

ARMY GROUND RISK-MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Countermeasure

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Something's Burnin'



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DASAF'S CORNER

From the Director of Army Safety

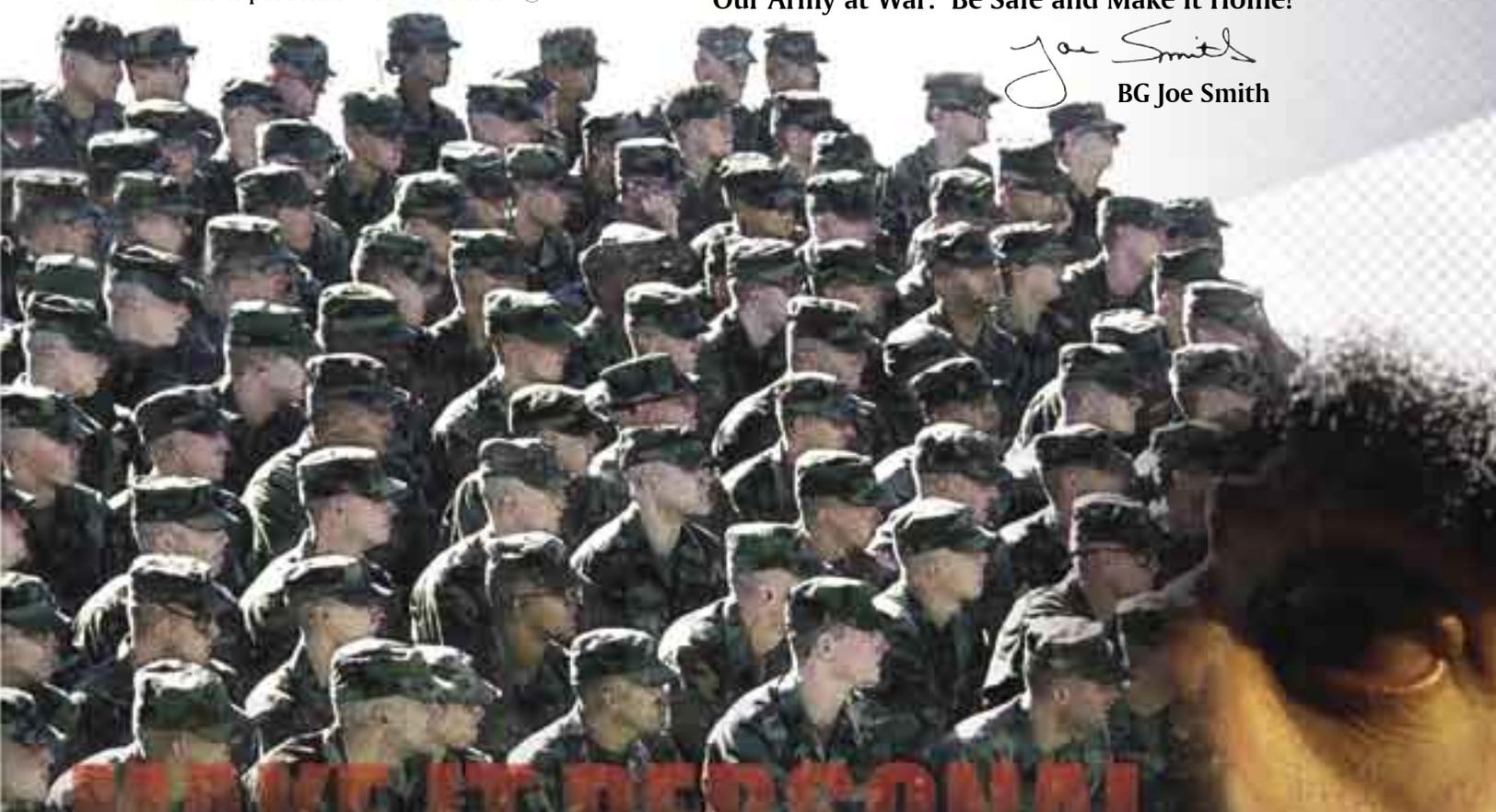
Make It Personal—Because It Is!

A picture is worth a thousand words. The image below represents the blank faces of the 216 Soldiers we've already lost to accidents this year, most of them preventable. These men and women—America's sons and daughters—were once in our formations serving our great Nation. Now they're gone. Over the last 90 days, a name has been added to this growing list of needless deaths every 34 hours. Was one of the 216 Soldiers a personal loss to you? If not, then these numbers are just statistics ... blank faces; not lessons learned, just lessons noted.

Don't add your name to this roll call. The same goes for your battle buddies—they're irreplaceable. When leaders are in charge, they take charge. Do the harder right, make a difference, and BE SAFE! Make it personal—because it is! ★

Our Army at War: Be Safe and Make It Home!

Joe Smith
BG Joe Smith



Begin each mission with the 5-step risk management process.

Eliminate preventable accidents.

Set the right example by following standards.

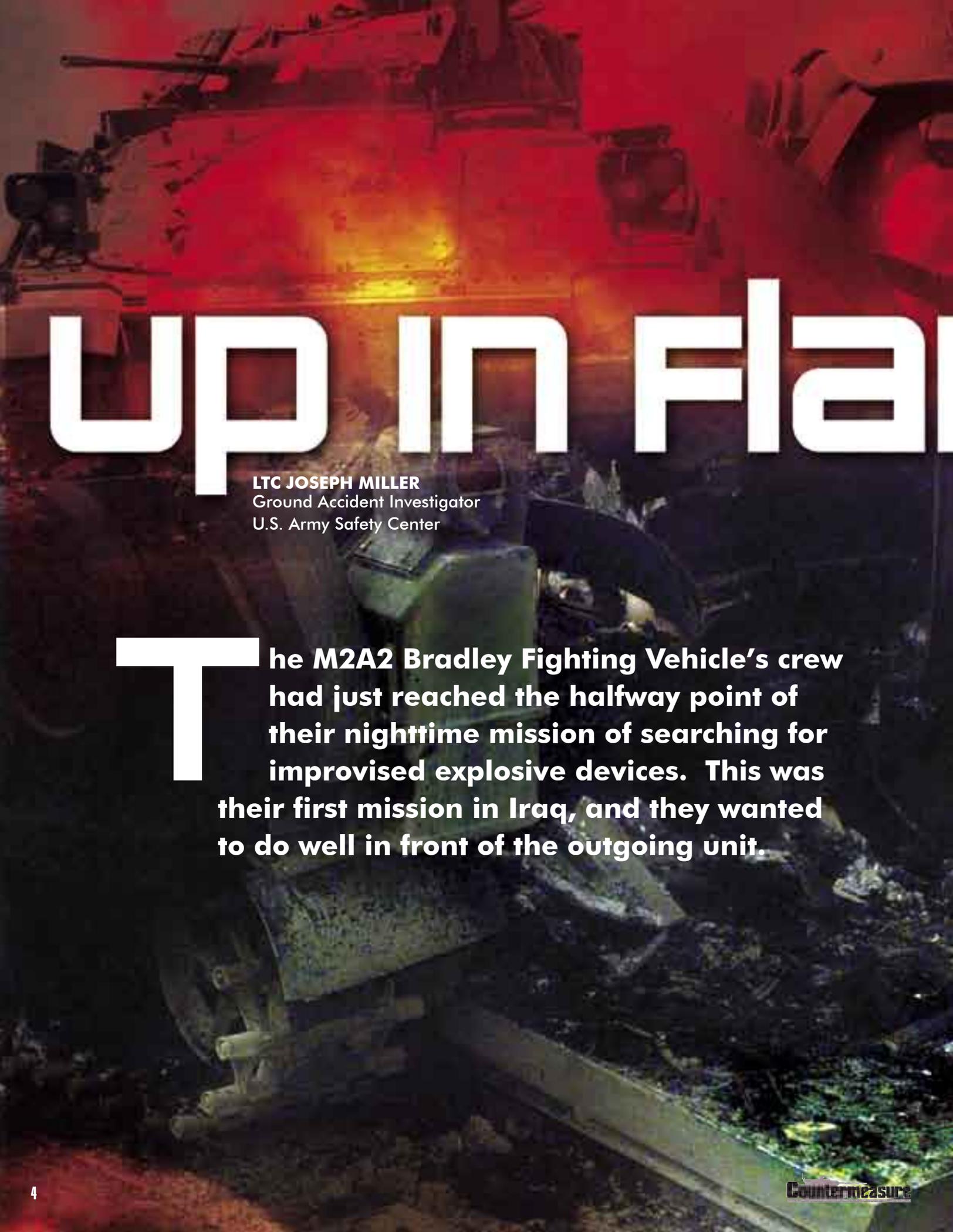
Accountability begins with the individual.

