"First in Training"

108th Training Command (IET) Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year
Sgt. Joshua Smith

108th Training Command (IET) Soldier of the Year,
Spc. Michael Glosemeyer,

108th Training Command (IET) Drill Sergeant of the Year
Sgt. Michael Yarrington
Being a drill sergeant allows you to motivate people to new limits, face their fears and become a Soldier.

Are you up for the challenge?

usarmy.usarc.108-tng-cmd.list.ds-recruiting@mail.mil
Greetings Griffon Team!

Fall is definitely in the air and our busiest time of year, the summer training season, is complete. Great job by all who played critical roles in executing reception and committee missions, Basic Combat Training and One-Station-Unit Training, and training for both ROTC and Military Academy cadets. For the leadership and headquarters teams who did the planning and oversaw the successful execution of this myriad of events, you collectively have much to be proud of. Well-done!

This summer the Army’s fortieth Chief of Staff was sworn in, General James McConville. I love our new Chief’s key message: “Winning Matters.” If you check out the Chief of Staff of the Army’s website, you read his expanded message to the force. “We win with our People doing the right things the right way. When we send the U.S. Army somewhere, we don’t go to participate, we don’t go try hard, we go to win. There is no second place or honorable mention in combat.” It’s this winning spirit that differentiates the American Soldier, and the 108th Training Command Team, made up of our three Divisions. Our command is key to how the Army inculcates a winning spirit into our citizen volunteers, who through hard work and professional training, are transformed into the best fighting force on earth. Each one of you, as a member of this command, plays a vital role in this remarkable transformation. I encourage you to remain focused on your specific contribution to this mission, and take justifiable pride in the part which you play.

Right in line with General McConville’s message of “Winning Matters,” is Lieutenant General Luckey’s, (Commanding General, Army Reserve Command), emphasis on the basics of our Army profession. In the words of General Luckey, “As hard as we are pushing to become more capable, more combat-ready, and more lethal, we cannot afford to walk past or speed past the basics of field-craft, soldiering, and standards and discipline.” Introduction to standards and discipline, two things that set our Army apart from civilian society, begins in the initial entry training and leader training we are charged to conduct as our core mission. In addition to the “top line” messages above from General McConville and Lieutenant General Luckey, I’d like to share some news you can use. If you haven’t yet downloaded the “Double Eagle” app onto your smartphone, I encourage you to consider doing so. It can be found in both the Apple Store and the Google Play Store, and it contains a wealth of information on topics ranging from leader best practices, to tips on preparing for the Army’s new Combat Fitness Test, to tools for sharing information with your fellow unit members. I guarantee you if you check out the app you’ll find at least one item which is both helpful and informative to you as a member of the Army Reserve Team – both Soldiers and Civilians alike. To hopefully motivate you to check out the Double Eagle app, go to the “News” tab and read the remarkable and heroic story of how a few of our hero-team mates from the 95th Training Division responded to vehicle accident just outside of Fort McCoy and by doing so may have saved three lives: those of a 63-year old grandfather and his two granddaughters, ages four and two. Inspiring! (See ‘Right place, right time: Soldiers deliver heroic response to car accident’).

As always, I’d like to close by thanking each of you – Soldiers and Civilian employees alike, for your dedication to our mission. The Army and our fellow citizens are counting on us train America’s Soldiers to be ready and win if called upon. Special thanks to all of our Families, whose love and support enable us to continue to serve. First in Training! Army Strong!

By Maj. Gen. Kate Leahy
Commanding General
108th Training Command (IET)

Innovating Through Diverse Points of View

Oracle recognizes the unique skillset veterans bring to our workplace. Leadership, teamwork, and the ability to adapt to change easily are key attributes that make hiring veterans an attractive option for Oracle. Learn more about how you can bring your service to the cloud by visiting www.oracle.com/veterans

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THE GRIFFON • Fall 2019 • 3

The “Band of Excellence” - what does that say to you? As Soldiers, Instructors, Drill Sergeants, trainers, leaders, our bar is set high. We are shaping the future of the force, defending the Constitution against all enemies, both foreign and domestic. But is that excellence or business as usual. True excellence comes when you choose the hard right over the easy wrong; when you put the needs of your Soldier before yourself; when you take time for self and Family care; when you accept a challenge and distinguish yourself above your peers. Congratulations to each and every Soldier, NCO and Drill Sergeant that distinguished themselves, challenged themselves, pushed themselves beyond their previous limits. You should all be proud. To those very few pictured here, we are exceptionally proud of your accomplishments within your divisions. Photos by Maj Michelle Lunato.
The band of excellence - The Army is a standards based performance oriented institution with 244 years of success on the battlefield. The Army established performance standards to successfully execute the task and collective mission. The band of excellence is about exceeding Army standards, elevating individual and collective performance to ensure our Soldiers are at their most lethal state at the line of departure (LD). The LD may be a forceful airborne operation into unknown location, the parade field at Fort Benning or squad live fire at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC). We must stand ready - lethal!

A winning culture enables the pursuit of excellence by empowering Soldiers and Department of Army Civilians to execute initiatives within the commanders' intent at the point of impact. Winning cultures march forward with a positive mindset focused on how to improve organizational performance. Winning cultures embrace "evolution" as the Army implements new programs such as the Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) with the purpose of increasing Soldier lethality.

The Army definition of leadership is the process of influencing others by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission while improving the organization. A key component of the leadership definition is "improving the organization." The band of excellence involves continued and relentless pursuit of continuous improvement in the accomplishment of the mission.

I am extremely proud to be part of an organization in which the center of gravity revolves around the Non-Commissioned Officer … our combat power is the Drill Sergeant, the epitome of the Non-Commissioned Officer, a symbol of professionalism and excellence! Drill Sergeants transform civilians into Soldiers with a laser focus on exceeding Army standards.

A Drill Sergeant serves in a position of special trust and authority (POSTA) and has the unique opportunity to develop and mold future Soldiers by setting the example of excellence. Drill Sergeants represent the highest of performance standards and set the foundation for future Soldiers. A new trainee will follow the Drill Sergeant's lead of exceeding performance standards if they are demonstrated and articulated. If a Drill Sergeant focuses on the minimum standard, for example "trainee you better hit 23 targets to qualify or you will be recycled," chances are the future Soldier will focus on 23 targets, the minimum standard. I would offer that is not operating in the band of excellence.

The band of excellence includes the leadership development programs such as Best Warrior and Drill Sergeant of the Year competitions, as well as drill sergeant of the cycle and making the commandant’s list at NCOPOS and DSA. I am proud that the 108th Training Command (IET) enjoys an outstanding reputation of excellence and a winning culture within the Army.

In closing, I would like to thank each and every Soldier, Departure of the Army Civilian and Family member for what you do for the Army everyday as we build the most lethal force in history.

Golden Griffon 7
First in Training – THIS WE'LL DEFEND

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By Command Sgt. Maj. R. Todd Priest
108th Training Command (IET)

The Army definition of leadership is the process of influencing others by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission while improving the organization. A key component of the leadership definition is "improving the organization."
Standing before the academy, she paused and collected her thoughts. Once she walked through the doors, it would be full throttle, game-face action. She’d be challenged, mentally and physically. And she’d have to dig deep and move past her comfort zone. After nine long weeks, all the hard work could pay off though. She’d come out of those doors different. She’d be stronger and more confident. Her life and career path would inevitably change.

With that all in mind, Sgt. Alycia Perkins grabbed her duffle bags and headed towards the doors of the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant Academy at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. The U.S. Army Reserve noncommissioned officer had prepared all she could and it was time to see if she was ready for the next phase of her Army career. She knew the role of drill sergeant would not be easy. In fact, Perkins explained that she anticipated the role of drill sergeant would require more than just physical strength. To be successful, she’d need mental and emotional endurance as well. “It takes a lot of toll to be a drill sergeant—not that I’ve had the experience yet—but I can see how exhausting it must be,” said the all-wheeled vehicle mechanic from Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 485th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 98th Training Division (Initial Entry Training). Strength and stamina would not be the only requirements though,
said the Soldier who hails from Columbia, South Carolina. The drill sergeant candidate expected she would need to have knowledge and experience as well. “The Army is always changing and to be able to keep up with whatever comes at you, and adjust and reset yourself to keep going with the times is important.”

Of course, all the strength, stamina and knowledge will get a drill sergeant nowhere if they don’t have patience, said Perkins, prior to signing in at the Academy. Most Army recruits are young and with youth, there is typically a level of immaturity. Add in being away from loved ones and the rigors of combat training, it’s bound to make dealing with trainees stressful at times, explained the drill sergeant candidate. “To be able to maintain your military bearing, continue to train and provide them with everything they need to learn, while at the same time not losing it, I feel like it is pretty important to have that patience as a drill sergeant.”

Patience is one quality that Perkins admitted to struggling with though. “Not that I am impatient or short-tempered, but I just know how hard that can be. That’s just something you have to build over time I think,” she explained prior to school.

In fact, during Week 3 of the Drill Sergeant Academy, the patience Perkins was trying to establish was tested. There was a miscommunication error during the hectic pace of tasks that resulted in some of her Soldiers being late to formation. As a result, she took the responsibility and the counseling statement since she was in charge. While not a school-ending mistake, the counseling statement meant that no matter how well she performed in the following five weeks, Perkins would not be eligible for the Commandant’s List. To the self-proclaimed perfectionist, this was extremely frustrating. 

Prior to school, the drill sergeant candidate confessed that she’s typically hard on herself when she made mistakes, and this time was no different. “It took a lot to stay motivated because I had a very high grade point average, one of the top 10 in the class.” Perkins said she had to dig deep and after her initial self scolding, accept her mistake and lack of absolute perfection. I finally had to realize that once I was on the trail, no one was going to ask if I graduated on the Commandant’s List, said Perkins. “One counseling statement will not make me less of a drill sergeant.”

As time at the Academy passed, Perkins could not help but notice the varying motivation levels of other drill sergeant candidates, who came from all different job skills and parts of the United States. “I’ve noticed that here at the Drill Sergeant Academy, obviously adhering to standards is very important, but motivation is [equally] important. And lack of motivation is not going to get you anywhere.”

For those attending the Drill Sergeant Academy in the future, regardless of being a Department of the Army selected candidate or an accepted volunteer, Perkins offered some advice. “Come here and give it your all. They give you everything, all the tools to be successful. All you have to do is apply yourself.”

And specifically for those Citizen-Warriors who want to challenge themselves and become a drill sergeant, Perkins suggested coming prepared to work hard, because in the end, the role of drill sergeant is same across the Army: “Trainees should not be able to differentiate between Active [Duty] and Reserve because that’s saying that you have the option to put in less than everybody else, and that’s not the case,” stated the Reserve noncommissioned officer. “A Reservist doesn’t mean that you are any less, that you should put in half the effort because you are there half the time. And it doesn’t mean the standard should be any easier.”

Though the end result of becoming a drill sergeant is the same for either component, Perkins learned that noncommissioned officers from each component bring something different to the
table. Reserve Soldiers must learn to balance the demands of both civilian and military jobs, along with their family life. “Being able to balance all that is a skill I feel like Active Duty Soldiers don’t necessarily really need as much.”

It’s not that Active Duty Soldiers don’t have challenges, of course they do. But at the end of the day, they have one job, not two, explained Perkins. The differences are not more or less challenging or relevant, they merely build a different set of strengths in people. The Active Duty Soldiers have the edge of experience from more hands-on training while the Reserve Soldiers have the edge of flexibility and resiliency from juggling competing demands, said Perkins.

Regardless of component, Perkins explained that deciding to become a drill sergeant requires a great amount of dedication. “This is a job you need to be fully committed to. It requires a lot of time, mental and physical energy, and patience.”

Whether the Drill Sergeant Academy was more mentally or physically taxing may depend on the candidate asked or the week’s events. In one week, there was a field training exercise, a physical fitness test, a 12-mile road march and a 6-mile forced ruck with stuff to carry, said Perkins the day before graduation. “So by the end of that week, I was completely drained. And then, we had combatives the next week. So there was a lot of physical stuff towards the end, but overall in terms of the course, it was definitely [more] mental.

A portion of the mental stress at the Academy is the level of responsibility that comes with the drill sergeant job, something that must be taken seriously, according to Perkins. “We are defending that legacy, those customs and courtesies that the Army has had since the beginning, and we are instilling it into people who have had no prior training. We are molding them into being Soldiers who will go forward and defend the Country.”

Creating that next generation of Soldiers out of civilians requires a great amount of energy, passion and dedication. In a few short weeks, drill sergeants must not only build a baseline of Soldier skills, but they must exemplify the Army culture. “You are building that camaraderie, that trust in the Army from the get go,” explained Perkins. “You are their everything. You are their first impression of what it is to be a Soldier, what it means to be in the Army.”

A Soldier’s journey in the Army may start at Basic Combat Training, but that is just their beginning. It is no different for a drill sergeant completing the Academy, according to Perkins. “When I put on the [drill sergeant] hat, it set it into reality for me. It made it tangible,” said the brand new drill sergeant. This may have been the end of the journey for Sgt. Perkins, but it is just the beginning for Drill Sergeant Perkins.

“There’s a lot more. It’s not just what you present out necessarily as far as knowledge, stature and physical ability, but the responsibility of what comes behind that is what you learn here in the school,” said Perkins. “You don’t learn how to be a drill sergeant—you learn that on the trail, but you get the tools necessary to help you complete that job here.”

So earning the drill sergeant hat, badge and title is just the first step in this noncommissioned officer’s journey and she’s already looking on to step two—time with trainees. “I have to get that time on the trail to really feel like I have completed, or started to complete, that mission I have for myself. I am very motivated to get out and apply what I have learned. I am excited for sure. Before, I was all nerves.

Now, I am just super excited to get out and make that positive impact.”
Smith, George named Army Reserve NCO and Soldier of the Year

Story by Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad

After five days of grueling heat, humidity, and very little sleep, nearly 60 U.S. Army Reserve noncommissioned officers and enlisted Soldiers were narrowed down to two at the 2019 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition.

Sgt. Joshua Smith with the 95th Training Division (Initial Entry Training), representing the 108th Training Command, was named the NCO of the Year and Spc. Collin George with the 102nd Military Police Command, representing the 200th Military Police Command, was named the Soldier of the Year.

They will represent America’s Army Reserve at the Department of the Army Best Warrior Competition later this year at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia.

Smith, 25, a drill sergeant candidate from Ashland, Wisconsin, has served in the Army for four years.

“This is a great group of competitors,” Smith said. “Honestly it could’ve gone to anybody. I’m just honored to be in this position.”

George, 24, a military policeman from Greendale, Wisconsin, has served in the Army for four years.

“I did this for them, my unit and my family and friends for all their love and support,” George said. “It’s a debt I owe to them, to win this. It’s been a long week, but I now know what I am capable of and what I can accomplish.”

During the seasonably hot week at one of the Army’s more storied military posts, the Warriors in America’s Army Reserve were put to the ultimate physical and mental challenges.

The competition highlights the very essence of what it means to be the most capable, combat-ready, and lethal federal force in the history of the nation.

The competition featured physical fitness tests, mental exams, marksmanship, land navigation, board interviews, urban warfare simulations, and various soldier tasks and drills relevant to the Army Total Force.

“The experience matters,” awards banquet guest speaker Command Sgt. Maj. (Retired) Scott C. Schroeder said. “Education is important, but without experience and action there’s no attainable outcome. Competing is doing.”

Master Sgt. Ryan Cameron, this year’s Army Reserve Best Warrior noncommissioned officer-in-charge is no stranger to this event. Last year, he served as assistant NCOIC and event planner and has previously competed at a division-level competition.

“The competition brings out the best of the best. I want all Soldiers here to get this training to see what they are really capable of as Reserve Soldiers,” said Cameron. “They can help train other soldiers based on what they learned and experienced. We are pushing them beyond anything they are capable of.”

And pushed they were.

One of the events right out of the starting gate was the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge test – an opportunity for the Warriors to get a feel for an allied nation’s army physical fitness test and earn either a bronze, silver, or gold badge. This was followed up by the Army Fitness Combat Test, a new strenuous, six-event fitness test designed to better prepare Soldiers for combat tasks that will roll out in October 2020, which replaces the current three-event test that has been in place for nearly four decades.

“Rucking, running, doing push ups in your spare time,” Smith said. “That’s the best way to prepare for the PT tests.”

After the initial physical fitness assessment, Soldiers underwent a battery of events to include written exams with questions ranging from Army regulations to current events; numerous day and night firing ranges from pistol to heavy machine gun and grenades; night and day land navigation; an obstacle course; simulated urban warfare; a 12-mile foot march; and a Helo Cast – a low-level jump out of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter into a lake – a first for the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition.

Additional firsts were a claymore mine setup and detonation event, and double the amount of competitors than usual which also led to more female soldiers (seven) competing in the 13-year history of the competition.

“If there was a female Soldier who asked me how this went I would tell her to take the challenge, do it, not let the males defeat you and just go for it,” said 21-year-old Sgt. Ashley Fehlman, 322nd Civil Affairs Brigade, and a college student studying kinesiology out of Honolulu, Hawaii. “It’s definitely worth it and overall, it looks good to your unit back home to compete and improve.”

