



MPRA

THE DRAGON | Winter 2024

MILITARY POLICE IN TIME



Since the Founding of the Republic

Assist Protect Defend

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Mission

Promote the history and preserve the traditions of the Military Police Corps Regiment while supporting Military Police Leadership, Soldiers and Families Army wide.

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The premier Military Police professional organization which is fully aligned with the Army and Military Police Corps current and future visions and recognized as relevant by Military Police Leaders, Soldiers and Families throughout the Regiment.

Values

Serve Military Police Leaders, Soldiers, and Families with dignity, respect, responsibility and stewardship of our resources with integrity, transparency and accountability.

A NOTE FROM THE

BUSINESS MANAGER

The MPRA Dragoon features information from the MPRA Community, news from the Home of the Regiment at Fort Leonard Wood, historical accounts, and stories from all components (Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve), as well as Retired Military Police from around the world. The overall goal of the Dragoon is to be current on the HOOAH events taking place within our ranks and, in turn, be a direct reflection of the Regiment as a whole. We encourage articles and photographs by and about Soldiers of all ranks, Military Spouses and Families, DA Civilians, and other Friends of the Regiment. Articles and photograph submissions should be Military Police-related and may include human interest, military operations and exercises, history, personal viewpoints and other areas of general interest. All articles accepted for publication are subject to editing. We welcome your ideas and suggestions for future publications and we look forward to hearing from you!



Respectfully,

Beth Bellerby
MPRABeth@gmail.com

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From the Executive Director

On behalf of our members, families, and friends, I would like to welcome you to this edition of the Dragoon. This is a special version of the Dragoon as after much deliberation and discussions we have decided to begin the transition to an online only version. Very few publications are in print these days to include the Military Police Professional Bulletin and many others. A few of the reasons for the change are the cost of mailing has increased dramatically and printing expenses are at the highest we have seen. The Dragoon will still be produced and published as an online version as it is now and has been for many years, so our members and readers can still enjoy the publication with the stories and happenings across the Military Police Corps on the MPRA website.

Sadly, we said so long to Mrs. Kathy West who transitioned to the retirement rolls after many years of dedicated service to the Museum and our Corps. We wish her the best in all her future endeavors. She will truly be missed.

On the cover of this edition as well on page 8 you will see the Military Police in Time art piece. This unique one-of-a-kind painting was delivered to Fort Leonard Wood in September by well-known artist Mr. Larry Selman. These numbered and limited-edition unframed prints are available in our Military Police Gift Shop for purchase and make great gifts.

Scholarship season is upon us as the MPRA and the OPMG / MPRA Excellence in Education windows are now open. Deadline for submission for both is March 31, 2024, and the details can be found on the MPRA website. This is a great member benefit. We hope that you will share within your circles.

This year the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence and Fort Leonard Wood will conduct the inaugural Protection and Maneuver Support Senior Leader Forum and Industry Exhibition July 22-26. For our MPRA team this means there will be only one industry exhibition on Fort Leonard Wood in 2024! This has caused the associations (Army Engineer Association and Chemical Corps Regimental Association) along with the MPRA to put their experiences together to plan and produce a great exhibition in support of this inaugural event. Regimental activities such as the Memorial Tribute, Golf Tournament, Hall of Fame, and Military Police Ball will still take place in September. This has been a huge undertaking, and we look forward to doing our part to make it a success!

In closing, I want to thank the Board of Directors, Senior Advisory Council, and our staff. We are still sought out on many projects and business practices which makes for a great organization. As always, let us hear from you. Your accomplishments are many and the stories from the field are always welcomed and needed. Visit our website and social media platforms often to see some of the latest happenings from around the world.



➡ Rick Harne

First Sergeant (Retired)
MPRA Executive Director

From the Commandant

I recently presented the annual State of the Regiment Briefing, and I want to share with you two key themes from it: transformation and policing. Our profession requires continuous transformation. We must be experts in our craft, accountable to the communities and people we help by policing, and responsible in how we use the unique powers granted to us. In all we do, our people consistently prove that they are the true credentials of our profession. Military police expertise continues to be in demand, and we must be ready to fight when called upon. Whether we go to the fight, or it comes to us, we cannot afford to lose our moral high ground.

The language change from modernization to transformation is deliberate. Many will think of modernization in the terms of incremental improvements to weaponry and communication systems. However, the rapid advancement and accessibility of technology risks outpacing Army modernization and requires bold transformation. The Army is steadfast in its journey, restructuring to reach 2030 goals that align with the Army of 2040. Despite the anticipated impacts to our Regiment in the coming years, as an Army enabler, Military Police continue to be in high demand. We must transform with the rest of the Army while simultaneously refining best practices in policing. Over the past year, USAMPS achieved incremental victories in reaching our goals for the Army of 2030. However, in some ways, Military Police of 2024 are equipped and organized similarly as Military Police who crossed the berm into Iraq 20 years ago. There are crucial exceptions such as the Common Remotely Operated Weapon System (CROWS) and the Raven unmanned aircraft system (UAS) which remove our Soldiers from hazards on the battlefield. Our Security and Maneuver Support discipline will continue to enable maneuver by extending Division and Corps operational reach. Military Police will continue to adapt both our formations and tactics to the mission.

While policing organizations, equipment, and training have adapted, we are still not moving at the pace of our civilian counterparts. Body worn cameras, license plate readers, and sensors are not standardized

across the force. Police training and personnel must be faster to adjust to a changing environment. While our innate adaptability has kept us relevant, we must continue to increase our pace of change. We will transform to take advantage of human machine integration and pursue the capabilities that technologies like robotics, AI, and machine learning will bring. The US Army Military Police School (USAMPS) will continue to update training, ensuring Military Police can perform all our missions in the future operating environment both at home and abroad.

Recently, The U.S. Army Military Police School had the privilege of hosting several Army senior leaders as they sought a more nuanced understanding of our training programs and the impacts of numerous changes in our Regiment. As I speak to leaders about our mission set, the transformational linkages between our typical garrison and warfighting policing tasks are clear. The need to have and exploit sensors and data can apply as easily to body worn cameras and crime trends, as to a networked sensor and battlefield trend. Threats to the ability of a unit to deploy from its home station are not simply a garrison policing problem, but a readiness problem. How Military Police, Department of the Army Civilian Police (DACP), and DA Security Guards (DASG) perform duties at home will have a direct impact on power projection. Emerging threats like small UAS and ubiquitous surveillance could be encountered as much by those conducting garrison policing duties as those setting the theater or securing the support area. Expectations for treatment of prisoners in war is challenging and the techniques used in managing our military inmates are helping us envision changes to future interment operations.

Technology is a major factor driving change, but how we apply it matters. Ethical use of technology has long been a discussion in policing, from facial recognition to data harvesting, and there are robust discussions about how and when they should apply. The same technologies police have used are emerging in LSCO. I can imagine a future where we transition our police technologies with us to the battlefield. History has shown that how



➔ BG Sarah Albrycht
52nd Commandant
and Chief of the Military Police
Corps Regiment

and when police employ their capabilities in conflict will always be viewed through a slightly different lens than our combat arms counterparts, therefore we must be deliberate to ensure we are using technology responsibility and with the proper expertise. This future transformation demands data literate and ethically grounded leadership to engage in professional discourse about how our capabilities could apply on a future battlefield.

The Regiment must undertake this critical and continuous transformation while simultaneously remaining prepared to safeguard our people, installations, and functions to include the Army's power projection requirements. From the depot to the foxhole, Military Police, DACPs and DASGs all work to extend a commander's operational reach during peace-time operations and in armed-conflicts. It is an undertaking of considerable magnitude that our people, fortunately, excel at. As RSCM Shoaf has said, "Where is the MP on the future conflict? Everywhere."

The continued challenges in our operational environments will necessitate Military Police forces to deploy the skills that our commanders have traditionally relied on to address complex human problems. As advanced as technology gets, our policing professionals must be ready to apply their personal judgement to deal with humans in crisis and apply force with discretion. This is our calling, our profession, and our mission. We will....

Assist. Protect. Defend.

From the Regimental Command Sergeant Major

Greetings and Happy New Year Military Police Corps Team. As my first official letter to the Regiment, I would like to take a few moments to express my sincere gratitude to the USAMPS Team, Fort Leonard Wood community and all those that assisted in my transition. A special thank you to the 15th Regimental Command Sergeant Major Shawn Klosterman and his family for an exceptional tour of duty, the Regiment is in a better place because of your leadership and guidance. BG Albrycht, I am humbled and honored to call you my battle buddy as we serve the Soldiers, Families and Civilian partners of the Military Police Corps Regiment. It is a privilege to lead, it is a privilege to serve, and I owe every ounce of energy I have to serving those who assist, protect, defend our Army and Families.

82 years devoted, that message could be heard loud and clear as we closed out the final quarter 2023 celebrating our Regiment and honoring those who have given so much to the Military Police Corps and the Army. A deserving congratulation to all our competitors at this year's competitive challenge. Your tactical and technical skills, your grit and courage were on full display, and you should be very proud of your accomplishments. Congratulations to our Regimental honorees. Your dedication and loyalty to the Army and the Regiment, your commitment to Soldiers and Families will continue to enrich the proud history of the Corp. We closed out Regimental Week with a bang, the Regimental Ball was one

for the ages, it was my first, and I want to thank all those who spent the better part of the year planning, resourcing, and dedicating many hours to ensuring all who attended had an amazing time. To the entire USAMPS and 14th MP BDE team, thank you for the many hours spent planning and executing Regimental Week, it was a huge success, and you all played a monumental role in that effort.

The Army and the MP Regiment are in a transformation period, with that comes unique and sometimes complex challenges. The USAMPS Team is working hard to remain transparent and flexible as we navigate these transitions. With Army restructuring and challenges in recruiting, engaged leadership at all levels will be paramount. Communication and transparency will be key as we evolve to meet the Army's requirement. We have some of the most talented Soldiers in the Army, Soldiers and leaders of character who deserve our very best. Together we will lead the MP Regiment through these complex times and prove once again why we are the force of choice.

The Army's mission is to fight and win our nations wars, to defend freedom wherever called, and to care for our Soldiers and families.... a more honorable cause there is not. As we focus our attention on the Army of 2030 and beyond; the Military Police Corps stands ready now to protect Army installations across the globe, building and sustaining partnership with our European and Pacific partners to deter peer and near peer adversaries, protecting the homeland, and responding



➔ **CSM William M. Shoaf**
Military Police School Command
Sergeant Major

to American communities in need. The MP Regiment is a Total Army asset, the premier dual-purpose force, capable of deploying globally in support of any mission. MP Soldiers are skilled and capable warfighters, technical experts in law enforcement, correction, and criminal investigations.

It is my greatest honor to serve as the 16th Regimental Command Sergeant Major. I will do so with laser focus on the Army, our Regiment and every MP Soldier and their family. Thank you for your service and sacrifice Of the Troops and For the Troops.



From the Regimental Chief Warrant Officer

Happy New Year to all!!! As I take on this new role for the Regiment, I would like to thank BG Sarah Albrycht and CW5 Retired Mark Arnold for having the confidence in me to continue the legacy of the Regimental Chief Warrant Officer (RCWO). I have been in the seat for almost a year, and it has been an absolute honor and a privilege to work with so many amazing leaders across the global footprint of the Regiment. As I am still learning this position and supporting new initiatives, I have learned a lot of hard work goes unnoticed by those behind the scenes. With minimal staff, all missions and tasks get completed by the hard-working Soldiers and Civilians working here at USAMPS, so thank you all for that you do day in and day out and assist me with the transition to this new position.

As stated above, there are new initiatives for the Military Police Corps. One of the new initiatives this year, which was near and dear to my heart, is updating the US Army Military Police Corps Regimental Regulation 870-1 to include the RCWO Philip E. Tackett Excellence in Policing Award, in honor of RCWO Retired CW5 Philip Tackett. This award is to ensure we recognize our best Law Enforcement Professionals throughout our Military Law Enforcement organizations. This award will recognize those who have left a major impact at their military installation due to their investigative

curiosity, investigative actions, and overall impact to the safety and security of Service Members, Civilians, and Dependents, those attributes RCWO Retired CW5 Tackett displayed over his 36 years of service. The areas of emphasis to receive this award include Innovations in Community Policing, Criminal Investigations and Field Operation, which had an overall contribution to the mission, Military Police Corps, and US Army.

As CID continues its transformation, the design is to ensure CID is capable of effectively and efficiently performing all expected functions of a Military Criminal Investigative Organization to provide the highest level of support to the Army and maintaining the operational readiness of the force. Actions are being implemented at the Headquarters and Field Office level, which will help the organization continue to move forward and improve service to the Army. The Regiment continues to support and assist the CID transformation efforts. As part of the Army downsizing, the Army continues to modernize the Warrant Officer Professional Military Education (PME) system. As staffing continues, USAMPS will continue to assess and build any required PME courses throughout this modernization effort. Although, funding has been limited and priorities change, we will continue to prepare for those additional courses and the future of the CID Warrant Officer.



CW4 Angela J. Rulewich
Regimental Chief Warrant Officer

I encourage each and every one of you to continue to work hard and ensure those who we serve, are provided the best investigative support possible and continue our legacy of excellence. Unfortunately, crime does not stop for holidays, weather, and/or an organizational transformation. Those we serve with, need your unique investigative capabilities, every day, 24/7. Again, thank you all for your support, and I look forward to another great year here at the Home of the Regiment!

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MILITARY POLICE CORPS CELEBRATED 82 YEARS

**“SERVING WITH DIGNITY, DETERMINATION AND DISCIPLINE” —
THE U.S. ARMY MILITARY POLICE SCHOOL HOSTED A WEEK OF EVENTS
TO CELEBRATE 82 YEARS OF DEVOTION TO SERVING OTHERS.**

STORY BY MELISSA BUCKLEY, FORT LEONARD WOOD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

“No one understands duty better than an MP. For 82 years, we have devoted ourselves to the service of others with dignity, determination and discipline. Duty can, at times, be heavy, and those that have never walked in our shoes can easily forget the importance of human detention, emergency response and critical investigations. No matter our status as active, Guard or Reserve Soldiers, or civilians as first responders and front-line public servants we will be the first to respond

to people in crisis,” said Brig. Gen. Sarah Albrycht, U.S. Army Military Police School commandant, during the MP Regimental Week Retreat ceremony Sept. 20 on the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence Plaza.

