

From the CSM: Creating
a Culture of Safety

PAGE 3

Retaining the Best,
Transitioning the Rest

PAGE 14

The 'Red Bulls' of the
34th Infantry Division

PAGE 30

NCO JOURNAL

VOL. 21, NO. 3 · MARCH 2012



TRAINING FOR THE
COLD

PAGE 20



March 2012

FEATURES

- 14 Retaining the best, transitioning the rest ▲**
During the next five years, the Army will shrink from 570,000 to 490,000 Soldiers. To stay in, Soldiers will need to be committed and flexible. **BY JENNIFER MATTSON**
- 20 Alaska school builds arctic warriors**
NCOs see firsthand how experts deal with arctic conditions and mountainous terrain at the Northern Warfare Training Center in Alaska. **BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES**
- 30 The Red Bulls**
The NCOs of the 34th Infantry Division have a legacy of staying around and seeing the fight through. **BY JENNIFER MATTSON**

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 From the CSM**
A culture of safety is up to every leader
BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. RICHARD D. STIDLEY
- 4 In Front**
News and information to help NCOs 'Be, Know, Do'
- 38 In Action**
Stories of NCOs training, maintaining, leading and caring
- 46 From the Field**
Dispatches from around the Army
- 51 Final Salutes**

ON THE COVER: Soldiers train in snowshoeing skills in December at the Northern Warfare Training Center's Black Rapid Training Site in Alaska.

PHOTO BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES

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A culture of safety is up to every leader

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. RICHARD D. STIDLEY U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

I've seen and done a lot during my years in this great Army, and I'm not easily surprised. However, shortly after I arrived at the USACR/Safety Center, I was somewhat taken aback by a single statistic: We lose four Soldiers in off-duty accidents for every one we lose to an on-duty accident.

I have several ideas on what's important in Soldier safety, but I'd like each of you — particularly our junior NCOs — to think about something: Why is it your Soldiers can do everything right on-duty, but mess it all up when they leave to go home?

We've all seen them: the Soldier who unbuckles his seat belt right outside the gate, the one who never wears a helmet off-post, and the other who habitually speeds well in excess of posted limits or drives after a night of drinking with his buddies.

The fact is there are always a few Soldiers who throw away everything that's important to them at the end of the day. As leaders, it's up to us to figure out why they do so and how to reach them before something tragic happens.

During my time as an NCO, three essential elements have remained constant in keeping Soldiers safe: discipline, enforcement of basic standards and communication down to the lowest level. We have to place the responsibility for high-risk behavior where it belongs — on Soldiers who willfully disregard the standards and leaders who turn a blind eye to it.

Indiscipline kills Soldiers, not motorcycles or cars. Whether on- or off-duty, the consequences of risky behavior are high, and leaders have to show their Soldiers they're serious about safety and the enforcement of standards.

I had just redeployed from Afghanistan with the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, when I received notification of my assignment at Fort Rucker, Ala. After spending a year in some of the harshest environments on earth and flying and driving hundreds of thousands of miles, every single one of our men and women came home to their families and loved ones. This didn't happen because I was their sergeant major or because every Soldier acted safely all the time; it happened

because leaders did their jobs. We had a culture in which leaders were empowered to make tough decisions, Soldiers knew they were held to the standards, and communication flowed effectively between ranks and organizations.

I share that story with you because it proves leaders can develop a culture of safety and still execute their units' most critical tasks. Although our Soldiers were limited in what they could do off-duty, there was plenty of opportu-

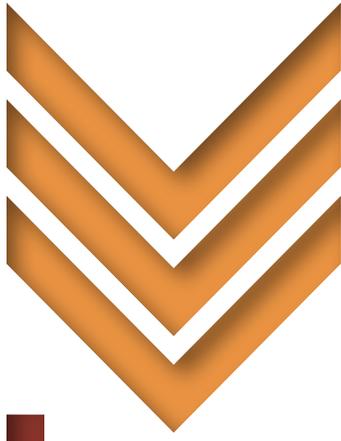


Command Sgt. Maj. Richard D. Stidley assumes his responsibilities as the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center on Aug. 8 at a ceremony at Fort Rucker, Ala. PHOTO BY ART POWELL

nity for indiscipline to creep in on the roads of and in the air over Afghanistan.

None of our Soldiers is perfect and some might argue we were simply blessed, but there's no doubt that commitment to safety and standards played the biggest role in our success. People have to be the priority; you can replace equipment, but you can't replace a Soldier. ♡

Command Sgt. Maj. Richard D. Stidley is the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center, Fort Rucker, Ala.



FRONT IN

News and
information
NCOs need to

**BE,
KNOW,
DO**

NCO JOURNAL

DoD opens more jobs to women

Positions include those closer to combat units

BY KAREN PARRISH
American Forces Press Service

The Army announced Feb. 9 a broadening of opportunities for female Soldiers, something the service's chief of staff said is meant to take better advantage of all the talent in uniform.

Six military occupational specialties have now opened to female Soldiers. The MOSs were previously closed to women because they were normally co-located with direct combat units. Additionally, other MOSs that had been open to women only at brigade level or above now will be open to female Soldiers at the battalion level.

"To me, it's about talent management," Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, chief of staff of the Army, told an audience of lawmakers and congressional staffers Feb. 9. "It's about using our best talent in the best positions, and I don't ever want to limit our ability and hinder the talent that we have in our Army."

Defense Department officials said the policy changes reflect both women's increased roles in and out of combat and the fact that war is no longer linear. Those changes will result in more than 14,000 new jobs or assignment opportunities for military women.

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta "is making these changes because he recognizes that over the last decade of war, women have contributed in unprecedented ways to the military's mission," George Little, a Pentagon press secretary, told reporters Feb. 9.

Women service members have put their lives on the line and demonstrated courage, patriotism and skill in defending the nation, Little said.

"But even as we make this announcement, I would like to stress that Secretary Panetta knows this is the beginning, not the end, of a process," he added.

The services will continue to review positions and requirements to determine what additional positions may be opened to



women, Little said. "Our goal is to ensure that the mission is met with the best qualified and most capable people, regardless of gender," he said.

The changes follow a departmentwide review of policies affecting women's job assignments in the military.

"Opening these positions implements lessons from over a decade at war, where women were proven exceptionally capable and indispensable to mission accomplishment," said Virginia "Vee" Penrod, deputy assistant secretary for military personnel policy.

She said the review panel worked to identify the changes "needed to ensure female members have an equitable opportunity to compete and excel in the U.S. armed forces."

The policy limiting women's military assignments dates to 1994 and lists four factors that ban women from assignments or jobs: prohibitive costs for lodging and privacy; the requirement to locate and remain with direct ground combat units; units engaged in long range reconnaissance and special operations forces missions; and job-related physical requirements that "exclude the vast majority of women service members."

Department leaders agreed the provision against locating with combat units no longer applies, Penrod noted.

Penrod said lifting the location-based prohibition opens 13,139 new Army jobs to women, because the Army is the only service that identified positions that had been closed solely because of where they took place.

The second change is not a new policy but may lead to one, Penrod said. The Defense Department has granted the Army, Navy and Marines a policy exception to selectively assign women to battalion-level combat units.

The services will gain experience through those assignments that will help department leaders assess the current prohibition's relevance and "inform potential future policy changes," Penrod said.

The report also takes aim at the provision

◀ **Spc. Amanda Vasquez of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, renders a salute Sept. 5, 2009, during the presentation of the colors at an event at Forward Operating Base Marez in Mosul, Iraq.** PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN

KAMAILE CHAN

BY THE NUMBERS

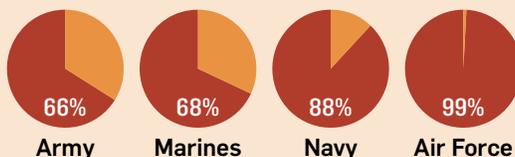
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The numbers of women Soldiers who have been **killed** and **wounded** in combat and non-combat incidents in Iraq and Afghanistan.

280,000

Number of **women who have served** in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last decade out of **2.3 million total veterans**.

Percentage of jobs previously **open to women**:



SOURCE: DEFENSE.GOV

excluding women from jobs because of physical requirements, she noted. The services are working to develop gender-neutral physical standards based on the tasks troops perform on the job, Penrod said.

"This is an area of emphasis for us as we move forward beyond the initial steps reported as part of this review," she added.

According to the report, the Defense Department will evaluate gender-restricted, physically demanding jobs once gender-neutral physical standards are developed. ♣

C. Todd Lopez of the Army News Service contributed to this report.

New MOSs for women

- 13M** Multiple Launch Rocket System crewmember
- 13P** MLRS operations/fire direction specialist
- 13R** Field artillery Firefinder radar operator specialist
- 91A** M1 Abrams Tank System maintainer
- 91M** Bradley Fighting Vehicle System maintainer
- 91P** Artillery mechanic

Army to replace 2 brigades in Europe with rotating units

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said Jan. 12 that the Army will withdraw two brigade combat teams from Europe while retaining a strong presence in the region via rotational units. The change is part of a new, 10-year defense strategy announced in January that emphasizes air-sea doctrine to better allow the United States to confront more than one threat at a time. Panetta said he is excited about the prospect of using rotating units, just as Special Forces and the Marine Corps do. "Conducting exercises providing, most of all, a partnership with countries in Latin America, Africa, and other countries where we can show the flag" is important, he said. More: <http://j.mp/ma12europe>

Imminent danger pay will now be prorated

Service members now will receive imminent danger pay only for days they actually spend in hazardous areas, Pentagon officials said. The change, which took effect Feb. 1, was included in the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, which President Barack Obama signed into law Dec. 31. The act called for paying service members imminent danger pay only for the time they spend in areas that qualify for the pay. In the past, service members received \$225 per month if they spent any time that month in an area where the pay was authorized. Now, service members will receive \$7.50 for each day spent in these areas. More: <http://j.mp/ma12danger>

Dietary supplements pulled from Exchanges

The Department of Defense has implemented a temporary moratorium on the sales of products containing dimethylamylamine, commonly referred to as DMAA, within military facilities. The moratorium will remain in ef-

BRIEFS CONT. ON PAGE 7 →

Budget aim: smaller, more agile force

Proposal includes pay increases and more training seats

BY C. TODD LOPEZ
Army News Service

Despite cutbacks, the Army's fiscal year 2013 budget request includes a pay increase of 1.7 percent for Soldiers, as well as allowance increases of 3.9 percent for housing and 3.4 percent for subsistence.

"The fiscal year 2013 [budget] reflects some hard and difficult choices," said Maj. Gen. Phillip E. McGhee, director of the Army's budget. Nevertheless, he said, "the Army will remain the best-led, best-trained, best-equipped ground force in the world."

The fiscal year 2013 budget request supports the all-volunteer force, and has "wise investments" in modernization programs, McGhee said. There are about eight program cancellations, however. Also, the budget supports operations in Afghanistan and funds the reset of equipment that came out of Iraq and what is planned to come out of Afghanistan.

The Army requested \$184.6 billion in this year's budget — about \$18 billion less than what the Army received in fiscal year 2012. Of that, about \$134.6 billion is part of the

"base" request for the generating force. An additional \$50 billion is to support overseas contingency operations, such as the war in Afghanistan.

In the base budget, the largest portion is aimed at military personnel, about 42 percent, or \$56.4 billion dollars. An additional \$47.2 billion is aimed at operations and maintenance, known as "O&M," and \$25.7 billion for procurement. Within the overseas contingency operations, budget, about 58 percent is targeted at operations and maintenance.

Within the O&M budget request, there is a \$7 billion decrease from what the Army received last year. Also in the O&M is \$15.4 billion to provide trained and ready forces to win the current fight and sustain readiness. That includes \$8 billion to support air and ground operations.

"It also funds additional training seats and professional military education, because we have so many Soldiers that are at home station now and are available to train," McGhee said.

The O&M funding also includes \$1.7 billion for Soldier and family programs, including Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, sexual harassment prevention and education programs, and the Army substance abuse and suicide prevention programs. About \$1.6 billion is also included for recruiting and initial military training for officers and enlisted personnel, and about \$4.1 billion for training of officers, NCOs and civilians.

Regarding the O&M funding for overseas contingency operations, the Army planned for a reduction of 25,400 Soldiers by September 2012, and for steady state of 41,000 Soldiers in fiscal year 2013.

The eight programs terminated in this year's budget should help the Army recognize a savings of \$5 billion in total over five years. The canceled programs include the Enhanced Medium Altitude Reconnaissance System aircraft and the base-funded Humvee recap program. Also, the Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles program will be canceled as well as the Mounted Soldier System program and the Joint Precision Approach and Landing System. Many other Army programs have also been downsized.

The Army asked for about \$19.6 billion in procurement for fiscal year 2013. Within aircraft procurement, for instance, the service requested about \$6.3 billion, which "reflects the tremendous demand on aviation assets. We remain committed to aircraft modernization," said Barbara L. Bonessa, deputy director of the Army's budget.

Included in aircraft modernization, is \$1.4 billion for

BUDGET CONTINUES ON PAGE 8 →

Proposed in the new budget



THE ARMY would eliminate the equivalent of eight brigade combat teams. It would also reduce the size of its force by 0.9% next year to 1,115,300, going to a 6.8% reduction in 2017.



THE NAVY would eliminate seven cruisers and two dock-landing ships. It would also reduce the size of its force by 1.7% next year to 385,000, going to a 3.9% reduction in 2017.



THE MARINE CORPS would eliminate one infantry regiment headquarters, five infantry battalions, one artillery battalion, four tactical air squadrons and one combat logistics battalion. It would reduce the size of its force by 2% next year to 236,900, going to an 8.3% reduction in 2017.



THE AIR FORCE eliminates six combat-coded fighter squadrons, one noncombat-coded fighter squadron and 303 aircraft. It would reduce the size of its force by 1.9% next year to 501,000, going to a 2.3% reduction in 2017.

Speaking out against bad acts

Each day, NCOs share their knowledge and experience on NCO Net (<https://nconet.army.mil>) the official forum for NCOs. Summarized here are some recent exchanges:

It's easy after events like the recent scandal — involving Marines who urinated on dead Taliban fighters — to talk about how leadership failed. But what about everyone else present during events like those who know it is wrong? If every member of the unit, regardless of rank, has a responsibility to take corrective action when leaders fail to act, how do we empower junior enlisted to speak up?

- ▶ "Soldiers from the lowest to the highest grade levels should be informed of the tools available to prevent incidents such as this one. One such tool is the Military Whistleblower Protection Act as stated in U.S Code, Title 10, Sec. 1034. Soldiers should be educated that the MWPA provides legal protection to service members from becoming victims of reprisal or retaliation for making a statement via a protected means of communication."
— **SGT. 1ST CLASS JOSE BARRIGA**, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas
- ▶ "Every Soldier has an obligation to speak up and report when they see or feel that an action is wrong. We can do all the education and face-to-face talks we want, but until you remove the fear of unofficial-type reprisal, we are fighting an uphill battle. If Pvt. Snuffy sees someone with many years of experience doing something wrong — someone he has to serve with and fight alongside — how apt is he to put himself into a position of being the odd man out?"
— **SGT. CHARLES CRANFORD**, Officer Candidate School small group leader, 3rd Battalion, 183rd Regiment (Regional Training Institute), Blackstone, Va.
- ▶ "In the United States Army — especially in the United States Army Reserve — unchecked power has been bestowed upon all leaders, and the 'chain of command' has been treated as an absolute that can never be disregarded, regardless of circumstance or other moral principle. The answer for everything that a Soldier finds to be wrong or in need of correction is to 'utilize your chain of command.' Unfortunately, if the chain of command is the source of the problem, this ensures the problem never is corrected."
— **SGT. 1ST CLASS DOUGLAS JOHNSON**, 13th TASS Battalion, 5th Brigade, 95th Training Division, U.S. Army Reserve, San Antonio, Texas

I would like to know how, as a BSB operations sergeant, I can track my battalion's NCOs as they complete Structured Self-Development.

- ▶ "The Army Career Tracker is the place to go to track your Soldiers and mentees, receive profiled communication from your proponent, and receive detailed individual education and training information. Here is how it works: Log in to ACT (<https://actnow.army.mil>) and choose your first-line leader (your rater); you may choose only one. You may select as many mentors as you wish. For example, if you are a platoon sergeant, you have four squad leaders. Each of the four squad leaders will choose you as a leader. Each of their Soldiers will then choose you as a mentor. In doing so, you will have total oversight of your formation with regards to their training, career opportunities, professional goals and education (including SSD). You will also have the ability to make recommendations to each Soldier."
— **MASTER SGT. PENNY BELL**, senior military training analyst, TRADOC
— **COMPILED AND EDITED BY JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER**

fect pending further review of relevant scientific evidence and reported events, officials said. Recent reports show that two Soldier deaths and additional adverse health effects in other service members, including kidney and liver damage, may be related to the use of dietary supplements containing DMAA.

More: <http://j.mp/ma12dmaa>

More prescription drugs added to screens

The Defense Department's drug-testing program is expanding to add screening for two additional prescription medications to the range of legal and illegal drugs it currently detects. Joe Angello, the department's director of operational readiness and safety, said the two drugs added to the screening program — hydrocodone and benzodiazepines — are nationally among the most abused prescription drugs now on the market. The program already tests for codeine and morphine, he noted. Angello said the new screenings were announced 90 days before they would take effect, which is unprecedented in the more than 40 years since military drug testing began. The memorandum went out Feb. 2.