Fehlman’s command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Major Jessie Baird, 9th Mission Support Command, made the 10-hour flight...
U.S. Army Sgt. Joshua Smith representing the 108th Training Command Initial Entry Train-
ing competes in a Board event at the 2019 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort Bragg, N.C. June 26. This year’s Best Warrior Competition will determine the top non-
commissioned officer and junior enlisted Soldier who will represent the U.S. Army Reserve
in the Department of the Army Best Warrior Competition later this year at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.
U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. Marsalas Morney (Released)

U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Joshua Smith, 108th Training Command, is served dinner by com-
mand sergeant majors representing every command in the United States Army Reserve
at the 2019 U.S. Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition at Fort Bragg, N.C. June 25. The
dinner was held to thank and show appreciation for this year’s Best Warrior competitors.

Sgt. Joshua Smith, 108th Training Command (IET) and Spec. Collin George, 200th Military
Police Command, pose with their US Army Reserve Command Spartan helmets, just one
of the tokens of success presented to the two Best Warriors during their award ceremony
following their win of NCO and Soldier of the year, respectively. Courtesy photo provided by
Sgt. 1st Class Justin McCarthy, 108th Training Command (IET)

from Honolulu to Fort Bragg.
“She’s a stud, and had the
fortitude to make up a 100 points
over some other Soldiers that did
the ruck,” Baird said. “She’s having
an awesome experience and this
is something she will look back on
for the rest of her life and say, ‘I did
it.’”

One female competitor has
won a best warrior competition
at a higher level than USARC –
Sgt. Sherri Gallagher – who won
the overall Army’s Best Warrior
Competition in 2010 at age 26.

For many of the younger
competitors, this is the highlight of
their Army Reserve career thus far.

Twenty-year-old Spec. Shakiera
Kapp, 115th Chemical Company,
out of Bennettsville, South Carolina,
agrees.
“I’d definitely do it all over again,”
she said. “The experience I have
by gaining here has been one of a kind.
I would recommend every Soldier
to at least participate once in this
competition.”

Twenty-four-year-old Sgt. Scott
Smullen, a human intelligence
collector with the 325th Military
Intelligence Battalion who also
works intelligence at his day job, is
giving the competition another go
around. He competed as a specialist
in 2017 at the USARC level and
placed fifth overall.

“Best Warrior is one of the
highlights of my career for sure.
Smullen said. At the Reserve level
it’s the highest you can go so to
be able to set yourself apart and in
some senses be able to compare
yourself to your peers in the Army
Reserves and to see the best that
we have to offer is always nice.”

Command Sgt. Maj Ted L.
Copeland, U.S. Army Reserve
command sergeant major, was
in attendance for many of the
competition’s events.
“You all have found it,” Copeland
said. “You’ve found what makes
you tick. Talk to your friends, talk
to their battle buddies talk to the
other soldiers in your unit. Tell their
stories. Spread the word. This is
what we’re about.

Other awards are as followed:
NCO Best Warrior runner up:
Sgt. Edward Singhchollet, 475th
Engineer Company
Soldier Best Warrior runner up:
Spc. Kalon Williams, 562nd Medical
Supply Company Logistics Support
Highest physical fitness score:
Sgt. Joshua Smith, 95th Training
Division
Highest marksmanship score:
Spc. Andrew Hinojos, 227th Inland
Cargo Transfer Company
There was one gold, four silver,
and 24 bronze badge German
Armed Forces Proficiency Badge
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Police Command, pose with their US Army Reserve Command Spartan helmets, just one
of the tokens of success presented to the two Best Warriors during their award ceremony
following their win of NCO and Soldier of the year, respectively. Courtesy photo provided by
Sgt. 1st Class Justin McCarthy, 108th Training Command (IET)
Right place, right time: Soldiers deliver heroic response to car accident

Story by Scott Sturkol
Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office

During the early evening of Aug. 15, Sgt. Roger Williams had left Fort McCoy to go back to his hotel in Sparta, Wis., after wrapping up a day of training at the installation. Little did he know his drive back to the hotel would play a role in saving the lives of a grandfather and his two granddaughters.

Just after 6 p.m., the serpentine belt on Williams’ “fairly new” car broke as he was just getting into Sparta after traveling about 8 miles from the post. “My car started acting up, then my battery light came on, and the car started overheating,” said Williams, who serves in Milwaukee with Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 334th Regiment, 95th Training Division. “It was bad, so I pulled into the Sparta Floral parking lot, which is near a four-way stop.”

Realizing he had something seriously wrong with his car, Williams contacted Sgt. 1st Class Justin McCarthy with the 108th Training Command at Charlotte, N.C., who was still back at Fort McCoy. “I’m not a car guy, so I gave him a call to see if he could help,” Williams said.

McCarthy immediately said he’d be over to help Williams. “I’m not a car guy, so I gave him a call to see if he could help,” Williams said.

McCarthy immediately said he’d be over to help Williams. When McCarthy left Fort McCoy, he also had other Soldiers accompanying him in following vehicles. These Soldiers were: Master Sgt. Ryan Cameron with U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) Headquarters of Fort Bragg, N.C., who was still back at Fort McCoy; and Sgt. 1st Class Eric Juhl with Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 415th Infantry Regiment of Helena, Mont.; and Sgt. Daniel McElroy with 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 320th Regiment, 95th Training Division at Fort Belvoir, Va.

All of the Soldiers are current or prior drill instructors who were at Fort McCoy from July to August to support Best Warrior and Drill Sergeant of the Year preparatory training for candidates entering U.S. Army-level competitions. U.S. Army Photo by Scott T. Sturkol, Public Affairs Office, Fort McCoy, Wis.
“I just got on to my phone to see where I could locally find a serpentine belt for my car, and out of nowhere, we hear this loud screeching noise,” Williams said.

The screeching that Williams and the other Soldiers heard around 6:45 p.m. was the sound of a 2007 Pontiac Torrent driven by 63-year-old David R. Turner of Tomah, Wis., jumping a median. It soared through the air into a utility pole directly across the road from where the Soldiers were working on Williams’ car.

“We watched it happen like it was in slow motion,” McElroy said. “From the car jumping the median into the pole and catching on fire.”

“When that vehicle hit that pole, there was a big explosion with a transformer blowing at the same time,” McCarthy said. “The only thing holding that pole up was the lines above. The utility pole was completely snapped off its base.”

Immediate response

When Williams, McCarthy, McElroy, Juhl, and Cameron saw what was happening, none of them hesitated a second to respond.

“I was already on my phone, so I called 911,” Williams said. “Everyone else was already by the vehicle trying to get to the occupants inside.”

Juhl said there was a lot of smoke, and it was hard to see inside the car.

“We focused on the driver first because we just expected a driver,” Juhl said. “All of the airbags were deployed, and with all the smoke … you really couldn’t see too far into the vehicle. So as we started working on the driver side, (three of us) broke the window and got the door bent down.”

After breaking the window, McCarthy said the smoke in the car started clearing out. Turner was partially awake and asked “how are the girls?”

In the back seat were Turner’s two granddaughters — four-year-old Delilah and two-year-old Two granddaughters — four-year-old Delilah. “We never thought about where to go or what to do. We just went into action without thinking about it.”

A grateful grandfather

Turner and his granddaughters are all fine with no serious injuries from the accident. Local reports show Turner passed out while driving the car, which was on cruise control, because of a medical issue.

Four of the five Soldiers met with Turner in Tomah on Aug. 23 after the accident to see how he was doing and to meet with local media.

“Remember you guys were talking to me and trying to calm me down,” Turner said to the Soldiers at their meeting. “I remember you taking me out of the vehicle … You are my guardian angels … all of you. I don’t really know what else to say other than thank you,” he said.
Making the Competition

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Lisa M Litchfield
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Lisa M Litchfield and Maj. Michelle Lunato

Tucked back in the cubicles, in the Operations section of the 108th Training Command (IET) headquarters is a trio of desks. They house computers, phones, paperwork, office supplies, a few photos, some memobrilia. To most, they are just a few desks. To those who know, this is where the magic happens.

These desks belong to a trio of Sgts. 1st Class who are the masterminds behind the 108th Training Command Best Warrior Competition, and who facilitate the United States Army Reserve train-up for the Department of the Army BWC and TRADOC Drill Sergeant of the Year Competition.

Sgt. 1st Class Charles Glass, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Hunter and Sgt. 1st Class Justin McCarthy have made competition their business. “We had the opportunity to come and help build the 108th’s Best Warrior and Drill Sergeant of the Year program and assist the USARC competition,” explained McCarthy. Coming from the tradition of the Drill Sergeant company into an operations position has given me an all new perspective on developing product, testing Soldiers to the current Army standards right out of the STPs. Not only focusing on the 108th Training Command but also the Soldier material and how our Soldiers will be tested to find the best of the best,” he concluded.

Prior to these noncommissioned officers taking charge of the program, the 108th Training Command (IET) BWC was tasked each year to one of the down trace divisions for development and support. While each division conducted an outstanding competition during their year of hosting, there was not much continuity and each year held a certain amount of “reinventing the wheel” as planning took place.

“The division would execute their own BWC and then turn around and execute the overall competition so there was zero product for the command,” explained McCarthy.

The list of requirements for a robust BWC is extensive. From developing training materials, acquiring billeting, arranging for meals and securing transportation to requisitioning training aids, ammunition, ranges, and training areas. The team was also responsible for developing and printing the program and arranging the award ceremony, securing the awards, location and guest speaker.

“It was a pretty huge learning curve,” laughed McCarthy, “but I think it went pretty well. We were able to produce the NCO of the Year overall from the USARC competition so our success has been fairly high.”

Pulling the support staff from all three divisions was an especially helpful part of executing this competition. While a single division shouldeering the burden reduces the amount of available resources, having the command in charge opens up the options for support and reduces perceptions of favoritism.

“We were able to create a product that was unknown to the commands,” explained McCarthy. It allowed us to eliminate any possibility of spillage or favoritism to any competitor and truly allowed us to find our best.”

McCarthy wants his Soldiers tested. He wanted to build a competition that kept Soldiers guessing, that tested their limits and then pushed them beyond.

“Some of the Best Warriors have become very rigid,” said McCarthy. “Standard APFT, standard weapons qual, standard first aid, standard foot march. We wanted to change that.”

Change occurred for the team by digging into the books. By selecting non-standard tasks, finding the latest and greatest out there, checking to see what the active component was training and making sure that the competition here measured up. McCarthy wanted Soldiers tested based on current threat, tasks that would ensure our competitors an edge.

Even the tasks that are considered standard, land navigation, fitness, ruck marching and weapons training were conducted in non-standard ways.

“I think the largest surprise for us this year, they were separated and pretty much segregated throughout the competition because we had so much content prepared for them,” explained McCarthy. “They were always moving, they were never together and it seemed to never stop.”

The competition was structured to start several hours before sunrise each day, conducting events in the dark and moving into daylight operations, rather than the standard competition ritual of starting near daybreak and moving into night operations.

One of those non-standard executions took place during the land navigation portion of the event. Rather than conduct a standard day land nav course and move into night land navigation just after sunset, the 108th team reversed the narrative. Soldiers were mustered for movement several hours before daybreak and moved to that start of the land navigation course. Here they conducted their “night” land navigation prior to sunrise.

“It’s hard to recover Soldiers in the dark,” explained McCarthy. “We always know we can lose Soldiers, have a medical emergency, so my recommendation is a dark day land navigation. We do our backward planning from daybreak to our start time early in the morning so we can execute that portion in the dark, but if we do have an injury or lost Soldier, it transitions to day making for an easier recovery… it also keeps the day moving without extending the day.”

Trying to create a new product to surprise competitors is a favorite of the team and they look at three different scenarios as they create: standard round robin warrior tasks, situational training exercises, and critical thinking lanes where several things are happening at once, creating scenarios where the Soldier must prioritize and act based on their own training, beliefs and instincts.

This year, the inclusion of the ACFT came as a surprise to some competitors, but was just another event designed by the team to fulfill more than one role during the competition.

“It’s one of the hot topics as a future operations piece,” McCarthy said. “I’ve been asked to learn the program, to help identify how we implement this amongst the 108th Training Command. So we saw an opportunity with our ACFT level three instructor to incorporate that into our trainings. We’ve actually incorporated a certification course into the validation of our instructors for level two, but we also incorporated not only the ACFT test but the ACFT block of instruction for the competitors so they have a rough ACFT level one certified as well.”

Assisting with this force multiplier was Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Roy who represented the 98th Training Division and 108th Training Command at the TRADOC Drill Sergeant of the Year competition last year and is serving as cadre for this competition.

Master Fitness Trainer and ACFT level three certified, Roy facilitated the ACFT and the training for certifications. Under his guidance, over 53 Soldiers returned to their formations with ACFT certification, 40-plus of those at level one, and the remaining ACFT level two.

Although his fitness expertise was paramount to his selection as cadre, Roy also felt like his experience last year was invaluable to the competitors. “I went through the competitions,” explained Roy. “I can give feedback to them, I can help them to prepare, those who finish up. I know what they’re going through, I know what to look for. I did this competition last year at Ft. Knox… and even the TRADOC one. This one’s no joke. It’s going to be no joke. They’re going to be tested mentally, physically and emotionally.”

No joke is just the way the BWC team wants it. They are committed to an event that doesn’t stagnate, remaining fresh and relevant and changing every year to reflect current world situations and real life challenges. This is the first event the team has been able to create beginning to end and they are justifiably pleased with the result.

“We fully created (this) from beginning to closing,” enthused McCarthy, “all of the events, awards ceremony, locations, ranges, billeting, vehicle transportation, we were tasked to write our own WARNO, Op Order, FRAGOs, host our own IPRs, so… we create a shell of a product and allow the NCOICs to alter the product to make it their own. By doing that, every year, even though we may execute some of the same tasks, it’s going to look different, it’s going to feel different.”

From the outside, different looks good as 108th Training Command NCOIC of the Year recipient, Sgt. Joshua Smith, also swept the United States Army Reserve Command competition and will now go on to compete at the Department of the Army competition in October.
Training the Trainers

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Lisa M Litchfield
108th Training Division Public Affairs

As cadre for the 108th Training Command (IET) Best Warrior competition, the Drill Sergeants assigned as instructor trainers knew to expect long hours, limited sleep, and the satisfaction of knowing they helped provide a stressful, competition driven environment designed to identify the best possible Soldier and NCO to represent the command. What they didn’t know, was they would be leaving New Jersey this spring with a brand-new certification designed not only to increase their knowledge and skills for the trail, but assist their fellow Soldiers back at their units.

The Army is changing the way they do they do business for physical fitness and rolling out the new Army Combat Fitness Test. As premier trainers of the future force, our Drill Sergeants and Instructors need to be prepared to facilitate that they were about to be given that opportunity.

Drill Sergeant (Sgt. 1st Class) Jonathan Roy, Charlie Company, 1/304th, 3rd Brigade, 98th Training Division is a certified Master Fitness Trainer, and was level two certified as cadre for the BWC. He and BWC Noncommissioned Officer in Charge Sgt. 1st Class Justin McCarthy planned for all 40 or so attending Drill Sergeant cadre to become level one certified in the ACFT during the train up period.

Shortly after finishing MFT in January, Roy got the call to attend ACFT level three training. As a level three qualified instructor, Roy is allowed to train and certify not only level one, but also level two instructors. Suddenly, the week before competition was filled not only with preparation of training lanes, but also with personal growth.

“I put together a Basic Training program,” explained Roy. “He (McCarthy) let me know what the schedule was going to be like, we put together a basic training program, it was going to be like two days, and it was going to certify 40 personnel.”

Using connections he had made with the NCO Academy at Joint Base McQuire-Dix-Lakehurst during his time at MFT, Roy was able to secure assistance and enough equipment to certify both level one and level two instructors.

With the ACFT requiring all test administrators to be certified, Roy wants to ensure that the Soldiers he trains are taught in accordance with what he earned at the MFT course and as such has developed his certification to include several components.

Soldiers acting as graders are required a level one certification so Roy’s program involves taking the ACFT for familiarization, and an in-depth breakdown of each station for understanding of key motion and movement, and what is classified as a fault or unsafe movement during any given event.

Soldiers being certified must “pitch” the events to a level two instructor, explain the motions, faults and safety risks on the events, answer in-depth verbal questions and pass a written exam.

Level two certified Soldiers can serve as event NCOICs. They are considered master graders and can certify the actual lanes and equipment. A more in-depth knowledge of specifications is required and level two master graders are allowed to retest Soldiers who previously failed an event and are concerned that there were issues in the way they were graded.

With over 40 Soldiers qualified at level one and level two prior to the execution of the best Warrior Competition, not only has Roy increased the number of certified lanes available and reduced competition wait times, but the benefits to the command are immediately evident.

“These Soldiers are spread out … key personnel from each division,” explained Roy. “Now we have all these level twos who are going to be going across the country, back to their home stations and able to teach the ACFT, they are able to teach, certify level ones to grade it and as long as we have ones at different battalions they are able to run these ACFT events and training events.”

Soldiers returning to their formations trained will be able to assist commanders and peers alike as the ACFT is implemented across commands. From equipment to safety, the knowledge they are returning with is critical according to Roy.

“It’s huge,” Roy enthused. “It’s important we educate Soldiers on this.”

Roy is a big fan of the new test, adamant that the new ACFT is a much better gauge of readiness and fitness than the previous push-up, sit-up, two-mile run test.

“I love it … Every single exercise has a purpose for the assessment and is based off what that Soldier will do on the battlefield. Whether jumping or landing off of barriers, pulling themselves over a wall, whether they are picking up and moving equipment, or they are doing individual movement techniques … it’s all practical, completely relatable to what’s happening on the battlefield.”

