fire, including blacksmith Henry Mechlin and saddler Sgt. Otto Voit, both Quartermaster Soldiers. Mechlin and Voit both received Medals of Honor for their actions at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Photo by David B. Crozier

estimated 3,000 Sioux and Cheyenne warriors for two days on the bluffs above the river in 1876. Seventeen men volunteered for the mission, including blacksmith Henry Mechlin and saddler Sgt. Otto Voit, both Quartermaster Corps Soldiers.

Mechlin, Voit and two other Soldiers were selected to provide covering fire and were vital in the success of the operation that provided water for the rest of the survivors of Custer's Last Stand. One of them later described the situation: "The sun beat down on us, and we became so thirsty that it was almost impossible to swallow." Later, 19 Medals of Honor

were presented for heroism at the Battle of Little Bighorn, including to Mechlin and Voit.

"There are a lot of heroic men and women in the Quartermaster Corps," said John O'Gorman, museum director. "The museum is dedicated to telling those Soldiers' stories, as well as those of the corps. The rich history of the corps brings a sense of pride to those within its ranks."

In fact, the U.S. Army Quartermaster School at Fort Lee uses the museum to educate Soldiers coming into the corps by having them tour it as part of their rites of passage, Piper said.



Photo by David B. Crozier

Another display portrays Gen. George S. Patton standing in his jeep waiting for it to be refueled. Patton learned to rely on the guidance from his quartermaster Soldiers when his race across France during World War II was brought to a halt when gasoline had to be diverted to another sector.

Insignia, uniforms and equipment used by quartermaster officers, noncommissioned officers and Soldiers are on display. One of the more interesting items found in the display is the coat of Brig. Gen. Thomas S. Jesup, "father of the Quartermaster Corps." Jesup was the quartermaster general from 1818 to 1860 and developed the first set of regulations, procedures and forms.

Photo by David B. Crozier



"The new Soldiers come in, watch a video history of the Quartermaster Corps and are given a guided tour of the museum," O'Gorman said. "Often, you can glimpse a change in the Soldiers as they realize the importance of the jobs they are about to undertake in the Army."

O'Gorman said fuel handlers might take notice of the petroleum and water exhibit with Gen. George S. Patton standing in his jeep waiting for it to be refueled. When Soldiers read the information that accompanies the display, they find out that Patton's race across France during World War II was brought to a halt when gasoline had to be diverted to another sector.

"This is a prime example of how the Army cannot move without the support of the Quartermaster Corps," Piper said. "Gen. Patton moved so fast through France that his supply lines were not able to keep up with him."

Patton himself realized the error and made quartermaster operations a priority. Relying on guidance from his quartermaster Soldiers, he began rationing supplies and ordered that a supply of reserves be stored within the Third Army until the unit became fully operational again.



Photos by David B. Crozier

At first, the job of the Quartermaster Corps was to provide Soldiers with the food they needed. When, the Commissary Department was absorbed by the corps in 1912, quartermaster Soldiers became responsible for procuring, developing and cooking food as well.

However, Quartermaster Corps Soldiers are not just responsible for fuel. In 1950, the corps became responsible for training the Army's parachute riggers and aerial supply personnel.

The aerial delivery and field services exhibit is dedicated to these Soldiers who literally have the lives of airborne Soldiers in their hands. Among the units highlighted in the exhibit are the 8081st Quartermaster Air Supply and Packaging Company, which rigged supplies during the Korean War; the 109th Quartermaster Company, which packed supplies during the Vietnam War; and the 5th Quartermaster Detachment, which rigs the loads dropped over Afghanistan.

The display shows a variety of aerial delivery containers used since World War II and traces the evolution of aerial supply rigging techniques. One of the key features is a simulated cargo hold of an aircraft with a projection screen showing how equipment is deployed in flight.

Another notable exhibit features a flag-draped coffin in front of two stained glass windows with a plaque that reads, "Show me the manner in which a nation cares for its dead, and I will measure exactly the sympathies of its people, their respect for the laws of the land, and their loyalty to high ideals." The quote is by William E. Gladstone, the four-time British prime minister who served between 1868 and 1894.

The display is part of the mortuary affairs exhibit. The

Quartermaster Corps has been responsible for the care of the dead since the Civil War. Army mortuary affairs specialists deploy around the world in war and peacetime to conduct the important mission of ensuring that fallen Soldiers are properly identified, returned to their families and buried.

"Quartermaster Soldiers are the ones who take care of Soldiers not only when they're alive, but also after they have passed on," Piper said. "Though mortuary affairs is a sad and dark mission, it is no less important. The Soldiers feel they owe it to the fallen and their families to ensure that no one is left behind."

Walking through the 20,000-square-foot museum, which was completed in 1963, visitors are pulled further and further into the world that is the Quartermaster Corps. From providing fuel to keep vehicles running, food and water to keep Soldiers healthy, and mortuary affairs to care for the fallen, the corps is always there supporting Soldiers on the front lines.

"The major thing that visitors need to know is the history of the Quartermaster Corps is still in the making," O'Gorman said. "Though we honor the past with remembrance, we can never forget that Soldiers are out there today carrying out missions that will become the history of tomorrow." 📖

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Photo by David B. Crozier

A flag-draped coffin stands as a symbol of one of the Quartermaster Corps' darker tasks: mortuary affairs. The corps has been responsible for the care of the fallen since the Civil War.

HUMAN RESOURCE CENTER OF

EXCELLENCE



Front view of the Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Maude Complex at the Human Resource Center of Excellence at Fort Knox, Ky.

Photo by Kyle Hodges, Fort Knox Public Affairs Office

NCE

MANY RARELY THINK ABOUT THE MASTERMINDS OF THE ARMY, THE PERSONNEL BEHIND THE SCENES STRATEGICALLY PLANNING AND DECIDING EVERY ASPECT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FOR THE ARMY.

By Stephanie Sanchez

It's easy to imagine what a Soldier does on a daily basis, especially as the military wraps up a war in Iraq and continues to fight a war in Afghanistan. And, without knowing specifics, many people are aware there are thousands of other Soldiers working worldwide to ensure the Army is successful.

But not many think about the masterminds of the Army, the personnel behind the scenes who strategically plan and decide everything that has to do with human resources for this entity. Some may not even know that many of these personnel are located in a single 882,000-square-foot complex at Fort Knox, Ky.

However, the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, which handles the active and reserve components of the Army, and the Army Accessions Command haven't always been accessible at one location. As part of recommendations by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission, or BRAC, the command moved its operations last summer from Alexandria, Va.; Indianapolis, Ind.; and St. Louis, Mo., to the new Human Resource Center of Excellence at Fort Knox.

In May, the complex that houses the center was named after Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Maude, who was the Army's deputy chief of staff for personnel and the highest-ranking military officer killed in the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. The center also recently made headlines when the command named its first female commanding general, Maj. Gen. Gina S. Farrissee, who replaced Maj. Gen. Sean J. Byrne. This was the command's first change-of-command since the BRAC movement.

THE MOVE

As of early October, the command's move was 90 percent completed. Throughout the transition, its focus has remained on offering human resource management to 570,000 Soldiers worldwide, Byrne recently told reporters.

The command provides human resources services to active-duty and reserve Soldiers, veterans, retirees and Army families and it is one of the largest human resources organizations in the world, according to its website. The command manages Soldiers' schooling, promotions, awards, records, transfers, appointments, benefits, retirements and so forth. It is the agency that handles Soldiers' entire careers, from the day they start in the Army to after their retirement.

“Our top priority is to support the warfighter,” Byrne said.

The command was originally formed Oct. 1, 2003, by merging the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command and the Army Reserve Personnel Command. The command operates as the field-operating agency of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, the Army G-1.

During an uncasing of colors ceremony in June after the command consolidated, Byrne said HRC was the first command to move from multiple locations to one. But, the transition was not done without challenges, he said. Part of the command’s strains were integrating functions, and updating and modifying software and hardware. There were also construction delays to clear World War I-era munitions from the site.

IMPORTANT COMMAND ELEMENTS

Among the command’s major offices that are dedicated to noncommissioned officers are the Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate, which offers active-duty and reserve component enlisted Soldiers career guidance and support; the Adjutant General Directorate, which manages Soldiers’ records, promotion boards, evaluation processing, personnel actions, and entitlement programs and veterans’ support; and the Personnel Information Systems Directorate, which provides information technology support to command functions.

Since the summer, the command worked gradually to build its workforce, consolidating nearly 2,000 new employees with more than 2,000 employees from its original locations.

Sgt. Maj. Kevin Hills, the Human Resources Contact Center sergeant major, said his new staff would help relieve his center’s workload. He said his office receives about 4,000 calls a week and thousands of e-mails from Soldiers, veterans, retirees and military family members.

People contacting the office, he said, ask various questions from what a Non-commissioned Officer Evaluation Report is to what the Traumatic Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance covers.

The questions “run the gamut from anything you could possibly think about in

the human resources environment. These are people calling from throughout the whole Army community,” he said.

As part of the BRAC move, Hills said his office expected an increase in workload. His personnel started preparing for the influx two years ago when they began researching to create a frequently asked questions section on their website.

Although Hills encourages Soldiers to go to their chain of command with ques-

“WE’RE HERE TO HELP, AND SOLDIERS SHOULDN’T BE AFRAID TO CALL OR E-MAIL US. WE’RE ALWAYS HERE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS. IF THERE IS EVER A DOUBT, CALL OR E-MAIL.”

— Sgt. Maj. Verdell Brown



Photo by Master Sgt. Christina Steiner

Command Sgt. Maj. John F. Gathers, left, assists HRC commander Maj. Gen. Sean J. Byrne, right, at the uncasing of the colors ceremony at the Human Resource Center of Excellence at Fort Knox, Ky., on June 25, 2010.

tions, he said his office’s goal is to assist Soldiers.

“The main thing we provide is inquiry resolution. If you have a human resources-related inquiry, we’re the agency that can get you an answer – in some form or another,” he said. “My commitment to the NCOs is to make sure other folks are doing their jobs, which is getting Soldiers the answers they need within 72 hours.”

HERE TO HELP

Another person who stays busy helping Soldiers is Sgt. Maj. Verdell Brown,

the Evaluations, Selections and Promotions Division policy manager.

Brown is in charge of policy waivers in Soldiers’ records. Her office handles all evaluation reports in the Army, except the National Guard’s NCOERs.

“We’re here to help, and Soldiers shouldn’t be afraid to call or e-mail us. We’re always here to answer any questions. If there is ever a doubt, call or e-mail,” she said. Soldiers “can go to our website. We have training aids, which are broken down to the basics with slide shows and any training that they need. If

it's not there, they can call and we can get it to them."

Soldiers, she said, shouldn't have a problem filling out evaluation reports if they follow instructions and use the site's wizard.

"If they use the wizard, they will not have a problem," she said. "This is going to break it down ... Follow the wizard; it will take you right where you need to be."

The command's move to the same location, she said, will benefit Soldiers because they have a one-stop place for questions regarding their employment.

Sgt. Maj. Debra Sturdivant, the Evaluations, Selections and Promotions

because a lot of times, people look at the reserve side as not being part of us (the active side). But they are. They are just like us, we are the same. What we have been saying for a long time, we'll put into action by all of us being together. Everybody being in one location will help because there are a lot of things that the active-duty side didn't know about the reserve side and vice versa."

Sturdivant is in charge of promotions for enlisted Soldiers. After a Soldier has been identified as being promotable, her office takes it from there.

Once Soldiers go to their promotion boards, she said their names are placed on a list and her office deals with cut-off

offices located in the center of excellence are those headed by Sgt. Maj. Javis T. Griffin, the Soldiers Programs and Services Division sergeant major. The offices deal with awards and decorations; combat-related special compensations; GI Bills; and incentive pay, special-duty pay and bonuses.