More: <http://j.mp/ma12screen>

Ceremony discontinues Accessions Command

In a Jan. 18 ceremony at Fort Knox, Ky., the U.S. Army Accessions Command was officially discontinued. Gen. Robert Cone, commander of Training and Doctrine Command, explained how vital Accessions Command's mission was for the 10 years of its existence — 10 years of recruiting for a nation at war. "Accessions Command provided the Army with its most precious assets — its Soldiers," he said. "I'm counting on you, U.S. Army Recruiting Command and Cadet Command, to continue with the same patience and energy."

More: <http://j.mp/ma12acc> 📌

UPDATE

Study: Master Resilience Training is proving effective

BY DAVID VERGUN Army News Service

The Master Resilience Training aspect of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is working well. That's the conclusion of an Army report, released in December, that covered a 15-month period of statistical evaluation.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, or CSF, was launched in 2009 to teach Soldiers how to be psychologically strong in the face of adversity, such as combat. The program, also available to family members and Department of the Army civilians, was designed at the University of Pennsylvania by behavioral specialists using proven research-based methodologies.

Within CSF, all Soldiers are required to complete each year the Global Assessment Tool, an online questionnaire that measures a Soldier's psychological health. The GAT scores give Soldiers an indicator of where they are strong and where they can improve. Those needing improvement can take Comprehensive Resilience Modules, which are online tutorials, or seek professional counseling.

GAT scores are confidential but the results are aggregated for statistical purposes, such as for use in the recently

released *Longitudinal Analysis of the Impact of Master Resilience Training on Self-Reported Resilience and Psychological Health Data*.

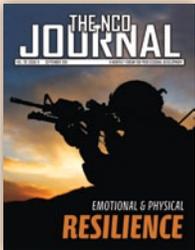
MRT is the second aspect of CSF. Master resilience trainers are Soldiers and Army civilians who are graduates of the 10-day MRT course taught at the University of Pennsylvania; Victory University at Fort Jackson, S.C.; or by mobile training teams. The trainers teach leaders to instill resilience in subordinates, meaning they help fellow Soldiers learn to bounce back from adversity.

The study evaluated GAT scores of eight randomly selected brigade combat teams. Four received MRT and four did not. Over the 15-month period, scores of the four BCTs receiving the training were significantly higher than the others, irrespective of other variables, such as unit leadership and cohesion.

"This report represents a significant milestone with respect to the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program and the Army's broader efforts to develop a more resilient and capable force," then-Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, who retired in February as the Army's vice chief of staff, wrote in the report's forward. "It is my hope that this report will spark fruitful discussions leading to new and improved ways we may help our Soldiers, Army civilians and family members to improve their overall psychological health."

The study has demonstrated the program's success, said Brig. Gen. Jim Pasquarette, the CSF program director.

"I believe this is something we're going to have forever, similar to physical training," Pasquarett said. "We believe this will save us money through prevention (because) it helps our Soldiers, family members and Department of the Army civilians deal with adversity in their life and more importantly — thrive in their lives." ♡



Previously in the NCO Journal

Read our earlier report on the Master Resilience Trainer Course in the September 2011 issue of the *NCO Journal*, downloadable at <http://j.mp/ncoj-mrt>.

← BUDGET CONTINUES FROM PAGE 6

the Chinook, \$1.2 billion for the Black Hawk, and \$1.2 billion for Apache procurement, Bonessa said. An additional \$518 million is requested for 19 additional unmanned Gray Eagle systems to support two more companies, for a total of 17 companies.

Within the overseas contingency operations budget is a \$486 million request for two Apache, six Chinook and 16 Kiowa Warrior helicopters to replace aircraft lost or damaged in current operations.

Within missile and ammunition procurement, the Army asked for about \$2 billion to support ongoing missile programs, including the Patriot Advanced Missile Capability-3 program, which includes funding requests for 84

missiles and 38 launchers. For tracked vehicles, the Army asked for \$1.5 billion — \$379 million for Strykers, \$204 million for Abrams tanks and \$184 million for Bradley fighting vehicle modifications.

The Army also asks for \$8.3 billion to support the Army network, tactical wheeled-vehicle modernization, and night vision and thermal vision weapons sights.

The Army is also asking for \$8.9 billion for research, development testing and evaluation — an increase over last year's appropriation. Included in that is \$640 million for the Ground Combat Vehicle. ♡

► Read the full budget documents at <http://j.mp/ma12budget>

Next step to next generation of camo

5 vendors vie to replace the Army Combat Uniform's pattern

BY C. TODD LOPEZ
Army News Service

The Army is one step closer to selecting a set of camouflage patterns that could replace what Soldiers are wearing now in most places.

As part of the “Phase IV” camouflage effort, the Army this week awarded contracts to five vendors — selected from an initial 20 — to each provide enough fabric in the new camouflage patterns they have developed to produce 150 uniforms for the Army to test.

Each vendor had been asked to produce a “family of camouflage patterns,” including one that would be suitable in a woodland environment, one that would be suitable in a desert environment, and one that would work in a “transitional” environment.

The Army will spend the next nine months testing the effectiveness of those patterns.

“To really have confidence in being able to make a recommendation to senior leaders, we need to do field trials,” said Col. William Cole, of Program Executive Office Soldier. “We are looking forward to getting out into the woods, into the deserts, into the transitional areas and having real Soldiers wear these uniforms and have real Soldiers observe them.”

Cole said the Army will use both real-world testing in varying terrains and conditions, as well as more advanced computer testing to evaluate the patterns.

“We’re going to put them through the ringer,” he said.

Because of the varying types of terrain Soldiers operate in, Cole said, the Army had found that “we can’t really have one pattern that is as effective as we’d like in every single terrain type.”

Today, most Soldiers wear the Army Combat Uniform. The ACU bears the Universal Camouflage Pattern, the familiar gray-green “digital” pattern. In Afghanistan, Soldiers also have the Operation Enduring Freedom Camouflage Pattern, or OCP, available for wear.

The vendors, which include the Army’s Natick Soldier Research, Development and Engineering Center, each developed three patterns with the same geometry — the shapes on the fabric — but with different color palettes.



Additionally, the vendors were to develop a fourth “coordinated” pattern, or designate one of the three already in their family of patterns, that would work well with all three patterns. That fourth pattern would be used on organizational clothing and individual equipment, or OCIE.

Cole said that OCIE — things like belts, protective vests, ruck sacks and plate carriers — are more expensive than a Soldier’s regular uniform. The Army doesn’t want to maintain OCIE in each of the three patterns, so instead the Army will have it in one pattern that looks good with all three of the uniform pattern variants.

Cole said that by October, PEO Soldier will have completed testing of the patterns and will be able to make recommendations to Army senior leadership.

“There’s a lot to do between now and October, but that’s our plan,” Cole said. “Complete the field trials and complete the more sensitive computer simulations and come back to senior leaders in October and lay out the results of what we found and have a recommendation.”

▲ A Soldier wearing the Operation Enduring Freedom Camouflage Pattern, or OCP, uses an M14 Enhanced Battle Rifle. The OCP pattern was developed to help Soldiers blend in better in Afghanistan. Now the Army is developing a new set of uniform patterns for all Soldiers as part of the Phase IV camouflage effort. U.S. ARMY PHOTO

True-to-life training

New simulation rounds let Soldiers practice with the same weapon they'll use downrange

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

When Soldiers enter the training environment, it's important that their experience is as close as possible to situations they'll encounter in combat. The Army has invested a considerable amount of money to make training more realistic to better help Soldiers when they deploy.

Units gearing up for combat have used equipment as varied as Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement Systems — laser tag-like devices commonly referred to as MILES gear — and paintball weapons to provide a realistic training environment.

Lately, the Army has invested in Ultimate Training Munitions technology. With this new training gear, the bolts of Soldiers' M4s are changed out, allowing them to train with the same weapon they'll carry downrange. But neither the training bolt nor the training magazine can be used with live rounds, making training safer.

Sgt. Maj. Corbett Whitmore, the 1st Armored Division's 2011 Expert Infantry Badge qualification event president, used this technology during EIB qualifications Dec. 12–16 at Fort Bliss, Texas.

"Nothing is a better reinforcement than pain," Whit-

more said. "And if you get hit, then you know you got hit. With MILES, you get a beep, but you don't know how you got hit or where you got hit. Out here, if you get hit in the arm, you get an arm injury and you have to assess that. If you get hit in the chest, then it's a kill. It's instant feedback, and it's a lot more accurate than using a paintball gun."

“It's instant feedback, and it's a lot more accurate than using a paintball gun.”

— SGT. MAJ. CORBETT WHITMORE

Sgt. Caleb Clark, the ammunition NCO for the 1st Armored Division's EIB qualification event, said the new technology allows Soldiers to continue training even if they've been hit.

"The biggest difference between the old ammo and this new stuff is the velocity," Clark said. "The old stuff had a higher velocity; it flew at 750 to 800 feet per second. This is only 325 to 350 feet per second. It hurts a lot less. Guys would get pretty serious types of injuries from the old [simulation] rounds."

Though the UTM rounds are designed to provide realistic training, Soldiers are required to wear a face mask, eye protection and gloves when operating with or around the equipment. In addition, they must clean their weapon with a clean, dry cloth instead of using oil.

"[The bullet is] like lipstick; it gets pushed forward, and it marks," Clark said. "The old stuff had liquid inside it and it had to burst on impact. When it would freeze, it would be frozen hard, it wouldn't work right, and it hurt a lot worse. This stuff, they can heat it to 160 degrees, and they can freeze it down to 20 below. It's still going to work."

The new UTM rounds are available now through Training Support Centers Armywide. Units can draw the rounds from their local ammunition supply point. ♡

◀ Staff Sgt. Steve Reyes of "Fox" Company, 51st Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, demonstrates the capabilities of realistic training Dec. 13 during an Expert Infantry Badge qualification event at Fort Bliss, Texas. PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON



Social media misuse a UCMJ offense

BY CHERYL RODEWIG Fort Benning Bayonet

Soldiers who post on social media sites at work, at home or by a mobile device must abide by the terms outlined in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

“Commenting, posting or linking to material that violates the UCMJ or basic rules of Soldier conduct is prohibited,” said Staff Sgt. Dale Sweetnam of the Online and Social Media Division, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs. “It’s never appropriate to be disrespectful of superior officers or NCOs, no matter if you’re in the company area or posting to Facebook at home.”

Five articles in the UCMJ deal specifically with different aspects of inappropriate behavior in public. They are Articles 88, 89, 91, 133 and 134.

“It is important that all Soldiers know that once they log on to a social media platform, they still represent the Army,” Sweetnam said. “The best way to think about it is if you wouldn’t say it in formation or to your leader’s face, don’t say it online.

Determining how to punish or reprimand Soldiers for social media misuse is up to command leadership, he said.

“Punishment can range anywhere from a letter of reprimand to an Article 15 and up to a court-martial, depending on the severity of the violation,” said Capt. Steve Szymanski, senior trial counsel with the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at Fort Benning, Ga.

Soldiers are still free to express themselves through social media based on their First Amendment rights, Szymanski said. However, Soldiers should be aware that they are subject to the UCMJ at all times and that ill-advised postings can result in legal action. ♡



Soldiers who smoke have higher injury risk, reduced endurance

BY CHANEL S. WEAVER
U.S. Army Public Health Command

Most Soldiers know that smoking cigarettes can eventually cause lung cancer and emphysema, but one does not have to wait 20 or 30 years to experience adverse effects.

Nearly one-third of active-duty service members smoke, and that figure increases among troops in a combat zone, according to a 2008 Department of Defense survey.

Multiple studies by U.S. Army Public Health Command scientists show that smoking has immediate health effects, such as increased injury risk and diminished physical performance.

“Past studies of Army basic trainees show the risk of injuries among Soldiers who smoke was as much as 90 percent higher than nonsmokers,” said Michelle Chervak, senior epidemiologist at the USAPHC. “We can definitely say that smokers have a greater risk of any injury, and more specifically, overuse injuries [during] repetitive activities such as running.”

USAPHC studies have also demonstrated that smoking negatively impacts muscle endurance. “Our data show that smokers perform fewer pushups and situps on the Army Physical Fitness Test,” Chervak said.

Smoking can also affect mission readiness. USAPHC

studies have shown that Soldiers who use tobacco have reduced night vision and mental sharpness, and increased risk of heat and cold injuries.

Likewise, smoking causes reduced blood flow to the extremities, which leads to more heat and cold injuries as the body is unable to cool and warm them, especially fingers and toes.

The financial costs of smoking are also significant. A recent *Army Times* article stated that tobacco use costs the Pentagon \$846 million a year in medical care and lost productivity.

For those who wish to reduce smoking, there is good news. USAPHC studies show that the risk of a heart attack decreases 24 hours after stopping smoking and, after one tobacco-free year, the risk for heart disease is one-half that of smokers.

Because the nicotine in cigarettes is so addictive, quitting the habit is not easy. But those who wish to quit smoking should not be discouraged, said Col. Heidi Warrington, chief nurse executive at the USAPHC.

“Any reduction in tobacco use is considered a success,” Warrington said. “Soldiers who are having trouble quitting should focus on reducing the amount of cigarettes they smoke, with an ultimate goal of achieving a tobacco-free lifestyle.” ♡

TOOLKIT

Voting in elections

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

Soldiers have gone to Iraq and Afghanistan to defend American interests and support the democracies emerging there. But many Soldiers will fail to execute their constitutional right and won't vote in this November's election, Army officials say.

Soldiers downrange or stationed in Korea and Germany will have to plan ahead to ensure their absentee ballots get counted in time. The Army has designated voting assistance officers down to the company level to help Soldiers exercise their right to vote. And the Federal Assistance Voter Program provides expatriates and military members resources to help them vote absentee.

"The Federal Voting Assistance Program has more than 5,000 Soldiers facilitating the voter program in the Army to ensure every Soldier's vote counts," said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Willison, a senior human resources sergeant at Human Resources Command and the voting assistance officer for Soldier programs.

NCOs should lead by example when it comes to voting in U.S. elections, Willison said. It's important that NCOs know the programs and tools in place to ensure every Soldier has a voice and can vote, even when he

By the numbers

The Federal Voting Assistance Program publishes a report after every election that compares military voting behaviors with those in the previous election cycle. The 2010 post-election report shows a few trends in military voting patterns:

24% Increase in military voters casting ballots

27% Increase in military voters receiving ballots

29% Military who never received their ballots

or she is downrange. Being deployed makes certain things more difficult, but NCOs can allot enough time — at least 45 days before the election — to ensure their Soldiers' votes will count, he said.

"In my experience downrange, Soldiers will have a computer or will have access to one. From there, it's easy to download a pre-paid envelope, print it and print off your ballot, and vote," Willison said. "And if a Soldier needs help, the voting assistance officer is there to provide support."

Moreover, Soldiers also have access to programs and websites that they can share with their voting-age family members, Willison said.

All Soldiers, whether stateside or downrange, can download federal absentee voting ballots if their local election officials haven't sent them one. Otherwise, at least 45 days before the election, Soldiers should receive their absentee ballots if they have followed the process and if their local election officials have responded to their requests for an absentee ballot.

◀ During a unit voting assistance drive May 22, 2008, Soldiers overseas register to vote. U.S. ARMY PHOTO



Campaigning do's and don'ts

Each election season, the Army reminds Soldiers and Army civilians that there should be a distinction between one's professional capacity and one's personal activities.

Specific examples of what a Soldier can and can't do:

- ✔ **DO REGISTER TO VOTE** This is actively endorsed and supported by the Army, and there are resources available in every unit to ensure all Soldiers are able to vote.
- ✔ **DO WRITE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** so long as you include a disclaimer that the views expressed are your personal opinion and not the official stance of the Army.
- ✔ **DO ATTEND POLITICAL FUNCTIONS WHEN OUT OF UNIFORM**, including fundraising activities, meetings, rallies, debates and conventions.
- ✘ **DON'T SOLICIT VOTES** for a particular candidate or issue while on duty. Soldiers cannot campaign or perform campaign functions during working hours.
- ✘ **DON'T WEAR MILITARY UNIFORMS** at political, campaign or election events unless acting as part of the official joint armed forces color guard at the opening ceremonies of the parties' national conventions.
- ✘ **DON'T SPEAK BEFORE A PARTISAN POLITICAL GATHERING** while on duty or while in uniform.
- ✘ **DON'T SELL TICKETS** or promote political dinners and fundraising events while on duty, in uniform or on post.
- ✘ **DON'T PARTICIPATE IN RADIO, TELEVISION OR OTHER PROGRAM** discussions or groups as an advocate for or against a partisan political party, candidate or cause.
- ✘ **DON'T CONDUCT POLITICAL OPINION SURVEYS** under the auspices of a partisan political club or distribute partisan political literature while on duty.
- ✘ **DON'T ALLOW USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF SOLDIERS IN UNIFORM** in campaign media, including billboards, brochures, websites or television commercials.

This year, no Soldier has an excuse to not vote in the presidential election, Willison said.