According to the U.S. Army Center of Military History, the MP Corps achieved permanent status in the U.S. Army on Sept. 26, 1941, but its service dates back to the Revolutionary War.

The week’s events started by honoring fallen MPs at

a memorial tribute Sept. 18 in Memorial Grove, where USAMPS Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. William Shoaf served as the guest speaker.

“To our Gold Star families in attendance or viewing virtually today, your presence is powerful and it is a solid reminder of your sacrifice and the tremendous cost paid for the freedoms we all share,” Shoaf said. “Today is the most sacred of days — we remember — our heroes gave all.”

The next day, the Order of the Crossed Pistols event for spouses kicked off at Training Area 130 with an Army Combat Fitness Test.

“We chose events specific to a day in the life of a trainee,” said 1st Lt. Elias Esparza, one of the event organizers. “The day is designed to help them understand MP life. They also get to meet other spouses and make new friends. We are building a community.”

Besides the ACFT, events throughout the day included the Personal Endurance Course, rappelling down the Warrior Tower, eating lunch at an Army Warrior Restaurant and weapons displays.

“I am excited for the rappel tower. We don’t get the opportunity to do this very often,” said Maggie Bourne, spouse of an MP Soldier. “We are building friendships and making memories today.”

Bourne said she enjoyed watching Soldiers at the event cheering on their spouses.

“It is fun to see them out here together, laughing and showing their support,” Bourne said.

While the spouses were enjoying the events planned for them, nearly 50 Soldiers from the 503rd MP Battalion were busy jumping out of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter over Forney Airfield.

The 503rd MP Battalion is the only Airborne-capable MP battalion in the world and is based at Fort Liberty, North Carolina.

Trainees with Company C, 795th MP Battalion, who are preparing to attend Airborne school after one station unit training, got to witness the event firsthand and see everything that goes into a jump, from practicing how to land correctly, to strapping on their parachutes, to landing.

During the Regimental Retreat ceremony, which took place Sept. 20 at MSCoE Plaza, Albrycht said the event is about honoring every MP Soldier — past, present and future.

“Retreat is a daily ceremony held at military installations as the national flag is lowered at the end of the

duty day. For many of the early years of my career, it was Military Police on duty who conducted both reveille and retreat. I find that ironic because the MPs likely got that duty, because they are always — on duty. Our duty day never ends,” Albrycht said. “It has been 82 years since Sept. 26, 1941. So, for 29,944 days, over 710,000 hours, we have stood the watch, manned the desk and patrolled the streets — handing our duty down from guard mount to guard mount, from shift to shift, for five generations of Military Police. That, my friends, is devotion to duty.”

“It has been 82 years since September 26, 1941. So, for 29,944 days, over 710,000 hours, we have stood the watch, manned the desk and patrolled the streets — handing our duty down from guard mount to guard mount, from shift to shift, for five generations of Military Police. That, my friends, is devotion to duty.”

At the Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. James W. Frye NCO of Excellence Award ceremony on Friday, the MP Corps recognized the hard work and dedication of NCOs during a presentation at Lincoln Hall Auditorium.

Top honors went to Staff Sgt. Nathan Villarreal, from the 89th MP Brigade, and Master Sgt. Grant Smith, from the 290th MP Brigade.

Five new photos were added to the MP Corps Hall of Fame Friday during a ceremony at the John B. Mahaffey Museum as well. The inductees were retired Maj. Gen. Adolph McQueen, retired Col. Timothy Lamb, retired Col. Thomas Tatum, retired Command Sgt. Maj. John McNeirney and retired Sgt. Maj. Douglas Loggins.

The week of regimental events also included a golf tournament, fishing event at the Lake of the Ozarks Recreation Area and regimental ball.

Editor’s note: Angi Betran and Brian Hill, both from the Fort Leonard Wood Public Affairs Office, contributed to this story.

PROTECT PROGRAM

EMPOWERS MP SOLDIERS TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER

STORY AND PHOTO BY PORSHA AUZENNE, FORT JOHNSON PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

In an effort to prevent and respond to harmful behavior, Fort Johnson's 519th Military Police Battalion founded the Protect Program.

The Protect Program is a three-day training course that empowers Soldiers at the grassroots level to protect one another from the harmful behaviors that erode trust and destroy cohesive teams. The program, which brings awareness to everyday issues, gives Soldiers the incentive to volunteer as ambassadors for the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention, Equal Opportunity and Suicide Prevention curriculums. Upon completion of the training course, Soldiers earn a special 'PROTECT' tab to wear on Fort Johnson.

"This tab represents a culture. A constant reminder that these acts are not tolerated," said Sgt. 1st Class Erik Rostamo, a platoon sergeant at 16th Military Police Brigade, Fort Liberty, North Carolina, who was a key part in initiating the Protect Program while stationed at Fort Johnson.

"The program further empowers Soldiers to intervene on all issues. We can change the culture by changing the conversation. The Protect Program opens the Soldier's eyes to the impact these harmful behaviors have on the Army, organizations, friends and Family members. When these issues happen in our organization, it's not just subject/victim and that's it. These things



The Protect Program is a three-day training course that empowers Soldiers at the grassroots level to protect one another from the harmful behaviors that erode trust and destroy cohesive teams.

impact readiness, our warfighting capability and our trust in one another. "

Rostamo further explained in-depth about the training Soldiers do during their Protect Program tenure. During the first two days, classroom discussion is led by noncommissioned officers, who Rostamo specified were passionate about the topics being discussed.

"The program doesn't take away from any existing established Army program regarding these topics," Rostamo said. "Instead, the program has added discussion and facilitation about the impact that these topics have on families, organizations, and people. It gets the buy-in from

our junior Soldiers, the target demographic for these issues. As SHARP representatives and company commanders are not always present in the case of a situation arising, those Soldiers can step up."

The Protect Program was such a success that it will officially be facilitated by Fort Johnson's SHARP program starting January 2024.

"The primary focus is to stop sexual violence before it happens. However, the program also aims to minimize the risk of suicide by utilizing postvention actions, encouraging fair treatment for all Soldiers based on merit, performance and potential and enhancing resiliency by reinforcing the Army's Values," Gustacia Gabriel, Fort Johnson's SHARP program manager, said. "The endstate is for volunteer Soldiers to complete the Protect Program course and actively intervene. Utilizing approved methods to stop incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault minimizes the risk of suicide before it happens."

To date, the Protect Program has 100 graduates. The program is open to all Soldiers looking to protect one another in the event of harmful behaviors.

For more information about the Protect Program, please contact the Fort Johnson SHARP office at 337-531-1788.

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New MPs Can PCS with a Friend to their First Duty Station Under Battle-Buddy Assignment Initiative

BY MELISSA BUCKLEY, FORT LEONARD WOOD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Most people would agree that going into unknown territory is easier with a companion — that is why the U.S. Army Military Police School has designed a program called the U.S. Army MP Battle Buddy Assignment Initiative to send new active-duty Soldiers to their first duty stations with their initial entry training battle buddies.

“Reporting to a new assignment is stressful for even the most seasoned Soldiers — just imagine the stress and anxiety for a new graduate of one station unit training. It’s possibly the first time away from home, a new state, a new country,” USAMPS Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Shoaf said. “Instead of a Soldier setting out on this unknown adventure alone, they have a buddy or group of buddies, who have spent the better part of 19 weeks getting to know each other, shared hardships and overcome adversity to accomplish the goal of graduating basic and advanced

individual training. They can look after one another and be accountable to one another as they navigate this transition.”

This initiative was implemented in the spring of last year under then-USAMPS Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. Shawn Klosterman. He said the first class able to use the program graduated in October of 2022, and since then, approximately 480 Soldiers have volunteered for the pilot program.

Klosterman is serving as the command sergeant major for Army Corrections Command at the Pentagon, after relinquishing responsibility of USAMPS to Shoaf in July. Klosterman said this program is still important to him because he believes it can make a positive impact on “our most valuable asset — our Soldiers.”

“It provides Soldiers with an ally to combat potential harmful behaviors or mental health concerns while building cohesive teams, since they have already went through

Top of page: Military Police trainees with Company E, 701st Military Police Battalion, conduct non-lethal riot training in May here. Under a U.S. Army MP School program now in place called the U.S. Army MP Battle Buddy Assignment Initiative, new active-duty Soldiers can complete a permanent change of station to their first duty station with their initial entry training battle buddies to help ease some of the stress of PCSing as a new Soldier. (Photo courtesy of Company E, 701st Military Police Battalion.)

adversity together and established trust,” Klosterman added.

He said the concept was first discussed back in 2021, to assist Soldiers with integrating into a new duty station.

“Working with the Human Resources Command and the Enlisted Personnel Management Division, over the next year, I was able to ensure the procedure was part of the IET assignments process,” Klosterman said.

One of the new MPs who recently volunteered for the initiative is Pvt. Jacob Bayless. Last month, he made his first permanent change of station from Fort Leonard Wood to Fort Cavazos, Texas, with his battle buddy, Pvt. Leonardo Pliego.

“Pvt. Pliego and I were bunkmates during one station unit training, and we spent a lot of time together during training and field exercises. He was my best friend throughout OSUT,” said Bayless, now attached to the 64th Military Police Company, 720th Military Police Battalion.

“PCSing with someone that you already know makes it much easier,” Bayless said. “Having Pvt. Pliego with me was great and comforting, because we would go to different places together to complete our in-process checklist during the weekdays, and on the weekends, it was good to have someone to hang out with.”

According to Bayless, his father helped him make the decision to volunteer for the program.

“About midway through OSUT, our drill sergeants asked if anyone was interested in using the Army’s Military Police Battle Buddy Assignment Initiative, so I spoke with my father about it, and my dad said, ‘it would be a great opportunity to have one of your buddies with you while you transition,’” Bayless said.

He is glad he decided to PCS with a battle buddy and said he hopes other new MP Soldiers getting ready to leave Fort Leonard Wood will take advantage of the program.

“A lot of the people you meet while you’re in basic training and OSUT go to different duty stations; some are in the National Guard or Reserve, so they go back home, and you may not see them again. So, if you and your battle have the opportunity to use the Army’s Military Police Battle Buddy Assignment Initiative, I highly recommend it. You can learn and grow personally and accomplish professional goals together,” Bayless said.

The Soldiers participating in this program go through OSUT with the 14th Military Police Brigade. According to the brigade’s Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Neikirk, they

introduce the program to the trainees during week six of OSUT.

“They then have two weeks to submit a request form. The battalions collect the data and the brigade sends the request to the MP IET branch. The brigade normally gets the participants’ assignments a couple weeks later,” Neikirk said.

Neikirk said the battle-buddy program supports the Secretary of the Army objectives, the Army Chief of Staff’s People First Strategy and the Sgt. Maj. of the Army’s This Is My Squad program because it, “allows early development of one of the arms of the golden triangle.”

In the golden triangle concept, the Soldier is inside the triad of support surrounded by the three united points of fellow Soldiers, Army leadership and family members – the idea is that if the three points around the Soldier are communicating in an effective manner, then the Soldier benefits.

“Having one part of the golden triangle established gives leaders’ peace of mind that the Soldier has a buddy that they can confide in and rely on when times get difficult,” Neikirk said.

Then, once signed into their new unit, Klosterman pointed out the new leaders will instantly be establishing another two-thirds of the golden triangle.

According to Klosterman, the battle buddies are assigned to the same company for a minimum period of six months.

Klosterman said he wishes the program would have been around when he attended IET.

“My best friend and I joined the Army, attended basic and AIT together, then were split up for the rest of our careers,” Klosterman said. “Having someone I knew and trusted, especially going to a new duty station, would have helped me integrate. Having someone there to lean on when I was struggling, lonely or just looking for help, would have been nice. Of course, I was able to make other friends, but if I would have had thoughts of suicide, or was in a crisis, I’m not sure I would have been able to talk to someone I didn’t know or trust right away.”

Shoaf said the program is receiving positive feedback from the field, with “a reduction in harmful behaviors and Soldiers who are ready and prepared to join their new units.”

Editor’s note: Sgt. 1st Class Justin Geiger, a Public Affairs specialist with the 89th Military Police Brigade, contributed to this story.



ACA Conference Adds Value to the Unit and Future MP Soldiers

STORY BY CARLOS R. PAIZ, 1LT, MP, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CHARLIE COMPANY, 701ST MILITARY POLICE BATTALION

On 10-13 AUG 2023, 1LT Patrick Brooks, the Commander of Charlie Company, 701st Military Police Battalion attended the American Correctional Association (ACA), 153rd Congress of Correction Conference in Philadelphia, PA. The conference is one of the largest correctional congresses in the world and brought together stakeholders that included corrections leaders from Latin American countries, Canada, and various accredited corrections institutions within the United States. The ACA accredits over 900 prisons and jails in the U.S. and internationally. Agencies in attendance included representatives from the Army's ACA accreditation team, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), and leaders of

“THE ACA ACCREDITS OVER 900 PRISONS AND JAILS IN THE U.S. AND INTERNATIONALLY.”

various U.S. state prisons.

The conference was comprised of training strategies, hundreds of workshops, credentialing standards and leader engagement opportunities with worldwide corrections leaders. The knowledge obtained from this



event supports the Charlie Company unit mission of training and certifying all future 31E - Corrections/ Detention Specialists in every component, with the ACA accreditation, and best corrections practices. Military leaders in attendance included Col. Kevin Payne, Commander of the 15th Military Police Brigade, CSM Joshua Kreitzer, Command Sergeant Major of the 15th Military Police Brigade, and Col. Shannon Lucas, Deputy Provost Marshal General. Jim Reilly the Military Police Accreditation Manager, and Matthew Lewis the Accreditation Programs Coordinator from the United States Army Military Police School (USAMPS) were also in attendance. The knowledge and experience gained from this conference will be shared throughout the unit to continue developing the best possible Military Police Soldiers.

