

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 4

Raymond “Ray” “Boz” D. Bossert

Cooper City

City Manager Candidate Report

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Cover Letter and Resume

Section 4

Raymond D. "Boz" Bossert Jr.
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Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
Cell- 706-215-4567
raybossert@comcast.net

10 March 2023

Future Partners in Cooper City Florida,

I appreciate the opportunity to apply for the Position of city manager of Cooper City. I have been in government service for my entire career and I have dual master degrees in public administration as well as strategic leadership. My time in the military and this academic education have inspired me to continue to serve the public in other capacities differing from the military. Currently, I serve as a village administrator and this has confirmed my desire to seek an organization with challenges. As an army engineer, I am uniquely qualified to build, manage and operate large facilities, a village being one of them. My background and desire to continue to serve citizens has driven me to seek out challenges and solve for "YES". You seek someone to work with the city leaders and citizens as a partner, a hands-on leader and someone who can work with, inspire and mentor a city staff, you found your city manager.

I know the meaning of building a team. I have a strong background in budget development and finance, public works and engineering project management; human resources management; organizational leadership skills and the ability to cultivate positive and productive relationships with senior boards, staff and community members. In my entire career, I have demonstrated a high level of integrity, energy, professionalism, a strong commitment to public service, open and positive communication skills and stable tenures in previous positions. I mandate full transparency in all dealings with the city council, all staff and our citizens. Trust and respect are critical to a professional and effective work environment.

While we all bring differing opinions and perspectives to many issues, once a decision is made, we all must "move forward" with one voice and message to be successful. I started a quarterly newsletter to our citizens, developed and "Application (APP)" to inform our citizens quickly for emergencies, issued a yearly "State of the City" message and a firm believer in a true "open door" policy. Regardless of the issue, my time is your time when it comes to a Board member, staff member or citizen. Innovation and relevancy are critical to a successful village leader and staff and I strive to maintain that. We all must move towards developed goals and objectives and everyone from the city manager to the newest staff member must know the "End state". I believe in constant staff assessments and counseling (every encounter is an opportunity to assess) and will hold staff accountable when necessary.

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My interagency dealings with other government agencies as well as non-government agencies will be valuable to this position. My recent military position as the National Guards Senior personnel and manning policy writer and implementer, will bode me well in employee dealings. I have dealt with the military's transition to a new retirement system, transgender health care, and border security. My expertise as a senior leader in the National Guard will bode well in dealing with the local, state and federal agencies for natural disasters or manmade emergency situations. I was personally involved in most Natural disasters from Hurricane Andrew thru the Southwest border issues. I am a firm believer in preparations and planned and exercised recovery operations to return to normalcy quickly.

Having lived in the south most of my adult life and a Florida resident in the past, I see this as an opportunity to relocate back to Florida and serve its citizens. My young family and I are seeking our forever home and a forever job with a high quality of life and job satisfaction, Copper City fits that goal. You are seeking someone who will be tactful, discreet, diplomatic, apolitical, and honest with the ability to lead, delegate, motivate and inspire with a willingness to hear everyone, build consensus and drive decision-making to conclusion. I can guarantee you I am that and more. Also, longevity in a position is key and I seek out that opportunity to serve for many years.

I have built, secured and managed large infrastructure. I have managed large budgets in the multi-millions in total. I have been involved in strategic planning for state level and national level projects. I am comfortable with speaking and briefing senior level executives as well as day to day discussions with the workers and citizens that make us successful. I am energetic, approachable, motivational, and a great listener. The customer comes first and in this case it's our citizens who deserve the best, but that can only happen if we prepare, educate and empower our city workers. I believe in the "servant leader" philosophy and will strive to ingrain that into our staff.

I have successfully conducted economic development projects, acquired over \$1 million just in 2022 in grants for Bike trails, Dog parks, Public Parks and public safety initiatives. I was a major driver in the development of a business council for our community leaders and helped them acquire State funding for projects and infrastructure improvements. I believe in collaboration for success is critical. In that I have worked with surrounding communities, our County and State to create partnerships that impacted all our citizens. I have initiated and championed collaborative projects in clean drinking water, cross community bike and hiking paths, zoning issues, electric vehicle charging projects, and municipal leadership and staff training. I am an expert at strategic training and planning for Community leaders and Staff and expect everyone to have a grasp on our "Cooper City Vision" for the future. Achieving my ICMA- Credentialed manager designation and status in 2022. I am a firm believer and live by that code of conduct

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and code of ethics. I also help instill and enforce those same codes in my subordinates. Your challenges in fiscal issues, infrastructure updates, government effectiveness and transparency and economic growth are challenges and opportunities we can address and I look forward to that. The only question left is when can we chat?

I appreciate your time and consideration.

V/R

//Signed//
Ray "Boz" Bossert

Mr. Raymond Dempsey Bossert Jr.
Retired Colonel USA, M.P.A, M.S.S, ICMA-CM
341 3rd Street South
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin 54494
Mobile: 706-215-4567
Email: raybossert@comcast.net
Availability: TBD

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS: Accomplished professional with an entire career of successful leadership in executive level management, policy development, international relations, engineering, facility management, fiscal oversight, security planning, emergency management and response, project management and training with multiple military and civilian organizations. Proven leader and experienced in team building, educational instruction, construction quality assurance, security & safety planning, emergency management and project management. Customer focused and results oriented team player with exemplary leadership, planning, training, organizational, and problem-solving abilities.