Roy has appreciated the opportunity to work with peers and train them on the latest the Army has to offer.

“A lot more of a relaxed and less stressful environment,” explained Roy. “Everyone has been super professional, it’s all Drill Sergeants, they are all super motivated and it’s been a pleasure going through it. Roy praised his fellow Drill Sergeants for taking the time to really dig in and study even though this was a last-minute requirement, added to an already busy week of lane preparation and validation.

“Even though some of them have gotten the paperwork the night prior they have read through it … they’ve done a good job.”

With the obvious benefits of Drill Sergeants who will now have ACFT experience as they roll into summer Echo missions, as well as the ability to further train and certify peers back at home station, Roy also wants to encourage those he has come in contact with to spread the good word about this test and help others who aren’t as familiar come to terms and be excited about the changes in the system.

“It’s not as bad as you think, and you have another year and a half until this is the standard,” Roy said. “You’re going to be required to uphold the standard but you have time to get to where you need to be.”
If you Google “Band of Excellence Army,” you may be surprised that Army Doctrine Publication 7-0 Training, comes up as one of the top search results. In paragraph 4-7 of ADP 7-0, it states: “Once the unit attains required task and weapon proficiencies, it strives to maintain these proficiencies within a band of excellence.” It is difficult to maintain our individual band of excellence responsibilities as Soldiers and the competing interests we face as Citizen Soldiers. This feature will discuss some things we can all do to help us as individuals stay in the band of excellence.

ADP 7-0 paragraph 3-9 states that the key to combat readiness is sustaining training proficiency within the band of excellence and that such an approach “precludes deep valleys in task and weapon proficiencies that would require excessive time and resources to regain.” So how does that relate to us as individual soldiers? It means that we cannot let ourselves or our units get unready, broken, or rusty in the key mission essential tasks that the Army expects us to be able to perform.

General Mark Milley, Army Chief of Staff, said, “Readiness is #1, and there is no other #1.” So as individual soldiers in the 108th Training Command, how do we stay “ready” and avoid the ‘deep valleys’ mentioned in ADP 7-0 that would require excessive time and resources to get us combat ready again? First, we all have the personal responsibility to maintain our physical conditioning. No matter how great your unit does physical training, you cannot stay in shape by only working out with your unit during battle assembly weekends. Luckily, the 108th Training Command “pacing item” or key weapons system is our drill sergeants, who themselves are already elite and expected to perform at higher levels. The Army homepage states: “A drill sergeant is a symbol of excellence in initial entry training, an expert in all warrior tasks and battle drills, lives the Army values, exemplifies the warrior ethos, and most importantly is the epitome of the Army as a profession.” So in the 108th Training Command, we are fortunate that our drill sergeants hold themselves to a higher standard. Getting out of standard or out of shape are “deep valleys” to avoid. We are expected to take pride in ourselves, our unit, and the uniform we proudly have the privilege to wear. This responsibility requires each and every one of us to stay in good physical shape and maintain our height body weight within the Army standards. Maintaining our physical readiness is the first band of individual excellence priority.

In addition to physical fitness, we all have an individual responsibility to maintain our medical and dental readiness. Many senior leaders have made statements recognizing the importance of being deployable, so that we can play the away game (i.e. deploy to fight the enemy overseas in order to keep America’s homeland safe). In the 108th Training Command, all of us are expected to know when our periodic health assessment and dental exams are due, so that we get them completed before they are overdue. Units that maintain high levels of medical and dental readiness are in the band of excellence for those metrics, but they stay in that zone by taking care of one Soldier at a time. Don’t let your battle buddy turn red on key metrics. Take care of each other and your Soldiers. Keeping our medical and dental readiness current would be my second individual band of excellence priority.

The number one priority of the 108th Training Command is to recruit, train, and retain drill sergeants. Our overall strength of drill sergeants has been steadily decreasing. If we don’t turn that trend around, it will take significant time and resources to fix it. Therefore, to be in the band of excellence, we need to all be recruiting every chance we get. We need to continually invite the best and brightest Soldiers from other units to come join us as a broadening assignment. In order for us to accomplish our mission, we need to increase our drill sergeant numbers. We all need to increase our efforts so that we help the 108th Training Command recruit, train, and retain drill sergeants—this will reduce the amount of time or resources training new drill sergeants in the event we get activated or deployed to perform our mission.

The 108th Training Command’s purpose is to produce the world’s greatest and most lethal combat weapon—the American Soldier. In order to accomplish that mission, we must keep ourselves and our Soldiers in the band of excellence on the key individual metrics such as physical fitness and medical readiness. However, as a Soldier in the Army Reserve, we have it more difficult than our active component counterparts, because we maintain full-time civilian jobs as Citizen Soldiers. For most of us, our family is not located near our unit, which means the traditional family support channels are not as available. In addition, most of us have civilian jobs and responsibilities consume our days. Being in the band of excellence means we have to balance Army readiness requirements with family life and our full-time civilian jobs. If we let any one of those three areas (Army, Family, and Citizen) consume too much of our time, it will smother the other two areas. Being in the band of excellence as an Army Reserve Soldier means we have the right balance between our Army duties, family obligations, and civilian job responsibilities.

Lieutenant Gen. Charles Luckey, Chief of the Army Reserve, said, “The Soldiers of America’s Army Reserve have never failed to answer the nation’s call. Today, we continue to build and sustain the most capable, combat-ready and lethal Federal Reserve force in the history of the nation.” We all need to do our part and stay in the band of excellence on those areas that take excessive time or resources to regain, so that if called upon, we can answer our nation’s call and be ready to deploy, fight and win and be able to accomplish the 108th Training Command’s mission in training our nation’s future Soldiers.

Ironman 6
From the 95th Command Sergeant Major

Leadership Essentials

By CSM Robert Potts
Commanding, 95th Training Division (IET)

As leaders we learned early and throughout our military education what leadership is and how it should be implemented. Soldiers will follow a good leader anywhere and under any conditions. While many factors decide the outcomes of a successful mission, leadership is often the most important. The perception we receive from our formation as a leader is also very important. All leaders have different characteristics, we all have different approaches, and we all have different leadership styles. The approaches and styles leaders use will impact the outcome of unit morale and how they accomplish the mission.

As you look at our 108th Training Command formation, 90 percent of it consists of Sergeant and above. That means 90 percent of our formation is made up of leaders. Keep in mind, a Sergeant is not born great, they must work hard for it. No one comes into the Army ready to lead, they must be trained how to do it.

It all started at an early stage in our careers—during our military education—we sat in a classroom with a small group of peers, and our educators taught us about leadership and how to implement it. We would go out and hold formations, get accountability, conduct a physical training event or lead a squad through some Situational Training Exercise Lanes and if you did well you received a first time go on that performance exam. As we progressed through the ranks, we continued to receive more advanced training on leadership and to develop strategies to guide efforts to train the Army and grow leaders. Some of the best training we received is the Army and grow leaders. Some of the best training we received is the Army ready to lead; they must be trained how to do it. They are trained how to do it.

Leadership is a combination of principles and character (beliefs, values, and moral fiber). It is not something you can touch, see, or measure, but it is something that your Soldiers will sense after being in your formation.

General Raymond Odierno, former Chief of Staff of the Army, said it best, "Leadership is paramount to our profession. It is integral to our institutional success today and tomorrow. As we transition to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex and uncertain environment, our Army requires intelligent, competent, physically and mentally tough leaders of character. Decentralized operations require leaders at all levels that understand their environment, learn quickly, make sound decisions, and lead change. Because there are no predetermined solutions to problems, Army leaders must adapt their thinking, formations, and employment techniques to the specific situation they face. This requires an adaptable and innovative mind, a willingness to accept prudent risk in unfamiliar or rapidly changing situations, and an ability to adjust based on continuous assessment." The most important leadership lesson I ever learned in my career is very simple: Being an NCO or leader is not about you, it is about everyone else around you. It is especially about the Soldiers and families who the Army trusts me to care for.

I want to highlight three simple things to think about when leading Soldiers.

#1-Know your Soldiers, know what they are doing, have an understanding of what they are going through, because you are making decisions that will affect their lives. If you do not have an appreciation for what they go through and their problems, you could make the wrong decision.

#2-Communicate constantly and effectively in today’s environment. Communication is extremely important and is dependent upon your ability to work as a team. You need to communicate "south" to the Soldiers under your care and ensure them that you are clearing obstacles for them to succeed. You need to communicate "north" by influencing leaders by highlighting successes and possible issues. You also need to communicate "east" and "west" by influencing and assisting your peers.

#3 - In my opinion, is the most important -Lead by Example. Your Soldiers will watch every move you make. Always lead from the front and DO NOT forget where you came from; you will be the example of the standards you will enforce. Their personal devotion is very desirable but can only be gained by treating your Soldiers fairly, justly, and by setting the example yourself in your actions, appearance, outward behavior, and overall knowledge. They will look to you for action; do not require them to do anything that you will not do yourself. In their eyes, you are the epitome of what right looks like.

I want to thank all the military families for their support. Not all who serve wear a uniform. Thank you for keeping our military strong.

IRONMAN 7
Making History Crossing Old Boundaries

By CPT Estrada and CPT Mott-Smith

It’s been three years since the Army first started accepting women into its infantry, armor, fire support specialist and special operator communities. Before this shift, one option female Soldiers had to positively affect the Combat Arms community, was to become a US Army Drill Sergeant. Drill Sergeants teach new recruits every aspect of Basic Combat Training—which means they have the great responsibility of shaping recruits into the best Soldiers in the world. Two of these female Drill Sergeants, SSG Marisa Diaz and SSG Kiaveth Vasquez, made history by being the first 2 female CAV-Scout Drill Sergeants in the United States Army Reserve. Their success represents a growing trend of highly qualified females moving into combat arms formations all across the United States Army.

Diaz decided to become a Drill Sergeant in 2015 in order to have a direct impact on the development of young Soldiers, especially female Soldiers. Her goal was to set the example that female Soldiers would look to for guidance and encouragement. Not surprising, Diaz was inspired to become a Drill Sergeant because of her own personal experiences while attending Initial Entry Training (IET) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

“When I joined the Army I was a dedicated individual but I did not have a sense of direction or purpose in my life,” Diaz explained. “My Drill Sergeants quickly solved my lack of direction and helped me find the purpose that I had always been looking for: to serve my country, surpass my own expectations, and always be there for my fellow Soldiers.”

When the opportunity arose for females to obtain a Combat Arms MOS, Diaz was one of the first Soldiers in the Squadron to volunteer to attend Calvary Scout (19D) Transition School, graduating in August 2018.

“When I was told that my unit was transitioning and that we would have the opportunity to achieve a Combat Arms MOS, I immediately started asking when the earliest class date was available,” Diaz said. “I knew this was the next best step for myself and my career.”

Diaz is eagerly awaiting her first opportunity to train and develop a unit of Calvary Soldiers when she supports the One Station Unit Training (OSUT), this summer, in Fort Benning, GA.

“I have been drilling myself and focusing on the basics to ensure that I am fully prepared to excel during this mission,” Diaz said. “My only desire is to make myself, my unit and the US Army proud.”

Similarly, SSG Vasquez, formerly an 89B ammunition specialist responsible for the management of ammunition and explosives, decided to become a Drill Sergeant in 2018, seeking ever more challenging roles within the United States Army.

On 21 May 2019, Vasquez became one of the first females in the history of the United State Army to become a 19D Cavalry Scout Drill Sergeant when she graduated from the 19D military occupational specialty transition course class 001-19 at 1st Armor Training Battalion 15-4th Regiment, Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

About the transition course she says, “The first 4 days were brutal. We were introduced to over 70 tanks and helicopters that eventually we would be tested on. The second day we had a physical demands test that consisted of different activities that will challenge us as Bradley crewmen. On the third day we had a 12 mile ruck march.”

Vasquez remembers vividly why she originally joined the Army. “I remember watching a commercial when I was in 6th grade of some female Soldiers rappelling down from a helicopter. I always thought that was so cool. I told myself ‘I can do that’.”

She continued, “my role models have been bad and good leaders throughout my career. The bad ones, well I don’t ever want my Soldiers to feel or go through those horrible experiences like I did; so I know what patterns and behaviors to avoid. With the good leaders I’ve had, they’ve been tough on me, but they taught me so much along the way. They pushed me to do better and at times I hated it, however, the end result was awesome.”

Vasquez will join with her peers this summer to forge the next generation of 19D Cav Scout Soldiers at Basic Combat Training, One Station Unit Training (BCT OSUT) at Fort Benning, Georgia. While in Alpha Troop 2/415th, 1st Brigade, 98th Division, Vasquez has often taken the lead within her unit and set high standards of excellence for her peers to emulate.

“From here she has her eye on her unit’s Best Warrior Competition, NCO/Drill Sergeant of the year, Iroquois challenge, and Ranger school. Whether influenced by leaders of their own or intrinsically motivated from an early age, these Drill Sergeants are poised to leave a legacy of their own as they train and mentor recruits into Soldiers in the coming years. The opportunity to provide their own brand of committed leadership is spread before them and it is now up to them to make the positive impact on young Soldiers they themselves were inspired by.
I am honored and privileged to once again be a member of the 108th Training Command (IET) and to command the great Division of Iroquois Warriors. Since many of you may not know me, I’ll take some time in my first article to introduce myself.

I enlisted in 1983 as a cannon crewman and my first duty station was Fort Polk, Louisiana. I learned a lot about the Army there, but more importantly, I discovered the camaraderie that is the Army. My intent was to complete my initial contract and then attend college. However, shortly after returning home, I realized the mark the Army left on me, and I missed the deep friendships and sense of membership I had found in uniform. I became determined to reenter the Army, but this time as an officer where I felt I could impact Soldiers, while still accomplishing the mission.

I received my commission as a distinguished military graduate from Ohio University with a regular Army commission as a Field Artillery officer. I served for more than seven years and learned from some truly amazing and dedicated NCOs. As my wife Valerie and I started have children, I made the decision to leave active duty and transferred to the IRR while I started my business and purchased a farm in Oklahoma. Once again, I quickly missed the officers and Soldiers who were such a part of my life and began looking for a Reserve unit to join.

As an artillery officer, I ended up in the 95th Training Division at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, working with drill sergeants for the first time. There, I served at the battalion, brigade, and division levels, and even as a unit administrator for a period of time. From these experiences, I believe I understand our mission set and many of the challenges we face. I have been away from the drill sergeant environment for several years now as a Brigade Commander for the Southern Division of the 75th Training Command and as the Deputy Commanding General of the 88th Readiness Division. Both of those opportunities enabled me to broaden my understanding of the Army Reserve and how we support the Army.

Now, as I join the 98th Training Division team, I see that our greatest current challenge is drill sergeant production, which includes recruiting. Readiness is a priority for both the Army and Army Reserve. We must be ready to be relevant, and in order to be ready, we need to have enough qualified and available drill sergeants to accomplish both our peacetime and wartime missions. I understand that production is the most challenging task for us. I do not believe there is a simple solution or a silver bullet out there. This will take a multi-faceted approach with multiple lines of effort. The G-3 is currently working on a Production Campaign Plan and we are working with brigades, battalions, and companies to develop a comprehensive approach that still allows for flexibility at the company level to tailor the production effort to the region. We understand recruiting in New York City will be different than rural Alabama or Kentucky.

Regardless of location, one thing is certain though. We cannot be successful without a team effort. It will take every Soldier, of every rank and job, to contribute. I ask you all to think about our mission and challenges. How does your role contribute? Is there something different that you and your section/peers can do?

I know the Army Reserve asks a great deal from each and every one of us. And I know it has become increasingly difficult to balance it all with your families and civilian careers. So, I am not asking you for MORE necessarily. I am asking you for excellence. I simply want us all to be the best Soldiers we can be and operate as the most effective and cohesive team possible.

From what I have seen so far, there are a number of leaders in our ranks, and I believe we have a lot of great opportunities before us. I look forward to serving with each of you.
Army Reserve Division welcomes new commander at Fort Benning

Story by Maj. Michelle Lunato
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Lisa Litchfield

FORT BENNING, Ga. — Family, friends and Soldiers from the 98th Training Division (Initial Entry Training) welcomed their new commanding general, Brig. Gen. Tony Wright, and bid a fond farewell to their out-going commander, Brig. Gen. Miles A. Davis, during a Change of Command Ceremony on July 13 at the National Infantry Museum’s Inouye Field.

Davis, a Livonia, Michigan resident, took command of the 98th Training Division in September 2016. While in command of more than 2300 U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers spread across 20 states, Davis raised the readiness level across the Division, said the 108th Training Command’s (IET) Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Kate Leahy, who presided over the ceremony. “Miles, you mentored commanders from company through brigade level, and set the example for physical fitness, professional competence and selfless service.”

In fact, Leahy said Davis had been so successful in getting results that it earned him his next position. “Evidence of this is the fact he’s been selected for a critically important Active Duty assignment [Assistant to the Deputy Commanding General for Readiness] at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters at Fort Bragg, where he will be in charge of working with all Army Reserve command teams to improve readiness levels across our 200,000 Soldier force.”

With that, Leahy turned to her new Division commander. Though she had just met Wright the day prior to the ceremony, she said she could easily see from his military biography that he was familiar with the Command. “As I was scanning his assignment history, I noticed he was no stranger to the 108th Training Command.”

