

Former Alaska National Guard TAG is NGB inspector general

Tech. Sgt. Erich B. Smith
National Guard Bureau

“There really weren’t a lot of jobs that would’ve made me put down my gardening tools and go back to work full time,” said the National Guard Bureau’s new inspector general. “But this is one.”

After 34 years of military service, including teaching at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and serving as the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, Dr. Laurie Hummel was ready to slow down when she retired in 2019.

“I was enjoying kicking back with some of the hobbies I had to leave behind during a busy career,” she said.

But when the offer to become the NGB inspector general presented itself, she said it was an opportunity to once again be part of something bigger than herself.

“[It’s] a job where you can help commanders create a safe and respectable and productive and collaborative environment for the Guard family – that’s a win-win,” said Hummel, who became the NGB IG in May.

The importance of the inspector general, and Hummel’s role in that position, can’t be emphasized enough, said Air Force Gen. Joseph Lengyel, the chief of the NGB.

“Inspectors general are a tremendous asset because they help us uphold trust – trust in the unit, in the Guard, and with the general public,” said Lengyel. “They are our impartial eyes and ears, who make sure we are efficient, effective, and operating within the law.”

Hummel said upholding that trust sometimes requires dispelling myths about the inspector general being “some monolithic, mysterious and scary thing.”

“Let’s take those two words: ‘inspector’ and ‘general.’ So, who really wants to spend a lot of time with either an inspector or a general?” she joked. “De-



Then Army Maj. Gen. Laurie Hummel makes remarks during her January 2019 retirement ceremony as the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. Hummel recently took the reins as the National Guard Bureau inspector general, a job she described as one of the few that would make her put down her gardening tools and go back to work full time, and said she looks forward to helping the National Guard “lean forward as its roles and responsibilities evolve.” (Photo by Spc. Michael Risinger)

veloping trust across the enterprise that [inspectors general] are here to assist can be a challenge.”

Addressing that challenge, she said, involves emphasizing to Guard members the NGB-IG office is composed of “folks dedicated to helping all of us in the National Guard be our best.”

Achieving that comes through a variety of efforts, including inspections, teaching the force and, should they be warranted, investigations, said Hummel.

“When we put all of those together, we work and enable to promote steward-

ship, accountability, integrity and efficiency,” she said.

Ultimately, the result of that effort enhances readiness and increases mission capability throughout the Guard.

“I think when it comes down to it, that’s what we do,” she said, adding the IG function “helps the National Guard be worthy of its members, and we help Guardsmen and Guardswomen be worthy of their [units].”

Hummel brings a wealth of experience to the table.

After graduating from West Point in 1982, she served in a variety of military intelligence assign-

ments before returning to West Point as an instructor. She served as a faculty member in the school’s Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering and then took on other military intelligence assignments of increasing responsibility.

Along the way she earned a Ph.D. in geography and graduate degrees in educational leadership and strategic studies. She also deployed to Afghanistan, where she served as the senior adviser to the National Military Academy of Afghanistan.

She retired from the active component Army in

2012, but then came back on duty as the adjutant general of the Alaska Guard in 2015 – a post she said will help her navigate some of the challenges in her new role.

“I can certainly identify with the unique challenges of being an adjutant general and the balancing necessary to simultaneously serve the interests of a state, under the leadership of a governor, while also being dependent on the NGB for resourcing, for subject matter expertise, and all of the federal support necessary to execute the federal mission set.”

But executing the IG role, she said, is something that she can’t, and doesn’t, do alone.

“A good IG office is full of [those] who are motivated to help people and organizations be better,” she said. “The NGB-IG is full of these folks.”

Roughly six weeks into her assignment, she said she’s in awe of those colleagues.

“I am already impressed by their intelligence and thoughtfulness,” she said. “They are a group who constantly talk about ways to serve the 54 [states, territories and Washington, D.C.], in addition to serving the chief and the National Guard Bureau.”

Hummel said there’s a lot she can learn from her team, something she sees as a pathway to continued success.

“From a personal perspective, I’d like to think of myself as a lifelong learner,” she said. “A learner tries to listen well and to think deeply and to be very aware of their own biases and limitations. All of those things serve an IG well.”

For Hummel, it boils down to caring for and contributing to the force.

“I still have some gas left in the tank and I [want] to be able to contribute to a National Guard I really care deeply about,” she said. “I want to help the enterprise lean forward as its roles and responsibilities evolve. I want to be on that bow wave of change.”

Army airborne task force descends onto Guam

Maj. Timothy Chavis

Paratroopers from the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, United States Army Alaska, parachuted onto Guam early in the morning as part of their Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska today.

Col. Christopher Landers, commander of U.S. Army Alaska’s 4-25 IBCT(A), led the training mission to secure the airfield as part of U.S. Army Pacific’s participation in ongoing joint

Paratroopers of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, U.S. Army Alaska, demonstrate a joint forcible entry into Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, June 30. The Army’s airborne brigade provides the Joint force the capability to rapidly deploy to and seize contested territory. The Joint force underpins United States’ commitment to the security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and demonstrates the ability to safely conduct operations in a COVID-19 environment. (Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Richard Ebensberger)

exercises throughout the region to include the Mariana Islands.

“This scenario tested our ability to execute real-world missions and demonstrated that we are capable of deploying anywhere in the U. S. Indo-Pacific Command area at a moment’s notice,” said Landers.

For his paratroopers, this exercise validated their ability to deploy and conduct operations in the Indo-Pacific region. While able to operate as a scalable task force, the unit delivered onto the airfield to make this the largest airborne operation here in recent memory.

Multiple C-17 Globe-



masters appeared in the early-morning sky carrying the paratroopers that had flown directly from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson,

Alaska, while donning their parachutes enroute.

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WEEKEND WEATHER

Friday



Partly sunny. High: 70F.

Saturday



Isolated showers.
High: 71F.

