

Thunderbolt Blast

Armor School Newsletter

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Armor News



On September 9, 2014 the MCoE and Armor School formally recognized GEN (R) Fredrick M. Franks Jr. with an induction into the Legends of Armor. GEN (R) Franks received the Order of St. George Silver Medallion. GEN (R) Franks was instrumental in the defeat of Iraqi forces during Operation Desert Storm. His service spanned 35 years and included commands of the 11th ACR, the 1st Armored Division, VII Corps, and culminated with the command of TRADOC. Previous inductees into the Legends of Armor include General George S. Patton Jr., General Creighton W. Abrams Jr., and General Don A. Starry.

The Armor School, Cavalry and Armor Association (CAA) and the Draper Leadership Foundation recognized the winner of the 2014 GEN Starry Writing Competition, MAJ William Nance. MAJ Nance received a commemorative 1911 Pistol and a \$400 check from CAA for his article *Lost Sabers: Why We Need Operational Cavalry and How to Get It Back*. The article addressed the topic: How can we improve the capabilities of our Cavalry Squadrons to ensure they meet the demands of the Army of 2025 and beyond? Pictured left to right: CSM Michael Clemens, BG Scott McKean, MAJ William Nance, and MG (R) Terry Tucker.



Maneuver Warfighter Conference. The MCoE and MG Miller hosted the 2014 Maneuver Warfighter Conference from 8-11 September. This year's conference focused on "Honing the Maneuver Force for the Next Warfight." The conference had participation from TRADOC, FORSCOM, Special Operations Command, and Partnered Nations. Guest speakers included GEN Milley, GEN Perkins, GEN Votel, GEN(R) McChrystal, LTG MacFarland, LTG Tucker, MG LaCamera, MG Miller, MG Flynn, MG Funk, BG McKean, BG Rainey, BG Rogers, BG James (AUS), and LTC Chenebeau (FRN). All briefings and presentations are available for download at <http://www.benning.army.mil/mcoe/maneuverconference/>

Armor School and OCOA

OCO A: The Order of Saint George Gold Medallion. LTC (R) Phillip Linn and COL (R) Robert Westholm received the Order of St. George Gold Medallion for their contributions to the Armor branch. The award represents the highest honor given for contributions to the Armor branch.

From the Chief of Armor's Turret

The Armor School is pleased to announce and welcome BG Scott McKean as the 49th Chief of Armor.

It is an honor to assume responsibility as your 49th Chief of Armor. Kim and I are excited to join the Fort Benning team and we are humbled by the warm reception shown upon our arrival. I look forward to working with the Maneuver Center of Excellence and the Infantry School to sustain Fort Benning as the premier training installation for our Army.



I had the fortunate opportunity to arrive at Fort Benning just in time for the 2014 Maneuver Warfighter Conference. The conference provided a tremendous forum for retired and active senior commanders, command sergeants major, and leaders to provide invaluable insight on the future warfight. The professional dialog will help in Honing the Maneuver Force for the Next Warfight. We are eager to advance and improve our Maneuver Force based on these intellectual exchanges.

As your Chief of Armor, it is my charge to develop and sustain an Armored Force grounded on the foundation of agile leadership, gunnery expertise, and effective sustainment. Our Armored Force must remain ready to deploy and be decisive in a complex environment, and remain capable of closing with and destroying the enemy using fire, maneuver, and shock effect. This is a collaborative effort and I look forward to your input and perspective on the way ahead.

COL (R) Westholm's Army career began in 1973, when he was the Distinguished Military Graduate at Texas A&M University. He served for 26 years, including deployments in support of Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

LTC (R) Linn spent 22 years on active duty as an Armor officer before retiring in 1992. During his service, he held command and staff positions in several locations including Germany and Korea. He also taught European History at the United States Military Academy at West Point. "It's a tremendous honor. I was surprised and humbled at being selected." Linn said.

Read more here: <http://www.thebayonet.com/2014/09/09/662105/doughboy-order-of-st-george-recipients.html#storylink=cpy>

TRADOC Capabilities Managers

TCM-ABCT: Semi-Annual Report. TCM-ABCT published the Semi-Annual Report to the force on 5 SEP 14. Observations, insights, lessons learned, and best practices for the report were collected during six events including three ABCT unit visits, one Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) rotation and two National Training Center (NTC) rotations. The report is an analysis of re-occurring and emerging trends observed in the past six months. The report also provides updates on the status of previously reported trends. The full report is located on the TCM-ABCT milsuite page at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/servlet/JiveServlet/download/164492-1-516002/TCM-ABCT-Semi-Annual-Report-5%20SEP%2014.pdf>

TCM-ABCT: Change of Personnel. The Maneuver Center and the Capabilities Development Integration Directorate welcome the arrival of Colonel Christopher Wilbeck as the new Director of TCM-ABCT and Reconnaissance. COL Wilbeck comes to Fort Benning from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where he was the Director of Operations for Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO). Contact COL Wilbeck directly at christopher.w.wilbeck@mail.mil; COMM (706) 545-1170.