Expertise in:

- Shoreland and coastal water issues, zoning and mitigation strategies
- Community engagement and initiatives
- Team building, leadership, holding staff accountable and inspiring and motivating others
- Disaster and emergency management, preparations, response and recovery actions
- Budgeting, analysis, forecasting and user-friendly budget products for all to understand

SKILLS: Strategic planning and program execution, zoning administration, community engagements, creative financing and fiscal planning, grant writing, policy writing and development, decision making expertise and staff planning, construction project management, fiscal management, emergency management/ response/planning, computer skills, "Top Secret" security clearance and extensive senior executive level engagement experience. Proven leader in stressful situations. A focus on solving for "Yes" by building consensus and collaboration and accomplishing tasks.

Work Experience:

Village Of Port Edwards

201 Market Ave
Port Edwards, Wisconsin WI 54469
05/2020- Present

Village Administrator

Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:

Day-to-day administration of the village, and direction of village departments and staff, when such authority is not otherwise vested by Wisconsin Statute or municipal code in boards, commissions, committees or other village offices.

I supervise all village department directors (police chief, fire chief, treasurer and clerk, public works supervisor) and serve under the general direction and policy guidance of the Village Board. The Administrator reports to and is evaluated by the Village Board and is the key point of contact with the Village Board. The Village rests on the banks of the Wisconsin river and is also responsible for a 500-acre recreational lake. Director of planning and development, economic development manager, zoning administrator, finance director, human resources director and cemetery manager.

I am responsible for 90 village employees, 15 square miles of village limits, 50 miles of village roadway, 6 village parks and cemetery's encompassing over 100 acres, 5 village wells providing over 850,000 gallons/per day as well as a wastewater plant (valued at \$25M) that can process over 1.5M gallons a day of waste daily to the 1900 residents and businesses. I oversee the 12 village municipal buildings/properties covering over 750,000 square feet, valued at over \$35M. I supervise the village fleet of 25 vehicles and over \$5.5M in equipment and the village cemetery encompassing over 40 acres. I am also responsible for a village annual budget of over \$6 Million dollars and over \$55 million in tax incremental districts and development areas encompassing over 200 acres. I am also responsible for the preparation and acquisition of over \$1 Million in grants and funding for specialty projects in the village in our public safety, economic development and parks areas.

Supervisor: Village Trustees (Contacted as required)

Work Experience:

US Army- 6/1984-12/2019

Active Duty, U.S. Army Reserves and The Army National Guard

Chief of Strategic Planning and Policy for Human Capital Management, Engineer and Senior leader and Commander

National Guard Bureau Personnel and Manning Directorate

(Comparable skills in Human resources director, emergency management project manager)

Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:

Principal advisor to the J1 Director, Director of the Joint Staff, Vice CNGB and CNGB for all military personnel policy and issues. Responsible for the development, coordination, implementation and oversight of military personnel policies and guidance for the 460K members of the National Guard. Division Chief leading a ten-person Joint interagency team. Responsible to inform, analyze, and provided NGB senior leaders on current and pending policies. Involved in promotion, retirement, payroll, service polices from development to implementation. Lead instructor for a civil support during domestic emergencies course taught quarterly to the states to improve their personnel and manning policies and procedures during emergencies. **Supervisor:** Major General Kevin McNeely (703-607-0780)

J5 Director of Strategic Planning and Policy

(Comparable skills as Director of planning and initiatives, interagency expert, emergency management planner)

Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:

Director of Strategic Plans and functions as the Georgia Department of Defense, Joint Forces Headquarters, principal staff officer in the areas of joint force development; supporting operational planning; joint doctrine; staff training and emergency management exercises.

- Conducted bi-lateral engagements with the countries of Argentina and the Republic of Georgia building strategic plans, exercises and institutional development across their interagency' s.
- Planned and executed a national level emergency management exercise focused on a level III hurricane devastating Georgia involving over 200 Local, State and Federal Agencies. **Supervisor:** Brigadier General John King (770-318-3206)

Senior Advisor on Engineering and Infrastructure

(Comparable skills as Director of public works and infrastructure development)

Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:

Served as the Division chief with The United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Institute of Peace, and other interagency and non-governmental organizations on all matters dealing with Department of Defense stability operations and disaster response and relief.

- Travelled to over 10 countries to plan and conduct integrated training and education to joint armed forces, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational organizations.
 - An advisor to over 1200 resident and non-resident students at the US Army War college and guest lecturer on engineering, disaster management, theater security cooperation in foreign countries and stability topics.
- Supervisor:** Colonel (Retired) Dan Pinnell (337-718-1818)

Deputy Command Engineer, US Army Central Command

(Comparable skills as a City Manager, Director of infrastructure development, interagency expertise)

Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:

Developed and managed the civil engineer support plan which identified engineer support requirements, standards of construction, potential shortfalls in engineer capability, mitigating actions, and risk to 350 engineer projects valued at \$5.6 billion in 20 countries for the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM).

- Directed and supervised six senior-level managers and one mid-level manager in overseeing five programs consisting of 85 projects which supported the CENTCOM mission and developed engineering requirements in support of Combatant Command theater campaign plan objectives and long-term master planning effort.
- Executed efforts in 20 countries: over 350 projects valued at \$5.6 billion: and supervised over 10,000 military engineers supporting 100,000 multi-national military personnel and government employees in the Middle East and South West Asia.

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-Administered the \$1 Billion reconstruction budget and construction program for the AL Anbar Iraq region over a 12-month period dealing with the US military, Iraqi ministries and security forces as well as other governmental and non-governmental agencies.