Sunday



Partly sunny. High: 77F.

IN BRIEF

A specialized team from Brooke Army Medical Center virtually supported a heart-lung bypass on the West Coast, saving a Soldier’s life and marking a first for this lifesaving program.

Read more on page 3

Nutrition Corner: Minimizing Food Waste

Did you know that each family in America generates approximately \$2,275 in food waste each year? Fortunately, there are several steps you can take to prevent wasting food in your household.

First and foremost, only buy what you need. Make a menu for the week, make a list based on the menu, and only buy what you need. We often find ourselves going to the store and buying what we think we need or whatever looks good at the time; however, this can lead to many food items going unused and spoiling.

Bulk discounts can be bad news

when it comes to purchasing fresh produce. If you do buy in bulk, have a plan for what you will use it for. Do not rely solely on fresh produce. Frozen and canned produce are nutritious options that have a much longer shelf life. Keep these products on hand but aim for fruit packed in juice or reduced sugar syrup and low sodium vegetables. This can be particularly useful here in Alaska.

Keep your refrigerated produce (berries, leafy greens, mushrooms, etc.) set at 40oF or below. Plan to use berries, fresh herbs, cucumbers, eggplant, leafy greens, mush-

rooms and summer squash within a couple days. If you find yourself with more fresh produce than you can use, make your own frozen food. Cut up your fruits and vegetables, place in an air tight container and freeze. Be sure to blanch your vegetables prior to freezing. You can also make a salsa, pickled vegetables or a smoothie

Featured Food:
Cucumber. Use as a low calorie snack or part of a meal! They can be eaten plain or as part of a salad.

Featured Recipe - Cucumber

Salad
Ingredients:
2 cucumbers, cleaned and sliced
1/2 cup white vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 small onion
1/2 cup sour cream, sliced

Instruction:
•Combine vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper in a bowl and mix
•Add cucumber and onion
•Chill for one to two hours in the refrigerator
•Add sour cream and serve

ACFT 2.0: Changes sparked by COVID-19

Thomas Brading
Army News Service

The Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFT, will be the force’s test of record Oct. 1, but the Army’s top enlisted Soldier says troops will have more time to train for and pass the six-event test – without fear of it negatively impacting their careers during that time.

Despite hold ups caused by COVID-19, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael A. Grinston is confident the long-planned ACFT will stay on track. In addition to the new training timeline, he also announced a handful of other modifications to the test, dubbing it ACFT 2.0.

It’s the same six-event physical fitness test – just an updated version, Grinston said. So even though troops don’t have to pass the test this year, they still have to take the ACFT as scheduled.

“When it’s the test of record, you have to put it into the system of record, and that’s the only requirement right now,” Grinston said. This means the Army won’t take administrative actions against Soldiers for potential ACFT failures.

Potential career impacts like separation, derogatory or referred evaluation reports, and a Soldier’s Order of Merit List standing are all off the table to be negatively impacted due to an ACFT failure.

This news comes as the

Army, in response to social distancing guidelines, hit the brakes on all physical fitness tests in March. Although fitness tests slowed down, Army leaders went full-steam ahead to plan how Soldiers will jump from the 40-year-old Army Physical Fitness Test, or APFT, to the new ACFT 2.0.

So what are the changes?

First, for many, the APFT is gone for good. Once testing suspensions are lifted, the only Soldiers required to take an APFT ever again will be troops without a current passing score, the sergeant major confirmed.

“As for everyone else [with a current passing APFT score] – they should start training for the ACFT,” he added.

As far as the evolution of the ACFT, the biggest change for Soldiers is the option to substitute a two-minute plank, once a Soldier has attempted the leg tuck.

The other six events are still locked in; the 3 repetition maximum dead-lift, standing power throw, hand release pushups, leg tuck, 2-mile run, and sprint, drag, carry. The plank is just an interim assessment.

The plank is seen as a transitioning tool for Soldiers jumping from the APFT to the six ACFT events, said Maj. Gen. Lonnie G. Hibbard, the U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training commanding general.



25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division Soldiers focus on the new Army Combat Fitness Test requirements at Wheeler Army Airfield, Hawaii. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Soldiers and leaders are still able to maintain their physical readiness, while incorporating the recommended health of the force best practices. (Photo by Sgt. Sarah D. Sangster)

Depending on an individual’s physical starting point, switching back to the leg tuck should take “anywhere between six to three months,” Hibbard added, but for now, the plank is an alternative.

Planks are a core muscle-burning exercise, completed by individuals who remain static with their elbows planted to the ground directly beneath the shoulders at a 90-degree angle while maintaining a straight posture.

Plank exercises can be conducted almost anywhere, Hibbard said, and do not require equipment to train for. Under the current COVID-19 conditions, this could be an ideal transitional assessment.

Also, the stationary bike event dropped its initial 15,000-meter standard down to a 12,000-meter standard. Biking is an Alternate Assessment for Soldiers with permanent profiles unable to complete the two-mile run.

Additional changes for fiscal year 2021 also include

scoring standards. All Soldiers are challenged to pass the ACFT at the “Gold Standard,” Hibbard confirmed, which is an overall minimum total score of 60.

To pass, all troops are required to meet the moderately challenging “gold standard” instead of the more grueling “grey or black” scoring minimums – typically reserved for harsher, more physically demanding career fields. This standard applies to all Soldiers, regardless of age or gender.

MEDDAC Minute

Important Phone Numbers

Emergency: 911
24 Hour Nurse Advice Line: 1-800-874-2273 Opt. 1
Appointment Line: 361-4000
Behavioral Health: 361-6059
Benefits Advisor: 361-5656
Immunizations: 361-5456
Information Desk: 361-5172
Patient Advocate: 361-5291
Pharmacy Refills: 361-5803
Tricare On-Line: www.tricareonline.com
Health Net: www.tricare-west.com, 1-844-8676-9378

can be treated are sprains and strains, respiratory infections, coughs, skin rashes, sinus infections and pink eye. Get started by downloading the PMP Anywhere app or by visiting pmpediatricsanywhere.com.