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A NEW SET OF CROSS PISTOLS: AKARNG “WOLF GANG” MILITARY POLICE COMPANY DEACTIVATES, USHERING IN NEW DETACHMENT

STORY BY SGT. SETH LACOUNT, 134TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

Alaska Army National Guard 1st Lt. Kenneth McCoy, left, incoming commander, and Sfc. Gerry Lopez, noncommissioned officer in charge, both assigned to the 297th Military Police Detachment, present the colors during an activation ceremony for the detachment at the Alcantra Armory in Wasilla, Alaska, Nov. 2, 2023. The 297th Military Police Company was deactivated as part of the detachment's transition, marking an end to a 15-year legacy of serving the state during the war on terror. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Seth LaCount)

In 2008, the Alaska Army National Guard's 297th Military Police Company was established to enhance the organization's force protection, anti-terror and crime prevention capabilities, upholding the tradition of the military police specialty to uphold military law and regulation. In its 15-year history, it served as an integral part of the AKARNG's mission around the state and across the world, from Fairbanks to Cuba.

The 297th MP Co. deactivated on November 2, 2023, at the Alcantra Armory in Wasilla, Alaska, as the unit's legacy culminated by retiring the colors and ushering in the 297th Military Police Detachment.

Although smaller in size, the unit leadership is confident that the detachment will serve as an important law enforcement component in the AKARNG as one of two military police units in the state, the 297th MP Det. and the 49th Missile Defense Battalion headquartered at Ft. Greely, Alaska.

Unit commanders and Soldiers from each era since the unit's inception gathered at the Alcantra Armory to celebrate the unit's accomplishments, Soldiers and future.

1st Sgt. Benjamin Guritz, the guest speaker for the ceremony and military policeman of 22 years, began his address with a comedic jest, highlighting an historical and respected rivalry between infantryman and military policemen.

"An infantryman called an MP a POG [Person Other Than Grunt]," said Guritz. "In response, [the MP] said, hey everyone, he's resisting arrest." As the audience laughed, Guritz said, "You'll never hear an infantryman say something so kind to you, but I think it hits home." Later on in his remarks, Guritz took a moment to recognize a list of noncommissioned officers that made an impact on the unit and thanked them by name.



Alaska Army National Guard Capt. Michael Thrall, left, outgoing commander, and 1st Sgt. Bethany Amarone, outgoing noncommissioned officer in charge, both assigned to the 297th Military Police Company, retire the colors of the unit's flag as part of a deactivation ceremony for the company at the Alcantra Armory in Wasilla, Alaska, Nov. 2, 2023. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Seth LaCount)



Alaska Army National Guard 1st Lt. Kenneth McCoy, incoming commander for the 297th Military Police Detachment, makes his opening remarks after taking command of the unit during an activation ceremony for the detachment at the Alcantra Armory in Wasilla, Alaska, Nov. 2, 2023. "As we move forward let us remember that our strength lies in the unity and dedication of our team and together we will continue to write history for the Alaska Army National Guard," McCoy said. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Seth LaCount).

"We can never give enough thanks to the leaders who paved the way for us," Guritz said. "The composition of this detachment will transform our MPs into the elite of the elite. The 297th MP Company forged a lasting legacy and now it's time for this detachment to forge their own. You will succeed, assist, protect and defend."

Capt. Michael Thrall, the commander of the 297th MP Co. and 1st Sgt. Bethany Amarone, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the unit, cased the colors for the company during the ceremony. Thrall made it clear in his remarks to those in attendance, that this ceremony was about the contributions of the people he's served beside.

"It is the efforts of these Soldiers in formation whose attitudes and actions have made this company succeed, whether that be on the deserts of Kuwait, the hills of Guantanamo Bay or the home forests of Alaska," Thrall said. "It is that spirit that will carry on to this new detachment with a sense of pride and ownership."

1st Lt. Kenneth McCoy, the incoming commander and Sgt. 1st Class Gerry Lopez, the NCOIC, both assigned to the 297th Military Police Detachment unveiled the new unit's colors alongside their Soldiers in formation, marking a new beginning for their team.

McCoy concluded the ceremony by proclaiming his gratitude and excitement to continue the legacy of the unit.

"I look forward to working beside these outstanding men and women and have high hopes of the great achievements we'll accomplish together," McCoy said. "As we move forward let us remember that our strength lies in the unity and dedication of our team and together we will continue to write history for the Alaska Army National Guard."



WEST VIRGINIA MP GUARD SOLDIERS COMPLETE SUCCESSFUL DEPLOYMENT IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

STORY BY SGT. ZOE MORRIS, WEST VIRGINIA NATIONAL GUARD

Soldiers with the West Virginia Army National Guard's 156th Military Police Law and Order Detachment landed at Fort Bliss, Texas, following a 10-month overseas deployment supporting the U.S. Army Central's Area Support Group– Jordan.

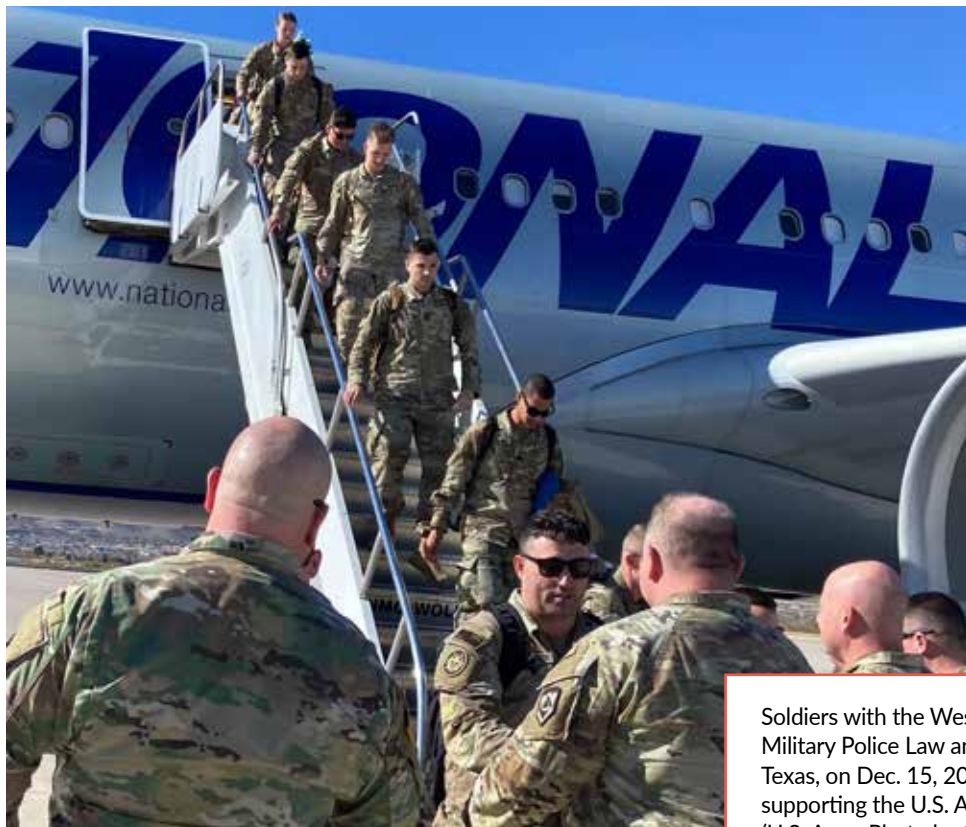
Brig. Gen. Gene Holt, Assistant Adjutant General – Army, and Command Sgt. Maj. Chadwick Moneypenny, State Command Sergeant Major, met the Soldiers on Dec. 15, 2023, as they stepped off the plane in Texas. This is the last stop for the troops before reuniting with family and friends for the first time since deploying in February 2023.

"These Soldiers performed super well and were highly appreciated," said 156th MP commander Capt. John Ivester. "The ASG command was sad to see everybody go because they really hit that level of optimal proficiency."

"The Soldiers in the 156th brought great credit to

themselves and the West Virginia National Guard while deployed," said WVNG Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Bill Crane. "ASG-J provides the support structure for USARCENT facilities and DoD personnel in and around Jordan, which goes to show how adept our troops are at operating on a global stage. I've very proud of them and their work and are especially happy they get to be home in time to celebrate the holidays with their families."

The 156th MP Det., 77th Troop Command Battalion, 111th Engineer Brigade, deployed from their home station of Holden, West Virginia, under the command of Ivester and Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Hatfield. While deployed, they conducted investigations, law enforcement operations, personal security detail services and force protection measures throughout five installations in Jordan and across six countries within the (USARCENT) area of responsibility.



“They displayed true professionalism and continued to do the job day in and day out with no issues at all.”

Soldiers with the West Virginia Army National Guard's 156th Military Police Law and Order Detachment landed at Fort Bliss, Texas, on Dec. 15, 2023, following a 10-month overseas deployment supporting the U.S. Army Central's Area Support Group - Jordan. (U.S. Army Photo by Capt. Molli Ruggles)

During the mobilization, several 156th MP Soldiers also assisted host nation partners by participating in a Jordanian Armed Forces Language Institute engagement, teaching English on a weekly basis.

“They displayed true professionalism and continued to do the job day in and day out with no issues at all,” Ivester said.

The unit was consistently recognized by the ASG-Jordan commander, Col. Thomas D. Chapeau for being proactive with every mission in support of the strategic vision for current operations.

The Soldiers are conducting demobilizations procedures at Fort Bliss and scheduled to depart individually to their homes. Often, larger units are flown back to West Virginia and given a formal homecoming ceremony, but thanks to the unit's smaller size, the desire to get the families reunited as soon as possible means the Soldiers can travel straight home.

The detachment last deployed in 2018, operating at two of Afghanistan's largest bases, Bagram Airfield and Kandahar Airfield, and provided support to smaller outlying bases.

While stateside, the detachment supports both state and federal missions with Soldiers skilled in specialized support to law-and-order operations. The unit is deeply part of the southern West Virginia community they are headquarter in and is a reliable asset to the West Virginia National Guard's One Guard Family.



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A Rare Occasion

STORY BY SFC (R) SCOTT FRANTZ

On 25 July 2023, four Soldier's Medal Recipients got together to meet and tell their stories. It is rare to see a Soldier's Medal recipient. You can go your entire career and never see one. But on this rare occasion four of them, three of whom are still on Active Duty in the 14th MP BDE and one retired living in the local area decided to meet with the 52nd Commandant of the Military Police School, Sarah K. Albrycht, for a photo opportunity and sharing of stories.

WHAT IS THE SOLDIER'S MEDAL AND HOW ONE IS AWARDED

Established in 1926, the Soldier's Medal is awarded to any person in the U.S. Armed forces who distinguishes themselves by valor, courage, and heroism by taking action in the face of adversity not involving conflict with an enemy while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Army. It was designed to recognize acts of valor during peacetime. Furthermore, the performance must have involved personal hazard or danger and the voluntary risk of life under conditions not involving conflict with an armed enemy. Awards will not be solely conferred on the basis of saving a life.

THE STORIES

On 4 October 1982, Sergeant Merle Jones, while assigned to the 9th Military Police Company, Fort Lewis distinguished himself by his heroic actions. While performing duties as an assistant instructor on hand grenade range #24, a M67 fragmentation grenade thrown by a soldier that Sergeant Jones was instructing, stuck the grenade pit's forward wall, bounced, and landed on the ground approximately nine feet behind the pit. Sergeant Jones realized that the grenade was too far away to kick into a sump or pick it up and throw it down range. He noticed that the soldier had frozen in a standing position and was watching the grenade.

Disregarding his personal safety Sergeant Jones immediately knocked the soldier to the floor of the pit and selflessly covered the soldier's body with his own. Due to his heroic and decisive actions, no one was injured even though the pit they occupied was struck with ricocheting fragments of steel and concrete. Sergeant Jones' courage, quick thinking, and willingness to protect a fellow soldier are keeping with the highest traditions of military service.

On 30 August 2003, for risking his own life in order to rescue others in need and during the approach of a hurricane, Specialist Chesser observed a boat capsize with some of those on board without life preservers. He noticed they were being pulled further out into the Gulf of Mexico. With total disregard for his own safety, Specialist Chesser immediately dove into the water and seized those in peril, effectively preventing them from being pulled even further out into the Gulf. His determination and selflessness in risking his own life to save others has shown that he possessed great courage in the face of danger. His quick reaction resulted in the safe return for all involved.

On 17 August 2014, Joint Base Lewis-McChord Law enforcement were notified of a verbal domestic. Upon arrival of the patrols, the suspect armed himself with a shotgun and barricaded himself in the master bathroom in a severe agitated state. SSG Frantz initiated contact with the suspect and began negotiations to establish a dialogue. For 2 hours SSG Frantz attempted to resolve the incident peacefully, instead, the suspect began pulling the trigger of the shotgun. SSG Frantz was unsure if the

suspect's weapon was malfunctioning or if he working himself up to commit suicide. At 1AM the suspect warned the patrols outside the door that he was going to open fire at the sounds of their voices. He aimed and opened fire.

"There are tons of heroes in the military, and each of these here today has a different experience to share. They demonstrated that whether they were on or off duty, they felt it was important to risk their lives to save others."

The projectile narrowly missing SSG Frantz and lodged into the recently evacuated next door neighbors living room. The suspect, after firing at officers outside the door, began to attempt to asphyxiate himself. After a moment of no sounds, an entry team was established to make entry with 4 Department of the Army Civilian Police and SSG Frantz. As the team was about to make entry, the suspect gasped for air, and dry fired the shot gun some more. The suspect exited the bathroom pointing the weapon at the officers. He began taunting the officers to shoot him, presumed in an

attempt to commit what is known as "suicide by cop". All 5 officers, without communicating their intentions, decided to hold their fire, and use a taser to incapacitate him. The entire sequence transpired in under 12 seconds.

On 11 September 2021, Sergeant First Class Anthony



On July 25, 2023, Soldier's Medal recipients Sergeant Merle Jones, Specialist Chesser, Staff Sergeant Frantz, and Sergeant First Class Anthony Santos, along with the 52nd Commandant of the Military Police School, Sarah K. Albrycht, came together for a rare occasion. Each hero shared their stories of valor, from thwarting a grenade threat to saving lives during a hurricane and defusing an armed standoff. Their acts of courage, recognized by the prestigious Soldier's Medal, showcase the unwavering commitment to protecting others in peacetime.

