

Commandant's Note

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As 2025 draws to a close, we continue to reflect on our proud heritage as we press forward in transforming into a more lethal, agile, and capable fighting force. The Infantry's story is one of constant adaptation — a legacy of grit, sacrifice, and innovation that spans from the trenches of past wars to the evolving multidomain battlefield of today. This year reminded us that transformation is not merely about modernization of equipment or technology, but about the continuous sharpening of the Soldier's mind, body, and spirit to meet the demands of future conflict.

In September, I had the distinct honor of presenting GEN (Retired) Vincent K. Brooks, CSM (Retired) Gerald "Gerry" Klein, and Mr. E. Paul Voorhees with the Doughboy Award for their lifelong contributions to the U.S. Army Infantry. The award, presented annually on behalf of all Infantrymen past and present, recognizes exceptional leaders who embody the highest standards of service and dedication. These individuals represent the essence of what it means to be Infantry — selfless service, humility, and an unyielding commitment to mission accomplishment. Their example reminds us that while technology and doctrine evolve, the character and leadership of the Infantry Soldier remain the foundation of our strength.

Presented during the week of the Maneuver Warfighter Conference, this year's Doughboy Award ceremony carried forward that same spirit of excellence into an event that explored the Army's most pressing challenges — how to deliver capabilities at speed and scale, maintain readiness, and harness emerging technologies to ensure dominance on future battlefields. The conference also underscored the importance of realistic training that reflect the complexities of contemporary battlefields, ensuring our Soldiers are ready to close with and destroy the enemy anytime, anywhere, under any conditions.

The articles in this edition of *Infantry* run the gamut of these topics, ranging from discussions on training considerations and doctrine proposals to recommendations on avoiding data overload and balancing integration and synchronization in planning.

The first article of the issue is one I find particularly valuable. In "Close Fighting Fundamentals: Tactical-Level Training Considerations to Prepare for Uncertain Future Battlefields," LTG Gregory K. Anderson, the commanding general of the XVIII Airborne Corps, shares supplemental training guidance to

help leaders envision what types of close-combat skills Soldiers will need to be able to fight and win future wars. "Knowing what you want your formation to be able to do is the first step to getting your training methodology correct," he succinctly notes. While also incorporating additional context focusing on large-scale combat operations, his subsequent considerations are based on his experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan and mostly learned from NCOs who were experts in the fundamentals of warfighting. Our Army must continue to cultivate robust teams and leaders who can think critically, demonstrate mastery of fundamental skills, and excel in night operations to prepare for the uncertainties and diverse challenges we will face on future battlefields.

Another article I'd like to highlight is "Ivy Raider 'Moneyball for Gunnery,'" which is Part 2 of a series that leaders in the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division wrote about their efforts to leverage data analytics to identify factors that could help improve crew performance during Stryker gunnery. The first part, which ran in last Winter's edition of *Infantry*, was recently recognized by the Chief of Staff of the Army as one of his articles of the year. Part 2 analyzes the importance of platform-trained master gunners, Stryker embedded trainers, and gunner selection on Table VI qualification. I applaud the authors' innovative approach, which aims to increase crew lethality while also saving time and resources.

And finally, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to CSM Jason Dein for his unwavering dedication and exemplary service as he retires after more than 28 years of distinguished service to the Army and our Infantry. I also warmly welcome CSM Christopher K. Donaldson, who joins the Infantry School team after serving as the senior enlisted advisor for the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Germany.

As we move into 2026, our focus remains steadfast: to develop leaders of character, to field formations that can fight and win in any domain, and to preserve the proud heritage of the Infantry for generations to come. We owe it to those who came before us, to those we lead today, and to those who will one day wear the blue cord.

I am the Infantry! Follow me!