"My division is over just about every service and program that a Soldier needs," she said. "That's basically what we do. We keep these programs updated; make sure the information gets out to the field. We make sure information gets into the right hands, so these junior leaders, NCOs and senior people can take care of their Soldiers; so they are knowledgeable about the changes, updates and everything they need to know."

Sgt. 1st Class Arthur Reynoso, the Special Operations Aviation Branch enlisted manager under the U.S. Army Special Management Division, said he assigns personnel to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment based on the regiment's needs. He works alongside other branch managers.

Reynoso manages more than 2,300 enlisted Soldiers. One of the unique characteristics of his regiment, he said, is that it is located in three different locations: Fort Campbell, Ky., Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., and Fort Lewis, Wash.

When it comes to the branch managers he works with, he said they try to comply with Soldiers' preferences, but they must take the Army's needs into account.

The assignments are "not always what the Soldiers want but at the end of the day, there is a bigger piece," he said. "Maybe the servicemember may not like what he or she sees at the 50-meter target, but he doesn't see that 300-meter target. That branch manager is already determining what each Soldier's 300-meter target is. ... The Soldier is only seeing from a short distance what is going on, but the branch manager is already determining from a distance what the goal is."

For more information visit <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/index.asp>.

To contact Stephanie Sanchez, e-mail stephanie.s.sanchez@us.army.mil.



Photo by Gerry Lynn, Army Corps of Engineers

Aerial photo of the Human Resource Center of Excellence. As a result of the base realignment and closure process, the Human Resources Command moved into the new Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Maude Complex at Fort Knox, Ky., last summer.

Division enlisted promotions branch manager, said consolidating the command at one site shows that this is "an Army of one."

"We've been saying that for a long time. Now we truly are when you're looking at the HRC," she said. "We have branches with different components here in one location. That's a great thing

scores and questions or concerns pertaining to promotions. She said her office interacts with Soldiers worldwide, from Afghanistan to New York.

"Say for instance, they have a document or something that is in question by the S-1. We deal with those questions, audits and promotions," she said.

Perhaps some of the most interesting



'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Overturned

Pentagon report outlines implementation

By Cindy Ramirez

'Long overdue'

IN WHAT HAS BEEN HAILED A CIVIL RIGHTS MILESTONE, THE "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL" LAW WAS OVERTURNED IN THE 11TH HOUR OF THE 111TH CONGRESS IN DECEMBER.

"It's not just about gay rights; it's about civil rights," said Darren Manzella, a former Army sergeant who was honorably discharged under DADT in 2008 after having served six years. "This was long overdue, and I'm very happy to see repeal is finally here. Now, persons who want to serve their country, no matter their sexual orientation, have the right and privilege to do so without having to hide who they are."

The law that repeals the 17-year ban on gays serving openly in the military, however, may take months to implement.

In fact, "don't ask, don't tell" remains in effect until the president, the secretary of defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff certify that the military is prepared to make the change. The law would take effect 60 days after that certification.

"For a long time, there was great emphasis on the fear of the unknown instead on how to make this happen," said Manzella, a member of the speakers bureau of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a nonprofit watchdog and policy organization that has long challenged the constitutionality of DADT. More than 12,500 service members have been dismissed under "don't ask, don't tell" since 2003.

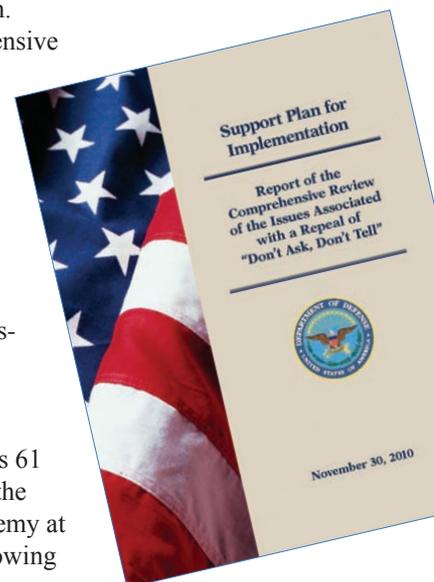
"We're past that now," Manzella said in a phone interview from New York, where he now serves as assistant director of advancement at the University of Rochester. "The report, I think, outlines how to make it happen. Now, it just needs to get done."

Work has already begun, as a Pentagon study that shows strong support for repeal outlines the process and numerous recommendations for implementation.

The "Report of the Comprehensive Review of the Issues Associated with a Repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'" and its accompanying "Support Plan for Implementation" were released by the Pentagon Nov. 30.

The reports point to three values as the keys to successful implementation: leadership, professionalism and respect.

Though they had mixed feelings about homosexuality, several noncommissioned officers in Class 61 of the Sergeants Major Course at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, agreed that following



military code and regulations in a professional manner was their duty as Soldiers and leaders.

“When I put this uniform on, I am Army,” said Master Sgt. George Bullard. “We have these rules and regulations, and I follow them as long as I have this uniform on. I will lead according to those rules. ... Regardless of whether you like it or not, the rules are there for us to follow and govern our Soldiers by.”

Others said they believe the impact of overturning DADT may be too much to handle.

“For someone to serve openly, I think, will cause more problems,” said Master Sgt. Robert Navarro, expressing concerns over the additional “stressors” on leaders who “already have too much on their plates.”

Navarro said though he’s not comfortable with having gays serve openly in the military, he’s glad implementation will not be done “overnight.”

Regardless of the time frame, said Master Sgt. John Woodson, implementing the changes is “going to be overwhelming. It will get out of control before it gets better.”

Woodson said he has mixed feelings about the repeal. More than just changing policies, he said, repeal is going to “force people to change their morals and values. It’s going to be a culture change, and change doesn’t come overnight.”

SURVEY SAYS

The survey of active-duty and reserve component service members and military spouses was not a poll of whether to overturn DADT, the report stresses.

Instead, the working group of 49 military members and 19 civilians was charged with assessing the impact of repeal by addressing concerns and outlining a plan for implementation should repeal occur. In addition to the survey, the review team held 140 focus groups and forums at more than 50 military installations.

Overall, about 70 percent of service members surveyed said they thought having a gay service member in their unit would have “mixed, no or a positive effect” on the unit’s ability to work together and get the job done.

About 69 percent of those surveyed responded they have at some point served alongside a gay person, and 92 percent of those indicated their unit’s ability to work together was “very good, good, or neither good nor poor.”

A majority of military leaders endorsed the report, though some, including Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr., expressed concerns it would be a distraction to change the policy during wartime. Moreso, many worried that in the hands of the courts, the services would not have been given time to effectively implement the changes.

“IT’S NOT JUST ABOUT
GAY RIGHTS; IT’S ABOUT
CIVIL RIGHTS.”

Darren Manzella

FROM CONGRESS TO THE COURTS

Even before the Pentagon report was released, the DADT law had become a political hot potato, as a full-fledged repeal required an act of Congress. Repeal

was part of an overall annual Pentagon policy bill that contained various spending provisions — including one for the repeal of DADT.

The bill failed to pass, as it was locked in political play. As a last-ditch effort, both the House and the Senate introduced stand-alone bills that provided for the repeal of DADT. In the end, repeal was approved by the House with a 250-175 vote, while the Senate voted 65-31 in its favor.

Before its run in the legislature, repeal of DADT had been entangled in the court system.

In September, a federal judge ruled that the law violated the equal protection and First Amendment rights of service members, and on Oct. 12, ordered the military to stop enforcing “don’t ask, don’t tell.”

After a month of rulings and appeals, the U.S. Supreme Court on Nov. 12 upheld the decision of a panel of three judges of the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco,

which issued an order allowing the Pentagon to continue enforcing the law. Under the last ruling, the existing “don’t ask, don’t tell” law would have remained in effect until February 2011. At that time, the Ninth Circuit Court would have heard a full appeal asking the federal judge’s order be reinstated.

Manzella, whose discharge papers state “homosexual conduct admission” as the reason for his dismissal, said he was often taken aback by the DADT law.

“These are people like me, willing to lay down their lives for their country, and they were being shown the door,” said Manzella, whose dismissal came after he talked about being a gay man in combat in a *60 Minutes* interview during his tour in Iraq in 2007.

IMPLEMENTATION

The report recommends three stages for the implementation: pre-repeal, implementation and sustainment.

The first two stages focus on the review and revision of policies and regulations affected by the repeal, including changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. They also emphasize the need for education and training, as well as leadership communications to create awareness of the changes.

“With a continued and sustained commitment to core values of leadership, professionalism and respect for all, I am convinced that the U.S. military can successfully accommodate and implement this change,” defense secretary Robert M. Gates said.

NCOs said training and education must be more than catch phrases and slide presentations.

“FOR SOMEONE TO SERVE
OPENLY, I THINK, WILL CAUSE
MORE PROBLEMS.”

Master Sgt. Robert Navarro

“They cannot just give us a PowerPoint presentation and tell us to go out there and show it to our Soldiers,” said Master Sgt. William Funcheon, a Sergeants Major Course student. “It’s going to have to be intense, detailed, on what to expect, how to deal with it. We’ll have to know what’s changed, and be given time to understand the changes so we can enforce them correctly.”

Key among numerous policies and regulations that will require revision is separations from the service, which eliminate homosexual conduct as a basis of separation.

Other policies that will be revised are re-accessions, which will permit qualified service members previously separated on the basis of homosexual conduct to be considered for re-entry; and benefits, which carry a slew of policy recommendations.

In part, the report recommends that the DoD not create a new status of “committed relationship,” which means same-sex couples will not be eligible for benefits currently allotted only to married couples consisting of a man and a woman.

All service members not in a federally recognized marriage should be treated as “single” for benefits purposes, the study recommends. Same-sex marriage is recognized in five states and in Washington, D.C., but not by the federal government.

Although service members can now designate any beneficiary for some benefits and notification purposes, the study recommends services review additional benefits that may give them “the discretion to designate a person or persons of their choosing as a beneficiary.”

“The issue of benefits eligibility is very complex and is part of the ongoing national political and legal debate concerning same-sex relationships and gay marriage,” the report states.

Certain articles in the UCMJ that reference sodomy will have to be deleted or otherwise revised, as would those involving “sexual conduct or inappropriate relationships to ensure sexual orientation-neutral application.” For example, the offense of adultery defined in the *Manual for Courts-Martial* should be revised to apply “equally to heterosexual and homosexual sex that is engaged in by or with a married person,” according to the report.

The study also addresses standards of conduct, moral and religious concerns, equal opportunity and harassment, accessions and recruiting, medical policies, and privacy and cohabitation. The report recommends against the creation of separate bathroom and shower facilities (think “separate but equal”) that would “wrongly isolate and stigmatize some service members.”

However, it also recommends commanders retain authority to alter berthing or billeting assignments to accommodate privacy concerns on a case-by-case basis.

REMAINING ‘CIRCUMSPECT’

Some gay-rights organizations, including the *Advocate* magazine, have questioned whether the study itself is “homophobic by nature,” especially given questions about privacy concerns — such as the use of bathrooms and showers.

In a December press conference, Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell reiterated that the intent of the survey was not “itself a referendum on whether or not there should be a repeal of DADT.” Additionally, he said, the mandate of the working group was to study “how you go about implementing a repeal if it were to take place,” including concerns voiced by service members about the use of such facilities.

At the request of the Armed Services Committee, Rand Corp., a nonprofit research and analysis institution, conducted a study titled “Sexual Orientation and U.S. Military Personnel Policy.” An update to its original 1993 study, the 2010 version was intended to provide insight to the working group that

headed the DADT report, the Rand study overview states.