Santos was leaving the Lawton Municipal Golf Course on his way to get dinner. While he was driving, he noticed a large plume of fire from what appeared to be a back yard. As he got closer to the residence, he realized the house itself was on fire, and there was no one present around the fire monitoring it or attempting to put it out. At this point the flames were engulfing the back porch and moving towards the main part of the residence. SFC Santos ap-

"The Soldier's Medal is a very prestigious award; it is the highest award bestowed for peacetime heroism in the history of the US Military. These are true heroes, and maybe telling of their stories, they may encourage others to share their stories with us as well."

proached the front door. Even though no one answered the door, SFC Santos was not convinced the home was empty and so he selflessly entered the residence and began clearing rooms looking for anyone who could still be in the house with any signs of life. Without hesitation and disregarding his own safety, SFC Santos moved from room to room where he finally found an individual asleep in the garage. Considering the garage in this house shares a wall with the porch that was the source of the fire and that the fire had spread into the wall and through the ceiling and would soon engulf the room, SFC Santos woke the

individual and while he was still incoherent, buddy-carried him to safety outside the residence. After SFC Santos got the individual to safety, he moved to the two nearest houses, alerting them to the emergency and advising them to evacuate as a precaution. About this time, Fire Services arrived on scene, aided the homeowner, and began engaging the fire. By this time the garage was fully on fire and the roof collapsed shortly afterward. SFC Santos's heroic and selfless act in the face of danger and probable bodily harm saved the life of the individual in the home. His heroism is a shining example to Soldiers everywhere as to what we aspire to be every day and how we strive to act in the face of danger in protecting our country and its citizens every day.

The Soldier's Medal is a very prestigious award; it is the highest award bestowed for peacetime heroism in the history of the US Military. There are tons of heroes in the military, and each of these here today has a different experience to share. They demonstrated that whether they were on or off duty, they felt it was important to risk their lives to save others. It did not matter what the situation – fire, storm, explosive ordinance, or hostage situation – they did not hesitate. These are true heroes, and maybe telling of their stories, they may encourage others to share their stories with us as well.





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A JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION

FORT LEONARD WOOD MP DRILL SERGEANT USES DATA FROM WELLNESS CENTER VISITS TO MEET FITNESS GOALS

STORY BY BRIAN HILL, FORT LEONARD WOOD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

To Fort Leonard Wood's trainee population, Army drill sergeants are supposed to be symbols of excellence. When they see the unique campaign hat drill sergeants wear, the trainees know they are around an NCO, who is an expert in all warrior tasks and battle drills, and who lives the Army Values.

While it is often called a rewarding job — is there a Soldier who doesn't remember his or her drill sergeant? — it is also a demanding one, as a drill sergeant's day often begins before dawn and ends long after dusk. Finding time to maintain the physical image of the professional Soldier while "on the trail" — the common phrase used to describe a drill sergeant's tour of duty — is sometimes difficult, but Fort Leonard Wood's Armed Forces Wellness Center has resources available to help.

When he first started visiting the AFWC here in December 2021, Staff Sgt. Winston Jordan, a drill sergeant

with Company E, 701st Military Police Battalion, was already unhappy with his physical appearance — seeing the data, however, was the catalyst he needed to make some changes.

"I thought to myself, 'How am I supposed to train, lead and mentor trainees at the current status I was in?'" Jordan said. "They look up to you, so you have to be that ideal image. And if you're not, then you have to step back and look at yourself."

For Jordan, that meant a hard look at the numbers his AFWC health educator provided: 27.4 percent body fat, 55.5 pounds of fat mass and 146.8 pounds of fat-free mass.

"I was not happy," he said. "What happens on the trail is we get up early in the morning, and we rely on energy drinks or coffee — anything with caffeine in it — then we're trying to figure out when we can work out. On top of that, we allow ourselves to eat poorly, so it's wear and tear

on your body.”

Jordan, originally from New Cumberland, West Virginia, grew up weight training and wrestling, and he set out to make some changes, including increasing his fat-free mass.

According to Anna Schwartz, the AFWC’s supervisory health educator, Jordan returned for an appointment just four months later and had already added nearly 14 pounds of fat-free mass, but that’s when his luck changed. He developed a condition called diverticulitis, an inflammation or infection in the large intestine that causes abdominal pain, fever, nausea, vomiting and changes in bowel habits — Jordan said he initially thought he had a hernia.

“That was definitely a setback,” he said. “It was a challenge, because it took away some of my motivation.”

He consistently kept coming back for follow-ups, though, Schwartz said.

“Although he was dropping fat mass and (body fat percentage), his goal was to increase muscle mass,” Schwartz said. “Unfortunately, due to his condition, he was reversing in his ability to maintain the muscle mass.”

To make things worse, in July last year, Jordan had to have emergency surgery when the condition worsened, which included having a colostomy bag for two months — as a drill sergeant.

“That was fun,” Jordan said.

At his mid-tour point, Jordan attended what’s called the Drill Sergeant Resiliency Program, intended to provide a week-long break from drill sergeant duties. During DSRP — in which the AFWC collects data on the changes in body composition, stress levels, sleep and blood pressure that occur from the start of the drill sergeant tour to the DSRP — Jordan’s body composition data was tracked at 23.2 percent body fat, 43.3 pounds of fat mass and 143.4 pounds of fat-free mass. He had dropped 17 pounds of fat-free mass since his diverticulitis started.

“It was around this time that his diverticulitis started to improve, and he was able to start implementing changes in his diet and exercise,” Schwartz said.

Within a few months of DSRP, Jordan was able to progress with his goal to gain fat-free mass, including gaining back the progress he made prior to having diverticulitis. Schwartz said he not only gained back a little more in fat-free mass, but he also lost nearly 20 pounds of fat mass and nearly 10 percent of his body fat.

“He drastically improved his body composition while on the trail and dealing with a very challenging health condition,” Schwartz said.

In March at Specker Gym, Jordan completed what’s called “The 1,000 Pound Club,” a strength-training achievement that signifies an individual has lifted a combined total of 1,000 pounds in three major lifts: the squat, deadlift and bench press. Jordan lifted a total of 1,190 pounds, which is 45 more than he lifted before his emergency surgery last year.

“It is a great feeling to randomly do the 1,000 Pound Club competitions and progress in weights,” he said. “Now, I have set my current goals to bench 335 pounds, squat 415 pounds and deadlift 550 pounds, for a total of 1,300 pounds during my next attempt.”

Jordan credits a lot of his success to the classes offered at the AFWC. In addition to having his body composition data analyzed over the course of his tour, Jordan was also able to attend classes on topics, such as stress management, upping metabolism and health coaching.

“I think more people should take advantage of the wellness center,” Jordan said. “If they can get in here more often — and not just the requirement when they go through DSRP — for drills especially, it’ll help them out and keep them motivated. Because if you don’t hold yourself accountable for what you want and your goals, then you’ll never succeed.”

Schwartz called Jordan a success story — and much of that success is found in the little details that show incremental improvements, even through setbacks.

“This was truly determination and overall consistency that would have been lost in the sauce had it not been measured or tracked,” Schwartz said.

Jordan said he is often asked by his trainees for advice on maintaining fitness levels when they get to their first duty station — in addition to books and websites on the topic, he also keeps a list of which installations have wellness centers.

“When they get to their unit, they have so much else going on,” he said. “They don’t have time to figure out what’s available on their installation, but you have to be physically fit in the military. If you’re not, then your mental capacity to stay motivated dwindles. Also, it’s a stressful environment, so it’s good to have that release — a lot of us love to go to the gym just to decompress.”

Jordan said drill sergeant hours are long and busy, and it takes discipline to manage limited free time — using available resources to help ensure “you don’t come off the trail in worse shape than you arrived” just makes sense.

“WE’RE TRYING TO GIVE ALL OUR TIME TO THE TRAINEES, BUT YOU ALSO HAVE TO REMEMBER TO GIVE SOME TIME TO YOURSELF, BECAUSE THE TRAIL COMES TO AN END,” HE SAID.

The AFWC’s services are available to all service members, Schwartz said, including National Guard and Reserve, military dependents, Department of Defense civilians, and retirees and their dependents. The process begins with a 30-minute initial health coaching appointment, when the health educator learns about the client’s behaviors, disease risk factors, goals and interests, and readiness and confidence to change.

“This allows the health educator time to make individualized recommendations of services that would benefit the client on their wellness journey,” Schwartz said, adding clients may also attend any AFWC educational classes at any time after their initial appointment.

The AFWC — formerly called the Army Wellness Center — is located in Bldg. 350, next to General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital, at 14122 3rd St. For more information on available services, visit their website or call 573.596.9677.

The AWC can also be found on Facebook and Instagram @FortLeonardWoodAWC.

THE SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY FELLOWSHIP — TEACHING FUTURE WORLD-CLASS MILITARY POLICE SERGEANTS MAJOR

STORY BY SGM ZACHARY WRISTON

Noncommissioned officers (NCOs) are the backbone of the Army. The culminating rank within the corps is the sergeant major. This broad group of sergeants major will lead and advise as the future battalion, brigade, and nominative command sergeants major, and even the Sergeant Major of the Army. Sergeants major constitute less than 1% of the enlisted force and across the joint force E9s only constitute 10,477 of 1 million service members (Congressional Research Service, 2022).

Master sergeants typically possess between 15-20 years of operational experience before their selection to attend the Sergeants Major Academy (SGM-A). The capstone of a progressive, sequential, and demanding professional military educational system. The Sergeants Major Academy strives “to elevate [students] from a tactical level of thinking to an operational and strategic perspective” (NCO Worldwide, 2023).

This critical transformation in perspective is accomplished through a world-class faculty consisting of Army Civilian Professionals (retired sergeants major who are graduates of the SGM-A and possess a master's degree) and current sergeants major possessing a master's degree. Instructing at the Sergeants Major Academy is an exceptional opportunity and one that is open to Active Duty, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve. The current method to achieve the educational requirements of the sergeants major instructors is the Sergeants Major Academy Fellowship. The Sergeant Major Academy Fellowship is critical to the development of academy instructors. The fellowship has a long history within the Military Police Corps Regiment. The fellowship is a beneficial investment in future sergeants major, advancing and enriching the fellows' Army career, and connecting to the warfighter.

THE SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY FELLOWSHIP

The Sergeants Major Academy Fellowship is a unique opportunity for sergeants major to earn a master's degree in one year and then teach for two to three years. The fellowship offers degree opportunities from two Tier 1, top



PSU Military Ceremony (Pictured L-R: SGM Joe Barron, Chris Nelson, Dana Richmond, Zach Wriston, Chris Becker)

research-focused universities: Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) and Syracuse University. Fellows can choose between a master's in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education through Pennsylvania State University or a master's degree in Instructional Design, Development, and Evaluation from Syracuse University (NCO Worldwide, 2023). The NCO Leadership Center of Excellence (NCOLCoE) funds all program costs, including tuition, books, and application fees. The fellowship program does not affect selectees' education benefits (i.e., GI Bill or Post 9-11 Education Bill) (NCO Worldwide, 2023).

For an entire year, the Army invests in thirty sergeants major who have the singular responsibility of earning a master's degree. Selected sergeants major move to Fort Bliss, Texas, to benefit from working and interacting collectively with the fellowship. This also reduces permanent change of station moves and interruptions to family life.

Unlike other educational opportunities presented during the career of noncommissioned officers, the program has minimal regular-army-life intrusions. The semi-annual ACFT and body composition requirement still apply.

PENN STATE'S PERSPECTIVE

“Military training has existed at Penn State since the university's founding in 1855. The Farmer's High School of Pennsylvania (which became the Pennsylvania State College in 1874) was one of the first schools founded by the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862. This act offered federal land to colleges in return for college-sponsored military training” (G. Bond, personal communication, November 2023). Greg Bond, Penn State's Director of Military Education, has led the administrative side of the fellowship from the start of the program. Mr. Bond is a retired Marine Lieutenant Colonel who brings enthusiasm and a career Soldier's experience and perspective to supporting and mentoring the Penn State fellows.

One key reason for Penn State's success in developing sergeants major is their relational connection with their students, especially exemplified by the fellowship's coordinator. Dr. William Diehl, an expert in adult education and

distance education, is the program coordinator. “My path was not a military path, but I have always respected the role that the people in the military play. I feel a huge responsibility to make this program successful and to make everybody here successful, and because of that, I feel that this is an opportunity for me to serve my country, too” (Diehl, 2015, as cited in Crozier, 2015).

Dr. Diehl sustains a relationship with fellows from their first class in August through the completion of their capstone paper the following summer. Dr. Diehl visits fellows three times throughout the program at the beginning of each semester. Beyond the in-person visits, Dr. Diehl continuously communicates, encourages, and mentors fellows throughout the year. Dr. Diehl’s coaching is invaluable as fellows navigate wicked problems, discern responsible teaching, and develop their capstone’s ideas.

THE FELLOWSHIP: A MILITARY POLICE TRADITION

The Military Police Corps Regiment has significantly contributed to the success of the fellowship and the development of thousands of future sergeants major since year one (2015) of the program. With the graduation of cohort eight, ten military police sergeants major have graduated from Penn State with a master’s degree in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education. In the first year of the fellowship, three military police sergeants major led the way: Sergeants Major Townsend, Cates, and Johnson. In this article, I focus on Penn State because this was my path through the fellowship. Sergeants Major are free to select either university: Penn State or Syracuse. I selected Penn State for a number of reasons, one of them was the mentorship of CSM Jason Johnson.

Command Sergeant Major (R) Jason Johnson graduated from Pennsylvania State University as a member of Cohort 1 in August 2016. “The opportunity to go back to NCOLCoE as a Fellow and become an Instructor at the Sergeants Major Course (SMC) was an absolute privilege and a great honor. This allowed me to give back to the NCO Corps at the most senior level” (Johnson, personal communication, November 2023). CSM Johnson instructed in the Department of Force Management for two years before returning to the operational force.

CSM Johnson served as a military police battalion operations SGM before attending the fellowship. “Two years into my instructor time, I was given the honor to go back into the field as a Command Sergeant Major. This gave me a unique perspective and kind of a “do-over” with returning to the field” (Johnson, personal communication, November 2023). When he returned to the operational domain, Johnson served as the garrison command sergeant major of Camp Parks, CA, and concluded his service as the executive SGM to the Army Reserve Command Sergeant Major, CSM Andrew Lombardo.

CSM Johnson represents not only the contribution of the Military Police Corps, but the Army Reserve as well. The fellowship is open to all three components: active duty, National Guard, and Army Reserve. The blend of instructors at the Sergeants Major Academy consists of all three components of the Army, members of the joint force, and members of our

multinational partners.

