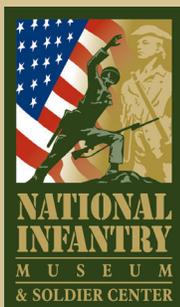


# THE INFANTRY HERITAGE LETTER



for an experience  
to remember

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## NATIONAL INFANTRY MUSEUM FOUNDATION

1775 Legacy Way  
Columbus, Georgia 31903  
706.653.9234  
nationalinfantrymuseum.org

## Celebrating our Resiliency ... and more

As this newsletter arrives in your mailbox or your inbox, most of America is practicing patriotism by staying at home. It looks like we may be nearing the downhill slope of the Coronavirus curve, but there are far more unanswered questions still facing us.

The museum closed its doors March 17. But its staff has remained busy, most working from home, some in the building, keeping a safe distance from others. Maintaining the facility and its priceless collection of artifacts is an ongoing, round-the-clock responsibility. But even those whose jobs depend on visitors have spent this time productively. The Education Department is building new programming, some of it available now through social media. The Events Department is giving virtual tours to prospective clients. And the Development Department is researching

new ways to raise money in tough times, while making sure our existing supporters are staying safe, healthy and connected.

At the time of this writing, no decision has been made as to when to reopen the museum. We are following Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp's shutdown order, which is set to expire at the end of April. We're also staying in touch with Fort Benning, whose Soldiers are still locked down. Training is continuing, but no new trainees are coming in and no new Soldiers are shipping out.

The museum depends heavily on both the military and civilian community for its success. Museum President and COO BG (Ret) Pete Jones recorded a video message to express his appreciation for your ongoing support. View it on our webpage or at [https://youtu.be/Y4Qd7\\_NMqCE](https://youtu.be/Y4Qd7_NMqCE).

**“** *I hate to be talking to you this way, instead of walking the Last 100 Yards ramp with you. It's sad to see this magnificent museum so quiet. No school kids learning about American history, no veterans reliving their pasts, no young soldier-trainees discovering the legacy that's about to be theirs. But, like you, we're doing our part to encourage a speedy resolution to the pandemic gripping our nation. If we have to shutter the museum for awhile to make sure we all stay safe, it's a small price to pay.*

*Moments like this remind us of our country's amazing resiliency. 75 years ago we emerged from World War II with a stronger economy and a new focus on innovation and education. 19 years ago we cleared the rubble from 9/11 and became a stronger, more patriotic nation, with a heightened appreciation of the importance of family and home. Americans are tough, and on the other side of this latest threat, we'll again celebrate our resiliency.*



**BG PETE JONES**  
President and COO, National Infantry Museum Foundation

*In the meantime, let's stand together to lend aid and comfort to stricken families, overburdened healthcare workers and small businesses.*

*We appreciate all who have reached out to us at the National Infantry Museum during this tough time. We, too, are resilient, and with your continued support, we'll soon invite you back for a walk through our country's great history.”*

# Continuing the Mission



**Above:** Volunteer Coordinator Richarda Logacz and Theater Host Karla Rivera enjoy a socially distanced lunch while waiting for the freshly mopped floor to dry.

The mission of honoring Soldiers never stops. It just requires a little extra ingenuity when the museum built in their honor is closed. So, if you could take a peek into what our staff is doing these days, you'd find: curators online researching artifacts online and writing text for the new current operations gallery; educators reaching out to youngsters on social media; restaurant staff engaged in deep cleaning; and landscapers keeping Inouye Field meticulously groomed. We want to be sure that when the Army's newest Soldiers are ready to graduate, they'll know just how much they mean to us.



**Right:** Events Coordinator Jessica Kennedy drowns in mums while organizing the department's storage room.



Spring cleaning and then some. Even the ceiling tiles!



Assistant Director of Education Tiffany Hoffman reads *Buddy, A Soldier Bear* to kids on the NIM Kids Facebook page.



Juggling projects -- and laptops -- at home.

# Mother-in-Law of the Army



Fort Benning has been called the "Mother-in-Law of the Army" because of the number of young Columbus women who've married its Soldiers. It's also known as a community that takes care of its families, and supports the spouses who sacrifice so much to live the Army life.

In January, the National Infantry Museum rededicated its Army Wife exhibit to all Army spouses, especially those who met in this community. Through the generosity of MG Carl McNair in memory of his wife Jo Ann, the display in the Fort Benning gallery tells the story of Army spouses and features photos of the McNairs and Capt Jeremy and Lisa Day (shown above with sons Ethan and Jacob), representing the newest generation of Army couples.