Rand worked with organizations that support gay service members and veterans, which were asked to encourage “military personnel who were directly affected by the DADT” to participate in an anonymous online survey. In all, 268 people responded, 208 of them indicating they were gay, lesbian or bisexual.

In a summary of its findings, Rand reported the vast majority of gay respondents “indicated they would remain circumspect in how they make their [sexual] orientation known to other service members.”

“I think, unfortunately, that there’s a stereotype that suddenly there’s going to be an outpouring of people coming out of the closet ... and that it’s going to be flamboyant and disruptive. I think that’s furthest from reality,” Manzella said.

“It’s more about not having to lie about who you had dinner with or not being scared and paranoid about being ‘found out.’”

The survey also asked respondents what factors would make them more comfortable about disclosing their sexual orientation. Ninety percent said “commitment by leadership” to implement policy change was “extremely important.”

Enforcing a zero tolerance policy on harassment was also of extreme importance for about 78 percent of the respondents.

Eighty percent of the respondents were male, which may account for a notable difference when participants were asked if they were concerned about harassment. Overall, 19 percent of respondents thought lesbians who are open about their sexual orientation would be harassed by other military personnel, compared with 37 percent who thought gay men would encounter harassment.

Manzella said that’s where strong leadership comes into play.

“I HAVE COMPLETE FAITH
IN THE MILITARY
LEADERSHIP.”

Darren Manzella

“WE HAVE THESE RULES AND
REGULATIONS, AND I FOLLOW
THEM AS LONG AS I HAVE THIS
UNIFORM ON. I WILL LEAD
ACCORDING TO THOSE RULES.”

Master Sgt. George Bullard

“I have complete faith in the military leadership,” he said. “You follow orders; you enforce orders. If someone is breaking the law, the policies and regulations, you deal with it appropriately and move on to accomplish the mission.”

Overall, 29 percent of the Rand survey respondents indicated they were in the Army, with 25 percent of those in the lower NCO ranks.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Looking ahead, the impact on recruitment and retention in the military was also considered.

To that end, the Rand study looked at other countries that allow gays to serve in the military. More than 20 NATO countries presently allow gay people to serve in their militaries, including the United Kingdom and France. Additionally, so do Russia and Israel. China does not.

The Pentagon’s study showed that nearly half the service members surveyed said DADT repeal would have no effect on their willingness to recommend military service to a family member or close friend. Some 27 percent indicated it would have a negative effect on their recommendation, while 6 percent said it would have a positive effect.

Rand surveyed young adults about the likelihood that they would enlist, asking potential recruits whether repeal would impact their decision to join the military. Results show there would be a decline in recruits of 4 to 7 percent.

To analyze the impact of repeal on retention, Rand used data from the Survey of Military Personnel conducted for the Pentagon’s study. The group of active-duty personnel most likely to leave the military because a repeal of DADT accounts for less than 6 percent of all personnel, Rand reported. Those individuals said they planned to stay, but considered the repeal more important than other factors affecting their retention decision.

“Estimates based on the best available data suggest that negative effects would be well within the range of past drops in recruiting and retention and would therefore be manageable,” the Rand report states.

Some NCOs said regardless of surveys, opinions and beliefs, laws must be followed.

“We as leaders have to accept it and follow the rules,” said Master Sgt. Lisa Williams. “We have to be professionals no matter what. We have to treat everyone equally — like Soldiers, period.”

To contact Cindy Ramirez, e-mail cindy.ramirez1@us.army.mil

‘DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL’

The “don’t ask, don’t tell” law was overturned by Congress in December but remains in effect until an implementation plan is certified by the president.

“No longer will our nation be denied the service of thousands of patriotic Americans forced to leave the military, despite years of exemplary performance, because they happen to be gay,” President Barack Obama said. “And no longer will thousands more be asked to live a lie in order to serve the country they love.”

The Pentagon study, “Report of the Comprehensive Review of the Issues Associated with a Repeal of ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’” and its accompanying “Support Plan for Implementation,” set a framework for implementation.

KEY IMPLEMENTATION MESSAGE

LEADERSHIP. The clear message is “leadership matters most.” Leaders at all levels of the chain of command set the example for members in the unit and must be fully committed to DoD policy to sustain unit effectiveness, readiness and cohesion.

PROFESSIONALISM. Leaders must emphasize service members’ fundamental professional obligations and the oath to support and defend the Constitution that is at the core of their military service.

RESPECT. Unit strength depends on the strength of each member. We achieve that strength by treating each member with respect.

IMPLEMENTATION

The report recommends three stages for implementation: pre-repeal, implementation and sustainment. The implementation stage includes:

- A. Update and Publish Policies**
- B. Communicate the Change**
- C. Provide Training**
- D. Emphasize Key Implementation Message**

The report also includes a list of policies that would require updating and gives recommendations for revision, a Q-and-A section, and vignettes that provide leaders with training scenarios.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL REPORT AT:
<http://www.defense.gov/dadt>

“WE HAVE TO BE
PROFESSIONALS
NO MATTER WHAT.
WE HAVE TO TREAT
EVERYONE
EQUALLY —
LIKE **SOLDIERS,**
PERIOD.”

Master Sgt. Lisa Williams



More than an NCO — *a true hero*

By Angela Simental

Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald T. Riling, command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Forces Command, keeps his boots firmly on the ground and focuses on his Soldiers.

Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald T. Riling, the 16th command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Forces Command has, been hailed a hero. He certainly doesn't like that description – he says he is just a noncommissioned officer.

In 2004, Riling earned a Silver Star, the third-highest military decoration, for his actions during a fierce fight in the city of Ramadi, Iraq.

Riling was serving as the command sergeant major of the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division in 2004 when he was notified that the Marines attached to his brigade were under heavy enemy fire. He immediately prepared his Soldiers for combat.

"We quickly formed a team and went to help them," Riling recounts. "We lost 12 great Americans that day. I don't feel I deserved the medal more than anyone who fought that day. I was just doing my job as the others were. I don't wear the award for me; I wear it for the ones who gave their lives and fought so hard in combat for our country – those are the real heroes in my eyes.

To this day, I still think of them. I will never forget what they did for our great nation."

According to the award citation, "After Command Sgt. Maj. Riling's team evacuated the injured Marines and recovered a Marine squad leader's body, another Marine platoon in the area came under attack by insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades. Command Sgt. Maj. Riling directed two Bradley fighting vehicles from the brigade's reserve into the fight to squelch the attacks."

This experience made Riling reflect on life's meaning and the things he values.

"It made me realize that life is so precious and that, in a matter of seconds, it can be gone," he said. "It also made me recognize how lucky I was; I could have been one of the 12 we lost. I was very humbled when I received this award. I can't talk about it without getting choked up."

Besides the Silver Star, Riling has also received other recognitions, including a Legion of Merit, Bronze Star and Meritorious



Courtesy photo

Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald T. Riling, left, FORSCOM's command sergeant major, speaks with an Iraqi translator during his second deployment to Iraq in 2005.

Service Medal, among others. But, as he said, his family is his greatest achievement and support system.

"I'm happily married to my lovely wife Melinda, who is my pride and joy and best friend. She is the person who helps me make good decisions. I appreciate the sacrifices she makes for me," said the father of five. "My parents are also a big part of my life. They have always supported and helped me get through tough times. They raised me with discipline and love at the same time."

Life as a Soldier

Riling said he proudly wears his uniform. Every patch and decoration is a reminder of the NCOs who have helped him become a better Soldier, and of the great men and women he serves with.

"I'm proud I have been able to serve with some of the finest Soldiers and leaders in the world in peace and in combat," Riling said. "I'm proud I have been afforded the opportunity to serve in

some great assignments."

A Michigan native, Riling knew from a very young age he wanted to serve his country and committed to the Army in 1983 at the age of 18.

"I decided to join the Army so I could serve, defend and protect my country," he said proudly. "I also joined so I would be able to see different parts of the world, meet new people and be a member of the team that serves our great nation."

Riling served in Haiti in 1994, in Korea from 1997 to 1998 and two tours in Iraq in 2003 and 2005.

Throughout Riling's 28-year military career, there have been NCOs who have guided, mentored and influenced him, showing him the best examples of NCO leadership, he said.

"I can't name them all. Those who really made an impact on me, have always given me great advice and have been there when I needed them are Command Sgts. Maj. Joe Gainey, Carl Christian, Jeff Mellinger, Ralph Beam, Cory McCarty, Neil Ciotola, Mark Ripka, Joe Allen, Marvin Hill, Iuni Savusa, Rafael Ramos,



in all matters pertaining to the command's more than 278,000 active-duty Soldiers.

"FORSCOM is a huge command," Riling said. "It's hard to get the word out to everyone. Yes, you can always send e-mails, but it's not the same as getting out on the ground and talking to leaders and Soldiers. You have to get out and see Soldiers and units and try to keep them informed the best way you can. I personally like to look the NCO's and Soldiers in the eye and tell them that we are doing our best to support them in the fight. We want to help them and make a difference"

About education

The best advice Riling received from his mentors was to pursue higher education, he said.

"I'm proud I listened to my mentors when they told me to go get an education and not wait until it's too late," he said. Riling earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Touro University in 2006. "Education is very important.

Sometimes, we NCOs say we're too busy, or we find excuses not to do it."

His military education included Air Assault, Airborne, Jumpmaster, Pathfinder and Ranger schools.

"I went to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy in 1999 – Class 50," he said. "I had a wonderful experience, and met many wonderful leaders with whom I still keep in touch. When you go to a school like this, you form a bond with the brothers and sisters you serve with, and you never forget them. There is a bond that was formed, and it will never be broken."

Before attending USASMA, Riling attended Drill Sergeant School in 1990 as a young sergeant first class.

"I really learned a lot about training Soldiers and becoming a better leader. It's tough duty and long hours, but it is very rewarding when you see Soldiers graduate after 10 weeks of basic training. It makes you feel good when you know you were part of their success, helping them become Soldiers," he said. "I have had Soldiers come up to me and say, 'You were my drill sergeant.' Some of them are now wearing sergeant major rank – amazing!"

Although Drill Sergeant School proved to be one of his most rewarding experiences, Ranger School was the toughest and most demanding and is, hence, his favorite.

"In Ranger School, you learn a lot about yourself and what you need to accomplish the mission. You learn that quitting is not an option," he explained. "I was glad I went when I was a young staff sergeant in the 82nd Airborne Division. This school helped me become a better leader and taught me a whole lot. This is a school you never forget, and you are proud



Top: Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald T. Riling, left, while on tour in Iraq in 2006 with Gen. James D. Thurman, then major general of U.S. Army Forces Command. Thurman selected Riling to serve as the FORSCOM top enlisted Soldier in 2009. Courtesy photo

Left: Riling stands next to his awards and deployment memorabilia in his office at Fort McPherson, Ga. Photo by Paul D. Prince, FORSCOM Public Affairs

Joe Spain, Pat Castin, Rick Hearn and Sgts. Maj. of the Army Robert Hall, Jack Tilley and Ken Preston," he said. "These are the guys who have always steered me in the right direction. Many of them have already retired. I'm very respectful and thank all of them for their friendship and mentorship."

Riling became the top-ranking NCO at FORSCOM on July 12, 2010, serving as the commanding general's personal advisor

when you graduate.”

Wise advice

From the NCOs Riling looks up to, he has learned the only way to lead Soldiers is to set a good example.

“Be fair to your Soldiers, but be hard when needed,” he said. “Show Soldiers how to get where you’re at and how they can better themselves in the future. This requires a lot of teaching, coaching and mentoring.”