Fight like you've trained.

Every Soldier counts.

216

As of 23 July 04



UP IN FLAMES

LTC JOSEPH MILLER
Ground Accident Investigator
U.S. Army Safety Center

The M2A2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle's crew had just reached the halfway point of their nighttime mission of searching for improvised explosive devices. This was their first mission in Iraq, and they wanted to do well in front of the outgoing unit.



mes!

As they proceeded along the main supply route, the gunner and Bradley commander (BC) heard a loud bang that sounded and felt like someone had dropped a Kevlar on the turret floor. Shortly afterwards their internal communications went out, and then came on a few minutes later. The crew then heard a second bang just like the first. The gunner smelled fuel vapors and informed the BC. They searched for a fuel leak, but couldn't find one. However, as the gunner traversed the turret he suddenly saw flames coming from beneath the BC's floor panel.

The BC immediately ordered the driver to halt and to lower the ramp, and everyone evacuated the vehicle quickly. The BC and dismounted squad leader borrowed fire extinguishers from the

HMMWVs behind them and tried to put out the fire. They were standing on the ramp and spraying the flames beneath the turret when the fire suppression system went off, hitting the squad leader on the side of his face and knocking him down. As the BC pulled the squad leader off the ramp, the fire spread to the ammunition boxes. The platoon sergeant immediately ordered his Soldiers to set up a perimeter 300 feet from the burning vehicle to keep anyone from approaching. The fire consumed the Bradley as 25 mm rounds, TOW missiles, and AT4 (anti-tank) rockets exploded inside. Ten hours later, the vehicle had melted down to a shell.

Why did the accident happen?

- Eight months before the accident, the vehicle rolled over during maneuvers. No one was injured because the crewmembers successfully conducted their rollover drill. However, since that incident the vehicle had experienced recurring electrical problems.
- Although the Bradley had been serviced five months before the accident, maintenance didn't steam clean the engine compartment. Steam cleaning flushes out debris that might clog the openings between the ballasts inside the hull and removes built-up grease and oil from the engine compartment.
- The crew rehearsed the emergency crew fire drill only once and failed to execute it when faced with a real fire.
- Two weeks before the accident, the driver drained condensation from the fuel filter directly into the hull instead of a suitable container. He continued to perform other preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) tasks, but forgot about the draining fuel filter. The BC came by later and saw the fuel draining



"All leaders must rehearse emergency crew fire drills until the crew becomes proficient."

into the hull. He shut off the toggle valve, and then he and his driver put the Bradley on an incline. They drained approximately 10 gallons of fuel from the hull.

Why the severity of the damage?

The crew had previously rehearsed the fire drill by evacuating the vehicle, closing all the hatches, and simulating pulling the outside fire suppression handles. In an actual fire, the Halon would have deprived oxygen from the fire and extinguished it. However, the crew only rehearsed this drill once and failed to execute the drill when faced with a real fire. Instead they evacuated the Bradley—leaving all of the hatches open—and tried to extinguish the fire with HMMWV fire extinguishers, but these proved inadequate.

The crew also believed setting the fire suppression switch in the driver's compartment to AUTO would cause all the Bradley's fire extinguisher bottles to go off

during a fire. However, that assumption was wrong. When the driver's toggle switch is placed in the AUTO mode, it only activates the two extinguisher bottles mounted inside the crew compartment. For engine fires, the driver can either turn a knob under the instrument panel or pull a handle located outside his hatch.

Recommendations

- All leaders (NCOs and officers) must ensure maintenance personnel repair ongoing electrical or mechanical problems and conduct services to standard.
- All leaders must supervise PMCS to ensure it is done to standard in accordance with the appropriate technical manual.
- All leaders must rehearse emergency crew fire drills until the crew becomes proficient.

Results

- Estimated cost of damages: \$1 million.
- The platoon lost one-fourth of its mounted combat power while in a combat zone. 

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A young, “indestructible” Soldier with a lot of time and imagination is a force to be reckoned with. Like the five-year-old who found his daddy’s gun, he can be a walking disaster area. All of us older Soldiers were once young Soldiers—it’s just that some of us were lucky enough to survive it. But then young Soldiers should never have to get by on luck alone.

Lighting Up the Tent

As a young specialist on a cold Colorado evening, I was doing what all Soldiers do in the “box”—trying to keep warm next to the tent’s propane heater. I was bored and sitting with two other Soldiers in my section examining a box of chemical lights. We noticed the box said the chemical lights were non-toxic and nonflammable. We already knew they were non-toxic from Soldiers rubbing the fluid on their teeth and scaring people at night. However, we decided to see if the chemical lights really were nonflammable, so I held one over the heater until it began to boil.

We didn’t believe we were in any danger. After all, the information on the chemical light’s box SAID it was nonflammable. We were just checking it—you know, making sure it passed the “Soldier” test. We were mighty surprised when the pressurized fluid exploded all over the inside of the tent and almost set it ablaze! Luckily, we were able to put out the fire before the tent burned.

Of course, as any young Soldier could tell you, the “real” culprit was the writing on the box—it had lied! In fact, all three of us said, “The box lied!” in unison. Never mind that it was our Soldier test that almost set the tent on fire. After

further thought, we decided to keep our little experiment a secret from our sergeant. We didn’t want him to be worried about us or anything.

Leaders, when you’re doing risk management and assessing hazards, remember there are young Soldiers for whom the word “impossible” only represents an irresistible challenge. They don’t always know what can harm them, and there is not enough luck in the world to save them all. That’s why it’s important to look at the hazards and develop a plan to protect young Soldiers from themselves. It’s called risk management and takes only five steps:

1. Identify hazards
2. Assess hazards
3. Develop controls and make decisions
4. Implement controls
5. Supervise and evaluate 

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A LIVE BUT



Five M2 Bradleys from the unit's third platoon pulled up at a large wadi near their forward operating base and prepared to test fire their crew-served and individual weapons into the wadi. Following that, they'd planned to mount their vehicles, cross the line of departure (LD), and conduct a combat mission in a nearby town. The unit had test fired their weapons into the wadi on several occasions, following the example of the unit they'd replaced. Everyone was focused on the impending combat mission of finding weapons caches, improvised explosive devices, and snipers.

The Bradleys dropped off their dismounted squads, and four of the vehicles moved to the firing line at the edge of the wadi. However, the fifth Bradley—located on the far right—stopped about 10 feet further back than the others. As the crews began firing their 7.62 mm M240C machine guns, the fifth Bradley's M240C jammed three times. The Bradley commander (BC) raised the gun and dropped down inside the turret to conduct clearing procedures.

The third platoon's dismounted squads normally waited for their Bradleys to finish firing before moving to the firing line. However, while they were waiting, they were joined by dismounted squads from the second platoon, whose Soldiers were accustomed to test firing their weapons next to their vehicles. A second platoon squad leader led his Soldiers forward through the third platoon and positioned his Soldiers on the firing line to the right of the Bradleys. The rest of the dismounted squads from

both platoons soon moved forward and began firing into the bottom of the wadi.