The student body also reflects this combination of US, joint force, and multinational students. It is an incredible opportunity to gain experience not just regarding the structure of other nation’s armed forces but their cultures, and connections to international and intergovernmental organizations. US service members have limited exposure to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). The academy’s international population possesses frequent interaction and service with these important organizations and shares insights that would otherwise elude to American sergeants major.

THE RECRUITMENT CHALLENGE

The ninth cohort of sergeants major commenced their studies in August 2023. Despite the value of the program, the fellowship has struggled to reach and recruit enough candidates. The opportunity and value of earning a master’s degree are evident. Upon completing their master’s degree, fellows instruct for two years and may be able to extend for a third year. However, within the sergeant major population, leaders too often perceive the fellowship program as a step toward retirement rather than the next step in preparing and building the future force. Division level sergeants major are also reticent to risk shortages in their sergeant major billets to allow leaders to become instructors. The tenth cohort has struggled to fill its thirty scholarships.

Sacrificing a sergeant major from his or her leadership role in a unit of six hundred or more Soldiers can be daunting for higher-level command sergeants major. How do you justify the risk to the force?

INVEST IN FUTURE SERGEANTS MAJOR

Noncommissioned Officers lead differently than their officer counterparts with greater opportunity and ability to interact directly with their Soldiers throughout their careers. The NCO Guide (2020) stresses the changing role of the Soldier as he or she advances to the rank and responsibilities of a sergeant major. Many of my peers, myself included, accepted the challenge of the fellowship for the opportunity to give back to the Army and to the NCO Corps.

Students arriving to the academy often expect they will learn practical hands-on tricks of the trade, only to encounter a rigorous academic calendar that mirrors the curriculum officers face at the Command and General Staff College. The purpose behind the curriculum is to “educate master sergeants and sergeants major to effectively assist commanders and field grade officers accomplish their units’ missions” (NCO Worldwide, 2023). The disconnection between expectation and reality can be daunting. In September, Generals George and Brito, with SMA Weimer (2023) encouraged senior leaders to actively engage with the Army’s professional bulletins to “reinvest in our profession” through professional writing and discourse. As an instructor, I have the opportunity every day to assist, support, and mentor the next generation as they improve their reading, researching, writing, and speaking abilities.

ADVANCING AND ENRICHING YOUR ARMY CAREER

Sergeant Major of the Army Michael R. Weimer's initial goal upon assuming his office was to make certain that the enlisted force remains the "envy of the world" (Colson, 2023). Part of shaping the best enlisted force in the world is investing heavily in both military and civilian education. Earning any degree while serving in the Army is an obvious step toward a future civilian career. However, it is shortsighted not to consider the significant immediate value that the degrees from Penn State and Syracuse present to fellows while still serving.

The Army and joint population consist entirely of adult learners. The education and experience gained from the fellowship enables fellows to understand "how people learn and why people do things the way they do" (Richmond, 2023, as cited in Dawson, 2023). Engaging with such a diverse student population through the experiential learning model enables learning from the students' experiences while instilling doctrinal concepts to frame those experiences.

CONNECTION TO THE WARFIGHTER

One can mistake education as a replacement for warfighting. Education supplements and enhances the competencies of the warfighter. The Army's senior leadership urges leaders to "ruthlessly prioritize time and resources towards building lethality" (Weimer, et al, 2023). The academy significantly contributes to lethality as it instructs five hundred residential students and 1,300 non-residential students every year who will lead ready combat formations.

The curriculum is frequently challenging to students, not only because of academic rigor but also because of relevance. Students want to know the "so what!" How will these concepts apply to my role as a sergeant major or command sergeant major. The critical and creative thinking required of the curriculum is often overshadowed by frustrations involving grammar, formatting, and APA and Army Writing style amalgamation.

As a career military police Soldier, I am able to influence and discuss military police operations within the context of a hundred Army military occupational specialties. Teaching at the Sergeants Major Academy also enables sergeants major to significantly contribute to the MP Corps' priority of developing leaders and taking care of people. Only halfway through the academic calendar, I have directly taught or interacted through student committees 20% of the MP students. The ability to discuss and connect past operational experiences to the Army of 2040 is indispensable.

During the interwar period between World War I and World War II, the future leaders of consequence George C. Marshall, Eisenhower, Patton, and Bradley made full use of the time to experiment and invest deeply into their profession (Taaffe, S., 2017). Their efforts rejuvenated the infantry school, shaped armor tactics, and connected the civilian population to military organization through the Civilian Conservation Corps, work projects, and National Guard training exercises. It is vital that senior leaders accept the charge of Generals George and Brito, and SMA Weimer(2023) to engage in "professional discourse" while time, access, and opportunity are available.



PSU Fellows Commencement (Pictured L-R: SGM Chris Becker, Joe Barron, Zach Wriston, Dana Richmond, Dr. William Diehl, SGM Chris Nelson, Mr. Greg Bond)

CONCLUSION

The Army cannot produce new sergeants major in the quantity and quality demanded without a robust group of instructors. The Sergeants Major Academy Fellowship enables the critical transformation in students from the tactical level to the operational and strategic level thinking. Service in the fellowship and as an instructor at the Sergeants Major Academy allows sergeants major to invest in future senior enlisted, advance and enrich their own career, and connect to the warfighter.

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Soldier Council “A Way”

STORY BY MAJ ANDREW BRIGGS AND LTC BYRON GREENE

INTRODUCTION

In military organizations, people matter most. As leaders, we are charged with taking care of our people, and we must deliberately devote our energy to assessing the needs of our Soldiers. The Army provides multiple resources to gauge the health of an organization, including command climate surveys, unit risk inventories (URIs), counselings, and sensing sessions. These formal and informal tools aid in assessing the needs of an organization. Another effective tool is a Soldier council. This article offers “A Way” for an organization to conduct a Soldier Council that allows Soldiers to voice their concerns, to give subordinate commands the chance to address those concerns, and to allow Soldiers an opportunity to directly engage battalion leadership without undermining the chain of command.

ORGANIZATION DETAILS

The Midwest Joint Regional Correctional Facility (MWJRCF) Battalion (Corrections) provides a guard force and oversees the administration and control of the Midwest Joint Regional Correctional Facility (MWJRCF). The MWJRCF is a Department of Defense Level II facility for military prisoners serving sentences of 1 to 10 years, and for Service Members in Pre-Trial Confinement (PTC) status. The MWJRCF is one of two correctional facilities in Fort Leavenworth and uses shared services with the United States Disciplinary Barracks.

The MWJRCF battalion is authorized upwards of 300 Soldiers, Noncommissioned Officers, and Officers between three companies with a 24-hour mission requirement. Additionally, the MWJRCF supports a civilian workforce of over 100 personnel who fall under the Military Correctional Complex (MCC). Soldiers assigned to the MWJRCF battalion work a combination of normal duty hours Monday through Friday and shift work consisting of three eight-hour shifts per 24-hour period.

THE PROBLEM (THE WHY)

The MWJRCF battalion uses formal and informal tools to solicit feedback, but we recognized an impediment – allowing our battalion leadership to gain visibility of Soldier and family member needs while still also allowing subordinate commands the opportunity to address those needs first. To address this problem, battalion and company leaders conducted analysis and identified three issues. We had no formal mechanism to seek frequent feedback, we struggled to receive feedback, and we were subject to the constraints of shift work and limited access to our population.

NO FORMAL MECHANISM TO SEEK FREQUENT FEEDBACK

We first identified the lack of an established formal mechanism for leaders to receive and discuss Soldier issues and concerns. While formal tools are useful for helping to assess the health of an organization, they have their limitations. Defense Organizational Climate Surveys (DEOCS) and URIs typically occur once a year, limiting the frequency for leaders to understand and address the unique, daily circumstances our junior Soldiers face while working in a correctional facility. Sensing sessions are beneficial but pose risks if inputs and outputs are not clearly defined. Leaders were quick to address issues when they gained awareness of those issues, but gaining awareness was often a matter of chance and opportunity, not because of deliberate and frequent solicitation.

DIFFICULTY RECEIVING FEEDBACK

We then identified the inherent difficulty seeking and receiving feedback from our Soldier population. Soldiers are often apprehensive to discuss issues or concerns with senior personnel, especially when that person is a Field Grade officer or Senior NCO. This could be for any number of reasons: Soldiers may not want to appear like they are complaining, there could be a lack of confidence in supervisors to bring concerns up through the chain of command, or

Soldiers could be afraid of being perceived as undermining the chain of command.

SHIFT WORK

Our third problem involved constraints associated with shift work. Shift work and our 24-hour mission prohibited companies from massing their formations. Additionally, the nature of shift work often limited the ability for squads and platoons to have their full population present outside of dedicated squad or platoon collective training. Our TDA mission and adjusted manning authorizations significantly limited our ability to conduct collective training beyond once per quarter. Shift work also frustrated attempts to align squad and platoon leadership with DA-6s which caused leaders to often provide information to Soldiers directly while bypassing first line leaders.

THE SOLUTION

To be successful we needed to develop a solution for our identified issues. First, our solution needed to be formalized with a clear purpose, inputs, outputs, and frequency to address Soldier concerns in a timely manner. We viewed our solution as a battle rhythm event, requiring a defined charter. Second, we had to encourage junior personnel feedback while overcoming the constraints imposed by shift work. Third, our solution had to avoid undermining the chain of command, the NCO support channel, the Commander's open-door policy, and the Army's SHARP and EO programs. With our problems and constraints identified, we brainstormed and developed clear intent for our council, our basic framework for the council's structure, and we identified risks and developed risk mitigation.

RISKS AND THE 4-WEEK CYCLE CONCEPT

Our planning process identified that risk was an area requiring significant consideration. We utilized the steps of risk management as outlined in ATP 5-19 Risk Management, to identify and assess the potential hazards associated with a soldier advisory council. We first identified and assessed the hazards that posed the most significant issues with a council. These hazards included undermining open-door policies, the chain of command, and the SHARP/EO/EEO complaint process. Additionally, we did not want the council to serve as a medium for disciplinary issues, to solve immediate problems, or to remove leader requirements to address immediate deficiencies. After identifying and assessing the hazards we solicited company command teams with the development of controls. This solicitation directly influenced the concept and structure of a four-week council cycle.

4-WEEK CYCLE CONCEPT

The 4-week cycle is designed to nest within the battalion's battle rhythm. It consists of a Working Group on week 2, a Council on week 4, and refinement and minutes publication occurring on weeks 1 and 3. Each week has specific tasks which feed into the following week. Week 1 is the first refinement week. During this week, the Battalion XO publishes

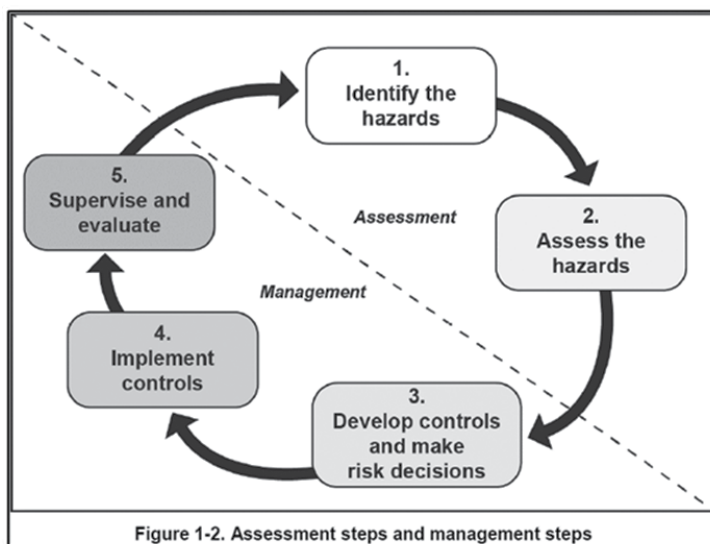


Figure 1. Risk Management Cycle, ATP 5-19

minutes from the previous week's Council, along with any additional updates.

Week 2 is for Company Working Groups. Companies pick their own days during the week to host their Working Groups. Each platoon nominates a junior-enlisted liaison (E5 and below) to bring issues and propose recommendations at company working groups. This allows command teams the opportunity to address issues and attempt to resolve those issues at their level. Company Command Teams can then refine and propose CONCUR or NON-CONCUR recommendations for the discussed issues. Additionally, members of the working group use week 2 to review the Battalion Council Minutes published in week 1. Companies capture minutes of their respective working groups which consist of discussed issues, recommendations, and CONCUR/NON-CONCUR status.

NON-CONCUR recommendations can mean two things. It can mean the issue and/or recommendation can be solved or at least addressed at the company level. It can also mean that company command teams disagree with proposed issues and/or recommendations. However, NON-CONCURs are still included in working group minutes. CONCUR recommendations mean that the issue and/or recommendation needs to be addressed during the Battalion Council.

Week 3 is the second refinement week when companies review their working group outputs discussed during week 2 working groups. Companies submit their refined working group minutes to the Battalion XO for review and consolidation during this week. The Battalion XO consolidates and reviews the working group minutes with recommendation topics separated between CONCUR and NON-CONCUR. The Battalion XO then sends Working Group minutes to battalion leaders and additional stakeholders to allow time to prepare for the council during week 4.

Week 4 is the Battalion Soldier Council. The Battalion XO makes final coordination for additional stakeholder attendance during this week. The council occurs during the 4th Thursday of the month. Required council members include the Battalion Command Team, Company liaisons, Battalion



Vigilance Soldier First Concept

The Vigilance Soldier First concept is a battle-rhythm driven and nested approach to solicit Soldier concerns, to refine those concerns, and to solve concerns at the company or battalion echelon. It seeks to deliberately create opportunities for Soldiers (E5 and below) to have a clear line of communication to company and battalion command teams while still preserving the authority of the chain of command.

Vigilance Soldier First DOES:

- ✓ Create opportunities for Soldiers to voice their priority concerns through a Working Group and a Council, with a deliberate feedback system in place.
- ✓ Offer company leadership the opportunity to address concerns and/or allow company leadership an opportunity to refine Soldier concerns.
- ✓ Allow Soldiers a way to communicate deliberately with the battalion echelon.