He advises NCOs to “take the time to listen to others. Take care of your Soldiers, and they will take care of you. Get a good education, and make the best of the Army.”

Riling believes loyalty, teamwork and good communication are the Army’s driving forces.

“You have to be honest and tell the truth to people. Loyalty goes a long way,” he said. “Also, having communication from the



Photo by Paul D. Prince, FORSCOM Public Affairs

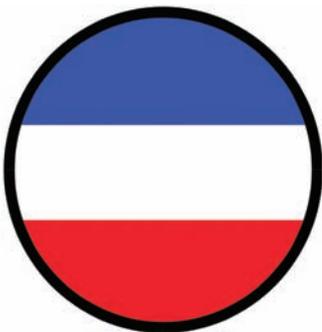
Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald T. Riling, a Silver Star recipient, has been the top enlisted NCO at FORSCOM since July 2010.

senior levels down to the junior levels is very important. Units must communicate to be effective, and leaders have to listen to the concerns of their Soldiers and families.”

He also explained that senior NCOs have to support their commander 100 percent in order to create a good command climate and solve important issues.

“You have to be the eyes and ears for the commander and make good recommendations so good decisions can be made for the entire unit. This way, all Soldiers will benefit,” he said. “Being flexible is also very important. Things will change from time to time, and you must adapt. Work well with others, even if you have disagreements on certain things – always try to work it out, and be professional. Lastly, be yourself.”

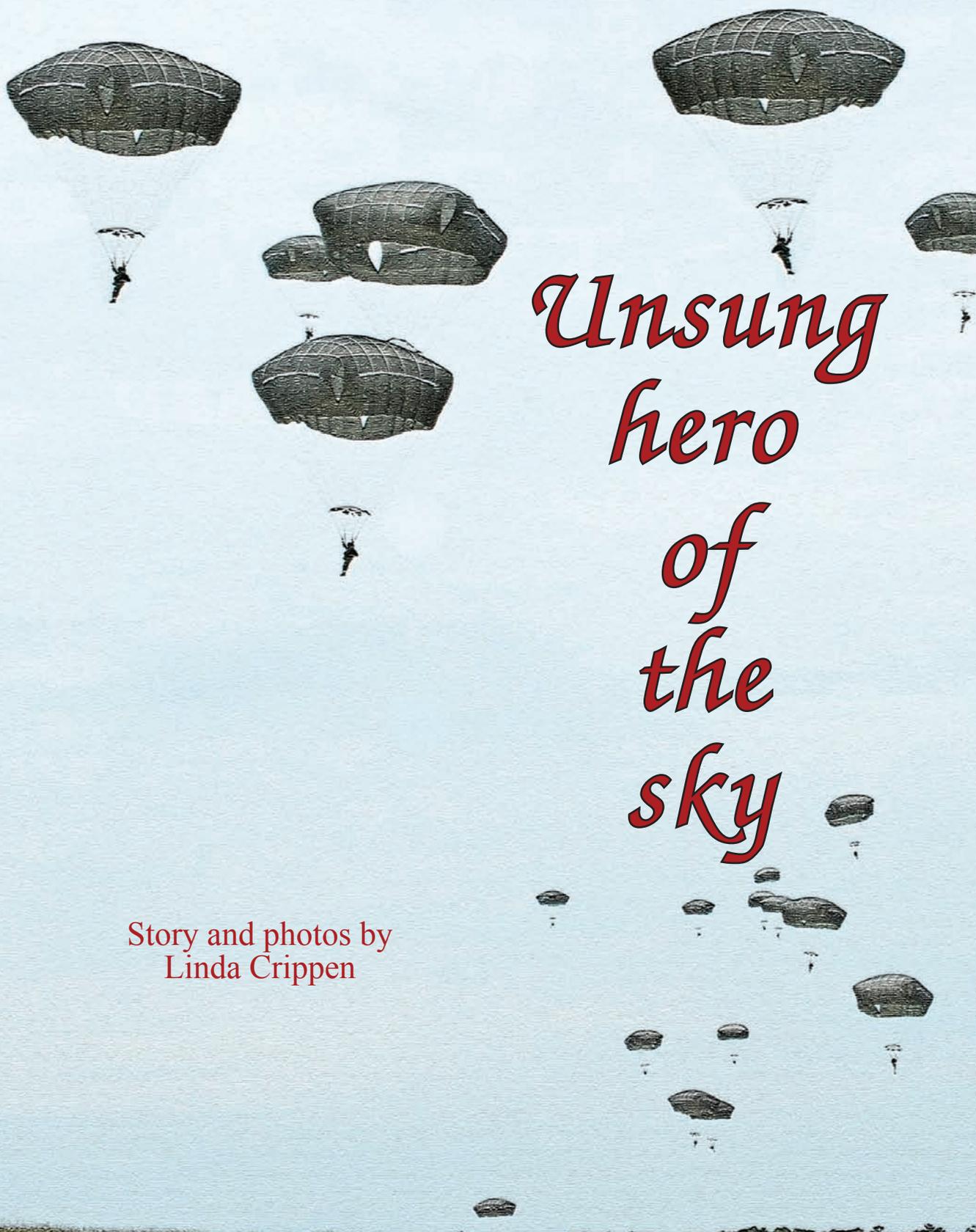
To contact Angela Simental, e-mail angela.simental@us.army.mil.



Facts about FORSCOM

- U.S. Army Forces Command is the largest command in the Army.
- Currently headquartered at Fort McPherson, Ga., became active in 1973, but will relocate to Fort Bragg, N.C., this year as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission changes.
- FORSCOM’s mission is to train, mobilize and deploy ground forces to meet the nation’s operational requirements.
- Responsible for mobilizing and training more than 278,000 active duty and 570,000 reserve Soldiers.
- Today, almost 200,000 FORSCOM Soldiers are deployed in 120 countries.
- 8,200 FORSCOM Soldiers provide protection within U.S. borders.
- Soldiers are primarily trained for warfighting missions, but are also prepared to quickly respond to America’s allies in danger or provide aid after natural disasters.
- Units also protect key national assets against terrorism.
- FORSCOM’s major units are spread throughout 15 installations.

Sergeant Airborne



Unsung hero of the sky

Story and photos by
Linda Crippen

“Jumpers ... Hit it! Check canopy!”

Although the written word cannot convey the inflection, pitch or volume of the commands shouted by Sergeants Airborne, these exercises are all too familiar at Fort Benning's Basic Airborne Course in Georgia. Sergeants Airborne, also known as Black Hats, drill these procedures into BAC students until the future paratroopers' reactions are second nature.

Ask any Soldier who has been stationed at Fort Benning. There's something nostalgic, something evocative about those jump towers that define the skyline of the post. The very sight of them has moved many a Soldier to enlist in jump school, while scores of students have used them as motivation to complete timed runs during jump school PT. And just as the towers are a genuine fixture of airborne school, the U.S. Army's Basic Airborne Course is the school that trains every military member who wears the coveted jump wings.

First Sgt. George Box, branch chief for Jumpmaster and Pathfinder Schools, calls BAC the world's mecca for basic airborne training. “When I first came to Fort Benning to the 29th Infantry Regiment, I always saw the towers and students ... I wanted to go airborne. After about a month, I saw the sergeant major of the 507th in the PX and chased him down. I told him I wanted to come to the 507th, and a few phone calls and e-mails later, they got me over here.”

Box said that the reason BAC is so special is because it's the starting place for everyone who is airborne: Delta Force; SEALs; Rangers; paratroopers at Fort Bragg, N.C.; all the sister services; and some international forces. “They all start here,” he exclaimed with some nostalgia. “The saying is that this [the 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment] is every paratrooper's regiment. Doesn't matter where you go; this is where it all starts.”

“Eubanks Field, Fryar Drop Zone, those 250-foot towers ... they define Fort Benning, Ga.,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Chip Mezzaline, 1/507th PIR command sergeant major. “Those towers are the first thing people see when they enter post.”

Reverence for the airborne lineage is something BAC ingrains into its students. “Just the other day, we were out on Eubanks Field,” Mezzaline explained. “There are a lot of memorials out there. I jogged up on a platoon, and Sergeant Airborne stopped the formation so we could discuss some history. That's the kind of thing that's inculcated into those students. You know, the Airborne Walk Memorial itself, which was dedicated in 1986, holds a huge piece of our history from the last 20 years.”

The memorials and historical significance of airborne paratroopers goes well beyond the tangible pieces one finds throughout Fort Benning. The bonds and camaraderie shared within the airborne community past and present are best depicted by a deep-running respect and pride for a brotherhood that lasts a lifetime.

The Basic Airborne Course trains around 18,000 people a year, so imagine how many people have gone through the school since it was officially organized in May 1942. Mezzaline said he receives an inordinate number of phone calls from paratroopers past and present with all sorts of requests.

A recent call that stands out was from a retired major, a Vietnam War veteran, who had participated in Operation Junc-

tion City, the largest airborne operation in Vietnam since World War II. The major was trying to locate a photo of his airborne class. Mezzaline said that, ironically, two months prior, another gentleman who had been in the same BAC class as well as Operation Junction City had stopped by the battalion.

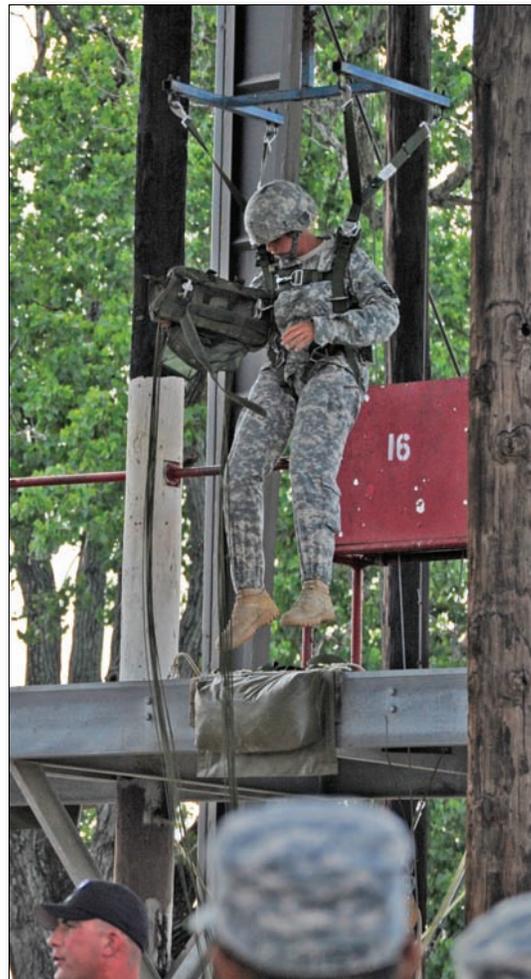
“I was able to put these two veterans in touch with each other,” he explained. “The retired major later told me, ‘I would have never been as successful as I am today if it weren't for my Sergeant Airborne. I had doubts about what I was capable of doing, but Sergeant Airborne pulled me aside and straightened me out. I went on to complete airborne school and be successful in life,’ the major said. And that's just one of the many stories about the folks who come through here,” Mezzaline added.

PERFECTLY SAFE

When it comes to performing their jobs, the instructors at the Basic Airborne Course have no other choice — they must be perfect. Risk assessment is a way of life built into their daily routines, and the magnitude of their responsibilities can sometimes weigh quite heavily.

“On a day-to-day basis, airborne school is pretty dangerous,” said Sgt. 1st Class Brian Ross, master trainer for the ground branch at BAC. “The jumpmasters are getting the jumpers out of the bird without any static line injuries; that's a tremendous responsibility for so many Soldiers' safety, and it can really be nerve-racking at times. But, that's the job.”