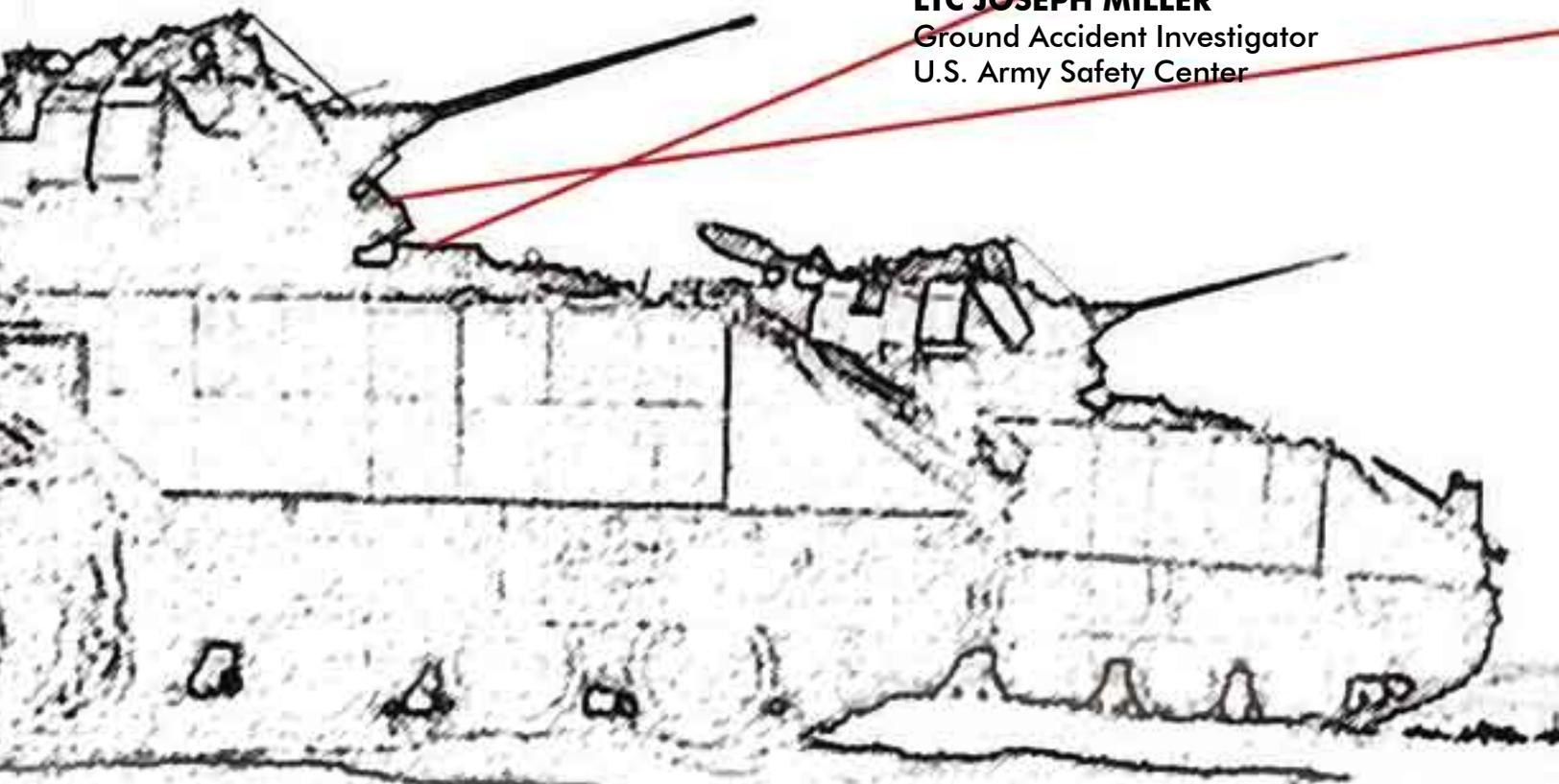
Because they were conducting combat operations, no one considered the test fire area a range. As a result, no one saw a need for a risk assessment or to have an officer in charge, range safety officer, surface danger area diagram, or range overlay as prescribed in Army Regulation 385-63, *Range Safety*, and Field Manual 3-22.1, *Bradley Gunnery*. No one asked if higher headquarters had any requirements for conducting test fire operations in the theater of operations. Everyone's focus was on crossing the LD and conducting the subsequent combat mission.

The BC removed the jam—caused by uneven links in the ammunition belt—and then directed his gunner to continue test firing the M240C into the wadi. Before the weapon jammed, the gunner had set his optics on high magnification and left them on that setting. When he aimed again into the wadi, his now tunnel-like field of view made it hard for him to see anything near the vehicle. As he prepared to continue firing, he lowered the Bradley's weapons and turned the turret slightly to the right. At just that moment a third platoon Soldier walked to a point about 20 feet ahead and five feet to the right of the Bradley. Neither he nor anyone else noticed the M240C's muzzle aiming in his direction. The BC gave the command to fire before rising from the turret to ensure the firing area was still clear. The M240C fired, hitting the Soldier and killing him.

DEADLY FIRE

LTC JOSEPH MILLER

Ground Accident Investigator
U.S. Army Safety Center



Why the accident happened

- Test firing weapons en route to crossing the LD had become routine. As a result, leaders were focused on the combat mission and had become complacent about the test fires.

- The previous unit had successfully performed their mission during their more than year-long assignment in a combat zone, so the new unit simply followed their example. As a result, the new unit didn't question whether the test fire operation was safe, or ask if there was a higher headquarters requirement to validate the area.

- No one in the chain of command considered the area a range, and so no centralized command and control measures were in place to ensure safety. In addition, the battalion master gunner hadn't provided adequate guidance to the battalion commander to ensure the dismounted squads were safe when the Bradleys fired.

Recommendations

- Commanders and leaders must conduct the risk management process before each mission. Risk assessment is much more than just another form to fill out. Risk management is a thought process that enables leaders to identify dangers and establish control measures to successfully and safely execute their mission. It's extremely important to conduct this process before beginning a combat operation.

- Leaders must maintain command and control of their Soldiers while conducting live-fire operations.

- Vehicle commanders must ensure a clear field of fire before ordering gunners to test fire their weapons. 🚗

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It's Not Just

Soldiers serving in Iraq and other regions in Southwest Asia already have a lot to worry about. A hostile enemy, improvised explosive devices, and the oppressive desert heat are just a few of the many challenges. And, for those that aren't careful, "weeping, painful sores" might be added to that list.

has been around for a long time and is found all over the world. There isn't a vaccine to thwart it, but leishmaniasis is treatable and, most importantly, preventable.

Since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, several Soldiers and other service members have been diagnosed with cutaneous leishmaniasis, or "Baghdad Boil." The disease, spread by sand flies, causes mild to severe skin lesions that take months to heal and can be disfiguring. Like malaria and other insect-borne afflictions, leishmaniasis

Prevention begins with awareness, and Soldiers should be aware of the sand fly's habits. Only one-third the size of mosquitoes, these silent flies are most active from dusk to dawn, but frequently feed during daylight hours. They easily can fit through the mesh of bed nets and are nuisance biters, meaning they bite repeatedly—some Soldiers have reported being bitten more than 100 times!



“Prevention begins with awareness, and Soldiers should be aware of the sand fly’s habits.”

exposed skin—is the best protection against insect bites and diseases like leishmaniasis and West Nile Virus. The BDU top should be worn with the sleeves down and the undershirt tucked inside the pants, which should be tucked

into the boots. Permethrin is available as an aerosol spray (NSN 6840-01-278-1336) or an impregnation kit (NSN 6840-01-345-0237). To protect exposed skin, apply a thin, even layer of DEET-containing product to uncovered areas such as your hands, neck, and face. A

long-lasting, 12-hour lotion containing 33 percent DEET is available under NSN 6840-01-284-3982.

Don’t forget to protect yourself while you sleep. Always use a permethrin-treated bed net (NSN 7210-00-266-9736 for netting, NSN 7210-00-267-5641 for poles)

in your sleeping quarters or tent. There is enough product in a single can of aerosol permethrin to treat one uniform and one bed net.

For more information on leishmaniasis, visit the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Web site at <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil>. An educated Army is one that’s ready for the fight. Arm yourself with the facts and make it home! 🐜

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a Bite

Once infected, it may take several months for a Soldier to exhibit the sores typical of leishmaniasis. These single or multiple ulcers can be extremely painful and don’t get better on their own. Over a few weeks, the sores enlarge, crust over, and break down into slow-growing ulcers up to several centimeters in diameter. Soldiers with suspicious sores should seek medical attention immediately for accurate diagnosis and treatment.

It’s important to remember that if you take the proper steps, you won’t have to wait for the doc to come around. The DoD Insect Repellent System—properly worn BDUs treated with permethrin and DEET on

JULIE SHELLEY
Staff Editor



McMurphy

CW3 MICHAEL MCMURPHY
A Co., 1-14th Aviation Regiment
Fort Rucker, Ala.