-Responsible for the real estate management program for the 20 country South West Asia region and over 250 bases and camps as well as over 2 million acres of U.S. property being leased or managed in the region

Supervisor: Colonel Alan Webster (703-963-0168)

Unit Commander and Senior Staff Officer, Brigade Commander (Comparable skills as a City Manager)

Duties, Accomplishments and Related Skills:

Commanded, trained, and led various military organizations (Reconnaissance, Intelligence, Communications and Logistics) totaling over 2500 soldiers, and civilians in all facets of military operations, logistics, property accountability, equipment maintenance, and personnel administration.

- Recognized twice for valor in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in dangerous, extreme conditions and high stress environments involving training and executing missions with local national forces.

- Planned and executed multiple planning workshops to better synchronize all the interagency efforts in the region.

Managed a \$10-Million-dollar budget for execution of these exercises.

-Responsible for deliberate and crisis action planning activities in support of state emergency response operations plan (OPLAN) and the development and contingency operations, focused on engineer and policing support and responsible for over \$250 million in government equipment.

- Responded to and supported the ice storms of 2014 as the lead military agency in the North Georgia Region. Conducted over 100 missions in support of civil authorities to the surrounding counties and state agencies.

Supervisor: Brigadier General John King (770-318-3206)

Education:

Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA United States

Master's Degree Major: Public Administration Minor: Local, State and Federal Government

US Army War College, Carlisle, PA, United States

Master's Degree Major: Strategic Studies Minor: Strategic Leadership

University of North Georgia, Dahlonega, GA, United States

Bachelor's Degree Major: Political Science Minor: History

Valley Forge Military Academy and College, Wayne, PA, United States

Some College Coursework Completed

Job Related Training:

- Joint operational planning and military decision-making process instructor, Joint Staff College (2016)
- Dual status command certification, Federal national response framework / incident response (2014)
- US Army joint planning course, senior level staff and civil support planning (2013)
- US Army Engineer officer advanced course, advanced construction and project management Skills (1999)
- Combat training center (CTC) and expeditionary CTC rotation participant 6 times at battalion and brigade level, leader and staff training
- National Guard Bureau personnel and manning officer, domestic operations training course facilitator and Instructor for 10 states in 2017-2018, emergency management training course

Language Skills:

Arabic-Lebanese: Novice Speaking skills

Affiliations:

-International City/County Management Association- Designated as a 2022 ICMA-CM Candidate for ICMA rating

-The Veteran of Foreign Wars - Life Member, Post Commander, Post Secretary and Quartermaster

-Army Engineer Association (AEA) - Life Member

-Valley Forge Military Academy Alumni Association - Senior Alumni Board Advisor

-American Legion- member Post #9 Wisconsin Rapids, WI

-National and State Level National Guard Associations - Life Member

Professional Publications:

- Editor of the stability issue of the US Army stability operations lessons learned, august 2016 Issue
 - Contributing editorial provider to the US Army War College "Parameters" quarterly publication.
 - Guest speaker on stability, transitions from crisis to steady state and disaster response at the Nigerian Defense University, Swedish Ministry of Defense, Naval Post Graduate School and U.S. Maneuver Center of Excellence, Fort Benning GA in 2015/2016
 - Numerous published letters to the editor articles on municipal funding, infrastructure and local government in the central Wisconsin city times newspaper.
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Additional Information:

- Top Secret (SCI) Security Clearance for over 15 years
 - Winner of the 2014 Georgia "Minute Man" award (Employee of the Year), best national guardsman in Georgia.
 - Certified civil-military coordinator for the United Nations humanitarian and disaster operations
 - FEMA ISC Trained on level 100-800 and, specializing in Incident management at all levels (Local, State and Federal)
 - Faculty instructor for resident and distance education curriculum to students of the U.S Army War College (colonels in the military) and is the humanitarian assistance/disaster relief subject matter expert and Middle Eastern area of operations expert.
-

REFERENCES:

Supervisor: Major General Walt Lord (Ret) (717-645-1176), waltlord65@gmail.com, Austin Peay University Military Advisor.

Supervisor: Commissioner John King (Major General) (719-686-3581), jking@oci.ga.gov, Johnfking@mindspring.com, Insurance Commissioner of GA

Supervisor: Mr. Jerry Deschane, (608-267-2380), ideschane@lwm-info.org, Director of the Wisconsin League of Municipalities

Supervisor: Mr. Dave Gault, (608-852-4881), Gault@countyofdane.com, Corporation Counsel for Dane County, WI

Supervisor: Lance Pliml, (715-213-4002), lance1@charter.net, Wood County, WI- Chairman of the County Board

PEER: Mr. Chris Voso (404-623-1400), cvoso1@gmail.com, Contractor for Valiant Services, Govt Contracting.

PEER: Mr. Mark A. Merlino, (978-501-0486-cell), Mark.A.Merlino@raytheon.com, VP for Raytheon, development

Subordinate: Mr. James van Emburgh (770-634-7553), oit7@cdc.gov, CDC of Atlanta planner

Subordinate: Mr. Stanford Johnson (865-337-4443), stanfordejohanson@gmail.com, Author and Veteran advocate.

Salary History:

Salary 2000-2015	\$150K annual senior Military officer (Lieutenant Colonel) pay
Salary 2015-2020	\$185K annual (Full Colonel pay rate)
Salary 2020-Present	\$125K annual Village Administrator (includes zoning administrator for adjacent town)

Candidate Introduction

Raymond D. "Boz" Bossert Jr.

