

# Thunderbolt Blast

Monthly Armor School Newsletter  
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## Armor School

**194<sup>th</sup> ARMORED BRIGADE.** Charlie Troop, 5<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 15<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, recently received training on the Long-Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System (LRAS3) during the last half of their 19D One-Station Unit Training (OSUT). Using a mobile simulator, the scouts were trained on placing the LRAS3 into operation, operating the sight sensor, and acquiring targets and their locations in day- and night-time conditions. Instructors provided by PM-Ground Systems briefed the future Cavalry scouts on the LRAS3's capabilities and maintenance requirements, as well as the efforts to integrate the LRAS3 directly into other systems in the contemporary common operational picture. The simulator enabled the instructors to conduct training in a controlled environment and gain instant feedback on a Soldier's proficiency level. After training in the simulator, Soldiers participated in a practical exercise using the actual LRAS3. Proficiency in basic LRAS3 operation was high, as the scouts had already received quality instruction inside the simulator. Future use of the simulators will help validate and improve working knowledge of the LRAS3 within the reconnaissance community. The Armor School will install an updated version of the simulator in Woods Simulations Center for use in 19D OSUT and other Armor School programs of instruction, greatly enhancing our training capability.

**316<sup>th</sup> CAVALRY BRIGADE.** The inaugural Gainey Cup "Best Scout Team" competition update. Planning and coordination continues to make the Gainey Cup a world-class event that will test our scouts' proficiency in fundamental reconnaissance tasks. The Gainey Cup event Website is currently active and can be reached at the following link: <http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/GaineyCup/Events.html>. This site will capture key information for the competition prior to and during the event. The site currently has the schedule of events and projected weather for the competition. In the future, the site will host other information such as packing lists, scoring rubrics, Day Zero sign-in information, vendor information and photos upon completion of the event. The Gainey Cup information can be found on its Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/528944870458594/notify\\_t=group\\_r2j#!/groups/528944870458594/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/528944870458594/notify_t=group_r2j#!/groups/528944870458594/). 316<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Brigade POC is CPT Joshua Hearn, at [Joshua.S.Hearn@mail.mil](mailto:Joshua.S.Hearn@mail.mil) or by phone at (706) 626-8169.

## Armor Branch and OCOA Personnel Notes

**SENIOR NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER SELECTION BOARDS.** The FY13 master sergeant board selected eight sergeants first class (SFC) for promotion to master sergeant (MSG). The earlier FY12 select-train-promote board selected six MSGs/first sergeants to attend USASMA. These numbers are historically low for CMF 19 and fell below the Army average for each list. The primary reason for the decreased selections is not that we do not have outstanding numbers of 19D/19K NCOs but the Army's decision to reduce the number of armored brigade combat teams (ABCTs). In the next four fiscal years, we project that we will lose 100 19Z (MSG) positions and 21 19Z SGM/CSM positions. We project that we will lose 132 MOS 19D40 posi-

## From the Chief of Armor's Turret

While others are talking about fiscal challenges and personnel reductions, your Armor School is acting to prepare the force for the future. Units in the force are conducting solid combined-arms decisive-action training. The Armor School and Maneuver Center of Excellence are developing the next generation of leaders to retain "old school" skills and lessons on combined-arms maneuver warfare. As the dust settles from the federal budget debates, we anticipate some changes – but nothing will shift our focus from developing Soldiers and leaders for the Armor/Cavalry force. Even with pending constraints, we will employ creative solutions to continue all current initiatives and we will forge ahead on some new ones.



The first big news in 2013 is that our pilot Mobile Gun System (MGS) Master Gunner Course has filled and class has just started. When these MGS master gunners return to your units, please let us know how they are doing so we can make course revisions as necessary.

We are still a go to recognize reconnaissance and security skills excellence with the inaugural Gainey Cup in March. We have 20 Active and Guard scout teams from across the Army who will display their mastery of reconnaissance and security fundamentals. It will be a tough and exciting competition; please plan on visiting. The Website and Facebook pages are up; links for more information are on Page 3.

The MCoE is updating our doctrine. FM 3-96, *The Armored Brigade Combat Team*, is nearing final draft phase and will provide tactics and procedures for our ABCTs to operate across the range of military operations. The draft Army Techniques and Procedures (ATP) 3-90.1, *The Armor and Mechanized Infantry Company Team* is nearly ready for feedback from the

tions. The reductions, coupled with a fill rate of 109 percent for 19Z MSG, leave little room for promotions at the current time. This will continue to impact promotions within CMF 19 for the next few years. To ensure that the CMF's best NCOs are competitive for promotion, leaders must ensure proper utilization of the NCO in conjunction with his assignments; honest counseling and accurate documentation of his duty performance; and, reiterating the importance of keeping the Enlisted Record Brief (ERB) and photo updated. While the analysis of the last MSG board is not complete, every NCO selected had followed the professional-development model and recently updated his photo. POC is OCOA at (706) 626-TANK.

