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# Association of Army Dentistry (AAD)

## Fall 2021 Newsletter

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As I prepare this newsletter, the Nation is commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. On that day, 19 militants associated with the Islamic extremist group al Qaeda hijacked four airplanes and carried out suicide attacks against targets in the United States. Two of the airplanes were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and the fourth plane crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people were killed during the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which triggered major U.S. initiatives to combat terrorism and changed our daily lives forever.

Most of us remember where we were on that fateful day that changed the course of history and initiated the Global War on Terror (GWOT). I had just reported to DENCOM at Fort Sam Houston and those events shaped my tour of duty there. Those who have served in the Armed Forces since that fateful day have seen the GWOT as the defining mission of their careers. Their bravery and dedication to duty have prevented another terrorist attack on our Homeland since then. We offer our sincere thanks and appreciation to the men and women who have answered the call of duty to serve our Nation.

The events we have been through since then and more recently with the global pandemic remind us to cherish each day as it comes and be thankful for our blessings. The AAD provides an excellent mechanism to keep in touch with old friends, while making new ones. God Bless!

Ron

Ronald J. Lambert, COL, USA (Ret)

President and Chair, Association of Army Dentistry

# Membership

In this edition, MG (Ret) Ted Wong presents an excellent article on his perspectives in taking leadership positions, "Taking the Plunge." For future editions of the newsletter, we would like to publish more perspectives or experiences from our membership. They can range from those experienced in the military, perhaps an inspiring moment or experience, a significant mentor or role model, or other experiences, either serious or humorous. Additionally, what have been the experiences of our members post-retirement? What influenced your choices, whether it was to enter private or group practice, academia, the VA, GS service, or a non-clinical career? What have been your experiences since then and the rewards that have resulted? Please consider sharing your experiences.

The AAD is actively looking for volunteers for Social Director(s) to help plan and execute events as well as someone with expertise in information technology to assist with our IT requirements. With elections coming up after the first of the year, we are also looking at members who may have an interest in serving on our board. If you are interested, please contact us at [assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com](mailto:assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com)

## AAD STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Over the last year, the AAD initiated a strategic planning effort and was fortunate to enlist the assistance of two US Army-Baylor Healthcare Administration Residents, CPT David Attanasio, MS, and CPT Elizabeth Lee, MS. Through their efforts and hard work, David and Elizabeth reviewed and evaluated our current structure and operations (from organization, activities, vision and mission, marketing, goals and objectives, etc.), surveyed current members, assessed our outreach activities, and developed solutions to perceived and identified issues/challenges.

Based on survey results, David and Elizabeth found that the AAD Vision and Mission were unclear and not widely known. Based on input from respondents, they developed suggested updates of our Vision and Mission statements. These are currently being reviewed and approved by the AAD Board.

In addition, survey respondents expressed interest in having the AAD provide opportunities for networking, fostering camaraderie, engaging in mentorship, earning continuing education, learning about current Dental Corps activities, and supporting the Dental Corps. CPTs Attanasio and Lee developed a list of proposed new and old activities as well as suggesting several ways to improve communication with internal and external audiences that better leverages social media.

As we implement these initiatives, please continue to provide feedback on how we can better communicate with members and better serve the Army Dental Corps.

## Army Dentistry Monument

Based on feedback from the Air Force, the Association of Army Dentistry anticipates Secretary of the Air Force approval of the Army Dentistry Monument at the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Museum at Joint Base San Antonio by the end of the year. Despite the delay, the holding pattern with Air Force approval process allows the AAD to make significant progress in the areas in which we do have control. Medical Video Television (MEDVID TV) at the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence (MEDCoE) is actively engaged in preparing audio visual materials for the QR Codes that will be attached to the monoliths within the monument. The AAD is has coordinated with Mr. Andy Watson for a landing platform or URL address within the AMEDD Center of History and Heritage to host the QR codes and other supporting documents. Additionally, **the granite monoliths have been delivered to the AAD's contractor in San Antonio and are being engraved.**

This past July we received an inquiry on whether donations could be made in remembrance of deceased members of the Army Medical Department and Army Dental Corps who were mentors and/or who had served as role models, **positively impacting the careers of those they inspired. Since then, seven "In Remembrance" donations have been received, ranging from those for COL (Ret) Leo Broering to LTG (Ret) Alcide M. LaNoue and MG (Ret) Bill Lefler.** If there is someone whom you would like to honor and add to this list, please do so.