TCM-ABCT and Reconnaissance also welcome the arrival of our new Sergeant Major, SGM Virgil Franklin. SGM Franklin comes to us from US Forces Korea, where he was the Operations Sergeant Major for 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team - 2nd Infantry Division. Contact SGM Franklin directly at virgil.l.franklin@mail.mil; COMM (706) 545-9252.

Armor Branch Personnel Notes

ENLISTED PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (EPMD): New Enlisted Branch Chief.

We are pleased to welcome LTC Fred Snyder, our newest member of the Armor Enlisted Branch Team within the Operations Division, EPMD, HRC. LTC Snyder comes to us from 1/11 ACR, Fort Irwin, CA where he served with distinction as the Squadron Commander. COL Matt Moore departed in June to become the DCOG, National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA.

Armor Soldiers should know that we will continue to maintain the open lines of communication COL Moore established through regular updates on the branch website at <https://www.hrc.army.mil/Enlisted/From%20the%20Office%20of%20the%20Armor%20Enlisted%20Branch%20Leadership>, our branch quarterly newsletters which we post to our web page found in the left-hand navigation column under "NEWSLETTER", and notes from the Branch Chief and Branch SGM as required. In addition, we have a Facebook page found at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Armor-Enlisted-Branch/876477259044650> where we post weekly notes to the Armor force. E-mail and phone calls are always welcome, with e-mail being our preferred method of contact since it provides a record we can quickly recall. When sending a note to Branch, please ensure the "Subject" line in your note is accurate and you have a valid phone number listed so we can discuss the issue if required.

OFFICER PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE (OPMD): Upcoming Officer Manning

Cycle. Armor officers available to PCS from 1 APR 2015 to 30 SEP 2015 should contact their assignment officer to ensure that they are tracked as an officer available to move during the 15-02 Distribution Cycle. A key consideration is determining availability with regards to time in a Key Developmental (KD) position. An Officer is considered KD complete at 18 months in the billet, or with 2x KD OER's. Specifically, for Company Grade Officers 12-18 months in Command (or 2x OERS as a Commander) is considered KD complete. Officers selected for a second command may stay for a total of 24 months. For Field Grade Officers, Majors will be allowed to serve in S3/XO billets in any combination of BN/BDE levels for up to a total of 24 months. Armor Branch encourages officers to contact their assignment officers to open a dialogue about KD time and future assignments early in the manning cycle. This allows the officer to provide input into the assignment process and gives the assignment officer the most flexibility in balancing the needs of the Army with the preferences and professional requirements of the officer.

Check the Amor Branch website for the latest updates and contact information for your assignment officer. <https://www.hrc.army.mil/Officer/AR%20Officer%20Home>

Again, it is an honor to serve our Armor and Cavalry community and develop the future FORGE THE THUNDERBOLT!

BG Scott McKean

"49"

From the CSM's OP

The End Depends On The Beginning

As the Armor School strives to provide the highest quality Soldiers to the operational force, the statement above has never been truer. The Armor School is unique in that it is the only organization in the Army with the specific mission of training Armor and Cavalry Soldiers and Leaders. In



the pursuit of excellence, we must strive to provide every student with unparalleled and observable leadership examples every day. In order to ensure the best product, it is paramount that we manage the talent within the Armor School and ensure that Soldiers have the opportunity to serve in a position that best capitalizes on their talents, with the understanding that what an NCO says in class is not as important as the habits that he or she displays on a daily basis. Reputation is everything.

To support of these goals, the Armor School has instituted an Instructor Leader Assessment Program (ILAP). Beginning in the month of August, every Soldier that arrives to the Armor School from SSG to MSG, regardless of MOS, will conduct a one-day assessment of their knowledge, skills, and attributes before assigning them to their job here on Fort Benning. The ILAP is a tool designed to highlight an individual's competence so that the USAARMS can raise the standard of training. We have created a fair and consistent scenario where, under physical and mental stress, we have the opportunity to observe an individual's competencies and attributes in relation to themselves, their peers, and their leadership. Attributes such as character, accountability, adaptability, initiative, teamwork and problem solving are just a few of the attributes we are looking for.