Specialist Available

Did you know you can see a specialist right here at Bassett urinary incontinence, overactive bladder, pelvic organ prolapse and fecal incontinence WITHOUT a referral from your PCM? Call 361-4000, option 4, option 1, option 1 to request an appointment with Dr. Christa Lewis.

Third Party Insurance

Do you have insurance other than TRICARE? Guaranteed no extra cost to the beneficiary, Bassett ACH is required to obtain a copy of private health insurance coverage from all non-active duty beneficiaries. To provide us with this information, beneficiaries will be asked to complete a DD FM 2569 annually.

Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet

It’s a great time to check your medicine cabinets for expired prescription and over the counter medications. A MedSafe box, located inside the main entrance of Bassett ACH across from the information desk, is in place to securely receive your expired or no longer needed medications.

Over The Counter Medications

Bassett Army Community Hospital Pharmacy offers beneficiaries the ability to receive free over the counter medications. Items such as fever/pain reducers, antibiotic cream, cold and allergy remedies, lice treatment and vitamin D are available. Medicines are subject to availability and families are restricted to a maximum of four items per week. A full list of medications is available at the pharmacy.

Appointments From Home

In partnership with TRI-CARE, PM Pediatrics is offering virtual appointments for TRI-CARE beneficiaries from birth through 26 years old. Visit with a pediatrician using your smart phone, table or computer from anywhere. Common illness that

GUAM

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Immediately after hitting the ground, paratroopers seized objectives and secured the airfield.

The exercise started only several days before, at JBER, Alaska, when paratroopers were notified of their mission. Every single paratrooper and all support personnel involved were screened for COVID-19, with all participants receiving negative results.

To ensure the health and safety of the military and civilian communities in Guam, everyone was quarantined to AAFB and observed all COVID-19 safety pre-

cautions. This included separation from the Andersen community throughout the exercise.

“We are successfully balancing readiness and mission requirements with health and safety precautions to protect ourselves and our communities,” said Landers. “Our joint partners have facilitated every one of our requirements. It’s been an incredible experience to work with them.”

The joint team in the Indo-Pacific underscores the U.S. commitment to keep it, secure, stable, free and open.

ALASKA POST

The Interior Military News Connection

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July 3, 2020

The Chaplain's Corner

The Focus of Your Journey

Chaplain (Capt.) Kenneth D. Gillespie
Medical Command
Alaska Chaplain

What role does spirituality play in your life? For some, the answer to this question is easy, for others, it is far more complicated. For some it may be easy because spirituality to them is either paramount or inconsequential. For most, it is somewhere in the middle, and therefore, this question becomes more challenging to answer.

One of my favorite parts of the initial military training I experienced in preparation to serve as a Chaplain for the U.S. Army was land navigation training. I have always enjoyed maps, geography, and hiking, and this was an opportunity to engage in all three, as

well as the chance to trade the classroom environment for the great outdoors. The senior NCO who led our training was excellent and one of the things he taught us about land navigation has more far-reaching implications.

When you are attempting to navigate on foot and using an old-school compass, you determine the correct direction to walk, and then identify something that stands out as a point of orientation, something to walk toward. He was clear that it was foolish to look at the compass as we walked because we would most certainly end up off course. He also told us not to choose something that moved, like a cloud or even the stars, because they, too, would

cause us to wander off course. It was best to choose something that was easily visible and stable, like a radio tower or a rock formation.

There is significant wisdom in the guidance of this seasoned NCO, which not only enabled us to successfully complete the land navigation training, but which also applies to every other area of our lives. We need something solid, reliable, and easily visible to orient ourselves to if we are going to successfully navigate the stresses and challenges in our lives. People often focus on their own happiness or on what is popular or trendy as a guide, but that is insufficient, leaving them wandering in circles, always trying something new, and never getting

anywhere.

A person can become lost in the hopelessness of such situations, not knowing where to turn for guidance. This is why that orientation point is so important. It is something to reorient ourselves to when we have lost our way. A steady guide to get us through difficulties and challenges, which we inevitably will face.

Returning to the original question, what role does spirituality play as we journey through this life, is it just an add-on, an accessory, or is it your point of orientation? Army Regulation 350-53 defines a person's spiritual dimension as "identifying one's purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision... [The] elements, which define the essence of a



person, enable one to build inner strength, make meaning of experiences, behave ethically, persevere through challenges, and be resilient when faced with adversity." Just like a radio tower on the horizon is an effective point of orientation during land navigation, our spirituality can be our point of orientation as we journey through this life.

If you have not thought much about

your spirituality lately, or it does not seem to be working for you, I would encourage you to reach out to a trusted Chaplain or religious leader within your tradition, who can help you better understand how to more fully rely upon your spiritual tradition as a guide in this life. We all need something enduring, something stable, which is larger than ourselves or our circumstances to journey toward.

'Game-changing' virtual health care saves Soldier's life

Elaine Sanchez

A specialized team from Brooke Army Medical Center virtually supported a heart-lung bypass on the West Coast, saving a Soldier's life and marking a first for this lifesaving program.

BAMC teamed up with Naval Medical Center San Diego last month to administer extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, or ECMO, treatment to a patient with presumed viral myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart muscle, which can, in some cases, lead to heart failure.

"This was BAMC's first time virtually supporting ECMO and it was highly successful," said Colleen Mitchell, ECMO primer, Institute of Surgical Research Burn Center. "It is a game changer for critical care."

Physicians first pursued conventional therapy when the young active duty Soldier was admitted to the Naval medical center. However, with the Soldier's condition declining, all signs began to point to ECMO as the best course of treatment.