Over the years, Wright, a Henryetta, Oklahoma resident, served in a number of roles in the 108th Training Command (IET) as well as in the 95th Training Division (IET), which is a sister division to the 98th Training Division (IET). As he was clearly well versed in the command and how it worked, Leahy turned to Wright and said, “So Tony, it’s a great pleasure to say simply, welcome back home. We have been waiting for you!”

Wright, who comes from the 88th Readiness Division in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin where he served as the Deputy Commanding General for the Troop Program Unit, then took the podium stating he was looking forward to continue the great tradition of success at the 98th Training Division (IET). “I am open to new ideas and enjoy developing innovative ways to solve challenges so we can get after readiness while accomplishing our training mission.”

Of course, no mission can be accomplished without Soldiers and Wright expressed his goal of fostering a healthy work-life balance for those Iroquois Warriors. “I enjoy getting to know Soldiers and how the Army fits into their lives. I also enjoy building teams, cohesion and trust, and being part of the team. I will develop clear intent and priorities so leaders, at all levels, can have confidence in making decisions within their lanes,” stated Wright looking over to the troops in formation. “We do a very important job turning citizens into Soldiers and I look forward to serving with you.”
Navy Prepares to Deploy (with Army Help)

By Ms. Alexandra Shea (IMCOM)

At McCrady Training Center a container village sits in an open field and acts as an urban warfare training site. Devoid of furniture within its buildings or cars parked nearby, it is a solitary site. Sailors outfitted in full body armor, M4 and M9 weapons stand within the gated compound in the center of the village keeping a watchful eye on the surrounding buildings and field on Aug. 19.

Suddenly an unfamiliar man dressed in jeans and a head wrap to obscure his features screams out in a foreign language. He pops out behind a small container building with tattered cloth windows and throws a small canister. White smoke starts devouring the north end of the sailor’s compound.

“Gas at my 10 o’clock,” shouted Lt. Cmdr. Adam Dickinson of the Navy Operational Support Center in Schenectady, New York. “He’s running to my South.”

Dickinson is one of 120 sailors currently being tested by drill sergeants and cadre of the 4th Battalion, 323rd Infantry Regiment, 98th Training Division. The unit officially took over Task Force Marshall this past July. Their mission was to train reserve Navy personnel for their role in supporting U.S. Army operations.

“We are training individual Navy augmentees to fill combat roles. We are training them to meet Central Command’s standards so there is no questions that they are capable of completing their mission,” said Sgt. Robert Lewis, a drill sergeant with TFM. “It’s going good. They are retaining what we are teaching them.”

Throughout their two weeks of training, the sailors are taught a variety of skills they will be tested on during their final day of training, the culminating exercise. Back at the container village, Dickinson and his fellow shipmates are defending their base of operation from enemy forces. It is one of their tested tasks during the CULEX.

“Endex, Endex, Endex,” shouted Derrick Manuel, support staff contracted to TFM. “Head to the back of the building so we can talk about what we learned.”

Manuel discusses what the sailors encountered and how they handled the enemy forces who tested their compounds fortifications and attempted to overrun the compound. The sailors talked about the events of the raid and ways they could improve their proficiency at keeping their compound from being overrun and their shipmates from injury or death.

Only one of the sailors was injured during the raid, receiving a gunshot wound to his left thigh. The compound’s quick reactionary force were able to apply a tourniquet, move him to a safe location and call for a medical evacuation flight. It took less than 10 minutes. The sailor survived the scenario due to the quick thinking of the QRF team and enjoyed a short rest in the shade of the compound while lounging on the litter he was carried away on.

Next, the sailors walked in a tactical formation to the next site, room clearing. Once arrived, Sgt. 1st Class Nick Barber, a TFM drill sergeant, took over the training and covered the basics of how to clear and search a room for enemy forces.

Barber knows a thing or two about conducting searches. The sailors were taught the basics of how to clear and search a room for enemy forces. Barber knows a thing or two about conducting searches. The sailors were taught the basics of how to clear and search a room for enemy forces.

“I was teaching how to enter and clear a building,” Barber said. “This guys get to see this maybe once in their career. It’s good for them to have this kind of familiarization so they can be used (for search and clearing) if needed.”

Once Barber finishes showing the process of clearing a room using the “glass house” method, the sailors move onto real rooms with real doors.

With a swift kick and a loud bang, the sailors entered the room and successfully cleared it. They continued on to another room to help build the muscle memory of conducting these searches. The sailors were surprised on their last round of door kicking and clearing as they found an armed enemy combatant. Gun fire was exchanged but the sailors emerge unharmed and victorious. Mission complete.

The sailors spent their last day completing tasks they may need to use during their mobilization that included convoy operations, encountering chemical environments, building hasty fighting positions, reaction to direct and indirect fire from enemy forces, searching detainees, defending their base of operations from enemy forces and basic medical aid to name a few.

At the end of the day, the sailor’s time with the task force will end. TFM personnel will have a few days to reset their equipment and enjoy a little personal time. For the sailors, they will clean and pack their gear and equipment and ship to their mobilization location. Some sailors will be shipped to Africa, the Middle East or major theater commands. Wherever the sailors may land, they are ready to accomplish their mission.

“These skills could save a Soldier, sailor, Marine or airman’s life,” said Staff Sgt. Marlon Huddleston, a drill sergeant with TFM. “They are professionals and they’re ready.”
Airborne Drill

In 2009, Staff Sgt. Goodrich was sitting in college at Central Michigan University thinking about joining the Reserve Officer Training Course program when he enlisted. Instead, he attended basic combat training that summer and became a Military Policeman. He was placed with the 428th MP Company located out of Portage Mich., and mobilized with them to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, from 2012-2013. He had always seen Drill Sergeants across the hall and knew that he wanted to become one. He joined the 3/330th Fox Company in 2014 after completing the Kalamazoo Valley Police Academy. In 2015 he became a police officer and started work for the Marshall, Mich., police department. He then completed the United States Drill Sergeant Academy in the summer of 2015.

“Being a Drill is a unique and challenging experience. It is a great opportunity for career progression, and personal growth. From pushing yourself to learn the modules while attending the Academy, to being responsible for a company of Privates while on the trail, becoming a Drill Sergeant allows you to become a better Soldier and learn what type a leader you want to be in both military and civilian life.”

Goodrich is is not only successful in his military career but also as a Police officer. He was awarded the Officer of the Year for the department in 2018 and received a lifesaving award from work in 2018 for saving an individual’s life by using his military combat life saving skills in an incident that occurred on 20 April 2018. He also received a meritorious service award from the Calhoun County Sheriff’s department for an incident that he assisted on in 2018.

On the military side, Goodrich won the battalion Best Warrior competition in 2017 and 2018. He reenlisted with the 3-330th to continue his mission as a One Station Unit Training Drill Sergeant. In 2019 he received an opportunity to attend Fort Benning’s Airborne School. As a highly motivated Soldier, Goodrich was “green” and ready to attend. With preparation, support, and communication, Goodrich successfully completed the Basic Airborne Course graduating 19 July 2019.

“Airborne school is probably one of the most unique experiences an individual could have in their lifetime. The school is nothing unattainable by anybody, however the difficult part of the course is beating your own mind when it comes time to jump,” explained Goodrich. “Everyone always says you have trust in the equipment and trust in the training. This is true, but you really need to overcome the fear of how unnatural It is to just jumping out of a plane. After you beat that fear you’ll become hooked, and all you want to do is jump more. I think as leaders and warriors anyone who wants the opportunity to do this school should be provided with that opportunity to help them grow.”
Cavalry (CAV) is alive and well in the US Army Reserve. Headquartered in Madisonville, Ky., the 2nd Squadron, 398th Cavalry Regiment is one of only two CAV squadrons in the Army Reserve. 2-398th CAV is assigned to the 1st Brigade, 98th Division, 108th Training Command. Their mission is to provide Cavalry Drill Sergeants and Instructors to the United States Army Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning, Georgia.

On the weekend of 6-8 September, the Cavalry Scouts from the 2-398th Cavalry Squadron conducted a time-honored “Spur Ride” at Fort Knox, Ky. As the original Home of Armor and Cavalry for more than 50 years, Fort Knox is a fitting location.

The Spur Ride, a rite of passage for every CAV trooper, is a skills proficiency test for Cavalry Soldiers that has deep roots in Cavalry history and tradition. There were spur candidates participating from both the Active Army and Army Reserve components.

The Spur Ride, led by 1st Sgt. Mitch Latham, was a demanding 36-hour, non-stop, scenario-based event. The APFT, which was modified to fit the spirit of the ride, led off the experience. The Spur Ride also contained a Cavalry knowledge exam, a combatant vehicle identification exam, heavy weapons proficiency and live fire range, along with multiple Field Training Exercise (FTX) Lanes, all of which were designed to mirror the Cavalry’s reconnaissance and security missions. An arduous ruck march rounded out the successful candidates’ group training at the close of the weekend.

Marching up (and down) hills affectionately named Agony and Misery is one of the highlighted last steps of the 2-398th CAV Squadron’s Spur Ride. This culminating event tested Soldier endurance and esprit de corps.

Much has changed on the Fort Knox post over the last twenty years, but two things endure the test of time: Agony and Misery! While the candidate’s mission was tough, they were excited to receive instruction and participate in team-motivating/building events, while overcoming individual hardships as a group. The group stayed driven and really showed how Soldiers can adapt and overcome throughout the entire weekend. These events demonstrate the passing of the torch to the next generation, who will undoubtedly perform commendably.

The final evening, the candidates participated in the long-standing tradition — a grog bowl ceremony, where the candidates were inducted into the 2-398th Cavalry Squadron’s Order of the Spur. Candidates were awarded their spurs, as all CAV Soldiers are, in the front, lean and rest position. The Cavalry is rich with tradition and ceremony. These candidates will one day be charged with performing similar functions, as many generations have participated throughout the years. No doubt these Troopers will do their duty!

In conjunction with the Spur Ride, the 2-398th CAV passed its colors from one commander to the next. Col. Phillip Taylor, commander of 1st Brigade, 98th Division, led the change of command, saying farewell to Lt. Col. Brian Slaughter and welcoming Lt. Col. Christopher McDavid. Outgoing commander, Slaughter a prior troop commander with 2-398th and former 1st Cavalry Division Soldier, brought a wealth of Cavalry experience to the unit and led the 2-398th CAV Squadron since 2017. His leadership and dedication to the mission have played a significant role in 2-398th CAV Squadron’s success.
Incoming commander McDavid also served with 2-5 Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas and with the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment while a member of the Tennessee Army National Guard. Both commanders have a rich lineage of CAV pride.

McDavid is charged with leading the squadron by training, resourcing and producing Cavalry Drill Sergeants and Instructors for the United States Army Maneuver Center of Excellence. Each year, the USAMCOE is dependent on the US Army Reserve to help train new Soldiers. Cavalry training at Fort Benning, Georgia, incorporates One Station Unit Training (OSUT), which assimilates both Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at ‘one station’ – Fort Benning, GA.

One of the biggest challenges for the 2-398th CAV Squadron is recruiting hard charging Cavalry Drill Sergeants. Anyone with the heart of a warrior and willingness to train can become a Cavalry Drill Sergeant. No matter the MOS, our mission is to train and produce Cavalry Troopers and Leaders!!

2-398th Stetsons and Spurs POCs:
- MAJ Steve Brock (Executive Officer) 270.207.8018
- CSM Michael Whittenburg (Command Sergeant Major) 606.872.1297
- MSG (P) Clint Halstead (S3 NCOIC) 913.249.5865
- 1SG Mitch Latham (First Sergeant, A Troop, 2-398th Cavalry Squadron) 606.688.1514
- LTC Christopher McDavid (Commander) 615.268.2585
- LTC Brian Slaughter (Former Commander) 615.720.2585

Stetsons & Spurs: Spur Candidates Patrolling to the MOUT site.

Stetsons & Spurs: Spur Candidates Ruck Marching Agony Hill, Ft Knox, Ky.

Stetsons & Spurs: Passing of the colors between outgoing commander Lt. Col. Brian Slaughter to Col. Phillip Taylor, who will then bestows incoming commander Lt. Col Christopher McDavid with the duties of command.
Serving Before She Could Vote — From Immigrant to Soldier to Citizen

By Maj. Michelle Lunato
98th Training Division Public Affairs Officer

As stood before the formation, she looked down at her daughter pinning the new rank of major on her uniform. Then, she glanced over at her mother who was beaming with pride.

In fact, U.S. Army Reserve Maj. Adriana Scott’s mother was so proud of her that she walked over to the front of the formation and gave her newly-promoted daughter a big hug.

Holding back the tears, Scott, a force protection officer with the 98th Training Division (Initial Entry Training), explained that this was the first promotion her family had been able to witness over the years due to deployments and training missions.

Scott looked out to the Soldiers in formation and over to Brig. Gen. Tony Wright, commanding general of the 98th Training Division (IET), and said she didn’t mean to get emotional, but the October promotion ceremony, with her family watching, just reminded her of why she chose to join the Army.

“I’ve always felt this sense of serving and helping people,” said Scott who migrated from Mexico with her parents when she was three years old. “My parents came here in the hopes of achieving ‘The American Dream’ in ‘The Land of Opportunities,’ explained Scott.

For years she worked alongside her mother and father in the fields, learning the value of teamwork and hard work. “It gave me a sense of doing something bigger than myself, and bigger than my community,” said Scott.

So during the September 11th attacks, Scott remembers how she felt a strong urge to take action.

I remember the feeling of helplessness and concern watching the news while sitting in my high school classroom. I thought to myself, all those innocent people who were just going about their daily lives were killed for the ignorance and hate of those 19 hijackers. I was angry and wanted to help. So she enlisted into the Army at 17 years old. “What better way than to be prepared to protect and defend our freedoms than by serving in the military.”

Enlisting was a way to contribute and make an impact, but also a way for the young immigrant girl to show her thanks. “I just felt a sense of serving the Country that had given so much to my family already.”

Scott was not wearing boots long before she found herself on her first deployment in Iraq. As a specialist in a transportation company, Scott saw a lot of the countryside as they delivered supplies to the troops in outlying bases. We lived out of bags, ate MREs [meals-ready-to-eat], and slept in, or around or on, our trucks, reflected Scott.

Between the limited water and the always on the go status, the young Soldier learned to be creative and resourceful. “Baby wipes are everyone’s best friend in the Army,” laughed Scott.

Her deployment to Iraq was filled with a number of other intense lessons. While in Fallujah, Iraq, Scott had mission of assisting with and securing the first Iraqi elections. She watched the Iraqi people line up to cast their votes, to make a difference in their country. And some of those in line were women who had never been allowed to have a voice before. That’s an image that Scott will always carry with her.

“Seeing other females being able to vote for the first time in Iraq… that was just a good thing to see as a young 18-year-old female from a small town.”

Even through her youthful eyes, Scott could see the power of all that she was witnessing—the first Iraqi election, and her and her fellow U.S. Soldiers were helping it happen. “We were such a crucial part of history moving forward. That gave me a sense of pride.”

The irony of watching the election in another country did not escape her. As an immigrant, Scott was able to serve the United States as a Soldier, but until she became an official citizen, she did not have the right to vote.

“To go into a combat zone and not know if you are going to come back and be able to exercise your own right to vote or become a citizen was kind of hard,” said Scott. So the young Soldier just had to hold fast and focus on the mission. “I could not wait to come back and be granted citizenship.”

Many argue the reasons for going into Iraq and what was accomplished, but Scott knows what she saw on the ground there. She saw people voting for change, people standing up to be heard, people making history. Seeing all that made her time there valid. “I can say that was a big accomplishment for the United States,” she stated.

Of course, not all of Scott’s experiences on her two deployments to Iraq were something to remember fondly. During one convoy, a Soldier and friend in her unit, Sgt. Tina Time, was killed in a vehicle accident.

Traumatic experiences and deep loss at such a young age make you grow up sooner, but you have to keep moving, said Scott. “If
anything, you get really close to the people in your organization [after going through all that]."

That level of loss made her look around at the big picture. She said she needed to understand and make sure her friend did not die in vain. More and more each day, she started to understand, and see, more of the impact there on the ground in Iraq.

"Deployment definitely helped me mature fast enough, but it also brought into perspective that what I signed up to do is a big part of making change in our history, and that's fighting for equality, fighting for rights, not only for our Country, but other countries."

When the combat veteran redeployed back to the United States, she kept that perspective in her heart. And when she finally received her U.S. Citizenship, she felt an immense sense of pride and accomplishment for her family. "It was one of the biggest moments in my family's achievements. It wasn't my achievement, it was my family's."

She was not the only one who could see all facets of the situation though. The judge giving the oath of citizenship did as well.

Scott reflected on the scene with thoughtfulness: My parents were there; I was in my dress uniform, the only female in uniform; and the judge called my name, knowing I had just returned from deployment. "He thanked my family, realizing that even people who came from other countries and who are not citizens, but are permanent residents, are still serving the Country every day. That meant a great deal to the family originally from Mexico, the family who allowed their daughter fight for a Country that had given them an opportunity.

Nearly 18 years later, and now a major, Scott says she would not change most of her Army experiences, including some of her time overseas. "I can honestly say that I cherish the time I did in Iraq."

Whether it was discussing life with her Iraqi interpreters, dropping of supplies to a local school or meeting with officials on improving their infrastructure, Scott's military experiences gave her a rare opportunity to see the world, experience a different culture, and learn valuable life lessons. Overall, she said her time in uniform has been rewarding.

"It has been amazing. It's made me realize how blessed we are. And it's re-validated why I wanted to be in the Army in the first place, and why my parents brought me here as a young child."

