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Spring 2009

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CONNECTED

Army Operational Knowledge Management

FIND... What You Need **SHARE...** What You Know **CONNECT...** With Those Who Know

Check out the revised *BCKS Public page*, your one-stop shop for everything Army KM. With more than 150 links to all you ever wanted to know about KM, the revised site includes information about: Army KM Training, Conferences, KM in the News and a KM Glossary with more than 330 KM-related terms.

Army Knowledge Management Qualification Course

The Winter 2009 issue of *CONNECTED* included an article about the structure of the KM Sections at the division and corps echelons. It also mentioned that "a qualification training course for KM Sections is being developed in anticipation of demand." For the last four months, BCKS has been developing the Army Knowledge Management Qualification Course (AKMQC) and associated Additional Skill Identifier (ASI) with outstanding support from both the TOE Army and TRADOC Centers of Excellence. The AKMQC objective is to "Ensure all Army KM Sections are proficient in executing full spectrum knowledge management, supporting their units' transformation into learning organizations."

The initial input from Subject Matter Experts (SME) produced a qualification course requiring more than nine weeks of training. Armed with that knowledge, a complete list of the terminal learning objectives and enabling learning objectives, resident SMEs sat down and identified the critical tasks necessary to adequately train a KM Section. These critical tasks were then vetted across the operating and generating forces to determine the final task list and course length.



After the vetting and staffing processes were completed, the course length was reduced to just five weeks. This includes a CAPSTONE exercise designed to raise the level of training effectiveness with a KM-focused simulated exercise. As presently structured, the curriculum will consist of common core training all students will receive together, and individual training tailored to meet the special requirements of each duty position.

BCKS has designed a curriculum that will prepare the KM Sections and personnel to accomplish their mission and an ASI which will allow Human Resources Command to track the trained personnel. The pilot course is scheduled for 13 July - 14 August 2009 at Fort Leavenworth. We expect the pilot course to fill up quickly so mark these dates on your calendar and look for the formal announcement to explain how to apply for the course. *CONNECTED* will report the

KM Tip – The KM Section

Twelve former brigade commanders with recent operational experience were asked what they wanted most in a Battle Command Officer. The three tasks that came up were "Understand the Tools," "Leverage the Tools," and "Teach the Tools." Of course the tools are the information

systems that we use to conduct our business in garrison and while deployed, a further sign of the digital era. Those three tasks assisted in defining the roles of the Knowledge Management (KM) Section at the modular corps, division and brigade headquarters, and helped in the development of new doctrine.

The KM Section's purpose is to support the commander and staff in achieving situational awareness and situational understanding to enhance and speed decision making. Like all things important, the Section does that by developing a plan that includes the "how-to" in displaying the common operational picture. That plan should detail the process on how the unit will access (and filter) new information internally and externally, as well as provide a working KM system that can route content while keeping commanders and staff from being overwhelmed.

Some say knowledge is the Soldier's last competitive advantage, and that may be true when realizing that a smart and adaptive enemy is also looking for an edge. According to Doug Brockbank, President of CKO Magazine, "...while individual knowledge is important, collective knowledge is crucial." It makes sense in this age of information operations that finally a formal team is resourced and committed specifically to this task.

Recently published Field Manual 6-01.1, "Knowledge Management Section," describes the tasks and roles of the KM Section throughout Army Force Generation. At a corps, the KM Section is led by the KM Officer (KMO), assisted by a Sr Battle Cmd NCO. The KMO directs two 2-person Battle Command Teams consisting of a Battle Command Officer (BCO) and a Content Management Specialist (CMNCO). The Sr Battle Cmd NCO coordinates KM tools and systems and Battle Command Systems architecture with G6, in order to ensure successful operation of systems in tactical operations centers, and that all relevant operational information can be displayed. With these teams the KM Section supports 24x7 operations working from the Joint Operations Center (JOC) floor supporting the staff. The teams have reach-back to the KMO, who assists key staff members, refines the knowledge management plan and provides support to priorities established by the Chief of Staff.