Ross, who is in charge of all training apparatuses and ensur-



Left: Sgt. 1st Class Chastity Wassman, airborne instructor, demonstrates the appropriate procedures to take during a tree landing.

Opposite Page: Basic Airborne Course students make one of their five qualification jumps during their last week of the course in May 2010. As pictured here, at least one jump is made with the new T-11 parachute.



Staff Sgt. Benjamin Thurman, an airborne instructor, marches Basic Airborne Course students into the training area for the last afternoon of training during week two of the course in May 2010. During week three, jump week, students make their five qualification jumps to earn their wings.

ing maintenance is up to date, developed a checklist for the 250-foot tower so his NCOs wouldn't forget any details when conducting inspections. "We must constantly and continuously conduct risk assessment in everything we do," he added.

"Perfection is the standard," said Staff Sgt. Rommel Hurtado, who used to be an instructor at BAC but now teaches at Jumpmaster School. "When you're on the aircraft, you've got all these scared airborne students who are thinking, 'Oh my God, is my parachute going to open? Am I going to be all right after this?'"

Hurtado, who is the current reigning Black Hat of the Year, explained that confidence is a key ingredient in the aircraft. "Students need to know everything is going to be just fine. When you're in that door at 1,500 feet or whatever height, you need to make sure you don't miss any detail, so the students can see that this jumpmaster is a professional and will follow his word."

It's the heavy burden of responsibility for jumper safety that deters many NCOs from wanting to be a jumpmaster or airborne instructor. Many responsibilities of a jumpmaster and airborne instructor are the same. In the aircraft, they are exactly the same.

Among the many responsibilities in the aircraft are ensuring all jumpers are properly hooked up to the static line cable, the static line is properly routed over the correct shoulder, good rip cord awareness, safe static line handoff to the safety jumpmaster, eye-to-eye contact, proper door exit and tight body position.

"The last person[s] those jumpers see before going out the door [are] the jumpmaster and the safety, who is also a jumpmaster — both Sergeants Airborne," Mezzaline said. "I can't think of anything better that instills confidence. Those Sergeants Airborne have the weight of the world on their shoulders, and I just can't tell them enough how proud I am of them for all they do."

PINNACLE FOR PARATROOPERS

There are several airborne proficiency levels a paratrooper can achieve: basic, senior and master. Paratroopers can also make themselves more proficient and valuable to the Army by attending Jumpmaster School and Pathfinder School. Yet, one of the true career pinnacles within the airborne community is being a Black Hat — a Sergeant Airborne — at the Basic Airborne Course, teaching young Soldiers how to properly jump out of a "perfectly good aircraft," as the saying goes.

Not everyone is cut out to be a Black Hat, Hurtado explained. Being a jump school instructor requires impeccable memorization skills, as formal and informal blocks of instruction necessitate, again, perfection. An additional challenge is making sure that what you preach is exactly what you do. "There is no room for double standards; never 'do as I say, not as I do.' What you teach must be exactly what's in the manual ... what's right," he said, adding that what you do in the aircraft must be perfect.

Jump school is unique in that for many of its students — about 75 percent — it is the first time they will come in contact with an NCO. Most of the students are cadets and officers: cadets from ROTC, a military academy, Officer Candidate School, new lieutenants, etc. And the majority of the enlisted Soldiers are fresh out of Advanced Individual Training.

"It's really important that the first interaction those young officers and Soldiers get, after their AIT drill sergeants, is with professional NCOs. When they look at that Black Hat, it should be what right looks like in the Army," Sgt. 1st Class Robert Contratto, chief instructor at BAC emphasized.

BAC students are assigned to one instructor for the three-week course. Typically, instructors are assigned 30 to 40 students each class cycle, and on many occasions, instructors speak in front of groups as large as 500. BAC senior enlisted all agree that teaching at jump school is a fantastic opportunity for junior NCOs to develop leadership skills.

"There's no place else in the Army where a sergeant or staff sergeant can expect to supervise 30 personnel," Contratto points out. "A young sergeant who comes here is going to learn a lot of leadership skills, how to deal with officers and how to negotiate that officer-NCO relationship. They'll develop that under our scope of supervision, so when they leave here after a few years and go back to the force with the eight men in the rifle squads, that will be easy," he said.

The Army benefits from those who serve as Black Hats as well. Contratto explained that they focus on airborne operations and teaching the students to be paratroopers, unlike the general force, which has to "isolate all the battle drills and warrior tasks with their Soldiers. When we send that instructor back out to the force, we're giving that new unit a subject-matter expert on airborne operations."

Contratto said he can't praise the instructors enough for all their hard work. "They're out there from 0515 until 1800 at night, trying to get everyone to graduate the course. That's their goal. No one here is trying to protect the badge. We want to see all the students graduate, which is why the instructors are out there training in 100 degrees, the pouring rain, as well as the freezing temps

and high winds. They are the unsung heroes of the course here.”

BLACK HAT OF THE YEAR

Every October, the 507th PIR holds a competition with a coveted title that all Black Hats chase after — Black Hat of the Year. The winner is considered to be the top performer and standards-setter. The competition is spread out over the course of one month and consists of many events, including giving classes, conducting jumpmaster personnel inspection sequences, oral exams, written exams, physical fitness, practical work within the aircraft, rigging equipment and a mystery event. This year, the mystery event was a mock board conducted by senior master trainers and the command sergeant major.

Hurtado, the current 2010-2011 Black Hat of the Year, said winning the competition was a milestone in his military career. He had participated the year prior but was disappointed in his performance. He said he returned this year with a different attitude, and his experience paid off. His final score was 949 points out of a possible 1,000. He also alluded to the fact that most of the winners are instructors at BAC, which is not surprising. Previous winners include Ross (2008-09) and Box (2007-08), and both maintain the same reverence for the title.

Box, whose reign was cut short by a deployment to support the war on terrorism, said being Black Hat of the Year has been the pinnacle of his career. “Just being at BAC has been the zenith. Being part of this battalion, this unit, I love it. I’ve been to Italy twice, and being in the 507th is the best assignment I’ve ever had. I was at Bragg; I was a drill sergeant. Nothing compares,” he admitted.

Ross, who is currently on orders to Fort Carson, Colo., described winning the Black Hat of the Year competition as doing your job better than the other guy — on that day. “I don’t feel I’m any better than the other Sergeants Airborne out there. But that day, I just happened to be so. Everyone has their good and bad days, so it boils down to the day of the competition.”

The mystery event for Ross’ year involved climbing the 250-foot tower. The quickest person to scale it and come down would win the event, and Ross nailed it. He said that year’s mystery event also included a written portion consisting of a 120-question test about the battalion standard operating procedures.

Perhaps even more prestigious than holding the title of Black Hat of the Year is the opportunity to slide into an instructor spot at Jumpmaster School or a master trainer slot at BAC. “When I won the competition, there was a master trainer position open, so the sergeant major said whoever wins gets that slot. That’s how I got into this slot. Actually, I had my choice to work here at BAC

or Jumpmaster School,” Ross explained.

AIRBORNE, SERGEANT AIRBORNE

So, you’re a high-speed paratrooper, and now you want to be a Sergeant Airborne? Many people have the wrong impression and think they have to be a jumpmaster in order to be a Sergeant Airborne. Not true, said Contratto. “Just about anybody can come here and be an instructor, any military occupational specialty.”

Potential instructors go through a rigorous screening process. Essentially, they are handpicked by the brigade command sergeant major, and then the battalion command sergeants major.

After being assigned to a company, the new candidate will go through BAC instructor training. Once the newly minted Sergeant Airborne wears the prestigious black hat, BAC will send him or her to Jumpmaster School. BAC personnel said the overall objective is to send all personnel to Jumpmaster and Pathfinder School.

Mezzaline and Contratto both agree that BAC always has its eyes out for great NCOs who want to work hard and train students. Teaching at the Basic Airborne Course is an excellent professional development opportunity for junior NCOs.

Historically, the school was one of the first in the Army to train officers and enlisted together, Contratto said. “It’s also one of the first schools in the Army that’s NCO-driven and NCO-run. This course is totally run by NCOs who are responsible for oversight of all training. The

commander and company commanders make the training schedules, but it is NCO-driven and executed,” he explained, adding that at BAC, first sergeants and platoon sergeants are empowered to execute training.

But Mezzaline warns that coming to BAC doesn’t equate to taking a knee. “You’ll be at home every night with your family, but the job includes hard work and long days out on the drop zone and in the training areas.”

The command sergeant major extended a personal invitation to interested and qualified NCOs who would like to become a Black Hat. But, he added, “This assignment isn’t for everyone. Only the best can be a Sergeant Airborne.”



Staff Sgt. Rommel Hurtado conducts a jumpmaster personnel inspection on a student at Jumpmaster School, Fort Benning, Ga. Hurtado is the current reigning Black Hat of the Year and also participated in last year’s Best Ranger Competition.

Editor’s note: Interested in becoming an instructor at BAC? Log on to the infantry Human Resources Command website to find out more information (AKO login required), and contact your branch manager to request the assignment.

To contact Linda Crippen, send e-mail to linda.crippen@us.army.mil.

Health & Fitness

Part 2: Preventive Medicine & Nutrition

Historically, by a ratio of 4-to-1, disease and non-battle injuries have caused more deaths during war than combat injuries. Yet, these non-battle injuries are largely preventable, provided leaders take the time to properly train their Soldiers in how to avoid them.

From mitigating medical threats to ensuring proper fitness, preventive medicine measures are simple, common sense actions that any service member can perform and that every leader should know. Since first-line leaders are responsible for all aspects of their Soldiers' health, the health and fitness portion of the Warrior Leader Course instructs how the mission, medical threats and condition of their Soldiers should be taken into consideration to maintain a healthy team.

PREVENTIVE MEDICINE: Two core competencies for leaders are achieving mission success and developing Soldiers. While physical readiness training prepares a team to have the strength, mobility and endurance to perform physically on the battlefield, other factors may hamper performance or result in injury, such as heat, cold or biohazards.

Leaders can reduce or eliminate the effects of these medical threats in three ways. First, individual Soldiers should practice preventive medicine measures on their own. A Soldier shouldn't need to be told to drink plenty of water when training on a hot day, for example, as it is a skill level 1 common task.

However, leaders throughout the chain of command are responsible for planning and enforcing preventive



Photo by Susanne Kappler

Pvt. Anthony Vongxay of Company D, 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry Regiment, drinks water during training at a range at Fort Jackson, S.C., in May. Ensuring your Soldiers stay hydrated is an easily practiced preventive medicine measure that helps avoid heat injuries.

medicine measures in units, the second principle of preventive medicine. If a training event can be held earlier in the day to avoid heat-related injuries, it should be.

Thirdly, field sanitation teams should be employed to train Soldiers and advise unit leaders on implementing unit-level measures. They can be invaluable resources in avoiding mission failure due to preventable medical threats.

NUTRITION: According to a recent CNN report, more than 4,500 service members were discharged from the U.S. military in 2008 for failure to meet weight standards. While the regular physical activity of properly conducted PRT can help Soldiers control their weight, eating right plays as critical a role in supporting overall health.

With a little bit of planning, Soldiers can learn to make the best choices for a well-balanced diet. The key is ensuring that one's diet is full of variety, includes foods from the full spectrum of food groups and is correctly portioned.

Soldiers should also monitor their caloric intake. Overweight Soldiers should eat fewer calories than they expend in exercise and everyday physical activity. Interactive calculators at <http://www.hooah4health.com/body/> can help determine the appropriate number of servings from each of the different food groups a Soldier should eat each day.

As the saying goes, a finely tuned engine out of gas goes nowhere. Leaders have the responsibility to make sure their Soldiers are filling their tank with the right fuel.



