

# Chief of Armor's Hatch: Readiness, Sullivan Cup

by BG Scott McKean

From Feb. 24-28, 1991, the Army's Air-Land Battle doctrine proved to be decisive. Specifically, the Armored Force once again demonstrated its role as the combat arm of decision. It's important to remember that just 15 years prior, our Army was characterized by images of the U.S. Embassy evacuation in Saigon, inferior equipment and low morale. However, in those 15 years, our Army transformed into a high-quality all-volunteer force, fielded the Big Five systems – including the M1 Abrams main battle tank – and honed our skills in Air-Land Battle doctrine.

Today, 25 years after Desert Storm, the Armored Force is in high demand across the Middle East, Republic of Korea and Eastern Europe. Every armored brigade combat team (ABCT) is committed to rotational missions, and 2<sup>nd</sup> ABCT, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, is coming out of the network-integration evaluation requirements to allow for rotational employment. The demand on our Armored Force requires the highest level of readiness, a requirement that we are fully confident of achieving and maintaining across the force. Our gunnery and maintenance programs will be the cornerstone of our readiness, but the task will also require increased attention across the spectrum from fundamentals of mounted land navigation to more complex air-ground operations and synchronization of fires. In this edition, we begin the discussion on issues regarding the decisive-action training environment that armor formations are experiencing.

The 2016 Sullivan Cup will be held at Fort Benning May 1-6 and will challenge the best tank crews from our ABCTs, the Marine Corps and Canada in many of the skills discussed previously. These competitions play a pivotal role in developing a culture of excellence that produces the next generation of lethal and competent tankers and cavalymen. The tradition of excellence is promulgated throughout our formations as crews vie for unit "Top Tank" or similar recognition, but more importantly, this culture is demonstrated at combat-training centers and, when called, on our battlefields. As MacArthur stated many years ago, "Upon fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds that upon other fields, on other days, will bear the fruits of victory."

The Saint George Ball on Friday, May 6, will culminate a great week of competition as the winning crew is recognized. The ball will also be the venue to induct retired GEN Fred Franks and retired SMA Ken Preston into the Order of St. George-Gold Medallion. These great warriors have provided a lifetime of service to our community, and I could not think of two more deserving recipients – congratulations, gentlemen! All information for these events are listed in this edition, and we hope you can join us.