The four key functions of the KM Section are to advise the staff on KM and enabling technologies, assist the unit create and apply KM processes, support unit learning, and help integrate information systems. The KM Section works closely with staff and technical specialists, and participates in a number of boards, bureaus, cells, centers and workgroups (B2C2WG). In concert with other staff sections, the KM Section assists with KM assessments and analysis, the management of content, tactical portal management and virtual community management.

Their capabilities and usage are deeper than one article can address, so ask your KM experts or contact BCKS for more details on what you can expect from your KM Section.

Corps KM Section - 3/0/3/6		
O5	02A Chief KM/Battle Command Off	1
O4	57A Battle Cmd Sys Off	1
O4	53A Battle Cmd Sys Off	1
E8	25B50 Sr Battle Cmd NCO	1
E7	11B40 Content Mgme Spec	1
E6	13B30 Content Mgme Spec	1

Success Story - Professional Forums Fill Knowledge Gaps

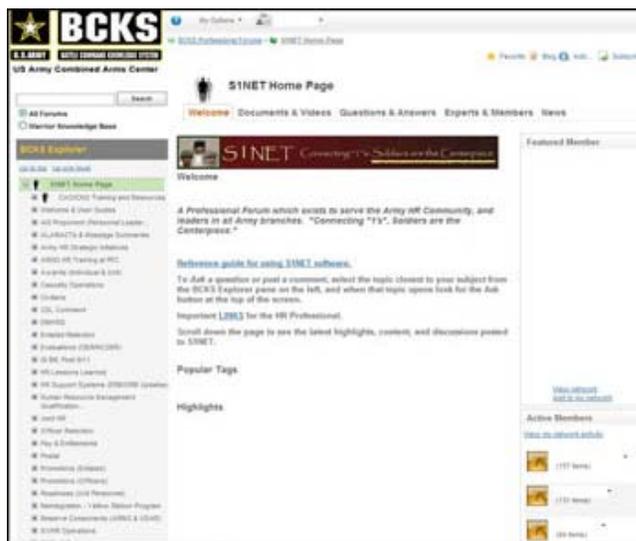
Forums often serve as a means to discuss official policy.

Action: The Adjutant General (AG) Proponency Office requested feedback from S1NET members about how information flows between the Division G1, Brigade S1, and Battalion S1 sections. "How are HR Professionals receiving guidance and updates on S1 issues?"

Result: Respondents included: a SFC, Former Bde S1 NCOIC; a 2LT from 2d Inf Div; a LTC from the 40th Div, CAARNG; the NCOIC (SFC), Office of Secretary of Defense, Military Personnel Office; and an IG SGM, US Army Europe.

Impact: An AG 1LT serving as the Plans and Ops Officer, 82d Abn Div G1, summarized the real impact of S1 Net:

- lets us reach out and touch the whole HR community.
- the best way to make sure everyone gets the updated messages.
- ensures standardization when you're at 50% strength.
- the most relevant information in a one-stop shop obtained at the click of a mouse.
- helps fill a gap in mentoring for a new 2LT coming out of the school house right into a Bn S1 job.



BCKS – Proud Parent of Air Force Social Learning

By Lt Col Mike Hower, USAF, Chief of Squadron Commander Professional Development at Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL, and the founder of the Air University Professional Forums Project.

Because of BCKS, the Air Force has entered the information age.

Well, maybe that's too strong a statement. How about this: Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) is the proud parent of social learning and professional networking in the United States Air Force.

Just like we spun off aviation from the Army Air Corps in 1946, the Air Force adopted the concept of the professional forum from BCKS in 2006.

For us, it started with a single directive from Air Command and Staff College (our version of CGSC) when commandant Maj. Gen. Randal Fulhart directed us to "build something like Company Command" for our squadron commanders. With the loan of 2,000 Tomoye Ecco licenses and a whole lot of technical support from folks like Dr. Mike Prevou, MAJ Brad Hilton, John Bryant, and the rest of the BCKS team, we launched *Commanders Connection* as the professional forum for Air Force squadron-level leaders in summer 2006.

