The 4th Annual Symposium on Modern Warfare Agenda
“Leadership and Modern Warfare”

Friday September 20, 2019
International Cultural Center, Texas Tech University

8:30 AM: Opening Remarks
Dr. Ron Milam, Executive Director, Institute for Peace and Conflict, Texas Tech University

8:45 AM: Session 1

*Time, Power, and Principal-Agent Problems: Why the U.S. Army is Ill-Suited for Proxy Warfare Hotspots*
Presenter: Major Amos Fox, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss

*Aiming for Success: The Tailored Command Philosophy*
Presenter: Dr. John Blumentritt, Air University, Maxwell AFB

*Towards a Reformed Operational Control of Private Military Contractors*
Presenter: Andrew Thornebrooke, Norwich University

10:15 AM: Break

10:30 AM: Session 2

*Reading with Osama: A Critical Analysis of Al-Qaeda’s Abbottabad Documents*
Presenter: Dr. Christopher Carey, Johnson County Community College

Presenter: Dr. Brent Talbot, USAF Academy

Crisis in Baghdad: Leadership in a Risk Adverse Environment

This presentation chronicles my story as a base and unit commander during a combat tour in Iraq and includes photographs (taken then) for this fast-paced lecture. However, this is not just an account of our modern military, but it also examines leadership concepts that can be used by those who manage or command in civilian or military settings. This briefing (and my book of the same name) analyzes management issues but also intends to demonstrate that one person can make a difference. It also does not provide a tired and over-used list of leadership traits but gives examples of real ideas and actual motivational successes. It also is not afraid to honestly examining my flaws and mistakes, which had a personal cost.

This story occurred in a perilous period of the Iraqi War when U.S. military forces were locked in a stalemate with anti-government groups. Simultaneously the Iraqis society was tearing itself apart with murderous, religious strife. It was a tipping point of the war, which I helped influence and is discussed in this lecture. When I arrived, I discovered many serious problems that were festering or had not even been identified – posing extreme danger for the base and our people. Find out how I motivated the young millennials, and we worked together to make our base safe and better.

Presenter: Colonel Gregory Marston

Colonel Gregory Marston was a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1978. He graduated from USAF pilot training in 1979 and flew the A-10, A-37, OV-10 and C-141 aircraft in the active duty Air Force and Air National Guard. He has participated in four combat tours and has flown 80 A-10 combat missions in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait. He has served as an A-10 “Warthog” Operations Officer, Squadron Commander, Group Commander and Wing Commander. In 2002-3 he commanded an USAF Group and the airfield at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. Under his leadership this unit flew over 1600 A-10A combat missions supporting U.S. Army Soldiers in Afghanistan. He commanded an USAF Group and Sather AB, Iraq from 2006-7. After Iraq he became the Director of Operations, Pennsylvania Air National Guard until his retirement in 2008.

Concurrent with his military career, from 1985-2008 he was a pilot for American Airlines, becoming Captain in the Boeing 727; Airbus A-300, Boeing 757, 767 and the B-777. He completed his Master’s Degree in Military History from Norwich University in 2019. He is married, has three children and lives near Doylestown, PA.


12:00 PM: Lunch

Keynote Speaker: General John Murray, Commanding General, Army Futures Command
1:15 PM: Session 3


Presenter: Dr. Brian Price, Air Command & Staff College

The Fighter Tactics Revolution, 1937-1944: Command Inertia, Crew Ingenuity, and Combat Innovation

Presenter: Colonel Matthew Hurley (U.S. Air Force, ret.), PhD, Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies

The War Against ISIS: Views from U.S. Air Force Operations and Maintenance

Presenter: Dennis Berger, ABD, Texas Tech University

2:45 PM: Break

3:00 PM: Session 4

Coalition Leadership during Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR), 2017-2018: A Historian’s Perspective

Presenter: Steve Frank, Command Historian, III Corps and Fort Hood, Texas

An Anecdotal History of an Officer’s Leadership Experience Over the Last 10 Years of War

Presenter: Captain Jonathan Austin, Operations Officer, G3 (CUOPS) III Corps and Fort Hood, Texas

4:30 PM: Closing Remarks

Dr. Steve Maxner, Director of the Vietnam Center and Archive and the Archive of Modern American Warfare, Texas Tech University

4:45 PM: End of Symposium