"I encourage all Soldiers to get out and vote," Willison said. "I would say it's the responsibility of NCOs to ensure their Soldiers understand their rights and to encourage their junior Soldiers to vote." ♣

▶ **NEXT MONTH: ARMY DOCTRINE STRATEGY**

Ways to ensure your vote counts

- ▶ **REGISTER EARLY** If you are unsure which state you are allowed to vote in, consult your voting assistance officer. Usually, it is the state of your home of record.
- ▶ **UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS** If you are moving, deploying or in the process of either, be sure to update the address where you want your absentee ballot to be sent.
- ▶ **PRINT OUT THE FORMS** You can go online and print of the ballots at www.fvap.gov for all national elections, if you haven't received your absentee ballot by mid-September.
- ▶ **VOTE!** You can vote as soon as you receive or print off your election forms.
- ▶ **MAIL YOUR ABSENTEE BALLOT** Send your absentee ballot back to your state and local elections officials to ensure your vote counts. You can return your ballot anytime as long as it is returned by the first Tuesday in November — Nov. 6 this year — but the Federal Voting Assistance Program suggests mailing the absentee ballot at least 45 days before the election.

Registering to vote

- ▶ **FVAP.GOV:** The Federal Voting Assistance Program gives service members and their families resources they need to vote. Since registration can vary from state to state, it's important that service members follow the voting guidelines for the state they are either registered in or are a resident of. This website provides information specifically for those who are looking to vote absentee.
- ▶ **CANIVOTE.ORG:** Most states require that you register weeks before you vote. This website gives a breakdown of who can vote, where you can register and what information you'll need to cast your ballot.
- ▶ **IN YOUR COMPANY:** For additional information, voting assistance officers are available in each company to ensure that absentee voting materials are ordered for their units.

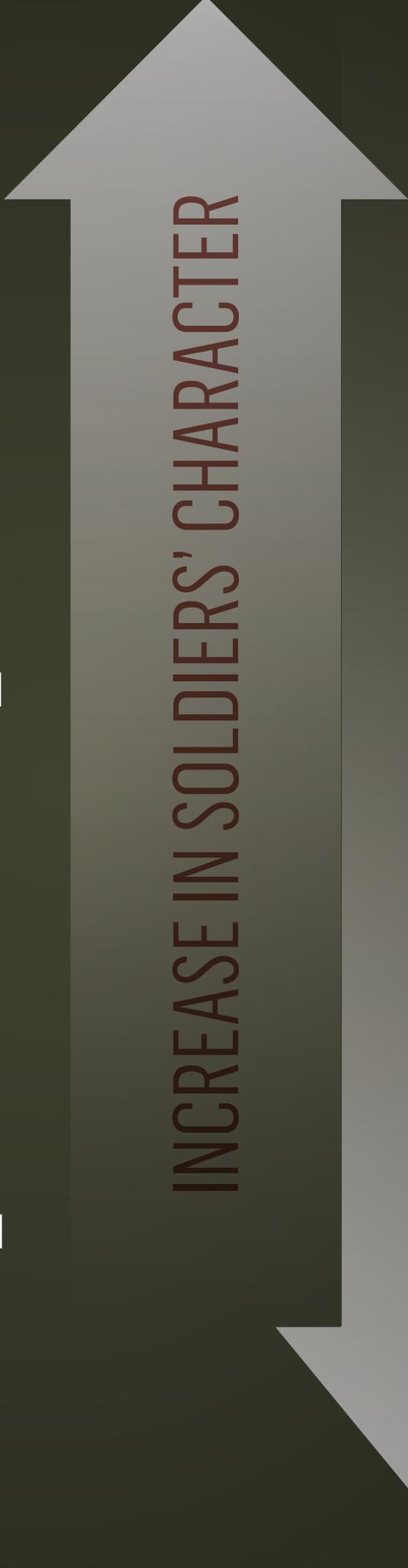


Retaining

THE BEST

Transitioning

THE REST



INCREASE IN SOLDIERS' CHARACTER



DECREASE IN TROOP LEVELS

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

During the next five years, the Army plans to reduce the active-duty force from 570,000 to 490,000 by taking a look at who should stay and who should go. Soldiers who wish to remain in the Army will need to be committed and flexible. **One in 10 Soldiers** currently serving will be affected by the drawdown.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III said the drawdown will impact all ranks of Soldiers from throughout the Army.

“The number one thing I want people to understand about this drawdown is that this is going to affect one in 10 people in our Army,” Chandler said. “When you think about a squad, about nine people, almost one person per squad is not going to be in the Army in five years.”

To implement those cuts in personnel, the Army will recruit less, retain fewer Soldiers and reduce the force through retention control points and early retirement for some Soldiers.

“We’re going to cut as many Soldiers as we need to meet the Army’s end strength,” Chandler said. “For those people currently serving, there will be a tougher future to try to stay in the service. We’re going to look at our retirement-eligible population, and some of those Soldiers are going to be asked to leave before their mandatory retirement date.”

Tougher retention

In addition, sergeants and staff sergeants already have tougher retention control points. Retention control points allow the Army to stipulate how long a Soldier can serve in a particular rank. The tougher restrictions, implemented in June 2011, weren’t put in place as a part of the drawdown. Rather, they were enacted to set higher standards and help quality Soldiers progress in their career, Chandler said. The new retention control points are 13 years for sergeant and 15 years for staff sergeant. These retention control points affect only those who are up for re-enlistment; they do not include Soldiers who already have a retirement date.

“We changed the retention control points for sergeants and staff sergeants so they will serve less time at their current grade than they have in the past,” Chandler said. “That might impact about 2,000 Soldiers in the next five years.”

Though tougher restrictions are being implemented for sergeants and staff sergeants, the Army plans to decrease the numbers in all its ranks, Chandler said.

“It is across-the-board cuts,” Chandler said. “We are

not targeting one specific rank. We are reducing the size of the Army overall. It will impact everyone from private to sergeant major.”

Axing brigades, but not their Soldiers

The Army is still in the process of figuring out how to implement the drawdown. No plan has yet been put forth about what the future force will look like in regard to which military occupational specialties will be in demand or which brigades will be deactivated, Chandler said.

“Brigades are going to maintain a certain size; we’re not going to say everyone from brigade X is going to be let go out of the service, but brigade Y is going to stay in,” Chandler said. “We’ll manage the drawdown across the Army. There will be some brigades that will no longer be in the Army structure in the future. But as an Army, we expect the brigades we retain to be fully manned, trained and equipped.”

The Army will continue to retain qualified, competent and proficient Soldiers, Chandler said. But it will enforce standards more strictly, and those Soldiers with discipline problems will disappear from the ranks.

“Service is a privilege,” Chandler said. “It’s a privilege; it’s not a right. You’ve got to continuously work hard to truly posture yourself as someone who is among the best, and those ways that we determine who are among the best are all common knowledge for those who are in the Army. They’re performance indicators that get you promoted, and they’re discipline and conduct issues that get you in trouble.”

It’s not just junior enlisted Soldiers who will have to

“Service is a privilege ... it’s not a right. You’ve got to continuously work hard to truly posture yourself as someone who is among the best.”

— SGT. MAJ. OF THE ARMY RAYMOND F. CHANDLER III



The Army will be going from **570,000** to about **490,000** Soldiers. Soldier numbers will be depleted through less recruiting, less retention and early retirement.

worry about disciplinary issues, Chandler said.

“If you don’t perform satisfactorily, you risk your ability to continue to serve, no matter what your rank is,” Chandler said. “But if you’re a person who strives for excellence, who tries to get better every day, you will definitely have opportunities in the Army.”

The criteria for qualified Soldiers, for their promotions and for their potential among their peers won’t change, Chandler said. But the Army is going to go back to focusing on the whole Soldier.

“We focus a lot on competence in our Army — how well you shoot your weapon, how well you do on [physical training], how many awards you have, your civilian education, your military education — those are all very important criteria,” Chandler said. “Those are still going to be important

criteria and one of the many ways we measure whether you are among the best. But it’s also two other areas, which may be more intangible — character and commitment. Those are going to be a really big part of [evaluating] the professional Soldier of the future.”

NCOs’ counseling roles

Commanders and their NCOs will have the biggest impact in deciding who will stay and who will go, Chandler said. The Army G-1 has decided that commanders, mostly colonels, will determine which Soldiers have the greatest potential and ability to meet the needs of the Army.

“In March 2012, the re-enlistment window opens for Soldiers who ETS in fiscal year 2013,” the letter on retention signed by Chandler, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno and Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh reads. “Army commands, Army service component commands, and direct reporting units will establish brigade-level re-enlistment objectives, and, just like the past, commanders will be directed to retain a percentage of the eligible population. However, unlike the past, commanders will not exceed this objective.

“This is not intended to be a race to meet the target ... it is about retaining quality and keeping the right Soldiers in the Army,” the letter says.

Brigade-level commanders and above will be given a retention mission, which includes a specific number of how many re-enlistments are authorized based on the strength and balance of particular MOSs. Commanders will not retain more than the number of Soldiers allotted to them by Army G-1. However, they will have some flexibility to retain quality Soldiers in over-strength MOSs by allowing their qualified Soldiers to re-train to other MOSs. Part of this process includes reviewing those Soldiers’ evaluation reports and counseling statements.

“When determining which Soldiers are best for retention, commanders should use the ‘whole Soldier’ concept, including attributes, competencies, leadership potential, adherence to standards, duty performance and evaluations that demonstrate ability to serve in any MOS,” the letter reads. “Under this concept, some Soldiers will be required to reclassify from overstrength career fields to understrength or balanced ones to meet Army requirements.

“It is imperative that commanders and command sergeants major ensure Soldiers receive performance counseling, as this will be one of the key tools of determining retention,” the letter continues. “Tough decisions are ahead. Some fully qualified Soldiers will be denied re-enlistment. To be successful, leaders at all levels must be personally involved in the

Bars to re-enlistment

As of March 1, staff sergeants and above not serving on an indefinite re-enlistment contract will be considered unqualified if their Official Military Personnel File contains any of the following:

- ▶ Relief-for-Cause Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report
- ▶ “No” listed in Part IV (Army Values/Attributes/Skills/Actions)
- ▶ A senior rater rating of 4 (fair) or 5 (poor) in Part V (Overall performance and potential) of an NCOER
- ▶ Academic Evaluation Report indicates a failure in an NCO Education System course

Commanders will also initiate a bar to re-enlistment against Soldiers for the following reasons:

- ▶ Loss of primary military occupational specialty qualification due to the fault of the Soldier
- ▶ Soldier denied Command List Integration for promotion by unit commander
- ▶ An incident involving the use of illegal drugs or alcohol within the current enlistment/re-enlistment period resulting in an officially filed letter of reprimand; a guilty finding under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice; a civilian criminal conviction; or a conviction by court-martial
- ▶ Two or more separate proceedings under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice resulting in a guilty finding by a field-grade commander during the Soldier’s current enlistment or period of service
- ▶ Soldier absent without leave more than 96 hours during the current enlistment/re-enlistment period

retention program. Commanders must carefully assess their Soldiers and ensure only our best Soldiers are retained to meet the needs of our Army.”

Though primarily an officer’s duty, NCOs have an obligation to show their commander who is proficient and who is not being professional.

“Noncommissioned officers play a huge role in helping that commander identify who really are the best performers and the people who have the best future potential,” Chandler said. “And that happens through counseling, through observations, and through that engaged dialogue and conversation with your Soldiers about where they want to be and where you expect them to go. It’s coaching, teaching and mentoring.

“I’m expecting all NCOs to be involved in this process, but the three NCOs who I hold personally responsible for helping to shape the Army are that company’s first sergeant, battalion sergeant major and brigade command sergeant major.”

Chandler said those three NCOs will most help shape the commander’s retention decisions.

“The first sergeant is really the NCO who has the last direct influence on Soldiers,” Chandler said. “The first sergeant is the father or mother of the unit. They have got to understand and know the Soldiers who are in their company. They have to ensure that standards are being met, that discipline is being enforced, that counseling is taking place, and that their subordinate leaders, specifically platoon sergeants and squad leaders, are engaged with their Soldiers.

“The battalion sergeant major is the one who is going to influence how programs and policies for our Army are going to actually be enforced within that battalion formation.

“Because we’re a brigade-centric Army, the brigade sergeant major is the one who is going to put it all together, who is going to help us shape it. They’re the right level of leadership to make sure we get to where we want to be in the Army.”

Soldiers who want to stay in the Army need to be prepared to answer two questions, Chandler said. Do they still want to serve? And are they willing to change their MOS?

“If a Soldier can’t answer both of those questions — ‘Yes, I am willing to serve’ and ‘Yes, I’m willing to serve at the needs of the Army’ — it’s going to be very difficult, if not impossible, for them to stay in the Army,” Chandler said. “We’re not going to re-enlist people for no reason.”



Newly promoted sergeants of the Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, recite the Charge of the U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer during an NCO Induction Ceremony on June 28. At the ceremony, 24 Soldiers were officially inducted into the time-honored NCO Corps. PHOTO BY SGT. ANDREA MERRITT

Recruiting a smaller force

U.S. Army Recruiting Command has already begun preparing for a smaller Army. Only those who meet the highest qualifications will be allowed to serve, said Command Sgt. Maj. Todd Moore, command sergeant major of USAREC.

“The qualifications for the Soldiers we’re bringing in right now are at an all-time high — in academics, morals and fitness,” Moore said.

USAREC stopped giving behavioral waivers — those required for potential recruits with a pattern of misconduct in their background checks — more than a year ago. Recruiters now also require would-be Soldiers to have high school diplomas.

“There’s always going to be opportunity in today’s Army for young people of high quality,” Moore said. “The number of waivers is extremely low; today, 99 percent of our recruits have a high school diploma or equivalent.”

“The qualification for the Soldiers we’re bringing in right now is at an all-time high — in academics, morals and fitness.”

— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. TODD MOORE

The Army will retain **quality Soldiers** in needed MOSs or outstanding Soldiers willing to learn a needed MOS. Qualified Soldiers will have a place in the Army, Chandler said.



Paratroopers assigned to 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, recite the oath of re-enlistment April 23, 2009, during a ceremony in Baghdad. The ceremony marked the squadron meeting its retention goals. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JAMES SELESNICK

Though fewer recruits will be needed, USAREC will continue to perform outreach programs to ensure the Army is represented in communities across the United States, Moore said.

“Recruiting Command is the Army in many communities throughout the United States where we don’t have installations and bases,” Moore said. “The things we do with outreach — educating America, changing lifestyles and those types of activities — aren’t going to change, especially as you look for the more-qualified citizens to serve.”

Managing the drawdown

Ultimately, the drawdown will be managed through multiple channels — retention, recruiting and retirement. The smaller Army will be a more professional one, Chandler said, as the Army seeks to purge its less-than-professional Soldiers from the ranks and focuses its efforts of mentoring Soldiers with the potential to be tomorrow’s leaders.

“I personally believe that we can manage our drawdown by focusing on those underperforming or poor-performing Soldiers and those Soldiers who show a pattern of misconduct,” Chandler said. “If we focus on those folks who do not measure up to who we say we are as an Army, along with normal attrition, we’ll be fine as an Army. We don’t have to

Old Army

Unconstrained environment, where any and everyone who met the basic standards or had waivers was eligible to serve.

Re-enlist all eligible Soldiers, including those who required waivers to be eligible.

Period of growth involved growing the Army by more than 70,000 Soldiers in the last 5 years.

New Army

Constrained environment, where commanders make the call to ensure they retain their best Soldiers.

Retain only the most qualified as determined by commanders, mostly colonels.

Period of drawdown includes reducing the size of the Army by at least 50,000 Soldiers in the next five years.