Covering topics such as taking command, leading and developing Airmen, commander's programs, inspections, and compliance, the forum rapidly grew to more than 1,200 members, or about half of the squadron commanders across the force. In 2008, inspired by the success of the MILSPACE forums at West Point, we expanded our system to include new offerings for professional reading, critical thinking and decision making, mentoring, and commander education and training.

Today, *Commanders Connection* serves as the vanguard of social networking in the Air Force, and we are trying to advance the practice of social learning and professional networking across the Department of Defense. We've linked our development efforts for the Tomoye Ecco platform with the professional forum teams at West Point and Defense Acquisition University to improve the tools available in the coming months. Together, we are developing new and improved capabilities for status and awareness, vignette and scenario based-instruction, shared and private file management, photo sharing, and wikis, along with enhanced account, member, and forum management tools.

For more information on these enhancements, *Commanders Connection*, or any of the other forums of the Air University Professional Forums Project, check out our website at <https://forums.af.edu>.

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Cloud Computing: You are Probably Already Doing It

Imagine the amount of fat, bloated programs that hog your computer's storage and it only seems to grow. Or those wonderful digital cameras and digital video images you have been collecting for the last couple of years. And you wouldn't want to forget about videos, podcasts and other rich media that you just want to hold on to like a digital packrat. It seems we have to yearly buy larger hard drives, more memory sticks or add portable storage devices to hold all our files like the 21st century version of a time capsule. When it comes to an organization, especially a large one, those costs in hardware and software all translate to money. Along came Cloud Computing and, unless you have been paying close attention, you may have never heard the term, but you might have been doing it for a number of years.



Cloud Computing is best explained as IT capabilities offered as a service. The Cloud is a long-used word describing the Internet, but when used with Computing, some believe the term is often misunderstood. To add further confusion, Cloud Computing is similar, but distinctly different from another concept called Software-as-a-Service (SaaS). An April 2008 Gartner report states as "cloud computing refers to the bigger picture... basically the broad concept of using the internet to allow people to access technology-enabled services. SaaS is software that's owned, delivered, and managed remotely by one or more providers."

For example, Hotmail, YouTube and Photobucket are typical Cloud Computing

services. You, the user, actually place your email, video or digital images in "the Cloud" by uploading them to a site hosted and administered by a third party. No fuss, no muss. You don't have to install any hardware or software, just click a button and the text, video or digital image is placed in the Cloud, along with the storage burden. Besides the obvious space savings, another advantage is that the files (or emails) are available to you from anywhere you have access, at home, at work, or while on the road.

SaaS is no slouch, either. Imagine not having to pay the costs of installing Microsoft Word, PowerPoint or Adobe Acrobat on your machine, but still having all that capability? One of my favorite SaaS sites which allows me to write documents and make presentations from my web browser is Zoho (zoho.com) and they are all Microsoft compatible. I also use Scribd (scribd.com) to convert my documents to a cross-platform format file (pdf) that can be viewed by PC and Mac users alike on the web or downloaded to my own storage device. For work, I can use AKO for email or DCO Adobe Connect for collaboration, all services that I use but don't own. Imagine a reduction of the site licenses, seat space and the like if industry and government were to solely use Cloud and SaaS applications?

Microsoft SaaS architecture expert Gianpaolo Carraro noted that "...SAAS will grow faster inside the corporate boundaries than outside." When thinking of the enormity of managing an enterprise domain like within the NIPRnet (and by extension all military networks) consider the organization's burden for software upgrades, adding patch fixes and providing IT support.

Galen Gruman summed it up best in "What Cloud Computing Really Means" by noting that "Cloud computing comes into focus only when you think about what IT always needs: a way to increase capacity or add capabilities on the fly without investing in new infrastructure, training new personnel, or licensing new software. Cloud computing encompasses any subscription-based or pay-per-use service that, in real time over the Internet, extends IT's existing capabilities." For the end-user, it just makes good sense.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hplXnFUlPmg>

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What's Hot in the BCKS Professional Forums!

On **Signal Link**: Is the plan to just give up on radios? Following up on release of FM 6-02.43; Signal Soldiers Guide, members of Signal Link shared their observations on the new FM. There are quite a few perspectives on the FM, both 'Old School' and views from the Schoolhouse.

