

HIGH DESERT WARRIOR

Fort Irwin

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Fort Irwin names Best Warriors, Squad



U.S. Army photo by Jack J. Adamyk

Sgt. Luis Lamarque (right), an infantryman with K Troop, 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, grades Sgt. Carlos Ramirez, unit supply specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1916th Support Battalion, 916th Support Brigade, on his ability to find a reverse azimuth during the Best Warrior Competition on Fort Irwin, California, April 10, 2023.

Story by Kimberly Hackbarth

Fort Irwin Public Affairs Office

FORT IRWIN, California — Soldiers from National Training Center and Fort Irwin participated in the installation's Best Warrior Competition and Best Squad Competition April 10-12, here.

Throughout the competition, Soldiers completed the Army Combat Fitness Test, warrior tasks and battle drills, day and night land navigation, a 12-mile foot march, an obstacle course, a range stress shoot, a written test, and a knowledge board.

At the end of the competition, 2nd Lt. Ethan Baker, a transportation officer with 1916th Support Battalion, 916th Support Brigade, won best officer, Sgt. Robert Navarro, a cavalry scout with Dragon Team, Operations Group, won best noncommissioned officer, and Spc. Lucas McEachran, a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear specialist with 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, won best Soldier, and a team from Operations Group won best squad.

Baker, a Chester, Virginia, native, joined the Army National Guard in 2017 and has been active duty for the last 10 months.

Participating in competitions that showcase Soldier



U.S. Army photo by Jack J. Adamyk

Capt. Mathew Lanter (Left), distribution company trainer with Goldminer Company, Operations Group, disassembles an M4 carbine as Spc. Nico Espitia, an infantryman, with F Troop, 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, grades during the Best Warrior Competition on Fort Irwin, California, April 10, 2023.

skills are part of the reason Baker joined the Army, he said.

"I wanted to compete because I enjoy taking on the individual physical challenges in the Army," Baker said.

"While I'm still young and new to it, I want to get out

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'Guy Ritchie's The Covenant' stars visit Fort Irwin



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Jake Gyllenhaal and Dar Salim, stars of the film *Guy Ritchie's The Covenant*, receive a safety brief from the flight crew from 2916th Aviation Battalion, 916th Support Brigade, before boarding a UH-60 Black Hawk in Burbank, California, April 14, 2023. Gyllenhaal and Salim visited Fort Irwin and met with Soldiers and family members.

Story by Kimberly Hackbarth

Fort Irwin Public Affairs Office

FORT IRWIN, California — Jake Gyllenhaal and Dar Salim, the stars of the upcoming film *Guy Ritchie's The Covenant*, visited here, April 14, with the United Services Organizations (USO).

Gyllenhaal and Salim flew by UH-60 Black Hawk to Fort Irwin and received a brief by the chief of staff and operations chief for the National Training Center, met with Soldiers from the installation and the rotational unit before introducing the film before a screening at the post theater.

In the film, Gyllenhaal plays an Army sergeant who is saved by Salim's character, an Afghan interpreter. Gyllenhaal's character later returns to Afghanistan when he learns Salim's character is being hunted by the Taliban.

"I think that this movie, first and foremost, is an action movie full of entertainment, but at the heart of it is a story about what we do for each other," Gyllenhaal said. "Our ethos is no one left behind, and I think sometimes in our world there's so much media

and so much information coming at us that certain stories and things come out of the limelight and to shed a little bit of light again on the story and the idea of it is a really important thing."

Salim said he agreed that the story was important to tell.

"We always hear about the things that divide us just because it's more interesting to write about or talk about in the media, but I feel that I love this movie because it's just about unlikely friendship, it's about brotherhood, it's about taking care of the guy next to you despite how dangerous the situation is," Salim said. "It's about making the right choices when it's most difficult to make the right choices."