Like any career, there will be hard times though. But that's just part of life, and the key for Scott has been to always learn something— even from hardship. "My time in the Army disciplined me and matured me much quicker, but it helped me become a better person, a better leader, a better mentor, and it's the biggest, most fulfilling career I have ever had," said Scott who has served in both the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve, as well as in the Civilian workforce over the years.

Now that she is a field grade officer, Scott will move on to the next opportunity. She will leave the 98th Training Division headquarters at Fort Benning, Georgia to become a battalion executive officer for the 96th Military Police Battalion at Camp Pendleton, California.

And just like all the years in the past, she will take on this new role with pride and be ready to serve her Country, her home.

"There is no better feeling than putting on your uniform and serving with pride."
I Want YOU To Command

from the 104th Training Division (LT) Commander

By Brig. Gen. B.G. Edwards
Commanding, 104th Training Division (LT)

Leadership, the lifeblood of an army, makes a difference every day in the United States Army. Since the formation of the Continental Army until today, with Soldiers deployed around the globe, Army leaders have accepted the challenge before them. The United States Army has always had great leaders who have risen above hardships and have drawn on a range of leadership qualities to influence Soldiers, build units, and accomplish the mission. - ADP 6-0

I recently had the unique opportunity to participate in a talent management project for the Army Reserve. We looked into why Army Reserve officers are not applying for command in the numbers necessary to adequately lead the force. And what I learned while participating in this working group was eye opening and somewhat heart breaking. But there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Cadets are trained to lead from the front in every Army officer producing school. It is the foundation of the Army officer developmental process. From day one, they are instructed to take charge, to lead the force, and do the right thing when no one is looking. It is here that cadets learn the ultimate opportunity to lead others is being in command.

Command is the authority that a commander in the armed forces lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment. Command includes the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources and for planning the employment of, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling military forces for the accomplishment of assigned missions. It also includes responsibility for health, welfare, morale, and discipline of assigned personnel. - JP 1-02

Mission command is the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations - ADP 6-0

To command in the world’s greatest Army is truly an honor and privilege. And, it is a tremendous responsibility that should not be taken lightly. To command in America’s Army is the apex goal for every commissioned officer strives for…or so I thought. In the past, the selection process for command at any level was challenging to say the least. Boards were held and protocols were followed, resulting in only the best of the best being selected to lead our force. Today in the Army Reserve it’s much different. And that is the genesis of this article.

Today, the Army Reserve struggles to fill its O5 and O6 level commands. It is not a lack of qualified officers, but a lack of motivated officers to update their records and apply for command. The last series of boards fell short of filling all the vacant positions within the Army Reserve formation. But why? What changed? And what can we do to fix the problem? Many issues were raised during the process and this paper does not address all of them. However, it addresses one idea that resonates across several conversation lines. That is the perception of risk vs reward.

There is a real perception in our formation that commanding at the O5/O6 level puts your career at risk with no reward. Leaders typically opt not to command in the Army Reserve for several reasons. Time, job conflicts, impingement on family time, and risk of formal complaints are a few of the common ones. The lack of promotion preference or added compensation for those willing to command can be added to this list. One recent and disturbing view is that having a “command isn’t required to be promoted in the Army Reserve.” Another point made by the group was “the lack of fulltime support personnel placed an undue burden on commanders,” forcing them to do too many things on personal time just to keep the unit afloat. Not to mention the vast distances between headquarters and subordinate units place great burdens on part time commanders to adequately run these organizations and meet Army Reserve readiness requirements. Considering these conditions, it’s not hard to understand why an officer would want to avoid the “burden of command.” After all, command appears to be a full time job masked in a part time cloak. One that consumes a tremendous amount of personal time without due compensation, decreases the ability to provide for one’s family, and increases stressors with civilian employers. Commanders endure these circumstances without the benefit of added pay or being promoted at a faster rate than their peers. Typically commanders are in position at a time when they are at the peak of their civilian career and family/life obligations. So, why command? I’ll tell you why!

Commanding in the Army Reserve is a challenge but rewarding experience to which more leaders must aspire. The
need for selfless leadership in the U.S. military has never been greater. Challenges associated with commanding are real, but are surmountable. Opportunities to serve as a commander provide officers with an invaluable, unmatched experience that cannot be rivaled in the civilian world.

Commanding in the Army Reserve provides leaders with a “leadership laboratory” in which core competencies are challenged, developed, and perfected. Army formations are diverse, and collaborative leaders broaden their problem solving skills portfolio by soliciting input from their organization. The periodic human interaction between a commander and the geographically dispersed members of the unit challenges a leader to be an effective communicator in both the written and verbal form. These interactions do not occur daily in the Army Reserve, requiring a commander to perfect the ability to communicate effectively. Leaders in the Army Reserve must establish close interpersonal relationships with and access to their chain of command that is unmatched in the civilian world, providing leaders with access to senior officers who will coach, teach, and mentor them.

The aforementioned challenges many reasons not to command, and the following tools address how reasons to not command can be further overcome. Various types of additional funding can be made available to command teams to compensate them for the additional time requirements consistent with command. Subordinate leaders. Time with families and career development are not alone in the endeavor. Senior leaders must prioritize the communication with and coaching, teaching, and mentoring of their subordinate leaders. Time with families and career development is a commodity that additional pay and retirement points only begins to replace, but strengthens the financial resiliency of a Reserve leader nonetheless. The shape modern warfare is taking requires leaders who are innovative, decisive, and bold, with the ability to effectively communicate and collaborate with multiple stakeholders. Developing these skills in the Reserve is a unique opportunity not typically offered in the civilian world that will make an officer more marketable in the civilian workplace. The Army Reserve needs commanders who recognize these factors and are willing to serve. America’s Soldiers deserve the best leaders we can provide.

“...if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known, that we are at all times ready for war.” — George Washington

Comments and Editorial assistance provided by LTC John Kaikkonen and CPT Eva Gonzalez.

For information on ROTC and becoming an officer in the United States Army ask your chain of command about the ROTC Scholarship opportunities and visit https://www.goarmy.com/rotc/find-schools.html or email usarmy.rotc-scholarships@mail.mil or call 502-624-7695.
By CSM William C. Phipps  
Commanding, 104th Training Division (LT)

Greetings Timberwolves,

This year’s summer missions have closed and with great success. I want to thank you all again for your participation in what I think was the most successful Cadet Summer Training event so far. Our team at Task Force Wolf, the Trainers and Drill Sergeants did a great job this year. I would also like to thank our team at West Point for their continued success and outstanding professionalism. I want to thank our Soldiers at the Merchant Marine Academy mission, even though it goes away after this year, great job by the team in leaving a lasting ARMY impression on them. Thank all the SROTC instructors and Cadet that work crazy Battle Assemblies and help mentor and develop young cadets outside of CST. Last but surely not least, all our Civilians, AGRs, TPU Staff and Command Teams for what you do daily in order to make our organization and our Soldiers successful. Remember everyone, your leadership and professionalism represents more than just your unit and the Division. You represent the entire Army Reserve when you are out there in front of those cadets. This is the same representation you have with our active duty Soldiers (COMPO 1). I tell Soldiers everywhere I go, you are an Ambassador for the entire Army. Don’t forget that when you are in public especially. You represent the entire Army in America’s eyes. I am not telling you to do any different in private, but everyone is watching you in public. Think before you act. I sound like my mother I know, but there is so much truth to that. Think about the potential second and third order effect of what you are about to do or say.

I want to take a moment to talk about something that I feel is lacking in our formations and we need help from every Soldier wearing a uniform. I just read an article from the Center for Initial Military Training (CIMT) and it talks about the lack of discipline in our ranks. CIMT talks about new Soldiers in our formations. FUA is First Unit Assignment. This was a survey distributed across all ranks from Private to Colonel. Here is a couple highlights from the 2019 survey:

- 2019 marks the 7th consecutive year that Leaders identified discipline as the most important New Soldier characteristic.
- Of all potential IET (Initial Entry Training) outcomes, discipline is, by far, the most desired: First Unit Assignment Leaders value New Soldier discipline more twice as much as Physical Fitness (the #4 ranked quality), and 21 times as much as Warrior Task and Battle Drill proficiency (the #5 ranked quality). Leaders describe discipline primarily in terms of military courtesy and bearing, professionalism, work ethic, and obedience to lawful orders.

As in previous years, the discipline “problem” was NOT described in terms of criminal behavior, recklessness, excessive alcohol consumption/drug use, or sexual or physical violence. Rather, FUA Leaders cite (their observations of) New Soldiers’ sense of entitlement, preoccupation with duty hours vs. completing tasks to standard, careless dress, tardiness, digital device fixation, and poor bearing/courtesy as evidence of indiscipline.

The survey talks about Soldiers acting like they are “back on the block,” poorly groomed, “me first” attitude and the Army “owes” them something as well as questioning, debating and “blowing off” lawful orders. Ironically, I had just discussed some of these challenges with the CG a week ago. This is not only true in the U.S. Army, but you can understand the challenges of having the majority of our Soldiers on a Battle Assembly and a couple weeks in the summer.

As I travel around and visit Soldiers, so many acts like they forgot what custom and courtesies are. Don’t get me wrong, some Soldiers are still doing the right thing, but many are not. This is a huge concern of the majority of leaders. Discipline = survivability on the battlefield. I am asking all leaders at every level to do the right thing. Correct Soldiers, don’t turn away and pretend you didn’t see it. I ask you to do that in the right, professional manner. “Praise in public, criticize in private.” Private doesn’t mean you have to find a private room. Pull them off to the side and have a conversation. However, if you are a leader that is afraid of offending someone, you have to work on your personal feelings aside when making decisions and genuinely don’t care about standards and discipline, maybe you should rethink your position. Customs and courtesies are evidences of a well-disciplined unit and Soldier. For those that are doing the right thing, continue to drive that train. Your professionalism across your span of influence will be remembered as your legacy when you are gone. By the way, for clarity, DISCIPLINE is taking care of Soldiers. In closing on discipline, as a leader, remember the principles: Be, Know, Do.

As the holidays are coming up, pay special attention to your battle buddies. This is a time of year when we seem to lose more Soldiers to suicide. Take a moment to reach out, sometimes it’s all it takes to let someone you know that you care. You are not alone, life is difficult and hurdles always seem to appear in our road in life. There is help out there. I encourage you to reach out and ask for it. There is no shame as we all handle things in a different manner. We all have had similar situations: divorce, relationship problems and breakups, loss of a loved one, financial hardships, PTSD, health problems, depression, loneliness and the list could go on and on. The point is, someone in your chain of command has been there. Let us know how we can help. Give us a chance to help you before you decide to give up. I can assure you that time changes everything and your thoughts aren’t the same as time passes.

As I close on this article, remember to stay humble and treat people with dignity and respect. I would like to recognize both of our BDE CSMS for all the work, time and effort that you put into making us a better organization. I am honored to serve with such dedicated individuals who constantly push me to be better. Thank you. This truly goes out to everyone that keeps me motivated to stay in the fight after 31+ years. Keep doing the right thing out there and let’s make this a better place than it was when we got here. For those Timberwolves that left, thank you for what you have done for our Soldiers and hopefully you carry that on. For those that retired, thank you for your sacrifice and service. You will always be part of an elite team of Americans. Be safe out there and enjoy your family and friends this holiday season. Keep communicating. I will hopefully see you soon. Timberwolf 7 out.
R-DAY

By Master Sgt. Edward Yurek
HHD 3-304 IN RGT, 2nd BDE, 104th Training Division

On one day a year Thayer Hall is transformed from multi
floor classroom building to a
processing station for newly in
processing cadets. That one day
is called Reception day or R-day.

Typically the first Monday in
June all the newly accepted
Cadets arrive at West Point to be
screened, in-processed and finally
sworn into the US Army. Helping
with that event is the 3/304th
Infantry Rgt., headquartered
in Saco, Maine. Two additional
companies supplement the
Maine contingent, one at Ft Dix,
New Jersey, and a second in
Schenectady NY.

About a week prior to R-Day,
50 Soldiers from across all three
companies of the 3/304th arrive
at West Point to help with the
transformation of Thayer Hall and
a long tapeline is laid in the floor
which will guide the new Cadets
as they weave through the halls
going from station to station.

The 3/304th Soldiers meets
with the Army Band and are
given assignments as height /
weight tapers, hallway monitors
and water supply points. A
civilian staff will be checking
the forms cadets are required
to bring. Soldiers ranging in
ranks from E3 to E8 serve in
critical spaces which make the
acceptance of more than 1200
cadets in one day possible.

The plan is detailed and
rehearsals are conducted. Each
supporting Soldier needs to
know who is doing what so that
talent can be interchanged as
the need arrives. There is no
room for backlog on a day when
so many Cadets are processed
through.

The plan is loaded tested.
A request for help to the local
population placed in the paper
enables them to act as new
Cadets.

On the Friday before R-day,
more than 300 civilian personnel
walk through the process to test
the plan. Each is spoken to as
if they were new Cadets and a
time estimate per cadet is created. Once complete, they
are fed in the Cadet chow hall.

A comprehensive AAR is conducted and fine
tuning is done. A retrain day is
scheduled for the weekend if
necessary.

At 6am Monday morning,
a school bus arrives and it
begins. Like clockwork, every
20 minutes, another bus arrives
offloading new Cadets. The
cadets are from all over the
country and are greeted by the
Soldiers of the 3/304th.

The first station is the shake
down. After a brief description
of what they need to do, each
new Cadet places their bags
down and starts going through
their gear, taking out the items
directed by an NCO. Once they
have what they need they start
walking the tapeline.

Soldiers of the 3/304th are
placed in strategic locations to
make sure no new cadets get
lost. SSG Curtis stands at a three
hallway intersection and divides
the Cadets as they approach. The
ones already wearing their Army
PT uniform go upstairs, those
still in civilians go left.

Further down the line is a
room where the 3/304th has 20
NCO’s sitting in a room. This is
the height/weight room. With
a constant flow of new Cadets,
they work at a feverish pace to
keep the flow moving. Those
over the standard are taped right
away and moved along.

In the center is the TOC. Each
station sends a SitRep outlining
how many cadets have been
screened. A goal of 120 Cadets
per 30 minutes has been set. At
each station, the Cadets have arm
bands scanned. Should a Cadet
somehow get off track and go
through station 13 before station
12, Soldiers of the 3/304th act
as runners returning the Cadet
to the station missed. Projected
on the wall is an updated count
of how many Cadets have been
successfully processed.

Every aspect of what a Cadet
needs is addressed, equipment
checked, paperwork processed,
expectations stated and the
process concludes with the
swearing in of the new Cadets.

As the Cadets complete their
inprocessing, they are assigned
to a Cadet company and led into
the Cadet area. No observers are
allowed in this space as the new
Cadets are taught by their Cadet
 cadre how to march.

The day concludes with the
1,230 Cadets standing together
as a class for the first time,
forming a new Cadet company and led into
the Cadet area. No observers are
allowed in this space as the new
Cadets are taught by their Cadet
 cadre how to march.

The day concludes with the
1,230 Cadets standing together
as a class for the first time,
wearing the uniforms they were
measured for and fitted into
three hours before and marching
together in unison for all to see.
Day one is done.
This summer, on 5 August, 25 Soldiers, including an active duty Soldier, one National Guard Soldier and 23 Army Reserve Soldiers, began the 108th Training Command’s Equal Opportunity Leaders Course at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), Wash. On 9 August, these EOLC graduates from different areas of the country became the next set of Officers and NCOs with the skills and knowledge to fulfill their duties of implementing the Army’s EO program and objectives in their respective units.

“EO leaders are the eyes and ears of the Commander” stated Ms. Moann E. Benson, Equal Opportunity Specialist, 108th Training Command and team lead for the course. “Effective EO leaders are able to communicate training requirements, policy requirements, issues and or concerns with the Commanders impacting the unit’s climate; and assists with action plans to improve the organization,” she added.

Facilitated by 10 Equal Opportunity instructors, sixteen classes and seven practical exercises were delivered during the first three days. The facilitators were a mix of personnel serving in different Civilian, officer and NCO positions within the 108th Training Command, 95th, 98th and 104th Training Divisions, 200th Military Police Command, and the Army Reserve Aviation Command.

Having a diverse group of instructors i.e. military, civilian, gender, and demographic makeup, provides students first with an image mirroring their organization and second, an array of experiences and knowledge to enhance the training they receive,” Ms. Benson emphasized.

The classes and practical exercises were held in different rooms at the Washington National Guard facility on JBLM. Lectures were given in the auditorium, practical exercises in the drill hall and the break-out sessions in several classrooms. On day one, students began at 0800 in the auditorium with a welcome from Col. Edward A. Wood, Deputy Commander for the 104th Division (Leader Training), and they also received the course overview from Ms. Benson and Master Sgt. Mark R. Fischer, EOLC co-host and Equal Opportunity Advisor with the 104th Division (LT). Students received a 181-page EOL guide containing comprehensive EO information. The nearly 24 hours of instruction and over five hours of practical exercises, along with the guide, prepared students for class presentations and examinations on the last two days.

“The EOL course focuses on a mixture of topics from communication skills, learning your biases, how to address conflict between persons and touches on subjects like racism, sexism, and discrimination,” stated Fischer, who taught and co-led several classes and exercises during the course and has been instructing EOLC for two years (five cycles).