EDUCATION

Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, PA United States

Master's Degree **Major:** Public Administration **Minor:** Local, State and Federal Government

US Army War College, Carlisle, PA, United States

Master's Degree **Major:** Strategic Studies **Minor:** Strategic Leadership

University of North Georgia, Dahlonega, GA, United States Bachelor's Degree

Major: Political Science **Minor:** History

Valley Forge Military Academy and College, Wayne, PA, United States Some College Coursework Completed

EXPERIENCE

Village Administrator (pop. 1800), Port Edwards, WI

2020-Present

US Army Corps of Engineers, Multiple Locations

Retired in 2020

BACKGROUND

The Village of Port Edwards is an old paper Mill Town in Central Wisconsin. It was founded in the early 1800s and established as a Village in 1902. The 2020 Census identified 1800 residents living in Port Edwards and with a few Businesses located within the Village it is mainly a sought-after Bedroom community for surrounding cities with concierge services. It is known for its safe and secure environment and premier Village services and sought after by many residents to establish a home. The Village rests along the banks of the Wisconsin River and also has a 500-acre recreational lake (Lake NEPCO) as part of the Village limits. These encompass high end vacation properties.

The Village of Port Edwards General Fund budget comprised \$3.5 million and the total budget was \$5.8 million in 2022. The Village has 37 employees with 4 departmental directors reporting directly to the Village Administrator. Including part-time staff and Citizen committee members who are paid by the Village, we have 90 total employees.

The Village Administrator supervises all village department directors (police chief, fire chief, treasurer and clerk, public works supervisor, wastewater plant, water plant) and serves under the general direction and policy guidance of the Village Board. The Administrator reports to and is evaluated by the Village Board and is the key point of contact with the Village Board. The administrator serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Village, the

Raymond D. "Boz" Bossert Jr.

director of planning and development, zoning administrator, finance director, human resources director and cemetery manager.

I am responsible for 90 village employees, 15 square miles of village limits, 50 miles of village roadway, 6 village parks and cemetery's encompassing over 100 acres, 5 village wells providing over 750,000 gallons/per day as well as a wastewater plant (valued at \$25 million) that can process over 1.5 million gallons a day of waste to the 1800 residents and businesses. I oversee the 12 village municipal buildings/properties covering over 750,000 square feet, valued at over \$25 million. Supervise the village fleet of 25 vehicles and over \$4.5M million in equipment. Supervise the village cemetery encompassing over 40 acres. Also responsible for a village annual budget of over \$5 Million dollars and over \$55 million in tax incremental districts and development areas encompassing over 200 acres. Also, responsible for the acquiring over \$850,000 in grants and funding for specialty projects in the village in our public safety, economic development and parks areas.

The three most significant issues facing the Village are:

- NEPCO lake boundary adjustment. In 2013 the Village entered a boundary agreement with the neighboring Town of Saratoga to adjust the parcels around NEPCO lake for a 10-year period to accommodate a new development. The agreement ends in December 2023 and the Village has begun a transitional discussion with the residents to ensure a smooth incorporation of the 200+ parcels and 10 square miles of land.
- Paper Mill development. In 2008 the old paper mill closed and this has been an issue with the Village. It encompassed over 180 acres, an active rail yard and multiple warehouse structures. It has been bought by an outside development company and the Village is working in collaboration to seek economic opportunities as well as construction projects to attract new business in the Village.
- Downtown commercial redevelopment. The departure of the Mill caused an exodus of small businesses in our Market ave. Business district. Initiatives in infrastructure improvements and economic development are ongoing. We continue to work with regional entities to aide in our re-development effort.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

I believe I can provide uniquely collaborative approaches and solutions in even the most demanding environments. Currently The Village is well established with a solid track record of performance, high levels of employee training and enforcement of standards, little turnover and offers excellent services to our residents building on frequently evaluated citizen preferences. Cooper City, in a more metropolitan area, larger sized budget and population and more structured environment offers unique and exciting challenges. I know I have the expertise to tackle and succeed in executing on behalf of our citizens.

Raymond D. "Boz" Bossert Jr.

I have a highly adaptive and motivational management style that has been the hallmark of my career. In every organization where I have worked, I have created and inspired professionals who operate with minimal input while empowering staff to accomplish their duties with minimal engagement, but fully understanding the vision and end state of the organization. This occurs with regular staff meetings and oversight to ensure we are all on the same page. Over the course of my career, I have taken every personnel action possible, both positive and hold people accountable. Except in extreme cases I have been able to approach actions in a proactive manner such that employees had opportunities to remedy their issues and were not surprised by any final actions.

Every employee I have worked beside has taught me something new, and I believe that most would say they have learned a great deal from me - staff development is a priority- "Building the Bench", I call it. Organizations are highly dynamic and evolutionary and a static management style is quickly rendered ineffective. As a result, I strongly prefer flexible participative organizations. Maintaining that adaptability will sometimes require compensation and employee classification plan revisions, reductions in force, restructurings, labor negotiations, and performance-based terminations. This of course could come after a holistic staff review and personal observations. However, the goal would be minimal disruption.

The elected officials I have served would likely say that I am highly competent, ethical, innovative, fair, dedicated, motivating and strategically decisive. Staff would say they appreciated my availability, clarity, consistency, high standards, team approach, and recognition of accomplishments. Both groups would see me as a visionary who can also get it done. A few examples are the clear, transparent and informative budgeting process we established taking reams of excel sheets and making a more visual and easier to understand product. Also our NEPCO lake boundary agreement transition merged 200+ new residents, mostly out of state owners to the long-term Village resident philosophy, and finally Community engagement efforts which build on the small town feel and hometown values of our Village. This included music fests, Village sponsored Holiday events and social media engagements, increasing our online resident participation from a few hundred to over 1200.

