

Chief of Chemical



**Brigadier General
Stanley H. Lillie**

Recently, Fort Leonard Wood celebrated the 87th birthday of the US Army Chemical Corps and Regiment. I am proud to be a Dragon Soldier and want to share our history and where we are heading in the future. I would like to share with all Dragon Soldiers the speech I gave during the Regimental Review.

“Today, we’re engaged in a great struggle with religious fundamentalists and zealots who believe the way to achieve their goals is to destroy the United States. It is a struggle as serious and as dangerous as any our Nation has ever faced—and Dragon Soldiers are there! They’re there because the mission of the Chemical Corps is as vital now as ever before as we continue to play a pivotal role in defending the homeland as well as providing freedom to others around the world. We’re on a journey; one that began 87 years ago. It is the journey of our Corps—and it is a personal journey for each of us. But before we can progress in our journey and understand what the future has in store, we must understand from where we came.

“It was a warm and sunny day on the 22d of April 1915, outside the small village of Langemarck, near Ypres, in Belgium, that our journey began and chemical warfare was born. It was just like any other spring day as the winds shifted and the evening breeze began to blow. I imagine most of the Allied troops thought the breeze a welcome event. As that breeze continued to blow, the first step of our journey began—you see, that breeze carried the contents of 6,000 chlorine-filled cylinders over Allied positions, causing 5,000 casualties.

“Our history, our journey, started on that field over 90 years ago. Since then, we have taken many turns. It began with the development of trench fans and crude protective masks made of cotton gauze. By the end of World War I, we had developed durable, reusable masks and decontamination techniques and equipment. And on 28 June 1918, we were born as a Regiment. Led by Major General William Sibert, we made great strides in understanding the nature of chemical weapons and defending our Army against the insidious horror of chemical warfare. Major General Sibert had a huge challenge—to form a Corps and develop doctrine, equipment, and organizations. He did it with great success. He personally ensured that success.

“While each step of our history has been a collective journey for our Corps, it was also a personal journey for all those brave doughboys, and it would continue to be a personal journey for those that would follow. We took turns in our journey, through World War II and Korea, where Dragon Soldiers fired hundreds of thousands of 4.2-inch mortar rounds in support of maneuver units in all theaters of the Wars.

“Because of our success in World War II and through the leadership of a newly appointed Chief of Chemical [Major General Anthony McAuliffe], Major General McAuliffe’s forthright thinking provided a more strategic approach. He said, ‘It required the experiences of World War II to demonstrate that the most important basic factors in a nation’s military strength is its war production and ability to convert smoothly and quickly its industry, manpower, and other economic resources.’ By the way, I think he also said something about ‘nuts’ while leading the famed 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne. Major General McAuliffe took it personally, dedicated himself to his profession, and excelled!

“Vietnam Dragon Soldiers were not only prepared for nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare, but they also developed and used flame devices, herbicides, riot control agents, and people sniffers. Led by Major Herb Thornton, they became tunnel rats—developing doctrine and techniques for tunnel-clearing operations. Major Thornton was an innovator who devoted himself to excellence. He took it personally!

“During the Cold War, the Chemical Corps came from the depths of near disestablishment, with a reduction in personnel to just over 200 Soldiers. It was a dark time for our Corps—even our senior Army leaders failed to understand the horrendous nature of the threat of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. However, all was not lost. Through herculean efforts and personal leadership, Major General Gerry Watson convinced our senior leaders of our importance and developed the construct we still use today. Dragon Soldiers were assigned to every command level—from company

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to corps and chemical organizations designed to provide reconnaissance, decontamination, and smoke operations. The Corps was saved! We were back in business! It was now time to redevelop training, equipment, doctrine, and techniques. At the direction of another remarkable leader, Major General Bob Orton, the modernization of doctrine, equipment, and training was accelerated. A key part of this mission was the development and the deployment of Fox recon vehicles and units to Operation Desert Storm, which proved a tremendous asset to field commanders. Once again, these two Dragon Soldiers made it personal and continued their vital involvement at every turn. Our Regiment's journey did not stop.

“On September 11, 2001, our Nation was viciously attacked, and we found ourselves engaged in a Global War on Terrorism. This turn of our journey has us deploying Dragon Soldiers around the world each day. And they continue to make our Corps stronger. Early on, Brigadier General Pat Nilo (Retired) spearheaded efforts in two key areas. First, she led the way in instituting CBRN protection of our critical installations and developed new domestic-response capabilities. Second, to ensure chemical Soldiers were trained and prepared for their new missions, she gained approval for the construction of the First Lieutenant Joseph Terry CBRN Responders Training Facility. This vision will soon become a reality. For Brigadier General Nilo, it was personal!

“We have successfully reorganized, restructured, task-organized, and conducted numerous new and full-spectrum missions. In the last few years, we have moved from smoke, decon, and recon missions to missions involving hazardous-material response, biological detection, and site characterization. A new joint interagency organization was formed (the Iraqi Survey Group), and Command Sergeant Major Stan Kusko led Dragon Soldiers in sensitive-site exploration during the critical search for weapons of mass destruction. He made it personal!