Both Fischer and Benson have long and wide-ranging careers that include instructing BNCOC/ANCOC PH1, Battle Staff, First Sergeant courses for Fischer and MOS courses (88N and 42A), NCO Development, Leadership, Common Skills (Soldier Tasks), SHARP, and EO for Benson who became instructor certified in 1997 and an EO Advisor in 2007.

“I am amazed by the level of knowledge, professionalism and experience they share with the class,” said Fischer, reflecting on his current co-instructors. “This makes me a better Equal Opportunity Advisor and a better person,” he added.

Staff Sgt. Joymarie R. Colon, travelling from Ocala, Florida to attend EOLC, initially believed “this is going to be another boring course where we sit through power point presentations and get a certificate” she stated candidly. However, after participating in
the exercises and completing the course her opinion changed. “Right now, I think the course has taught me so much about myself that I didn’t have a clue and I’m grateful for that,” she enthused.

Also experiencing a new level of self-awareness, operations Sgt. Jacob T. Wiatrowski, assigned to the Headquarters Company, 333rd Military Police Brigade in Farmingdale, New York, said of the course, “[it] opened my own eyes and ears to see and hear offensive language, and demeaning behavior unbecoming of not just a Soldier, but any human being.’ He also stated that he looks forward to his new role as a ‘change agent’ addressing situations that make Soldiers uncomfortable. ‘Many times, we have failed our brothers and sisters by our blindness to the truths of stereotypes and forms of discrimination,’ he explained.

Master Sgt. Patricia F Kolcz, B Company, 3rd Battalion, 414th Regiment, 1st Brigade, 104th Training Division is also committed to ensuring proper Soldier treatment. Kolcz has served in different positions, company and staff, in her eighteen years of service. ‘I volunteered for this [EOL] position … I hope to use my experience, combined with this training, to improve the quality of military life experienced by the troops I have the opportunity to serve with,’ she explained.

EO situations can be difficult and challenging. The EOL course presented lectures on topics including Socialization process, Values, Attitudes and Behaviors, Conflict Management, Racism and Sexism, and Effective Communication in order to help understand the complexities of human relations. The course is designed to build on necessary skills leading to professional solutions and handling issues at the lowest level.

Practical exercises such as Life Boat and Star Power gave Soldiers opportunities to have hands on experiences leading to a variety of insightful moments.

“Role playing exercises, interactive (educational/awareness) presentations create ‘ah-ha’ moments for different Soldiers…” Ms. Benson explained. One of those “ah-ha” moments happened for Colon in the Star Power exercise when she realized how important power is and how it is important to do the right thing once you have it.

Equal Opportunity Advisor Fischer further described the impact of the Star Power exercise. “Star Power…is designed to show that people in power make the rules, their rules sometimes do not benefit the larger group but only a small select group of their choosing,’ he stated. ‘These rules can sometimes lead to larger problems.’

Five days of instruction, practical exercises, breakout sessions, class presentations and a final examination culminated in graduation ceremonies and words of wisdom from the instructions. Each instructor had an opportunity to share words of wisdom to the graduating class before being dismissed. Several shared personal stories of pivotal EO experiences that changed their perspectives as Soldiers and leaders, as well as influencing their leadership skills throughout their careers and in some cases even their style. The day concluded with the successful graduation of all twenty-five Equal Opportunity leaders, presentation of completion certificates to the new EOLs of class 300-EOL-004 and awards for instructors celebrating their contributions to the success of the training mission.

For more Equal Opportunity related information, visit the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute site at https://www.deomi.org.
In April, 302/317 Soldiers participated in the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge Competition. Of those, 21 earned enough points through the rigorous events to achieve the Gold, Silver, or Bronze GAFPB. These Soldiers all competed in events that required minimal rest and reset times prior to completion due to our training schedule. Within 20 hours they completed a 190m swim in uniform, 11x10m sprint, flex arm hang, 1000m run, up to 12k ruck march, and a pistol course. Prior to these events they completed NBC Pro mask donning and first aid events for go / no-go scores.

German SGM Schiller, the German Army Liaison running the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge, congratulates Sergeant Daniel Green, 2/317 on his earning the Silver GAFPB.

2/317 Soldiers, SSG Heymer and SGM(A) Torrence, complete the flex-arm hang as part of the GAFPB.

SGM Schiller, pins Sergeant Nathan Julius, 2/317, with his Silver GAFPB.

GAFPB Bronze award recipients: CPT Brandon McFarlane, SGT Dennis Scott.

Capt. Jonathan Lipinski of the 2/317 competes in the GAFPB.

2/317 Soldiers participate in the GAFPB Swim Event.

GAFPB Gold award recipients: SGT Alexander Warley, SGT Peter McClintic.

The Soldiers of the 3-304th Regiment 3rd Battalion conducted a Change of Command between outgoing commander Lt. Col (P) Brian J. Van De Wal and incoming commander Lt. Col Andrew R. Craven, and Change of Responsibility Ceremony between outgoing CSM Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Pattershall and Command Sgt. Maj. Clint Hale at Trophy Point Amphitheater, West Point, New York, on Saturday, 29 June 2019. The event was hosted by Michael J. Foreman, Assistant S-3, 3-304th Regiment 3rd Battalion. Col. James P. Sanders, brigade commander, 2nd Brigade, 104th Training Division (Leader Training), Lexington, Kentucky, served as the reviewing officer during the momentous ceremony.

Lt. Col. Craven’s most recent Army assignment began in 2016 as the United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) Team Chief at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Contingency Response Unit in Washington, DC. His deployments include Haiti, Kosovo, and most recently Iraq, where he served as Group Engineer for the 5th Special Forces Group.

Why Did You Join?

By 1st Lt. Jazmine Gillett
S3 CUOPS 3-414th

Everyone has their own reasons for why they joined the military. Is it a family tradition? Patriotism? Love for your country? Accepting a new challenge? Why did you join the military and what does serving mean to you?

I once asked a Soldier who had been in the IRR for four years why she decided to come back to the Army Reserve, she replied to me “ma’am it’s because I missed the misery.” At this point I had only been in the Army Reserve for one year and didn’t understand why would you come back to something that made you feel that way. I then asked that Soldier to explain herself more and why she chose these words to describe her experience. She replied:

“Your civilian counterparts, who have never served, don’t understand what it is to be out in the field when it’s cold, you’re tired, hungry, sleep deprived, but surrounded with other Soldiers who help, encourage and motivate each other to do their best during these times. The bonds and memories that are developed from these situations are priceless. Yes it can get hard when you are a parent, working a full time job, taking college courses and then you have that one weekend a month of drill, it can be too much, but once drill is done and you come back to work on a Monday and your coworkers start talking about their weekend, you just think of how you embraced the suck and worked as a team member to accomplish the mission.”

When was the last time you reflected on your decision of serving your country and the person you’ve become from the date your recruiter told you to raise your right hand to now? How has your career changed from day one to now? The reason that led me to join the military was actually me avoiding taking an extra year of P.E. in high school, all the girl drama was just insane and I didn’t want to be a part of it. When a friend told me that I could take JROTC and substitute that for P.E. I decided to make the switch and sign up for JROTC for my sophomore year of high school. Who knew that 15 year old me was making a decision that would lead to you reading this brief story. I had great mentors in high school and in college that challenged me and encouraged me to always do my best. I appreciate everything the Army has taught me so far and appreciate everyone I’ve had the opportunity of serving next to.

“I came back because I missed the misery.” It’s not the misery that Soldier missed but being part of a team who made the decision to raise their right hand to protect and defend our nation, being a warrior, a member of a team, to serve the people of the United States and live the Army values. That’s what the Soldier missed.

To all who served, continue serving and to all family members supporting us throughout the journey, thank you for serving.
Around the Command

CST Lanes 25-31 MAY 2019

- SGT Johnson (B Co 4-399) instructs and assists CST Cadets step-by-step to construct their Hip-Rappel Seat
- Cadets learn and implement the steps to tie their own rappel seat, and utilize that seat to rappel both wall side and open side rappels before moving to the Confidence Course
- Cadets develop personal courage and problem solving skills necessary to navigate the obstacles necessary on the confidence course.

2nd/317th April 2019 FTX

From 25-28 April 2019, 2nd Battalion 317th Regiment set the standard with an intense weekend of training at Fort Lee Virginia; the event kicked off Thursday 25 April with the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFB) – which featured 22 participants competing in survival swimming, a 110 meter shuttle sprint, flexed army hang, and 1000 meter sprint. The GAFB participants then persevered through a 9km road march, which kicked off at 0500 early Friday morning, 2nd/317th then hit the ranges hard, and managed to qualify 63 Soldiers on the M16. 11 Soldiers on the M9, and test 22 GAFB participants in the GAFB pistol event – despite frequent weather delays. 2nd/317th made use of this down time to complete ToD packets. 2nd/317th then kept up the pace on Saturday with a make up APFT, followed by day land navigation. During the intermission between day and night land navigation, 2nd/317th received vital information from Mr. Jason Rogers – the Division suicide prevention program manager, as well as Division IG – MAJ Ballard, and BDE EO SSG Jones. Soldiers then finished off the weekend with night land navigation. All Soldiers trained to standard, while remaining safe boasting no injuries and/or accidents.
A Moment of Appreciation

In a quiet moment prior to relinquishing command of the 98th Training Division (IET), Brig. General Miles Davis found himself standing outside the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center, Fort Benning, Georgia, listening to 108th Training Command commanding general list his many accomplishments as she presented him with a well deserved Legion of Merit. Davis was quick to praise his wife for her contributions over the course of his career and present her with a token of his appreciation as well (US Army Reserve photos by Sgt. 1st Class Lisa M. Litchfield).

CST Lanes 25-31 MAY 2019

- Field Leaders Reaction Course instructors place the Cadets in scenarios designed to test their ability to problem solve, communicate and execute unique scenarios.

- Instructors from the 4-399th BN complete Call For Fire (CFF) certification with CST TF Training and begin instructing Cadets on fire support observation before testing their ability to do so with simulated combat stress to complete training.
Who runs the world? Sergeants Major!

It was a powerful sight as these four senior NCO’s, Sergeant Major Terry Patterson, Command Sergeant Major Lorraine Smith, Command Sergeant Major Bethannie Bugbee and Sergeant Major Lyneli Woodard, got together for a photo at the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center, Fort Benning, Georgia during the 98th Training Division change of command and monument dedication weekend US Army Reserve photo by Sgt. 1st Class Lisa M Litchfield

Brig. General Miles Davis and Brig. General Tony Wright, along with their wives, pose for photos immediately following the dedication of the 98th Training Division Monument, sponsored by the 391st Regimental Officers Association. The monument was placed outside the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center, Fort Benning, Georgia (US Army Reserve photo by Sgt. 1st Class Lisa M Litchfield).

1-304th BN, 3rd BDE Increment 2-3

1-304th BN (F Co, A Co, B Co. conducted Annual Training in support for 1-46 BCT Aug 21 – Sept 7 at Fort Benning, Georgia.

The main effort was to support 1-46 operations, specifically White and Blue Phase BCT. Trainees in these phases are nearing the completion of BCT. We effectively supported Rifle Marksmanship and Field Exercises in our 18 days on ground.

MG Brito made a battlefield circulation on 5 SEPT 2019 and was given an overview of training operations for Echo Company, 1-46 as they completed the “Anvil”. Specifically, MG Brito visited patrol bases in a field environment where the trainees were conducting squad level tactical lanes. MG Brito took time to engage with trainees in the field, giving a speech on the importance of mastering the fundamentals and remembering all they learn while in BCT.

Cpt. Grimes was given an opportunity to provide input to the General on the support 98th DIV provides to 1-46 BCT operations, stating that our Drills are more than capable and excel during the increment rotations; evidence supporting this is in the numbers and also in the positive feedback received from 1-46.

Maj. General Brito awarded two 2-3 increment Drill Sergeants for their stellar performance. DS Pimentel and DS Duesler were recognized.
Drill Sergeant Course Graduation Highlights 011-19

Cannabidiol (CBD)

It's new and hot in the civilian world and a variety of over the counter medications are being made with CBD. So what is it? Cannabidiol is extracted from the flowers and buds of marijuana and hemp plants but that doesn't make it a drug. It does not produce intoxication because marijuana's "high" is caused by the chemical tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). This leads us to a state of fluctuation because the state of the law on CBD oil is unsettled. While Federal law has removed hemp and its derivatives from the schedule of controlled substances as of 2018, marijuana and its derivatives remain controlled (although several states have passed laws legalizing the drug).

At this point, certain types of CBD oil are legal in some states, including North Carolina. To be legal, the oil must be derived from hemp and have less than 0.3% THC.

CBD is wildly popular because it has been reportedly linked to anxiety relief, neuroprotection, better sleeping habits, pain relief and has been extensively researched as an anti-seizure medicine for children with epilepsy. The FDA has currently approved only one drug containing CBD oil.

Federal and state governments are still developing regulations on how CBD oil may be used in products and the FDA has published several letters warning consumers of the inaccurate content of various CBD oil products and states that "many were found to not contain the levels of CBD they claimed to contain."

A 2017 study found that nearly 7 of 10 CBD products didn't contain the amount of marijuana extract promised on the label. Nearly 43 percent of the products contained too little CBD, while about 26 percent contained too much. The FDA and NC have sent notices to businesses that the use of CBD oil in food is prohibited.

Servicemembers are prohibited from using Hemp or products containing Hemp oil by AR 600-85, and this includes CBD oil. UCMJ or adverse administrative action can result.

Any product that lists CBD in its contents may contain levels of THC or other controlled substances that can cause you to test positive (pop hot) on a drug test. This not only goes for Servicemembers but our civilian (Federal) employees as well. Choosing to use CBD oils to treat what ails you is not considered to be an alternative medical explanation for the positive test result. AR 600-85 Army Substance Abuse Program prohibit Servicemembers from the consumption of any THC or HEMP derived products, to include CBD products. Furthermore, do to the lack of federal regulations on CBD products and a limited history on the long term effects of these products, everyone should be cautious absorbing or consuming these products.

So what?
Drill Sergeant Candidate Preparation Training

Delta Co, 2/397th, conducted follow-on Drill Sergeant Candidate preparation training coordinated with Ft Knox R2 program to build mental resilience and promote positive mental thinking, build memorization skills, and ensure the overall success of Drill Sergeant Candidates.

Training conducted was built upon foundations learned during January battle assembly.

Operation conducted jointly with A & C Companies.

Overall, both training sessions were conducted with high success and Soldier/instructor enjoyment.

Sgt. Jermain Green, a unit supply specialist with the 4/518th Training Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 98th Training Division (IET), was honored October 6, 2019 for his volunteer service. Green was attending his Advanced Leader Course when the certificates for volunteer service were presented in April. Therefore, Brig. Gen. Tony Wright, commanding general for the 98th Training Division, presented Green the coin and certificate on behalf of Maj. Gen. Gary Brito, commanding general of the Maneuver Center of Excellence. Green, who has been assigned to the 4/518th for over two years, has volunteered for more than 500 hours with Fort Benning to include Operation Home Front, the USO of Georgia and coordinated programs throughout five different states. His volunteer work has ranged from Back to School programs to mentorship to assisting the homeless. After receiving the coin, Green said he will continue to volunteer because he truly enjoys giving back.

Photo by Maj. Michelle Lunato
Griffon Association Scholarship Applications Due April 1

Another big three months for the Griffon Association. Both our annual major fundraiser, the Soldiers' and Families' Golf Tournament, and the annual picnic took place and were a big success. We invite all who read this article to join us by becoming members to continue this success well into the future. You will see a copy of the most current membership application with this article.

In September, our 9th Annual Soldiers’ and Families’ Golf Tournament took place on the 30th at Pine Island Country Club in Charlotte. This tournament over the first eight years has raised over $100,000.00 to support scholarships, grants to Soldiers and families where a Soldier has been injured in the line of duty or put in financial stress because of a deployment, assisting the 108th with projects which cannot be paid for with appropriated funds and providing funds to other charitable organizations which assist Soldiers and veterans. The 9th Annual tournament added to this success when 20 teams of golfers enjoyed a wonderful day of golf and helped raise over $12,000 for our many Soldier oriented good works. The tournament once again insured our motto of “Be a Patriot, Help a Soldier” would continue to be supported through 2020.

The annual picnic was held at Kings Mountain National and State Parks on October 5th. Over 20 members of the Association enjoyed a full course BBQ lunch and had the opportunity to visit the Kings Mountain National Military Park’s hosting of the Overmountain Men’s arrival and other reenactments which vividly displayed the life of Patriot militia during the Revolutionary War era. The highlight of the picnic was the attendance of the new 108th Training Command CG, MG Kate Leahy and her husband. The CG provided a very informative briefing on the status and missions of the 108th and its subordinate units as well as some of the challenges ever present in the recruitment and training of the lifeblood of the command, the Army Drill Sergeant. She also provided some ideas as to how the Association might help the Command in this endeavor. A great time was had by all.

The next big event for the Association besides the planning for next year’s golf tournament will be our scholarship considerations. Applications for 2020 scholarships must be received by 1 April 2020. A copy of the application accompanies this article.

If you want to support and be part of an organization which makes a difference in the lives of our Soldiers and their families, please consider joining us by submitting a membership application today. It is only $10.00 for an annual membership and $108.00 for a life membership. You can make a difference for our Soldiers.

Copies of the membership and scholarship apps can also be found on our website, 108thgriffonassoc.com.