My greatest strength is collaborative consensus building. The approach I utilize brings together a clear vision, detailed planning and budgeting, designing, project management, operations, and stakeholders. A recent project involved a water quality assessment of our regional water sources. It involved the challenge of laying groundwork to lease from the thirty-five separate municipalities and municipal, residential and commercial water sources. The project also encompassed seeking external grants to help with scientific data collection and the establishment of a water quality dashboard that could be exportable to other cities, counties and potentially States. The significant number of stakeholder groups, State organizations, and the explanation of the product not assigning blame for bad water quality all presented unique challenges.

Raymond D. "Boz" Bossert Jr.

In terms of weaknesses, I recognize that at times my tendency to push efforts faster than others deem a comfortable pace, some view negatively. It is all in an effort to satisfy the residents and Commission and not live up to the commonly viewed "bureaucratic pace of government". This has taught me to adjust my style to explain more, ease concerns and clearly lay out the process while remaining positive and ensuring all input has been reviewed and included if possible so it's a collaborative plan and not just mine.

As for self-evaluation as well as organization assessments, these are critical. A monthly SNAPSHOT is what I produce to inform the team as well as Commissioners and residents of your Governments actions. This cannot be just a compilation of RAW DATA, but an assessment of the team and its actions. This is also a tool to address the strengths and weaknesses of the organization with a corrective action plan that is timelier than most. As for the staff, every engagement with any staff member at any level is an opportunity to assess that person's capability and performance. I use these meetings as opportunities to provide input to everyone on their performance. I am a firm believer in self and peer assessments and this involved a senior reviewer on all employee's annual assessment, to provide the opportunity of a staff member to see what their Boss's Boss thinks of their job performance. This can be very telling and motivate staff to overperform in their normal position, knowing that they are being noticed from higher echelons.

I also believe in data driven decisions. An informed decision made in a timely manner is the best option with the number of tasks on the docket for a city the size of Cooper city. Long drawn-out discussions, ill-informed and in some cases biased data only causes frustration and confusing. Having the facts, and multiple options with all the details ensure smooth commission meetings for decision making. This approach does not belabor the timeline with random and unnecessary discussions. Also tying our daily, weekly monthly and annual reports to a strategic or comprehensive plan with milestones and outcomes is key to success.

I will cite my success at the Pentagon along the southwest border when the federal government authorized not only security forces to be sent to augment the border but also the construction of the border wall. I was the senior officer in charge of coordinating and synchronizing the efforts with all the border states as well as the other 46 states and territories to start a rotation plan amongst federal and national guard troops for a 2 year rotation to augment the Border patrol sectors. I was uniquely qualified as a personnel officer at the time with engineering experience. We planned for the deployment, living facilities and mission sets for over 25,000 troops to assist the border security mission. I met with local leaders, state officials and governors, and of course federal officials in the State department, FEMA, Homeland security and other organizations to coordinate the efforts in the construction of a wall. In my time we established over 400 miles of new fencing and sealed over 1000 gaps in the existing wall. All done in an 18-month period. The ability to bring many entities to the table, set a common goal then execute the plan was exhaustive but rewarding for our national security.

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As for a failure or mistake. I will lean more on not fully completing the mission based on planning shortfalls. Having responsibility to revitalize our Villages closed paper mill we were working off a development plan that was flawed. Thus, in the execution and enforcement of that plan I was challenged with having to correct many contractual issues that were not fully resolved but they were explained to the Board and citizens that all was well. So what I assumed upon my arrival as a well thought thru plan and the residents expected progress, we had to re-explain the challenges. Since I accept responsibility when in charge the concerns from residents were aimed at myself and the village offices and rather than place blame we accepted it to move forward. Thus, an extensive amount of time was spent re-explaining the process and working with the attorneys and developer to try to set things right. Thus, a program and economic development plan that was being executed was delayed and due to the extensive amount of day-to-day operations consuming time and I assume responsibility to all that what should have happened in a timely manner required more time and did not meet previously explained timelines. This required regaining credibility with the residents and rebuilding trust on what the Village said about that project moving forward.

It's not about firing people, there is no pleasure in that. It's about holding people accountable for their actions. This can only be done when the expectations are clear to all staff. When a staff member does not adhere or live up to expectations and has been counseled and given opportunities to correct their actions in a timely manner, if the decision is to fire its cut and dry. These same expectations and accountability are for department directors down to the newly hired staff member.

The challenges I see facing Cooper City are:

- Maintain the goodness in Cooper City, nothing is excessively broken but must be reviewed and continued for the most part for the resident's benefit.
- Ensuring depth in the employee bench with retention and recruiting efforts
- Pending economic development issues and zoning concerns.
- Future infrastructure growth that is planned, informed, financed and messaged to the community.
- Analyzing and reviewing organizational approaches with staff to expand methods and means of true efficiency enhancement throughout
- The over reliance on consultants is alarming. The citizens and the Commission thru the City manager expect to hire competent and qualified government servants. Many of the tasks assigned should be expected to be done in house. At the same time when the capability or competency of an issue or department exceeds the team then and only then should, we default to an outside consultant. They do not and never will have the "skin in the game" that a staff member does on any issue.
- "Do more with less" and conducting a holistic review of the Budget, contracts and capital improvement plans and ensure they meet the sanity check of relevant and responsible on behalf of the residents.

Raymond D. "Boz" Bossert Jr.

During the first six months my efforts will involve:

- Meeting with staff, elected officials, citizen groups and to some extent county/state officials to assess city operations, concerns, positions, and dynamics
- Learning the Commissions goals and perspectives -- this effort will be the key to formulating the appropriate strategic directions
- Assessing the City's financial position and reviewing anticipated future trends
- Further familiarization with relevant laws and the city codes/ordinances prior to my start
- Assessing current performance measures that will be used to determine if staff and I are meeting organizational goals and citizens' expectations and expanding on the previous customer survey analysis already employed in Cooper City -- this will include initiating revisions and clarifications as necessary to identify new opportunities.