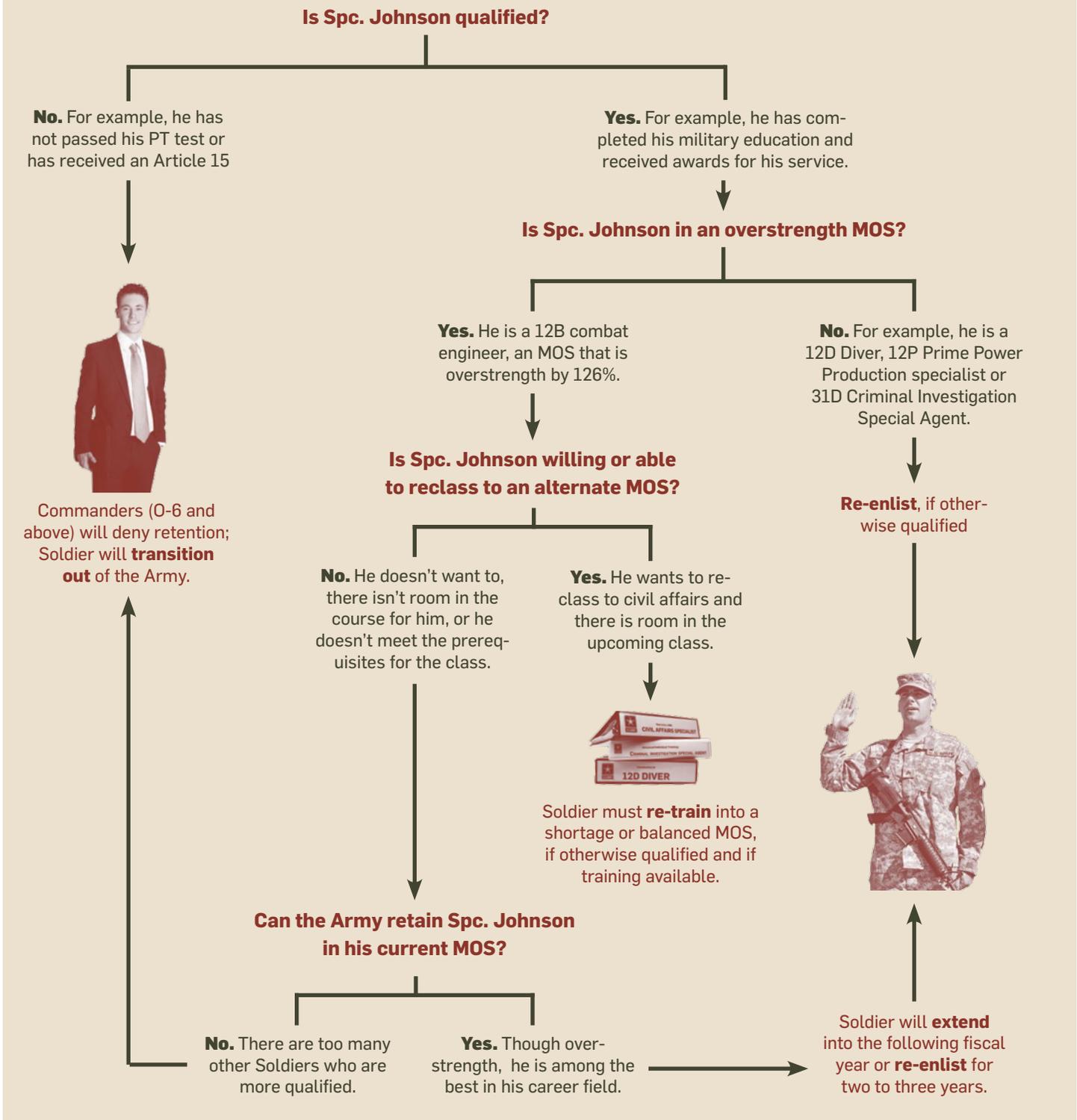
implement any more-Draconian measures.”

The drawdown comes as the Army completes its mission in Iraq and focuses on winning in Afghanistan; after 10 years of war, the Army is switching gears, moving from the need to grow the Army to reducing it to its pre-Global War on Terrorism levels, Chandler said.

“A lot of people talk about the drawdown and think it’s going to be a gigantic challenge for the Army,” Chandler said. “In some ways it is; we’re fighting a war, we’re deploying Soldiers, we have incredible strain on our force. But this is an opportunity for us to seek out and retain the best-

Example: Spc. Johnson up for re-enlistment

Spc. Joe Johnson is a 12B combat engineer with basic military education, a high school diploma and a civil engineer certificate. He has deployed for 12 months and has received an Army Commendation Medal and two Army Achievement Medals. According to his NCO Evaluation Report, Johnson has a high performance potential and lives the Army Values. He's currently in an MOS that is overstrength at 126%. Below charts how a commander might decide whether Spc. Johnson can re-enlist.

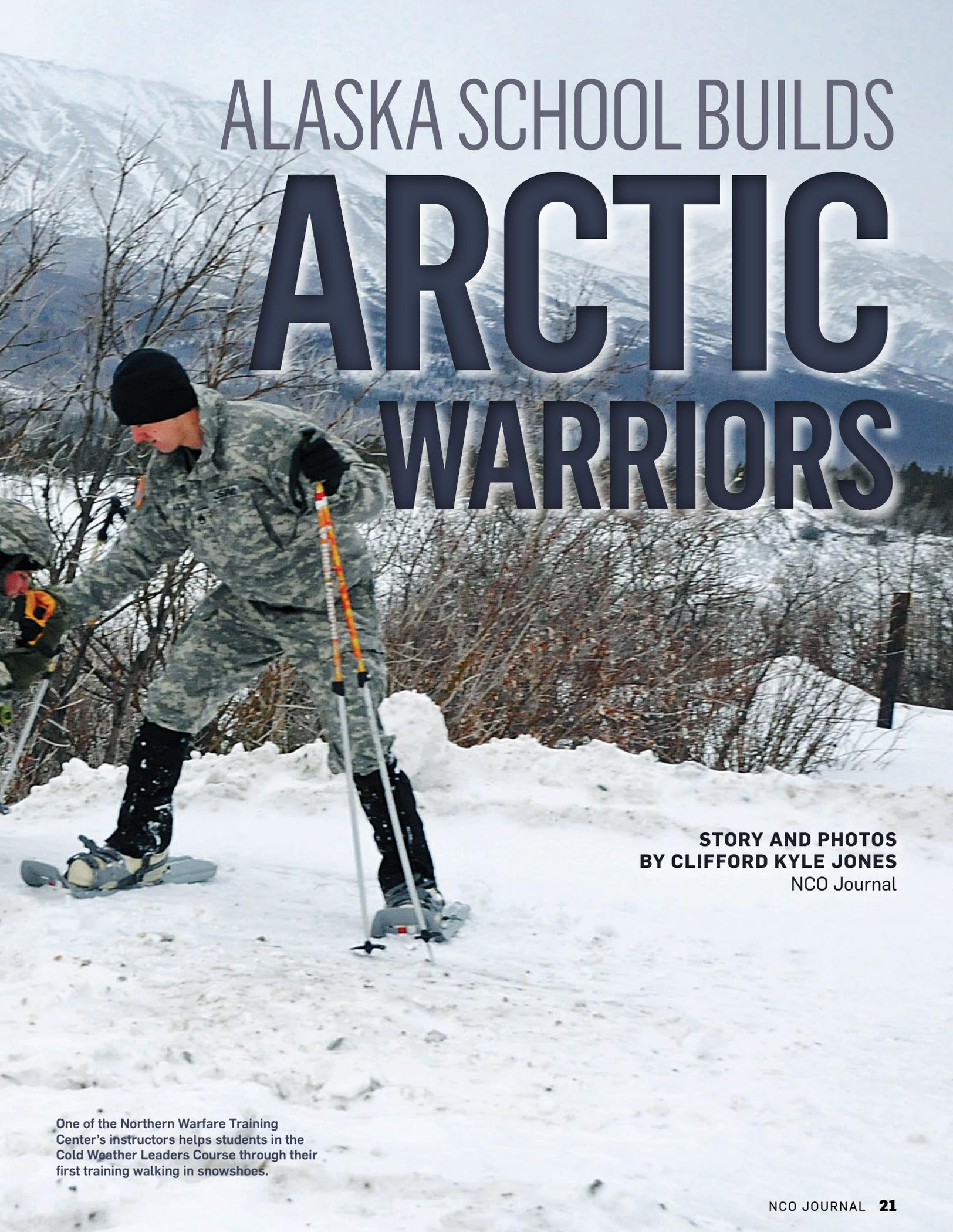


qualified people for our Army and for the nation. It's our obligation to do that. And as sergeant major of the Army, my expectation is that NCOs are doing what they're supposed to do: to counsel their Soldiers, to develop their Soldiers

and to help their Soldiers get better. And I'm also expecting them to enforce standards and discipline.”

To contact Jennifer Mattson, email jennifer.mattson@us.army.mil.





ALASKA SCHOOL BUILDS ARCTIC WARRIORS

**STORY AND PHOTOS
BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES**
NCO Journal

One of the Northern Warfare Training Center's instructors helps students in the Cold Weather Leaders Course through their first training walking in snowshoes.



Above: One of the students in December's Cold Weather Leaders Course at the Northern Warfare Training Center's Black Rapids Training Site, near Fort Greely, Alaska, skis along the trail of the course's last event, a 10-kilometer biathlon.

Opposite page: Another student takes part in the biathlon on snowshoes instead of skis.

Want to prepare your unit for the challenges it might face in the mountains of Afghanistan? Or protect your Soldiers from the dangers of a freezing cold snap in Korea? You can see firsthand how experts deal with arctic conditions and mountainous terrain at the Northern Warfare Training Center's Black Rapid Training Site in Alaska. And the center's instructors can tell you not only how to overcome tough climates and landscapes, but also how to use them to your advantage.

The NWTC, which is based at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, has had many

names, and its mission has changed somewhat over the years since first being organized in Alaska, shortly after World War II. The NWTC, though, has remained one of the few sites within the Department of Defense that offers service members the chance to gain expertise in coping with harsh temperatures, precipitation and terrain, as well as how to conduct successful operations in these challenging conditions.

Soldiers stationed with units based in Alaska automatically benefit from such training. But the instruction available at the NWTC can be a boon to Soldiers throughout the Army.

The NWTC offers several regular

courses throughout the year, including the Cold Weather Leaders Course and the Basic Mountaineering Course. The CWLC primarily targets corporals through sergeants first class, as well as platoon-level officers. The 13-day course, during much of which students will be outside braving the elements, is intended to give graduates the tools they need to ensure their Soldiers are using their gear properly to protect themselves from the cold and know how to move themselves and their equipment across the snow and ice.

The BMC, intended for the same ranks, is a 15-day course that teaches Soldiers how to traverse rough, elevat-



ed terrain using the basic principles of knots, anchors and rope bridges, as well as how to prevent and treat altitude illness.

Shorter courses — the Cold Weather Orientation Course and the Mountain Warfare Orientation Course — are intended to familiarize higher-ranking NCOs and officers with the importance of cold-weather and mountain training, and how to successfully conduct operations in those environments.

The center's NCO in charge, 1st Sgt. Tom Dow, said the vast majority of the students come from U.S. Army Alaska, or USARAK, but that's because of "a lack of knowledge" about the school in the Lower 48 — "not knowing this place is up here and what we have to offer," he said.

However, word about the school is

starting to get out, Dow said.

"We've had several [Special Forces] teams come up lately and get personalized training. And I think we've had five guys from the 101st [Airborne Division]. So the word is starting to spread that we exist," he said. "Korea is interested. They're trying to start up an [Arctic Light Individual Training] program to combat some of their cold-weather injuries — they're having a spike in cold-weather injuries. Also 10th Mountain [Division] has been talking to us."

ALIT is a USARAK program intended to train Soldiers to operate safely and effectively in arctic environments. The NWTC's cold-weather courses prepare Soldiers to develop and implement ALIT training programs back at their units.

SET UP TRAINING

Interested in setting up training for your unit at the Northern Warfare Training Center? Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Simmons, the center's training NCOIC, says it's as simple as calling or emailing the center's cadre or leadership and explaining what you want to learn.

"Tell us what you're strong in. Tell us what you're weak in," Simmons said. "From that, we'll build a course to suit your unit's needs."

Designing a course depends on the specifications, but typically the process takes a few months. Visit www.wainwright.army.mil/nwtc/.



Above: CWLC students learn how to haul an ahkio sled before learning how to set up their campsite. **Below:** A Northern Warfare Training Center instructor shows students the contents of their ahkio sled, including tents and tools.

One of the biggest reasons to conduct ALIT programs — and a major emphasis of the CWLC — is preventing cold-weather injuries. The Black Rapids Training Site, which is south of Fort Greely, Alaska, routinely reaches temperatures of minus 30 and minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Even simple actions become difficult when Soldiers must wear two sets of gloves and juggle several other layers of clothing to prevent dangerous moisture being trapped against their skin.

Even the standard method of firing a weapon doesn't work, said Staff Sgt. Gene MacKenzie, an NWTTC instructor.

In his presentation on ALIT during December's CWLC, MacKenzie recounted that when he arrived at Fort Wainwright in January 1998, it was his first duty station. His sergeant, who had a different philosophy about ALIT than the Army has now, told him then, "If you don't get frostbite or a cold weather injury, you're not a true arctic warrior."

As a result, MacKenzie's first exposure to "ALIT" consisted of spending the night outside in a sleeping bag wearing only his "skivvies," he said, and then helping treat some of the Soldiers in his squad for frostbite in



the morning.

And when he and his squad were at the range a few weeks later, he learned another lesson the hard way.

"In basic training, what do they teach you to do with your rifle when you shoot?" MacKenzie asked the December CWLC students. After several of the approximately 80 students responded, MacKenzie said, "That's right: 'Nose on the charging handle.'"

But it was about 50 below zero outside, MacKenzie said. So after firing a few rounds, he couldn't remove his

nose and cheek from the metal of the rifle. "So I just pulled, and [my rifle] took part of my nose with it."

That was his introduction to contact frostbite. Metal quickly cools to the temperature of the air around it, and when bare skin is exposed to that metal, instant injury can occur. It can happen firing a weapon, putting your hand on a vehicle as you climb in or picking up a trash can lid.

That's why whenever CWLC students step outside, they are required to wear contact gloves — a light set that

provide some protection while still allowing some dexterity, but can be worn under a thicker set in extreme cold.

With that sort of risk, uniform guidance takes on a whole new import.

“If you’re not following the uniform guidance, that’s a safety issue,” Dow told the students at the beginning of the course. “And if it’s brought to my attention or the commander’s attention that you’re a safety violation, then we’re going to process whether you need to stay here or go back to your unit.”

When there is enough demand, the center also offers its Assault Climbers Course, which trains Soldiers on more advanced mountaineering skills. And the center is capable of crafting programs based on the needs of individual units. For instance, this winter, the center’s instructors led dozens of members of a Special Forces unit from Fort Carson, Colo., through over-snow mobility training and basic mountaineering techniques.

The center’s leadership and cadre hope more units will take advantage of the expertise available at the Black Rapids Training Site. The training can be valuable for units heading to Afghanistan or other areas around the world regularly affected by the cold, such as South Korea or Germany. However, it can also be useful for units closer to home. Such places as Fort Drum, N.Y.; Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Bragg, N.C.; and Fort Campbell, Ky., have severe winters and report a number of cold-weather injuries each year. But even less-obvious locations, such as Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Sill, Okla., can see a disturbing number of injuries from the cold.

“Anyone who’s going to have to operate in a cold environment for sure can benefit from the courses,” said Maj. Gary McDonald, the center’s commander. “So anybody up north — the 10th Mountain Division [at Fort Drum], the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea and Fort Lewis, Wash., as well — can definitely benefit from this. But even units at Hood have something to gain — learn about the cold weather. Every winter, the Army man-



CWLC students practice walking along hilly trails in snowshoes.

dates that you do cold weather training with your units; it doesn’t matter where you’re at. ... Well, this is the place to come to build your subject-matter experts. And those [SMEs] need to exist at the squad level; that needs to be your team leaders and your [staff sergeants]

because they’re the ones who have the most contact with Soldiers. They’re able to spread that knowledge over the largest breadth of people.”

Sgt. Mahuad Abdulrahman, a team leader with the 10th Special Forces Group at Fort Carson, was one of the

HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN WARFARE TRAINING CENTER



ORIGINS Some phase of almost every conflict in which the United States has been engaged was fought in mountains or cold, or both. However, specialized training of units for cold weather and mountain warfare was not seriously undertaken until the approach of World War II.

WWII In 1942, the Mountain Training Center commenced operations at Camp Hale, Colo. Its primary accomplishment was training the 10th Mountain Division for its future role fighting in the mountains of Italy, but it also sent training detachments across the United States.

few students from outside Alaska during the Cold Weather Leaders Course in December. He definitely saw the benefits of the course.

“It was a good experience,” he said. “There was a lot of good information — training, how to deal with the cold weather, the effects on equipment and batteries.”

Before the end of the course, he was already preparing to use the information when he got back to Colorado.

“We actually have some training coming up,” he said. “We’re going to be out in the cold doing a cold weather exercise, so this is a carryover into that. We can take it back, teach the Soldiers the same thing that we use out here.”

In addition to learning how to prevent cold-weather injuries, CWLC students are trained on how to analyze the weather and evaluate the terrain; manage risks; plan over-snow movements; use snowshoes; haul an ahkio sled; set up tents and use stoves safely inside them; improvise shelters; maintain vehicles, weapons and other equipment in the cold; avoid the risks of avalanches; and conduct basic search and rescue in snowy and mountainous environments.

It’s a lot of information to convey in under two weeks, and in addition to completing all the assigned tasks during that time, students must pass a written exam covering all the material before being presented their “arctic” tabs, a locally authorized patch in USARAK for graduates of the NWTC.

Fortunately, Dow noted, the NWTC has great instructors, most of them infantrymen like himself.