108th Griffon Association, Inc.
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION
Fall Semester

Sponsor’s Name and Rank ____________________________
[sponsor must either be an active member of the 108th Griffon Association, or any soldier assigned and serving with the 108th Training Command (IET) and subordinate Commands]

108th Association Member or Serving 108th Training Command (IET) Soldier (circle one)

Sponsor’s Unit ______________________________________

Application must include the following prepared by the applicant:
• Cover letter [include all that apply: a list of extra curricula/community/volunteer activities, work experience (hours per week), and military experience to include SROTC/JROTC]
• Copy of transcripts (high school if entering college for the first time in the fall semester or college transcripts if currently/recently enrolled)
• Three letters of recommendation from non-family members, and
• On a separate sheet please answer the following questions:
  What are your educational goals?
  How will achieving these goals improve your life and improve your community?

Applicant’s Name: _____________________________________________________________________
[applicant may be a member of 108th Griffon Association; child or grandchild of a 108th Griffon Association member; soldier of the 108th Training Command (IET) to include subordinate commands; or the child of a soldier of the 108th Training Command (IET) to include subordinate Commands]

SSN ___________________ Date of Birth___________________ Gender: Male or Female (circle one)

Address (No P.O. Boxes): _______________________________________________________________

Telephone ____________________ EMAIL: ____________________

High School __________________________ Graduation Date _________

GPA (unweighted) ______

Address (es) _________________________________________________________________

College(s)________________________________________ Hours Completed_________

GPA ______

Address(es) ____________________________________________________________

Name of College You Will Attend Using this Scholarship ___________________________
[You must be accepted/enrolled -- funds will be issued by the college at registration]

Location (City, State) _______________________________________________________________

Application must be received NLT 1 April, any application received after that date will not be consid-ered regardless of reason. MAIL COMPLETE APPLICATION TO: 108th Griffon Association, Inc., Scholar-ship Committee, C/O Lin Ingram, 1 Flagship Cove, Greensboro, NC 27455
Military Resources

Travel USA

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Got Leave? Three Incredible Theme Parks and an Epic New Roller Coaster Make Universal Orlando Resort the Perfect Getaway.

You work hard all year in service to our country. So, when it’s time for some well-earned leave, you want to be able to play just as hard as you work. Universal Orlando has the perfect ticket for you. Now members of the military can get four days of sensational theme park fun for less than the price of a 1-day ticket (offer compared to after-tax purchase price of a 2-Park, 1-Day Anytime Season Park-to-Park Ticket purchased at front gate or universalorlando.com). Your amazing vacation starts upon arrival at one of Universal’s spectacular hotels. With the newly opened Universal’s Endless Summer Resort – Surfside Inn and Suites, there’s now a hotel for every vacation style and budget. Universal’s hotels are as close as can be to all the action and include exclusive benefits including complimentary transportation to all three theme parks plus the Universal CityWalk nighttime entertainment complex. Universal’s Value and Prime Value hotels also boast family suites that sleep up to six, providing the perfect spot for groups of any size to experience Universal Orlando. They include a kitchenette and a bathroom with a separate sink/vanity to make getting ready in the morning convenient for everyone. All the hotels have fabulous resort-style pools with fun activities everyone will enjoy.

While at Universal Orlando Resort, you’ll step into the movie and TV based action of Universal Studios Florida, the tropical splendor of Universal’s Volcano Bay, and the epic worlds of heroes and legends that make up Universal’s Islands of Adventure. At Islands of Adventure you’ll find the new and widely acclaimed Hagrid’s Magical Creatures Motobike Adventure™ in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ – Hogsmeade™. For the first time ever, join Hagrid™ as you fly deep into the Forbidden Forest, beyond the grounds of Hogwarts™ castle, on a thrilling roller coaster to discover the rarest magical creatures. In addition to the rides and shops of Hogsmeade™ that completely immerse you in the world of Harry Potter™, Islands of Adventure features pulse-pounding attractions that let you battle villains alongside Spider-Man, feel the rage of the Incredible Hulk as you hurtle through the sky, and come face to face with dinosaurs in the jungles of Jurassic Park.

Next door at Universal Studios Florida, your family will delight in mind-blowing rides and attractions that put you in the middle of some of the biggest television shows and movie franchises in history. Meet Illumination’s mischievous Minions, save the earth alongside the Penguins of Madagascar, put you in the middle of some of the biggest television shows and movie franchises in history. Meet Illumination’s mischievous Minions, save the earth alongside the Penguins of Madagascar, and the full-throttle excitement of Fast & Furious – Supercharged. Plus, Universal Studios is the home of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ - Diagon Alley™, with even more spellbinding attractions for your family to enjoy.

And you can’t miss the perfect blend of thrills and relaxation offered at Universal’s Volcano Bay. There’s no better way to enjoy the Florida sunshine than to spend a day in this exotic tropical paradise, a water theme park only the minds of Universal could create. Bask in an island getaway where you’ll find over 30 unique experiences and 19 different attractions, including Florida’s only water coaster, the Krakatau Aqua Coaster, which shoots you up, around, through, and down the towering volcano centerpiece of the park.

If you’re visiting from November 16 through January 5, there’s a mischievously merry lineup of festivities in all the parks, hotels and CityWalk. Experience Christmas in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ as Hogsmeade™ and Diagon Alley™ are transformed with wondrous spirit. Treat yourself to Universal’s Holiday Parade featuring Macy’s as the Minions and other characters join in the fun. And watch the live retelling of Dr. Seuss’ classic holiday tale starring The Grinch™ in the Grinchmas™ Who-liday Spectacular. On select nights, the best-selling holiday artist of all time, Mariah Carey, performs live. And to round out the fun, be a part of EVE, Universal CityWalk’s incredibly over-the-top New Year’s celebration. You’ve never had a holiday like this.

There’s always new vacation fun and excitement waiting for you at Universal Orlando Resort. So take advantage of Universal’s amazing military ticket offer and special hotel packages to make some lasting memories with your family.

HARRY POTTER characters names and related indicia © & ™ Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. Harry Potter Publishing Rights © JKR. (s19) *This offer is not available for purchase at Universal Orlando Resort theme parks on the same day. Ticket is only available for purchase at participating U.S. military base ITT/GT ticket offices or the Shades of Green Resort in Orlando. To receive full benefit of the ticket entitlements, first use of the ticket must be on or before December 28, 2019. All ticket usage must be completed on or before December 31, 2019 when the ticket will expire in full. Unused days will be forfeited. Offer cannot be combined with any other offer, promotion or discount. Limit one (1) ticket per purchase. The 2019 4-Pack Park-to-Park Military Promotional Ticket entitles one (1) guest admission to BOTH Universal Studios Florida AND Universal’s Islands of Adventure theme parks on the same day. Ticket is valid for any four (4) calendar days between May 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, with no blackout dates. Both the 2-Park and 2-Park Park-to-Park Military Promotional Ticket entitles one (1) guest admission to Universal Studios Florida/Universal’s Islands of Adventure AND Universal’s Volcano Bay theme parks on the same day. Ticket is valid for any four (4) calendar days between May 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, with no blackout dates. Both the 2-Park and 2-Park Park-to-Park Military Promotional Ticket entitles one (1) guest admission to Universal Studios Florida/Universal’s Islands of Adventure AND Universal’s Volcano Bay theme parks on the same day. Ticket is valid for any four (4) calendar days between May 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, with no blackout dates. Both the 2-Park and 2-Park Park-to-Park Military Promotional Ticket entitles one (1) guest admission to Universal Studios Florida/Universal’s Islands of Adventure AND Universal’s Volcano Bay theme parks on the same day. Ticket is valid for any four (4) calendar days between May 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, with no blackout dates.
If there were ever a destination created with romance and reconnection in mind, it would be the Caribbean — exotic landscapes, untouched beaches and pure waters are simplicity and beauty at its finest.

When couples find themselves needing to escape the everyday and get back to what really matters, Sandals®, the only resorts made for two people in love, is the perfect place to fall back to. With more quality inclusions than any other resorts on the planet, indulging in relaxation is simply effortless.

Experience A New Level of Luxury

Challenging the luxury all-inclusive industry for almost 40 years, Sandals Resorts made innovation the standard at each of the brand’s 15 resorts by offering couples more places to unwind, whether they prefer quiet, intimate nights or soirees fit for the A-List. The “feet-up-and-drink-in-hand” experience has long been the expectation of Caribbean vacations, but Sandals takes this to a new level with groundbreaking bar concepts. At Sandals Montego Bay and Sandals South Coast, the top shelf is set above the sea at Latitudes Overwater Bar. As one of the most popular spots on resort for its 360-degree view, where sunsets naturally gather everyone for a breathtaking goodbye to the day.

Sandals Royal Barbados boasts equally as impressive amenities, such as Lovers Lanes — the Caribbean’s only all-inclusive, four-lane bowling alley and craft beer bar serving international brews from over 15 countries. Across the resort, Sky Bar, situated on a rooftop terrace, pours premium smoked cocktails rivaling New York’s hotspots with the tranquil sea replacing a crowded skyline.

As innovations are continually rolled out across each destination, it’s no wonder why Sandals has earned its spot as the World’s Only 5-Star Luxury Included® Resorts. Toast and Dine The Night Away

Once night falls, guests will notice the casual Caribbean vibe take on elegance with the appropriately named 5-Star Global Gourmet™ dining program. Drawing inspiration from hundreds of countries, Sandals has curated 23 culinary concepts at up to 16 distinct restaurants per resort — each overseen by a chef with years of homeland experience.

While endless pours of premium liquor, beer and Robert Mondavi Twin Oaks® wine are available all day at every bar, drinks really come to life in the evenings with each restaurant serving signature cocktails that marry the Caribbean to its cuisine, such as the sake-infused mojito at Soy Sushi Bar that transforms the island classic into a truly international creation. In true Luxury Included® Style, everything you could want to eat and drink is included with no limitations, so guests can fully indulge in as much as they desire while never worrying about a check or tip.

Retreat For Some Suite Romance

Designing suites is no small task. Every accommodation seeks to use passion as inspiration for the ultimate break from the world. Those seeking unmatched intimacy will surely find it in Love Nest Butler Suites®, which offer amenities manifested straight from lovers’ wildest dreams.

At Sandals Royal Caribbean, Sandals South Coast and Sandals Grande St. Lucian, Over-the-water bungalows and villas dot the sea, offering an escape usually reserved for exclusive, far-flung Pacific adventures. In these suites, guests experience a deeper connection to the water with glass flooring showcasing the aquatic life along with a private deck and staircase winding straight into the waves.

Jetset across the Caribbean to Sandals Grenada and Sandals Royal Barbados and experience the height of luxury in signature Skypool suites — oversized rooms featuring an infinity-edge swimming pool, where guests can soak up the horizon during morning plunges, late nights or anything in between. Each of the Love Nest Butler Suites® comes with personal butler service held to exacting standards of the English Guild of Professional Butlers. Setting new standards for luxury service, guests quickly learn to expect the unexpected — favorite cocktails served on the beach, romantic, post-dinner bubble baths and special turndowns — all while taking the little things and making them everything.

If you’re ready to escape the worries of every day and fall back to a resort crafted with your romance and reconnection in mind, Sandals is the premier destination. To book, contact your travel advisor or book at 1-800-SANDALS | sandals.com.
SUIT UP & OCCUPY THE BEACH

Our Orders? Do it all or nothing at all

Save an additional 10% off your vacation

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Home to the Caribbean’s purest white-sand beaches, Sandals Resorts makes a day at water’s edge the ultimate adventure for you and your partner.

Soak up the sun for hours with thrilling land and water sports, including beach volleyball, kayaking and scuba diving for certified divers, then watch the day fade to an end at one of our 5-Star Global Gourmet® beachfront or Over-the-Water Restaurants before retreating to top-tier Love Nest Butler Suites®, designed with innovation in mind.

Visit sandals.com/disclaimers/4085 for important terms and conditions. Sandals® is a registered trademark. Unique Vacations, Inc. is an affiliate of Unique Travel Group, the worldwide representative of Sandals Resorts. 4085 only.

1-800-SANDALS | SANDALS.COM
In Southwest Florida, Islandology is always within reach. It’s our way of life. You won’t find high-rises and big crowds, you’ll find endless white-sand beaches, lush wilderness and secluded islands. Islandology is about being comfortable with your surroundings and enjoying all the simple pleasures that come with a day at the beach or a night under the stars. Before you make the trip with the one you love, make a few plans. For there are many ways to experience our way of life.

Whether it’s chartering a fishing boat, going on a shelling tour or kayaking through shaded mangroves, life on the water is essential to Islandology. The warm Gulf of Mexico makes for a nonstop day of island hopping or an eventful day on the beach. Those same waters also bring the perfect souvenirs – seashells. Sanibel Island is known as the shelling capital of the world, thanks to the hundreds of shells that wash ashore every day. With so many different kinds and colors to pick up, you’ll find countless keepsakes to combine into a collection of your own.

Nature is a large part of Islandology, too. Hundreds of uninhabited islands dot our coast, each with their own ecosystems and wildlife just waiting to be discovered. The J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge is home to hundreds of species of exotic birds and sea life, all viewable from your vehicle on the four-mile Wildlife Drive. Or, follow the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve boardwalk. This 1.2-mile elevated trail is a great way to explore Florida’s wetlands without getting your feet wet.

Aside from nature, Southwest Florida has a unique blend of romantic escapes and city life that defines Islandology. For years, Lovers Key State Park was accessible only by boat, and it was said that only lovers traveled to the island to bask on its remote beach. Today, it’s still a secluded getaway for couples, great for shelling, swimming and spotting wildlife like manatees and dolphins.

After time alone, explore the Fort Myers’ River District where a thriving arts and entertainment scene includes several galleries and theaters downtown. You’ll find much more than the usual watering hole — laid-back bars are serving delectable cuisine and delicious drinks provided by expert mixologists. Finally, cap the evening with a quiet walk along the wide, inviting sands of Fort Myers Beach and the Gulf of Mexico, the perfect time to reminisce about the day and plan every step together for tomorrow.

With so many ways to explore Islandology on The Beaches of Fort Myers and Sanibel, it’s worth staying awhile to do it right. Whether you choose a vacation rental or traditional accommodations like a hotel or resort, you’ll find a variety of lodging options to suit any budget. And it’s all close to Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), where a multitude of direct flights are available daily.

The island vacation of your dreams is here, in a destination that’s just a short drive from Miami, Orlando and Tampa. To start planning your trip, visit FortMyers-Sanibel.com.
Islandology is our way of life. It’s escaping from lists, schedules and itineraries. It’s making more time for play time and discovering how a stretch of sand can become your own private getaway.

Plan your trip at FortMyers-Sanibel.com
U.S. Army Opening Up the West

By Jean M. Peiton

(From information researched by Dr. Eugene Watkin, PhD in American History)

In 1808, a small garrison of the U.S. Army’s 1st Infantry headed up the Mississippi River from what is now Saint Louis. Brigadier General Zebulon Pike had scouted the area from 1805 to 1806 following the Louisiana Purchase. But it wasn’t until 1808 following William Henry Harrison’s Treaty of Saint Louis, that any other U.S. military presence was in the area. They were dispatched to the area to set up a government factory outpost, as established under Article 9 of the 1804 Treat of St. Louis.

Colonel Thomas Hunt, who was assigned the mission, left St. Louis with 63 officers and enlisted men. Hunt died early into the expedition and his leadership role fell to his second in command, Lieutenant Alpha Kingsley. Having reached the unique east to west portion of the Mississippi River in late August, Kingsley chose the location with its high bluffs and sheltered cove to establish Fort Belle Vue, a temporary fortification, before the onset of winter. They began building Fort Madison in April of 1809, amidst a threat from the Sac and Fox Nation due to a poor hunting season, cultural misunderstandings and English influence. The name change was in honor of James Madison, the newly elected President of The United States.

Once the fort was up and running, the local natives realized that the factory post was acting as it had claimed to be, a sort of frontier store where they could trade furs, lead and other natural commodities for trinkets, firearms, metal implements and whiskey. The local tribes around the area got along well with the garrison and the traders at the fort. Blacksmiths and other trades offered the indigenous tribes goods that they otherwise went without. When the War of 1812 finally engulfed the area, Fort Madison was primarily attacked by war tribes of the Winnebago, also known as the Ho-Chunk and Menominee, which were from what is now modern-day Wisconsin. There was a small disgruntled group of Sac warriors, led by Chief Blackhawk that joined with the sieges that were leveled at not only the fort, but the peaceful tribes that traded there. The first siege laid against the fort occurred prior to the official beginning of The War of 1812, resulted in the deaths of soldiers stationed at the fort. It wasn’t until September of 1812, that the Shawnee leader Tecumseh unleashed a theatre wide defensive, attacking Fort Wayne. Indiana; Fort Harrison, Indiana and Fort Madison, all within a few hours of each other. Fort Madison weathered a four-day siege carried out by approximately 200 Winnebago and Sac warriors. Private John Cox was killed and the outbuildings, including the factory trading post were destroyed, ending Fort Madison’s role as a trading post.

Used as a forward intelligence gathering outpost until November of 1813, the decision was made to abandon the fort due to the ongoing encounters with hostile tribes resulting in six more casualties. The fort had run out of food, which was due in part to misuse of government funds by the U.S. contractor, William Morrison. With the soldiers unable to hunt or forage outside of the fort’s walls, the decision was made to burn the fort and withdraw to St. Louis.