I work well and extensively with the media and try to ensure accurate, quality coverage for citizens. Part of my effort is designed to help the media keep up to date on the Cities operations and programs. My personal appearances in the media can range from occasional to frequent, as I defer to the mayor and elected officials as they prefer.

Social media is critical to successful community engagement. What needs to be very clear is that the message is concise and factual and comes from the decision maker. The city manager needs to be the final approval of all city correspondence and all city communication on behalf of the city in my own tone and style. Therefore, a citizen knows it's the "gospel" and not a random comment. While the city internet site can have multiple content providers, there needs to be a single source for the Gravely Important issues and they come from the city managers office. This prevents confusion, mis-quoting and provides comfort to the citizens that this is a factual and valid statement.

I do not anticipate anyone contacting the Village of Port Edwards or the Military would provide negative information about me. Even my personal social media engagements are minimal. In my spare time, I enjoy traveling with my family.

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES I WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE MYSELF

- Innovative
- Dedicated
- Accessible
- Committed
- Highly Ethical
- Proactive

Raymond D. "Boz" Bossert Jr.

REASON FOR DEPARTING CURRENT POSITION

To seek greater challenges and responsibilities. Having achieved a full military retirement but having many years of work life still ahead of me we are seeking our forever home and a quality of life, school systems and activities that Cooper City offers. The unique challenges and composition of Cooper City are exciting and I want to be part of those success stories.

CURRENT / MOST RECENT SALARY

My compensation at the Village of Port Edwards was \$130,000, this included the stipend to be the zoning administrator for a neighboring town.

CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
RAYMOND "RAY" "BOZ" DEMPSEY BOSSERT JR**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County Wood County, WI	No Records Found
State Wisconsin	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County Wood County, WI	No Records Found
Federal Wisconsin	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle

Wisconsin	No Records Found
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Credit

Improving and Recently Good

Personal Bankruptcy

No Records Found

Sex Offender Registry

Not Listed

Education

Confirmed

Employment

Confirmed except for:
Village of Port Edwards, WI
(5/2020 – Present)

Social Media

Nothing of Concern Found

**Background Check Summary for
RAYMOND "RAY" "BOZ" DEMPSEY BOSSERT JR**

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. 1681-1681Y, credit and bankruptcy information are very sensitive and should not be used in the consideration of hiring. The information is included for each candidate because we do not want you to be surprised if third parties raise what they consider to be a concern. Also, some states have limited the reporting to seven years, so any records older than that will not be available in those states. In addition, motor vehicle reports are limited to three to seven years, depending on the state.

**Background Check Summary for
RAYMOND "RAY" "BOZ" DEMPSEY BOSSERT JR
Personal Disclosure**

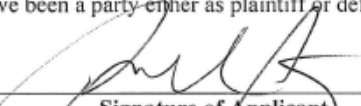
Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: Raymond Bossert

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused of or have been involved in a domestic violence or abuse incident?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been an owner in a business that did so?
Yes No
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been charged with driving while intoxicated?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Please list links to all your social media accounts (Facebook / Instagram / LinkedIn / Twitter, etc.) and your personal web page if you have one.
Ray Bossert Facebook
Ray Bossert LinkedIn
9. Is there anything else in your background that, if made public, would cause you, our client or our firm embarrassment if it came to light through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No
10. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

Attested to: 
Signature of Applicant

Please email this form via PDF DOCUMENT to Lynelle@cb-asso.com or via fax to (561) 621-5965 no later than 5:00 PM MST 02/21/2023.
(Note: Please be sure to sign the form with your actual signature if you are sending Fax or PDF Document)

CB&A Reference Notes

Reference Notes have been placed after the Internet Research to preserve the page numbering of the report.

CB&A Internet Research

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (WI)
October 9, 2022

What has happened to 12 closed paper mills

Author/Byline: Becky Jacobs

Over the last three decades, at least a dozen paper mills closed in Wisconsin. As a result, hundreds of people lost their jobs. One village even ceased to exist due to the devastating financial ramifications of losing its mill. Across the region, communities were forced to figure out what to do next. In the years since, new businesses and buildings have sprung up where some of the former paper mills once operated, while others' futures remain uncertain. One mill caught fire, and people can ice skate on the site of another. In some cases, hemp farmers and crypto miners moved in. Some of the properties are still for sale. Here's what happened at each of the 12 mills.

Clearwater Paper mill in Fox Crossing: Zoned 'industrial' but ideal for residential Clearwater Paper Corporation announced it was closing its Fox Crossing facility, which employed roughly 290 people, in the summer of 2021, as the company moved away from its away-from-home tissue products. By early 2022, KK Integrated Logistics, a Michigan-based warehouse company, purchased the property. KKIL said in January that it was renovating warehouse space for a tenant, Little Chute-based Trilliant Food & Nutrition, and was considering turning another section into apartments. KKIL continues to own the former mill and a nearby warehouse, George L. Dearborn Jr., Fox Crossing's community development director, said in an email Sept. 16. The village is willing to work with KKIL or any viable developer interested in reusing the facility, he said. KKIL and Trilliant did not respond to requests for comment for this article. The property is currently zoned for industrial use, but with its frontage on Little Lake Butte des Morts, it "would be ideal" for residential and commercial uses, according to Dearborn. The same applies, he said, to a vacant Kimberly-Clark office building nearby, which a company spokesperson confirmed is for sale. Over time, developers have contacted the village with different options, Dearborn said. At a July meeting, the village's Board of Trustees discussed a proposed redevelopment project that would include a grocery store, restaurants, office space and condominiums.