After a summer of temperatures that hovered near the 100-degree mark, the cooler fall days were looking good for my favorite sport—motocross racing. The fall race series was coming and I had to practice for Sunday’s competition, so I packed up my dirt bike and headed to the track. When I arrived, I found out the track manager had changed the track layout, so practice was a must.

It was a Friday, and that evening I was going to fly a night system gunnery mission to train two students attending the AH-64 Apache aircraft qualification course. The show time for work was 5 p.m., so I had the whole day to myself. I could have fun and still have time to shower and make dinner before work.

I was the only rider on the track.

I’d always told myself never to ride hard unless someone was there to call 911 should I crash and need help. I was getting the track timing and rhythm just fine when a guy drove up to ride with his young boys. I knew it was about time to go but now, with someone there, I thought I’d open it up and try to reduce my lap times. The manager was grooming a section of the track, so I stopped to say hi and told him I’d see him on Sunday. Then I took off on my final lap.

“Murphy’s Law” says that if something can go wrong, it will—and usually at the worst possible time. I found this out the hard way as I tried something new. I hit a set of jumps faster than



normal to see if I could clear all three instead of the usual two. That was a big mistake! My back tire hit the second jump and threw me over the handlebars into the third. I landed hard on my left shoulder and heard a “crunch.” I barely had time to think “That hurt!” before my 250-pound bike landed on me, smashing my right side.

I thought I was paralyzed. I moved my toes inside my boots and then I moved my fingertips. I knew I was somewhat OK, but I still couldn’t move my torso.

I always wore the proper riding gear, including a chest protector and shin and knee guards. Wearing that gear paid off! The rear tire still

had power to it when it landed on my right shoulder and then hit me in the head. The rear axle hit the back of my helmet. Despite all this, I remained conscious.

I went to the hospital in a privately owned vehicle. While I was at the hospital I was given multiple painkillers and X-rayed from head to toe. I found out that I would still be able to walk and was released.

I missed work that evening. I felt really bad because my peers had to pick up the slack. In addition, my students had to fly with another instructor, which interrupted the continuity in their training. My wife had a tough week at work and now she had to take care of me. Luckily, I had all weekend to rest.

This incident ended up being reported as a Class C ground accident. We were in the simulator the following week, which I was only able to do by keeping myself on some serious painkillers. If I’d had to fly, I would’ve had to ask one of my co-workers to fill in for me. I was grounded for two weeks and, five months later, still hurt and couldn’t race.

I learned something from that accident—I call it “McMurphy’s Law.” No matter what else I am doing, I am still a Soldier. I can’t afford to put myself first, not even for my favorite sport, if it means not being there for other Soldiers who rely on me. I owe it to them to show up physically prepared, not injured from an avoidable accident. And as for my hobby, I have to be honest with myself. I’m 37 and can’t take falls like that anymore.

Enjoy your hobbies and sports, but choose them carefully. And while you’re out there having fun, remember to take your job as a Soldier seriously. Your friends, family, and unit are depending on you. 🍀

CW3 McMurphy is an instructor pilot for the AH-64D Apache Longbow. His 15 years of combined Navy and Army active-duty service include 11 as a helicopter pilot. In addition to working as an instructor pilot, CW3 McMurphy also serves as the acting assistant safety officer for his unit. He may be contacted at (334) 255-5058, DSN 558-5058, or via e-mail at michael.j.mcmurphy@us.army.mil.



An Unexpected Maneuver

Accidents don't always happen to the other guy. The following is a true story from days gone by that is as relevant as ever. You never know what's lurking just around the corner.

CW5 WES HEDMAN
U.S. Army Safety Center

There I was, riding my Kawasaki KZ 750 motorcycle on a bright and sunny Thursday afternoon in the summer of 1985. I'd just completed my annual physical at the troop medical clinic, and I was headed back to my unit at the local airfield. I felt good that I'd pulled another one over on the doctors and received a clean bill of health. However, my flight status was about to be jeopardized for good.

I was traveling westbound on a secondary road that led through post toward the

airfield. The speed limit was 30 mph, and I was abiding by the law (not unusual, but I've had my moments!). As I approached a bank on my right, a car in the oncoming lane turned immediately in front of me into the bank's driveway.

Added to the driver's abruptness was another problem: He turned into the exit lane, which was directly in my path. This maneuver was completely unexpected. After all, the exit was clearly marked. The bank was open, and all the cars in the drive-

T?

ET

through lanes were pointed toward this exit. I never could have predicted that driver would turn right in front of me into the wrong lane of a busy bank!

My options were limited. With a lane full of oncoming traffic to my left, a rather deep ditch to my right, and the car directly in front of me, I quickly executed the “brake and slide for life” maneuver. I braked and allowed the bike’s rear to slide toward my right side as the front forks impacted the car’s right-rear quarter panel.

I’ve never been able to remember all the contortions I went through, but I do know my body’s momentum carried me over the top of the handlebars. I flew over the car’s trunk and landed flat on my back in the middle of my lane, dazed and seeing stars. Several Soldiers witnessed the accident and came running to pick me up from the road.

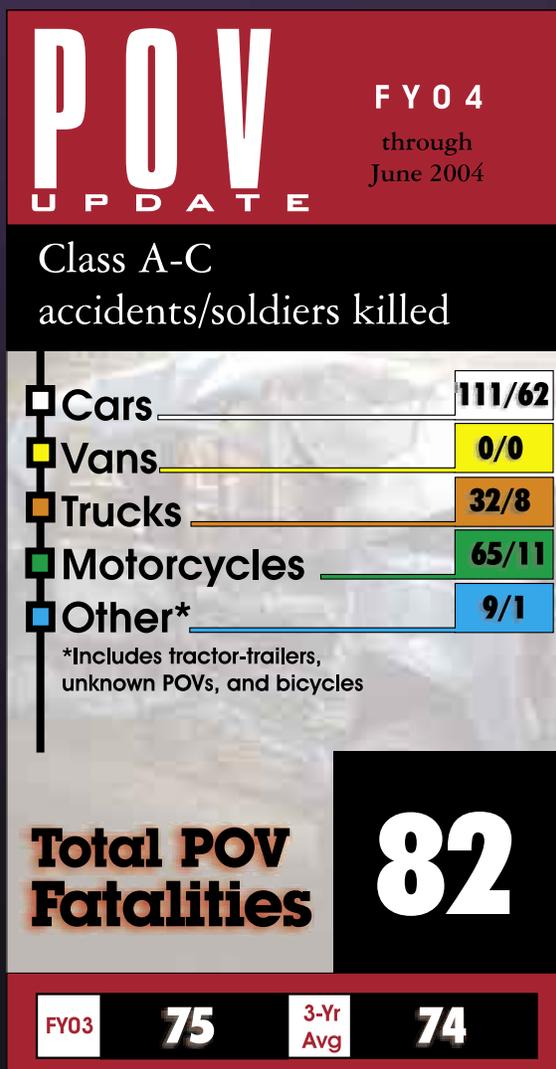
The wrong-way driver continued to pull forward and was now blocking the exit. He climbed out of his vehicle and just stood there. Other than being dazed, he didn’t seem to be suffering any ill effects from our unfortunate meeting.

I was wearing my helmet and vest, flight suit, and boots, so I didn’t suffer any road rash. My injuries—which included the biggest goose eggs I’ve ever seen on my shins and some significant bruises—were minor compared to the potential effects of such an accident. The next day my right shoulder hurt really bad, and I couldn’t raise my right hand above my chest. My bike fared a lot worse and was pretty much totaled. But thankfully, I had walked away.

Before the accident, I considered myself a good defensive driver. I had avoided many collisions in the past with cars that did not

yield my right of way. However, this incident proved to me that you can never be cautious enough. The other driver couldn’t explain his actions or why he entered the exit ramp. I think he just made a wrong turn and, in his haste to reverse course, took the first available ramp. Whatever the circumstances, in the end it was my situational awareness, a quick maneuver (which I knew to do because of my Motorcycle Safety Foundation training), and the protection provided by my helmet, clothing, and boots that saved the day. 🏍️

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“Hey Mike, how’s it going? Looks like you’re partying tonight!”
“Yeah, Jerry—I’m lovin’ life. Did you see my new wheels?”

