



2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter,

Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)

WEBSITE: www.2-1-196th.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/2-1-196th



Volume 8

“A Soldier Once And Always”

June 2018

Commanders Corner: Well, Summer of 2018 is coming up. I hope that some of you will be able to make the Americal Division Veterans Association 2018 Reunion, which the 2-1 Association Chapter attends as well, 26-29 September 2018 in Oklahoma City, OK. I am trying to work out going, but I have two American Legion conferences to go to this year and may not be able to make this one.



I was recently elected as the Commander of American Legion Post 284 in Colonial Heights, VA where we live. I assume office in June 2018 and the term runs till June 2019. We have an active post with nearly 1,100 members, about 600 of whom are Vietnam Era veterans.

This month we were involved with presenting four awards to Army ROTC students at our local college, Virginia State University. All the veterans' organizations were there, Legion, VFW, Purple Heart, AUSA, MOAA and another half dozen to show our appreciation to young men and women who are picking up the gauntlet of service and studying to become Army Officers. If you are retired and have time on your hands, consider looking for a local high school or college with an ROTC program, doesn't matter what branch of service, to support however you can. Our future leaders need the counsel of veterans. Remember our collective extended family, those Americans serving in our Armed Forces all over the world.

Thank you for your monumental efforts supporting National Vietnam War Veterans Day! You inspired a surge of patriotic outreach to Vietnam veterans and their families in each of the 56 U.S. states and possessions, and hosted the largest monthly number of events in VVC history, exceeding the next closest month by 25 percent! More than 2 million Vietnam veterans and their families have now been publicly and individually thanked and honored during 13,034 events. In addition, even your most conservative estimates indicate that 29 million attendees have applauded our Vietnam veterans and their families in person at these events – 12% of our country's adult population!

Got a comment, idea or complaint, contact me at Commander.2.1.jgw@gmail.com.

John

Keep safe and may the bond of battle never be broken!



“I have a very strict gun control policy: if there's a gun around, I want to be in control of it.”

— Clint Eastwood

A DVA 2018 National Reunion: The 2018 National Reunion dates have been set and Registration forms are available in the latest issue of the Americal Journal. The location is Oklahoma City, OK and the dates are September 26-30, 2018. Headquarters hotel is the Oklahoma City Wyndham Gardens Airport Hotel. Reunion guests can stay at a price of \$79.00 per night plus a 14% tax. Reservations can be made by calling 405-685-4000. Remember to tell the reservation clerk that you are attending the 2018 ADVA Reunion. Tours have been scheduled for Thursday and Friday including a visit to Fort Sill, OK where the latest ADVA monument is located, lunch is being provided at a Ft Sill mess hall and a visit to the Artillery Museum. Look for more details in the 1st Quarter ADVA Journal.

Pres. Trump Presents Retired Navy SEAL With the Medal of Honor for His 2002 Actions in Afghanistan:

Retired Master Chief Special Warfare Operator Britt Slabinski was awarded the nation's highest military honor 16 years, 2 months, 20 days after the action that prompted the award, one that President Donald Trump dubbed “The Battle of Robert's Ridge.” Trump placed the medal around Slabinski's neck at a White House ceremony May 24 in front of a packed room full of guests, which included seven teammates of Slabinski's who were with him in Afghanistan in the early morning hours of March 4, 2002. “Today, we induct a new name into the most exclusive gathering of heroes — and that's what exactly this is,” he said. The first order of business was to secure the peak and silence those enemy machine guns. Slabinski and his teammate, Air Force Tech Sgt. John Chapman charged uphill towards the bunkers, Chapman knocked one out before he was shot. “Britt continued to engage the enemy, repeatedly exposing himself to horrendous fire,” Trump said. As members of his team were wounded, Slabinski, braved enemy fire to help them to safety before engineering a dangerous retreat down the treacherous mountain slope, taking the wounded with them and sometimes moving through deep snow. Though he didn't speak, Trump relayed Slabinski's words that the awarding of this Medal of Honor wasn't an individual award for himself, but it was recognition of what they did jointly as a team during what Trump called “the Battle of Robert's Ridge.” “To Britt and all the men of Robert's Ridge ... through your actions, you demonstrated that there is no love more pure and no courage more great than the love and courage that burns in the hearts of American patriots,” Trump said “We are free because warriors like you give their sweat, their blood and, if they have to, their lives for our great nation.” Trump concluded his words about Slabinski, who served for another 12 years in the Navy.

“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and passed on ... or we will spend our sunset years telling our children's children what it was like in the United States when men were free.”