ECMO is a heart-lung bypass system that circulates blood through an external artificial lung, oxygenates it, and delivers it back into the bloodstream. Rather than treat the condition, ECMO performs the job of the patient's heart and lungs, buying the patient precious time to respond to treatments and heal. Established in October 2012, BAMC has the only adult ECMO center with full capability in



U.S. Army Lt. Col. (Dr.) Robert Walter, chief, BAMC Pulmonary/Critical Care Medicine, provides tele-critical care support during a simulated extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, or ECMO, cannulation at Naval Medical Center San Diego, Dec. 11, 2019. (Courtesy photo)

the Department of Defense and remains one of the few centers in the world with air transport capability.

"The sooner the patient is on ECMO and stabilized, the less time vital organs are without oxygenation or necessary blood pressure support and the quicker the recovery," said Bernadette Elliott, Adult Extracorporeal Life Support/ECMO Transport Program Manager.

With increasing evidence of its lifesaving properties, in recent years adult ECMO has become a hot commodity around the world, and other military medical centers have expressed interest in the capability. Naval Medical Center San Diego was one of the first military hospitals to purchase ECMO equipment that would enable short-term care prior to a patient transfer, noted Lt. Col. (Dr.) Robert

Walter, chief, Pulmonary/Critical Care Medicine.

Last December, a team of BAMC physicians and nurse specialists flew to the naval center to provide training in ECMO administration, patient transfer, and telemedicine-based mentoring to 25 personnel.

"Fast-forward to now, and that initial training was incredibly beneficial," Walter said. "With the patient in this case clinically declining, the physicians in San Diego were able to recognize at a critical moment that ECMO was indicated and feel confident they could provide appropriate care."

In close coordination with the San Diego-based team, BAMC offered to virtually assist with cannulation, which is the insertion of tubes into a patient, and other ECMO management as the center coordinated a patient transfer to a local

hospital.

In the absence of a specialized team and full capability, the aim is for military medical professionals to have the skillset to stabilize patients on ECMO for transfer to a local facility for shorter-term care, such as in this case, or flown to BAMC when a longer course of treatment is indicated, which is typically the case with illnesses such as influenza, Walter explained.

Mitchell was the primer on call at BAMC the day the call came from San Diego. The primer is responsible for ensuring fluid is smoothly flowing throughout the circuit.

"We tried to connect via secure video teleconferencing; however, there were technical issues so we defaulted to audio support," she recalled. "I walked them through cannulation and priming the circuit,

while closely monitoring the patient's vital signs. It went very well."

The Soldier was successfully transferred and removed from ECMO after a few days and is expected to fully recover, Mitchell said. "There's no better feeling than to have the skillset needed to contribute to someone's survival," she said.

"If that capability hadn't been there, there may not have been a good outcome," Elliott added.

Teamwork was key to this success, Walter said. "This was a terrific example of collaboration across facilities," he said. "And it was one of the most avant-garde telemedicine application I've seen. There's nothing in medical literature regarding virtual support of adult ECMO cannulation and management. BAMC is truly at the tip of the spear."

Further down the road, Walter said the team hopes to become the hub of virtual ECMO support to other military medical facilities around the world, providing tele-mentoring and virtual biophysical monitoring of patients both stateside and down-range.

The goal is to have consistent, quality ECMO care and capability throughout the Military Health System, said Elliott, noting that BAMC can fly a patient here from a combat zone in 18-36 hours. "Whenever we hear a patient is alive today because of our support ... that is what it's ultimately about. It's real-time critical care support."

Army recruiters pushing more into digital world

Sean Kimmons
Army News Service

Army recruiting plans to create a small cyber team to expand its esports program, which has already helped attract thousands of potential recruits, amid a larger push into the digital realm.

Similar to the regular esports team, which was formed last year, the three-person cyber team will compete in events across the country, showing a different side of the service to Generation Z youth.

In the competitions, Soldiers will write code to conduct offensive and defensive cyber operations through a video game, said Maj. Gen. Frank Muth, commander of U.S. Army Recruiting Command.

"We need cyber-interested Soldiers," he said. "The intent is to get out there and engage the cyber world doing cyber esports, and then use that as a tool to recruit."

Esports arena
The command sees the

esports arena, where millions play video games or watch other gamers, as an emerging method to reach out to youth compared to traditional ways.

In its first nine months after being stood up last fiscal year, the esports team generated about 4,000 leads as its Soldiers competed online or during live events. In the first quarter of this fiscal year, the team doubled that number with 8,000 leads.

The team expects to see 24,000 leads by Sept. 30.

"That's been awesome," Muth said June 23 during a discussion for the Association of the U.S. Army's Noon Report series.

Other recruiters have taken advantage of the rapid growth of esports, which, according to Forbes magazine, had audiences of more than 443 million across the world last year – a following greater than American football and rugby combined.

Recruiting stations have even created their own esports tournaments to prospect for recruits.

The Syracuse Recruiting Battalion, for instance, recently ran a Call of Duty tournament. The effort cost only \$2,000 and had two recruiters each working just eight hours total for the weeklong event.

In comparison, the battalion typically rents a booth at the New York State Fair for \$15,000 to engage with people for three weeks, 15 hours a day using up to a dozen recruiters.

The best year they had

See DIGITAL on page 5

Soldiers test new night vision capabilities

Bridgett Siter

"Really good" was never really going to be good enough for the Army team developing the Enhanced Night Vision Goggle – Binocular. Nine months after equipping the first unit with the ENVG-B, developers are testing the rigor of system enhancements at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, La., in order to assess new augmented reality technologies and the hardware that delivers them.

As a night vision device, the ENVG-B’s dual thermal and infrared sensing capabilities deliver unmatched clarity in situations where visibility is diminished, including the complete absence of light. It was fielded for the first time last fall as part of an initial Directed Requirement to get those next generation night vision capabilities in the hands of Soldiers at Fort Riley who have since deployed with them to Korea.