On **MI Space**: Should the CI specialty change to fall under CID command instead of MI and should the CI powers more closely reflect those of OSI? Does the CI community in the army now more closely represent a policing agency than an intelligence gathering agency? There are many sides to this hot topic on MI Space.

On **CompanyCommand**: CC Jam (Mar '09)

Dealing with Death: How did you deal with it personally and what actions did you take as Commander to lead your Company in the aftermath of a death in your unit? There are many considerations presented here and good insights.



All BCKS Professional Forums require **AKO** access. Most BCKS forums require membership to view or participate in the forums. To join a forum, it's a simple 3-step process:

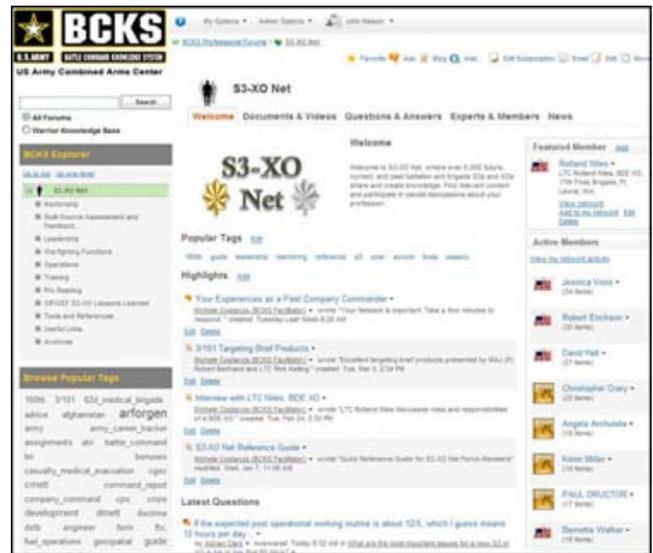
1. Access the BCKS Professional forum page at: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil>.
2. Select the link to forum you want to join.
3. Then select "Become a Member," fill out the profile and submit.

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New Look and Feel to Professional Forums

During January 2009, BCKS upgraded its Professional Forum platform from Tomoye Ecco 1.6 to Tomoye Ecco 2.1. The forums now offer a simpler and cleaner user interface, designed to make them more intuitive by reducing the number of tabs and making user functions more visible and obvious. Besides changes to the interface, the new software includes several new capabilities that will increase the value of your forum participation and experience.

The most exciting improvements to the forums are the increased social networking capabilities and personalization supported by the new software.



Create a Professional Network:

- Identify people and add them to your network, visible on your profile, from virtually anywhere you discover them and easily view the networks of those people you discover.
- Visit another user's profile to see the activity (e.g. new content, responses etc.) from that person's network, communities and subscriptions.
- See the most active people in the community and your network as well as the most helpful and most connected people in the community.

Add Favorites:

- Easily select as "Favorites" content within and outside BCKS forums and have them displayed on your profile.
- See what others have identified as "Favorites," allowing peers to note what their fellow peers find valuable and interesting.

Use Tags:

- Organize your "Favorites" and members of your network by associating keywords or "tags" when you create a favorite or add a person to your network.
- View your "Favorites" and network according to the tags you have assigned. This new feature also benefits the entire community who can see these tags when they browse tagged content or people. View the most popular tags in the community in the lower left-hand column of the page.

Build a Personal Blog:

- Blog on professional topics on your profile page.
- Discover other users' logs through their associated tags. New blog entries are visible on the profile home tab with a list of all entries under the "blogs" tab in the profile.

Find Key People with the "New Member/Experts Tab:"

- Makes it easier for you to find official experts and a host of emerging experts and leaders.
- Lists key contacts and has an online member directory.
- Contains a list of the most helpful and connected members. This list is calculated from those users who have the most "helpful" marks for their content, questions and answers.

Recognize Members using - the Welcome tab's "Featured Member" box:

- Forum leaders can recognize or give visibility to particular members.