— Ronald Reagan

Ace of Spades: P.S. Last month we printed a story about the "Widow Maker" patch. The research was done by Dana Baird. The design came from a 2/1 unit member in 1966 by a grunt named Peterson who lives in Michigan.

About The "Widow Maker" Symbol: We in 1st Platoon, A Co. 2/1 Inf also carried the Ace of Spades. Sorry I don't have picture of the symbol. I remember some of the longer tour soldiers attaching it to killed enemy soldiers or left it in burning hooch's. I remember a Chaplain came out to the field and counseled us (A Co), during a resupply in the field. I was impressed that he came to the field because I don't remember anyone from BN, then a spotter plane flew over and within minutes we started receiving in-coming 155 artillery rounds walking up the creek-bed that we were using to take baths. The Chaplain did not know what to do. I gathered him up and we took shelter-whatever that was worth. He was concerned. Naked guys were running everywhere to find cover. Our CO, literally ran on water to get to the other side of the creek and his Company RTO's to call BN and they ultimately stopped the friendly Arty fire aimed for us because the Spotter thought we were the bad guys taking a bath. Whew! But more to this story because the Chaplain shared with me why he came to the field. (I hope I remember correctly, I am sure I could be wrong, but this is what I currently recall). Something about an Ace of Spades plus a portion of a body part (maybe) an ear-cannot remember all details or if was true) was sent back to the US to an EX girlfriend who terminated her relationship with a soldier in some unit?????. The chaplain was making the rounds to these units and asking all of us to do the right thing and respect the enemy body and their soul. It was against the Geneva Convention concerning mutilation. He passed out crosses to us and conducted prayer services with us. I wore mine the rest of my tour. I had a man to man meeting with my platoon/not as an officer/ to discuss not to use the Ace of Spades anymore on any person dead or alive. I did not want to give an order. I presume they did not use it again and I feel confident they did not. The reason why I did this and not go thru an NCO is that I did not have any ranking NCO's until later in my tour. I used senior specialist, E-4s, to be squad leaders and acting Plt. Sgt. I just wanted to share this with you because I remember this event. Some years back, I also shared this with my CO who is still alive. He also remembered this episode.

Mike Ford

Here's Why Troops are Poised for Their Biggest Pay Raise in Nine Years: Congress is ready to give troops their biggest pay raise in nine years next January, a move that will mean almost \$700 more annually for even the most junior service members. Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel panel advanced their section of the annual defense authorization bill, which includes a 2.6 percent pay raise and a host of other military specialty pay renewals for 2019. The move comes after House lawmakers approved the same pay raise. Although the final bill still faces months of negotiations between House and Senate leaders, the identical pay raises signal that troops' paychecks won't be a significant stumbling point in that work. While appropriators still must allot the funding for troops' salaries, the defense authorization bill represents Congress' best opportunity to override the president's pay raise target. The proposed 2019 is the largest since 2010, and 0.3 percent above last year's increase.

In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a congress.

-- John Adams

Graduating and Commissioning: The weekend 2-4 June 2018 at Providence College in Rhode Island I will rub elbows with fellow 1968 classmates at our 50th reunion, many of whom I literally have not seen in 50 years. We expect a crowd of at least 127 and coincidentally 127 have passed on to bigger and better things. We graduated June 4, 1968, and were commissioned that same morning. In the Army, West Point officer graduates were always the first to be commissioned in a given year. The reason being, that when push came to shove when up for General, they could pull the one day rank on you. In 1968 - by some mistake - we were both (PC and West Point) commissioned the same day - June 4th. Of the 90 guys commissioned with me - only six got Infantry. One of the six got killed in Nam - LT Thomas Patrick Gill, KIA 7 Dec 1969. A total of ten PC graduates were killed in the war. We will honor them all the weekend of 2-4 June 2018. The attached picture is of my Mom Evelyn, my Dad Jerry, and youngest brother Christopher. All three have since passed....so this picture which I found is a keeper! So if you're wondering about the "most dangerous" soldier in the world - it happens to be a 2LT with a map and compass. ...and I don't mean that in a complimentary way. God Bless our grunts who had to put up with us...I was a 1LT when arrived in Nam...but still most green behind and in front of the ears. Thank you NCO's and troops for breaking me in and watching my back. We are brothers till this day... and now you know the rest of the story.