Before premiering the film, Gyllenhaal and Salim spent time with Fort Irwin Soldiers and families around the installation, including Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brandon Elliott, pilot in command with Company A "Desert Hawks", 2916th Aviation Battalion, 916th Support Brigade, who flew Gyllenhaal and Salim to Fort Irwin.

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Celebrity Visit

From THE COVENANT, Page 1



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Jake Gyllenhaal and Dar Salim, stars of the film *Guy Ritchie's The Covenant*, pose for a photograph with Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brandon Elliott (third from right) and his flight crew with Company A "Desert Hawks", 2916th Aviation Battalion, 916th Support Brigade, in Burbank, California, April 14, 2023. Elliott, a pilot in command and Pleasant Hill, California native, and his team flew Gyllenhaal and Salim to Fort Irwin where they screened their upcoming movie for the Fort Irwin.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Jake Gyllenhaal and Dar Salim, stars of the film *Guy Ritchie's The Covenant*, pose for a photograph with Soldiers on Fort Irwin, California, April 14, 2023. Gyllenhaal and Salim visited with Soldiers out in the training area while learning about the installation's mission.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Jake Gyllenhaal and Dar Salim, stars of the film *Guy Ritchie's The Covenant*, pose for a photograph with rotational Soldiers on Fort Irwin, California, April 14, 2023.



Photo by Jack J. Adamyk

Jake Gyllenhaal and Dar Salim, stars of the film "Guy Ritchie's The Covenant", pose for a photograph with the audience at the Fort Irwin post theater prior to the screening of the film on Fort Irwin, California, April 14, 2023.

"They were both very welcoming and took their time interacting with us," Elliott said. "They seemed truly excited to be there for the visit and to meet everyone on Fort Irwin."

Gyllenhaal expressed gratitude toward the Fort Irwin community following his visit.

"From the moment we were greeted by everyone at the airport in Los Angeles, everybody has been not only professional but good humored," Gyllenhaal said. "I was really impressed with all the systems here and all of the incredible skill on hand and on display."

Gyllenhaal and Salim learned about the mission of Fort Irwin and the NTC and saw Ujen, one of the mock cities in the training area, known as "the box".

"Everyone's been so generous and so warm and welcoming, and the sheer size and scale of this place is just very, very impres-

sive," Salim said. "I never imagined that a training facility of this size and with these opportunities for training even existed in the world so that was very educational to see."

The opportunity to meet people and learn about their stories is one of the biggest takeaways for Gyllenhaal from making the film and visit Fort Irwin, he said.

"I think one of the incredible things about the work that we do is you get to meet people you would never have expected to, not only in our research and our work for the roles we play, but also in sharing our movie and publicizing it," Gyllenhaal said. "I just feel so grateful for my work because I don't know if I would have been able to come to Fort Irwin in this way if I didn't do what I do and it's just such an honor to be here."

For Salim, the experience of creating the film and making a living as an actor is a "privilege," he said.

"Working with one of the best directors

in the world, sitting next to Jake today that I worked with and I can call a friend ... it's just been such a learning experience and an honor for me and that the movie also has such a strong message and a warm heart and that brings us together here today is just a big experience in life that I'm very thankful to have gotten," Salim said.

Elliott, a Pleasant Hill, California, native, said he appreciated the USO bringing Gyllenhaal and Salim to Fort Irwin for the visit.

"We enjoyed getting to see their movie, especially since it wasn't released yet," Elliott said. "Seeing a movie before it's even out was such a unique experience that we wouldn't have gotten to have without the USO, Fort Irwin and the Desert Hawks bringing them out!"

Guy Ritchie's The Covenant hits theaters April 21.

WHO WE ARE

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- Honorable Mention, 2009 U.S. Army IMCOM-West**
Newspaper Competition — Tabloid category
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Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware
Newspaper Competition — Tabloid Category

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NTC, Fort Irwin volunteers recognized at ceremony

Story by Kimberly Hackbarth

Fort Irwin Public Affairs Office

FORT IRWIN, California — Leaders from the National Training Center and Fort Irwin recognized volunteers from the community April 19, during a ceremony, here.

