

# A supportive community welcomes military newcomers

*Erin O. Stattel, Army War College Public Affairs*

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(September 27, 2010)—With unseasonably warm weather and not a cloud in sight, newcomers made their way downtown Saturday to spend a day in a community proud to say it is home to the Army War College.

“This was a fantastic opportunity on a beautiful day to get to know the area a bit,” said Lt. Col. John Howard, an International Fellow from New Zealand and a member of Seminar 12. “The whole event has been very well-hosted by Carlisle and the community. The range of artisans and craftsmen selling their wares are of international quality and I must say I truly enjoyed the crab cakes at the food alley.”

***Maj. Gen. Gregg F. Martin, USAWC  
commandant, signs the Army Community***

***Covenant.*** *Photo by Erin O. Stattel, Army War College Public Affairs.*



Army War College newcomers perused booths manned by local artists and vendors at the Carlisle Harvest of the Arts and got to know some of the local people before heading to Veterans’ Square to witness the signing of the Army Community Covenant and to enjoy a performance by the U.S. Army jazz Ambassadors Dixieland Band.

Fellow Seminar 12 member Coast Guard Commander Todd Prestidge said it was a great opportunity to bring his family out to the downtown area.

“I am a ‘geo bachelor’ and my family is up visiting this weekend so we decided to come out and explore the downtown Carlisle area in a family friendly atmosphere,” Prestidge said. “It is just a very, very nice day and event, and I got to show John around our little American town here.”

The community covenant served as reminder of how supportive the local Carlisle area is to the Army War College community.

“We have a terrific partnership with the community and Carlisle is very supportive of Carlisle Barracks and the Army War College,” said Lt. Col. Janet Holliday, garrison commander. “We in turn, would like to show our support for our community and never have I been in such a supportive community as we are here.”



“I don’t think we could ever do enough for members of our military and their families,” said Mayor Kirk Wilson. “This event is a labor of love for everyone who is involved, and this community is steeped in military history so if there’s a community that has a special place in its heart for the military, it’s Carlisle.”

***Army War College newcomers chat with some Carlisle locals during the Welcome Jam***

***downtown last weekend. Photo by Erin O. Stattel, Army War college Public Affairs.***

Army War College Commandant Maj. Gen. Gregg F. Martin reminded those in attendance that Carlisle is still considered one of the favorite places to be stationed while serving in the military.

“Military people travel and live all over the world and one of the best places to get assigned to is right here in Carlisle, Pennsylvania,” he said.

Martin presented retired Lt. Col. Sam Lombardo, who served during World War II, a flag which had been flown over Afghanistan in a USAF fighter jet that had been arranged by a former Army War College faculty member. Lombardo, a prominent veteran within the community, embodies what it means to serve a nation and serve a community.

The flag was a token of appreciation and had a deeper meaning.

Lombardo, who enlisted on Nov. 11, 1939, in the 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Division, Pennsylvania National Guard as a private, was a 25-year-old first lieutenant in World War II, fresh out of fighting on the front lines of the Battle of the Bulge, when he decided to make his own American flag.

He said he requested one from a commanding officer but was denied, so he and his men decided to make their own flag. It was pieced together, under combat conditions and often under candlelight, with

whatever materials could be secured like pillowcases, curtains, and even a German surrender flag. It took the men approximately two-and-a-half months to complete the flag, which was finished by the time the men reached the Danube River.

One of the men rolled the material into a medical kit and carried it with him as they advanced from town to town. At night, they'd painstakingly cut out stars and sew them on to the flag. They finished both sides of the 48-star flag by the time the war ended. Their flag was the first American flag to cross the Remagen Bridge during the war and it is now on display at the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning.



***Maj. Gen. Gregg F. Martin, USAWC commandant, and Col. Bobby Towery, USAWC deputy commandant, present ret. Lt. Col. Sam Lombardo with a special American flag as a token of appreciation of his service to the nation and this community. Photo by Erin O. Stattel, Army War College Public Affairs.***

That story inspired former Army War College faculty member Air Force Col. Gerald Goodfellow, now commander of the 7<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, USAF 7<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing, Dyess AFB Texas.

Honoring Lombardo and his unit's dedication to the flag and their country, he arranged for an American flag to be carried aboard a B-1 Bomber during a combat mission in Afghanistan, for presentation to Lombardo during Saturday's Army Community Covenant Signing.

After Lombardo was presented the flag by Martin and Col. Bobby Towery, deputy commandant of the Army War College, he stepped up to the microphone to thank them for his gift.

"I would do it all over again," he proudly said.

Click here to view more photos from Saturday's events:

<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/banner/mediagallery/photoGallery.cfm>.