EATING HEALTHY

Good nutrition begins with making healthy choices. Here are the recommendations from MyPyramid.gov for an average person's 2,000-calorie diet:

Grains: 6 oz. every day

- ✓ **Make half your grains whole:** Eat at least 3 oz. of whole-grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice or pasta every day.
- ✓ **Serving sizes:** 1 oz. is about 1 slice of bread, about 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, cereal or pasta.

Vegetables: 2½ cups every day

- ✓ **Vary your veggies:** Eat more dark-green veggies like broccoli, spinach and other dark leafy greens. Eat more orange vegetables like carrots and sweet potatoes.
- ✓ **Don't forget beans and peas:** Eat more dry beans and peas like pinto beans, kidney beans and lentils.

Fruits: 2 cups every day

- ✓ **Focus on fruits:** Eat a variety of fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruit. But, go easy on fruit juices.

Milk: 3 cups every day

- ✓ **Get your calcium-rich foods:** Go low-fat or fat-free when you choose milk, yogurt and other milk products.
- ✓ **Lactose intolerant?** Choose lactose-free products or other calcium sources such as fortified foods and beverages.

Meats & Beans: 5½ oz. every day

- ✓ **Go lean with protein:** Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry.
- ✓ **Cook smart:** Bake it, broil it or grill it.
- ✓ **Vary your protein routine:** Choose more fish, beans, peas, nuts and seeds.

Fats, Sugars & Salt: Limit intake

- ✓ **Healthy sources:** Make most of your fat sources from fish, nuts and vegetable oils.
- ✓ **Avoid added sugar:** Added sugars contribute calories with few, if any, nutrients.

Preventing injuries: Be prepared



HEAT

Acclimatize personnel to high temperatures gradually, ensure adequate **supplies of drinking water** are available, **keep skin covered** from sun and train during **cooler hours**.



COLD

Ensure Soldiers are **dressed in layers** of dry, properly fitting gear, especially **clean, dry socks** to avoid trench foot. **Rotate** frequently those performing low-activity duties.



INSECTS, ANIMALS & PLANTS

Know the animals and plants in the area you may encounter. Use authorized **repellents**, **keep sleeves down** and **shirts buttoned**. **Keep food out** of sleeping and working areas.



FOOD- & WATER-BORNE DISEASES

Use approved **water-purification kits**. Keep foods at **safe temperatures**. **Wash hands** regularly, and keep waste-disposal areas and latrines **safe distances** away.



TOXIC CHEMICALS

Identify sources of toxic chemicals and materials, and if available, **obtain safer alternatives**. Observe all **cautions and warnings**, using proper **ventilation and protective gear**.



NOISE

Identify and isolate noise hazards. Wear **hearing protection** when needed and **train using that protection**. Ensure Soldiers' hearing is **tested annually**.



NON-BATTLE INJURY

Help Soldiers take measures to **deal with stress**. Ensure they know and avoid the adverse affects of **tobacco use**, **alcohol consumption**, and high-risk **sexual behaviors**.



UNFIT SOLDIERS

Fight weight problems by promoting **regular physical activity**, **portion control** and **nutritious dining choices**, and by creating an environment that supports these behaviors.

NCO Stories

A selection of Valor



Staff Sgt. Joe R. Hooper

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, Staff Sgt. (then Sgt.) Joe R. Hooper distinguished himself while serving as squad leader with Company D, 2nd Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry, 101st Airborne Division.

On Feb. 21, 1968, Company D was assaulting a heavily defended enemy position along a river bank near Hue, Republic of Vietnam, when it encountered a withering hail of fire from rockets, machine guns and automatic weapons. Hooper rallied several men and stormed across the river, overrunning several bunkers on the opposite shore. Inspired, the rest of the company moved to the attack.

With utter disregard for his own safety, he moved out under the intense fire again and pulled back the wounded, moving them to safety. During this act, Hooper was seriously wounded, but he refused medical aid and returned to his men.

With the relentless enemy fire disrupting the attack, he single-handedly stormed three enemy bunkers, destroying them with hand grenades and rifle fire, and shot two enemy soldiers who had attacked and wounded the chaplain.

Leading his men forward in a sweep of the area, Hooper destroyed three buildings housing enemy riflemen. At this point, he was attacked by a North Vietnamese officer whom he fatally wounded with his bayonet.

Finding his men under heavy fire from a house to the front, he proceeded alone to the building, killing its occupants with rifle fire and grenades. By now his initial body wound had been compounded by grenade fragments, yet despite the multiple wounds and loss of blood, he continued to lead his men against the intense enemy fire.

As his squad reached the final line of enemy resistance, it received devastating fire from four bunkers in line on its left flank. Hooper gathered several hand grenades and raced down a small trench which ran the length of the bunker line, tossing grenades into each bunker as he passed by, killing all but two of the occupants. With these positions destroyed, he concentrated on the last bunkers facing his men, destroying the first with an incendiary grenade and neutralizing two more by rifle fire. He then raced across an open field, still under enemy fire, to rescue a wounded man who was trapped in a trench.



Upon reaching the man, he was faced by an armed enemy soldier whom he killed with a pistol. Moving his comrade to safety and returning to his men, he neutralized the final pocket of enemy resistance by fatally wounding three North Vietnamese officers with rifle fire.

Hooper then established a final line and reorganized his men, not accepting treatment until this was accomplished and not

consenting to evacuation until the following morning.

His supreme valor, inspiring leadership and heroic self-sacrifice were directly responsible for the company's success and provided a lasting example in personal courage for every man on the field. Hooper's actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

Most Decorated Soldier in the Vietnam War

By Stephanie Sanchez →

Even after leaving Vietnam, Staff Sgt. Joe R. Hooper continued to fight battles – with himself.

Hooper struggled with alcoholism. The addiction started from distress caused by anti-war politics, according to several news accounts.

Many people know little about Hooper, who died of a cerebral hemorrhage on May 6, 1979. But he is one of the most decorated Soldiers in the Army, along with Sgt. Alvin York and 1st Lt. Audie Murphy. He received more medals than any other Soldier in the Vietnam War.

During his 17-year military career, Hooper earned more than 30 medals, including the Medal of Honor, two Silver Stars, six Bronze Stars and eight Purple Hearts. President Richard Nixon presented the sergeant, who later moved up the ranks to staff sergeant, the nation's highest military honor on March 7, 1969, for his service during the Vietnam War.

Hooper is credited with killing 115 North Vietnamese and saving several of his comrades on Feb. 21, 1968.

On that day, Hooper was leading his squad along a river bank near Hue, Vietnam, when it stumbled across a North Vietnamese divisional headquarters. Immediately, there was a hail of fire from rockets, machine guns and automatic weapons.

"It was six against maybe 140 of them," Hooper told the *Seattle Times* in 1977. "It was hand-to-hand, and the main battle lasted six and a half hours. It seemed like a long time before other companies got there to help."



Courtesy photo

President Richard Nixon presents the Medal of Honor to then Sgt. Joe R. Hooper at the White House on March 7, 1969. Hooper served two tours of duty in Vietnam.

At the beginning of the attack, Hooper quickly rallied several men and stormed across the river, overrunning several bunkers. Then he moved into heavy fire to pull wounded men to safety.

While helping his Soldiers, Hooper was shot but refused to be treated.

"With the relentless enemy fire disrupting the attack, he single-handedly stormed three enemy bunkers, destroying them with hand grenades and rifle fire, and shot two enemy soldiers who had attacked and wounded the chaplain," according to his citation. "Leading his men forward in a sweep of the area, Hooper

destroyed three buildings housing enemy riflemen. At this point, he was attacked by a North Vietnamese officer, whom he fatally wounded with his bayonet."

As the squad continued to move forward, it was attacked by North Vietnamese in four bunkers. Hooper, again protecting his Soldiers, grabbed several hand grenades and raced down a small trench, which ran the length of the bunker line. He tossed the grenades into each bunker, eventually killing all the occupants.

At the end of the attack, Hooper established a final line and reorganized his men, still not accepting treatment and not consenting to be evacuated until the next morning. Along with his bul-

let wounds, Hooper received several shrapnel wounds.

A *Seattle Weekly* story states that Hooper retired from the Army in 1974 with a \$12,000 retirement check that he carried around in his shoe.

Chemical Corps Soldier personifies personal courage, places mission first

By Sgt. Mary Ferguson →

How many times have you thought or even said, “This is not my job; I didn’t sign up for this,” or “I’m not supposed to be here doing this!”?

When honest with themselves, even the most dedicated and selfless Soldier may answer “yes” to that question. They’re human — they breathe, bleed, want and need, just like everybody else.

However, Soldiers are different, because despite being human, especially in these moments, they still find the personal courage within themselves to place the mission first.

Sgt. Charles A. Claude Jr. found and lived that personal courage throughout his seven years in uniform — a time that’s afforded him many opportunities to say, “This is not my job.” One opportunity, perhaps none more obvious, was during his recent tour in Iraq.

Claude redeployed to Fort Bliss, Texas, in December 2007 after serving a 15-month tour in Mosul, Iraq, with E Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team 1st Cavalry Division. There, he earned a Bronze Star with “V” device and Purple Heart for doing what he’s always done — place the mission first.

“We’re a combat engineering company, and [downrange] we were in charge of clearing all of Mosul of [improvised explosive devices]. ... We only had one battalion and one route clearing company, so we did two to three missions a day,” Claude said, adding that Mosul is the second largest city in Iraq.

On Sept. 2, 2007, about three months before the company’s return to the United States, the Soldiers were pursuing insurgents who used rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire against them.

“All hell broke loose. ... We were coming down this back road, I was shooting this car and around the corner there was an insurgent. He tried to go head-to-

head with our [armored security vehicle]. He actually did some damage with his AK-47 — took my driver’s window completely out, and blew my sight out,” said Claude, who was the first sergeant’s gunner.

During the firefight, one of the insurgent’s rounds came through the ASV’s window, flipped around inside the vehicle and shattered apart, wounding Claude’s arm and his first sergeant’s leg.

“I didn’t know I was hit at that time,” Claude remembered. “It all happened so fast. ... We got a call from the vehicle behind us saying that the [insurgent] was hanging on our vehicle, so I popped out of the hatch and shot him. ... That day was just as crazy as the rest of the days, but that day we got hurt. It was only about two weeks later, and we were back out on the road again.”

Col. Michael Bolluyt, Claude’s former chemical battalion commander at Fort Polk, La., said, “Sgt. Claude came to the battalion during a crucial period ... and he stood out with basic combat skills as we began training on the brigade-sponsored live-fire ranges. He became a teacher and mentor to his peers in all the skills we were introducing to [Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear] Soldiers.”

“In the blistering heat of Fort Polk, he never complained, never quit and put the mission first because he knew how important the training was, despite one’s MOS,” Bolluyt added.

While Claude’s infantry experience led to an unusual mission even during his time in a chemical company, Claude said, all Chemical Corps Soldiers should prepare for the experiences he’s faced as a CBRN NCO.

“It’s important for some of the younger [Soldiers] to read this and think, ‘That could be me in a year or two,’” Claude said. “With any MOS like this, where you are probably the only one in a company, you have to really show that you are supposed to be there, to earn respect.



Photo by Mary Ferguson

Chemical Corps Soldier Sgt. Charles A. Claude Jr.

... You have to have pride in the Chemical Corps, represent it and think, ‘I’m going to do this job as well as anyone.’”

Bolluyt said this message is incredibly relevant for CBRN Soldiers, because the Chemical Corps is one of the few Army branches that has Soldiers at the corps, division, brigade, battalion and company levels.