Brig. Gen. Curt Taylor, commanding general of the National Training Center and Fort Irwin, thanked the units and volunteers.

“Thank you for coming and celebrating the incredible work that happens in your organization every day that is essential to readiness and community spirit,” Taylor said. “There are a lot of things that happen in units all the time that turn our units into a family that we absolutely couldn’t do without our great volunteers.”

Each unit recognized a volunteer of the year for their contributions to the Fort Irwin community.

Heather Carr, spouse of Roy Carr, a platoon sergeant with 11th Armored Cavalry

Regiment, earned the title of National Training Center’s volunteer of the year.

“I choose to volunteer because it makes my heart happy to be able to give back,” Carr said. “I’m a people pleaser by nature and making people happy and giving back to the community is one of the ways that I can fill my own bucket in healthy way.”

Carr volunteers with Team Red, White and Blue, a nonprofit organization that brings veterans and their communities together through physical and social activities, with the Military and Civilian Spouses’ Club of Fort Irwin, and “everything in between,” she said.

“I have made so many different friends and connections and I have learned so much from ... everybody that I’ve come in contact with and been able to grow with them, with the community and they just encourage me to keep going,” Carr said. “You make and build relationships and you come into contact



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Heather Carr (center) receives the National Training Center Volunteer of the Year award from Brig. Gen. Curt Taylor (right), the commanding general of NTC and Fort Irwin, and Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Haydt (left), the command sergeant major of NTC, during a volunteer recognition ceremony at Epicenter April 19, 2023.

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From **WARRIORS**, Page 1

there and experience it, so I think that drove a lot of my decision [to compete].”

McEachran previously competed in competitions at his unit, which motivated him to compete at the installation level, he said.

“I wanted to compete because I was given the opportunity with Soldier of the Month in January and Regimental Best Warrior last month and I realized I’m capable of doing more than I thought,” the Clovis, California, native said.

His experience with competitions at the regimental level helped him, especially with the knowledge board, McEachran said.

“I really messed up and instead of letting it get to me, I let it shape me,” McEachran said. “I took the criticism I was given, so I could go to the regiment level and excel and then come to NTC and continue on.”

Navarro said he wanted to compete to set the example for his Soldiers.

Navarro’s team also won Best Squad for the installation.

“Honestly, I didn’t think I had it in the bag,” Navarro, a Madera, California, native said about his win.

The competitors faced many challenges throughout the competition.

“The most challenging part for me was coming out of the obstacle course because we went through the 12-mile ruck straight into the obstacle course essentially and then the heat of the day and the fact that we’d only slept for a few hours the night prior for the night land [navigation], that was the hardest part to me,” Baker said.

McEachran said going through the events with the other Soldiers was one of the best parts of the competition.

“I know we’re competing against each other, but ... we’re more than just competitors and we’re more than just Soldiers at the end of the day,” McEachran said.

Following the competition, the installation command sergeant major announced the winners at an award ceremony on April 12.

Navarro said he was ecstatic to win.

“I didn’t think I was going to win,” Navarro said. “It felt great, I felt like I accomplished something.”

Navarro and his squad will represent the installation at the Best Squad Competition at Fort Campbell.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Second Lt. Ethan Baker, a transportation officer with 916th Support Brigade, reports to the president of the board, Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Haydt, the command sergeant major of National Training Center, during the National Training Center and Fort Irwin’s Best Warrior Competition at Fort Irwin, California, April 12, 2023. Baker, a Chester, Virginia, native, won best officer in the competition.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Second Lt. Ethan Baker (right), a transportation officer with 916th Support Brigade, receives an award from Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Haydt (left), the command sergeant major of National Training Center, for taking first place for officers in the National Training Center and Fort Irwin’s Best Warrior Competition at Fort Irwin, California, April 12, 2023.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Sgt. Robert Navarro (right), a cavalry scout with Dragon Team, Operations Group, receives an award from Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Haydt (left), the command sergeant major of National Training Center, for taking first place for noncommissioned officers in the National Training Center and Fort Irwin’s Best Warrior Competition at Fort Irwin, California, April 12, 2023.