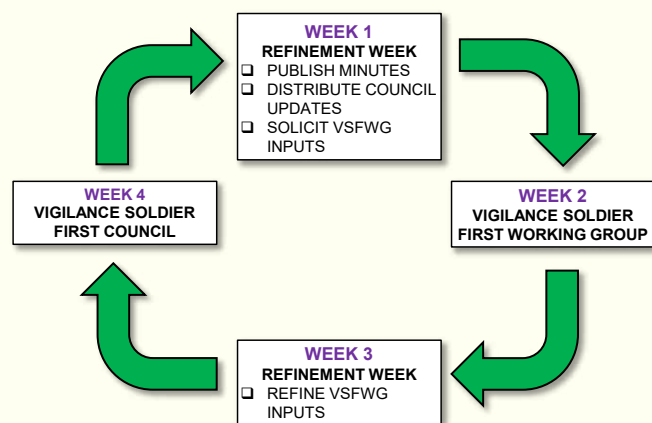
Vigilance Soldier First DOES NOT:

- ✓ Undermine open door policies or the chain of command.
- ✓ Undermine or replace the SHARP/EO/EEO complaint process
- ✓ Serve as a medium for disciplinary issues or concerns.
- ✓ Rapidly address and solve immediate problems.
- ✓ Remove Leader requirements to address and fix immediate deficiencies.

HOW IT WORKS

- ❑ Vigilance Soldier First (VSF) effort achieves effects through a nested, battle-rhythm driven process consisting of a Working Group (VSFWG) (Week 2) and a Council (VSFC) (week 4), with refinement and minutes publications occurring on weeks 3 and 1.
- ❑ Platoons nominate junior-enlisted liaisons (E5 and below/1 per PLT) to propose recommendations at the VSFWGs. Recommendations receive concur/non-concur feedback from company leadership.
- ❑ Liaisons then propose CONCUR recommendations at the VSFC and seek approval. NON-CONCUR recommendations will still be reviewed.
- ❑ The VSFWG is critical to provide company leadership the opportunity to address problems that can be solved by the company command team and to avoid placing the company command team in a position of ignorance.
- ❑ XO serves as proponent to collect and track all submissions.

VIGILANCE SOLDIER FIRST CYCLE



ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Q: What constitutes a Non-Concur?

A: A Non-Concur at the company level means two different things. It can mean that a submitted recommendation can be solved at the company level, or it is a misunderstanding that can be clarified at the company level. AND it can also mean that the company leadership disagrees with the recommendation.

Q: What should a recommendation consist of?

A: A liaison should come prepared to provide context and understanding of a problem and have a recommendation to solve the problem.

Q: What days of the week do the council and working group occur?

A: VSFC occurs the 4th Thursday of the month. Companies will pick their own days during the week to host their VSFWGs.

Q: Who serves as liaisons?

A: Liaison selection as at platoon discretion.

VIGILANCE, HONOR, COURAGE!

Soldier Council 4-Week Concept

Chaplain, and the Battalion XO with optional members including platoon and company leadership. The council begins with reviewing previously published minutes, followed by CONCUR recommendations, and ends with a quick review of company NON-CONCUR recommendations. After the conclusion of the Council the Battalion XO prepares a summary of items discussed in the form of council minutes which are published during Week 1.

BATTALION SOLDIER FIRST COUNCIL CHARTER

This 4-week cycle concept, including draft of the charters for the Company Working Groups and the Soldier Council were again socialized with subordinate command teams for additional input. After receiving company feedback, the Battalion S3 published the concept and charters in an operations order added updated the battalion's battle rhythm one month prior to the implementation of the first four-week cycle.

EXECUTION

One month after the publication of the Soldier Council Order the battalion executed the first iteration of the 4-week

council cycle. Since Week 1 of the cycle is intended for publication of the previous month's minutes and for solicitation of inputs, little occurred during the week. Week 2 saw the companies conduct their first working groups with their newly assigned Soldier representatives. The three companies provided over 11 topics ranging from manning issues, tasking predictability, awards/recognition, and clarification for numerous facility issues. Seven of the 11 topics received CONCUR recommendations to be discussed during the Battalion Council.

During Week 3 the companies submitted copies of their working group minutes to the battalion XO. The battalion XO reviewed each company's working group minutes and sought additional clarification on various discussion points when needed. The battalion XO then reviewed and consolidated all issues into a single document with recommendations separated into CONCUR and NON-CONCUR categories. The battalion XO then sent this document to the battalion leaders and invited select stakeholders capable of providing insight regarding certain CONCUR recommendations.

Week 4 saw the first implementation of the Battalion Soldier Council. At the start of the week invitations were sent



Vigilance Soldier First Working Group

CHAIR: Company Commander

PURPOSE:

- ☐ Incorporate Soldier input/feedback through a multi-tier process starting at the Soldier level.
- ☐ Provide company-echelon opportunities to resolve issues and/or refine issues for VPFC
- ☐ Provide CONCUR/NON-CONCUR feedback to Soldier recommendations

LOCATION/TIME/FREQUENCY: Company Areas, Week 2

FACILITATOR: Company 1SG

MEMBERS:

(REQUIRED)

- Company Command Team
- Platoon Liaison(s)

(OPTIONAL)

- PLT/SQD Leadership

INPUTS:

- ☐ Platoon issues/concerns
- ☐ Published minutes

OUTPUTS:

- ☐ Proposed recommendations for VPFC

KEY TASKS:

- ☐ Solicit Soldier feedback.
- ☐ Develop and understand considerations.
- ☐ Refine proposed recommendations and categorize by concur/non-concur.

VIGILANCE, HONOR, COURAGE!



Vigilance Soldier First Council

CHAIR: Battalion Commander (LTC Greene)

PURPOSE:

- ☐ Incorporate Soldier input/feedback through a multi-tier process starting at the Soldier level.
- ☐ Provide a direct LOC between junior-enlisted and BN CMD team
- ☐ Share TTPs horizontally and vertically

LOCATION/TIME/FREQUENCY: Battalion Classroom, 1500-1600, Week 4

FACILITATOR: Battalion CSM (CSM Huggard)

MEMBERS:

(REQUIRED)

- Battalion Command Team (LTC Greene / CSM Huggard)
- HHC, JRCF Soldier Liaison
- HQ, JRCF Soldier Liaison
- A Co, JRCF Soldier Liaison
- Battalion Chaplain (CH (CPT) Shipma)
- Battalion XO

(OPTIONAL)

- PLT/CO Leadership

INPUTS:

- ☐ VPFWG proposal and concur/non-concur recommendations.

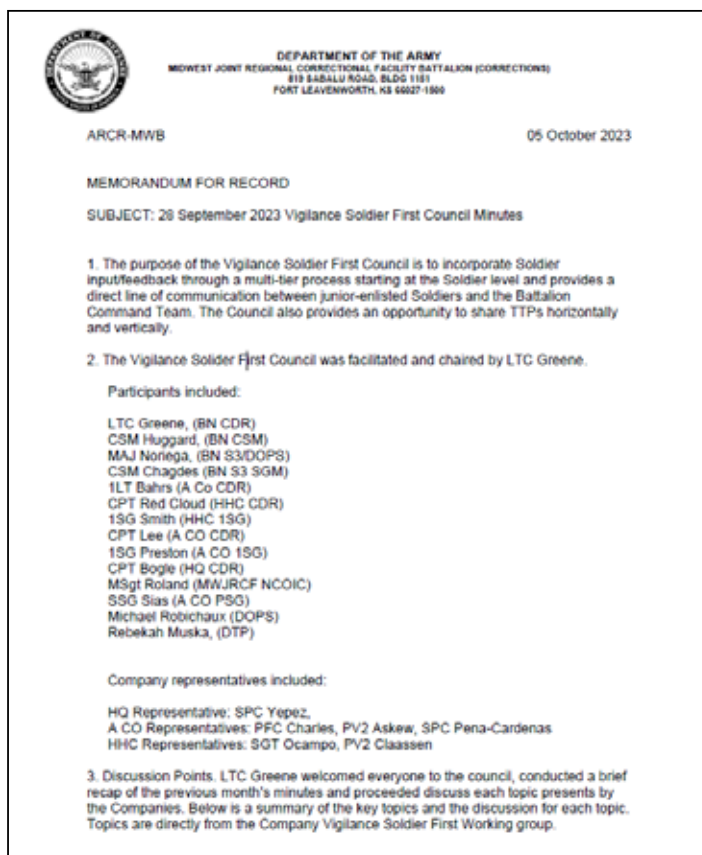
OUTPUTS:

- ☐ Published minutes

KEY TASKS:

- ☐ Review previously published minutes
- ☐ Review CONCUR recommendations.
 - ☐ HQ, JRCF
 - ☐ A CO
 - ☐ HHC, JRCF
- ☐ Review NON-CONCUR recommendations.
 - ☐ HQ, JRCF
 - ☐ A CO
 - ☐ HHC, JRCF

VIGILANCE, HONOR, COURAGE!



Example Soldier Council Minutes

out to all Company Command Teams and Platoon leadership. The council was held in a battalion classroom with a round table layout of the room to facilitate discussion between all attending personnel. The council opened with introductions from each participant in attendance. The Battalion Commander welcomed each member, discussed the purpose and intent of the meeting, and proceeded discuss each topic presented by the Companies. At the end of the Council, the Battalion Commander asked for feedback from participants on their thoughts of the Vigilance Solder First Working Groups and Council. Responses were overwhelmingly positive for the first iteration of the company working groups and battalion council. Participants expressed multiple times the importance for Soldiers to have the opportunity to have discussions and receive clarification of information they may have been previously misunderstood. The Battalion Commander charged all company representatives to share the outcomes of the meeting with their fellow Soldiers.

During the following week, Week 1 of the new 4-week cycle, The Battalion XO, created the Council Minutes from notes taken during the meeting. The XO then emailed minutes to all senior leaders. Company leaders also posted printed copies of minutes in key company areas such as information boards and Soldier break rooms and watch mount rooms in the MWJRCF.

ASSESSMENT

To ensure the Battalion Soldier Council allows Soldiers to safely voice their concerns, allows subordinate commands the opportunity to address those concerns, and allows Soldiers an opportunity to directly engage battalion leadership without undermining the chain of command, continuous assessment must occur. To date the battalion has conducted four Soldier Councils with much success, but room for improvement always exists. Our assessment identified several areas for improvement.

Because we had the time and space to discuss issues, we could now invite key stakeholders to our council to adequately address all issues. These stakeholders include civilian staff working in the MWJRCF, and personnel from outside organizations. Our Brigade benefits from an established wellness program, and we ensured our civilian wellness program coordinator was present at our council. For organizations with a large civilian population, consider collecting civilian feedback in the form of adding to the current council and/or creating a separate civilian workforce council. Finally, the frequency of the week 4 council may be more than necessary, as we've seen fewer issues addressed at the council during each monthly iteration. Company command teams indicated that Soldiers were running out of concerns/ issues that had not already been previously addressed. Small organizations may benefit more from quarterly battalion councils while maintaining monthly company working groups.

MAJ Andrew Briggs serves as the Battalion Executive Officer for the Midwest Joint Regional Correctional Facility (MWJRCF) Battalion (Corrections).

LTC Byron Greene serves as the Battalion Commander for the Midwest Joint Regional Correctional Facility (MWJRCF) Battalion (Corrections) and the Facility Commander for the MWJRCF.



MWJRCF BN soldiers Conduct Soldier First Council (Picture taken 30 NOV 23 by CPT Bogle)



In Vietnam in front of my 615th sign

65 YEARS APART

An MP Adventure

STORY BY ARNOLD DAXE, JR. COL, USA RET - VIETNAM VET (1967-'68)

Prior to 2020, at the top of my bucket list, was taking a trip to Germany to visit the 615th MP Co, *The Bloodhounds*, in Vilseck (Rose Barracks), a trip twice interrupted by my spouse's illness and the worldwide Pandemic. Finally, after coordination with three successive commanders, the last one, Captain Zachary Stilwell, worked diligently with me and his NCO's on a plan to visit his unit the third week of March, 2023.

The purpose of my visit was to determine if any differences exists between the soldiers of the 615th MP Company (720th MP Bn) in Long Binh, Vietnam in 1967 and the 615th (709th MP Bn) in Vilseck (Rose Barracks) in 2023, a span of over 65 years! It was more of a curious and historical undertaking.

The Vietnam (RVN) company was comprised mostly of young men (no women) who had low draft numbers. The missions included combat support to four combat divisions, night convoy support to an armored cavalry regiment, and perimeter and access support to the rather large Long Binh tactical area of operations (TAOR) which contained USARV HQ, III Corps and many combat support and combat service support units. To assist the 720th MP Bn with their widespread mission, the 18th Military Police Brigade attached an Infantry platoon mortar section to the 615th which was probably a first for a 140 man military police company. Between the two, the differences were obvious.



Presenting a new guidon to 1st Sgt Chenault and Capt Stilwell

For the Rose Barracks MP's, a company that was 20% female soldiers and was comprised of a combination of mostly volunteers and career soldiers, they had multiple missions in the Vilseck - Grafenwoehr area. It included separate platoon level field training with the 18th MP Bde, the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, DLO and road patrol support, operating an MP station, and lastly, access & perimeter control. Indeed, the 615th was very busy and sometimes thinly stretched to enable them to fulfill all their missions. Reminded me of the 1967 615th which never had all their soldiers and equipment in one place.

Departing Virginia on March 12 aboard United Airlines, I arrived in Frankfurt and later in Nuremberg, where two company NCO's, SFC Drake Bristrow and SSG Chris Acres were waiting to transport me to Rose Barracks in Vilseck, the home of

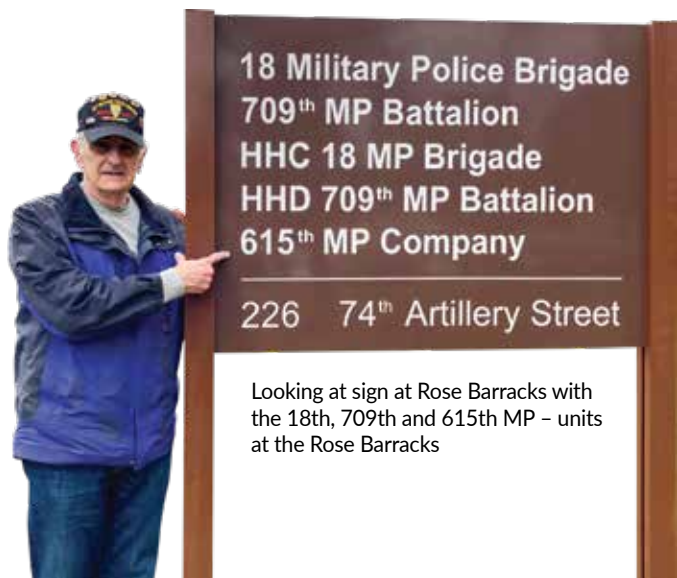
the 18th MP Bde, the 709th MP Bn and, of course, the home of the 615th MP Co, "The Bloodhounds." They deposited me at a very hospitable Army lodging facility where I rested until the following morning.