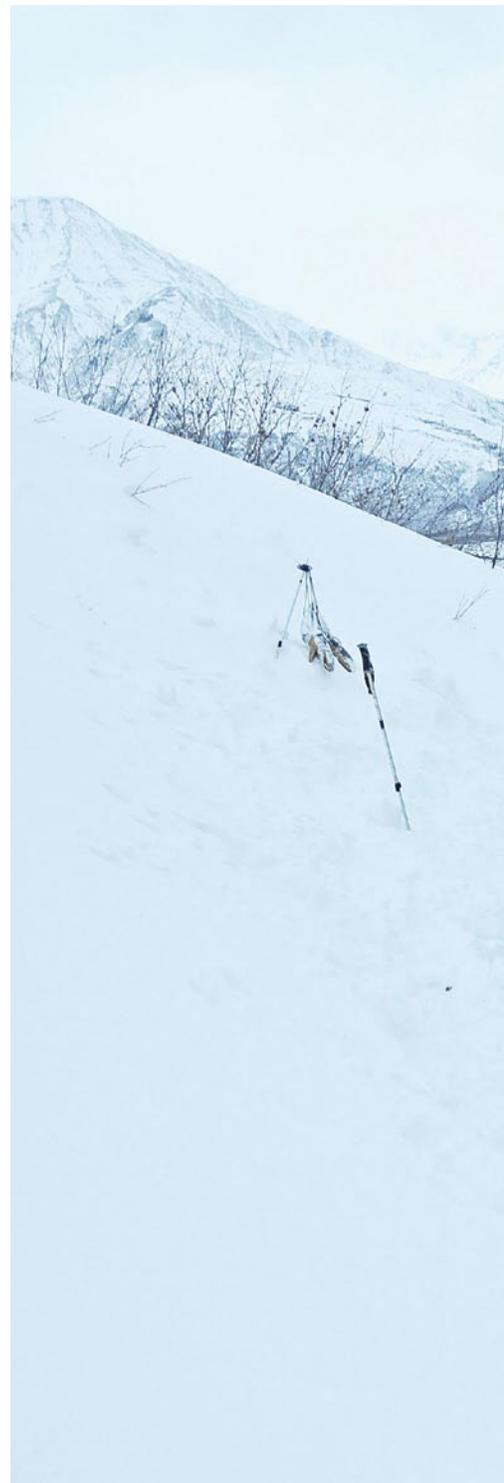
“We try to have instructors for three years,” Dow said. “Generally, we pull them from another unit in Alaska, and usually they have a lot of experience training already. They’re all 11B [infantryman] slots, but we have MPs in here, and we have some fire support guys. [The mix] helps; it gives us a good background. I’m kind of partial to the 11Bs, but all the instructors do a phenomenal job.”

The NWTC’s training NCOIC, Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Simmons, said the center’s instructors are diligent about working together and with their leadership to provide the best possible training. The NWTC is allotted 20 slots for instructors, he said, but less than three-quarters of those slots were filled this winter. However, the NWTC cadre was a careful mix of third-year, second-year and first-year instructors, so that the experienced crew can assist the newer Soldiers and share what works and what doesn’t.

“Because our cadre have been together for a while, they know the training, they know what works, they know how to implement, and they know how to train,” Simmons said.

This passing of knowledge happens both formally and informally, in chats in the office after classes or on the slopes.

“Every night, when we’re in class and even when we’re not in class, we have a meeting and go over what we think went well and what we think we could have done better,” Simmons said. “We don’t always agree on everything, but we find out what is best for the organization and we make it happen



As part of their training, CWLC students learn basic rescue and recovery techniques. In this simulated avalanche rescue, students prod the ground in search of “victims,” bags that have been stashed beneath the snow.

POST-WAR At the end of World War II, the center was moved to Camp Carson, Colo. In 1948, a school for arctic operations was organized at Big Delta, Alaska, later named Fort Greely. In July 1949, the Army Arctic School was redesignated the Army Arctic Indoctrination School.

1950s Training in mountain and cold weather operations were conducted simultaneously at Camp Carson and Fort Greely until 1957, when total responsibility for cold weather and mountain training was transferred to Alaska. It became the U.S. Army Cold Weather and Mountain School.

MODERN ERA In 1963, the Army shifted training from individuals to units. The school was redesignated the Northern Warfare Training Center and still maintains the Army's cold-weather and mountain warfare training and develops tactics and techniques for such operations.





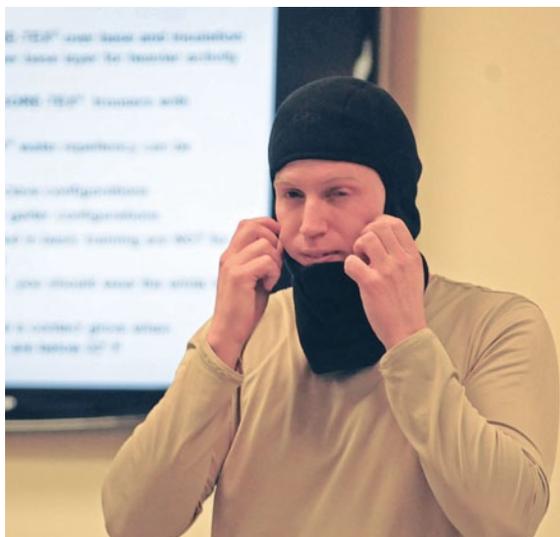
Above: After clearing and packing an area to prepare a campsite, CWLC students learn how to set up a tent. The students would spend seven of the course's 12 nights outside in the 10-man tents. **Below:** An NWTC instructor pulls on his balaclava to demonstrate one of the three ways it can be worn during a classroom course on the proper use of the Generation III Extended Climate Warfighter Clothing System.

— through communication and having those different mindsets. You can't just have somebody who's going to constantly agree with everything; you've got to have that difference of opinion. Everybody here is opinionated, especially when it comes to this. Most of them like to mountaineer. They love the cold weather. They love to ski. The majority of the time, these instructors, when we're not in class, they're skiing, snowmobiling, mountain climbing, or climbing on the glaciers — doing outdoorsy things to further enhance their skills."

The students get to ski, too. A lot. Some of the center's instructors have heard some students complain that they ski too much.

But at least one student wasn't complaining.

"The skiing was great. It's probably



one of the greatest schools I've been to, just for that simple fact," said Sgt. Alexander Houser, a team leader in the 23rd Sapper Company, 6th Engineering Battalion, 2nd Engineer Brigade, at Joint Base Richardson-Elmendorf, Alaska. "It's pretty much a free ski les-

son. I couldn't do it before; now I can. I'm not saying I got good, but I'm comfortable on them."

Houser attended the CWLC in December after attending the Basic Mountaineering Course last summer. Even with his previous experience at the school, the physical demands of the CWLC surprised him.

"I wasn't expecting it to be as active as it was," he said. "We did a lot of moving around, and I'm surprised that my silkweights held up so much — that's mostly what I wore. It's definitely a smoker."

Dow said Houser's newfound faith in his undergarments and the rest of his uniform is one of the most important elements of the lessons at the school.

"We teach people confidence in equipment," Dow said. "A lot of people — a lot of the younger NCOs, and

even some of the senior NCOs — don't really know how to fully use the equipment that we have. Then they get out here and test the equipment, and they see that it actually works. That's one of the best things that I see from the winter courses."

Finding out just how well their uniform items work is just one of the things students learn about their equipment. They put their skis, snowshoes, rescue equipment, tents and stoves to the test in rigorous training and exercises that include spending seven nights outside, several days hitting the slopes and a 10-kilometer biathlon that some students ski and others snowshoe.

The demands on the students are intense, but the demands on the instructors are even more strenuous. Part of the reason the NWTC doesn't have more of its allotted spots filled is because sometimes Soldiers don't work out in those instructor slots.

"There's no guarantee that, just because you come here, you're going to be an instructor, because you have to go through instructor qualification courses. If you don't make it, then you can't be an instructor," Simmons said. "You have to be a qualified instructor here to instruct, and it's pretty hard."

The center is selective about who it taps to be an instructor, so even being selected is difficult.

"We'll look at their [Enlisted Record Briefs], we'll screen their records, we'll talk to their chain of command, see what type of Soldier they are, because we only want high-caliber Soldiers here — who want to train, who want to succeed, who want to pass their skill set off to other people — so we look at all of that. And then if we have a warm and fuzzy about them we bring them aboard, try them out," he said.

The center looks at "where they've been, their different duty stations, the different schools they've been to," Simmons said. "We also look at [General Technical] scores — does somebody have the potential to comprehend everything? Because, if you look at what we teach, the instructors have to know everything. And the cold-weather courses are a smaller portion of what we teach. If you go into mountaineering, it's a whole lot more classes that



A CWLC student prepares to ride the ski lift during the first day of ski training at the NWTC.

they have to learn and be proficient in and instruct.

"We look at character, too. Does somebody have the drive? Do they want to be here? Do they want to advance? We don't want people who want to be stagnant. We want to progress. ... We're looking for people who want to continue to push themselves and push the people around them. So that way, we as instructors and as an organization don't get lazy. We just want to keep excelling."

And the students reap the benefits. Houser said, "It's definitely one hell of an experience. The instructors have been great. They're really calm. They just sit with you, and say, 'Ok, this is how you do this if you want to

survive."

Houser had wanted to attend the CWLC since he arrived at Fort Richardson and noticed his platoon sergeant's arctic tab.

"All my friends and I said, 'Ooh, I want that,'" he said. "I've just been waiting to get the rank to come here."

And now that he's completed his second course at the NWTC, Houser can't wait to come back.

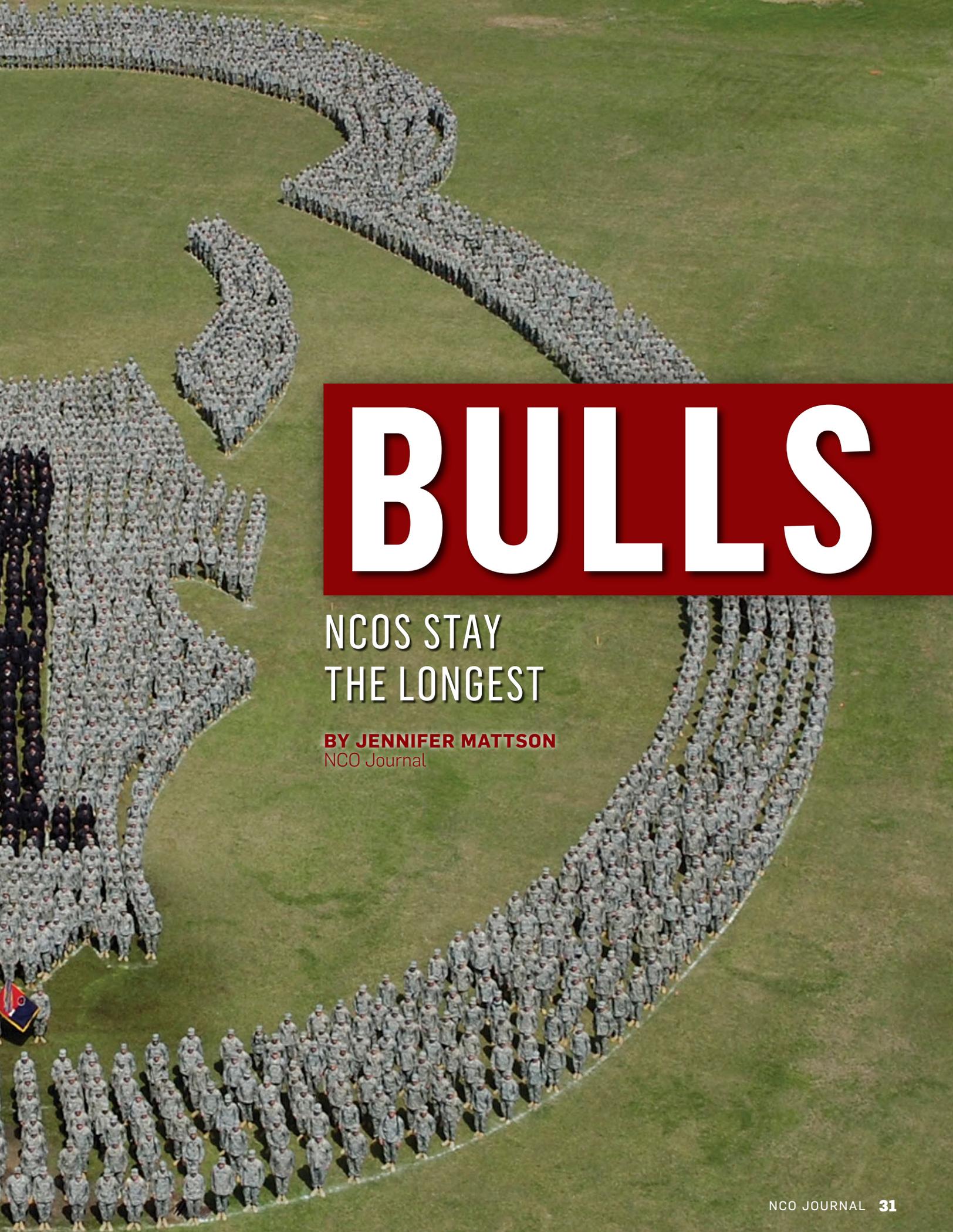
"This is probably one of the most unusual schoolhouses I've ever been to," he said. "I actually want to come back and do the Assault Climbers Course." ❖

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An aerial photograph of a large formation of soldiers in grey uniforms on a green field. The soldiers are arranged in a large, stylized number '34'. The '3' is formed by a long, winding line of soldiers. The '4' is formed by a more complex arrangement of soldiers, with a section of the right side of the '4' formed by soldiers in black uniforms. In the bottom right corner of the formation, a small group of soldiers is holding an American flag. The word 'RED' is overlaid in large white letters on a red rectangular background across the middle of the image.

RED

THE 34TH INFANTRY
DIVISION'S



BULLS

NCOS STAY
THE LONGEST

BY JENNIFER MATTSON
NCO Journal



Previous pages: Soldiers of the 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, pose in the shape of the unit crest March 14, 2006, at Camp Shelby, Miss. PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS CLINTON WOOD

Above: An artistic rendering of the Red Bulls fighting in the winter line at Pantano, Italy. The battle took place from Nov. 28 to Dec. 3, 1943. PAINTING BY DONNA NEARY

Though the requirement for National Guard Soldiers is two weekends a month and two weeks a year, the Soldiers of the 34th Infantry Division have a legacy of staying around and seeing the fight through. The “Red Bulls” held the line the longest during World War II: They saw 517 days of continuous combat. In March 2006, their tour to Iraq was extended during the troop surge, and they were deployed for a total of 22 months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. One of those tours was the longest of any division deployed to Iraq.

Most Red Bull Soldiers come from

the Iowa National Guard and the Minnesota National Guard, but the division also has subordinate units in Idaho, Wisconsin, Wyoming and North Dakota. It is headquartered in Rosemont, Minn. All together, the division comprises approximately 23,000 National Guard Soldiers.

Staff Sgt. Eric Ebner, an unmanned aerial vehicle operator with 34th Infantry Division Headquarters Company, recounted seeing a memorial to the Red Bulls at Camp Ripley, Minn., where the names of fallen Soldiers were etched in black glass.

“From all the way back when the first Minnesotans volunteered to fight in the Civil War, to World War II, to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan,

across the wall are the names and faces of our fallen,” Ebner said. “Most all volunteered; they knew what they were getting themselves into, and they went. They put their best foot forward. They went knowing the worst could happen, and they did it without complaining.”

The tradition of the Red Bulls citizen-Soldiers has deep, historical roots. These Soldiers work and live in their communities; they put on the uniform once a month and two weeks a year at a minimum, but the Red Bulls don’t have a tradition of doing the minimum. These National Guard Soldiers rise to the occasion, helping their communities during natural disasters, protecting key assets from terrorist attacks and fighting America’s wars abroad, often exceeding their expectations as Guardsmen.

The Beginning

The 34th Infantry Division’s subordinate units can trace their lineage

back to the Civil War, when the Minnesota National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment, was the first volunteer regiment to offer its services to President Abraham Lincoln. The 34th Division was constituted later, in August 1917. Though activated for World War I and deployed to France, the division arrived too late to see combat. It was inactivated in December 1918.

World War II

When World War II broke out, the 34th ID was the first division to deploy overseas. Its first stop was Belfast, Northern Ireland, where it supplied 80 percent of the initial recruits for the newly formed Ranger Regiment, headed by one of the division's officers, Capt. William Darby. From the British Isles, the Red Bulls served in North Africa, Italy and the Philippines.

The 34th ID helped conduct Operation Torch, a three-pronged series of Allied landings in Nazi-occupied French North Africa. The 34th Infantry Division landed and fought in Algiers; from there the division joined with other Allied forces and headed east to Tunisia.

Staff Sgt. William Handt, a mechanic for wheeled vehicles who has served with the Red Bulls for 18 years, said World War II provided a defining moment in the history of the division. The 34th ID was given the task of taking Hill 609 (Djebel Tahent), which was strategically located between the ports of Tunis and Bizerte in present-

day Tunisia. The Germans were reinforcing their troops in Tunisia with personnel and supplies from Sicily, Italy.

"The other units couldn't take the hill," Handt said. "But the division — the fight and determination of the Minnesota Soldier — that's what took the hill."

After taking Tunisia, the Red Bulls headed for Italy. The 34th ID helped supply other Allied troops as they took Sicily and Salerno. In Italy, the Red Bulls fought in Monte Pantano, San Vittore, Monte Chiaia, Monte Trocchio and the Rapido River. The 34th tried, unsuccessfully, to breach the Gustav Line, a chain of German defenses along the Italian peninsula above Naples.

Failing to capture the Gustav Line, the Red Bulls tried to gain access through Anzio in February 1944. They finally broke the line in March 1944 and drove with other Allied troops to Rome. From Rome, the division pushed inward, up the Italian boot. The Red Bulls' final offensive was mounted in April 1945, when remnants of the German Corps, including the 34th German Division, surrendered to the Red Bulls near Milan.

The opposing Germans gave the division its most common moniker, calling 34th ID Soldiers "Red Bulls" for the patch on their sleeves.