Photo by Kimberly Hackbarth

Spc. Lucas McEachran, a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, receives an award from Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Haydt (left), the command sergeant major of National Training Center, for taking first place for junior enlisted Soldiers in the National Training Center and Fort Irwin’s Best Warrior Competition at Fort Irwin, California, April 12, 2023.

Fort Irwin celebrates Month of the Military Child

Story and Photos by Renita Wickes

Fort Irwin, California

The National Training Center and Fort Irwin, California, hosted its annual Spring Fling event to celebrate Month of the Military Child April 9, 2023.

Since the creation of Month of the Military Child in the mid-1980s, every April the Department of Defense joins national, state and local government, schools, military serving organizations, companies and private citizens in celebrating military children and the sacrifices they make.

Lisa Fuga, the special events coordinator with Fort Irwin's Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation, coordinated the event along with other departments from the organization.

According to Fuga, more than 5,000 Soldiers and family members attended the celebration.

Twenty informational booths and 18 home-based businesses and vendors lined Army Field, providing food, goodie bags and useful information about water conservation, recycling, and other Fort Irwin programs.

The Villages of Fort Irwin provided carnival rides, a fun-house and six midway style booths with carnival games for all ages.

"We were so thrilled to be a part of the event again this year," said Cherry Langston, marketing manager at The Villages of Fort Irwin. "Seeing all our friends, colleagues and residents smiling and having a great time brings us all closer together."

The Los Angeles Rams also participated in the event by bringing out their inflatables and staff members from the team, including Mo Streeby, the head of football development.

"We enjoy any opportunity we get to engage our youth and especially our military kids," Streeby said.

Soldiers with Fort Irwin's Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers ran a dunk tank where senior leaders across the instal-



Army photograph by Renita Wickes

Members of the Fort Irwin community gather for a Spring Fling celebrating Month of the Military Child April 8, 2023, at Fort Irwin.

ation volunteered to get dunked, including Col. Jason Clarke, garrison commander of Fort Irwin.

"This year's month of the military child celebration was one of the largest events I think Fort Irwin has had since COVID," said Clarke. "Our kids are an important part of our community and we wanted to ensure they had the best time possible."

As the father of four girls, Clarke said he knows firsthand the sacrifices our military children make.

"I think we can all agree, we can never do enough to ensure our children feel valued," Clarke said. "I want to thank DFMWR and our partners for making this a special event for our children and the entire community."

This year's event was sponsored by The Villages at Fort Irwin, the National Training Center chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army, United Services Automobile Association, Military & Civilian Spouses' Club of Fort Irwin, Support the Enlisted Project, L.A. RAMS, Salamasina & Co., Humble Homes, High Desert.



Army photograph by Renita Wickes

Staff from Shuttleworth Dental Clinic share information with the Fort Irwin community April 8, 2023, during a Month of the Military Child celebration on Fort Irwin.



Army photographs by Renita Wickes

Members of the Fort Irwin community gather for a Spring Fling celebrating Month of the Military Child April 8, 2023, at Fort Irwin, California.

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with people you would've never thought you would've ever met."

Carr said she did not expect to win volunteer of the year for NTC.

"I don't know who put in for it for me, but I'm very grateful and very thankful," Carr said. "I don't do what I do for recognition, I do what I do because it's what I love to do."

Even if it's just an hour of your time once a week, it all adds up, Carr said.

"Everything that I did in 2022 has made a significant difference that even I didn't realize how big of an impact," Carr said. "It's definitely worth it to volunteer and be involved in your community because you meet new people, and

you get to do exciting and new things."

Taylor emphasized the importance of volunteers to the Fort Irwin community.