We believe that these competencies, taken directly from the Army Learning Model and the Maneuver Leader Development Strategy, are integral to the makeup of the professional Noncommissioned Officer that you want teaching and leading the next generation of lieutenants, NCOs and Soldiers, remembering that the Army Chief of Staff of 2042 is in our courses now.

Key to this process is the reception counseling that every Soldier receives before beginning the ILAP. It outlines the duties and responsibilities of a leader in the Armor School.

HQ U.S. Army Armor School 

	Chief of Armor	(706) 545-2029	BG Scott Mckean
	Armor CSM	(706) 545-8169	CSM Michael Clemens
	DCMDT	(706) 545-3815	COL John Hermeling
	MGMT Staff	(706) 626-1406	LTC Joseph Jasper
	ARNG Liaison	(706) 626-2306	
	Armor Historian	(706) 626-1491	Dr. Robert Cameron
	OCOA Director	(706) 545-1352	George DeSario
	OCOA SGM	(706) 545-7725	SGM Gregory Proft
	OCOA (EIA, DRAPER)	(706) 626-TANK (8265)	usarmy.benning.mcoe.mbx.armor-ocoa@mail.mil
ARMOR magazine	(706) 545-2698	usarmy.benning.tradoc.mbx.armor-magazine@mail.mil	

194th AR BDE 

	COL Scott King		CSM Robert Tompkins	
		1-46 IN BCT	LTC Matthew Scalia	CSM Richard Meiers
		2-47 IN BCT	LTC Christopher Bresko	CSM Daniel Dennison
		30th AG (Rec)	LTC David Welch	CSM Nyeedra T. Edwards
		1-81 AR	LTC Anthony Bailey	CSM Michael Belle
		5-15 CAV	LTC Michael Birmingham	CSM Samuel Roark

316th CAV BDE 

	COL William Thigpen		CSM James Westover	
		1-29 IN	LTC Richard Surowiec	CSM Ricky Fields
		1-16 CAV	LTC Jeffrey Paine	CSM Eric Littlejohn
		3-16 CAV	LTC James Hayes	CSM Jason Detty

199th IN BDE - ABOLC

		2-16 CAV	LTC Dennis Atkins	CSM Jerold Pyle
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TCM

COL Chris Wilbeck	TCM-ABCT and TCM-Recon	(706) 545-1170	christopher.w.wilbeck.mil@mail.mil
COL Ed House	TCM-IBCT and TCM-MC	(706) 545-2078	claud.e.house@us.army.mil
COL Christopher Willis	TCM-Stryker	(706) 545-5364	christopher.r.willis2.mil@mail.mil
COL Dan Goldthrope	TCM-Soldier	(706) 545-1189	daniel.p.goldthorpe.mil@mail.mil

Armor School Links

MCoE: <https://www.benning.army.mil>

Armor School: <https://www.benning.army.mil/armor/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/USAARMS>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/USAARMS>

ARMOR magazine: <http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/eARMOR>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/ARMOR-magazine/122557661278366?ref=hl>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ARMORMagazine>

Blog: <http://www.earmorcontent.com/blog>

USAARMS DIVIDS: <http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USAARMS#.Us1-TfuF2TM>

<http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/563/thunderbolt-blast#.Us1-ePuF2TM>

<http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/562/armor-magazine#.Us1-EvuF2TM>

Fundamentals of Reconnaissance and Security: <http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/fundamentals/>

Maneuver Self-Study Program: <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>

Likewise, and just as important, is the process after the physical portion of the ILAP. Each Soldier appears individually before a board consisting of the Armor School CSM, both Brigade CSMs and the NCO academy and Armor Basic Officer Leader Course CSM. During this process we discuss the individuals self assessment (completed at the reception station), observations provided to us by the losing units NCO support channel, the observations from the cadre of the ILAP and where that individual sees themselves best fitting into the organization.

At the completion of the ILAP, when that Soldier leaves the board, he or she have met their Brigade CSM, know what position they will be placed into, and lastly, have a plan of action that outlines their professional development goals for their time Fort Benning.

In closing, the talent management of the Armor School is a vital component to the training, education and leader development of our Armor and Cavalry Forces. Please contact me with any questions regarding our program and your Soldiers that are on assignment instructions to Fort Benning so that we can continue their professional growth and send NCOs back out to the force who have benefited from their time here and are able to assume positions of greater responsibility in your organizations. SCOUTS OUT!

CSM Michael Clemens