Between wars

The division was inactivated in 1945 when it returned from World War II. In 1946, the division was reorganized with

Red Bull Soldiers discuss plans to maneuver into Pacha Khak village, Afghanistan, while conducting a dismounted patrol April 7, 2011. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE 34TH INFANTRY DIVISION



RED BULLS TIMELINE

August 1917 The division is created from National Guard troops in Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska and the Dakotas

Feb. 10, 1941 Division mobilized for World War II and begins training exercises at Camp Claiborne, La.

Jan. 26, 1942 The 34th Infantry Division becomes first American division to deploy overseas during World War II

Nov. 8, 1942 The 34th ID participates in Operation Torch by landing in French North Africa and fighting German troops stationed there

May 23, 1944 The 34th ID's Staff Sgt. George J. Hall performs actions that would merit his receiving the Medal of Honor. He performed courageously outside of Anzio, Italy

1945 The 34th Division takes control of the Po Valley in northern Italy

1963 34th ID loses divisional status, retains name but consolidated into a headquarters unit

1968 34th ID inactivated

Feb. 10, 1991 Minnesota-based 47th Infantry Division, which had never seen combat, is renamed the 34th Infantry Division

September 2002 Mobilized in support of Operation Noble Eagle II, a homeland security operation

Sept. 30, 2003 Assumed command of Peacekeepers Hall on Eagle Base in Bosnia-Herzegovina

December 2003 Started to plan and execute the deterrent force mission for Operation Joint Forge in Bosnia

March 2006 Deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; the unit served the longest deployment, 16 months in-country

August 2010 Deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom

June 2011 1st Brigade deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation New Dawn

RED BULL MEDAL OF HONOR: STAFF SGT. GEORGE J. HALL

Staff Sgt. George J. Hall served with the 34th Infantry Division during World War II. He received the Medal of Honor “for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above the call of duty,” his citation for the Medal of Honor reads.

In Anzio, Italy, on May 23, 1944, Hall’s company took fire from three enemy machine guns and snipers. Braving this fire, Hall maneuvered to a point within hand grenade range of one of the enemy’s positions.

After throwing four hand grenades, he took the enemy’s position. He then maneuvered to the second enemy location, and threw additional hand grenades.

Hall then left the second position and crawled to

the third spot.

As he came upon the enemy, Hall’s right leg was severed by a shell burst from opposing artillery. But thanks to his efforts, his company was able to overtake the third position and advance.

“Staff Sgt. Hall’s fearlessness, his determined fighting spirit, and his prodigious combat skill exemplify the heroic tradition of the American infantryman,” his citation reads.

Hall was sent home to Boston and died Feb. 16, 1946, of complications from his fight in Anzio.



Hall

troops from the Iowa National Guard and the Nebraska National Guard. Due to Guard cutbacks in 1963, the division was limited to a divisional command headquarters with no subordinate units. After more cuts to the National Guard, the division was again inactivated in 1968.

In 1991, under a reorganization of the National Guard to honor historic divisions, the 47th Infantry Division — a National Guard division from Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin that had never seen combat — was reflagged as the 34th Infantry Division.

The 34th Infantry Division deployed to Bosnia in 2003 to oversee

NATO’s drawdown there. The Red Bulls also deployed to Kosovo in 2004 and in 2007 on peacekeeping missions.

Serving the Homeland

During Operation Noble Eagle, the 34th Infantry Division was activated in support of the Department of Homeland Security. It guarded key areas the DHS thought might be attacked by terrorists, including nuclear plants and weapons facilities. Though Guard troops are routinely activated for state emergencies, these nationwide missions provide a pivotal example of what the Guard is capable of, said Command Sgt. Maj. Doug Julin, command

sergeant major of the division.

“These missions allow us to give back to our communities,” Julin said. “They support us when we’re down-range, but we have that reciprocal relationship of support. They know they can count on us when we’re needed.”

The Guard activates for emergencies in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa, including floods, tornados and missing person alerts. Soldiers with the 34th ID have deployed to the U.S.-Mexico border to deter illegal immigration. They also provided security at the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn., and the 2010 presidential inauguration. In 2011, the Red Bulls supported relief efforts after an earthquake in Haiti.

In Afghanistan

In May 2004, the Red Bulls deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. OEF was the first deployment in 59 years in which Red Bull Soldiers were able to earn a combat patch. They worked on 13 Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan.

“From the inception of the unit

Sgt. Jeff Woodford, a medic with A Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion of the 136th Infantry Regiment, 34th Infantry Division, attached to the 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward), speaks to an Iraqi civilian waiting for medical care May 16, 2007, in Al Madinah, Iraq. The Red Bulls deployed within the Al Anbar province to develop the Iraqi Security Forces, Iraqi government and economy to help Iraqi reconstruction. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE 34TH INFANTRY DIVISION



early in the last century to recent actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, members of the 34th Division have established an honorable legacy of hard-fought battles and long deployments in answering the call to duty,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Joel Arnold, command sergeant major of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, in an editorial in the March 2011’s *Ryder Dispatch*, the monthly magazine of 2nd Brigade during its deployment.

The division’s 2nd Brigade Combat Team deployed to Afghanistan in October 2010, partnering with Afghan National Security Forces to assist in stabilizing the eastern region of Afghanistan through security training.

The 2nd BCT was instrumental in March 2010’s Operation Bull Whip, an air-mobile operation in which Soldiers cleared a district center and held it for the remainder of their tour. Afghan soldiers and other American units had tried unsuccessfully to stabilize that area before, but the Red Bulls were able to take it with the help of Afghan, French and 101st Division forces.

“The governor was instrumental in getting the Afghan people to buy in that they wanted a district center, that they needed one,” Arnold said. “He then pleaded with my commander and others to get an operation in there that was done in conjunction with Afghan and French forces.”

In Iraq

The 34th Infantry Division deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom twice. Sgt. Bryan Sheppard, with Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, deployed to Iraq from 2005 to 2007. He was a battle staff NCO who used live feeds to track convoys between two airbases in Iraq.

“There are some missions that stick in your head, things that scare you,” Sheppard said in an oral history. “What really stuck in my head is that the mission was worth it. Most of my time, I spent tracking operations and making sure they were going back and forth and making sure they got what they needed. Throughout the whole deployment, we saw how much people



Sgt. 1st Class Miguel Zamora grabs a hose to put out a fire that burned more than 100,000 acres Aug. 18 at the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. At the direction of Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton, four Minnesota National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopters and National Guard aviation support teams assisted the ongoing firefighting efforts within the Pagami Creek region of northeastern Minnesota. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. BEN HOUTKOOPER

from Minnesota care about their National Guard troops. I’ve never seen anything like that in my entire life. I’ve spent 13 years active duty and I never saw anything like that before.”

The Red Bulls’ deployment to Iraq

in March 2006 was expected to last 12 months. In December, however, their deployment was extended. As the Army required more Soldiers on the ground in Iraq to implement its “surge” strategy, it called on units already there



Staff Sgt. Louis Karsnia, a cavalry scout from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, helps distribute sandbags March 28, 2009, in Moorhead, Minn., as residents fight flooding from the Red River. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JON SOUCY

to prolong their stays while other units were trained to replace them.

The Red Bulls' 16-month deployment to Iraq would mark their longest unit deployment since World War II. It also gave them the distinction of being the unit that served the longest, continuous deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sgt. 1st Class Mark Newstrom deployed to the region four times, three times with the Red Bulls. He saw the Red Bulls at the height of their warrior spirit during the surge, he said.

"There were talks about how the Red Bulls were the longest deployment in-theater," Newstrom said. "We had a purpose. We worked hard to accomplish the mission faster so we could get out of there and make sure that what we did was worthwhile."

The Red Bulls returned to Iraq in 2009, assuming control of U.S. Division South, maintaining control of the

region around Basra, Iraq. The division was the lead for the 16,000-service member, multinational force, which operated in 18 provinces. The division worked with the Iraqis to provide security in the region.

"Minnesota National Guard has the reputation for being the best out there," Sheppard said. "We saw that in Iraq."

In June 2011, the Red Bulls went to Kuwait to help manage the drawdown of military equipment and personnel from Iraq.

A supportive community

The Minnesota communities, where most 34th ID Soldiers hail from, strongly supported the troops during their deployments and when they returned home, Julin said. The Minnesota National Guard implemented the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program, which helps Soldiers re-integrate once they return from deployment. The

program also helps communities learn what they can do to support Soldiers and their families during deployments.

Soldiers and their families attend the program 30, 60 and 90 days after they return from deployment. The participants and facilitators cover such topics as reintegration, reconnecting with family members, combat stress and anger management.

The Beyond the Yellow Ribbon campaign has grown to partner with corporations, communities, cities, churches and colleges that support Soldiers. From its grassroots in Minnesota, the program has been adopted in other states.

Staff Sgt. Jesse Holland, with A Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, deployed to Afghanistan with the Red Bulls.

He said it is communities' support that boosts Soldiers' morale.

THEIR PATCH & MOTTO

THE RED BULL INSIGNIA was based on a design by Marvin Cone of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He drew it in 1917 for a contest while training for World War I with the division at Camp Cody, N.M. A steer skull on an *olla*, or Mexican water jar, is featured as a reminder of the division's training in the Southwest.

The division was based in the New Mexico desert until it was reactivated in Minnesota in 1941. Because of the patch, the Germans during World War II called the division's Soldiers the "Red Bulls," earning them their nickname.

THE MOTTO of the 34th Infantry Division is "Attack! Attack! Attack!" The war cry characterizes the nature of the division's combat operations in World War II, when the division saw 517 days of continuous, front-line combat in five major campaigns.



"Beyond the Yellow Ribbon has helped my family," Holland said. "The community in Minnesota is supportive, and I know my family is being looked after and taken care of. That allows me to accomplish the mission in Afghanistan."

A family of professionals

The NCOs of the Red Bulls take a holistic approach in their relationship with their Soldiers. Some of them are family members, others neighbors or community leaders. Red Bull NCOs mentor junior Soldiers whether in combat, during a flood mission or in careers outside the Army, Julin said.

"It's a privilege to be the senior NCO for the division overall — the ability to interact with junior Soldiers and help them be better than they think they are sometimes and work to support them," Julin said. "They provide the esprit de corps, the professionalism, and they reflect that not just in the Guard but also in their

civilian careers. Together, we as senior NCOs help them become not just good Soldiers but an asset to our society. And it's that junior NCO guiding this nation into the future, whether they're on the battlefield or at home."

Sgt. Jennifer Noel deployed with the division to Iraq as a paralegal with the 147th Human Resources Company, 347th Regional Support Group. Her father, Joseph Frasier, was scheduled to deploy with the medical support company that would be with her in Iraq. But he broke a leg just before deployment and had to stay home.

She said though the camaraderie among the Red Bulls is professional, Soldiers serve with family members, neighbors and friends.

"There's a level of professionalism that we all strive for," Noel said. "We all work hard, we all train hard and we all have our own jobs, whether that be a paralegal or a medic or a surgeon or public affairs. But at the end of the day, we all strive to meet the standards and carry out those basic Soldier functions. Red Bulls are great professionals, but we're also great Soldiers."

Noel's husband, Spc. Ryan Noel, deployed last year with B Company, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 194th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division.

"As an NCO for the Red Bulls, I feel that we are the backbone of our organization, mentoring the lower enlisted," Jennifer Noel said. "Great senior NCOs lead by example and reach out and mentor those below them."

"We are a family," Ebner said. "I've felt that way since the first day I walked in the unit as a 17-year-old. This job is really dull and boring sometimes. But it's scary and difficult. To know that you can trust the person to your right or left and depend on them like a well-functioning family is what makes a big difference." ♡

To contact Jennifer Mattson, email jennifer.mattson@us.army.mil.

Staff Sgt. Jacob Pries (left) an engineer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, and Staff Sgt. Scott Murray Jr. (center) a squad leader with A Company, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, talk with Maj. Gen. Tim E. Orr, adjutant general of the Iowa National Guard, March 22, 2011, at Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam, Afghanistan. PHOTO

BY STAFF SGT. RYAN MATSON





ACTION IN

Stories of NCOs

**LEADING,
TRAINING,
MAINTAINING,
& CARING**

NCO JOURNAL



Hand-to-hand with the enemy

Sergeant grabbed insurgent's barrel and was shot in the chest before evacuating his squad

BY T.C. BRADFORD
Fort Polk Public Affairs

A Fort Polk, La., Soldier was awarded the Silver Star on Dec. 16 for his actions under fire that saved the lives of two comrades in Afghanistan.

Sgt. Timothy Gilboe, a member of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, is also credited with helping to eliminate a high-value target after engaging in hand-to-hand combat with an insurgent.

The Silver Star is the third-highest medal a Soldier can receive. It is bestowed for extreme valor in the face of the enemy.

Gilboe's unit was based in the Jaghato District of Wardak province, Afghanistan. Early last April, the unit conducted combat operations in the Tangi Valley to prevent the enemy from running supplies through Jaghato to Chak, according to Lt. Col. Tom Rickard, 2nd

Battalion's commander. In mid-April last year, the unit began conducting a joint operation with Polish forces in Jaghato, which led to the events of April 28.

Gilboe's platoon was patrolling near the village of Awalata when it came under fire. The Soldiers wounded a couple of insurgents in battle. As they were maneuvering to assess the situation, they came under further attack.

They were walking by some buildings when two more insurgents charged at them from about 30 feet away. The insurgents fired more than 60 rounds of ammunition at them, mortally wounding the squad leader, Staff Sgt. Matt Hermanson. At the same time, shots hit the assistant machine gunner's rucksack, setting it on fire.

The squad returned fire, forcing the insurgents back, and Gilboe turned his attention to extinguishing the fire in the ammunition-filled rucksack. While he and the assistant gunner were occupied with putting out the

◀ Col. Richard D. Clarke, 10th Mountain Division's deputy commanding general of operations, pins the Silver Star on the chest of Sgt. Timothy Gilboe of 2nd Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, during a ceremony Dec. 16 at Fort Polk, La. Last April, Gilboe risked his life to save his comrades during an insurgent ambush while deployed to Awatala, Afghanistan. PHOTO BY T.C. BRADFORD

blaze, insurgents tried to rush them again. A teammate, an Air Force joint terminal attack controller assigned to 1st Platoon, shot one of the insurgents, but the other was within 10 meters of Gilboe and coming fast.

Gilboe charged the remaining insurgent. Gilboe had put his weapon down to fight the rucksack fire, and he realized he would have no chance to retrieve it before the enemy closed in, so he engaged the enemy with the only weapons he had — his hands and his courage.

Gilboe reached out and grabbed the barrel of the enemy's AK-47 and pulled it toward his chest, which was covered by an armor plate. He said the last thing that ran through his mind before the enemy pulled the trigger was, "This is gonna hurt a lot."

The insurgent fired a burst directly into Gilboe's chest plate, knocking the wind out of him and sending shrapnel into his legs. Out of breath and fighting hand to hand, Gilboe disarmed the insurgent and hit him in the face several times, stunning him and allowing the assistant gunner time and opportunity to kill the insurgent.

Gilboe was wounded, but so were his squad and platoon leaders. He took charge of the remaining squad members, cleared the area and set up a security perimeter. Without regard to his own wounds, he rendered first aid to the wounded and cared for them until the medic could prepare them for evacuation. Gilboe helped load the wounded on the medevac helicopters, and only then did he allow himself to be treated and removed from the area.

His citation reads that he "demonstrated exemplary bravery and leadership under extreme pressure." When his life and the lives of his fellow Soldiers were on the line, Gilboe aggressively took the fight to the enemy and came out victorious.

Because of his actions, two Soldiers' lives were saved and a high-value target was eliminated.

Standing before his fellow Soldiers as he received the Silver Star, Gilboe shared his thoughts on the loss of Hermanson, his squad leader and friend.

"It's a bittersweet thing," he said. "I mean, we all know who the real hero was. It was Matt (the squad leader). I'd give

everything ... my medal, my worldly possessions ... to have him here today."

Gilboe said his squad leader saw that the team had taken out the enemy, and he hoped that brought Hermanson some closure.

Gilboe's parents, Steve and Deanna, drove from Maine to watch their son receive his award.

"I thought he was crazy at first when he came home and said he wanted to join the Army. I didn't really want it to happen," Deanna Gilboe said. "But I'm happy now

that he decided to do this. He's a hero."

Gilboe is a fair representation of the quality of Soldier that volunteers to join the Army today, Rickard said.

"We have outstanding Soldiers joining the force. They come in, eyes wide open, they know they are going to get into a fight of some sort," he said. "It's amazing the virtue that our folks have, wanting to come in and serve their country, and they don't have illusions. They know what they are going to get into."

Rickard talked about his feelings as a commander of troops like Gilboe.

"I couldn't be prouder," he said. "Leading these men in combat has been an extraordinary honor for me. I'm humbled

SILVER STAR CONT. ON NEXT PAGE →

NCO receives medal for his selfless service

BY SGT. KANDI HUGGINS 1st Heavy BCT, 1st Infantry Division

Soldiers and spouses of the 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, received recognition during the division's fourth Volunteer of the Quarter ceremony Feb. 7 at the conference center at Fort Riley, Kan.

Sgt. Joseph Maden, the operations NCO in charge of 4th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 1st HBCT, received the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for volunteering more than 100 hours of community service during the last quarter.

Maden worked with the Adopt-a-School program in Council Grove County, Kan., where his squadron is partnered with three different schools.

