



Gen. Paul Funk, center, commander of the Army Training and Doctrine Command, speaks during a contemporary military forum during AUSA's 2021 Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

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AUSA forums focus on Army priorities

Eight contemporary military forums and three family forums will be part of the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition in October.

The hashtag for the Oct. 10–12 event at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., is #AUSA2022, with many programs shaped around the theme, “Building the Army of 2030.”

Topics for the 11 forums are framed around the Army's top priorities at a time of broad transformation that includes capabilities, doctrine, organizational structure and efforts to improve programs for soldiers, Army civilians and their families.

Each forum will include a combination of current and former Army leaders and outside experts.

The program will also include keynote speeches by Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth and Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville, who are expected to provide status reports on where the Army stands today and a roadmap for the future.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston is also expected to speak at several events.

It is no surprise that several forums will focus on modernization.

One panel concentrates on cyber and information warfare, especially what the Army requires on the digital battlefields of the future.

Another panel discusses combat capability modernization, especially looking at how early experimentation and testing can shape programs.

In a wider look, another panel discussing future fights will concentrate on operational concepts and doctrine, including new organizations and new leadership development and training strategies.

Recruiting challenges will be discussed in another panel that touches on inspiring people to join the Army and taking steps to retain those who have joined.

Two theater-focused forums are planned. One will look at land power in Europe, which will include the contested European theater and how the U.S., NATO and other allies are responding to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and how the U.S. needs to make adjustments to gain strategic flexibility.

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Battle of Mogadishu heroes highlighted in graphic novel

Master Sgt. Gary Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Randy Shughart, who gave their lives to save their fellow soldiers during the fierce Battle of Mogadishu, are the focus of the latest graphic novel in the Association of the U.S. Army's series on recipients of the nation's highest award for valor.

Medal of Honor: Gary Gordon & Randy Shughart tells of the two special operations soldiers' actions during the October 1993 battle made famous by the book and subsequent movie, *Black Hawk Down*.

During the battle, Gordon and Shughart volunteered to be inserted at the site of a downed helicopter to protect the pilots and crew.

"Gary Gordon and Randy Shughart asked not once, not twice, but three times to go on the mission that ultimately claimed their lives," said Joseph Craig, director of AUSA's Book Program. "I'm proud that we can share their story in this new graphic novel. As always, the creative team behind this project has produced an amazing portrait of courage and sacrifice."

Medal of Honor: Gary Gordon & Randy Shughart is available here.

AUSA launched its Medal of Honor graphic novel series in October 2018. This is the 16th novel in the series.



The digital graphic novels are available here.

In 1993, as a civil war raged in Somalia, U.S. troops, including Army Rangers and Delta Force operators, were sent to protect United Nations humanitarian aid efforts and crack down on the warlords who were seizing food rations before they could reach the local population, according to DoD.

On Oct. 3, 1993, American troops launched a mission over Mogadishu, Somalia's capital, to capture the notorious warlord Mohamed Farah Aideded. The daytime mission quick-

ly went awry when two MH-60 Black Hawk helicopters were shot down by rocket-propelled grenades.

One of the helicopters, call sign Super 64, was piloted by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mike Durant. His crew was critically wounded while Durant was trapped in the wreckage. Somali fighters started to gather from every direction, with only the fire from circling American helicopters keeping them at bay.

Gordon and Shughart, snipers with the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta, also known as Delta Force, were in one of the gunships from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment up above.

Learning that ground forces weren't going to make it to the Super 64 crash site, Gordon and Shughart volunteered—three times—to go instead.

Dropped off 100 meters away, Gordon and Shughart fought their way through enemy gunfire and "a dense maze of shanties and shacks," according to DoD. At the crash site, they quickly assessed Durant's injuries and pulled him and his crew from the wreckage.

Under constant fire, Gordon and Shughart picked off enemy fighters

See **Graphic novel**, Page 5



Army leads joint efforts to counter small unmanned aircraft systems



NCOs in the Advanced Leader Course receive counter-unmanned aircraft systems training at Fort Dix, New Jersey. (U.S. ARMY/KEVIN MCDEVITT)

The military services must work together to counter the growing threat posed by small, unmanned aircraft systems, said the Army leader tasked with the effort.