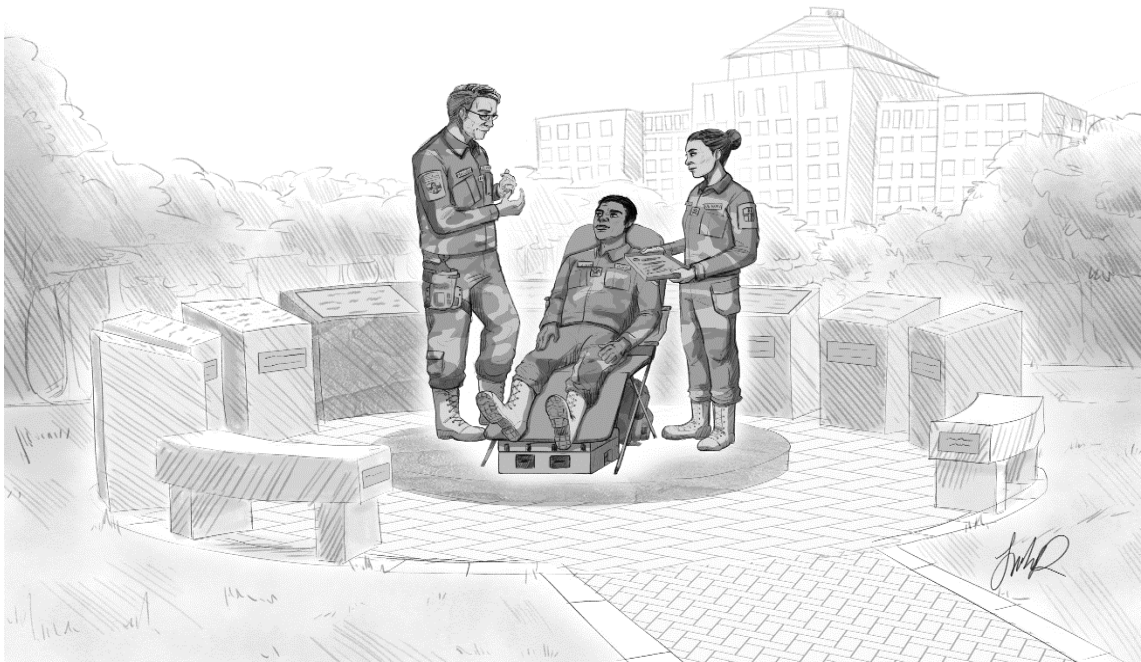
As a reminder for those members who are in search of an end of year tax deduction, there is no better place to look than by providing a tax free donation to the AAD's Army Dentistry Monument Fund. All donations are welcomed and will be acknowledged with a letter for tax purposes. Donations of \$1,000 or **more will result in the donor's name or the "In Remembrance" honoree's name** being placed on one of several donation level bronze plaques which will become a permanent part of the monument.

Donation levels that will be recognized on bronze plaques on the monument are as follows:

- Marshall Society - \$10,000 and above
- President's Circle - \$5,000 to \$9,999
- Founders Circle - \$2,500 to \$4,999
- Friends of Army Dentistry - \$1,000 to \$2,499
- In Remembrance - \$1,000

Donations should be mailed to the following address:

Association of Army Dentistry  
914 P Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001