After a short visit to the 18th and 709th command groups, we headed for the 615th

which was close by. The CO, Cpt Zach Stillwell and 1SG Chelledon Chenault greeted me with open arms, elated that I finally arrived. I was proud to be the first Vietnam commander of the 615th to ever visit the 2023 version of the 615th in Germany. I didn't know quite what to expect but the men and women soldiers of the company exceeded my expectations. So began my visit to my fellow Bloodhounds that included most



My 1967 Vietnam jungle Jacket



Looking at sign at Rose Barracks with the 18th, 709th and 615th MP - units at the Rose Barracks

of the NCOs and quite a few enlisted soldiers, all interested in what their brethren did during the Vietnam war. Many of the soldiers were surprised when I told them that in 1967, we had NO female soldiers in the entire brigade, had a whole bunch of armored jeeps and

one or two V-100 armored commando vehicles for convoy and route support. *Later changes to the Army's TO&E force structure that added female soldiers and deleted the V-100's were not implemented until years later.* Of course the Army's M151 quarter ton jeeps were replaced by Humvees, and are only found today in Army museums and parades.

I traipsed through the orderly room (gazing wistfully at some 1967 artifacts), the supply and maintenance shops, the motor pool under the watchful eye of SFC Chris McMillan and even the arms room where an outstanding female non-commissioned officer, Sgt Vivian Pham was in charge. In Vietnam, we did not have a motor pool per se so I was surprised to visit a complete motor pool and maintenance shop admiring soldiers with their sleeves rolled up and happy with a wrench in their hands and grease on their uniforms! Visiting and talking to as many soldiers as I could in three days left me with the impression that they enjoyed what they were doing, were well trained, respected and supported each other, and, of course understood the significance of their mission.



Sgt Samuel Jenkins outside USO in Grafenwoehr

For one of my last days in Vilseck, I was able to ride-along with Sgt Samuel Jenkins from the PMO and we travelled to the far reaches of the company's access control responsibilities at Grafenwoehr where elements of the Ukrainian armed forces at Camp Kherson were training and familiarizing themselves with the operational abilities of U.S. Army field equipment. I even found a USO building which unfortunately, was closed but I did have an opportunity to speak with a Ukrainian army soldier. Back in Virginia, I continue to volunteer with the USO at Dulles



Sgt Vivian Pham (was armorer now asst Plt Sgt)

airport as I have been a loyal supporter of the USO since 1964 when assigned to the 1st Cav Div in Korea (and had an opportunity to meet Bob Hope!)

As I knew this was going to be a fast and furious trip, I packed in as much as possible in 2-4 days which was a whirlwind visit to be sure. The last night concluded with a dinner surrounded by many of the Bloodhounds and their spouses at a German restaurant in Amberg where I proudly presented the CO and First Sergeant with a new banner/guidon which they planned to display outside their orderly room. My son Jeff had two guidons made in Atlanta; I kept one and delivered the other to the company. The original guidon disappeared never to be found.

The next morning, SSG Acres drove me to Nuremberg where I caught a Lufthansa bus for the short ride to Munich where I delayed my departure for one day to enjoy some of Munich's wonderful brew and sausage. I flew home on a United flight the next morning wrapped in the excitement and wonderful memories of a once-in-a-lifetime visit to my old outfit, comforted by the fact that despite the 65-year difference, these soldiers had remarkable heart and esprit, were enthusiastic in their jobs and were led by professional officers and non-commissioned officers. I will not forget these Bloodhounds and wish I could have stayed longer. The Military Police Regiment is in good hands. I salute and admire them all!

Go Bloodhounds!

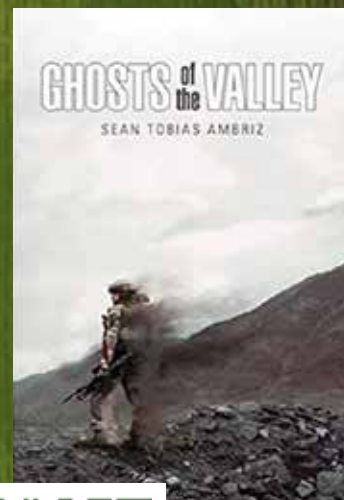


TOC truck in motor pool

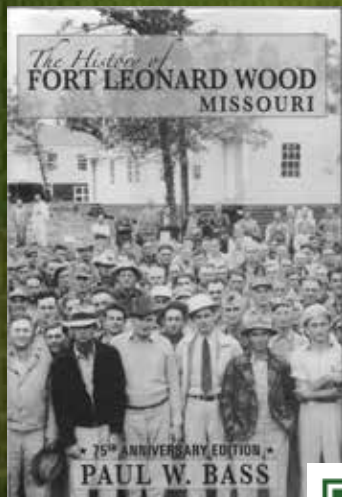
MP Book Nook

Ghosts of the Valley

Ask around your local VFW about what a military police soldier does for a living. The answers will make you laugh, cringe, and sometimes simply lean back at the nonsensical tales we evoke from our comrades in arms. Even to the standard military police soldier, their experiences from one to the next are largely different depending on any number of influences. Whether that is duty station, deployments, specific type of military police. In this book, you will see the far edge of the combat spectrum for a military police soldier. Every so often, military police get training that enables them to be attached to units conducting missions well outside the purview of a standard military police soldier. For those soldiers, their story goes largely untold. The events in this book are told exactly as they happened. Some have been modified due to security concerns and for the privacy of comrades. Ghosts of the Valley gives a full spectrum recount of the incidents that took place in Afghanistan, and the recovery process that became necessary upon return to the peace of home. The book is not meant to glorify war, but to expose the horrors of it. Ghosts of the Valley also provides a comprehensive, and up-to-date as of the publication, list of resources for those struggling with PTSD, or those who simply need help.



PURCHASE: <https://mpronline.org/product/ghost-of-the-valley>



The History of Fort Leonard Wood Missouri

In this exciting new book, author Paul W. Bass documents the 75-year history of Fort Leonard Wood, formed in anticipation for America's involvement in WWII and still training front line defenders today! The History of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri provides detailed information on the formation of the base in 1940 (and why it was named for General Leonard Wood), then follows base training, objectives and growth during World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the Cold War, plus the War on Terrorism beginning in the 1990s through today.



PURCHASE: mpronline.org/product/the-history-of-flw-mo

DEAN'S DELAY

STORY BY RONNEY Z. MILLER, USAMPS HISTORIAN

An M1917A1 .30 caliber machine gun emplacement overlooks the Kapchon River and the main highway leading south from Taejon (20 July 1950).

Due to the tactical situation that existed during the first six weeks of the Korean War, Republic of Korea (ROK) and US ground forces were primarily confined to conducting an economy of force mission. Inherently risky and difficult to execute under the best of circumstances, a series of delays and withdrawals defined the ROK-US effort in the early stages of the Korean War. The concept was to trade space for time so that additional ground forces could be projected onto the peninsula. It should be noted that retrograde operations tend to cause increased levels of battlefield stress among soldiers.

The rearward movement away from the enemy (by its nature) was a demoralizing experience. As such, commanders were confronted with the unenviable task of not only physically sustaining the force but preserving the fighting spirit and morale of their men. Despite the heartbreaking cycle of retreat, fight, and retreat to fight again, the American soldier manifested a unique quality – elasticity in defeat. His spirit might be bent but it didn't break. The 24th Military Police Company – the first MP unit deployed to Korea – conducted route reconnaissance missions; escorted hospital trains and

convoys; provided security for command posts and forward aid stations; rounded-up stragglers; and conducted traffic control and rear area security operations. However, in the early days of the Korean War, everybody was a combat soldier, and in several instances, Military Policemen found themselves leaning forward in their foxholes, “popping caps.”

On 5 July 1950, the 1st Battalion(-), 21st Infantry Regiment, dubbed “Task Force Smith” after its commander Lieutenant Colonel Charles B. Smith, engaged North Korean armor and infantry units just north of Osan. This was the first US unit to engage the enemy in ground combat during the Korean War. For six hours, Task Force Smith conducted a tenacious and courageous defense of Jukmi Pass but was compelled to withdraw. Regardless of the outcome, the Battle of Osan represents one of the defining moments of the Korean War – it heralded the entry of US ground forces into the conflict. General Douglas A. MacArthur boldly referred to this ill-equipped and poorly trained unit as an “arrogant display of strength.” Members of Task Force Smith held a different view... they considered themselves as the “tethered goats.” The Battle of Pyongtaek was fought the next day as the 24th Infantry Division continued its delaying actions. Attempts to disrupt the enemy's battle rhythm along this avenue of approach

can be charitably characterized as “feeble at best.” During the Battle of Chonan (6 - 8 July), the 3rd Battalion, 34th Infantry Regiment, was nearly destroyed before it could extricate itself. By 10 July, the North Korean People's Army (NKPA) had overrun half of South Korea, but their momentum had been significantly impacted by the Chonui to Chochiwon delaying actions. In a series of desperate battles fought between 10 and 12 July, the 21st Infantry Regiment(-) delayed two of the best divisions in the NKPA and it also constituted the best battlefield performance of US troops to date. In the mistaken belief that the forces opposing them were in much larger numbers, the enemy proceeded with greater caution and with less speed. A concentrated and determined effort by the NKPA at this time, employing their overwhelming tank superiority to the fullest, could have possibly taken Pusan and deprived Eighth Army of a base of operations as well as a major point of entry.

During the Defense of the Kum River Line (14 - 16 July), the 19th and 34th Infantry Regiments engaged a numerically superior hostile force. The Kum River was the last natural obstacle north of Taejon and this was the first significant combat action fought by the 19th Infantry Regiment. On the first day of the battle, the NKPA 4th Division collapsed the defensive positions held by the 34th Infantry in front of Kongju and breached the Kum River at multiple points. Not only was the heavily depleted 34th Infantry Regiment forced to withdraw, two batteries of the 63rd Field Artillery Battalion were overrun and

ROK and US soldiers of the 24th Infantry Division greet each other at a road intersection in Chonan the day before that city fell to the North Korean People's Army (7 July 1950).



(Top) Sergeant William Wang of Olympia, Washington, Military Policeman, helps medical aidmen of the 2nd Infantry Division unload wounded soldiers at a battalion aid station (3 September 1950).



(Left) Corporal Harold C. Pearce is seen astride a motorcycle while serving on occupation duty in Japan (circa 1949).



An artillery crew checks their equipment near the Kum River (15 July 1950). While the NKPA pushed south towards the ROK provisional capital of Taejon, the 24th Infantry Division had established a defensive line on the south bank of the Kum River.

suffered numerous casualties and the loss of many of its field pieces. This withdrawal completely exposed the left (west) flank of the 19th Infantry Regiment. By 16 July, the 19th Infantry still occupied its main battle positions astride the Seoul-Pusan highway where it crossed the Kum River at Taepyeong-ni. It had repelled (or driven out by counterattack) all frontal assaults and major penetrations of its river positions except that of Company C on Hill 200. At 0300 hours on Sunday morning, the NKPA 3rd Division renewed its effort to breach the Kum River. Despite heroic efforts, friendly forces were compelled to withdraw. During this battle, the 19th Infantry Regiment lost 20% of its fighting force – the 1st Battalion sustaining the heaviest casualty rate (338 out of 785 men or 43%). This battalion also lost most of its heavy equipment and vehicles. The 52nd Field Artillery Battalion lost eight of its nine 105mm howitzers and most of its heavy equipment. During these series of delays – collectively known as “Dean’s Delay” after Major General William F. Dean, Commanding General of the 24th Infantry Division – the 24th Military Police Company fought as infantry, evacuated the wounded, established critical check points along the main supply routes, escorted convoys and hospital trains, served as a source of combat intelligence, and dealt with enemy prisoners of war and thousands of refugees. As Colonel William M. Campbell, Provost Marshal of X Corps,

observed, “It took this strange Korean War to make Military Policemen realize they were just as much as part of the fighting team as the infantry soldier. Those who did not realize it right away damn soon learned.”

During the Battle of Taejon (19 - 20 July), bitter house-to-house fighting ensued as North Korean soldiers continuously infiltrated the city, often disguised as peasant farmers. Both opposing forces sustained horrific casualties. Ultimately, the 24th Infantry Division was forced to abandon the city. Company L, 34th Infantry Regiment, and the 1st Platoon, 24th Military Police Company, acted as the rearguard which enabled the 24th Infantry Division to break contact. It remained behind for thirty-six hours after the main body had withdrawn and MPs escorted the last convoy out. This composite force battled its way through enemy roadblocks and reached the safety of friendly lines on 22 July. Corporal Dwain Anderson, Sergeant Lawrence H. Halvorson, Sergeant First Class Charles Kluge, and Corporal Harold C. Pearce were killed. These were the first four MPs to lose their lives during the Korean War. Company L sustained 70% casualties during this action. In 17 days of combat (5 - 22 July 1950), the 24th Infantry Division had been driven back 100 miles, suffered more than 30% casualties, and had 2,400 men listed as missing in action – among the latter was Major General William F. Dean. After the fall of Taejon, the war would enter a new phase as reinforcements from the US and

other UN contingents began to arrive in-country. The final days of July witnessed some of the hardest-fought battles of the Korean War; nevertheless, the North Koreans had managed to overrun almost all of South Korea by then and the tactical situation had reached a critical point – for both opposing forces. By the end of July 1950, the enemy had sustained far greater losses than what US intelligence sources had realized and were compelled to forcibly conscript untrained South Koreans of dubious loyalty into their ranks to replenish their manpower losses. Additionally, the United Nations Command (UNC) had achieved undisputed air and naval supremacy. Another major problem that the NKPA faced was that of a lengthy and tenuous supply line. Under constant air attack, with both coastlines under naval blockade, and with the arrival of more and more US and UN ground troops, time was running out for the NKPA. On the other hand, never before or afterwards were conditions as critical for Eighth Army as in the closing days of July and the first days of August 1950. If the NKPA was running out of time, Eighth Army was running out of space to trade for time. Recognizing the “handwriting on the wall,” Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker (Commanding General, Eighth Army) drew the proverbial “line in the sand,” ordering friendly forces to fall back behind the Nakdong River and to establish a defensive posture oriented on terrain retention. The Defense of the Pusan Perimeter would qualify as another defining moment of the Korean War.