After returning to Fort Riley from deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Maden began working with the program when he was asked to speak about his experience overseas.

"I received a gunshot wound to the upper arm and shrapnel to the pinky while deployed," Maden recalled. "

After I came back, one of the NCOs recommended I talk to the football players about my combat wounds and my attachment grew toward the students so I took over the program from there."

Maden said he and his unit attended the games, helping boost the players' morale, giving them water and helping them when they were injured.

"It's great for me to be able to share my experiences with them. I hope it encourages them to keep going and stay in good spirits, regardless of the wounds they may receive on and off the field or court," Maden said. ♡



← **SILVER STAR CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE**
 to serve with them, and when you meet or hear about guys like Sgt. Gilboe, just being in the same uniform and the same division is an honor for me.”

When Gilboe enlisted in 2006, he was assigned as an engineer with 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at Fort Polk. He later decided that he wanted to be an infantryman. He had to reclassify, go back through training and eventually was assigned to 10th Mountain Division’s 4th BCT back at Fort Polk.

Although Gilboe actively set in motion the path that would lead to that day, among all of the recognition and accolades from friends, family and fellow Soldiers, his greatest source of pride and kindest words were for his

friend and squad leader Hermanson.

“After the chaos was over and we got to him, we rolled him over, and his first thought was for the rest of us. He asked if everyone else was OK,” he said.

Gilboe said that Hermanson, although dying, had the foresight to prep a hand grenade as a last resort in case the battle didn’t turn out well. He had also made radio calls to inform others of the situation.

“He went out fighting,” Gilboe said.

His experience that day will color the way he leads others going forward.

“I know, (as a leader), you need to approach every situation with a solid plan and superior communication,” he said. ♡



Photo of the Year

▲ Pfc. Kevin March of C Company, 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, provides security for his squad Jan. 31, 2011, as they climb up a cliff in the Arghandab River Valley, Afghanistan. The image, taken by Sgt. Breanne Pye, a public affairs NCO assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, was selected from thousands of others submitted by military photographers last year to be designated the 2011 U.S. Army Photo of the Year. Her entry earned almost twice as many votes as the runner-up. “Every time a Soldier dons his gear and steps up to protect his loved ones, it makes my dedication to spreading their story a little stronger,” she said. “They sacrifice so much for their loved ones back home, and to bring less than my very best to what they do would be a disservice.” PHOTO BY SGT. BREANNE PYE

BY EXAMPLE

‘Get back to basics’

Sgt. 1st Class Meghan Malloy helps ensure her Soldiers are medically ready to deploy

Sgt. 1st Class Meghan Malloy enlisted out of Camano Island, Wash., in 2000. During a year spent in the Army Reserve, she was working at an emergency room on her second day of drill duty when the 9/11 attacks happened. The next day, she submitted her packet to go active duty. Since then, she's deployed three times to Iraq, served in the last MASH (Mobile Army Service Hospital) and currently serves as the senior medical NCO for the 5th Engineer Battalion, 4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

Why did you join the Army?

My dad was a military historian. He worked with a lot of veterans groups, telling their stories. I grew up with a lot of survivors of the Bataan Death March and Pearl Harbor. I grew up with a lot of respect for veterans, and I love the history of the Army.

Why have you stayed in?

NCOs have played a significant part in my career. The role of NCOs has definitely changed the way I've looked at life. It's affected the professional demeanor I have toward younger Soldiers.

How has Army training helped your career?

I find that the caliber of person in the Army is the best that our society has to offer. I love how there's always someone looking out for you; someone always has your back. After my first deployment, that really solidified it. There was always somebody watching out; you never had to worry about being by yourself.

What does it take to be a good NCO?

You take care of Soldiers and they will take care of you — that's the real key to being a good NCO in this Army. If you're a squad leader, just be the very best squad leader you can be. Work hard at what you do, push yourself and push your Soldiers. Recognize the Soldiers who have that little bit of spark you think you can make into something better.

How do you set the example?

I try to be what I want them to be. I try to set my standards high. The best NCOs I've worked with weren't afraid to get their hands dirty — they'd fill sand bags, bring chow on guard duty, come in to work before us and leave after we were all long gone for the night. I try to set that same example.



What role have NCOs played in your development as a Soldier and NCO?

I made a few mistakes as a younger Soldier, and those NCOs stepped in and said, "Hey, I see something in you. You can be something better." They pushed me along in my career, and they pushed me further than I ever thought I'd be able to go. I would've gotten out a long time ago if it hadn't been for them.

What changes would you like to see Armywide?

We need to get back to basics. We've got an NCO Education System that has drifted more toward quantity than quality. We're pushing out NCOs and it's more of a check-the-box system. With our operational tempo slowing down, we should be able to get back to pushing out good leaders and good NCOs.

— INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER MATTSON

▲ Sgt. 1st Class Meghan Malloy pauses to take a photo with local children while on a mission in Iraq during her deployment from 2005 to 2006 with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SGT. 1ST CLASS MEGHAN MALLOY

'First response' training saves lives

BY MINDY ANDERSON U.S. Army Africa

The U.S. Army Africa Surgeon's Office and the Headquarters Support Company medical section came together at Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy, recently for a three-day First Responders Course to address some of the most important topics for travelers to Africa.

The course covered basic trauma and first aid topics, including familiarization with field sanitation, tropical medicine and CPR training. Along with the USARAF travel medicine clinic, the course ensures all personnel traveling to Africa have the skills they need to respond to emergencies and care for themselves and fellow travelers.

"The difference in 'first aid' and 'first responder' is an emphasis on the caregiver being able to do everything required to keep an injured person alive," said Command Sgt. Maj. Hu B. Rhodes, U.S. Army Africa's command sergeant major. "When you are confident in your ability to perform the assessment, treat the injury, stabilize the patient, prepare for transportation and move the patient, then you are prepared to not only save a life, but also to save the quality of life for a wounded comrade."

Col. Kimberly Armstrong, USARAF's chief nurse, recommends all staff members traveling to the continent attend the course.

"Actually, the information on first aid and food and water safety is valuable for anyone," Armstrong said. "But it is especially critical for our USARAF staff as they



usually travel in small teams and visit areas that may have limited medical resources."

The course is not intended to make participants medics, but will provide them with the knowledge and confidence to thrive and survive in an austere environment, she said.

"The information is essential to help keep them healthy and prevent illness while traveling," Armstrong said. "They may find that they are on their own for hours to days while waiting for assistance or evacuation, and they must be prepared to do what is necessary to save a life." ♡

▲ Spc. Dylan Carpenter practices starting an IV on Command Sgt. Maj. Hu B. Rhodes during a recent First Responders Course at Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy. PHOTO BY MINDY ANDERSON

THIS MONTH IN NCO HISTORY

March 7, 1890

In 1890, the Apache Wars, the series of armed conflicts between the U.S. Army and Apache warriors in the Southwest, were almost over. The famed chief Geronimo had already surrendered, and all that was left of the Apache resistance were a few bands of renegades in Arizona and New Mexico.

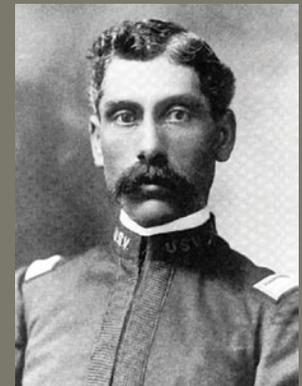
After one such group raided a wagon train outside Fort Thomas, Ariz., then-Col. Benjamin Grierson, the commander of the Department of Arizona, ordered a team of Soldiers to chase after them, making "every possible effort ... to capture or destroy the murderers."

The troops, Grierson wrote, "persistently followed [the bandits' trail] for several days and nights over the rough, broken mountains and plains of Arizona" before trapping them March 7 in a cave in a narrow canyon of the Salt River, about 30 miles northeast of present-day Globe, Ariz. There, Sgt. William McBryar, a Buffalo Soldier of K Company, 10th Cavalry Regiment — "an excellent shot," Grierson said — began "firing against

a rock almost in front of their cave, thereby splatter[ing] lead and splintered rock in their faces." Having lost three men, the bandits soon surrendered.

Cited for his "coolness, bravery and marksmanship," McBryar was awarded the Medal of Honor two months later.

After 14 years in the Army, including service in the Philippines and Cuba, and a temporary commission to first lieutenant, McBryar mustered out in 1901. Stymied by segregationist policies, he was refused re-entry, though he tried multiple times. He later served in a variety of odd jobs, including as a watchman at Arlington National Cemetery, Va., where he was buried after his death in 1941. — COMPILED BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS



McBryar

'One more family finally has answers'

U.S. Army Pacific's top NCO brings uncle's remains home

BY STAFF SGT.
CASHMERE JEFFERSON
U.S. Army Pacific

The journey has taken more than six decades. The remains of Pfc. Jimmie Gaitan, a Korean War prisoner of war, were escorted home to his family Nov. 22 by his nephew, Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota, U.S. Army Pacific's top noncommissioned officer.

Leota's family received the call from the U.S. Army's Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, just days after Leota and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III visited JPAC, located on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

"We were given a detailed brief at JPAC on how the remains were identified and were told that in the next 48 hours, 19 families would be notified that their loved one had been found," Leota said.

"Within 48 hours, my phone was ringing off the hook at 3 a.m.; it was my cousin. He said, 'Uncle Jimmie has been found,'" Leota said.

"JPAC has been able to make an identification of a lost family member every two and a half days," said Steve Thompson, JPAC's external relations officer. "More than 1,743 members have been returned to their families thus far, Leota's uncle being among them."

Gaitan was a medic assigned to the Clearing Company, 2nd Medical Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division, when he was taken prisoner while tending to his wounded comrades in South Korea on Feb. 13, 1951. He died while in prison on May 24, 1951.

"My aunt, Ruth Gaitan, has been waiting 60 years for her husband," Leota said. "She's 83 years old. They were married for only a short time before he left for Korea. Now she's waiting for me to bring him home."

"It's truly an honor for my family to ask me to bring the remains of my uncle home," he added.

On Nov. 22, Leota went to JPAC and received custody of his uncle's remains and secured them in a green blanket, a tradition that dates back to the Civil War.

The remains were then sent to a local mortuary, where they were placed in a coffin. Leota accompanied the remains from the mortuary to the aircraft.



The military escort ensures that the remains are loaded on the plane before boarding. The escort is usually the last passenger to enter the aircraft and the first to exit.

Leota escorted the remains of his uncle from Honolulu International Airport on Nov. 22, to San Antonio, where Gaitan was buried with full military honors Nov. 26 at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

For his service to the Army Medical Department on the front line under tremendous hardship, Gaitan was posthumously inducted into the Order of Military Medical Merit as an honorary member Nov. 17 by Brig. Gen. Keith W. Gallagher, commander of Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu.

"Thanks to the efforts of those who've worked tirelessly to identify my uncle, one more family finally has answers, and one more American can finally come home," Leota said. ♡

▲ Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota helps secure the remains of his uncle, Pfc. Jimmie Gaitan, a Korean War prisoner of war, in a green blanket Nov. 22 as part of the custody procedures at the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT.

CASHMERE JEFFERSON



Special Forces NCOs train their leaders

Instructors share their experience to teach the next generation

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

When captains arrive at the Special Forces Qualification Course, their primary instructors are NCOs who have been on small Special Forces teams downrange.

These NCOs take their skills, expertise and knowledge, and instruct their future leaders on what each member of a Special Forces team is capable of. After graduation, SFQC students will join an operational detachment A (or Special Forces A team) downrange.

Master Sgt. Shawn Thompson, an 18F special forces intelligence sergeant, served on a team for three years before coming to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, N.C., as an instructor for the SFQC's military occupational specialty phase for 18A

▲ Captains are briefed by "host-nation military" members Sept. 20 during an exercise at the Special Forces Qualification Course at Fort Bragg, N.C. NCOs run the course and act as instructors and role players. PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON

detachment officers.

"The inside joke is we're training captains who are supposed to be smarter than us," Thompson said. "But [their knowledge is all] book knowledge, and we show them how to apply that book knowledge the way it needs to be applied. That's the strength of the NCO."

The NCOs who train the captains at this course bring a different perspective — how teams operate and what each team member brings to the table, Thompson said. An ODA is made up of a 12-man team: a detachment commander, an assistant detachment commander, a team sergeant, a special forces intelligence sergeant, two weapons sergeants, two engineer sergeants, two communications sergeants and two medical sergeants.

Knowing who is responsible for what and how NCOs work together is critical, Thompson said. That information is what NCOs pass along to captains during the 14-week MOS portion of the course.

"We've had so much team time, held different positions on teams and have watched a lot of captains," Thompson

said. “Captains only get a couple years on a team; an NCO can get 13 years on a team. You see a lot of captains come through, you see how they interact, you know what a team is responsible for. And what each section on the team does, you have that expertise yourself. By bringing that to the table, you’re able to bring to the captains how a team operates and, basically, allow him to find his place on a team.”

Master Sgt. Steve Everett has served 14 months at the Special Warfare Center as an instructor and served two years in Okinawa, Japan, as a team leader.

He said NCOs bring their downrange experience to captains in the classroom so that those captains can see directly how textbook theories and tactics are applied on the battlefield.

“We have to make sure that they understand what’s being taught, not just on a book basis, but on an operational basis,” Everett said. “NCOs have been in the environment, and we know what works in that kind of small Special Forces team.”

NCOs help expose officers to the realities their Soldiers will face and the things the officers will have to keep in mind when they’re downrange, Everett said.

“[A captain] needs to be able to consult the senior non-commissioned officer and the rest of the men on his team,” Everett said. “Officers are oriented toward planning; NCOs are more directed toward taking care of their men.”

During the course, NCO instructors act primarily as observers. They assist and guide officers through the training, and can be used as a resource. They also lead after-action reviews once the training missions are complete.

Steve McDaniel, a retired sergeant major, served 18 years on a Special Forces team, 16 of which were spent downrange. He currently serves as a contractor with the SFQC, where he provides information to the command about students in the course and guides students through role playing, which is based on doctrine and his experience.

“It says a lot about NCOs that are [teaching here],” he said. “It says a lot about the command that NCOs are enabled to teach these officers everything they need to know so they can be successful commanders.

“A lot of time, you don’t get that NCO point of view,” McDaniel continued. “All of these NCOs have served on a team as an NCO team leader. They know the weaknesses that they’ve seen in the past, as well as the strengths. They’re the only ones here with team experience. An officer can’t share what the Soldiers on the team feel like; they can command

► **Master Sgt. Steve Everett briefs captains Sept. 20 on their next mission during the Special Forces Qualification Course at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg.**

PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON

What they learn

Special Forces Qualification Course graduates earn the privilege of wearing the Special Forces tab and the green beret. But before they graduate, Soldiers complete extensive training in:

- **Special Forces history**
- **Language and culture**
- **Special Forces tactical combat skills**
- **Military operational specialty training**
- **Unconventional warfare practicum (commonly referred to as “Robin Sage”)**

a lot better if they know what the guys on the team are experiencing.”

Sgt. Maj. Gil Vargas, who oversees the instructors during the MOS-training portion of SFQC, said that being an instructor can help an NCO’s career. An instructor at the school has the best promotion potential to become a staff sergeant or sergeant first class within the special operations community, he said.

“It expands an NCO’s horizon and prepares him for the next level of responsibility by executing his duties here,” Vargas said. “It’s a very challenging job as an NCO because now you have guys who are really, really smart. The NCOs have to stay one step in front of them all the time”

The NCOs also have to demonstrate their professionalism, qualification and experience daily, Vargas said.

“If you look at what the definition of a ‘professional’ is, my view is it’s a guy who’s in shape, who’s very smart, thinks outside the box, is committed to his mission and has passion for what he does,” Vargas said. “Those are the guys I have working here as far as NCOs.” ♣



Once a captain, now a master sergeant

Chaplain assistant formerly trained to launch nuclear missiles

BY JON CONNOR

Army Sustainment Command

Going from “green” to “gold” is a familiar transformation in the Army. But switching from being an officer to an enlisted man while changing service branches is far less common.

Yet that’s exactly what Joe Newsom did, choosing to continue serving the best way he knew how.

“I always understood I would retire as a captain,” he said, despite having to work his way up the enlisted ranks to master sergeant during his 20 years of Army service.

His story is one of choices, with military retirement as his ultimate goal. His choices led him to a fulfilling Army career as a chaplain assistant, something which Newsom says has fit him perfectly.

“I was happy to have anything steady in my life,” Newsom explained.

Newsom, 57, is assigned to Army Sustainment Command’s chaplain’s office at Rock Island Arsenal, Ill. This summer, he plans to retire from the Army and receive a

captain’s pension for 20-plus years of active-duty service.

“It was after he had served with us for a few weeks when I heard of his former career as an officer,” said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Charles Rizer, ASC’s staff chaplain. “He carries himself humbly, yet confidently. He has an adventurous character, and I suppose that once he came back into the military, he wanted to experience it from a different perspective. It fits his personality.”

Newsom’s transformation began when he received his commission in June 1976 from Auburn University’s Air Force ROTC program.

“I was hoping to eventually do something in computers,” the math major said. For nearly 12 years he did, leading the life of an Air Force missile launch officer of nuclear weapons.

After serving at air bases in South Dakota, Montana and in Italy, Newsom’s Air Force career came to an end after being passed over twice for promotion.