## Active Component News

### Army Dental Corps Bulletin

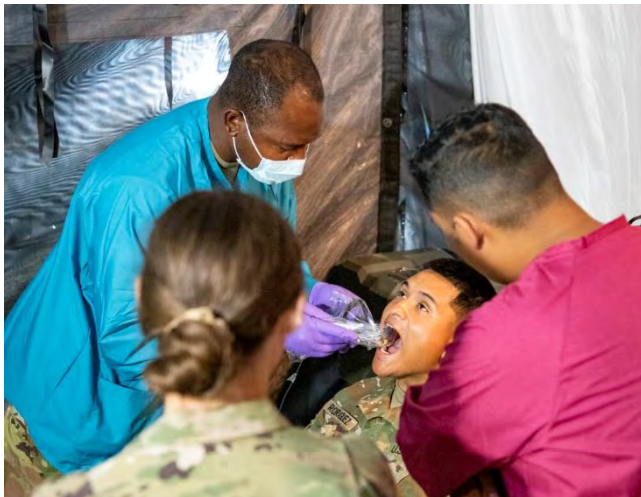
The most recent version of the Army Dental Corps Bulletin was re-tagged by the Public Affairs Office (PAO) and is now labeled as Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI). The new tag prevents distribution of the DC Bulletin outside of Federal communication mediums. Therefore, it cannot be sent through civilian e-mail nor linked on Facebook at the present time. The messaging team at the Corps Chiefs Office is researching ways in which to get the information out to AAD members, while still being within the parameters set by the PAO. In the meantime, the Facebook pages of the Army Dental Corps Chief and the Association of Army Dentistry provide a wealth of current information.

# Reserve Components News

Army Reserve Soldiers of the 965<sup>th</sup> Dental Company Area Support (DCAS) participated in the Total Force Integrated Training (T-FIT) at Fort Hood, Texas in July 2021. The 965<sup>th</sup> DCAS coordinated training support and assistance with the FT Hood DENTAC and the 502<sup>nd</sup> Dental Company Area Support for this annual training.

The T-FIT simulates an austere field environment where training includes executing privileging and credentialing, movement of personnel and equipment, setting up a Field Dental Clinic, and hands on clinical care with live patients. The COMPO 3 unit also receives a comprehensive external evaluation of their primary Mission Essential Tasks which allows Commanders to prioritize future training needs of the unit.

Partnership between Reserve and Active components ensure mission-ready units that can support large scale and Joint Force missions.



965<sup>TH</sup> DCAS Soldiers deliver field dental treatment during T-FIT.



965<sup>TH</sup> DCAS provide dental treatment and conduct training at FT Hood DENTAC.





965<sup>TH</sup> DCAS Soldiers set-up tents to use as field dental clinic and tactical operation center.



965<sup>th</sup> DCAS Soldiers inspect and set-up portable dental units during T-FIT.



965<sup>th</sup> DCAS Soldiers conduct training and review mission objectives during T-FIT.

## Leadership Corner

### TAKING THE PLUNGE

MG (Ret) Ted Wong

It starts with a lot of stress and fear, followed by sheer exhilaration and excitement, and ends with a sense of accomplishment and relief. **It's been said these are the phases you go through during your first parachute jump....and your first leadership job.**

As young dentists, you are focused on learning to be the best clinicians you can be as well as providing the best care to your patients, and appropriately so. But the Army Dental Corps also expects you to learn to be effective leaders and at some point in your career, to step into positions of responsibility. A couple things that make people hesitant to step into leadership positions are the anxiety and trepidation about venturing into the unknown territory of leadership and being uncertain of your abilities to be successful. I am reminded of the time when I was in my first assignment in the Army and my DENTAC commander, Colonel San Filippo, asked me to take a clinic Officer in Charge (OIC) position. I initially told him I needed time to talk it over with my wife, **because I wasn't sure I was ready, but after I realized he wasn't asking me, but** informing me, I said I would be honored and privileged to take the OIC position. I actually enjoyed my year as an OIC, learning a lot and receiving a lot of great support from the clinic team and Colonel San Filippo. There are two things I learned: (1) If a leader/commander is asking you to take a leadership job, they are confident you are ready to successfully take on the job, and (2) The leader who puts you into that position will be there to ensure your success by providing support and advice; after all, they are the one who put you in the job.