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“The last 87 years have seen many challenges in the journey of the Chemical Regiment. We have had many successes, and our Soldiers and families have sacrificed a great deal—yet we continue on that journey. As Winston Churchill once said of the American involvement in World War I, and which still stands true today, ‘To fight in defense of his native land is the first duty of the citizen. But to fight in defense of someone else's native land is a different proposition. To cross the ocean and fight for strangers, far from home, upon an issue of which one has had no say, requires a wide outlook upon human affairs and a sense of world responsibilities.’

“We are all grateful for your sacrifices each day, but in the Regiment's journey, we have left some of our brothers and sisters behind. For they have made the ultimate personal sacrifice. Most recently, eleven of our Dragon Soldiers have made that sacrifice in defense of freedom in the Global War on Terrorism. We honored them at the Regimental Review and at the Dragon Ball. The eleven Dragon Soldiers that have fallen are (see *pages 28 and 29*):

Corporal Mark A. Bibby

Second Lieutenant Benjamin J. Colgan

Staff Sergeant Robert S. Johnson

Corporal Forest J. Jostes

Specialist Mark J. Kasecky

Staff Sergeant Morgan D. Kennon

Specialist Lizbeth Robles

Sergeant Thomas C. Rosenbaum

Sergeant Stephen R. Sherman

Sergeant Gregory L. Wahl

Sergeant First Class Mickey E. Zaun

“You may be wondering where our journey will take us next or what is in store for our Regiment in the future. As the Army evolves into a new era of modularity, so must the Chemical Corps evolve. We are focused more than ever on the full spectrum of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense. We are no longer looking just at the traditional CBRN threat. The enemy has advanced in its technology, so we must adapt. We have revamped our doctrine and expanded our training. Dragon Soldiers now find themselves executing and advising on new missions of base defense and convoy security, as well as occupational health and environmental hazards—all in the context of joint and combined warfare. Many are performing these missions on this very day, and they continue to show the knowledge, passion, and dedication required to excel. They are making the journey personal!

“With this in mind, we will continue to develop doctrine and equipment to further our relevance and capabilities in the current operational environment. New systems such as the Stryker NBC recon vehicle, the Joint Biological Standoff Detection System, and the Chemical Unmanned Ground Recon System are just a few that will afford us more capabilities than we’ve ever had before. We will not stop or even pause. Our journey continues.

“As our first chief, Major General Sibert said, ‘I speak with some experience when I say that there is no field in which the future possibilities are greater than in chemical warfare and no field in which neglect to keep abreast of the times in research and training would be more disastrous.’ With that in mind, we will continue to develop, change, and expand our missions, equipment, and training to ensure we can support our Army and our Nation in any conflict or situation in our future.

“Dragon Soldiers, remember no matter what new technology is developed or what new capability is achieved, it would all be irrelevant without those of you standing in the gap today. You are the Chemical Corps’ ultimate system, you are the 21st-century capability, and you are the key we cannot fight without. But you must have a passion, a drive, a burning desire in your gut, and love in your heart for our business. You must take it personally! For our Regimental history is the sum of the personal journeys of all Dragon Soldiers who have gone before, and it is because of our personal journeys each day that the Regiment is as vital and strong as it has ever been throughout our history.

“It has been 87 years, a long journey in human years, but a relatively short journey in the history of mankind. We celebrate our past but must look to the future to write the next chapter. The journey does not stop now. We cannot afford to stop or even pause.

“We have seen where we came from and know where we are in the present. I promise our journey into the future will be exciting, fast-paced, and involve full-spectrum CBRN missions, training, and equipment. Make it personal! *Elementis Regamus Proelium.*”



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The Command Sergeant Major George L. Murray Award, a new program to honor the top noncommissioned officer and the top junior enlisted Soldier in the Chemical Corps was initiated this year (see *Corps Honors Top Enlisted Soldiers*, page 36). The first recipient of the NCO of the Year Award was Staff Sergeant Travis Dauer, 21st Chemical Company (Airborne), Division Support Command, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The first recipient of the Soldier of the Year Award was Specialist Marcos Silva, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 84th Chemical Battalion, Fort Leonard Wood. Many civilian vendors contributed to make the award process a success, enabling us to see involvement in the Corps like never before.

We presented Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston with the Chemical Corps’ highest award, the Order of the Dragon. Sergeant Major of the Army Preston is the first SMA to receive the award at Fort Leonard Wood.

As the Corps continues to drive forward with onward movement and upward mobility, I urge each and every Dragon Soldier to get on board—the train only stops momentarily, but the opportunities to get involved are abundant. The future of the Corps looks great! We are engaged and prepared to meet every operation and contingency. We are, and will continue to be, the Corps of the future!