But that was just the beginning, said Maj. John Nikiforakis, the Assistant Product Manager for PEO Soldier. New applications are being tested and refined for delivery to the Close Combat Force.

“We put an incredible tool in the hands of Soldiers who need it now,” Nikiforakis said. “But the goal always is to treat the Soldier as a system, to equip



A 10th Mtn Soldier adjusts his Enhanced Night Vision Goggle - Binocular in preparation for a land navigation exercise during the ENVG-B Reliability Growth Test in June at Fort Polk. (Photo by Bridgett Siter)

Soldiers and squads holistically with weapons and system elements that work together to make them more lethal and more survivable. That’s what we’re doing here, testing the ENVG-B as a system.”

It’s a system that includes augmented reality capabilities and a heads-up display that integrates wirelessly with weapon optics. Those kind of capabilities make it possible for a Soldier to detect and even fire on a target around an obstacle with limited exposure to the enemy.

In what is called a reliability growth test, the first of three planned for the ENVG-B system, Soldiers from C Troop, 3rd Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 10th

Mountain Division, put the system to the test during field training exercises throughout the month of June. After a week of classroom training with the systems, a week of marksmanship training on the range, and a week of nighttime situational training exercises, the event culminated in a 72-hour field training exercise with an opposing force. Thirty participants used the ENVG-Bs, and others used PVS-14 night vision devices in order for data collectors and observers to draw comparisons.

There was no comparison, said Capt. Will Hess, the C Troop commander.

“In terms of target detection and clarity, the difference between

the (ENVG-B) and the PVS-14 is night and day,” Hess said. “The guys wearing the ENVG-Bs were taking targets out to 300 meters and even beyond, whereas our guys with 14s are having trouble seeing beyond 150. I can’t say enough about the ENVG-Bs. There’s really no comparison.”

Which doesn’t mean the tests all ran smoothly. By design, RGTs are iterative. Soldier Touch Points that expose weaknesses in the software or hardware early and often throughout the development process in order to shape a final product that is beneficial to the Soldier and wholly accepted. That’s the Soldier Centered Design methodology employed by the

Soldier Lethality Cross Functional Team that leads the ENVG-B program, one of Army Future Command’s signature modernization efforts. Soldiers are involved in design and development every step of the way.

“The focus for this is getting it the hands of the Soldiers and just figuring out early on what are some issues with the device and how do Soldiers actually use it,” Hess said. “They developed it and tested it in the lab based on how they think Soldiers are going to use it. Now, we give to Soldiers and run them through our training and see how they actually use it and to test its durability, to see how it stands up to the kind of rigorous use Soldiers put it through in a dense, rugged environment doing dismounted squad maneuvers.”

The rugged environment at Fort Polk includes swamps, and swamps present Soldiers with a different kind of challenge.

“Snakes. Two water moccasins, two feet away,” said 2nd Lt Phillip Davis, who spotted the threat using ENVG-Bs in thermal mode. “The guys using the 14s couldn’t see them at all. There’s no comparison between the two. Just the difference in depth perception and clarity is drastic. The ENVG-Bs are incredible for situational awareness alone. Having that

augmented reality with Rapid Target Acquisition allows us to make decisions quicker, and that’s going to save a lot of lives.”

With all the additional “gee whiz features” on the ENVG-Bs, like see-through map overlays and a compass, Davis said he needs more time with the goggle to prevent cognitive overload.

“The potential is astonishing,” he said. “These are capabilities I never thought I’d see in the Army, but it’s a lot like learning to drive a stick shift; we just need practice. Our guys are picking up on it very quickly, so I can see it being a great benefit a few months from now.”

In the coming months, the ENVG-B team will continue to conduct Soldier Touch Points, including RGTs, to address any issues identified during the exercise at Fort Polk, Nikiforakis said. It’s an iterative “test-fix-test” cycle.

“We rely on Soldier feedback to ensure the equipment we field is exactly what they want and what they need to be more lethal and more survivable on the battlefield,” he said. “The need to restore overmatch is urgent. The key to staying on track is keeping Soldiers involved every step of the way and finding ways to work around the challenge of the (COVID-19) pandemic.”

July 3, 2020

Army researchers augment combat vehicles with AI

U.S. Army CCDC Army Research Laboratory Public Affairs

When Soldiers enter a new environment, their mission demands they stay one step ahead of the enemy; however, they may find it challenging to maintain a high level of alertness if they're driving a combat vehicle across unfamiliar or dangerous terrain.

The U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command's Army Research Laboratory designated several research programs as essential for future Soldier capabilities. Of these major flagship programs, the Artificial Intelligence for Maneuver and Mobility, or AIMM, Essential Research Program, endeavors to reduce Soldier distractions on the battlefield through the integration of autonomous systems in Army vehicles.

Dr. John Fossaceca, AIMM program manager, said he seeks to develop the foundational capabilities that will enable autonomy in the next generation of combat vehicles. This include the construction of a robotic combat vehicle that operates independently of the main combat vehicle.

"The main purpose of this essential research program is to build autonomous systems that help the Army effectively execute Multi-Domain Operations," Fossaceca said. "We don't want Soldiers to be operating these remote-controlled vehicles with their heads down, constantly paying attention to the vehicle in order to control it. We want these systems to be fully autonomous so that these Soldiers can do their jobs and these autonomous systems can work as teammates and perform effectively in the battlefield."

Considerations that go into the development of military autonomous vehicles differ significantly compared to those intended for commercial use.

Manufacturers typically design commercial self-driving cars to op-



Learn how the U.S. Army seeks intelligent vehicles to ease Soldier burdens in multi-domain operations in June 25, 2020, episode of the CCDC Army Research Laboratory's What We Learned Today podcast. (U.S. Army - Shutterstock)

erate on pristine roads, where heavy traffic and crowds of pedestrians play a significant factor in its capabilities. In contrast, the Army often faces environments with diverse terrains and areas that may not even have a road to travel on.