The indigenous, tribes began referring to the location as Potowonok, meaning “Ring of Fire.” It wouldn’t be until the newly established Iowa Territories were opened to settlers that the area would be inhabited by Anglo-Saxon immigrants. The pioneers were drawn to the location by the “lone chimneys” seen standing along the banks of the Mississippi River as steamboats began moving up and down stream. The legend of the fort resulted in the City of Fort Madison. Incorporated into the Iowa Territory in 1838, the city became the home of The Iowa Territorial Prison. This territorial prison is still standing to this day, encased in the walls of what is now referred to as Historic Iowa State Penitentiary, housing inmates from 1838 to 2015, when the 177-year-old institution closed, making it the oldest continually used penitentiary in the United States.

The community was home to Sheaffer Pens, which were invented and produced there until 2007 and continues to welcome cowboys to town every September for the Tri-State Rodeo, a nationally qualifying rodeo.

With its newest festival Riverfest, rocking out on the banks of the Mississippi River in the first week of August and many more festivities and unique attractions, visitors to the area can join into all of the festivities. They can also visit Old Fort Madison, a period specific replica of the original Fort Madison which stands in tribute to the Army’s 1st Infantry and the servicemen who lost their lives there while expanding our nation ever westward to the Pacific Ocean.

You can access more information at visitfortmadison.com or by downloading Tourburst© a downloadable app, through either the iTunes or Google Play stores for use on any smartphone. Visit the City of Fort Madison, Iowa online today and plan a trip to the place where Iowa began.
Branson, Missouri
Where Wondrous Christmas Trees and Shopping Sprees Welcome Visitors

It's no wonder that Branson, Missouri goes all out to celebrate Christmas. Nestled in the heart of the beautiful Ozark Mountains and renowned as the live music show capital of the world, at any time of year the city offers its guests the most heartwarming and genuine of welcomes. Come the holidays, those greetings grow more joyous than ever as Branson's people, its natural treasures, its memorable attractions and live shows, and singular shopping experiences all express the Christmas spirit so exuberantly that abundant goodwill truly reigns toward every man, woman, and child.

Starting on the first weekend of November, residents and visitors alike gaze in amazement at a town that has miraculously become America's Christmas Tree City — its proud official title since 2017. This year's displays are bigger and better than ever, with almost one thousand brilliantly decorated large Christmas trees on public display all around the greater Branson area. (And that number doesn't even include another thousand-plus trees within Branson's renowned 1880s theme park Silver Dollar City.)

Meanwhile, the city's stores abound in the holiday spirit, welcoming shoppers into their own exceptional Christmas-themed shopping experiences featuring distinctive gift items that will help them bring home the warmth of Christmas Branson-style. It all adds up an experience that bestows the greatest gifts of all: peace, joy, and unforgettable memories.

Anyone who visits Branson in November or December can't go very far without seeing some sort of spectacular Christmas tree, or groupings of trees, on public display. And many of them are perfect spots to take selfies — or let's call them 'elfies' for the holidays—to share on social media.

Natural evergreens, of course, number among the highlights. Some of the most prominent ones welcome visitors to attractions along West Hwy. 76 Country Boulevard, more formally known as the Branson Entertainment District, home to most of its entertainment venues. These include the 29-foot traditional evergreen lit by more than 2,500 soft white LED lights in front of the Branson Ferris Wheel; a 28-foot evergreen that welcomes guests to Dolly Parton's Stampede; and a beautifully accessorized 26-foot evergreen in front of the Grand Country Resort.

Possibly Branson's most amazing tree, however, is the eight-story-tall accurate portrayal of an evergreen that forms the centerpiece of Joy on Town Square, the brand-new Christmas experience at Branson's stellar amusement park, Silver Dollar City. Covered in literally hundreds of thousands of LED and RGB lights, part of more than a million lights in a show that repeats every 15 minutes, the tree seems literally to come alive with animated holiday imagery, including falling snowflakes and Santa riding his sleigh.

Christmas shopping opportunities in Branson are as delightful, and delightfully extensive and varied, as the Christmas trees. The city's stores abound with holiday decorations and special gift items, many of which would be hard to find anywhere else. And shopkeepers are more than happy to wrap, pack, and ship gift purchases, making shopping just as easy and far more fun than online—not to mention the many unique or hard-to-find stocking stuffers you can find in Branson.

Visitors who come to Silver Dollar City to experience Joy on Town Square would be wise to do some holiday shopping there as well. Not only was it named one of America's top five amusement parks by USA Today, but the more than 100-acre attraction also features a demonstrating colony of 100 resident craftspeople who create and sell late-19th-century American heritage skills like woodcarving, glassblowing, knife-making, blacksmithing, pottery, leatherwork, candle-making, cookery, candy-making and more.

Old-time gifts from a different era await shoppers at Dick's 5 and 10, a traditional mid-20th-century variety store founded in 1961 in the heart of Branson's Downtown Historic District. In a 1,500-square-foot, miraculously jam-packed store where model trains run on tracks overhead, collectibles displays enthrall at every turn of the head, and classic Christmas songs constantly play, aisle after aisle showcase more than 250,000 different nostalgic, hard-to-find, sometimes indispensable items that most kids today have never seen and their parents and grandparents thought they would never see again: candies, soda pops, sports items, home trends, toys and games, books, superhero items, classic collectibles, souvenirs, inspirational gifts, housewares, embroidery and notions, nostalgia, and you've-got-to-see-it-to-believe-it quirky and fun aisles.

The authentic hospitality, generosity of spirit, and wonderful memories in the making to be found in Branson, Missouri will delight your family during the Christmas season.

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We Believe
SOME CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS GROW BRIGHTER EVERY YEAR.
In Branson, we believe in a few things. And the only way to experience a Christmas vacation is to be here with us. Branson. You won’t believe it, until you see it.
Hendersonville, North Carolina

Your Home for the Holidays

Everyone dreams of spending the holiday season in an idyllic town trimmed with lights and brimming with merriment. The charming Blue Ridge Mountain town of Hendersonville, North Carolina, invites you to make holiday memories this season. No matter where you call home, you’ll feel like a local as the town welcomes you with two months of festive events.

Beginning in November and continuing through New Year’s Day, the Home for the Holidays celebration features downtown decorations, parades, hayrides, holiday-themed performances, visits with Santa and shopping specials.

“Everyone has worked hard to put together this lineup of events that continues for two solid months,” says Beth Carden, executive director of Henderson County Tourism. “No matter when you come to Hendersonville, there will be something for you to do that will put you in the holiday spirit.”

The big kickoff takes place the Friday after Thanksgiving, Nov. 29, with the Downtown Street Lighting and Santa’s Arrival. Attendees gather on the Historic Courthouse Plaza and sing Christmas carols. Santa arrives at dusk and flips the switch to illuminate lights on the trees and along the street. Hendersonville’s serpentine Main Street, lined with trees and brick planters, transforms into a storybook Christmas town with block after block of twinkling lights and elaborately decorated storefronts.

The next day, Nov. 30, support Small Business Saturday by shopping at Hendersonville’s many locally owned retailers. Enjoy casual browsing, chatting with store owners, and sampling snacks and goodies. Pop into Mast General Store, a western North Carolina (WNC) mainstay, for two whole floors of clothing, home decor items, children’s games, cookware and barrels full of old-timey candy. Take pleasure in creaky floorboards and friendly staff who guide you through the large inventory.

Just north of downtown, The Oriole Mill represents a new age in WNC textile manufacturing. The mill takes cotton, wool, silk, linen, alpaca and bamboo, and weaves them into fine fabrics using no chemicals in the process. The fabric then moves to the cut-and-sew stage where it becomes bedding, clothing, kitchen towels, table accessories, handbags and more. The high-quality products are sold at the retail shop in the front of the mill and make fabulous gifts that become family heirlooms.

Explore the talents of local and regional artists along the Art Gallery Trail, which showcases a dozen galleries in and around Hendersonville. Whether you’re looking for a painting, piece of jewelry or an ornament, or something more utilitarian, such as a ceramic dish, vase or custom greeting card, these shops represent a variety of fine art and craft.

Youngsters will delight in this year’s new Peppermint the Bear Scavenger Hunt. Black bears, the unofficial Hendersonville mascot, are hidden throughout downtown businesses. When someone locates a bear in a store, the shopkeeper stamps his or her storybook guide. Once all the stamps are collected, participants turn in their completed storybooks to the
Hendersonville Visitor Center for a chance to win a grand prize basket.

After a day of shopping and exploring, take in a show at Hendersonville's renowned Flat Rock Playhouse, known as the Little Broadway in the Mountains. The original musical revue ‘A Flat Rock Playhouse Christmas’ has become a favorite family tradition. The show runs Nov. 29-Dec. 22. Drawing on the success of past performances, the show blends familiar tunes with surprise additions for a night filled with singing and dancing.

The holiday skating rink returns once again to the Visitor Center, Dec. 18-Jan. 1. The synthetic “ice” creates a smooth surface that is ideal for beginners, yet authentic enough for seasoned skaters. The iceless rink allows for skating in any weather. Two curling lanes encourage visitors to try their hand at the winter sport.

The entire Visitor Center parking lot becomes a winter wonderland with plenty of activities for skaters waiting their turn or for family members who prefer not to skate. Visitors can play games, roast marshmallows over a fire pit, take photos in Christmas-themed cutouts, and sip hot chocolate and cider. Dec. 20-22, tractor-drawn hayrides board at the Visitor Center and circle downtown for a magical tour of the lights.

Several of Hendersonville’s independently owned restaurants offer special meals throughout the holidays. Season’s at Highland Lake—a beautiful restaurant known for its seasonally focused menu, well-appointed dining room and wine list—serves buffet meals for Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day. Or treat yourself to a night out for the holiday wine dinner on Dec. 12 or New Year’s Eve dinner on Dec. 31.

With so much to do in Hendersonville, you’ll want to make plans to stay. Whether you’re looking for a convenient hotel, romantic inn, homey vacation rental or pet-centric property, Hendersonville offers a variety of lodging options.

For a full schedule of Home for the Holidays events and a complete list of accommodations, go to www.VisitHendersonvilleNC.org or call 800-828-4244.
Sevierville's Smoky Mountain Winterfest

With more than 15 million lights along the 25-mile long Parkway in Sevierville, Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, Smoky Mountain Winterfest is a magical time to visit the Smokies. Sevierville and her sister cities of Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg put on their brightest event yet from the Friday before Thanksgiving through President’s Day each year. Beautiful lights and fun special events add to the enjoyment of winter in the Smoky Mountains — as do the Christmas-themed attractions, incredible shopping and holiday shows.

Special Winterfest attractions, like Shadrack’s Christmas Wonderland at Smokies Stadium (Nov. 15, 2019 - Jan. 5, 2020) add to the excitement. This 1.5-mile drive through LED light and music experience features fun extras for the kids, including crafts and photos with Santa (Nov. 15 – December 23).

Wilderness at the Smokies Waterpark Resort offers year-round water park fun inside the Wild WaterDome. But winter visitors to this tropical oasis can also enjoy some cool activities — including taking a spin at the seasonal outdoor ice-skating rink.

Christmas events highlight the joys of the season. From Sevierville’s traditional Christmas Parade (Dec. 7) and events like Santa Hustle Smokies 5K and Half Marathon (Dec. 15) to tree lighting ceremonies and more, there are plenty of ways to put some extra jingle in your step. Shopping in Sevierville is the perfect way to check off your list — twice. With nearly 150 name brand outlet stores where shoppers can find everything from fine China and clothing to tools and furniture, Sevierville is a retail haven. Tanger Outlets Sevierville is particularly popular with more than 100 high end name brand stores. Events like the Moonlight Madness and After Thanksgiving Sales kick off the holiday shopping season in the Smokies and are a great reason to plan a Smoky Mountain Winterfest vacation.

Specialty retail shops featuring items like fine art, antiques and collectibles and outdoor items are also popular. Find something for the person who has everything at Smoky Mountain Knife Works, a 100,000 plus square foot store featuring cutlery, collectibles, kitchen gadgets and authentic relics. Visitors can even bring a little Winterfest home by visiting stores like Country Christmas and Collectibles where Winterfest style lighting displays are for sale and custom displays are built to order.

Learn more about the 30th Annual Smoky Mountain Winterfest Celebration and start planning now at Winterfest. VisitSevierville.com.
Cedar Hill: A Slice of Hill Country Near Dallas
Rolling Hill, Rare Ecology and Unique Charm

The City of Cedar Hill continues to be a powerful draw for those looking to take a hike, bond with nature, or simply walk and shop in an area with the versatility and energy of a city, but the comfort of a small town. A community packed with natural resources, green areas and eco-friendly, sustainable offerings, the city is attracting more and more visitors every year to one of the Dallas area’s hidden gems.

What's the secret behind the draw to Cedar Hill?

Nature at Your Doorstep

People who visit and live in Dallas and Fort Worth often crave a way to connect with nature and a chance to hike and explore the outdoors. The only problem is Texas' beautiful Hill Country region is more than a three-hour drive away to the areas around Austin and San Antonio, and many areas nearby are scarce on outdoor amenities.

But Cedar Hill features the best of both worlds for the Dallas-Fort Worth area – proximity to both downtowns along with the rolling hills and stunning natural terrain of the Hill Country region. By combining some of the Dallas area's best hikes with a dynamic Historic Downtown area of its own, Cedar Hill has solved the problem of wanting to spend time outdoors in a meaningful way, while still being able to grab a great meal and visit an eclectic mix of shops.

The delightful mix of green spaces and multi-use areas ensures that visitors and locals can come to town and play or hike in a natural environment without leaving civilization entirely behind. The mix of people that Cedar Hill draws is heavily influenced by the environmental efforts of the area. People are drawn toward cities that offer sustainable options, and sustainability is built right into the core of the Cedar Hill development plan as part of the “Growing Green” initiative.

Big-City Sensibilities with Small-town Values

Some people visit Cedar Hill and never leave. One reason is, by incorporating playgrounds, parks, and other green areas into town life, the area has attracted families and individuals that would have otherwise opted for a typical Dallas suburb or conventional neighborhood.

The unique mix of offerings has also made it surprisingly simple to attract people who crave the beauty of nature, but don't want to leave the convenience of city life behind. Cedar Hill's focus on creating a walkable downtown mirrors life in a large city without the drawbacks of overpopulation and a profound lack of plants and nature. Instead, visitors and residents can easily access lush green areas, bring kids to the playground or choose from one of many dining options.

The delightful blend of amenities with access to a robust array of recreational choices for hiking and nature exploration, and the small-town charm visitors experience has led to the arrival of a wide range of businesses. Retailers and restaurateurs including dining and specialty food locations are a natural fit, but Cedar Hill is also home to a surprising number of manufacturing and industrial brands seeking sustainable locations and eco-friendly options for their products and teams.

Cedar Hill Draws Visitors From Dallas and the Surrounding Areas

Families seeking a diverse and dynamic downtown make up part of the mix of residents who spend most of their time in Cedar Hill, but they are not the only ones visiting. Visitors seeking a nearby taste of Hill Country are drawn to Cedar Hill from nearby suburbs and from Dallas and Fort Worth and beyond every day of the year.

Savor the secrets of Surry County, Virginia

Experience the free ferry ride to Surry from Williamsburg, discover the site of the first Colonial uprising and the rest of the story of Tocotanians. Feel the exciting heartbeat of Native American drums and taste authentic country smoked ham and non-GMO, pesticide-free fresh produce.

Visit Cedar Hill TX

‘The Hill Country of Dallas-Fort Worth’

Come live and breathe our natural beauty while experiencing our warm, Texas hospitality. www.VisitCedarHillTX.com
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108th Training Command (IET) “First in Training”

How to Apply:
• Current Enlisted Soldiers should contact their local ROTC program
• Official University/College acceptance letter from school ROTC program
• Inform the ROTC Recruiting Operations Officer (ROO) at University/College of Interest of scholarship thru 108th TC (IET)
• ROO will assist and build standard request packet along with 108th TC (IET) packet requirements
• ROO will submit copy of packet for determination by 108th TC (IET) committee.
• Upon selection by committee ROO will submit packet to Cadet Command.

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY:
• Currently in the Army Reserve or eligible to enlist (Valid CH 2 MEPS physical)
• U.S. Citizen between ages of 17-30
• (Can be no older than 30 in year of commission).
• Pass a valid APFT
• AR 600-9 HT/WT compliant
• Official University/College acceptance letter with a ROTC program
• Serve 8-year obligation once commissioned
• Participate in Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP)
• Graduate students can apply for 2 Year scholarship
• 4-YR GRFD with non-prior service 1000 SAT or 19 ACT scores, 2.5 H.S. GPA
• 3-YR or less GRFD with established 2.5 or higher GPA

Benefits:
• Covers full tuition and fees (uncapped)
• Or $10,000/year toward room/board
• Yearly book allowance of $1200
• Monthly stipend of $420 while in attendance
• Paid as a E-5/Sergeant during Drills/Annual Training

ROTC Cadets who are already contracted are not eligible.

Deadline:
Phase I – Fall Campaign 31 JUL
Phase II – Spring Campaign 1 NOV

For more information on the Minuteman program visit: https://usar.army.mil/MinutemanCampaign/ or email 108th POCs at: usarmy.usarc.108-tng-cmd.mbx.108th-minuteman-scholarship@mail.mil
YOUR PRICELESS SMILE IS PROTECTED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

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• Even if you’re already covered by an employer plan, adding TDP for additional coverage can save you money**
• TDP can help meet readiness requirements for NGR sponsors

* For active duty family members and most NGR sponsors
**Exclusions & limitations apply. See smileTDP.com for details

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