“No, whaddya get?”

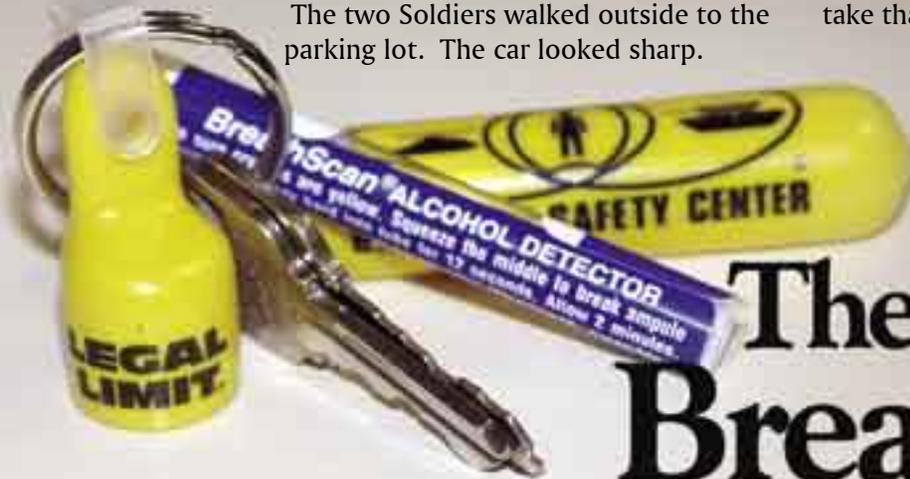
“New Chevy Monte Carlo Super Sport.”

“Must have been expensive.”

“It was—but I used the money I saved while I was in the sandbox. Come on out and see it.”

“Sure.”

The two Soldiers walked outside to the parking lot. The car looked sharp.



The Breath of Life

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Managing Editor

“Wanna go for a ride?” Mike asked.

“I dunno—how many beers you had tonight?”

“A few, but hey—I can handle it.”

“Let me see your keychain—you know, the one with the little yellow tube-looking thing on it.”

“Huh? Why?”

“Let’s see what colors show up when you blow into the breathalyzer.”

“Oh man—give me a break!”

“Would you rather be doing this on the side of the road for a cop?”

“Alright—but this is stupid, I’m fine.”

Jerry pulled the cap off the Legal Limit BreathScan tube. He pulled out the little plastic bag that held the breathalyzer and the instructions. He read them and then handed the breathalyzer to Mike.

“Here—squeeze the middle of the tube until you feel the glass ampule inside break.”

Mike squeezed the tube between his thumb and forefinger. It took a bit of pressure, but he felt the ampule break.

Jerry told him, “OK, blow hard for 12 seconds into the end of the tube.”

Mike did as his friend asked but thought the whole thing looked pretty stupid. When he was done, Jerry took the tube, shook it, and waited a

couple of minutes.

“Hmm ... look at this,” Jerry said as he held the tube so Mike could see the crystals inside. They’d been yellow to start with, but now they’d turned blue.

“What does that mean?” Mike asked his friend.

“It means you’re blowing positive for alcohol—but you’re not legally drunk. If you were, the crystals would be green.”

“Well, that’s good news! I guess it means we can take that ride!”

“Not so fast! When did you have your last beer?” Jerry asked.

“I just finished it when you walked in.”

“It takes 30 to 90 minutes before alcohol’s full effect hits you,” Jerry said. “A half hour from now, you could be getting a DUI ticket or find yourself wrapped

around a tree. I’ll tell you what, I’ll call a cab. I’ll even pay for it.”

“OK, you made your point. Can I have my keys back?”

“Not ‘till I see you in formation tomorrow. That way I’ll know you’re alright.”

OK, this was a fictional story, but it’s one that has played out for many Soldiers in Europe, according to Lawrence Martin, owner of Legal Limit BreathScan, Inc. He explained how the company partnered with U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) in a successful effort to help curb drinking and driving. Seeing the success in USAREUR and the interest of other DOD agencies, the Army Safety Center purchased 22,000 BreathScan key fobs. They’re being provided to Soldiers through installation management agencies and major commands. If the program is successful, the ultimate goal will be to provide one to every Soldier. 🍷

For more information on this program contact Mr. Al Brown at (334) 255-3656, DSN 558-3656, or e-mail james.brown@safetycenter.army.mil; or Mr. Mike Evans at (334) 255-2643, DSN 558-2643, or e-mail mike.evans@safetycenter.army.mil.

Safety Alert: Electrocution Hazard

During the past five years 12 Soldiers have been electrocuted by accidentally contacting overhead power lines. Most overhead lines are not insulated. Activities conducted near overhead power lines, such as stringing communications wire, erecting antenna masts, climbing into trees and onto buildings, and using metal ladders present a severe hazard to all personnel. Contact with overhead power lines often causes serious or fatal injuries.

Take the following actions to protect yourself and others:

- Survey your area for the presence of overhead power lines.
- Recognize the hazard they present to your operation.
- Consider all power lines energized and dangerous.
- Never throw communications wire over, or suspend it above, overhead power lines.
- Do not use metal ladders where they may contact overhead power lines. Use wood or fiberglass ladders instead.
- Do not erect an antenna mast unless the distance from overhead power lines is at least twice the height of the mast. Technical Bulletin 43-0129 has a lot of useful information on this topic and is available online at <http://www.monmouth.army.mil/cecom/safety/system/spub.htm>.
- Do not drive vehicles under overhead power lines when whip antennas are not tied down.
- Do not operate cranes or other lifting devices beneath overhead power lines.

Editor's Note: This Safety Alert was provided by the Directorate for Safety, Communications Electronics Command, Fort Monmouth, N.J. 





I'm an Army Aviator. Before I fly a mission, I do risk management so I can live to fly another day. However, it's funny how I and a lot of other Soldiers leave that mentality on post at the end of the day. While I was home from Korea on mid-tour leave, I learned safety isn't just for when you're on duty—it even works at home!

It was a beautiful day when I learned this lesson. I was down to my last “honey do” project. I was anxious to finish so I could head to the woods for some long-overdue deer hunting.

- The task: Pressure-wash the vinyl siding on my house.
- Conditions and equipment: A rented gas-powered pressure washer, an extension ladder, and a 24-hour time limit.
- Standards: Successfully clean the entire house and pass the “lipstick 06” inspection with zero defects.

I went to the local rental center and got the gas-powered pressure washer. I wasn't given any operational instructions, nor did I ask for any. I consider myself a

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pretty intelligent person (like most Type A personalities), and I knew I could figure it out on my own. I brought the equipment home and, within minutes, had it running and ready for my task.

The pressure washer was equipped with a hose that could be attached to a cleaning solvent container, but in my haste I failed to ask for one. Instead, I decided to seek an alternate method for applying my cleaning concoction. After all, I had a two-gallon herbicide sprayer. It could be filled with bleach and water, pumped up to maximum capacity, and used to spray the solution on the siding.

“What a super idea,” I thought. But like so many super ideas before, it was a great plan with poor execution. Things were going well until the hose came off the container while I was pumping it. Bleach and water came out of the hole where the hose had been and hit me right in the eye. I immediately ran into the house and began flushing my eye with water.

After 20 minutes I still couldn't open my eye. I decided to call the emergency room to get some advice, which was to come

to the hospital immediately. Without hesitation I grabbed my sunglasses and car keys and headed off to the ER. Once there I was treated and examined. The attending physician told me there wasn't any significant damage and to follow up at the troop medical clinic the next day.