"This small community could not survive without the tremendous support [and] commitment of a wonderful team of volunteers who come out every single day and show up to contribute to so many of our community activities," Taylor said, adding that there were more than 27,625 volunteer hours in Volunteer Management Information System, which tracks volunteer hours and manages volunteers.

Volunteer winners:

11th Armored Cavalry Regiment-Blackhorse Volunteer of the Year: Laura Ferrell

Operations Group, National Training Center Volunteer of the Year: Maj. James Rainey
916th Support Brigade Volunteer of the Year: Spc. Desmond Noah

MEDDAC Volunteer of the Year: Kayla Capiga

DENTAC Volunteer of the Year: Courtney Reggans

United States Army Garrison Volunteer of the Year: Carey Killea

National Training Center Volunteer of the Year: Heather Carr

Religious Support Volunteer of the Year: Kelly Furtick

Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation

Volunteer of the Year: Paige Smith

Active Duty Soldier Volunteer of the Year: Sgt. 1st Class Sourivon Sathahoneros

Soldier and Family Readiness Group Volunteer of the Year: Weed Army Community Hospital

Youth Volunteer of the Year: Andrew Furtick

Outstanding Scout Volunteer of the Year: Bryce Brown

Volunteer Family of the Year: The Ramsey Family

Private Organization Volunteer of the Year: Military and Civilian Spouses Club

Desert Warrior Week



Soldiers from the National Training Center and Fort Irwin competed in multiple events during Desert Warrior Week April 17-21, 2023, including basketball, football, combatives, and a video game tournament. The week concluded with a Concert in the Park featuring Ne-Yo and an award ceremony where 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment earned the Commander's Cup.

Photos by Jack J. Adamyk, Jazlyn Villalobos & 11th ACR

Community

Days of Remembrance



Photos by Jack J. Adamyk.

Lt. Col. Jesse Thompson, Shuttleworth Dental Clinic officer in charge, was the guest speaker at the Days of Remembrance Ceremony, held at the Sandy Basin Community Center on Fort Irwin, California, April 12, 2023. He gave a unique perspective of the war to end all wars and the horrors that were wrought during the Holocaust. Incorporating his knowledge of the German language, he was able to translate various historical texts to the audience and help bridge a language gap that many did not know existed.

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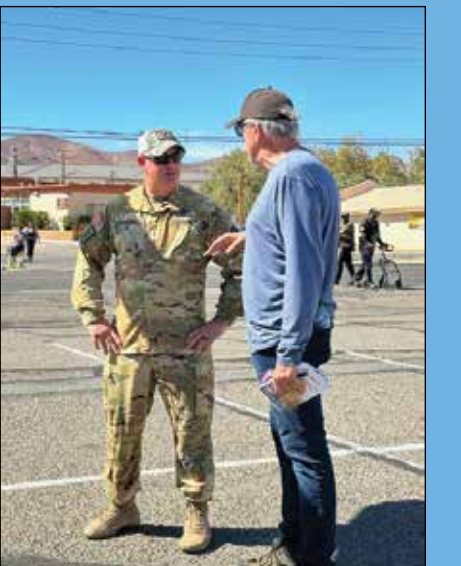
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Fort Irwin hosts Vietnam Veteran recognition ceremony

Fort Irwin recognized Vietnam Veterans from the community April 21, 2023, during a ceremony at Sandy Basin Community Center on Fort Irwin. Vietnam Veterans received commemorative lapel pins in recognition of their service during the event. Following the ceremony, Vietnam Veterans attended a static display of military equipment.



News



Fort Irwin Legal Assistance Office



Small Claims in California

By Gemma Landa, Esq.

Small claims court is a special court where disputes are resolved in a fast and inexpensive manner. The rules are simple and informal. The most common issues handled in this court are unpaid loans, property damage, landlord-tenant rent and security deposit disputes, and car repair issues.

How Much Money Can I Ask For?