LT Jerry



2LT, Infantry - US Army ROTC Commissioning Day at PC - 4 Jun 68

Arlington Cemetery, Nearly Full, May Become More Exclusive: The solemn ritual of a burial with military honors is repeated dozens of times a day, in foul weather or fair, at Arlington National Cemetery, honoring service members from privates to presidents. But in order to preserve the tradition of burial at the nation's foremost military cemetery for future generations, the Army, which runs Arlington, says that it may have to deny it to nearly all veterans who are living today. Arlington is running out of room. Already the final resting place for more than 420,000 veterans and their relatives, the cemetery has been adding about 7,000 more each year. At that rate, even if the last rinds of open ground around its edges are put to use, the cemetery will be completely full in about 25 years. "We're literally up against a wall," said Barbara Lewandrowski, a spokeswoman for the cemetery, as she stood in the soggy grass where marble markers march up to the stone wall separating the grounds from a six-lane highway. Even that wall has been put to use, stacked three high with niches for cremated remains.

Pres. Trump Donates His Presidential Paycheck to VA Caregivers: President Donald Trump donated his \$100,000 salary for the first quarter of 2018 to the Department of Veterans Affairs, a gesture the White House said underscores his commitment to recognizing the sacrifices to military and their families. Acting VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said the money will be earmarked for caregiver support programs within his department, to include "mental health, peer support, financial aid, education and research" for those families. "President Trump understands the critical role of caregivers in meeting the essential needs of America's veterans," he said. The donation is the fifth made by Trump since he became president. Previously, he turned over his federal salary to the Department of Transportation for infrastructure repair, the National Park Service for battlefield preservation, the Department of Education for support programs and the Department of Health and Human Services for opioid management programs. The White House announcement came one day after House lawmakers overwhelmingly passed a \$52 billion legislative package on veterans policy that includes an expansion of the VA's caregiver stipend program to veterans of older generations. Currently, the support payouts are only open to caregivers of veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars era. The Senate is expected to take up the legislation in coming days. Wilkie praised the House for their action and urged quick passage in the upper chamber.

Army Eyes Long-Term Role for Apache with Futuristic Weapons and Upgrades: The US Army is eyeing futuristic weapons and other upgrades for the Boeing AH-64 Apache attack helicopter, such as directed energy weapons and a compound wing, as it believes a replacement aircraft is not expected within the next decade. The plans are aimed at keeping the Apache relevant for decades to come as the Future Vertical Lift programmer's replacement for the attack helicopter, Capability Set Three, isn't due to be fielded until at least 2030. Potential upgrades include a composite tail boom, vertical stabilizer and tail rotor blade. Possible changes to the design of the aircraft include the addition of a compound wing and propulsor. The Army is also keen on updating the gunship's arsenal with small guided munitions and directed energy weapons. "You're not going to replace 791 Apaches overnight," said Richard Tyler, deputy project manager, Apache Attack Helicopter programme, during a presentation at AHS International's 74th Annual Forum & Technology Display conference in Phoenix, Arizona. "We see the Apache going forward for quite a number of years. We want to keep it relevant. We are going to leverage the work being done in FVL and in ITEP." There is likely to be more than a 20 year transition period, he added.



*BARGE IN *

Heavy freight was moved along the Mississippi in large barges pushed by steamboats. These were hard to control and would sometimes swing into piers or other boats. People would say they "barged in".

National Guard Has Eyes on the Border. But They're Not Watching Mexico: The hundreds of National Guard troops deployed by President Trump in April are now busy securing the southern border. But when it comes to surveillance, they are forbidden from looking across it. The troops operating and monitoring high-tech surveillance equipment along the border have been told they are prohibited from using it to look into Mexico. The little-known caveat is part of the legal ground rules for the new National Guard deployment along the southwest border, which calls for troops to operate "up to" the United States-Mexico border, state and federal officials said. Here in Texas, the other side of the Rio Grande is off limits for Guard members overseeing 24-hour surveillance video feeds from camera towers, tethered helium balloons and other equipment. "We are not doing foreign intelligence collection on the border," Army Lt. Col. Jamie Davis, a Defense Department spokesman, explained in a statement explaining the policy. The troops face other limitations: They are prohibited from performing law-enforcement duties, making arrests or interacting with migrants. And while troops are allowed to look across the border with their eyes, the rules on electronic surveillance place a significant restriction on the monitoring capability that federal officials have said is key to preventing illegal entries from Mexico. Mexico serves as a staging ground for illegal entry into the United States, as groups of immigrants, smugglers and guides assemble on the Mexican side of the border before crossing the river or scaling the fence in daylight and darkness. The Border Patrol, which is not bound by the National Guard limits on surveillance, routinely watches both sides of the border. "They have their hands tied," said Representative Vicente Gonzalez, a Texas Democrat whose district includes the border city of McAllen. "This is not what the National Guard was designed for." He said the money spent on putting troops on the border should be used instead to hire additional Border Patrol agents. But Republicans in the four states that share a border with Mexico — Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas — have largely supported the call-up. National Guard and Border Patrol officials played down any impact the rules were having on the troops and touted the deployment's achievements so far. The roughly 800 troops already working in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona have so far helped Border Patrol agents apprehend more than 1,600 people making illegal border crossings and seize more than 1,000 pounds of marijuana, officials said. The soldiers have been providing air support in Lakota helicopters, repairing roads and vehicles and monitoring stateside surveillance footage from hundreds of camera towers and other equipment.

