



“SWIKITS”

Saturday, May 8 is Military Spouse Appreciation Day. While our spouses deserve appreciation and recognition every day of the year, take some time out of the day to do something unique and significant for yours.

Fayetteville's 29th annual Dogwood Festival will be held April 23 through April 25. Events include a 5K and 10K run April 24, and Gin Blossoms playing that evening at Festival Park. For more information, visit www.faydogwoodfestival.com



Pfc. Nacho Cheese, a military working dog, gets all four legs back on solid ground after parachuting onto Mackall Army Airfield, his fourth career jump, while attached to Sgt. 1st Class Brian Parker, tandem jumpmaster for 2nd Bn., 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne).

(Photo by of Sharilyn Wells, Paraglide)

United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School

INSIDE SWCS

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THE STATE OF SWCS, 2010

By Dave Chace

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — The U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School does not operate inside a bubble.

This was the overarching theme of the “State of SWCS” command brief delivered by Maj. Gen. Thomas R. Csrnko, SWCS commanding general, on the second day of this year’s Special Forces Symposium.

“The working relationship between the Special Warfare Center and School and the operational Special Forces groups has never been better,” Csrnko said during the briefing, before a crowd of over 200 Green Berets and special guests at the Crown Expo Center in Fayetteville. Csrnko referenced the Center and School’s ability to quickly adapt to new training requirements as determined through special operations units’ feedback.

“No one changes anything in our courses unless you say so,” Csrnko said to the audience of special operators. “That’s our contract with you, the operational force.” He clarified that the Center and School was not only committed to designing its courses around Green Berets’ needs, but to the needs to civil affairs and psychological operations Soldiers and units as well.

The Symposium continued throughout the week with guest speakers, the Special Forces Expo, tours and demonstrations at Camp Mackall and the Regimental First Formation and graduation of the latest class of almost 150 new Green Berets.

The tour of Camp Mackall, held the day before Csrnko’s “State of SWCS,” showed off some of the newest advancements in special operations training. High altitude airborne demonstrations showcased parachutists jumping in tandem with a military working dog, and dropping an unmanned 600 pound bundle within 200 meters of a specific target.

“Camp Mackall is becoming a dynamic training facility for special forces, civil affairs and psychological operations,” Csrnko said.

The tours also brought special guests and family members through many of the Center and School's training facilities on Camp Mackall, including "Tent City," the central hub of Special Forces Assessment and Selection, where the cadre reviewed the standards and criteria for candidates to move beyond the three-week "interview."

"We are not giving the Green Beret away," Csrnko said during his presentation. "I can assure you." The Special Forces major general invited any of the Symposium's attendees to shadow an SFAS class for themselves to ensure the regiment's high standards were maintained.

Csrnko touched on some of the SWCS initiatives over the past year, including its new role as a commissioning authority for warrant officers, and the introduction of a new inter-agency studies masters program for warrant officers in conjunction with Kansas University. Csrnko also mentioned the Center and School's vigilance in keeping its advanced skills training relevant to teams and units on the battlefield.

"We've taken the 'pool club' out of the underwater operations business," he said, referring to increased training time in the open water during the combat diver qualification course.

For the way ahead, Csrnko said SWCS is exploring improvements and upgrades to its facilities at Fort Bragg and across the country. New facilities at Fort Bragg will support special operators returning to SWCS for advanced education, as well as provide "an isolated, safe and secure environment for AIT," he said. SWCS gives Fort Bragg the distinction of being the only non-TRADOC post that hosts Advanced Individual Training courses (for civil affairs and psychological operations Soldiers).

In closing, Csrnko again referenced the Center and School's close relationship with the Army's special operations units.

"We have a responsibility at SWCS that we send your Soldiers back prepared to do what you need them to do," Csrnko said, not just referring to those Soldiers attending courses with SWCS. "Our permanent party will learn essential skills while they're here, and be prepared to operate when we send them back you," he said.



This mock-up shows the proposed additions to the Center and School's campus on Fort Bragg. Bryant Hall can be seen in the top right corner, with Ardennes St. running from the top of the image past the right-hand red building, which would house the 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne). The new campus would also incorporate another building for academics, an intelligence center and two parking decks. Some of the additions are still pending final funding approval.