Besides the numerous new features, there are improvements in some of the standard forum capabilities such as supporting discussions and the handling of file types. Experienced users of the Professional Forums will immediately notice that the software upgrade converts the forums' discussion capability to a "Question and Answer" capability that allows you identify the most helpful responses to a question and the most helpful answerers. Submitting new questions or answering existing questions is now done directly from the page without having to open up a separate dialogue box making it much more accessible. Additionally, this new software supports the ability to embed video files directly on the page, allowing for playback while still in the forum. Coupled with improvements that support personalization and social networking, these enhancements are a huge step forward for our Army Professional Forums.

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The Way Ahead for BCKS: An Interview with BCKS Director COL Burnett

Colonel Charles (Chuck) Burnett  was assigned as the Director, BCKS, 27 October 2008. He graduated from the University of Florida as a distinguished military graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer and Information Sciences. Key assignments include: battalion commander, concepts development division chief, procurement management officer, government flight representative, National Guard advisor, distinguished visitor bureau director, counter-drug instructor pilot, chief of information systems, air operations officer, aviation maintenance officer, and company commander.



On his 100th day as the BCKS Director, CONNECTED sat down with COL Burnett to talk about his impressions of BCKS and KM, the challenges facing BCKS and what the path ahead looks like.

CONNECTED: After a little more than four months at BCKS, what are your impressions so far of the organization?

COL Burnett: I've been more than impressed with the exceptionally qualified

people working at BCKS. The military experience, KM skills and education level the contractors here bring to BCKS is unparalleled in my 27 years of military experience. In fact, BCKS would not be where it is today if it weren't for the contribution that the contracting teams have made in developing BCKS.

CONNECTED: What are the most important aspects of your education, training, and background that you bring to bear in your position as Director, BCKS?

COL Burnett: My college degree in Computer and Information Sciences and assignment as a Signal Officer give me a good comfort level with some of the technology issues surrounding Army Operational Knowledge Management (AOKM).

As an aviation maintenance officer, I focused on making Soldiers' work as easy as possible, which is also BCKS' role.

As a helicopter flight instructor and standardization pilot, I'm familiar with the TRADOC approach to training, and can offer the guidance, understanding and direction to help develop the KM training programs needed to support KM as a formal discipline within the Army. I can tie in and blend my hands-on experience as a trainer in developing POIs and lesson plans with my command and staff experience in doing knowledge management... we just never called it that.

CONNECTED: What is the biggest challenge facing BCKS?

COL Burnett: The biggest challenge facing BCKS is really the same challenge that is facing the entire Army. During meetings with the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and the TRADOC Commander, the message was clear... there will probably be no budgetary growth in the Army for the next few years. In fact, there's the likelihood of reduced resources. So the biggest challenge is, in the midst of no growth and possibly diminishing resources over the next few years, BCKS is facing an increase in demand for KM products and services, such as forum facilitation and training.

CONNECTED: Are there one or two capabilities or services BCKS offers that you believe have the most impact on Soldiers/units?

COL Burnett: I'll look at both current and future capabilities. Currently, the best-known services BCKS provides are the online professional forums and the Warfighters Forums because they provide Soldiers and leaders at all levels the opportunity to exchange information and share expertise, which prevents them from having to repeat mistakes that others may have already encountered.

In looking at future capabilities BCKS has to offer, the greatest opportunity lies in the development of the KM proponentcy. In doing that, we will ramp up the training required for the KM sections at brigades, divisions, corps and Army Service Component Commands (ASCC). The graduates of the AKM Qualification Course will go back to the forces in the field and become combat multipliers.

CONNECTED: Going forward, what is your overall strategy and goal for BCKS?

COL Burnett: The goal for BCKS is to become the indispensable partner with all levels of leadership in the Army in how they execute battle command. I want every Army leader to know that KM is important. I want them to embrace it. I want them to use it. And I want them to know that BCKS is making KM happen. I want BCKS to be known as the KM authority in the Army.

KM is at the tip of the spear in helping win the current fight. Never has its effective employment been more important to our Army. At the DP123 GORB (General Officer Review Board) conducted in February at Fort Leavenworth, TRADOC CG General Dempsey said, "KM is one of the things that makes warfare in the future different from warfare in the past."