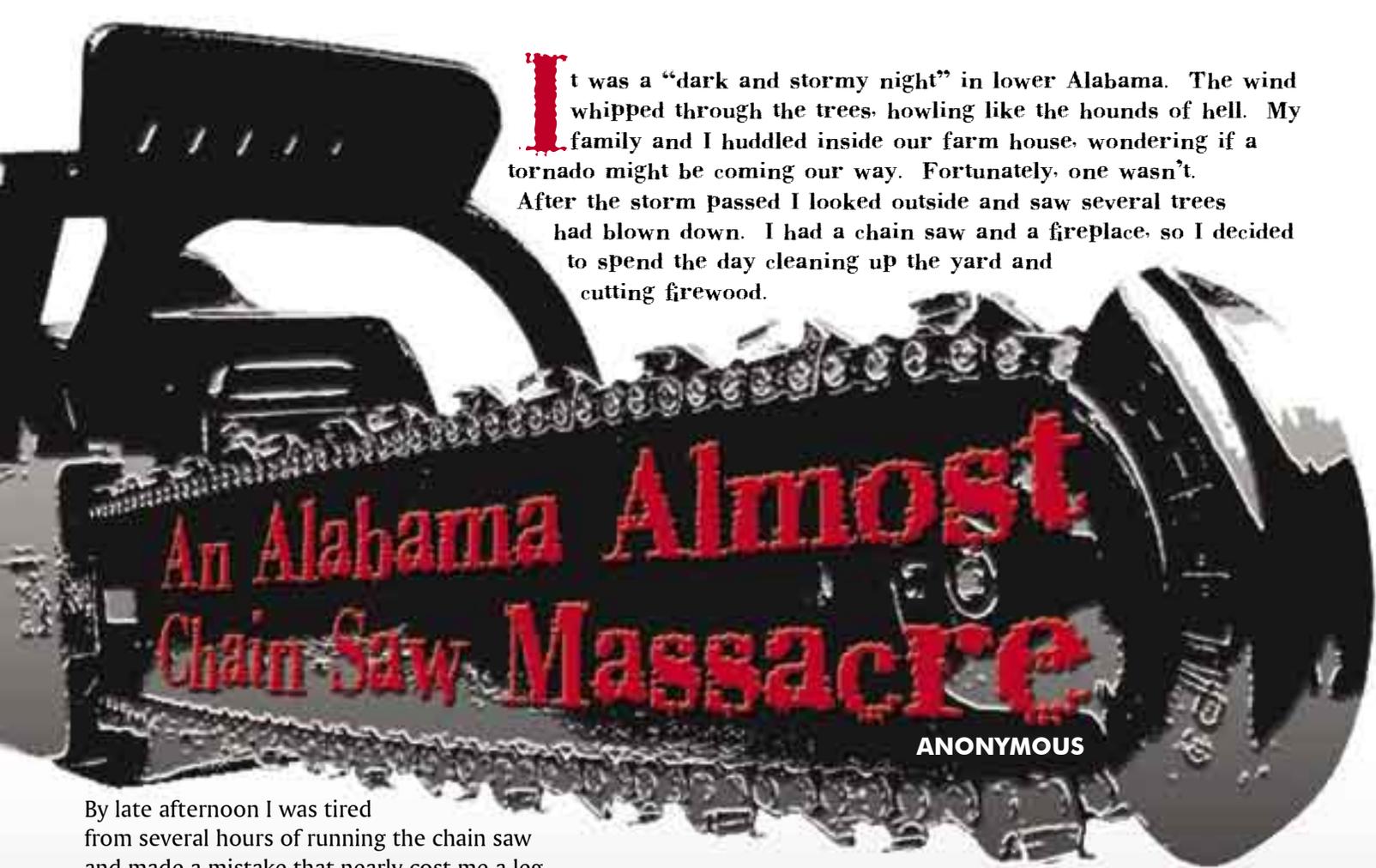
I did as I was told and reported to the optometry clinic the following morning. After the exam, the optometrist told me that I had suffered serious damage to my cornea, and some of that damage could be permanent. The doctor explained that it was the pressure of the solution that injured my eye. I had to return to the clinic every day for treatment and checkups until I left for Korea again.

Fortunately the treatment was effective, and I made a full recovery. I was very lucky and share this story as a means of reinforcement. All I needed to avoid this accident was a pair of protective goggles—and I had a pair hanging on my workbench in the garage. I just didn't take the time to put them on.

Too often Soldiers take shortcuts in their everyday household chores. Something as simple as wearing protective glasses while using power tools can stop a devastating accident. Safety doesn't apply only to your on-duty time. It should be taken into consideration and applied in every aspect of your life.

The Army executes the big missions well—it's the little things that get overlooked and cause accidents. Pay attention to those little details and be safe! 🐻

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It was a “dark and stormy night” in lower Alabama. The wind whipped through the trees, howling like the hounds of hell. My family and I huddled inside our farm house, wondering if a tornado might be coming our way. Fortunately, one wasn’t.

After the storm passed I looked outside and saw several trees had blown down. I had a chain saw and a fireplace, so I decided to spend the day cleaning up the yard and cutting firewood.

By late afternoon I was tired from several hours of running the chain saw and made a mistake that nearly cost me a leg.

As I was cutting some small limbs, I turned the chain saw trigger grip loose to grab a small limb that was in the way. While I was reaching for the limb—which was no bigger around than my thumb—the tip of the chain saw’s blade hit the limb. The saw kicked back and twisted in my hand. The still-turning blade swung around and hit the back of my leg hard enough to cut through my jeans. Fortunately, the saw missed cutting the back of my leg by a fraction of an inch.

That day I learned how important it is to always read and follow the safety instructions when using a saw. The manual warned users to always keep both hands on the saw to maintain control. Obviously, I hadn’t followed that rule. I also learned that fatigue can set you up to make simple mistakes—ones that can lead to serious injuries when you’re using power tools. Fatigue and ignorance of safety instructions are all it takes to set you up for a nasty accident.

Here are a few safety tips when using chain saws:

- Read the owner’s manual carefully before using.
- Wear protective clothing, including a hard hat, safety glasses, gloves, safety shoes, tight-fitting clothing, and hearing protection.
- Cut at full throttle.
- Quit if you get tired.
- When cutting a log on the ground, stand uphill so you’re not in the path should the log roll downhill after

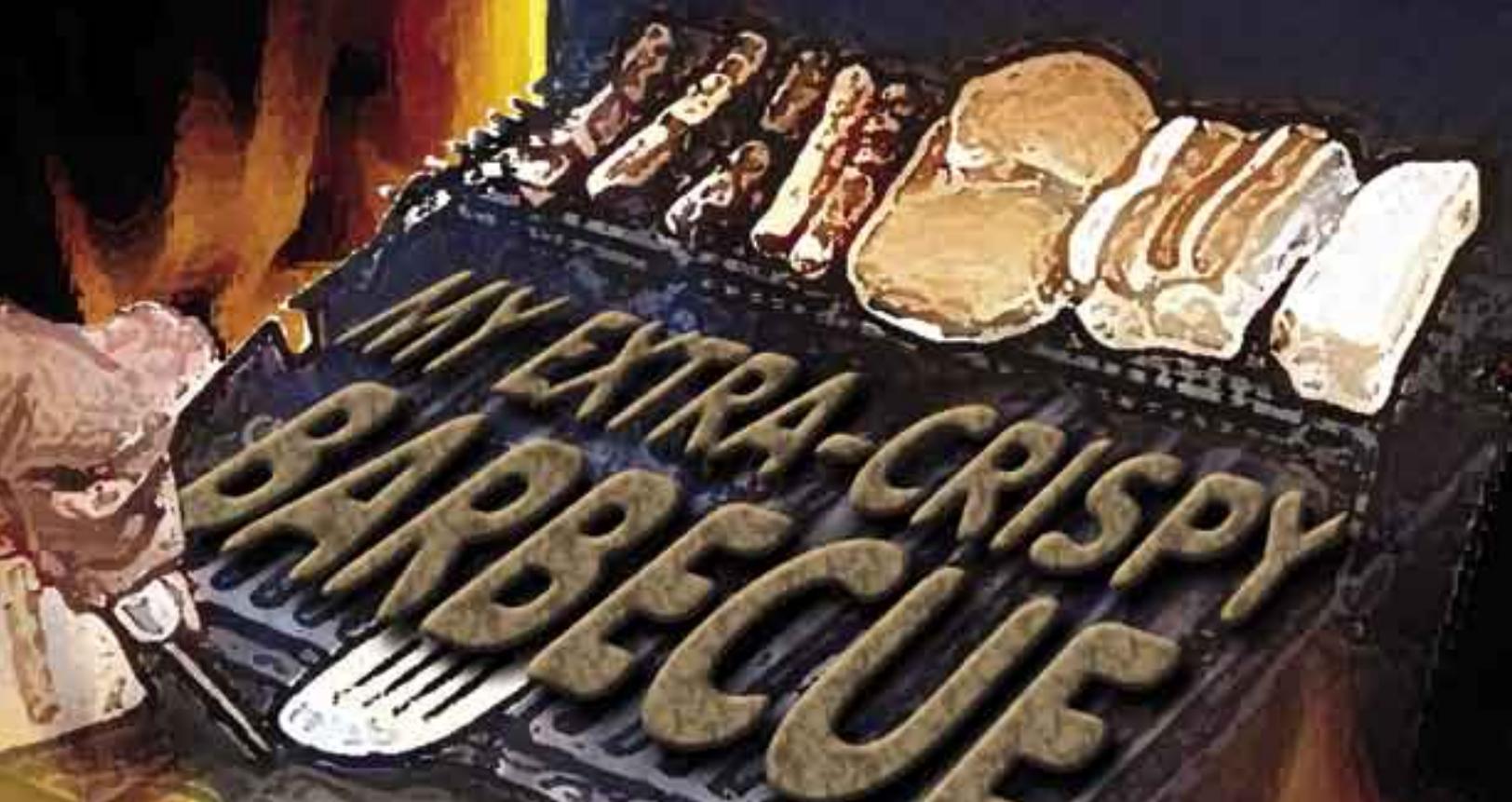
being cut.