"Soldiers may have to operate in forests or deserts, and they may have to operate in a certain manner like moving stealthily in order to achieve some objective," Fossaceca said. "This is very different than what's happening in the autonomous vehicle industry, which is the main model of autonomy available today in terms of autonomous vehicle research."

As a result, this research intends to fill the gaps to cover these unique situations that Soldiers face.

Autonomy in the next generation combat vehicle will not only help Soldiers make decisions but also clearly explain the rationale behind its suggestions so that a Soldier can either approve the choice or intervene if necessary, Fossaceca said.

"Future military missions are going to

require autonomous vehicles that can determine what the passable routes might be, calculate the best route and make assessment about what's happening in the environment," Fossaceca said. "We want to integrate this autonomous behavior in modern military vehicles so that it feels less alien to the Soldier and can decrease the cognitive burden of the decision-making process."

In the short term, Army researchers plan to take advantage of recent advances in computing architecture and create a single platform that will first perform narrow AI, or artificial intelligence that can complete very specific tasks consistently, and leverage these capabilities to build a teammate for the Soldier.

"We want to perform very specific tasks at first but make them very robust and make them operate really well," Fossaceca said. "And then, as time goes on, we want to make things more general so that systems can do a lot more than just very narrow, specific tasks on the battlefield."

One of the program's near-term objectives pertains to the development of intelligent mobility with narrow AI in environments with minimum a priori training data. While self-driving cars normally need tremendous amounts of data to train the vehicle's intelligent system, Army researchers have developed techniques to reduce the training time and data required.

Other examples include Natural Language capabilities to enhance communication between Soldiers and their vehicles as well as what Fossaceca referred to as "tactical teaming with distributed assets," where the intelligent system changes and adapts as the mission progresses.

In the long term, Army researchers want future combat vehicles to be able to look at the context of the environment and obtain helpful clues. This capability would require the intelligent system to analyze complex, adversarial environments and develop possible courses of action.

"For example, let's say the vehicle's intelligent system notices a

roadblock," Fossaceca said. "An obstacle like a fallen tree could just be there by coincidence and require additional navigation in circumventing it, while sandbags may indicate signs of a trap and require the system to warn the driver about the possibilities of an ambush. We want our systems to process these kinds of contextual clues in the future."

So far, researchers in the program have worked to improve the autonomy software stack, a special collection of software algorithms, libraries and software components for autonomous vehicles.

Originally the product of the laboratory's 10-year Robotics Collaborative Technology Alliance, the software stack consists of computer programs that allow autonomous vehicles to perform functions such as navigation, planning, perception, control and reasoning. The autonomy software stack also contains a world model that the intelligent system can use as a virtual brain to keep track of information about the world.

"With the autonomy software stack, we can feed capabilities into the [CCDC] Ground Vehicle System Center's software enterprise, so that they can incorporate those capabilities into their next generation combat vehicle program in the future," Fossaceca said. "This is foundational research, and it represents the program's core architecture."

Recently, Army researchers achieved another important milestone with the Scalable Adaptive and Resilient Autonomy program, which leverages external collaborators outside of the laboratory to accelerate the pace of emerging research in scalable, heterogeneous behaviors.

"We have several different types of robots and systems working together, and we're asking external performers to come in and help us with increasing the complexity of scenarios that we can handle," Fossaceca said. "This is really going to help us toward our goal of autonomous maneuver in multi-domain operations, so this is pretty exciting."

DIGITAL

Continued from page 3

at the state fair was nearly 1,300 leads. The esports tournament had almost 1,500 leads with much less funds and manpower.

"Think about the time, energy, cost that was associated with getting that many more leads just utilizing esports," Muth said.

Autonomous recruiting

A new concept of "autonomous recruiting operations" is also being developed, following lessons learned during the pandemic that forced the command to temporarily reduce the use of its brick-and-mortar recruiting stations and go entirely virtual.

The operations aim to increase the mobility of recruiters by relying on technology and social media platforms.

In the future, Muth said the Army will institute a test for NCOs to not only gauge their aptitude for being a recruiter in the fu-

ture, but also their knowledge of technology.

If the test determines the NCO is better suited as a recruiter than a drill sergeant, the Soldier could then be placed in a specific tech or social media recruiting operation.

The command has even changed its curriculum, spending more time on creative methods to engage potential recruits on social media, Muth said.

After requests from recruiters about paying to "boost" content on social media to reach larger audiences, the command has also changed how they can use their stipend.

Each month, recruiters receive \$75 that usually covers some incidental out-of-pocket costs associated with prospecting. Now, recruiters can use that stipend to boost their social media posts.

"We are changing the way we recruit," Muth said. "We're changing the way we're going to bring in



Visitors play video games inside a semitrailer belonging to the U.S. Army Recruiting Command's esports team during the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C., Oct. 14, 2019. The command plans to create a cyber esports team and roll out autonomous recruiting operations, which will increase the mobility of recruiters with a larger social media presence. (Photo by Sean Kimmons)

recruiters and how we train them and then how we get them out there in the environment recruiting."

The general believes as recruiters become more mobile and interactive in

the virtual space, the Army may require less physical space for recruiting stations. A 1,200-square-foot office with 18 recruiters, for example, may be reduced to a 200-square-foot office. Or,

even a kiosk where recruiters huddle like at a patrol base before they go out to conduct their mission.

"It's very exciting times for recruiting and we've learned a lot," he said.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Fort Wainwright Family & MWR

Weekly Events

July 4 - 11

4

B.O.S.S. White Mountain ATV Trip
July 11
8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Tackle the trails of White Mountains National Recreation Area with B.O.S.S. and Outdoor Recreation on an ATV! *An ATV Safety Course is required before taking this trip. Registration deadline is July 4.