Gilbert Paper mill in Menasha: Ready for development Gilbert Paper's mill in Menasha closed in 2001 when Fox River Paper Co., bought the company. The 114-year-old mill made high-quality communication papers, including stationary and specialty papers, as well as watermarked cotton-content stationary. After three Menasha attorneys purchased the old mill in 2004, they found and opened a locked safe, discovering \$1,100 in brand-new 1963-series dollar bills made by Gilbert Paper. Two of those attorneys, known collectively as PJC Group, still own the property. They rent out the Gilbert Paper mill office to people, according to Edmund Jelinski, one of the owners. And "the site was finally made ready for development in 2018 and is being actively marketed," Jelinski said in a Sept. 14 email.

Glatfelter mill in Neenah: Electronic engineering and an ice rink among its uses. Glatfelter closed its Neenah plant, which made book papers, in 2006. Four years later, Plexus Corp., an

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
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electronics engineering and manufacturing company, created its global headquarters where the former mill and its adjoining sludge landfill site were located. The company later added a design center nearby. Ascension Medical Group has a clinic at the former mill. There's also Gateway Park, and an ice rink at The Plaza. And the east half of Arrowhead Park covers some of the mill's former property. There is also an apartment building called Solaris on Main, and Tadych Investment Partners of De Pere is finishing up a seven-story complex that will have retail, residential and office space.

International Paper mill in Merrill: Crafting commercial curtain walls. International Paper Company eliminated about 150 jobs when it closed its Ward Paper Mill in Merrill in 1994 because of low demand for fine writing paper. Today, the site is owned by Todd and Renea Frederick, of Prairie River Properties LLC. The Fredericks also own FreMarq Innovations, a company that moved into the former mill in 2019. The facility is used to manufacture "high performance commercial curtain wall and window systems," according to Annette Frederick, FreMarq's marketing project manager. "The buildings have been completely remodeled but still hold some of the original features," Annette Frederick said in an email in mid-September. "Our favorite is the old wood beams are still in beautiful shape and line the entire ceiling of our main warehouse."

Neenah Paper plant in Appleton: Mativ still plans to sell. In 2021, Neenah Inc. announced the closure of its Appleton plant, saying it was "no longer a competitive asset" for the company. The facility primarily focused on transportation filtration media, including products used in air, oil and fuel filtration. A hundred jobs were affected by the shut down. At the time, a representative said that the company was looking to sell the property at 430 E. South Island St. In July, Neenah Inc. merged with Schweitzer-Mauduit International, Inc., and the companies now operate as Mativ Holdings Inc. Mativ still plans to sell the former mill, a company spokesperson told USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin. "At this time, the property is not being used for other purposes," the spokesperson said in a Sept. 12 email.

NewPage mill in Kimberly: A full riverfront community. NewPage closed its Kimberly mill in 2008, eliminating roughly 600 jobs. In the years since, the site was redeveloped into The Cedars at Kimberly, a 98-acre riverfront community that includes parks, trails, houses, condominiums and apartments. In June, the village and its project partner, Hoffman Planning, Design & Construction, Inc., announced the final phase of the project, which will create townhomes and condominiums in the Blue at the Trails neighborhood.

Park Falls mill: Still seeking more tenants. After more than 120 years in business making finer paper, the mill in Park Falls closed in 2021. Since then, city leaders had to cope with the loss of one of their biggest water customers. And SOS Limited LLC, a Chinese crypto mining company, starting leasing space at the former mill. Northwoods Group Realty LLC, a Delaware company that owns the property, is looking to lease more parts of the facility to other interested companies, a representative told USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin in August.

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Port Edwards mill: Demolition expected to start next year. Domtar Corp. closed its mill in Port Edwards in 2008, eliminating about 500 jobs. Five years later, DMI Acquisitions, an Ohio-based real estate and redevelopment company, bought the property, with plans for a business park — which stalled. In the meantime, DMI leased space in the former mill to hemp farmers in 2019. As of mid-September, DMI still owns the property, but there is no longer anyone leasing space there, according to **Raymond Bossert**, Port Edwards village administrator. Demolition of the mill is expected to begin in the spring of 2023, with plans to get occupants in a warehouse space, **Bossert** said in an email. The village also received a grant, according to **Bossert**, to create a river walk that will "improve the landscape and open up greenspace on the [m]ill site for future development." That's expected to be completed in 2025.

Riverside Paper Corp. mill in Appleton: Apartments and a senior community. When Riverside Paper Corp. stopped production at its Kerwin Mill in 2005, 100 people were out of work. The company, which was founded in 1893, decided to stop making paper so it could focus on its coating and converting businesses. The mill was demolished in 2011 and turned into the Eagle Flats development, which includes apartments at The Landing and a senior community at Riverwalk Place. The corporate office of the former Riverside Paper Co. became The Draw, a place for artists to work and socialize.

Verso mill in Wisconsin Rapids: Future hazy, but feedback welcome. In 2020, Verso announced it would stop production at its Wisconsin Rapids mill, idling the facility indefinitely and causing more than 900 workers to lose their jobs. Since then, the future of the mill has been up in the air, as some groups have hoped to restart it under local ownership. In the spring of 2022, Verso merged with BillerudKorsnäs AB, a Swedish pulp and paper company. As of late July, it was unclear what BillerudKorsnäs planned to do with the Wisconsin Rapids facility, but city leaders have asked residents to help prepare potential redevelopment ideas for the space.