Call for Articles

Are you a KM professional or someone who's just getting involved with KM? Would you like to share a KM experience, Best Practice or TTP with the other Soldiers? **Submit an article** for publication in CONNECTED. KM is about sharing and exchanging knowledge, and CONNECTED can serve as your platform for doing that.



This is an opportunity for you to discuss your experience with KM and how it helped you or your unit save lives, time or money; prevent injuries; or improve training, a process or a procedure. Many people would have the opportunity to read your article in CONNECTED and it would also be preserved in archived copies of CONNECTED that are available online.

Whether you'd like to contribute an article or suggest a topic for CONNECTED to cover, we hope to hear from you soon at leav-bcks-webmaster@conus.army.mil

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Index of Links

Links Disclaimer: *The appearance of hyperlinks in this newsletter does not constitute endorsement by the Defense Department, U.S. Army or U.S. Army Command Arms Center of those websites or the information, products or services contained therein. Such links are provided consistent with the stated purpose of this DoD website.*

Some DOIMs may have some sites linked from this publication restricted.

- BCKS Public Site: <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/BCKS/>
- Army Knowledge Management Qualification Course
- KM Tip - The KM Section
- Success Story - Professional Forums Fill Knowledge Gaps
- BCKS – Proud Parent of Air Force Social Learning
 - Air University Professional Forums: <https://forums.af.edu>
- Cloud Computing: You are Probably Already Doing It
 - zoho.com: zoho.com
 - scribd.com: scribd.com
 - What Cloud Computing Really Means: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hplXnFUlPmg>
- What's Hot in the BCKS Professional Forums! (AKO account required)
 - Signal Link: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=55843>
 - Is the plan to just give up on radios?: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=679270>
 - MI Space: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=1550>
 - Should the CI specialty change to fall under CID command instead of MI and should the CI powers more closely reflect those of OSI? <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=716813>
 - CompanyCommand: <http://cc.army.mil/>
 - CC Jam (Mar '09) Dealing with Death: <https://milspace.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=108659&lang=en-US>
 - AKO Access: <https://www.us.army.mil>
 - BCKS Professional forum page: <https://forums.bcks.army.mil>
- New Look and Feel to Professional Forums
- The Way Ahead for BCKS — an Interview with BCKS Director COL Burnett
 - COL Burnett Biography: http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/BCKS/Burnett_Bio.pdf 
- Links to Other KM Periodicals
 - Navy's KM newsletter: http://www.chips.navy.mil/archives/08_Jul/web_pages/index.html

- KMCI Journal: <http://www.kmci.org/kijournal.html>
- KM World magazine: <http://www.kmworld.com>
- Journal of Knowledge Management Practice (JKMP): <http://tlainc.com/issue1.htm>
- The Systems Thinker: <http://www.thesystemsthinker.com/>
- Knowledge Management Review:
<http://www.melcrum.com/products/journals/kmr.shtml>
- The Collaborator, The 2008 Collection  :
<http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/BCKS/2008%20collection.pdf>
- Knowledge Transfer ...Through People  :
<http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/BCKS/Knowledge%20Transfer%20Book.pdf>

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Publisher Information

CONNECTED is published quarterly by the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS), the lead agent for the Army Operational Knowledge Management (AOKM) proponent, headquartered at the Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS. CONNECTED disseminates AOKM news, TTPs and best practices, and is a forum for expressing original, creative and innovative thought about knowledge management.

Information provided is intended to help the Army improve Soldier and unit readiness, training and performance. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth. Links throughout CONNECTED will work if you have an active Internet connection. Otherwise, you will need to copy and paste the URLs provided into your browser. Some links require AKO ([Army Knowledge Online](#)) access.

Send submissions and suggestions for this publication to CONNECTED, BCKS, 627 McClellan Ave., Bldg. 43, Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027; or via e-mail to leav-bcks-webmaster@conus.army.mil. We're on AKO/DKO. See us at <https://bcks.army.mil>
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