Unmanned aircraft systems, sometimes called drones, enable adversaries to conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions and attack U.S. forces at a low cost, according to the Congressional Research Service.

Smaller UASs are particularly problematic because many of them cannot be detected by air defense systems. An Army Stand-To on small UASs called them “rapidly proliferating ... and potentially lethal.”

To meet this growing threat, the defense secretary designated the Army as the executive agent to “lead and direct” the counter-small UAS effort, Maj. Gen. Sean Gainey, director of the Army’s Joint Counter-Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Office, said Tuesday during a webinar hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army as part of its Noon Report series.

Tactics being used in the war in Ukraine underscore the importance of counter-UAS capabilities, Gainey said.

“What we’re seeing in Ukraine is ... that when you scale this capability from a small quadcopter all the way up to a larger [drone], and are able to leverage [intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance] to put other effects ... to bear, [it] really shows the importance of having counter-UAS at scale, not just at a fixed site,” he said.

As more soldiers gain access to counter-UAS capabilities, Gainey and his team are prioritizing feedback from service members and offering training opportunities at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona.

“We’re doing a great job of getting capability out there, but ... delivering capability with the training, doctrine, ... organization and leadership understanding of that capability ... was the biggest challenge,” he said.

In addition to countering the growing threat of small UASs, Gainey and his team also are working on the more immediate task of integrating its efforts with NATO.

“As they’re developing capability, we’re working with them,” Gainey said. “[There is] still a lot of work to be done as we move forward because there’s a significant demand for some of our capabilities.”

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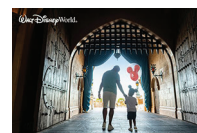
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Graphic novel

From Page 3

with deadly accuracy, holding off the horde as they waited for reinforcements.

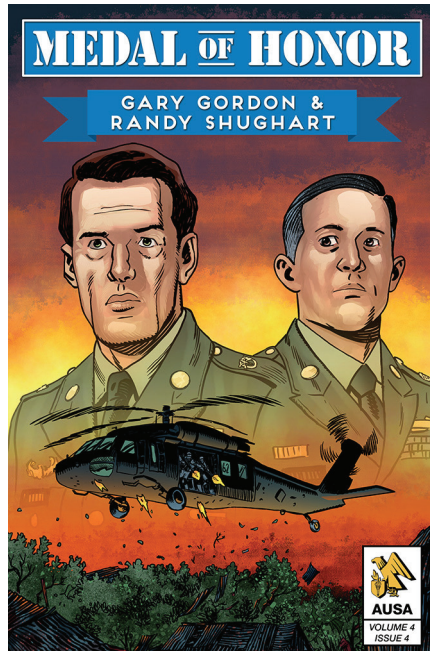
The men continued to fight until only Gordon was left standing.

His own rifle ammunition depleted, Gordon grabbed another weapon, checked on Durant and went back into the fight.

A massive wave of automatic fire finally silenced the Delta resistance, and Durant, the sole survivor, was taken prisoner for 11 days.

His co-pilot and the crew chiefs, CW4 Ray Frank and Staff Sgts. Tom Field and Bill Cleveland, were posthumously awarded the Silver Star for their actions under fire.

The full-scale battle continued for about 15 hours, into the early morning of Oct. 4. In all, 18 U.S. troops were killed and many more wounded, according to DoD.



Gordon and Shughart were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor during a May 23, 1994, ceremony at the White House.

“Gordon and Shughart knew their own chances of survival were extremely bleak,” President Bill Clinton said at the ceremony.

“Gary Gordon and Randall Shughart died in the most courageous and selfless way any human being can act. They risked their lives without hesitation,” he said.

Each AUSA graphic novel is created by a team of professional comic book veterans. The script for the graphic novel on Gordon and Shughart was written by Chuck Dixon, whose previous work includes *Batman*, *The Punisher* and *The 'Nam*.