The F-35 Just Made Its Combat Debut: Lockheed Martin's F-35 has seen combat for the first time. The Israel Defense Forces announced on its Twitter account that the Israeli version of the aircraft, using its "Adir" moniker was used in operational missions. "The Adir planes are already operational and flying in operational missions," the tweet said, quoting Israel Air Force head Maj. Gen. Amikam Norkin. "We are the first in the world to use the F-35 in operational activity." The Israeli Air Force used the F-35 in two recent strikes in the Middle East, Norkin said, according to the news outlet Haaretz. The use of the F-35 in combat is a major milestone for the aircraft that has been in development since the early 1990s. The program has been marred not only by cost overruns and delays but persistent attacks by critics who have called into question the jet's war fighting capabilities.

*BUYING THE FARM *

This is synonymous with dying. During WW1 soldiers were given life insurance policies worth \$5,000. This was about the price of an average farm so if you died you "bought the farm" for your survivors.

VA and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Warn Against Home Loan Refinancing Offers That Sound too Good to be True: Understand that certain advertised benefits, such as no out-of-pocket closing costs, skipped mortgage payments, and escrow refunds, are costs that are generally added to your loan and increase the overall principal balance. These are all red flags that may indicate that the loan is less likely to benefit you. Before you proceed with a VA mortgage refinance, be sure to consider the long-term and short-term benefits and consequences of refinancing your loan. We are working hard, along with other government agencies, to identify, stop, and prevent illegal and misleading advertising related to VA mortgages and refinancing. If you are considering mortgage or refinancing through a VA loan, VA loan specialists are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, to assist you. If you have questions about your current VA loan, contact VA at (877) 827-3702.

Ernest Medina, Key Figure in My Lai Massacre, Dies at 81: Former Army Capt. Ernest L. Medina, a key figure in the My Lai Massacre during the Vietnam War, has died in Wisconsin. He was 81. Medina was an Army captain on March 16, 1968, when American troops under his command killed hundreds of unarmed Vietnamese civilians. He was acquitted in a court-martial over the massacre. Medina died May 8, according to an obituary written by his family. No cause of death was given. Medina was Captain of Charlie Company whose mission was to attack a crack Vietcong unit. The intelligence soldiers received was inaccurate and they encountered no resistance in the village of My Lai and a neighboring community. Charlie Company killed 504 villagers in just three to four hours, most of them women, children and elderly men. It wasn't until more than a year later that news of the massacre became public. Medina was accused of responsibility in the deaths of at least 182 civilians. Medina, whose platoon took up a position in reserve outside the village, said during his trial that he was not with the soldiers when the massacre happened and that he didn't know about it until it was over. Medina acknowledged killing one woman, but said he believed she was about to attack him. Lt. William L. Calley Jr., who led the first platoon into My Lai, was the only one convicted of the 25 men originally charged in the massacre. In a 1988 interview with The Associated Press, Medina looked back on My Lai as a "horrendous thing" that never should have happened.



Soldiers From Army's Newest Armored BCT Win 'Best Tank Crew' Trophy: The soldiers competed against 15 other tank crews across the Army, Marine Corps and allied militaries at Fort Benning, Georgia. In October, the brigade converted from an infantry to armored brigade, becoming the Army's 15th ABCT, the release said. Cpl. Justin Harris, gunner of the winning crew, said in the release that their goal was to set the standard for all armored brigades. "We may be the newest armored brigade combat team in the Army, but we plan to release the 'Hounds of Hell' at the competition," he said before the competition.