B.O.S.S., Bldg 1045
Call 353-7648, registration required

4

Virtual Independence Day 5K Run
4 - 5
Varies

Join us for a Virtual 5K! You can register by calling or going to Physical Fitness Center. Photos, videos, and/or route tracking images can be sent to the Facebook event on Wainwright MWR Facebook page to be entered to win a prize. Cost: \$15, includes t-shirt.

Physical Fitness Center, Bldg 3709
Call 353-7223, registration required

5

ATV Safety Course
July 12
9 a.m. & 1 p.m.

If you would like to adventure with ODR on an ATV trip, it is required to complete an ATV Safety Course beforehand. Registration deadline is July 5.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 4050
Call 361-6349, registration required

8

Youth Sports & Fitness Workout Wednesday
July 8
Varies

Workout with Youth Sports & Fitness every Wednesday by checking out the video on the Wainwright MWR Facebook page. Keep an eye out for the next challenge!

Youth Sports & Fitness, Bldg 1045
Call 353-7482

11

Boaters Safety Course
July 18
9 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Everyone checking out a motorized watercraft from the Outdoor Recreation Center is required to have a Boater Safety Card issued from the Fort Wainwright Outdoor Recreation Center. Registration deadline is July 11.

Outdoor Recreation Center, Bldg 4050
Call 361-6349, registration required

CHENA BEND CLUBHOUSE & GOLF COURSE

RED, WHITE, & BLUE
Golf Outing
July 3 - 5
\$20
(907) 353-6223




wainwright.armymwr.com



Join us at the Warrior Zone for a BBQ! July 4, 2 - 8 p.m.
For more information, go to wainwright.armymwr.com.
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Do's and don'ts for displaying Old Glory

Susan H. Lawson
Defense.gov

This week, American flags will be displayed across the nation in celebration of the Independence Day holiday. Following a few guidelines can ensure we are displaying Old Glory properly.

In 1923, the U.S. National Flag Code was created and distributed nationwide. The code became Public Law in 1942 and became the U.S. Flag Code we know today. The U.S. Flag Code lays out the ways to display and respect the flag of the United States.

For example:

- The flag should not be on display outdoors during bad weather.
- The flag should not be used for advertising purposes, or embroidered on cushions, handkerchiefs, napkins or boxes.
- The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding or drapery.
- It should never be displayed upside down unless trying to convey a sign of distress or great danger.
- The flag should never

touch anything beneath it; this includes water, merchandise and even the floor.

- When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.

Other Do's and Don'ts:

- Clean and damage-free flags should always be used. Dirty, ripped, wrinkled or frayed flags should not be used. Also, when flags are damaged, they should be destroyed in a dignified manner.
- The U.S. flag should flow freely in the wind or in a lobby with a passing breeze as people walk past. Stretching a flag is a lot like walking around with your arms held out straight. It is not to be held captive by metal arm spreaders as if to say, "Look at me!"
- Staffs and finials should always be upright and not leaning.
- Clamping a U.S. flag



Dan Frye (top left), facilities maintenance electrician, Arlington National Cemetery; and Ray Coppage (lower center), facilities maintenance mechanic work lead, Arlington National Cemetery; hang American flags in the Memorial Amphitheater in preparation for Memorial Day at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, May 21, 2018. (Photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

to a vehicle's antenna is acceptable, or the flagstaff clamped to the right fender, as long as the flag displays in the proper direction.

- Service flags are displayed in order of service precedence, not the host service where they are displayed. The order of precedence is Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard.
- When displaying the U.S. flag with other flags, the U.S. flag comes first and is centered in the middle of a flag display. In addition, the U.S. flag must be placed higher than the other flags, unless other national flags are present. In that case the U.S. flag would be the same height.

July 3, 2020

'Be About It': Provost marshal general sends message to MPs on racial division and civil unrest

Gary Sheftick
Army News Service

As American citizens share their frustration over the racial divisions and call for police reform across the nation, The Army provost marshal general and his sergeant major delivered a video message to all military police on fostering a culture built on trust and acceptance.

The three-minute video, "Let's not just talk about it – Let's BE ABOUT IT," by Maj. Gen. Kevin Vereen and Sgt. Maj. Larry Orvis Jr. was posted this week to social media platforms. The message was intended to reach the more than 34,000 MPs in the Army's three components and about 8,000 civilian personnel who support them, including Department of the Army civilian police, Army security guards and special agents.

The message is also meant to raise awareness among all audiences of the opportunity to foster a culture of change in how others are treated, Vereen said.

Vereen, the Army's first African-American provost marshal general, asks leaders and Soldiers to listen to one another and actually "see" each other as individuals.

"See me as a black man," he says in the video. "See me as a father with black sons."

Vereen explained during a phone interview Monday that he still reminds his three adult sons about how they should conduct themselves in a respectful manner if pulled over by police off post.

"I have to have that conversation with them," he said. "My sons are nervous right now; and not just my sons, but those who have young men, they too are feeling this uneasiness with what has recently happened in our country."

His message is simple: "Leaders need to take time to ask their Soldiers how they feel," he said.

"I am concerned there are members of our MP family who don't feel seen during this time," he goes on to say in the video.



Then-Brig. Gen. Kevin Vereen hosts a Martin Luther King Jr. observance at Fort Knox, Kentucky, last year before being promoted and becoming the Army's provost marshal general. (Photo by Eric Pilgrim)

It just takes a few minutes to listen and understand, he explained over the phone. He urged leaders to get to know their Soldiers.

"The questions are not necessarily hard," he said, recommending setting up an environment to engage in dialogue with an opening question as simple as "How are you doing?"

Some things cannot be ignored, he said. "We just cannot push aside the fact that we have a major situation happening in our country. We've got major protests going on in almost every metropolitan city in the United States."