**19D ATTENDANCE AT RANGER SCHOOL AND ARMY RECONNAISSANCE COURSE (ARC).** U.S. Army Armor School (USAARMS) strongly encourages the 19D MOS to undertake available Ranger School and ARC slots. There are 487 coded positions available for NCOs to attend Ranger School for FY13. ABCTs are authorized 180 SGT (19D2G) team-leader slots, 12 per BCT. Stryker BCTs are authorized 144 slots for both SSG (19D3G) section-leader and SGT (19D2G) team-leader slots, 18 per BCT. Also, there are 19 authorized RTB slots for 19D3Vs, 10 for SSG and nine for SFC. ARC slots are available to both Active Army and Reserve Component NCOs and commissioned officers in Armor, Infantry, Engineers, Aviation, Military Intelligence, Field Artillery – first or second lieutenants who have successfully completed the Basic Officer Leadership Course, and NCOs who have successfully completed Basic Noncommissioned Officer's Course or Advanced Leadership Course. MOS 19Ds have the opportunity to attend these courses to further increase their fundamental understanding and knowledge of both reconnaissance and small-unit tactics to help promote leadership potential and professional development. For more information, visit <http://www.benning.army.mil>.

## Doctrine Updates

**ATP 3-20.15 PUBLICATION.** As the Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) Doctrine Branch welcomes a new year, we are pleased to announce the publication of ATP 3-20.15, **Tank Platoon**. This manual was published in December 2012 and is available at <https://armypubs.us.army.mil>. We are also making final adjustments to ATP 3-90.1, **Armor and Mechanized Infantry Company Team**, which we expect to publish by mid-2013.

We'll start this year by providing some insight to what doctrine is and how it's used.

Army operations are doctrine-based. Army doctrine forms the basis for training. It is a systematic body of thought describing how Army forces intend to operate as a member of the Joint force in the present and near-term, with current force structure and materiel. It applies to all operations, describing how (not what) to think about operations and what to train. It provides an authoritative guide for leaders and Soldiers while allowing freedom to adapt to circumstances. For the most part, doctrine is descriptive rather than prescriptive.

Doctrine is not a substitute for mature judgment, careful mission analysis or informed leadership.

The ABCT Doctrine Branch POCs are LTC Stephon Calhoun, [stephon.calhoun.mil@mail.mil](mailto:stephon.calhoun.mil@mail.mil), and Bruce Moore, [bruce.m.moore2.civ@mail.mil](mailto:bruce.m.moore2.civ@mail.mil).

force, so please provide your thoughts and input to ensure we produce realistic, effective doctrine.

We've started planning for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sullivan Cup 3-6 Sep 13. This year we will invite a crew from the U.S. Marine Corps to compete. More information will be available soon, but you can begin preparing your teams to earn the title of the best tank crew in the U.S. military.

There is one change to our spring calendar: this year's Reconnaissance Summit has moved and will link in with the Maneuver Conference in the fall. However, in the interim we are keeping our eyes out front and looking at the future of reconnaissance and security. We're building concepts on the Scout of the Future and on a new scout-platoon organization to meet the future battlefield's challenges and opportunities. Look for upcoming articles in ARMOR magazine, for information coming out on the hot loop, and be sure to engage in these important debates.

GEN(R) McCaffrey recently visited MCoE and remarked that he "learned a while back that if you have problem on the battlefield ... find an M1 tank!" There is a lot happening at the school to ensure this statement remains true. Stay tuned to the Blast, Facebook and Twitter to learn more. As always, we welcome your feedback on how we can improve our support to your efforts in the field.

Giddyup! 47

## From the CSM's OP

Happy New Year and we hope the holidays were good to all. Wow, 2013 already. It seems like just yesterday we were all worried about Y2K and a technology meltdown. It never happened, and we all survived. This year will be no different.

On paper and in the news, it looks bad. Budget reductions, reducing the Army, Benghazi, Algeria, Korea and Iran all create the air of uncertainty and anxiety among Soldiers. Combine these things with the recent master sergeant promotion list and you have a recipe for disillusion among our younger generation of noncommissioned officers.

We as the senior leaders of the Armor force really need to get together on our message to our young Soldiers and NCOs. Yes, the Army is going to get smaller. Yes, we as a branch are overstrength. Overseas contingency operations (OCO) have been a boon for all combat MOSs. We got to have more Soldiers, more equipment and faster promotions. That is catching up to us now as the war effort draws down. But this is not the first time this has ever happened in the Army's history. Many of us were probably around during the mass exodus after Desert Storm in 1991.



