

# Thunderbolt Blast

Armor School Newsletter

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## From the Chief of Armor's Turret

*The Armor School is pleased to announce and welcome the selection of COL Leopoldo A. Quintas as the 48<sup>th</sup> Chief of Armor.*

Let me start by saying how humbled and honored I am to have been selected to serve as the 48<sup>th</sup> Chief of Armor, and how excited both Lori and I are to be stationed at the home of Armor and Cavalry. I look forward to the challenge of ensuring that our maneuver forces



will continue to remain adaptive, innovative and prepared for all future conflicts. As commandant, I plan to stress the importance of mobile, protected, precision firepower and the fundamentals of reconnaissance and security within combined-arms maneuver and wide-area security.

In the short time I have been interacting with the Maneuver Center of Excellence, I have been absolutely impressed by the warm and professional reception from the MCoE, the Armor School and our Infantry School brethren.

I am eager to work with the stakeholders of Armor and Cavalry, in the months ahead as we continue the important work of posturing our Army to continue to dominate any potential adversary. Equally important, I also look forward to working with commanders, command sergeants major, leaders and Soldiers to maintain the branch's high level of expertise and our hard-earned reputation as the combat arm of decision.

Please do not hesitate to tell us how we are doing by contacting me directly at [leopoldo.a.quintas.mil@mail.mil](mailto:leopoldo.a.quintas.mil@mail.mil).

Forge the Thunderbolt!

COL Lee Quintas  
"48"

**MANEUVER SELF-STUDY PROGRAM.** The Maneuver Self-Study Program (MSSP) consists of books, articles, doctrine, films, lectures and practical-application exercises to help educate maneuver leaders about the nature and character of war, as well as their responsibilities to prepare their Soldiers for combat, lead them in battle and accomplish the mission. The intent is to enhance understanding of the complex interaction between war and politics and to improve the effectiveness of maneuver leaders in complex environments and in combat against determined, adaptive enemies. Our Army must be prepared to fight and win our nation's wars and accomplish missions across the range of military operations. A commitment to learning across your career is critical to ensuring that you continue to grow as a leader and are prepared for increased responsibility. To gain more information on this program, see <http://www.benning.army.mil/mssp/>.

## Armor School Soldiers

**194<sup>th</sup> ARMORED BRIGADE: SOLDIER OUTCOMES.** The 194<sup>th</sup> Armored Brigade is developing desired "Soldier outcomes" for the courses we currently conduct (19K OSUT, 19D OSUT, 91A/M AIT and additional skill identifier courses). Using the MCoE Maneuver Leader Development Strategy (MLDS) as a foundation source, the brigade models the strategy at Soldier/trainee level. The brigade focuses on identifying the most critical skills, knowledge and abilities gaining units must see in each graduate to determine "Soldier outcomes." The vision is to produce a more competent, confident and resilient Soldier who is uniquely prepared to contribute to the profession for his/her MOS. The "ends" are a measure of effectiveness (what do we want the Soldier to be); the "ways" are through adaptive, realistic and challenging POI; the "means" are through empowered instructors and drill sergeants, using the latest technology to present information, train and teach Soldiers. The product is a Soldier entering the profession of arms prepared to be a valued member at his/her first unit of assignment. This is a continuing initiative for our brigade, and we will further shape this strategy. We will survey FORSCOM unit commanders to help ensure we identify the right Soldier outcomes and request feedback where we need to improve the strategy. [https://securewebako.hqda.pentagon.mil/CAC/ariwebAKO/GEN\\_19DSUPERVISORSURVEY\\_AUG13/](https://securewebako.hqda.pentagon.mil/CAC/ariwebAKO/GEN_19DSUPERVISORSURVEY_AUG13/)

## Armor Branch and OCOA Personnel Notes

**FY13 CAPTAINS' BOARD ANALYSIS.** The FY13 ACC captains promotion list was released Aug. 8. This year, Armor Branch had 428 officers in the primary zone; 405 were selected for a percentage of 94.6 percent. We also had 24 above-the-zone officers, nine of which were selected for a rate of 37.5 percent. The primary zone numbers identify a slight upward trend from the previous year's selection rate of 93.8 percent, for a minor difference of 0.8 percent. Bottom line: Promotion rates remained steady at the grade of captain, even with the promotion boards becoming more competitive. The overall takeaways from this year's captain board are: 1) Update your board files; your ORB and photo represent you. 2) Performance remains the key to promotion. 3) The better your OERs/ AERs, the better your chances are for promotion.