Many of the Army National Guard's 15,000 military police were involved in keeping the peace during protests across the nation this month, he said.

"They were there to protect citizens and safeguard their Constitutional rights to peacefully assemble and exercise free speech," he explained.

When asked were there some anxiety in the minds of the National Guardsmen, Vereen said that "some of the National Guard Soldiers were called to respond to demonstrations in their own neighborhoods." Potentially facing friends and neighbors can involve a special kind of anxiety and uneasiness, he explained, adding it requires a special kind of "resiliency, restraint and professionalism."

Vereen was asked about what training military police receive that helps them in their many missions.

"MPs get special training in cultural awareness, the proper use of force, and how to de-escalate a situation," he said.

"There are a lot of things you can do before there is a decision to employ or use lethal force," he said. "We train our MPs to exercise these measured levels of response based on the circumstances they find themselves."

With regard to the nationwide discussion of police reform, Vereen said "If we are going to look at ways to implement police reform, it starts at the highest level – the federal level." He further went on to say that reform "must be a two-pronged approach and executed at the local level by the local sheriffs and community chiefs of police."

"You must work to redesign the police force," he said. "You have to start with vetting, and it must be done thoroughly. Everybody should not be carrying a badge and carrying a weapon."

Next, in order to implement community policing, trust needs to be built within the community, he said. Partnerships need to be formed with key influencers in the community. When done effectively, communities will begin to police themselves and share information freely to those police in their community, he added.

On military installations, the situation is a little different, he said. About 90 percent of people that MPs interact with are

tied to the Army, he said. They are family members or Soldiers.

"We go in with the understanding these are people we know; we have a relationship with them," he said. "There is an expectation ... that we are going to treat them with dignity and respect."

Vereen said he grew up around Army installations. His father was a Special Forces NCO.

"I grew up in a military family, so I was always around other cultures," he said. "That kind of made me who I am."

Yet, he said not a day goes by that he does not feel that he needs to prove himself, and strive to be the very best, because of his heritage and because that is what the profession demands.

When asked about his feelings on whether true change will happen in America with regard to racism, Vereen said "The young generation is demanding change." It's not just African-Americans like in the 1960s during the civil rights marches, where an overwhelming majority of participants were blacks, he said, but stressed this civil rights movement involves all ethnic groups.

"With regard to change, they are not going to settle for regulations and policy that are just written on paper," he said of the youth today, adding they want to see action and visible change.

"We can't just talk about it," he said, "we really have to be about it."

Army releases results of fall 2019 housing surveys

Army Public Affairs

The U.S. Army today released the results of two housing surveys conducted at the end of 2019 by an independent third party. The results for Army privatized housing increased slightly over the previous survey, conducted during the spring of 2019, in the overall and service satisfaction scores, with the most noticeable increase in the quality of maintenance. The results for Army-owned and leased housing remained virtually unchanged from the previous survey, with only a slight decrease in satisfaction. The results come amid continuous Army efforts to improve housing conditions as one of its top priorities.

More than 87,000 residents were invited to participate and 21,287 responded, although participation rates were slightly lower than last year for privatized housing.

"Feedback from residents is extremely valuable for measuring and improving the quality of housing on Army installations," said Mr. Alex Beehler, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment. "The results of this year's survey will be used to continue identifying the concerns of our residents, and will guide Army staff and the private housing companies on ways we can improve the quality of life for our Soldiers and their Families."

The Army will use the survey results as one of several tools to continue identifying ways to improve

housing conditions by enhancing communication with residents, creating and prioritizing action plans to correct deficiencies, and identifying items that are most important to residents.

The goal of these successive surveys is to quantify, compare and evaluate performances over time. Army leaders are committed to further improving housing conditions, and the survey results will help to shape future housing quality and services.

Quality housing for Soldiers and their Families continues to be the Army's top "Quality of Life" priority, and Army leaders are committed to further improving housing conditions. The survey results will help leaders continue to shape improvements in housing quality and services.

"We are absolutely committed to providing safe and secure housing on every installation, and making every installation an installation of choice for our Soldiers and Families," said Gen. Gus Perna, Army Materiel Command commander. "The action we take from these survey results will be another step to hold ourselves and privatized housing companies accountable to provide a high-quality standard of living and to earn back the trust of our housing residents."

Both surveys were administered online by CEL & Associates Inc., an independent, third-party organization that also conducts housing surveys for the other military services and for the private sector.

Exchange giving military shoppers chance to win prizes on Facebook every Free Friday

Carina DeCino
Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs

Social media is a great way for military communities to stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. That's why the Army and Air Force Exchange Service is inviting military shoppers at Fort Wainwright and installations worldwide to sound off on Facebook every Free Friday for the chance to win some serious prizes.

Authorized Exchange shoppers can enter each Free Friday drawing by simply replying to the question posed on the Free Friday post at facebook.

com/ShopMyExchange. Past winners have received prizes such as a new GrillSmith Executive Series 5-burner gas grill, a Courtyard Creations seven-piece patio dining set, a Husqvarna riding lawnmower, an IZOD bedding and bath set, and a Serta Perfect Sleeper Queen mattress.

"Warfighters and military families are under a tremendous amount of stress right now, so we hope this year's lineup of Free Friday drawings gives them the chance to take their minds off the uncertainty," said Fort Wainwright Exchange general manager Gloria Sylvia. "Exchange shoppers have won \$83,611

in Free Friday prizes since we started this program, so it has definitely paid off for our lucky winners."

Replies must be posted on the same day of the Free Friday post to be entered into the drawing. Drawings are held on the Monday after each Free Friday giveaway. Entries made by 11:59 p.m. Central on the day of the posting will be entered into the drawing.

Honorably discharged veterans who have verified their eligibility to shop the Exchange online can also enter the weekly drawings. Veterans can find out more on the Exchange's community Hub page at <https://bit.ly/Vets4Life>.