THROUGH THE CRACKED GLASS:

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at Our Newest Exhibit

WRITTEN BY AMANDA WEBB, MUSEUM SPECIALIST

Looking at the Humvee door, visitors can imagine how terrifying the IED attack must have felt for the crew occupying the vehicle. Yet, in talking with the Soldiers who were part of the convoy that day in January 2007, incidents like this were not uncommon. That is part of what makes the Military Police Corps Regimental Museum's most recent acquisition and exhibit so important. This moment of crisis, captured in metal and shattered glass, tells a story that can impact every visitor, no matter their perspective or experience.

THE STORY:

On 23 January 2007, in Ghazaliya, a neighborhood in West Baghdad, Iraq, twelve members of the 410th Military Police Company responded to reports for assistance from their Iraqi police counterparts. Serving as a Police Transition Team, the Soldiers of the 410th trained and mentored the Iraqi Police and regularly responded to calls for help. While enroute, the convoy of four M1114 HMMWVs was attacked by small arms fire coming from Iraqi insurgents. Captain Jason Sama, the company commander, quickly directed return fire and circled the troops around to trap the shooters. The convoy continued until a second burst of gunfire halted the patrol, and the team assessed their environment. Two deceased bodies, wrapped in plastic, were spotted on the side of the road. The insurgents

detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) hidden under the bodies. The explosion rocked the vehicles, blowing out tires, shattering windowpanes, and disabling the lead HMMWV. With the help of a nearby Bradley fighting vehicle, part of a Quick Reaction Force, the convoy was able to engage with the enemy, secure the area, recover the lead vehicle, and retreat to the Ghazaliya Police Station to regroup.

THE DOOR:

Weighing in at almost 600 pounds, the Humvee door is the museum's heaviest non-vehicle artifact. Contributing to the weight is the important addition made to the original door in late 2006. The door's exterior carries the Objective Fragment (Frag) Kit #5. Designed by the US Army Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, the kit is comprised of a set of four doors with ballistic panels that mechanics could bolt to the M1114 HMMWV's standard doors. The M1114's original doors could not withstand the blasts of roadside bombs and, in many cases, would produce shrapnel harming the Soldiers inside, but with the use of these retrofit kits, Soldiers could up-armor the vehicles while in theater, including Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Future HMMWV models included the Frag Kit #5 as part of the manufacturing process because of their early success.

The IED shrapnel embedded in the door's exterior in the aftermath of the January 2007 incident proved the value of the up-armor kit in protecting Soldiers. The damaged door was shipped stateside and put on display at the Armor Holdings Factory and then later at the Office of the Project Director Joint Tactical Vehicles Program. It reinforced for the people who designed and constructed the frag kits that their work saved Soldier lives.

In 2022, the museum received the offer to add the door to our permanent collection. Over the course of a year, the museum staff completed the extensive paperwork to add the door to the US Army's Artifact Collection, researched the background



The door shortly after attack. Note the blown-out tire in the lower left corner. Photo courtesy of John Elsass.

on the door and frag kit, and prepared the exhibit space. To support the door's weight and allow for easier movement, the exhibit specialist designed and built an innovative frame on casters. The museum obtained the rights to film footage, taken by an ABC news team who was riding with the convoy during the attack. Since its unveiling during MP Regimental Week in September 2023, the door has become a beacon, drawing the interest of new MPs visiting the museum to learn about their history and heritage, as well as that of seasoned MPs who look at the IED shrapnel embedded in the door and reflect on their own time in the "sand box."

THE SIGNIFICANCE:

The M1114 door, with its up-armor kit, shrapnel embedded in the window, and pock marks dimpling the exterior, tells many stories for our visitors. The door speaks to the story of MPs deployed during the Global War on Terrorism, and how the duties of the Military Police included serving in Police Transition Teams. The video footage from the incident underscores the importance of training, so that when an event is happening, each Soldier reacts quickly with the skill that only comes from a practiced force. The shrapnel from the IED, both terrifying and awe-inducing, reminds us that the Army is constantly pushing the bounds of technology to protect the men and women serving and that trusting in our gear and equipment can and will save lives.

For more information on the Military Police Corps Regimental Museum visit our webpage at https://history.army.mil/museums/TRADOC/fortLeonardWood_milPoliceCorp/index.html#Visit

And follow us on Facebook to see what we're up to! <https://www.facebook.com/usarmymilitarypolicemuseum/>



Exhibit Specialist John Vance checks the alignment of steel bars for bracing the base of the mount.



Text panels and photographs printed in-house are prepped for mounting onto foam board for the exhibit.



The staff adjusts the door to ensure the holes of the original hinge align to the mount before final attachment.



The completed exhibit, currently in the museum's temporary gallery. The door will become part of a larger exhibit on security and mobility in the future.



MASTER SERGEANT DANIEL A. GOTSCHALL AWARDED PURPLE HEART

A STORY OF SACRIFICE,
LEADERSHIP, AND UNWAVERING
DEDICATION TO HIS SOLDIERS

For this Military Police Soldier, selfless service, perseverance, and patience has come around full fold. On 27 January 2023, the Department of the Army approved Master Sergeant Daniel A. Gotschall the Purple Heart, for his wounds received on 10 September 2011, who is now serving as the United States Army Europe and Africa, G34 Office of the Provost Marshall Operations NCOIC. While assigned as a Squad Leader for the 54th Military Police Company, 709th Military Police Battalion, then Staff Sergeant Gotschall was injured by the enemy. At the time, he was deployed to RC East Wardak Province, Afghanistan in Support of Operation

Enduring Freedom. At approximately 1521L time, Combat Out Post Sayed Abad was struck by a 2,200lb Suicide Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive on the East Side near the dining facility and sleeping quarters. Regardless of his wounds and injuries, SSG Gotschall found himself searching for, caring for, and guiding his 21 Soldiers to safety. Due to the volume of casualties on that day, he elected to remain at the Combat Out Post as his Soldiers moved to a higher level of care. His sacrifice, dedication to mission accomplishment, and the care of the greatest asset the Army has, the Soldier, is shown significantly from this incident.



"THE CARE FOR SOLDIERS AS A NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER IN MY CAREER HAS BEEN AND ALWAYS WILL BE AT THE FORFRONT IN HOW I CARRY MYSELF AS A PROFESSIONAL FOR ME AND FOR OUR ARMY. I'VE ALWAYS HAD THIS DESIRE TO HELP THOSE IN NEED OR TO BE THERE FOR PEOPLE, BECAUSE PEOPLE MATTER MOST AND WE SHOULD NEVER FORGET THAT." – MSG Daniel A. Gotschall

On October 25th, 2023, Brigadier General Patrick J. Ellis, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3, United States Army Europe-Africa presented the Purple Heart to Master Sergeant Gotschall in an official ceremony at United States Army Wiesbaden, Germany. BG Ellis recalls his time and experience as the Commander of the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, Task Force Blue Geronimo, during 2011 in Wardak Province, as being one of the most kinetic areas because of its geographical location near the Tangi Valley.

"THIS WAS A HOT BED OF INSURGENCY AS THEY HAD THE ABILITY TO LAY LOW IN THE VALLEY AND MOVE FROM ONE MAIN SUPPLY ROUTE TO THE OTHER." ATTACKS WERE DAILY AND DEADLY."
– BG Ellis


MSG Gotschall tells those there at the ceremony that he is grateful to have been given the opportunity to have closure from a significant day in his career and that he would have made the decision to stay on the COP and take care of his Soldiers a hundred times over. He stated that he is indebted for the courage of his Soldiers, their commitment to mission accomplishment and resilience to get back into the fight. MSG Gotschall highlighted that getting through that day could not have been possible without the dedication of his fellow noncommissioned officer Sergeant Joseph Basgall. A man he says that he would truly give his life for.

Lastly in his closing comments, he states that's what a leader does, they place the missing first, the never accept defeat, never quit and darn well never leaves a fallen comrade. That life is short in retrospect, but you never know how big your impact can be on someone else's life to make it longer or better. No matter what uniform you wear, care for people and being the individual that is in the arena is what life is about. Living a life and a career deliberately has always yielded fulfillment. Always strive to be an outlier, and never stop bettering yourself and others, and be the Man in the Arena.



A FIGHTING SOLDIER AND HIS OPPORTUNITIES

STORY BY SGT. NICKSON SCHENK, 8TH THEATER SUSTAINMENT COMMAND



One year in and many accomplishments later, one Soldier believes that every opportunity has worth. Spc. Samuel Elston, a military police officer with the 728th Military Police Battalion, 8th Military Police Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command, shows that job fulfillment can come in many forms. From figurative to physical blows, Elston demonstrates that accomplishing goals can take effort.

"I think it [the Army] offers me a multitude of opportunities in terms of my career field and the things I want to do," said Elston, an Aurora, Illinois, native. "It drives and motivates me."

From high school to college, Elston knew he wanted to work in the field of criminal justice. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and psychology and realized he wanted more out of his chosen field. He desired a challenge and saw that the Army was the perfect place for that.

"I didn't want to be a regular cop," said Elston. "I need something that pushes me both mentally and physically. The Army seemed like a good fit for that."

Spc. Samuel Elston, a military police officer with the 57th Military Police Company, 728th Military Police Battalion, 8th Military Police Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command poses for a photo on Fort Shafter, Hawaii.



Spc. Samuel Elston (left), a military police officer with the 57th Military Police Company, 728th Military Police Battalion, 8th Military Police Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command faces off with his opponent ahead of the final combatives match at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, Nov. 30, 2023.

Joining the Army at the age of 25, Elston thought it necessary to chase every opportunity available and learn as much as possible.

Sgt. 1st Class Sarah Magness, Elston's platoon sergeant, said, "his attitude is unmatched with others within the unit. His consistent performance encourages all others to emulate how he carries himself."

Within his first year in the Army, Elston earned his Air Assault wings, Jungle tab, and Expert Soldier Badge in addition to attending a litany of other military courses, and he has no plans of stopping anytime soon.

"I put that pedal to the metal, and I just tried to not let off," said Elston. "I really tried to take any opportunity that I could get."

From a young age, Elston's drive and commitment was apparent. Claudio Torres, a Metea Valley High School wrestling coach in 2010, met Elston at a youth wrestling club when he was in the 7th grade. Torres immediately saw potential, stating that Elston was always pushing himself.

"Sam has always had that dog mentality," said Torres. "If there is one phrase to describe him, it is that he is very determined."

Elston has always set high goals for himself and pushes himself past his comfort zone, he said. A lot of his drive and his motivation for competing comes from his past with wrestling.

"Sam is a person who puts one hundred percent into his goals and sets high expectations for himself," said Torres.

Elston's mindset and drive continued in his military

service. Sgt. Mike Early, 728th Military Police Battalion's combatives representative, introduced him to their combatives curriculum. Having a competitive spirit and a history with combative sports, Elston jumped at the chance to train again. After several months, Early informed him about an upcoming tournament and suggested he compete.

"It's [combatives] just something that I love to get out and compete in," said Elston. "There was a tournament coming up and it was right up my alley."

With a winner's mentality and a competitor's spirit, Elston attended the 25th Infantry Division's Tropic Lightning Week combatives tournament. From Nov. 28 to 30, Elston competed in five mixed martial arts matches. He won the first three by getting one technical knockout and submitting two other competitors.

Elston climbed his tournament bracket, and by his fourth and longest match he was in the semi-finals. Round after round, Elston defeated the competition, making it to the finals. Before the second round ended, Elston found himself standing before his opponent after forcing him to submit. Elston then realized his achievement.

On Nov. 30, after days of grueling competition, Elston beat out 31 other competitors and won his bracket.

"I wasn't expecting to win the tournament, but I'm not going out there to lose - I would say that it was definitely my goal, and I'm glad I was able to pull it off," said Elston.

Through it all, Elston realized that he wouldn't normally have these opportunities outside of the Army. Elston has already started moving toward his future goals, including participating in another MMA tournament with 25th ID on Fort Benning, Georgia.

"Spc. Elston is a one of a kind Soldier. He is an outstanding and humble Soldier with great potential to go far," said Magness.

With his drive for knowledge and fulfillment, Elston understands that, with enough effort – and maybe a few punches – any goal is achievable.



Spc. Samuel Elston, a military police officer with the 57th Military Police Company, 728th Military Police Battalion, 8th Military Police Brigade, 8th Theater Sustainment Command exclaims in victory after winning a division-level combatives tournament in his weight class.

2023 MILITARY POLICE CORPS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Each year the Military Police Corps Regiment solicits nominations for the U.S. Army Military Police Corps Regimental Hall of Fame. Commissioned Officers, Warrant Officers, Enlisted Soldiers, or Professional Civilians who have served in or supported an Active, National Guard or Reserve Military Police unit are eligible for nomination.

The Military Police Corps Regimental leadership proudly announced this year's inductees as Major General Adolph McQueen, Colonel Timothy J. Lamb, Colonel Thomas H. Tatum Jr., Command Sergeant Major John F. McNeirney, Sergeant Major Douglas M. Loggins. This year's inductees bring the total number of distinguished leaders enshrined in the Military Police Corps Hall of Fame to 125.

The MPRA joins the regimental leadership in congratulating each of these inductees and their families on this outstanding milestone in their service to our Regiment and this great country. In keeping with promoting the history and preserving the traditions of our Regiment the MPRA is proud to maintain a current place on our website where you can view the names, pictures, and citations for all 125 Hall of Fame members. We invite you to visit the site at www.mpraonline.org to see this collection of Military Police heroes and to read about their legacies.

Although the United States Army Military Police School is the proponent for the MP Hall of Fame, the MPRA encourages everyone to review the outline of the prerequisites, process, and regulatory requirements and consider nominating those you feel to be deserving of consideration for this great honor.



**Colonel
Thomas H. Tatum Jr.**
Service Career 1984–2013



**Major General
Adolph McQueen**
Service Career 1982–2013



**Command Sergeant Major
John F. McNeirney**
Service Career 1986–2018



**Colonel
Timothy J. Lamb**
Service Career 1979–2004



**Sergeant Major
Douglas M. Loggins**
Service Career 1984–2007

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