Pencils, inks and the cover were by PJ Holden, who has worked on *Judge Dredd*, *Battlefields* and *World of Tanks*; colors were by Peter Pantazis, who previously worked on *Justice League*, *Superman* and *Black Panther*; and the lettering was by Troy Peteri, who has worked on *Spider-Man*, *Iron Man* and *X-Men*.



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National Guard group joins AUSA as Association Partner

The Association of the U.S. Army's newest Association Partner is the National Guard Association of the United States.

Retired Gen. Bob Brown, AUSA president and CEO, and retired Brig. Gen. J. Roy Robinson, president and CEO of NGAUS, signed the partnership agreement Aug. 17 at NGAUS headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The National Guard Association of the United States emphasizes the role of the Guard in national security, "works to transform our members' ideas into legislative action" and provides states and members "unified representation before members of Congress and their staff on the association's priorities," according to the organization's website.

Association Partnership with AUSA is an opportunity for like-minded military service organizations to join AUSA in support of the total Army.



Retired Gen. Bob Brown, left, AUSA president and CEO, and retired Brig. Gen. J. Roy Robinson, NGAUS president and CEO, sign the partnership agreement. (NGAUS PHOTO)

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Diary tells story of famed WWII airborne commander

Aug. 16 marked 82 years since the Army conducted its first official parachute jump in 1940.

In 2002, President George W. Bush commemorated that history by declaring National Airborne Day.

“The history of airborne forces began after World War I, when Brigadier General William Mitchell first conceived the idea of parachuting troops into combat. Eventually, under the leadership of Major William Lee at Fort Benning,

Book Program

Georgia, members of the Parachute Test Platoon pioneered methods of combat jumping in 1940,” Bush said in a proclamation of the day.

“In November 1942, members of the 2nd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, conducted America’s first combat jump, leaping from a C-47 aircraft behind enemy lines in North Africa. This strategy revolutionized combat and established airborne forces as a key component of our military,” Bush said.

The 82nd anniversary of that first Army jump is particularly resonant given that the 82nd Airborne Division is one of the prestigious groups that comprise today’s airborne ranks, which also include the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team and the newly reactivated 11th Airborne Division.

Lt. Gen. James Gavin commanded the “All-American” 82nd Airborne Division during World War II. Gavin kept a diary during the war years, starting in April 1943, when the unit was preparing to go to North Africa



Paratroopers assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division load onto a CH-47 Chinook helicopter before jumping onto a drop zone in Błędów Desert, Poland. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

through the occupation of Berlin in the summer of 1945.

That diary was kept secret for decades, only coming to light when the general’s family discovered it among his belongings after his death. It recounts observations on fellow military and political leaders, Army operations and Gavin’s personal life.

Previously unpublished, the diary

will finally see the light of day this fall as part of the Association of the U.S. Army’s Book Program.

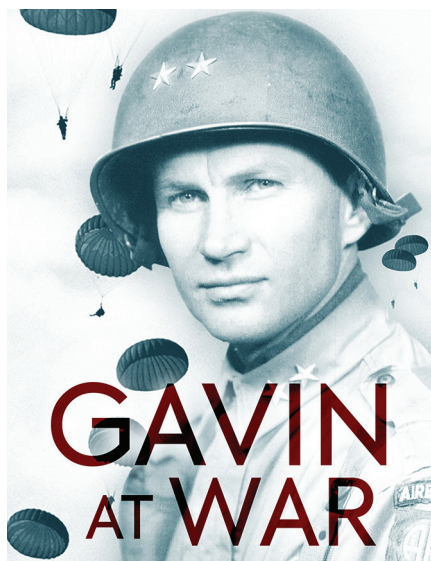
In October, AUSA publishing partner Casemate will release *Gavin at War: The World War II Diary of Lieutenant General James M. Gavin*, edited and annotated by Lewis Sorley.

Readers can pre-order a copy of *Gavin at War* now.

For those looking for immediate airborne gratification, the book program has the already published *Airborne Forces at War: From Parachute Test Platoon to the 21st Century*. This large format illustrated history traces airborne forces over the decades, highlighting key leaders and crucial battles.

