

Sergeant Major of the Army Glen Morrell

by

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Sergeant Major of the Army Glen Morrell Outline

I. Introduction

A. References: Elder, Dan. The Sergeants Major of the Army. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2003.

Association of the United States Army, NCO Matters (1995-2005). 20 September 2005.
<http://www.ausa.org/webpub/DeptNCOSTuff.nsf/byid/CCRN-6CCRFM>

Association of the United States Army, NCO Matters (1995-2005). 20 September 2005.
<http://www.ausa.org/webpub/DeptNCOSTuff.nsf/byid/KCAT-6DBQKU>

B. I did not find a lot of material about Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell. The information I did find was very consistent. I created my topic statement after reading about his life and remembering what he was like in person. I met him in 2001 during an awards ceremony in Beckley, West Virginia.

II. Body

A. The paper starts with the topic statement and a conversation that I had with SMA Morrell's wife at an awards ceremony in Beckley, West Virginia.

B. I reference his childhood to illustrate his desire to be a Soldier at a young age. I discuss SMA Morrell's family to show the foundation of his Values. School was important because his teachers were able to influence him and nurture his decision to join the Army.

C. I show his numerous assignments in the Army and how he was able to help Soldiers and families through a personal love and commitment.

D. After 33 years of service SMA Morrell is still inspiring Soldiers all over the United States. I focus on his continuous contributions to Soldiers in the recruiting command. Every year he travels around the United States to speak to Soldiers and families throughout the Recruiting Command.

III. Closing

A. Summary: I will use a summary slide to recapture the key points of my briefing.

B. Question and Answer period:

C. Concluding statement: Sergeant Major of the Army Glen Morrell's greatest contribution to the NCO Corps continues to be his love for and commitment to the Soldier.

Sergeant Major of the Army Glen Morrell's greatest contribution to the noncommissioned officer (NCO) Corps continues to be his love for and commitment to the Soldier. Every year he takes time to speak in front of recruiters all over the United States. I met Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA) Morrell and his lovely wife Karen during Beckley Recruiting Battalion's annual training and awards conference in 2001. My wife and I were talking with Karen and during the conversation she said "he loves being with Soldiers". The sincerity in her voice said it all.

Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell was born on 26 May, 1936 in Wick, West Virginia (Elder). He was the youngest of seven children, four sisters and 2 brothers. His father worked for Hope Natural Gas Company and his mother was a housewife. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell spent most of his time fishing and reading as a young man. The family did not have a television and listening to the radio was a rare treat. The family would often have important discussions at dinner. Respect for people and giving everyone a chance were frequent topics. There was structure in the home and discipline was a big part of that structure. Whipping was the standard punishment from both parents.

Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell went to public school at Normantown. All grades were in the same building. This would turn out to be significant because teachers had a long time to influence the kids. Some teachers at Normantown served in World War II and had an air of military discipline. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell knew in middle school that one day he would be a Soldier. He did well in school excelling in math, science, and history. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell worked on the farm for \$1.50 a day during high school. He would think about being a Soldier and jumping out of planes while working in the fields. He completed high school in 1954.

With few opportunities in West Virginia, SMA Morrell could fulfill his dream of becoming a Soldier. In the fall of 1954, he volunteered to join the United States Army. He wanted to be an infantryman, but he had to join for the needs of the Army. He joined the Field Artillery and served as a forward observer and cannoneer in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He graduated from jump school in 1955. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell married Karen Wade of Parkersburg, West Virginia, during his first enlistment. He left the Army in 1957 and moved back to West Virginia. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell wanted to serve as a highway patrolman in West Virginia, but there weren't any jobs available.

SMA Morrell missed being a soldier. He reenlisted in the Army in 1958. His first assignment was Combat Support Company, 2d Battle Group, 6th Infantry, Berlin Germany. While in Berlin he graduated from the local NCO academy. The academy was small with only four training platoons. In 1960 the Combat Support Company phased out and he transferred to the 14th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Fulda, Germany. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell spent a lot of time mentoring NCOs during this assignment. Some officers accepted positions as NCOs after a reduction in the force structure. They did not have the skills or experience to handle discipline problems in the unit.

In 1962 SMA Morrell reenlisted in the Special Forces. Promoted to Staff Sergeant, he went back to Fort Bragg, North Carolina and served as a Heavy Weapons Sergeant for Company C, 5th Special Forces Group. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell learned to speak French and Spanish while serving in the Special Forces. He did his first tour in Vietnam in 1963 staying for six months. He earned Sergeant First Class and returned to Vietnam in 1964 for his second tour. At the end of his second tour he went to the Special Forces Training Group at Fort Bragg. In 1966 he left Fort Bragg for the 8th Special Forces Group in Panama. In 1969 SMA Morrell did

his last tour in Vietnam returning in 1970 as a Master Sergeant.

Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell returned to Panama from 1970 to 1973 serving as the First Sergeant of Head Quarters Company, 8th Special Forces Group. At the end of that tour he left to attend the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas. He was one of nineteen Special Forces Soldiers at the academy. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell earned an Associates Degree from El Paso Community College while attending the academy. After graduating the academy he left Fort Bliss to serve as the First Sergeant for Company A, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry in Fort Riley, Kansas. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell told me there were two assignments he was skeptical about taking, ROTC and Recruiting Command. He wanted to Soldier and he thought these assignments would take him away from Soldiers. He said that his next assignment at St. Johns University's ROTC Department was a learning experience. His primary job was to manage the office and Soldiers on the staff.

Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell received great news after his selection for promotion to Sergeant Major. He was going to Fort Stewart, Georgia to be the Command Sergeant Major of the 1st Ranger Battalion, 75th Infantry. He finished ranger training in January, 1977 and said it was "the best realistic training I ever received in the Army" (Elder). Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell was the Distinguished Honor Graduate at forty one years old. He was the oldest member of his class. After arriving at the 1st Ranger Battalion he understood what it meant to train. He said "Training day and night, seven days a week...All we did was train, train, train, and running exercises" (Elder). In 1979 he returned to Bad Tölz, Germany to be the Command Sergeant Major of the 10th Special Forces Detachment until 1981.

In 1981 SMA Morrell reported to the United States Army Recruiting Command at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. I mentioned earlier that this assignment made him feel like he was leaving

Soldiers. He later said that he found his recruiting tour to be very rewarding. The Recruiting Command had a lot of problems that no one was dealing with. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell spent his entire tour with Soldiers and their families helping them deal with the problems in recruiting. Problems with housing and medical care were important issues to Soldiers. There was no installation around to support the majority of Soldiers and families in recruiting. The first thing SMA Morrell did was fight to bring fewer sergeants into recruiting because of the money problems. He was also instrumental in assigning NCOs in certain demographics so that they would be successful and families would be comfortable. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell had such an impact on the Recruiting Command that their highest award for recruiting excellence is the Morrell Award.

In 1982 SMA Morrell left recruiting to be the United States Army Forces Command, Command Sergeant Major. In 1983 SMA Morrell became the 7th Sergeant Major of the Army under General John A. Wickman Jr., the Army Chief of Staff. He was now able to help Soldiers all over the world. He worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for single Soldiers. He did not travel with the Chief of Staff. He would take his wife with him to visit Soldiers and families. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell said, "I always enjoyed talking to Soldiers, that's what I wanted to do" (Elder). Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell continued to focus on the development of the NCOES (noncommissioned officer education system). He felt that combining the Primary Leadership Course and the Primary Noncommissioned Officer Course was important. He knew the formation of the Primary Leadership Development Course was vital to establishing a solid corps of NCOs. During SMA Morrell's term the Sergeant Major Academy took over the responsibility for developing the common core training for the NCOES. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell focused on a number of other initiatives during his tenure as

SMA. He retired from active service on 30 June, 1987 after serving as a Soldier for thirty three years.

Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell continues to contribute to the NCO Corps today. His yearly presence at recruiting ceremonies inspires Soldiers all over the United States. You can feel the passion he has for Soldiers in his speech. He made it very clear for me when he said, “NCO leaders must know themselves, their Soldiers, and their Soldier’s needs. Furthermore, they must be capable of inspiring young leaders with their knowledge. That can not be done by words alone; it must be done by personal examples of ethical and professional excellence” (<http://www.ausa.org/webpub/DeptNCOSTuff.nsf/byid/KCAT-6DBQKU>).

In summary, Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell’s greatest contribution to the NCO Corps continues to be his love for and commitment to the Soldier. His parents created an environment of strong values and discipline. Teachers helped him by nurturing his desire to be a Soldier as a young man. His love for Soldiers started before he ever put on an Army uniform. Sergeant Major of the Army Morrell’s wife, Karen, is still by his side sharing his life-long dream of being a Soldier. He has been able to touch many Soldiers lives through his various assignments in the Army. After thirty three years of paid service, he now serves Soldiers for free. Year after year SMA Morrell is somewhere in the United States inspiring Soldiers. I was lucky to be one of the Soldiers sitting in the audience during his 2001 speech in Beckley, West Virginia. I received the Morrell award for excellence in recruiting in 2004. It is an honor for me to wear the Morrell Award around my neck.

Works Cited

Elder, Dan. The Sergeants Major of the Army. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2003.

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