“The Chemical Corps is making enormous contributions. ... We are the fifth most deployed branch,” Bolluyt explained. “All formations across the battlefield are vulnerable. ... By hearing Sgt. Claude’s experiences, I hope senior leaders see the importance of exposing their Soldiers to a mixture of combat skills.”

Claude agreed and said that today, all warriors have to be infantry Soldiers at heart. They have to know how to do the jobs around them, because even though everybody may have a specialty on their team, they may have to cover down to accomplish the mission, as he has throughout his career.

He also said his experiences have made him a better-rounded NCO with the ability to adapt and change to lead all types of Soldiers.

See CLAUDE, next page



Recruiter earns Soldier's Medal for lifesaving actions on German autobahn

By Andy Entwistle
Albany Recruiting Battalion

Sgt. 1st Class Michael Alden thought he'd left behind his duties as a volunteer firefighter when he deployed as one of Albany, N.Y., Battalion's Europe Detachment recruiters in 2006.

However, he put his past training to the test during an emergency on Feb. 21, 2008, when he saved the life of a German driver by helping him escape from his flaming vehicle. Alden also administered lifesaving first aid.

As a result of this heroic action, Alden was awarded the Soldier's Medal on Aug. 28, 2008.

Alden, then a senior guidance counselor assigned to the Kaiserslautern, Germany, recruiting station, was on the autobahn driving to a conference when he saw the fiery wreck in the oncoming lane.



The award citation notes his "disregard for his own safety" as he ran across several lanes of busy highway to provide aid to the driver who was struggling to exit the crushed car. He extinguished the man's flaming clothing and provided immediate first aid before

braving the flames in an attempt to rescue a second victim who, unfortunately, was

beyond help.

With the car still flaming, Alden then took measures to ensure the safety of bystanders and moved the driver to a safer location. He continued to render aid by treating the man's burns and ensuring his airway remained open.

With his medical training, Alden was able to assist another witness, a doctor, to start an IV. Firefighters arrived minutes later and extinguished the vehicle fire.

Battalion commander Lt. Col. Ken Sullivan noted while presenting the award that Alden's actions were "the mark of a good Soldier." But, his reaction that day was also the instinct of a good firefighter.

Since entering recruiting duty, Alden has served more than seven years as a volunteer with several fire departments, including the Independent Fire Company, No. 4, in Charles Town, W.Va., while he was the station commander in Hagerstown, Md., part of Baltimore Battalion. In 2002, that fire company selected him as its Firefighter of the Year.

His specialized training includes



Photo by Michael Alden

Albany Recruiting Battalion recruiter Sgt. 1st Class Michael Alden, receives the Soldier's Medal on Aug. 28, 2008, from his battalion commander, Lt. Col. Ken Sullivan.

rescue diving and swift-water rescue techniques. "After I retire from the Army, I'd like to work in the fire service full time," Alden says, "or maybe pursue a career as a flight medic."

He brushes off discussion about his actions on the highway that morning, focusing instead on the surprising reactions of the German Polizei officer.

"He thanked me three or four times and said people don't do things like that very often," Alden notes. "But, I honestly think anybody would have done it. Certainly any Soldier would."

CLAUDE Continued from page 38

"During this last deployment, I had a squad of six Soldiers, and none of them were my MOS," he said. "But again, if you do what you're supposed to do as a Soldier and an NCO it will take care of itself. ... Over time they will not even look at you as 'just the [CBRN] guy' anymore."

As a Soldier, an NCO and a member

of the Chemical Corps, "Sgt. Claude has made a mark for future CBRN Soldiers to recognize and emulate," Bolluyt said. "He is a warrior of the highest caliber."

Yet, even Claude admitted, "Sure, there have been plenty of times when I've felt like, 'Why am I doing this?'" — But that never stopped him from climbing into

the gunner's turret of his first sergeant's vehicle because, he said, "You've got to always think, no matter what, 'I'm a Soldier. Putting the mission first is always my job, regardless of what that mission is.'"

NCO Leadership in Iraq:

“We’ve still got work to do.”

By Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey
Army News Service

Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, the United States Forces-Iraq command sergeant major, has seen just about everything during his five combat tours and 35 years as a Soldier.

During his time as a noncommissioned officer, he said the one thing that has remained a constant is the expectations Soldiers have of their NCOs.

“If you ask any Soldier out there, they’ll probably tell you they expect their noncommissioned officers to get them to the right place at the right time, with the right equipment to do whatever mission they’re given,” Allen said. “They expect noncommissioned officers, more than any other leader, to protect them from all the stuff that rolls downhill, to provide them with good leadership.”

During a recent trip to Joint Security Station Loyalty with Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, USF-I commanding general, Allen talked to the senior NCOs of the 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery, 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division. While Austin spoke with troops preparing for a mission, Allen pulled the first sergeants aside for a huddle.

Allen shared with them his certainty that everyone has something significant going on in their lives that might affect their performance. He encouraged them to bear that in mind as they deal with their subordinates.

“The bottom line is, when you think it’s hell that you’re going through, keep going, man, just keep going,” he said. “You only get in trouble when you stop. Keep going, talk to somebody, but keep going. Don’t stop, whatever you do.”

As the U.S. military mission in Iraq



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey

Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, U.S. Forces-Iraq command sergeant major, stands with Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery during a recent visit to JSS Loyalty.

continues to move forward, Allen said his job is to make sure the troops are performing at their best and that Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines understand that, although the mission has changed, Iraq can still be a dangerous place. It’s imperative that everyone stays committed and focused.

“We still partner with the Iraqi Security Forces, border patrols and the Iraqi police,” Allen said. “Yes, we have a new mission set ... but the fact of the matter is, any time a Soldier goes outside the gate, they’re in the same posture that they were at the height of this war. I mean full [per-

sonal protective equipment], ready to defend themselves and their fellow Soldiers each and every day.”

Allen is confident that, thanks to today’s leadership culture, Soldiers are up to the task. He now sees junior NCOs entrusted with life-or-death decisions on a daily basis.

“We empower them to use their own decision-making process to execute their mission. I see that a lot now,” he said.

According to Allen, a big part of the success in Iraq is due to the dedication and commitment of young service members and junior leaders.

And now, with the Iraqi Security Forces in the lead and U.S. forces advising, assisting and training, he said young leaders are still just as critical to the mission.

“We’ve come a long way, but we’ve still got work to do. Our continued success will, in large part, depend on the conduct and professionalism of our force,” he said. “I’m confident that our young men and women will keep doing the right thing and will stay focused and committed to the mission. Got to do it, that’s the job, and we need to work together to be effective.”

Without a doubt, Allen said he believes leaders want to do the right thing.

“We’ve got a great system, but sometimes you’ve got to tweak it. I’ll always make sure Soldiers are getting a fair shake and that leaders are looking out for the Soldier. I’ve done it all my life, and it’s all I know how to do.”

Allen said he recently caught a group of Soldiers off guard by telling them something they weren’t used to hearing from such a senior NCO.

“I work for you,” he told them. “If there’s something I need to do, you need to tell me.”

NCO Leadership in Afghanistan:

*“Don't ask others
to do things you
wouldn't do yourself.”*

By Sgt. Spencer Case
304th Public Affairs Detachment

Having served with the 101st Airborne Division in two wars during a career spanning more than four decades, U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. James M. Brown brings a unique perspective to the current conflict in Afghanistan.

Brown, who hails from Indianapolis, grew up in Los Angeles in a “patriotic, old-fashioned family” of Southern extraction. During the Vietnam War, Brown joined the Army and completed basic training and noncommissioned officers’ training successively before gaining any field experience. Those who went through this process were called “Shake ‘n’ Bake” sergeants because of how quickly they got their stripes. After completing his training, Brown deployed to Vietnam from 1969 to 1971, where he served as a squad leader in the 101st Airborne Division.

Following Vietnam, Brown remained in the inactive reserve and the National Guard, never serving far from the Indianapolis area.

In the civilian world, he worked in the transportation business and eventually came to own a transportation company that includes buses and limousines for the airport and city. He continued to ascend the enlisted ranks in a number of units until he became the 38th Infantry Division command sergeant major in 2002.

In 2006, Brown became the Indiana state command sergeant major, working for the state adjutant general. Units in the state had served 70 deployments since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and Brown felt uncomfortable being in a position where he was sending others to war while he remained behind.

“My feeling is, don’t ask others to do things you wouldn’t do yourself,” he said.

When the opportunity arose to volunteer for his current deployment to Afghanistan, Brown left behind his wife, Cheryl, six children and eight grandchildren. He said though it has been difficult, his wife understood his sense of obligation.

Brown and the other Indiana Guardsmen arrived at Forward Operating Base Lightning, Paktya province, in mid-February 2009, replacing the Tennessee National Guard Soldiers who preceded them. Brown and a few other Indiana National Guardsmen are completing their tour in Afghanistan as part of a perennially deployed partnership unit, which goes by the name Regional



Photo by Sgt. Spencer Case

Command Sgt. Maj. James M. Brown, an advisor to Afghan National Army noncommissioned officers in the 203rd Thunder Corps Regional Corps Training Team II, volunteered to serve a final deployment.

Corps Training Team II.

Brown’s part of this involves mentoring the NCOs in the Afghan National Army’s 203rd Thunder Corps.

One anecdote he related demonstrates the cultural differences. He spoke to an Afghan supply sergeant who was staggered by the idea that he’d need to order 1,500 bars of soap several weeks in advance of the course’s beginning for several hundred soldiers. Hard for him to grasp, having come from a small village, he had never imagined dealing with bars of soap in such quantities.

Others might be discouraged by such challenges, but Brown, a self-described student of history, is able to put them in perspective.

“Washington couldn’t get shoes for the Soldiers at Valley Forge because the Continental Congress would not give him the money.”

And that, Brown noted, was after inheriting military habits from the Prussians, who already had a good grasp of long-term planning. The Afghans, on the other hand, have fought for thousands of years only at the squad-level and have never had to deal with large-scale issues of supply and demand.

As for the rapid buildup of the ANA that is happening now, Brown points out that the United States was in a similar spot during World War I, World War II and the Korean War. The United States needed to field an Army quickly and had several different kinds of programs. He didn’t need to mention his own experience as a “Shake ‘n’ Bake” sergeant, but could have.

The symmetry of his own career hasn’t been lost on him, he said.

“Going into a unit with a historical reputation was a pleasure. Coming back and serving with that same unit years later — wearing the [screaming eagle] patch on both shoulders — is an honor,” Brown said. “They were a great outfit then, and they remain a great outfit today.”

NCOs inducted into JSC-A Sergeant Audie Murphy Club

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta
ISAF PAO

Sgt. Audie Murphy was the most decorated Soldier who served in the United States Army during World War II.

He was awarded 33 medals including the Medal of Honor and a battlefield promotion to second lieutenant for his bravery and leadership during his combat deployments to Africa and Europe.

The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club was established at Fort Hood, Texas, in 1986 to honor noncommissioned officers who have demonstrated through their performance and leadership ability the standards set by Murphy.

Three U.S. Army NCOs deployed to Afghanistan were inducted Oct. 14 into the newly created Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan SAMC: Sgt. 1st Class Marc A. Torres, Sgt. Janet Chavez and Sgt. Christopher Mancino. Staff Sgt. Layton A. Flynn was also selected but was unavailable for the ceremony.

“The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club was named after who most believe — at least until we started this global war on terrorism and extremism — to be the last American hero. But now, we meet and soldier with heroes every day,” said ISAF senior enlisted leader Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill, who was the guest speaker at the induction ceremony. “But, Audie Murphy was a legend in his own time. So club members, you clearly have some big shoes to fill to uphold Audie Murphy’s legacy and standards of excellence.”

The JSC-A SAMC is the first chapter to be established by a sustainment command in Afghanistan.