Both books honor the soldiers, past and present, who have served as airborne troopers.

To order these or any other AUSA Book Program titles, please visit www.ausa.org/books.



Joseph Craig is AUSA’s Book Program director.

AUSA forums

From Page 1

Another forum continues the Army’s close study of deterrence in the Indo-Pacific and the Arctic, discussing current and future threats and what adjustments might be required in doctrine and capabilities.

The Army’s top priority—people—

is the subject of a forum that looks at a variety of programs to improve the quality of life and reduce stress and uncertainty.

Climate change and its impact on national security will be the topic of another forum.

The three family forums will include the popular town hall dis-

cussion where senior Army leaders answer questions from military families.

While the topics are set, the speakers and schedule for the forums have not been finalized.

More information, registration and any updates are available online at the Annual Meeting website.

Chapter recognizes veterans hospital psychiatry team

On Aug. 5, the Association of the U.S. Army's Coastal South Carolina chapter presented its Outstanding Service Award to the psychiatry access team at the emergency department of the Ralph H. Johnson Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Charleston.

Members of the team were commended for "providing kind, compassionate, skilled and empathetic mental health assessments and care to veterans and their families," said retired Lt. Col. Larry Dandridge, the chapter's vice president for veteran and retiree affairs.

In a ceremony in the medical center's emergency room, Dandridge presented an engraved plaque and framed letter of appreciation to Dr.

Coastal South Carolina

Tara Wright, director of mental health services; Dr. Virginia Vilponteaux Porterfield, chief of the psychiatry access team; and social workers Nakia Singleton and Travis Thomas. Other members of the team include nurse practitioners Myra Pinckney and Thomas Nygren.

Dandridge told the team that "they are unsung champions of excellent mental health care, and they are examples for other health professionals to follow."

He also said that the psychiatry access team is one of the reasons that the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center is a world-class patient- and family-centered care facility.

The center has been rated by the Joint Commission, a nonprofit that accredits health care organizations and programs, to be in the top 10% of all public and private hospitals in the country for many years based on customer satisfaction, quality of care, infection prevention, responsiveness and dozens of other standards.

It is the only hospital in South Carolina to be habitually rated as a five-star medical center, Dandridge said.

The psychiatry access team "works



Retired Lt. Col. Larry Dandridge, left, vice president for veteran and retiree affairs at AUSA's Coastal South Carolina chapter, presents the chapter's Outstanding Service Award to the psychiatry access team at the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center. (AUSA PHOTO)

with veterans and their families to develop and implement a plan of care, which could be anything from arranging acute hospitalization to discharging to the veteran's home with mental health follow-up," according to the citation on the award plaque.

Team members deliver highly skilled mental health assessments and compassionate care for veterans with urgent, emergent and crisis conditions, the citation says.

"Their primary focus is always the safety of the veteran, and as such, the PAC Team ensures that veterans are screened and assessed for suicide risk, drug addiction, the need for criminal justice assistance, and risk of homelessness, and collaborates with the veteran and his or her family in developing safety plans," the citation says.

AUSA's Coastal South Carolina chapter adopted the medical center in 2004 because of the tremendous role its employees play in supporting and treating area military members, veterans, their families, survivors and caregivers, Dandridge said.

The chapter recognizes teams and employees at the center with a quar-

terly award for outstanding service.

Previous awardees include the pharmacy team, nurses and nurse teams, the chief of the Patient Advocates office, the emergency department and a social worker with the Veterans Justice Outreach Program.

"Chapter members have volunteered at many VA medical center events and have frequently joined with other patriotic organizations to help provide funds and supplies that are needed by veterans and their families but are not covered by VA appropriated funding," Dandridge said.

The chapter has also adopted the center's Fisher House, which provides a "home away from home" for veterans and their loved ones as they receive medical care. The Fisher House welcomed its 2,500th veteran family in July 2021.

Chapter volunteers have raised over \$50,000 for the medical center and more than \$70,000 for the Fisher House over the past 17 years, Dandridge said.

For more information on volunteering or tax-free donations to the center or the Fisher House, click here.



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