**FY13 COLONELS' BOARD ANALYSIS.** This year, Armor Branch had 51 officers in the primary zone; 29 were selected for a percentage of 56.9 percent. This percentage is a noticeable increase from last year's promotion rate of 48 percent. The key to selection remains performance in CSL positions. All

officers selected for promotion were O5-level CSL commanders, including CSL transition teams and all categories of command. Analysis shows officers receiving one COM OER while in a CSL position were at risk for promotion. The above-the-zone (AZ) selection rate remained extremely low. Two officers out of 68 eligible were selected for an AZ rate of 2.9 percent. These officers had very strong, well-enumerated ACOM OERs while in high-profile positions after command. This selection rate is slightly above last year's rate of 2 percent (one AR officer selected). This rate continues to indicate that officers on their second look are at a disadvantage for selection. Overall, our Armor officers continue to perform very well in both promotion and command boards. Exceptional performance captured by well-enumerated ACOM OERs remains the key to success in these boards.

## TRADOC Capabilities Managers

**MASTER GUNNER COURSE ENROLLMENT.** To provide unit stability within the Armor community, upon receipt of any NCO's ATTRS reservation for the Master Gunner Course, the unit is responsible for informing Armor Branch HRC that this NCO is attending the course to avoid any assignment generation during his course enrollment. Upon graduation from the course, 316<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Brigade will send a by-name list of all graduates to the Office of the Chief of Armor, who in turn will inform Armor Branch HRC to set up graduating NCOs with a 24-month stabilization period. The normal stabilization period is a 24-month lock-in, but it is the unit's decision to opt-out of the stabilization period, if needed. Also, upon return to their units, course-qualified NCOs must be placed in an authorized master gunner slot.

## Army National Guard

**SENIOR GUNNER COURSE.** By MTOE there are 42,000 unstabilized crews in the Active Component/ Reserve Component. Gunnery-training capability at the ARNG's Warrior Training Center, Fort Benning, teaches the Senior Gunner Course, which prepares NCOs to be unstabilized-gunnery subject-matter experts. The WTC recognizes that every unit that has unstabilized platforms needs SMEs, so it's open to all MOSs and all ranks. It's the perfect course to kickstart an unstabilized gunnery program. Often times a unit will send an officer or two out of the S-3 shop so they understand the process of planning and executing a gunnery cycle. Students even use their own unit YTC to develop a gunnery-training plan for their unit, which means that, upon graduation, they have something real to take back to their company/battalion leadership. The WTC will even provide VCEs to help with gunnery if the unit can't find outside evaluators, and they'll remain in touch with the unit to help provide feedback as the unit progresses through its training cycle. The course is taught by MTT, two to three instructors, 10 to 14 days long, TDY paid by the supported unit. Resources needed to conduct the course include the M2, M240B, M249, MK19 and a classroom with a screen and projector. AC units taught include 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne. For more information, contact MAJ Keith Bell, WTC S-3, (706) 545-0365, [keith.e.bell.mil@mail.mil](mailto:keith.e.bell.mil@mail.mil).

## Doctrine

**MANUAL REVIEWS.** The Cavalry Doctrine Branch of the Maneuver Doctrine and Collective Training Division is conducting comprehensive reviews of reconnaissance and security manuals for publication over the next four quarters. *The Reconnaissance Troop* manual recently was distributed to the force for initial-draft review; target date for completion of the review was Sept. 17. Also over the next several months, FM 3-98, *Cavalry Operations*, will be submitted for review to the force. Field manuals and ATPs provide doctrinal guidance on organizational roles and functions, capabilities, limitations and responsibilities for Cavalry organizations during unified land operations. FMs and ATPs incorporate significant changes in Army doctrinal terminology, concepts and constructs, and they give proven techniques developed during operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Cavalry Doctrine Branch requests your input to the doctrine-manual revisions; the drafts can be found on the Cavalry Branch's AKO page, <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/grouppage/130810>. Responding by email is the preferred method, using DA Form 2028 with accompanying drafts. This allows the authors to contact your organization quickly to seek clarification of your comments if necessary. Comments should reference the location (paragraph and line number or figure) within the initial draft and include recommended changes with supporting justification. Please send your comments to Steve King, (706) 545-6734, [steven.a.king4.civ@mail.mil](mailto:steven.a.king4.civ@mail.mil), or MAJ Ryan T. Kranc, (706) 626-3650, [ryan.t.kranc.mil@mail.mil](mailto:ryan.t.kranc.mil@mail.mil).