“The impression we had was that if you kept your nose clean you could stay in,” he said, adding he was disappointed in how things turned out. In the spring of 1992 Newsom joined the Army Reserve.

“It was such a wonderful feeling to be in uniform,” he said.

With the end of one career, another eventually emerged as Newsom decided he would like “some sort of military retirement” via the Army Reserve.

“Would I come in as an officer or enlisted? It really didn’t matter,” Newsom said, recalling issues he pondered in his quest for a military retirement. What the Army offered was coming in as an enlisted Soldier, serving as a chaplain assistant at the rank of specialist. Newsom accepted and entered the Army at age 38.

As his religious upbringing and faith has sustained him throughout his life, being a chaplain assistant seemed logical and something he could embrace for a military career.

◀ Master Sgt. Joe Newsom, the senior chaplain assistant NCO of Army Sustainment Command, talks to a Soldier on Jan. 11 at a rehearsal for a change of responsibility ceremony at ASC’s headquarters at Rock Island Arsenal, Ill. PHOTO BY JON CONNOR



NCO to race-walk in Olympics

BY TIM HIPPS

Installation Management Command

Staff Sgt. John Nunn earned a spot in the London Olympic Games by winning the 50 km (31 mi.) race-walk event Jan. 22 at the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials in Santee, Calif., with a time of 4 hours, 4 minutes, 41 seconds.

Nunn, 33, of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program, surged during the final 1½ kilometers to shake two-time Olympian Tim Seaman, 39, who finished second in 4:05:50. Because none of the athletes met the Olympics “A” standard of 3:59:00, only Nunn earned a berth in the 2012 Olympics.

“Yesterday was the greatest day since Athens,” Nunn said, referring to his Olympic debut in the 20 km race-walk at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. “Yeah, I crushed them.”

In race-walking, one of the competitor’s feet must appear to be in contact with the ground at all times. Because this decreases the length of the racer’s stride, racewalkers must attain a cadence similar to a 400-meter runner, yet maintain it for hours at a time.

During the first 20 kilometers of the trial, five walkers stuck together before one fell off the lead pace. At the 32 km marker, another dropped off. At 36 kilometers, the third-place finisher lost contact, leaving Nunn and Seaman to battle it out. With 13 kilometers remaining, Nunn opened a 50-meter lead with a move that almost backfired.

Nunn said his energy wavered as he neared the 41-ki-

RACE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE →



▲ Staff Sgt. John Nunn celebrates crossing the finish line and winning the 50 km race-walk event Jan. 22 at the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials in Santee, Calif. PHOTO BY JEFF SALVAGE/RACEWALK.COM

“Being a chaplain assistant, the Army allows me to do things I love [like] practice my beliefs,” he said. “I’m not in other people’s food chains. I enjoy what I do, and God’s blessed me to do it.”

For a decade, Newsom was a drilling reservist, working part time in the civilian world and taking classes in microcomputers and information technology.

In May 2004, Newsom was called to active duty at Fort Bragg, N.C. He served in a variety of units as a chaplain assistant until May 2011, when he joined the Army Sustainment Command staff.

Newsom said he was amazed he was able to rise in the enlisted ranks to master sergeant without having to change his military occupational specialty, which he said is common in the Army Reserve.

“I don’t believe in coincidences. [God] must want me to be an E-8,” Newsom said.

“I don’t believe in coincidences. [God] must want me to be an E-8.”

— MASTER SGT. JOE NEWSOM

Whether it’s aiding burn victims or counseling suicidal people, Newsom said he’s very satisfied with his vocation.

“The fact that I can affect people’s lives is amazing, which, in turn, can affect me,” he said.

When working with burn victims, Newsom said his ability to maintain eye contact is very important.

“I could afford them the dignity they deserved,” he said.

Asked if he carries himself as an officer or NCO, Newsom replied, “I’m both.”

“Master Sgt. Newsom seems to me to be a combo of the two,” said

Staff Sgt. Richard Noel, ASC’s chaplain assistant operations NCO in charge.

“Even more importantly, he seems to be down to earth ... what you see is what you get. Also, he has compassion and heart for helping people — something that never changes no matter your rank, military or civilian.” ♡

← RACE CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

lometer mark. “I was like, ‘Oh, no, I don’t have it,’” he recalled. “My head started getting light. My arms felt like all the blood was rushing out of them. I was thinking I might pass out.”

Three kilometers later, “Tim passed me like I was standing still,” Nunn said. “And I was like, ‘That’s it. All this work, I can’t get it back.’”

Seaman built a 25-meter lead and stayed there.

“All of a sudden I realized, ‘He’s not advancing anymore. He used all his energy to get up to me,’” Nunn said. “At that point, my legs started coming back and I thought, ‘Let’s just get up to him.’”

At the awards banquet, Nunn told the audience, “For the first time in my life, I became a true fan of race-walking today. I had a front-row seat for one of the most exciting races that has happened in decades. ... It felt like it was 12 rounds of a heavyweight boxing match.”

Later that evening, Nunn checked in with the reactions of both athletes’ fans on Facebook.

“I don’t think there’s been that much talk about race-

walking in America in a long, long time,” he said.

Nunn applauded the Army and his coach for sticking with him in times that were not fun.

“There is no question in my mind I would not have made the 2012 Olympic Team without the Army putting the pressure it did on me,” he said. “I thought at the time, and part of me probably still thinks, some of the benchmarks it asked me to hit were pretty outlandish, pretty far-fetched, compared to what other track-and-field athletes were being asked to do.”

Nunn would hit one benchmark, and then get tasked with another he thought unattainable.

“I thought, ‘Well, this has been fun. I guess they’re going to release me.’ Then I thought, ‘Why don’t you do what’s right, put your priorities in order, and see what you can pull off?’”

“I made it my life,” said Nunn, who began writing things on his mirror as a daily reminder of what it would take to get to London.

For the past two months, the mirror read: 4:05.

His winning time was 4:04:41. ♡

NCO to be first active-duty Soldier to compete at Paralympic Games

BY MICHAEL MOLINARO

U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit

Showcasing his courage, determination and inspiration, USA Shooting announced in January the nomination of Sgt. 1st Class Josh Olson of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit to the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team. If approved by the U.S. Olympic Committee, Olson will be the first active-duty Soldier to be nominated for the Paralympic Games and the first active-duty service member to compete in shooting sports at the games.

Olson qualified for the team based on the International Paralympic Committee’s two-part qualification system for the London 2012 Paralympic Games, which will be held two weeks after the Olympic Games.

At the 2011 IPC World Cup in Australia, Olson finished sixth in the mixed 10-meter air rifle prone event. Earlier that year, he finished seventh in the mixed 50-meter rifle prone event at the IPC World Cup Alicante and eighth in mixed 10-meter event at the IPC World Cup USA held at Fort Benning, Ga.

In 2003 while on patrol in Iraq with 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, Olson was struck with a rocket-propelled grenade and lost his right leg from the hip down. After spending 18 months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., Olson was assigned to the Army Marksmanship Unit.

During his time at the USAMU, Olson has become a



pioneer and advocate for wounded warriors, said Lt. Col. Dan Hodne, commander of the unit. He has led the effort to establish a Paralympic team there, enabling wounded warriors on active duty to showcase the Army while enhancing its overall combat readiness through the unit’s robust marksmanship training program.

“Sgt. 1st Class Olson is a trailblazer for our Army,” Hodne said. “His unique Army story speaks volumes of the notion of ‘ability’ rather than ‘disability,’ and exemplifies professional Soldiers who all must be ‘Army Strong.’” ♡

▲ Sgt. 1st Class Josh Olson trains at the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Ga., to compete at the 2012 Paralympic Games. PHOTO BY MIKE MOLINARO

A chance to be constructive

Engineers get a rare stateside opportunity to flex their skills

BY SGT. CHRISTOPHER M. GAYLORD
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Sgt. Kristen Collison didn't expect her training as an engineer would come into play at a parking lot at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. But it was there that she and her unit were able to use their skills to build something of lasting value for the Army.

"Nobody has a job like ours," said the electrician with the 585th Engineer Company, 864th Engineer Battalion, 555th Engineer Brigade. She was halfway into a nearly two-month-long project with her company, which was tasked to assemble a massive shelter for Soldiers of JBLM's newest unit, the 16th Combat Aviation Brigade.

A small handful of Soldiers with the company, which specializes in vertical construction, has been working since the beginning of December to erect an Expeditionary Forces Aircraft Shelter System, a 115-foot-long, 49-foot-high tent structure the brigade will use as a supply depot for helicopter parts. The project was completed in January.

For Collison, the NCO in charge at the job site, the work is an opportunity to knock the rust off her and her Soldiers' engineering skills — an opportunity seldom afforded stateside.

"It's pretty great to actually use our skills, because when everybody comes back (from deployment), they're in-garrison, and they get in that mode where they get bored and don't like their job because they're not doing their job," she said.

"Then we get opportunities like this, where we can build a really great building for somebody else who's going to need it, who's going to use it, and it's really important to them. So it's an outstanding opportunity."

Garrison life for Soldiers in a construction company typically entails very little construction work, said 1st Lt. Thomas Kutnink, a platoon leader with the company.

But in Iraq or Afghanistan, it's a different story. There, all they do is build, he said. They build forward operating bases, checkpoints and shelters similar to the one his company was building for the 16th CAB.

"It gives us this great opportunity to do stuff that we



don't normally do unless we're downrange," Kutnink said.

"It's something these Soldiers would be a lot more likely to see downrange. We see shelters like this all the time in Afghanistan and Iraq," said Capt. Rex Broderick, the company's commander.

The unit's project is expected to save the installation more than \$1 million — the estimated cost of hiring civilian contractors to complete the job instead, he said.

"Construction guys love any opportunity they get to go out and do training on real construction stuff, especially in the garrison side," he said. "It's a fantastic morale builder."

"When we're at the company cleaning weapons and doing maintenance, it's not the same," Collison said. "It's not the same as coming out here and swinging a hammer or doing some electrical work."

"We came in here to do a job, and we like to do it," she added. "We like building things, and we like being able to say, 'Hey, I just built that, and it looks great.'" ♡

▲ Pfc. Ricke Scriven (left), a plumber with the 585th Engineer Company, and Staff Sgt. Alvino Santana, a squad leader, fit together steel arches Jan. 11 during a project to assemble an Expeditionary Forces Aircraft Shelter System for the 16th Combat Aviation Brigade at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. PHOTO BY SGT. CHRISTOPHER GAYLORD

'A lot of answers I didn't have before'

'School of Leaders' fills in knowledge gap for junior NCOs

BY STAFF SGT. TRAMEL S. GARRETT
18th Military Police Brigade

Junior noncommissioned officers of the 709th Military Police Battalion, 18th MP Brigade, at Grafenwöhr, Germany, took advantage of "School of Leaders," a professional development course conducted Jan. 23–Feb. 3.

The program — developed by Timothy Lamb, a former 709th MP Battalion command sergeant major, and Sgt. Maj. Shannon Wilson, the 709th MP Battalion operations sergeant major — was designed to enhance the skills of young NCOs within the battalion.

"We all have seen a systemic degradation of standards, discipline, knowledge and initiative across the Army," said Master Sgt. Rusty Lane, the battalion's intelligence NCO in charge. "We, as the battalion senior NCOs, could continue

to complain about it or do something.

"We initially looked across the board and identified subjects that were not being taught in the NCO Education System any longer and what our NCOs were weak in," Lane said. "We then prioritized them accordingly."

The battalion's leadership reached out to local Army resources such as the Wellness Center, Soldier 360° and the Army Substance Abuse Program. They provided subject-matter experts to help educate the battalion's future squad leaders and platoon sergeants. In addition, senior NCOs taught lessons on weight control, maintaining leader books, land navigation skills and sponsorship.

Currently in its third iteration, the School of Leaders has received much positive feedback in end-of-course after-action reviews.

"With all the time we spend training, I don't get the time to research information," said Sgt. James Byrnes, a military policeman with the 615th MP Company. "In this two-week course, I get a lot of the answers that I didn't have before."

"It's a great refresher," said Sgt. Daryl Thompson, a human resource specialist with the 554th MP Company. "You lose certain things during deployments. Going back to the basics ... will help me become a more effective leader."

The battalion's long-term goal is to train squad and team leaders to administer the course within their units.

"Getting back to the basics and re-implementing the standards — showing what right looks like with a standard across the board — really defines the future leaders that we are training to step into our shoes," Byrnes said.

"As senior NCOs, it is our duty to ensure our junior NCOs are getting all they possibly can from us," Lane said. "It is our job to grow our replacements." ♡



◀ Sgt. 1st Class Harmony Dawson, a plans NCO for the 709th Military Police Battalion, instructs a class on the wear and appearance of Army uniforms Jan. 26 during the "School of Leaders" course in Grafenwoehr, Germany. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TRAMEL S. GARRETT

Submit your article

The NCO Journal always seeks articles related to NCO professional development. If you have a story, photo or illustration, please send it to Master Sgt. Antony Joseph at antony.m.joseph.mil@mail.mil. Text should be sent in Microsoft Word format or in an email message. Photos and artwork should be high-resolution digital files. Submissions will be edited for content, length and style.

Roll Call OF THE FALLEN

FINAL SALUTES

Operation Enduring Freedom

SPC. KEITH D. BENSON, 27
Brockton, Mass., Jan. 18, 2012

SPC. CHRISTOPHER A. PATTERSON, 20
Aurora, Ill., Jan. 6, 2012

BRIG. GEN. TERENCE J. HILDNER, 49
Fairfax, Va., Feb. 3, 2012

PFC. MICHAEL W. PYRON, 30
Hopewell, Va., Jan. 10, 2012

1ST LT. DAVID A. JOHNSON, 24
Horicon, Wis., Jan. 25, 2012

SGT. 1ST CLASS BILLY A. SUTTON, 42
Tupelo, Miss., Feb. 7, 2012

SPC. BRIAN J. LEONHARDT, 21
Merrillville, Ind., Jan. 6, 2012

SPC. ROBERT J. TAUTERIS JR., 44
Hamlet, Ind., Jan. 6, 2012

STAFF SGT. JONATHAN M. METZGER, 32
Indianapolis, Ind., Jan. 6, 2012

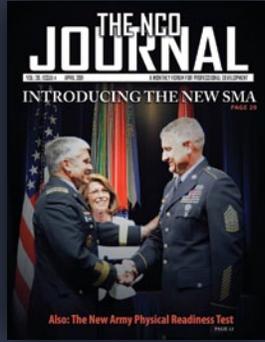
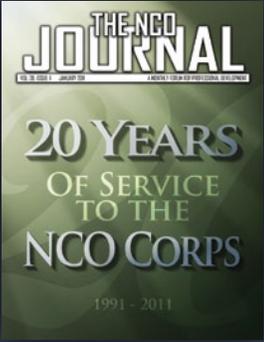
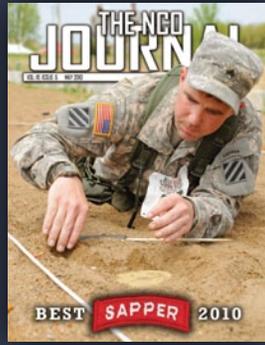
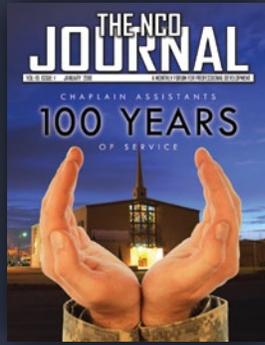
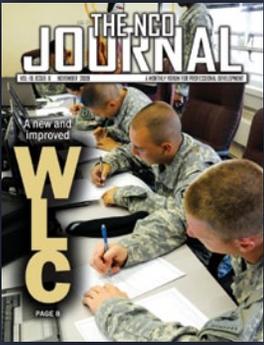
PFC. NEIL I. TURNER, 21
Tacoma, Wash., Jan. 11, 2012

PFC. DUSTIN P. NAPIER, 20
London, Ky., Jan. 8, 2012

SGT. 1ST CLASS BENJAMIN B. WISE, 34
Little Rock, Ark., Jan. 15, 2012

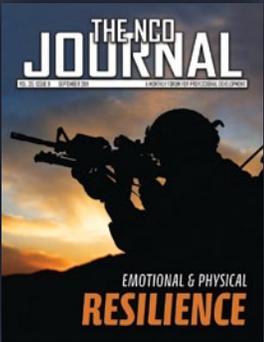
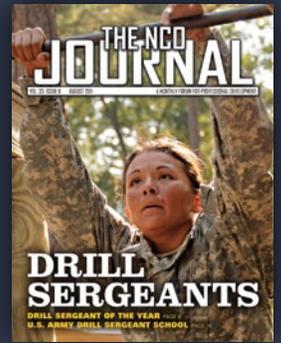
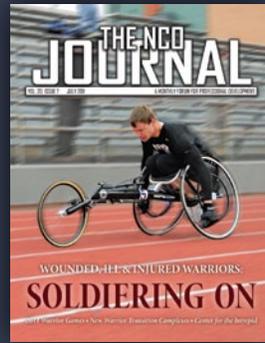
**YOU
ARE NOT
FORGOTTEN**

*This is a continuation of a list that began in the October 2003 issue of
The NCO Journal and contains names released by the Department of Defense
between Jan. 7, 2012 and Feb. 10, 2012.*



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