## HQ U.S. Army Armor School

	Armor CMDT	(706) 545-2029	COL Paul Laughlin
	Armor CSM	(706) 545-8169	CSM Miles Wilson
	DCMDT	(706) 545-3815	COL Scott King
	ARNG Liaison	(706) 626-2306	LTC Scott Fowler
	MGMT Staff	(706) 626-1406	LTC Matt Boal
	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)	email OCOA
<b>ARMOR</b> magazine	(706) 545-2698	email <b>ARMOR</b>	

## 192<sup>nd</sup> IN BDE

	<b>COL Ron Clark</b>		<b>CSM Clyde Glenn</b>	
		<b>1-46 IN BCT</b>	LTC Brown, Cale	CSM Dydasco, Eugene
		<b>2-47 IN BCT</b>	LTC Feger, Kyle	CSM Dennison, Daniel
		<b>3-47 IN BCT</b>	LTC Thompson, Travis	CSM Svenson, Todd
		<b>30th AG (Rec)</b>	LTC Kidder, Stuart	CSM Reddock, Earla

## 194<sup>th</sup> AR BDE

	<b>COL Kevin MacWatters</b>		<b>CSM Robert Tompkins</b>	
		<b>1-81 AR</b>	LTC Plummer, Dawson	CSM Lockhart, Dean
		<b>3-81 AR</b>	LTC McCoy, Jeff	CSM Wagner, Anthony
		<b>5-15 CAV</b>	LTC Koloski, Andrew	CSM Roark, Samuel

## 316<sup>th</sup> CAV BDE

	<b>COL David Davidson</b>		<b>CSM Michael Clemens</b>	
		<b>1-16 CAV</b>	LTC Brown, Mark	CSM Martin, Valmond
		<b>2-16 CAV</b>	LTC Diano, Oscar	CSM Feltman, Bradley
		<b>3-16 CAV</b>	LTC Mackey, Andre	CSM Williamson, Michael

<b>TCM</b>			
COL Nicoson, Gary	TCM-ABCT and TCM-BfSB	(706) 545-2517	gary-nicoson@us.army.mil
COL House, Ed	TCM-IBCT	(706) 545-2078	claud.house@us.army.mil
COL Speights, Elmer	TCM-Stryker	(706) 545-5364	elmer.speights3.mil@mail.mil

## Army National Guard Regional Training Institutes (RTIs)

	School code	958	1016	998	1012	1017	1012
	Location	Gowen Field Armor SME Site IDARNG Boise, ID	ARNG Res. Tng Ctr Smyrna, TN	Camp Shelby Hattiesburg, MS	Fort Indiantown Gap Annville, PA	Camp Mabry Austin, TX	Camp Ripley Little Falls, MN
	ARNG RTI	1-204 <sup>th</sup>	2-117 <sup>th</sup>	1-154 <sup>th</sup>	1-166 <sup>th</sup>	1-136 <sup>th</sup>	175 <sup>th</sup> Regt
<b>M1A1 Tank Commander Certification</b> 171-SI3M/19K2/3/4		X					
<b>Scout Commander Certification</b> 171-SI3X/ASID3		X	X	X			
<b>Cavalry Scout (MOS-T)</b> 171-19D10 (HMMWV/M3) (R)		X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Cavalry Scout Adv Ldr</b> 171-19D30-C45		X	X	X	X	X	
<b>Armor Crewman (M1A1)</b> 171-19K10 (M1A1) (R)		X		X			
<b>Armor Crewman (M1A2)</b> 171-19K10 (M1A2) (R)		X					
<b>Armor Crewman Adv Ldr</b> 171-19K30-C45		X		X	X		

Courses highlighted in yellow are not yet supported with required equipment.

Promotions are going to be lean until the Army settles on its endstrength and the number of brigade combat teams on active duty. However, the best and most qualified NCOs will still get promoted. It is very important that we remind our NCOs to always keep their records up to date and correct, make sure their DA photo is the same, and that they are doing the right branch-qualifying position for the right amount of time. Today's NCOs must seek self-development, maintain their NCOES requirements and seek courses and jobs that will broaden their experience.

Lastly, we need to tell our NCOs that this is an exciting time to be in the Army. Doctrine, formations and equipment are all changing for the Army of 2020, and NCOs are playing an important role in these changes. The nation's wars and OCOs will be won on the "backbone" of the NCO Corps, just like every other war this nation has fought. I'm proud to be a small part of such an awesome group!

Armor Strong!

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### Upcoming Events

1-5 March 13 - Gainey Cup  
3-6 Sep 13- Sullivan Cup



### Gainey Cup Links

**Armor School:** <http://www.benning.army.mil/armor/GaineyCup/>

**Facebook:** [https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/528944870458594/532503716769376/?notif\\_t=group\\_activity](https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/528944870458594/532503716769376/?notif_t=group_activity)

### Armor School Links

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

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

**ARMOR magazine:** <https://www.benning.army.mil/armor/ArmorMagazine/index.htm>



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