

Commandant's Note

BG PHILLIP J. KINIERY

It is a distinct honor and privilege to succeed MG Monté Rone as the 62nd Commandant of the U.S. Army Infantry School, Chief of Infantry, and Director of the Soldier Lethality Cross-Functional Team.

I've always prioritized professional development and hard, relevant training. The modern battlefield demands Soldiers and leaders who are prepared for the hardest day of ground combat. Physical toughness, mental resilience, and grit are in high demand, and we have a responsibility to deliver. We must integrate new technology, pass on lessons learned, and train as hard as possible to be prepared to fight and win anywhere in the world at any time.

As our Army undergoes its most significant transformation in decades, the Infantry Branch is changing as well, and I'm excited to guide leaders through such a momentous time. Our rapid adaptation to large-scale combat operations is a necessary shift away from global war on terrorism (GWOT)-era tactics. We will face numerous opportunities as we integrate new equipment and develop cutting-edge tactics and doctrine for the future battlefield, and we have the best leaders in the nation to seize these opportunities and pave a way forward. During times like these, I think it's important to place an emphasis on leader and Soldier development. New technology and advanced weaponry will never replace our brave men and women whom our country relies on to accomplish the mission. It has never been more critical to produce combat-ready officers, NCOs, and Soldiers for our force.

The collection of articles in this issue of *Infantry* targets several focus areas — to include unmanned aerial systems (UAS), command and control, and Soldier load, among others — and aims to help prepare our force for the next fight.

In his article, "Integrating Drones Isn't Intuitive — Practical Ways to Build this Critical Capability," LTC Reed Markham accurately comments that UAS "are not just the future of warfare; they are the present." As we have seen in conflicts around the world, UAS are playing a major role in combat operations. LTC Markham shares how his battalion identified challenges to drone integration and worked to improve their UAS capabilities by training leaders to better understand their usage, building operator expertise, and modifying systems to efficiently resource and maintain UAS assets.

Another article I'd like to highlight is "Relearning Infiltrations: The Light Infantry Advantage," which discusses the recent use of infiltrations by Ukrainian forces and encourages U.S. forces to maintain a high level of proficiency in this often-misunderstood form of maneuver. LTC Aaron Childers and MAJ Michael Stewart detail the benefits that light infantry forces bring to the fight and how well suited they are to conduct infiltrations. They make a strong argument about the versatility that infiltrations offer and state that infantry forces need this skill set to be successful against our near-peer adversaries.

An article I am hoping will generate some discussion is SSG L. Armando De Lara and COL Ryan Kranc's "Scouts vs Snipers: Combining the Craft to Survive LSCO," which discusses the evolving role of snipers in the Army and factors that are affecting this critical force multiplier. It details the importance of properly employing snipers and understanding what they bring to the force. When utilized correctly, snipers can provide timely intelligence updates and support command and control. The authors provide numerous recommendations to address the challenges currently faced by snipers. These include making structural changes, educating leaders on their proper employment, integrating sniper curriculum into the NCO Education System, and upgrading the sniper training pipeline.

In "Techniques for Mortar Ammunition Planning," MAJ Andrew Patterson provides insight to mortar planning at the battalion and company levels. The article details effective strategies for multiple points of friction commonly found in mortar operations. MAJ Patterson discusses the link between haul capacity and how it affects the type

of support that mortars are able to provide. He also emphasizes tailored mission planning as an essential part to providing the best possible operational support.

One of the missions of our branch professional bulletin is to provide a forum for new ideas and generate discussion on any topic relating to our profession. If you read something you agree or disagree with in any of our issues, I encourage you to share your thoughts (or even write a rebuttal) to our editorial staff (usarmy.moore.tradoc.mbx.infantry-magazine@army.mil). We want your feedback! In the coming months, we will be making changes to the frequency in which we publish articles and modernizing our publication methods to reach more readers and increase professional discourse. These changes are part of a larger Chief of Staff initiative to renew professional military writing — the Harding Project, which you can read more about on the following page.

I am the Infantry! Follow me!