Among the other "Benning couples" attending the rededication were LTG Tom and Pam Metz, MG Walt and Candy Wojdakowski, COL Rob and Mindy Choppa, COL Ralph and Jean Puckett, Janice Van Meter and Sally Gates.

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# TWICE AS NICE!!

## NIM Voted Best Free Museum AGAIN!

For the second time, the National Infantry Museum has won the distinction of **Best Free Museum in America** by readers of USA Today. The NIM won the same award in 2016, the last time USA Today conducted the contest.

This time around, the NIM also was nominated in the category of **Best History Museum**, winning an impressive and unexpected third place finish.

The readers' choice contest ran from January 20 to February 17. The NIM sat in or close to first place throughout the month in the familiar Best Free Museum category. To avoid confusion – not to mention tough competition with some world renowned history museums – the museum downplayed its nomination as a Best History Museum. Yet, despite little publicity, the museum vaulted from eighth place to third place in the closing days of the contest.

“Just like they always say at the Oscars, we were proud just to be nominated,” BG (Ret) Pete Jones, President and COO of the National Infantry Museum Foundation, said after being notified of the win. “But to come away with first and third place wins – nationwide! – is testament to just how exceptional this museum is. Our visitors already know it, travel experts know it, and now this award will help us make sure everyone knows it.”

USA Today travel writers nominated 20 museums from across the country in each category, including many that are more well-known than the NIM, such as the Smithsonian and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. and the National WWII Museum in New Orleans.

The museum hosted a “Twice as Nice” party on March 4, featuring the Carver High Marching Tigers, the unveiling of banners boasting of the museum’s awards, and the Columbus mayor’s proclamation naming March 4 National Infantry Museum Day.



*NIMF President Pete Jones, Columbus Mayor Skip Henderson, Army Museum Enterprise Regional Director Dave Hanselman, PVT Giovanni Crook and CSM Martin Celestine cut the cake to celebrate the NIM's big win.*



## The OTHER Threats We Face

Before the pandemic launched a new threat across the globe, the museum hosted a symposium called “Security in an Increasingly Dangerous World.” From Russian election meddling to Chinese economic positioning to the spread of violent extremism ... six distinguished panelists painted a sobering picture of the threats surrounding us.

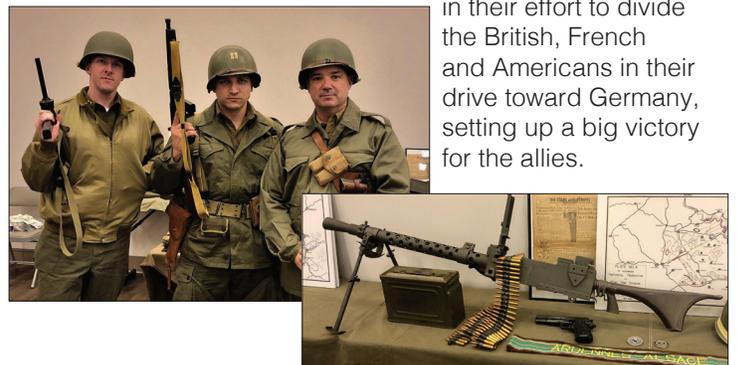
Many thanks to our panel of experts, included retired Colonel John Stahl, retired Colonel Bob Wilson, retired Colonel Bill Carty, Dr. Alex Crowther, Colonel John Dee Suggs, retired Brigadier General Kurt Crytzer and National Infantry Museum Foundation President retired Brigadier General Pete Jones.

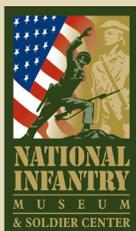


## Remembering 1945

In full uniform, Armor and Cavalry curator Rob Cogan, CPT Walt Gradzik and Education Director Chris Lewis manned displays of vintage weapons and equipment as the museum commemorated what Winston Churchill called “the greatest American battle of the war,” the Battle of the Bulge, on January 18.

The battle was Adolf Hitler’s last major offensive in World War II against the Western Front. But the German troops failed in their effort to divide the British, French and Americans in their drive toward Germany, setting up a big victory for the allies.





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### HONOR THE SACRIFICE

### PRESERVE THE LEGACY

The National Infantry Foundation was established in 1998 to honor our nation's Infantrymen, past, present and future, and to preserve their legacy. The Foundation, in partnership with the U.S. Army, is committed to sharing their legacy through the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center.

*The museum is sponsored, in part, by the U.S. Department of Defense. The content of this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Government and no official endorsement should be inferred.*

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