## From the CSM's OP

Greetings, Cavalry and Armor troopers! First, I must extend a welcome to and provide a short introduction of the 48<sup>th</sup> commandant of the Armor School. COL Leopoldo Quintas is a proven mounted warrior who joins us from his most recent assignment with the storied 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division. He has also served in distinguished Armor and Cavalry regiments worldwide and in combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He is sure to be a great asset to our Armor force and the Maneuver Center of Excellence, and I am proud to be part of his team.



Secondly, I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. I am CSM Michael Clemens, and most recently I served as the brigade CSM for 316<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Brigade at Fort Benning. I have been a Soldier in our Army for 24 years, working in every leadership position a Cavalry scout can hold, including serving as a drill sergeant in 15<sup>th</sup> Cavalry and as the 19D branch manager at Human Resources Command. However, most of my time has primarily been in the airborne/infantry brigade combat team communities. I have had a great career full of memorable people and experiences, and I look forward to continuing that for years to come.

It is certainly both a privilege and an honor to serve with and represent our Cavalry/Armor soldiers in any capacity. My No. 1 goal while a member of the Armor School is to ensure the continued development of mobile, protected, precision firepower and the reconnaissance and security strategy for the Army as a whole. I will do everything in my power to be a champion of the combat arm of decision both here at MCoE and throughout the force.

In closing, I am excited to be a part of this great organization; the Armor School has a challenging mission that is executed with the utmost professionalism every day by experts who came from your formations. It is a pleasure to be associated with them. I hope to expand both the number of contacts and partnerships with the operational units to continue to improve our battle position and to make this your Armor School.

SCOUTS OUT!

CSM Michael Clemens

HQ U.S. Army Armor School



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194<sup>th</sup> AR BDE



	<b>COL Scott King</b>		<b>CSM Robert Tompkins</b>	
		<b>1-46 IN BCT</b>	LTC Matthew Scalia	CSM Eugene Dydasco
		<b>2-47 IN BCT</b>	LTC Christopher Bresko	CSM Daniel Dennison
		<b>30th AG (Rec)</b>	LTC David Welch	CSM Nyeedra T. Edwards
		<b>1-81 AR</b>	LTC Dawson Plummer	CSM Dean Lockhart
		<b>3-81 AR</b>	LTC Jeff McCoy	CSM Anthony Wagner
		<b>5-15 CAV</b>	LTC Michael Birmingham	CSM Samuel Roark

316<sup>th</sup> CAV BDE



	<b>COL David Davidson</b>		<b>CSM Jeremiah Inman</b>	
	<b>197<sup>th</sup> IN</b>			
	<b>LTC Joseph Pierce</b>			
		<b>1-29 IN</b>	LTC Richard Surowiec	CSM Ricky Fields
		<b>2-29 IN</b>	LTC Darren Jennings	CSM Curtis Arnold
		<b>1-16 CAV</b>	LTC Mark Brown	CSM Eric Littlejohn
		<b>2-16 CAV</b>	LTC Oscar Diano	CSM Bradley Feltman
	<b>3-16 CAV</b>	LTC James Hayes	CSM Michael Williamson	

TCM

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Articles featured in **ARMOR**

**Maneuver Leaders, Self-Study and War**  
by CPT Joseph Byerly

**Trends in Mounted Warfare**  
(for **ARMOR**'s 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary)  
by LTC Kris P. Thompson

**The Men Who Put the Arm in Army**  
(for **ARMOR**'s 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary)  
by John Wayne

**Hiding Behind Mission Command: How the Fear of Micromanagement Prevents Leader Involvement in Detailed Planning**  
by CPT Brian J. Harris

**Soldier Power: a Growing Operational Concern**  
by MAJ Steven P. Meredith and MAJ David Bergmann

**Success or Failure: the Importance of Junior Leadership in the Decisive-Action Training Environment**  
by LTC Christopher Budihas and 2LT Brian M. Bove

**Upcoming Events**

May 2014- Sullivan Cup

**Armor School Links**

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

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

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

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



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