WWII Marine Who Died at Battle of Tarawa to be Buried at Arlington: All she knows is a few stories — stories that reach back more than seven decades. They are stories of the hijinks of Harold V. Thomas and Robert Thomas when they played as kids in their family's neighborhood on Columbus' South Side a lifetime ago. Stories like how they thought it was funny to wade into the Scioto River wearing their new leather shoes "just to christen them." Stories of how both men joined the Marines, how both went off to war, how only one came home. "It just wasn't something my dad would ever talk about much," Carole Thomas-Corne said of her father, Robert. "I just knew he spoke of my Uncle Bud so fondly." Both men enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps, and both fought in the Pacific Theater in World War II. And both were among some 18,000 Marines who stormed the small, heavily fortified island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll in the Gilbert Islands in November 1943 to seize it from the Japanese. Robert was wounded and earned a Purple Heart; Bud was killed in action. Thomas-Corne, who lives on the Northeast Side, said the story that was passed down was that the man she only ever heard called "Uncle Bud" had been buried at sea. Now, she thinks that was probably made up to, in some small way, comfort Bud's grieving mother. The not knowing may have otherwise proven too much. "They say she was never the same after he died," Thomas-Corne, 69, recalled of her grandmother. Now, after 75 years of questions, the Thomas family finally has some answers. Remains that have been interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific were identified last year as those of Marine Pfc. Harold V. "Bud" Thomas, who will be buried on Monday with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. As many as 20 relatives, including some nieces and nephews who still live in Columbus, will attend.

Navy Boosts Number of Women on Submarines: Eight years after the Navy announced a policy change allowing women to serve on submarines, there are 93 women aboard Pacific Fleet vessels, including nine officers on two Virginia-class submarines at Pearl Harbor, the undersea service said. "The submarine force's women integration efforts in the Pacific to date have gone smoothly," said Cmdr. Corey Barker, spokesman for the U.S. Pacific Fleet Submarine Force. "Looking forward, the intent is to maintain a deliberate process while expanding officer and enlisted integration into the submarine force." Navy plan is to have women make up 20 percent of submarine crews. Six females are part of the crew of more than 130 on the USS Texas at Pearl Harbor, including the head of the engineering department. Three junior officers are in the engineering department, and a junior officer is in the weapons department. The USS Mississippi has three women aboard, including a department head who is the navigation operations officer. In late 2015 two women became the first to be assigned to submarine duty in Hawaii on that same vessel. On the bigger guided missile sub USS Michigan out of Washington state, which has two crews that rotate duties, four female officers and 29 enlisted women are now on the "blue" crew, and six female officers and 29 enlisted are on the "gold" crew, the Navy said. The Navy in March celebrated Women's History Month, noting that women were part of the sea service as nurses dating back to the 1800s. It would take many more years to get aboard combat ships and submarines. Women arrived on auxiliary ships beginning in 1978 and on combatant ships in 1994. In 2016 the Defense Department said it was opening all occupations to women. Women just want to be "submariners," not "female submariners," The Associated Press said in a March story. "That'll be a great day when it's not so new that everyone wants to talk about it," Suraya Mattocks, who was on the guided missile sub USS Michigan out of Washington state, said in what the AP called a "rare interview."

Flags Honor the Fallen at Arlington National Cemetery: Thousands of flags wave proudly this Memorial Day at tombstones in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, just outside Washington. For more than 60 years, the army's ceremonial unit, known as the Old Guard, has been placing the flags at graves in the huge military cemetery in preparation for Memorial Day. The national holiday, observed the last Monday in May, honors the men and women who died while serving in the military. VOA's Deborah Block takes us to the annual tradition known as "Flags in."



Air Force Debates Replacing Depleted Uranium Rounds for A-10: If the Air Force is going to keep its A-10 Thunderbolt II fleet flying through 2030, it'll need more than just new wings. It's also going to need new ammo. The service is deliberating how best to acquire more PGU-14 ammunition, currently made by Orbital ATK, for the A-10 as its existing bullet inventory -- averaging 32 years old -- is beginning to age out. It is unknown if the Air Force will stick with 30mm depleted-uranium (DU) bullets or if it will switch to a tungsten round. In 2015, the Defense Department said it was not using depleted uranium bullets in the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. But months later, during an offensive strike dubbed Operation Tidal Wave II, mission planners changed their minds and used the slightly radioactive weapon against ISIS oil trucks in the Syrian desert, according to a report from The Washington Post. Eglin officials could not speak to whether the A-10 has fired the DU ammo recently in combat. Depleted uranium is used for its ability to pierce armored vehicles, as it is 60 percent more dense than lead. DU has "40 percent less radioactivity, but the same chemical toxicity as natural uranium," according to the Department of Veterans Affairs Public Health description of the substance. Aware of environmental and health concerns, officials at Eglin are weighing battle scenarios in which DU bullets are a must and when the tungsten alternative could be used. Tungsten is comparable to uranium but a bit less dense, so manufacturers must balance out the weight to match today's PGU-14 rounds, which weigh roughly 14 ounces each. When the A-10's GAU-8/A Gatling-style auto cannon is fully loaded, it weighs roughly 4,000 pounds, DuPont said. "It is the largest flying Gatling gun in the world today." Analysts and engineers from the 780th, using a test round called PGU-15, look for what's called relevant action time. They will watch the sequence of "when the firing pin strikes the primer, until the projectile exits at the muzzle, which is very important in the Gatling gun because I have spinning barrels," DuPont said.