- Be sure your body is clear of the path the saw will follow after completing the cut.
- When carrying the chain saw, stop the engine, put the protective sheath in place, and carry the saw with the guide bar pointed behind you and the muffler away from your body.
- When starting the saw, rest it on the ground—not on your knee or leg.
- Let the saw do the work. Don’t try to force the blade through the wood.
- Avoid sawing from a ladder or while standing in a tree.

Kickback is dangerous and occurs when the tip of the blade touches an object, such as a log or branch. To avoid kickback:

- Use a low-kickback chain. Replacement chains are available.
- Don’t touch the tip of the blade to any object while the saw is running.
- Always hold the saw firmly with both hands.
- Employ the proper grip: Grasp the forward handle with your left palm down and your fingers tightly wrapped around the handlebar. Hold the rear handle firmly with your right hand. 

Editor’s Note: Safety tips provided courtesy *Safety Times*.



Even safety guys get into trouble...

It was the weekend of my daughter's birthday. I checked our grill because she wanted to have a cookout with hamburgers and hot dogs. I was getting low on propane so I said, "Hmm ... I'd better get my other propane bottles refilled." I grabbed the two empty cylinders and took them down to the shop, where I had them checked out and filled.

I came back and started the cookout. Because the old bottle was so close to being empty, I put the new bottle underneath the grill beside it. That way it would be ready when the old bottle ran out.

We cranked up the grill, threw on the hot dogs and hamburgers, and started having a good old time. While I was happily cooking on top of the grill, the full bottle of propane was getting steadily hotter underneath it. The next thing I knew, flames were boiling out from underneath my grill. I thought, "Oh no! Maybe my old grill has finally given up the ghost and the gas is escaping somewhere." But when I looked underneath the grill I saw the problem—the second bottle was on fire!

Propane bottles have a pressure relief valve that is used to eliminate air from the bottle when it's being refilled. Well, there that valve was, shooting out flames! The new bottle underneath my grill had gotten so hot the propane, which was expanding under the heat, was venting through the pressure relief valve. And lucky me, just inches away was an

ignition source—my flaming burners.

This was really nice, what with me having about 20 or 30 people sitting around the house. I ran inside, grabbed the fire extinguisher, and came back out and began fighting the fire on the bottle, which was still spouting flames. The grill's wooden frame caught fire and the flames burned and melted everything else—including the cooking temperature controls. I kept spraying the bottle with extinguishers until I knocked the fire down. Knowing the bottle was going to be hot, I put on some insulated gloves, grabbed the bottle, and pulled it out.

The main thing you have to remember is this bottle was still hot. Boyle's Law says the more temperature you put to gas, the more it will expand. So I put the bottle in the middle of the yard, got out the water hose, and sprayed it down to cool it.

What did I learn from all this? Don't think of the space under your grill as a good place to store extra propane bottles. Remember the three legs of the fire triangle: oxygen, fuel, and heat (ignition source). The environment provides the oxygen, the extra propane bottle—when it gets hot enough—provides the fuel, and with your grill's burners just inches away—guess what you've provided? 



ACV

Class A

■ Soldier died when the M1A2 Abrams he was riding in rolled off a bridge, causing fatal head injuries. The deceased Soldier was the track commander. The tank's driver and gunner were injured. The Soldiers were on a reconnaissance patrol when the tank's track broke, causing the driver to lose control.



POV

Class A

■ Three Soldiers and one civilian were killed in a three-vehicle collision. The Soldiers were in two separate vehicles when one crashed into the back of a parked flatbed trailer being used for road work. The second vehicle then hit the first. All three Soldiers died from the impact. The truck's driver, who was placing cones along the highway at the time of the accident, also was killed.

■ Soldier died after being ejected from his vehicle during a rollover. The Soldier was trying to avoid another vehicle backing out of a driveway. The vehicle rolled after the Soldier overcorrected and lost control. The Soldier was on terminal leave at the time of the accident.

■ Soldier suffered fatal injuries when his vehicle ran off the roadway and struck a tree. No other details were provided.

■ Soldier suffered a permanent total disability when his motorcycle left the roadway and struck a house. The Soldier's spinal cord was severed, causing paralysis.

■ Soldier was killed when

her vehicle ran off the roadway and struck a tree. The Soldier lost control of the vehicle just before the accident.

■ Soldier died after his vehicle hit a tree. The Soldier apparently overcorrected the vehicle after it left the roadway, causing it to cross the highway and hit a culvert before impacting the tree. The Soldier was wearing his seatbelt, but excessive speed is listed as a contributing factor.

■ Soldier suffered fatal injuries after the vehicle he was riding in was struck head-on by another vehicle traveling the wrong way on an interstate. The Soldier was wearing his seatbelt.

■ Soldier was killed when his vehicle crossed the centerline and struck another vehicle head-on. The Soldier, who was not wearing his seatbelt, was on post for morning PT.

Class B

■ Soldier suffered a permanent partial disability when the POV he was riding in was involved in a head-on collision with another vehicle. Two other Soldiers were in the same vehicle and suffered injuries. The Soldiers were wearing their seatbelts.



AMV

Class A

■ Two foreign national civilians were killed when their vehicle was rear-ended by an M915A1 tractor truck. The truck was part of a convoy, and the driver switched lanes to avoid hitting another convoy vehicle. The driver and truck commander were not injured.



Personnel Injury

Class A

■ Soldier died after collapsing during PT. No other details were reported.

■ Soldier drowned while swimming with three other Soldiers in a local lake. One of the other Soldiers attempted to rescue the deceased Soldier, but was unable to help.

■ Soldier was killed when he was struck by friendly 155 mm stet during a counter-fire mission. The deceased Soldier was part of a ground patrol. One other Soldier was injured.