It was stood up May 17, 2010 by Command Sgt. Maj. Clark Kinder, JSC-A; Master Sgt. Thomas Pacheco, local president; and Master Sgt. Bradley Waters, local secretary. The club conducted its first ever selection board on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, Aug. 30.

“It’s a great honor to be inducted into a membership that is comprised of a great group of NCOs that really cares about Soldiers,” said Torres of the 158th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 43rd Sustainment Brigade, KAF. Torres has been deployed to KAF since Dec. 8, 2009, and redeployed in late October. His unit had three truck convoys which ran commodities and gun trucks as the direct support maintenance company throughout southern Afghanistan.

The second inductee was Chavez of the 382nd Transportation Theater Opening Element, 419th Joint Movement Control Battalion, Kabul.

“It means a lot,” Chavez said. “It means that my work was recognized. All these years of being squad leader, I learned a lot and I’m finally being recognized for it.”

Chavez and Torres have an interesting connection: He was her basic training drill sergeant in 2001.

“For me, it’s a great honor that I’m being inducted with Sgt. Chavez because Sgt. Chavez is actually one of my last cycle of training Soldiers when I was a basic training drill sergeant [at Fort Jackson, S.C.],” Torres said.

The third inductee was Mancino of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 82nd Sustainment Brigade, Bagram. “For me it’s a tremendous honor to be inducted into such a prestigious club,” he said. “However, this is not about me, it’s about my Soldiers. What they do is what makes me who I am as a leader.”

Mancino’s unit provides logistics support for Regional Commands North, East and Capital.

To qualify for the JSC-A SAMC, Torres said he and the other inductees passed a series of boards.

“There’s a lot of questions about leadership,” Torres said.

On June 30, the JSC-A SAMC conducted its first fundraiser, collecting \$3,800 in contributions to support the Wounded Warrior Program at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

“Being a member of this club puts you head and shoulders above your peers,” Hill said. This leads me to the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club motto, which is, ‘You lead from the front.’ As a leader, you must be clairvoyant. Leadership is action, not a position.

“Every time you stand in front of those [your] Soldiers, they are asking you three questions,” Hill said as he concluded his speech. “Those questions are, ‘Are you committed? Can I trust you? Do you care about me?’ You can only answer those questions with actions. And, the actions that [it] take[s] to answer those questions are ‘You must be available, you must be accessible and you must be approachable to your troops.’”



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta

Left to right, Sgt. 1st Class Marc A. Torres, Sgt. Christopher Mancino, and Sgt. Janet Chavez, 382nd Transportation Theater Opening Element, Kabul listen to International Security Assistance Force senior enlisted leader Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill after they were inducted into the Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan’s Sergeant Audie Murphy Club on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

Respect in the military

Sgt. 1st Class Paul Rieks
135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

I've been in the military for 22 years. During that time, I've heard the debate from officers, senior noncommissioned officers, junior noncommissioned officers and junior enlisted that respect between Soldiers is "earned," not automatic. Where are the lines drawn with respect for each other when it comes to peer groups, friendships, off-duty hours and in the work place? Soldiers are confronted with this dilemma each day as they make choices on how to deal with each situation.

Interaction within a peer group, sergeant first class to captain for example, is acceptable by Army standards. But, at what point do personal friendships built between two Soldiers cross the line? Within this peer group, I've experienced respect, camaraderie, loyalty, trust and confusion. As a senior NCO, it's my duty to protect my officers in any situation; cover their backside when needed, and clear the path to make sure they can complete their mission. When officers in my unit complete their task, it means I've completed mine. This is where respect is earned; in the trenches. Getting the job done with both seniors and subordinates is the best way to gain needed trust and loyalty.

Confusion occurs when officers and senior NCOs try to do too much by themselves. Micromanagement within this peer group has no place. I've witnessed the demise of officers who don't lean on platoon sergeants who know how to do their job and are willing to shoulder their share of the responsibility. In turn, I've seen the results of ineffective senior NCOs who will refuse to shoulder the responsibility bestowed upon them and forced officers into micromanaging roles. In these cases, I've found that lack of communication and respect for each other hinders the development of effective leaders.

Micromanagers don't trust their subordinates to get the job done and forfeit opportunities to delegate authority. This is where respect from your subordinates is lost. Soldiers who work for you must feel needed and have legitimate jobs. Giving a subordinate a meaningless task only compounds the problem and creates discontent.

The key to healthy peer relationships is maintaining your military bearing and keeping open lines of communication in all situations. There has to be mutual respect for each other if a friendship is going to foster. Soldiers need to respect each other's rank at all times, but it's absolutely acceptable to have friendships within your peer groups.

The lasting effects of well-fostered relationships built on trust and loyalty are camaraderie and the building of a cohesive team.



Sgt. 1st Class Paul Rieks

Respect is one of the Army core values and guides us as Soldiers. If you respect yourself, respecting others will be easier, and respecting each other goes a long way in the Army. Keeping junior enlisted informed about missions and activities, and empowering them with responsibilities shows they're important to the team. Respecting Soldiers of any rank instills the confidence to complete any task and hurdle obstacles in the way.

I've experienced peer-group friendships that will last a lifetime. These friendships are built on a firm foundation of mutual respect and admiration for one another. There is no secret remedy or grand illusion regarding how to make

all of this work. There isn't an Army regulation or DA Pam that teaches you how to treat other Soldiers. When I look back at situations that have caused discontent or a perceived lack of respect for someone, it's usually tied to poor communication. Two-way communication can alleviate this confusion. As Soldiers, it's everyone's responsibility to respect the person standing on your left and right.

Is there an answer to the question, "Is respect earned or is it automatic?" Not really. Each Soldier has to look inward to find their beliefs and values to come up with the answer.

The Army teaches us to say, "Yes sir," or "No ma'am," and "Yes sergeant," and "No sergeant." These responses are ingrained in us early in our careers which ensures proper discipline and protocol as Soldiers. I only hope that as I walk by an officer or enlisted Soldier, I receive a crisp salute in return or a greeting of the day. It's the simple things that are required by the Army that make the difference within our organization. Respecting yourself, your unit and the Army will give you a sense of worth and guide you through your career, whether you're a Soldier with two years of service or someone like me with 22 years.

Editor's note: Sgt. 1st Class Paul Rieks is deployed at Contingency Operating Base Speicher in Tikrit, Iraq. He is the public affairs operations NCO in charge for the 135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Iowa Army National Guard.



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PHOTO JOURNAL





Sgt. Larry J. Isbell of Oklahoma City, representing the National Guard at the 10th annual Best Warrior Competition held at Fort Lee, Va., watches his firing lane for targets during the M4 range qualification event Oct. 21, 2010.

Photo by Spc. Venessa Hernandez

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PHOTO JOURNAL

▶ Sgt. Jeffrey Souder of the Japan District Veterinary Command, Okinawa Branch, tends to a dog in Mabalacat, Pampanga, in the Philippines on Oct. 15, 2010, during Operation Goodwill.
Photo by Lance Cpl. Patricia D. Lockhart



▼ A Soldier with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, adjusts his mortar tube during an area reconnaissance mission off Highway 1 in Zabul province, Afghanistan, Oct. 1, 2010.
Photo by Spc. Joshua Grenier

▼ Staff Sgt. Marvin Mendia of 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, fingerprints a detainee in Gavband village, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 27, 2010.
Photo by Staff Sgt. Christine Jones





^ Soldiers with the 864th Engineer Battalion, assigned to Combat Outpost Terminator, set up barriers to establish the perimeter of a strong-point operating position in the Zhari district of Kandahar province, Afghanistan, Sept. 16, 2010. Photo by Master Sgt. Michele A. Desrochers



^ Staff Sgt. James Hatcher, right, security force squad leader for the Nuristan Provincial Reconstruction Team, leads a column to the village of Kautiak in eastern Afghanistan on Oct. 30, 2010. Photo by U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Richard Simonsen



^ Soldiers from Delta Company, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), provide security while the sub-governor of the Sabari district conducts a key leader engagement in Khowst province, Afghanistan, Oct. 19, 2010. Photo by Sgt. Jeffrey Alexander

Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

Operation New Dawn

Pfc. David D. Finch, 24, Bath Springs, Tenn., Dec. 8, 2010

Operation Enduring Freedom

Staff Sgt. Vincent W. Ashlock, 45, Seaside, Calif., Dec. 4, 2010 ◆ Sgt. James A. Ayube, II, 25, Salem, Mass., Dec. 8, 2010
Cpl. Sean M. Collins, 25, Ewa Beach, Hawaii, Dec. 12, 2010 ◆ Spc. Patrick D. Deans, 22, Orlando, Fla., Dec. 12, 2010
Pfc. Jacob A. Gassen, 21, Beaver Dam, Wis., Nov. 29, 2010 ◆ Spc. Ethan L. Goncalo, 21, Fall Rivers, Mass., Dec. 11, 2010
Sgt. 1st Class Barry E. Jarvis, 36, Tell City, Ind., Nov. 29, 2010 ◆ Pfc. Buddy W. McLain, 24, Mexico, Maine, Nov. 29, 2010
Cpl. Willie A. McLawhorn Jr., 23, Conway, N.C., Dec. 12, 2010 ◆ 1st Lt. Scott F. Milley, 23, Sudbury, Mass., Nov. 30, 2010
Spc. Kelly J. Mixon, 23, Yulee, Fla., Dec. 8, 2010 ◆ Spc. Kenneth E. Necochea Jr., 21, San Diego, Calif., Dec. 12, 2010
Staff Sgt. Curtis A. Oakes, 29, Athens, Ohio, Nov. 29, 2010 ◆ Spc. Matthew W. Ramsey, 20, Quartz Hill, Calif., Nov. 29, 2010
Staff Sgt. Jason A. Reeves, 32, Odessa, Texas, Dec. 5, 2010 ◆ Spc. Derek T. Simonetta, 21, Redwood City, Calif., Dec. 12, 2010
Pfc. Austin G. Staggs, 19, Senoia, Ga., Nov. 29, 2010 ◆ Sgt. 1st Class James E. Thode, 45, Kirtland, N.M., Dec. 2, 2010
Spc. Jorge E. Villacis, 24, Sunrise, Fla., Dec. 12, 2010

You are not forgotten

Editors 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. 1, 2010, and Dec. 17, 2010.

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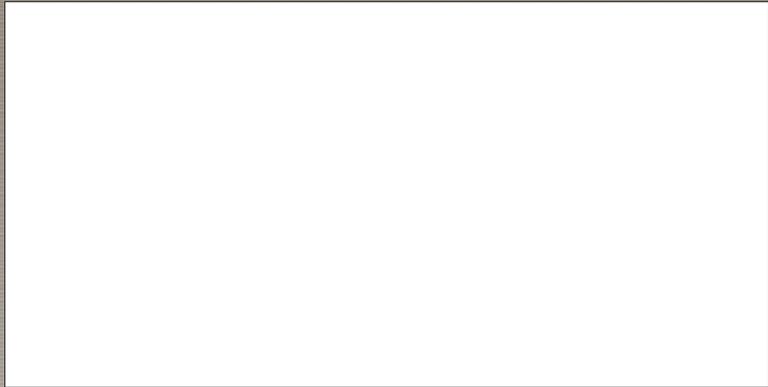


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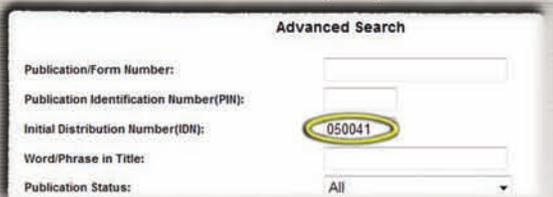
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