



Artillery OCS News September 30, 2024

Greetings From Fort Sill,



Artillery OCS Heritage Hall Ribbon Cutting November 2, 2024:

The US Field Artillery Association planned an event for November 2 that included a light lunch in the Artillery OCS Heritage Hall for US Field Artillery Hall of Fame inductees, Field Artillery Association Directors and Fort Sill Leadership.

The OCS Heritage Hall is part of the Field Artillery Museum and is used as a classroom and a location for special events. The Managing Director of the Field Artillery Association thoughtfully offered us the opportunity to have a ribbon cutting during the event while Fort Sill Leadership and a distinguished group of VIPs would be present.

The Artillery OCS Alumni Family and Friends built and gifted the Artillery OCS Heritage Hall to the Army. The US Field Artillery Association provided no support for the project, but we are pleased to have the November 2, US Field Artillery Hall of Fame luncheon in the new facility.

Reminder: If you plan to attend the Ribbon Cutting and Lunch on November 2, 2024, you must register online (there is no charge). In addition, please notify us so that we can verify the registration list provided by the Field Artillery Association.

Click here to register:

<https://www.fieldartillery.org/events/ocsmuseumlunch>

There needs to be clarity about the US Field Artillery Hall of Fame and the Artillery OCS Hall of Fame. There is no connection between the two. The US Field Artillery Association administers the U.S. Field Artillery Hall of Fame. All nominees must be living at the time of nomination.

Three (3) Artillery OCS graduates are honored in the US Field Artillery Hall of Fame:

1. General Jack N. Merritt (Class 35-53).
2. General Tommy R. Franks (Class 5-67).
3. Major General Leo J. Baxter (Class 6-70).

From the US Field Artillery Association website:

"The United States Field Artillery Hall of Fame was designed to recognize, with distinction, a wider array of Field Artillery men and women, across various branches, of assorted ranks, and civilians or volunteers who have contributed greatly to the branch. There was also a need to recognize those former Red Legs, who served and then, using the core values of the FA, went on to reach the top levels of their chosen profession.

The 2024 Inductees are:

- LTG (Ret) David D. Halverson, US Army
- LTG (Ret) Gary Cheek, US Army
- MG (Ret) Guy Bourn, US Army
- Col (Ret) Michael Marletto, US Marine Corps
- Hon Brian Birdwell, LTC (Ret), US Army
- LtCol (Ret) Michael Grice, US Marine Corps
- CWO5 (Ret) David Thomas, US Marine Corps
- CW4 (Ret) Richard Wilkinson, US Army
- SMMC (Ret) Ronald Green, US Marine Corps
- CSM (Ret) Harold Shrewsbury, US Army
- Mrs. Constance McDonald

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Artillery OCS Hall of Fame: The Artillery OCS Hall of Fame is a separate entity that recognizes distinguished graduates of the Artillery OCS (commissioned in any branch) and graduates of other OCS programs who were commissioned or who later served in an Artillery Branch (Field Artillery, Air Defense Artillery and Coast Artillery).

Three OCS graduates were recently inducted into the Artillery OCS Hall of Fame:

- Ambassador George Southall Vest, Class 23-42 (deceased).**
- Colonel Charles S. Simerly, Class 3-61 (deceased).**
- Colonel Sheldon B. Johnson, Fort Benning Class RC2-71.**

Ambassador Vest was the former Director General of the United States Foreign Service, US Ambassador to the European Community, and Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs. He is one of only sixty Foreign Service Officers to reach the rank of Career Ambassador in the US Foreign Service's history. Vest retired in 1989 and remained a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He died in August 2021 at the age of 102.

Colonel Simerly played a critical role in both writing and testing new aviation doctrine in South Vietnam. In 1965, he helped establish the modern Army Aviation unit distance and flight endurance records. During the 1972 North Vietnam Easter Invasion, he used airborne direction-finding platforms to reduce the reporting time on enemy unit locations from 24 hours to 5 minutes. He commanded the first Army Electronic Warfare unit and left a legacy that helped make the Army's tactical IEW (Intelligence and Electronic Warfare) systems more accurate, timely, and flexible. He was inducted into the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame in 1994.

Colonel Johnson attended Infantry OCS at Fort Benning and the Artillery Officer Basic Course at Fort Sill the next training year. After eight years in the Michigan National Guard Field Artillery, he volunteered to serve in the "Captains to Europe" program on a 30-month active duty accompanied tour and a 90-day extension. He returned to the Michigan Army National Guard and later commanded an 8-inch SP Unit (M-110) for 36 months. The unit was selected to become an M270-MLRS unit and he commanded this unit for the next 24 months during the fielding of the MLRS System.

Thanks to LTC Bill Shade, Fort Benning OCS Class 4-60, a member of the Army OCS Hall of Fame for nominating COL Simerly.

Contributions to the Artillery OCS Alumni Chapter: 812 alumni and friends have contributed \$763,977 since November 1, 2019. We have achieved 97.32% of our \$785,000 goal for the Artillery Officer Candidate School Heritage Hall project. If you have already contributed, please accept my THANK YOU. If you have not, please consider joining this effort and becoming part of the Team. Working together to complete and sustain this project will be a wonderful and lasting tribute to our departed Brothers.

The Artillery OCS Alumni Chapter is an IRS 501(C)3 charitable organization. Donations are tax-deductible. Tax ID: EIN # 74-3052514. You can send a check to Artillery OCS Alumni PO Box 33612 Fort Sill, OK 73503. Click on the link below to see how you can support our efforts: <https://artilleryocshistory.org/support-us.html>

The Support Us page has a PayPal link for credit card donations. Thanks for your continuing support, Randy C. Dunham (Class 10-69)

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<https://artilleryocshistory.org/index.html>

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