Attacking POV Accidents

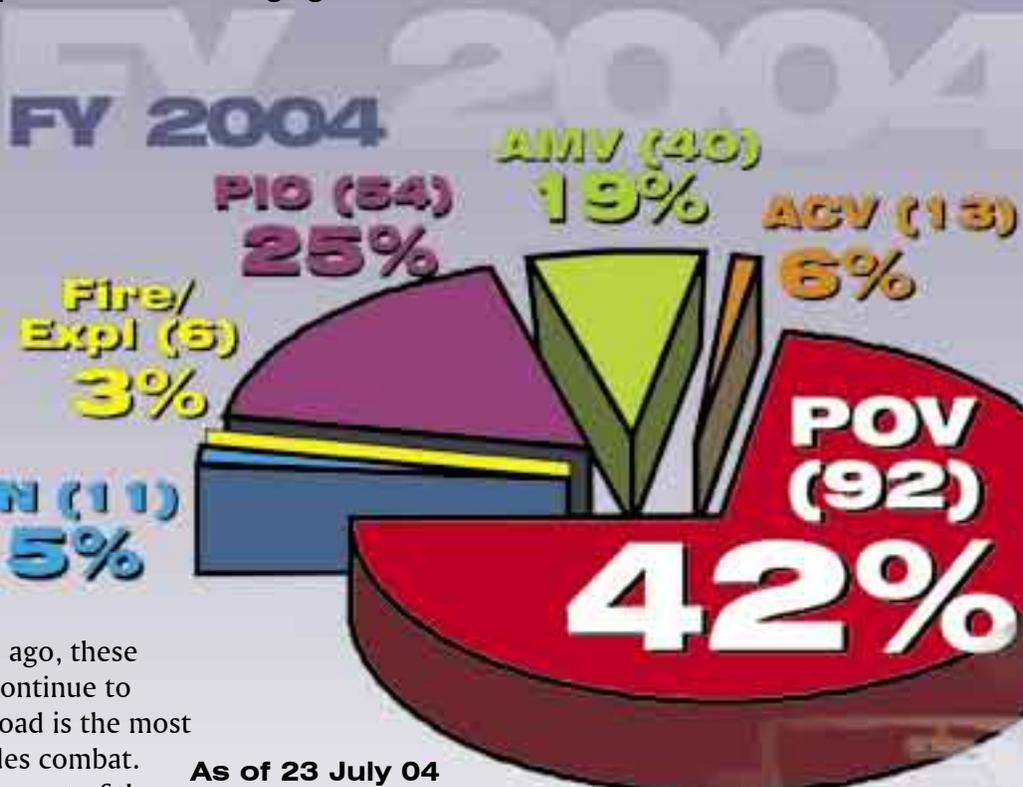
As an Army at War, we need every trained Soldier for our fight. Roadway accidents continue to take a toll on our formations, and we must do something aggressive about it. The Army Safety Campaign's goal is to make the fight personal and engage Soldiers at all levels to make a difference.

Here are some round numbers to think about: Our Nation lost more than 58,000 service members during a 10-year period in the Vietnam War. By comparison, an average of 54,000 highway deaths was reported each of those 10 years on U.S. highways! That was 30 years ago—so, how are we doing now? The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported more than 42,000 deaths in 2002 and about 43,000 in 2003 on America's roadways.

While that is better than 30 years ago, these numbers remain staggering and continue to increase. The bottom line: The road is the most dangerous place you can be besides combat.

During the past 10 years, 55 percent of the Army's accidental fatalities resulted from POV accidents. Despite strong leader involvement, this rate remained constant through 2003—a clear indication we're not making a difference. It's time for aggressive change. Leaders must remain involved and renew their focus on standards, discipline, accountability, and—most importantly—training.

As an Army, let's take a closer look. During the past two years, 179 Class A POV accidents resulted in 173 fatalities. A breakdown of these accidents shows that 144 involved automobiles (sedans, trucks, vans, or sport utility vehicles), 33 involved motorcycles or all-terrain vehicles, and two involved tractor-trailers or other vehicles. Only 56 of the Soldiers involved in these accidents were passengers—the other 147 were driving the

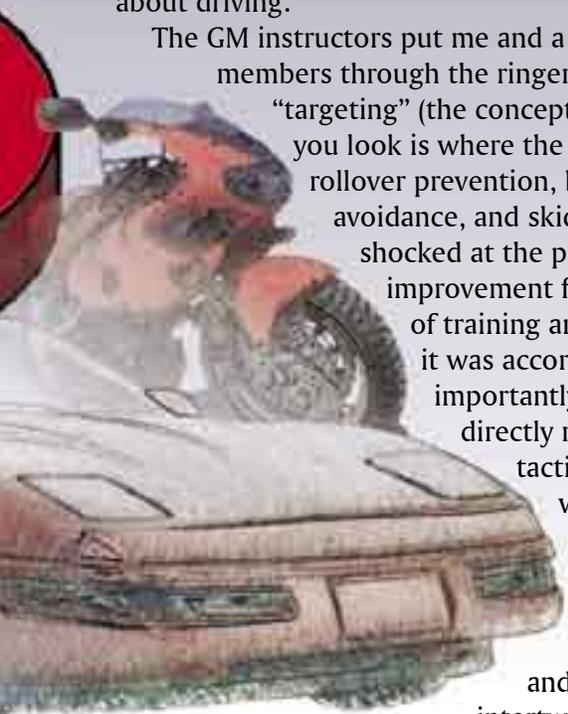


accident vehicle. These Soldiers were listed as “at fault” or made mistakes in 121 (67 percent) of the accidents. Excessive speed was the predominant mistake made by Soldiers (23 percent), followed by failure to use required safety equipment (15 percent), failure to stay alert (15 percent), alcohol use (15 percent), and driving while fatigued (8 percent).

The chart above shows the Fiscal Year 2004 breakdown of POV fatalities for non-deployed units. Central Command Soldiers deployed to operational theaters were not included, since they don't use POVs. This leaves about two-thirds of the Army, where we've already lost 92 of our highly trained Soldiers to POV deaths. That's nearly three-fourths of all non-deployed accidental fatalities!

Historically, POV safety has been a tough area to attack because we perceive there are few control measures and almost no opportunities for supervision. However, hope is not a method for better results. As the Chief of Staff, Army, says, “We need to look at safety from a different perspective.” We must apply training, standards, and discipline to this problem. These time-proven control measures will work, but it won’t be business as usual.

I just returned from a visit to General Motors (GM), which is now in partnership with the Army to reduce POV accidents. This partnership has nothing to do with products or contracts—just sharing POV safety. For the past 10 years, GM has provided advanced driver skills training to all their employees and family members. This training takes only one day and will completely change the way you think about driving.



The GM instructors put me and a few staff members through the ringer teaching us “targeting” (the concept that where you look is where the vehicle goes), rollover prevention, braking, avoidance, and skids. I was shocked at the proficiency level improvement from one day of training and how safely it was accomplished. Most importantly, this training directly relates to tactical vehicles as well. I drove several vehicles of all types, sizes, and conditions, and the techniques intertwined seamlessly.

Using the GM model, I believe we quickly could set up a driving course in every state at minimal cost. GM will “train the trainers” for free with their equipment at our installations. Initial training takes about three days, and the new instructors can be trained fully in about three weeks by practicing on each other. Training for our Soldiers is all “hands-on” and can be accomplished on a 1000’ x 1000’

blacktop area. Once fully trained, four instructors can teach approximately 25 drivers per day.

While these new initiatives are being developed, use the “POV Toolbox” link on the Safety Center Web site at <https://safety.army.mil>. Also online, the ASMIS-1 POV module is gaining momentum. This tool gets leaders engaged with their subordinates in trip planning and risk management, and easily can be implemented as a standard for every Soldier on leave or pass. To date, more than 8,000 users have registered for ASMIS-1. Of those users, only one Soldier has been involved in a POV accident, and he wasn’t the driver! Also, we’re making keychain-size breathalyzers available everywhere to help sober drivers get the keys from their impaired buddies.

As a final thought, remember the part motorcycles play in our numbers. Returning Soldiers have money for new vehicles—especially motorcycles. For example, AAFES has nearly 5,000 motorcycles, cars, and trucks awaiting delivery. During the past two years, 34 Soldiers were involved in 33 fatal motorcycle accidents (one Soldier was a passenger). Soldiers driving motorcycles were at fault or made mistakes in 22 accidents (66 percent). Excessive speed (36 percent), failure to use required safety equipment (18 percent), and alcohol use and inadequate planning (9 percent each) were the most common causal factors.

Take a hard look at your formations. Make POV and motorcycle fatalities personal. **Make a difference—we are an Army at War and an Army that cares!** ★

“The bottom line: The road is the most dangerous place you can be besides combat.”

BG Joe Smith
Director of Army Safety

got a story to share?

W We're all ears when it comes to hearing your hard-learned lessons on safety. You're out there on the front lines, getting first-hand experience on the safety issues that are important to Soldiers. Don't be a stranger—we need your stories on the following topics:

- Deployment/redeployment lessons learned
- Convoy operations—stateside and overseas
- Safely dealing with IEDs
- Accidental discharges
- Pre-mission trip planning
- Rollovers
- Surviving the weather
- Dealing with critters that bite and sting

If you've got a story to share and have access to e-mail, just fire it off to countermeasure@safetycenter.army.mil. If "snail mail" works best, send your story to:

U.S. Army Safety Center
Countermeasure
Bldg. 4905, 5th Avenue
Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363

Be Safe!