"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. A well-regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the best and most natural defense of a free country."

— James Madison

Soldiers Beat out Marines for Top Spots at Marine Sniper Course: Two soldiers recently nabbed top honors at ... wait for it, the Marine Corps Scout Sniper Basic Course held by the 2nd Marine Division. Sgt. Clinton Scanlon and Sgt. Bryce Fox were named high shooter and high stalker in the course that graduated the year's first crop of Marine snipers on April 13 at Camp Geiger on Marine Corps Air Station New River, North Carolina, according to a Marine Corps release. The pair had a slight advantage, though, since both already had graduated the Army's sniper school. "We did go through U.S. Army Sniper School so I think we definitely had a leg up on some of the fresh Marines right out of the fleet," said Scanlon, who was high shooter. "It was clear that everyone here knew what they were doing and the instructors were able to get the guys here shooting very well." The fundamentals in the two courses are the same: scouting, stalking, shooting. But the Marines still use the M40A6 rifle while Army snipers use the M2010. Note to astute reader: The Marines are finally replacing their Vietnam War-era M40s with the Mk 13 Mod 7 sniper rifle, Marine spokesman Capt. Christopher Harrison told Marine Corps Times. The Mk 13 shoots a .300 Winchester Magnum round rather than the 7.62mm NATO round that the M40 uses. But before you shoot the target, you've got to stalk the kill. Fox, the class' high stalker, scored the highest average on the ten stalks required to graduate the school. "You take a shot without being seen and they you shoot again," Fox said in the release. "The (instructors) do a walking sequence to try and lock on you. If you don't get found, you pass." But though the two hit the top of this intro-to-sniper school, they are not quite ready to go after the Corps' advanced sniper training. "It was a great course that has all the information to get a sniper going in any community, Army or Navy," Scanlon said. "After this, I'd like to attend one of the advanced Marine Corps Sniper courses, but for now I'm going to go back to my unit to get my guys trained up on the things I learned here."

Army Is Preparing to Send Anti-Aircraft Strykers to Europe: The U.S. Army is fast-tracking newly configured Stryker armored vehicles with helicopter and drone-killing weapons to counter Russia in Europe and provide more support to brigade combat teams. The Strykers will fire a wide range of weapons to destroy close-in air threats attacking ground units, to potentially include Hellfire or Stinger missiles. The program, which plans to deploy its first vehicles to Europe by 2020, is part of an Army effort called Short-Range Air Defense or SHORAD. Senior leaders say the service plans to build its first Stryker SHORAD prototype by 2019 as an step toward producing 144 initial systems. Given that counterinsurgency tactics have taken center stage during the last 15 years of ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army now recognizes a need to better protect soldiers against more advanced, near-peer type enemy threats — such as drones, helicopters or low-flying aircraft. Although drone threats have been escalating around the globe, U.S. foes such as the Taliban or Islamic State have not presented aerial threats such as helicopters, aircraft or large amounts of drones. However, there is widespread recognition that the service must be better equipped to face technically sophisticated enemies. As part of its emerging fleet of SHORAD Stryker vehicles, the Army is exploring four different weapons areas to connect with on-board sensor and fire control. They include Hellfire missiles, Stinger missiles, guns and 30-millimeter cannons. Also, it goes without saying that any kind of major enemy ground assault is likely to include long-range fire, massive air support as well as closer-in helicopters and drones to support an advancing mechanized attack. This is where the Stryker SHORAD comes in. Infantry does not have the same fires or ground mobility as an armored Stryker, and handheld anti-aircraft weapons such as a hand-fired Stinger would not have the same defensive impact as a Hellfire- or Stinger-armed Stryker.