A person cannot sue for more than \$10,000 in a claim. If the plaintiff (the person initiating the lawsuit) is a business, the limit is \$5,000. You can file as many claims as you want for up to \$2,500 each. However, you can only file 2 claims in a calendar year if you are suing for more than \$2,500.

What are the Requirements?

If you want to sue someone in small claims court, your claim must be monetary in nature. This means that if you win your case, the judge will order the other party to pay you. If you want the other party to do or not do something, then small claims court is not the proper court for your claim.

Also, before filing, you must contact the other party in an effort to resolve the dispute outside the courtroom. You must inform the other party the amount owed and the reasons why you think they owe you that amount. You can complete this step in person, by mailing a letter, or emailing the other party.

After you start your case, you must be available to appear in court, either in person or remotely. You cannot send someone else to appear on your behalf. However, there are some exceptions to this requirement. For example, you may not have to go to court if: (1) you are serving on active duty in the armed forces, (2) you are assigned to an out-of-state duty station after you file your claim, and (3) your assignment is for more than six months. For more information about these exceptions, check out form SC-109, Authorization to Appear.

Lastly, you cannot have an attorney represent you in court. However, you may, and should, talk to an attorney before you start your case and before your hearing date.

What are the Filing Fees?

The fees are based on the amount of your claim and the number of claims you have filed in the past 12 months.

If you have filed 12 or fewer claims in the past 12 months and the amount of your claim does not exceed \$1,500, the filing fee is \$30. If the amount of your claim ranges from \$1,500.01 to \$5,000, the filing fee is \$50. If you are suing for an amount between \$5,000.01 to \$10,000, the filing fee is \$75.

If you have filed more than 12 claims in the past 12 months, the filing fee is increased to \$100, regardless of the amount of your claim.

If you think you cannot afford the filing fee and meet your basic household needs, or if you are receiving public benefits, or if your income is less than the set amounts listed on form FW-001, you may qualify for a fee waiver. For more information about fee waiver requirements, check out form FW-001.

How Long Do I Have to File a Claim?

Even when you have a good legal cause to sue, you cannot file your claim if you do not meet the filing deadlines, also called Statute of Limitations. These are some common deadlines:

- Personal Injury: you can file a claim for up to 2 years from injury.
- Verbal agreement: you have 2 years to file after the agreement was broken.
- Written agreement: you have 4 years to file after the agreement was broken.
- Property damage: you have 3 years to file after your property was damaged.

What Happens at the Hearing?

At the hearing, the judge will listen to both parties. You must bring any evidence that supports your case, such as witnesses, photos, police reports, bills, receipts, contracts, repair estimates, and any other relevant evidence. If someone else is in possession of evidence that may help your case, you can request the court to subpoena witnesses, things, or documents. You must submit this request before your hearing date.

The judge may make a decision at your hearing or mail it to you later. Instead of a judge, you may have a commissioner or temporary judge at your hearing. A temporary judge (called a "judge pro tem" or "judge pro tempore") is an experienced lawyer who hears and decides certain types of cases. Let the court know if you don't want a temporary judge to hear your case. You may have to reschedule your hearing and come back another day.

What Happens After the Hearing?

If you are the plaintiff and the judge decides against your claim, you can't appeal the decision. However, if the other party files a claim against you and you lose, you can appeal. You have 30 days to file your appeal after the clerk mails the judge's decision. The appeal fee is \$75.

What Happens if the Defendant Appeals?

You will have a new hearing at the superior court. You will have to bring your evidence and argue your case again. This time you can bring a lawyer to represent you in court.

How Can the Legal Assistance Office Help?

The small claims process may be time consuming and requires some preparation to effectively explain your case to the judge. Also, there are special rules applicable to certain types of claims. For assistance or advice on preparing your small claims case, call the Fort Irwin Legal Assistance Office at 760-380-5321, or visit us in Building 230, C Avenue. Our attorneys will be able to answer your questions and guide you throughout the process.

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