**Another issue that crosses peoples' minds is, "Why should I leave clinical dentistry after the Army and I have invested so much time and resources to be a dentist?" I was starting a staff internship at DENCOM when I asked this** question of Major General (Retired) Patrick Sculley, the first DENCOM Commander. His sage response was that I could continue to treat patients and make a difference one Soldier at a time, or I could take a leadership position and use my influence to make a difference for many Soldiers at a time. And he mentioned that the Army Dental Corps has many clinically talented dental officers, but we always need dental officers who have the skills, aptitude, and resilience to be successful in leadership and staff assignments.

I have to admit that I always have some level of anxiety and uncertainty going into my leadership jobs. But through excellent mentorship and support from the chain of command and unit personnel, I enjoyed my leadership assignments **and felt we made a difference in many Soldiers lives. So when it's your turn to be a leader, take the plunge—you'll be glad you did.**

# National Hispanic Heritage Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated each year, with this year's events celebrated from Wednesday, September 15, through Friday, October 15. The spring newsletter featured an article by Susan Allen about MAJ Fernando E. Rodriguez, DDS, an Army Dental Officer and Pioneer in Dental Research. The following excerpt is from earlier this month in Soldier Today, sponsored by AUSA, honoring Medal of Honor recipient MSG Roy Benavidez.



Medal of Honor recipient MSG Roy Benavidez

**“In my 25 years in the military, I feel like I have been overpaid for the service to my country. There will never be enough paper to print the money, nor enough gold in Fort Knox for me to have, to keep from doing what I did. I am proud to be an American and even prouder that I have earned the privilege to wear the Green Beret.”**

## Social Media

Please visit the **AAD’s Facebook page to receive** the latest news from throughout the Army Dental Care System and Army Medicine. Please check it out now!

<https://www.facebook.com/AssociationofArmyDentistry>



# In Memoriam

- Jeffrey Stewart Almony, COL, USA (Ret) 02/10/1963 – 09/19/2021

The AAD is saddened to announce the passing of COL Almony, 58, of Southern Pines, NC. He was a graduate of the dual degree Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Training Program at the University of Texas, Houston, Dental Branch. Subsequently, he completed a General Cosmetic Surgery Fellowship. COL Almony served as the Chairman and Director of the 4 year Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Training Program at Womack Army Medical Center, Fort Bragg, N.C., for ten years. **Notably, he earned the "A" Proficiency Designator** and was awarded the prestigious Educator of the Year Award by the US Army Dental Corps Chief. After retirement in 2014, he entered private practice in Pinehurst, N.C. To read more about his distinguished military service and his generous life in retirement, please follow the link below.

- <https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Almony%2C%20COL%20Ret%20Jeffrey%20Stewart%20%202-10-1963%20--%209-19-2021.pdf>
- Thomas Gardner, COL, USA (Ret) 4/12/1932 – 05/03/2020

Many of us benefitted from the knowledge of retired military dental officers who returned to become faculty members in dental schools across the nation after their retirement from active duty. One of those dentists was COL Gardner, who became a professor and later clinic director at the University of Iowa, College of Dentistry, where he was one of my professors and mentors. At that time, we were also blessed to have professors such as COL (Ret) Gil Lilly and COL (Ret) Jay Hanson, a tradition followed today by retired dental officers who have offered their talents to train the next generation of dentists.

COL Gardner retired as Associate Dean of the dental School. To read more of his distinguished military career and life in retirement, please follow the link below:

- <https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Gardner%2C%20COL%20Ret%20Thomas%20V.%20Jr.%20%208-5-1931%20--%207-25-2020.pdf>

We post the obituaries that are brought to our attention; if there are others that you wish to share on our website, please forward them to the AAD. The link to all of the obituaries on our website is at the following web address:

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/about/in-memoriam/>

## Conclusion:

If any of our members have input for the Board of Directors of the AAD or wish to share an article for the newsletter, please forward your recommendations or articles to the email address below.

The AAD would like to thank each of you for your continued membership and support of our charitable mission. If any of our members has an interest in serving on our board of directors or assisting in another capacity, please contact the AAD at [assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com](mailto:assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com)

Please keep our men and women in uniform in your thoughts and prayers as they continue their missions around the world - God Bless America!

Editor AAD Newsletter, COL Ron Lambert, COL, USA (Ret)

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