Wausau Paper mill in Brokaw: About half the buildings are gone. The mill in Brokaw closed in 2012, leaving roughly 400 people out of work and sending the village into financial jeopardy. In 2018, Brokaw eventually merged with the village of Maine. The former mill is currently owned by Brokaw Holdings LLC, according to Dean Stratz, register of deeds for Marathon County. All of the papermaking equipment and machinery have been removed, and about half of the buildings were demolished, Betty Hoenisch, Maine's president said in an email Sept. 20. It's unclear what Brokaw Holdings plans to do with the property in the future, according to Hoenisch. Attempts by USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin to contact the company were unsuccessful, but TerX Shredding & Recycling says on its website that the business is located in the former Wausau Paper Mill.

Whiting Paper mill in Menasha: Investigation into fire still open. Whiting Paper's 134-year-old mill in Menasha — which produced matte board, scrapbooking and high-end art paper — closed in 2016. The mill caught fire in May 2021. The cause remains undetermined, according to fire and police officials. "It is still an open investigation," Lt. Nick Thorn told USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin in September. "... If there's any leads that come forward, we work them." Since then, "the site was stabilized," according to Sam Schroeder, Menasha's community

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development director, and the "hazardous burned out building was removed." There are "no official redevelopment plans," Schroeder said in an email Sept. 23, but the city will be working on this issue "over the next several years." There are many challenges with the property, he said, including unknown contamination, existing debt, the foundations, site access and an abandoned tail race. "Having an anticipated project makes taking on those costs and possibly the acquisition of the site more viable," Schroeder said. Danz Real Estate, which owns the property, has "abandoned" the site, according to manager Tom Danz.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

<https://icma.org/articles/member-news/members-recommended-receive-credential-july-2022>

MEMBER NEWS - ARTICLE
June 6, 2022

Members Recommended to Receive Credential in July 2022

Author: Jenese Jackson

These ICMA members have been recommended by the Credentialing Advisory Board to receive ICMA Credentialed Manager or Candidate status in July 2022.

ICMA Credentialed

Manager Candidates

Raymond Bossert, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

http://www.vi.portedwards.wi.gov/index_print.asp?locid=199

Welcome to the Village of Port Edwards!

June 1, 2022

Notes from the DESK of the Administrator, **Ray "Boz" Bossert:** (1 JUN 2022)

1. The Village crews are out conducting our Summer projects. 4th Street, Seneca Road and Port Road resurfacing. As well as the completion of 3rd street downtown.
2. Our Committee and Board meetings are conducted in person meetings but we will continue to offer ZOOM meeting connections for all citizens to participate from the ease of your home. I will post ZOOM links on our Facebook page.
3. As always if you have a question, concern or even to identify a Village employee with some praise, you can reach me 24/7 at 715-315-0304, or my email at villageadmin@portedwardswi.gov

Lets all stay "Port Proud!"

Port Edwards is a village in Wood County, Wisconsin, United States. The village is located northeast and adjacent to the Town of Port Edwards along the Wisconsin River. The population was 1739 at the 2020 census.

Address: 201 Market Ave, Port Edwards, WI 54469

Phone: (715) 887-3512

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Mother Jones
April 28, 2022

Hazing, Fighting, Sexual Assaults: How Valley Forge Military Academy Devolved Into "Lord of the Flies"

Author/Byline: Ruth Murai

On a chilly evening in September 2020, Jordan Schumacher solemnly patrolled the grounds of Valley Forge Military Academy, near his wit's end. Weeks earlier, the school's top brass had elevated the 20-year-old college sophomore to the highest rank available to cadets—first captain. A former Boy Scout who'd joined a junior ROTC program at age 11, he was proud of the promotion and ready to lead. But as he navigated the school's toxic environment in his new role, he'd been feeling increasingly helpless and depressed. Entrusting students in leadership roles was all well and good, but a dearth of healthy adult oversight and accountability had contributed to a culture replete with assaults, verbal abuse, hazing, and sexual violence that had resulted in police visits, lawsuits, and a cold war pitting recalcitrant trustees and administrators against reform-minded parents, alumni, and cadets. Out on patrol that night, Schumacher told me, he felt on "the brink of darkness."

The Forge, as insiders call it, resembles a cross between an East Coast prep school and a military installation. Its 100-acre campus is dotted with dormitories and academic buildings, but also with a war memorial, an obstacle course, and a parade field for drill formations. Nestled 20 miles north of Philadelphia, the private institution teaches middle school, high school, and junior college students. Some graduate as commissioned military officers, but all are subject to the customs and courtesies of military life, as well as its trials and traumas.

With school leaders doing little to address the fraught campus atmosphere, Schumacher had taken it upon himself to patrol the grounds as often as possible. This evening, walking along a mossy brick pathway, he spotted something suspicious: Behind a storage shed, out of sight of campus surveillance cameras, a group of upperclassmen was tormenting a few shivering plebes. He'd stumbled upon an unsanctioned version of the "cap shield" exam, an induction rite wherein new students are quizzed on the Forge's nearly 100-year history. The exam is the culmination of a boot camp of sorts for incoming college students. Those who pass are welcomed into the Corps of Cadets, which Schumacher now commanded, and rewarded with the cap shield medal, a brass badge depicting the mythical moment when General George Washington, standing on the Pennsylvania battleground for which the school was named, prayed for the survival of the fledgling American republic.

Valley Forge "brings out the best and the worst in people... It showed me who I didn't want to be."

Schumacher had arrived on campus in 2019, excited by the Forge's time-honored traditions and drawn to its curricula on counterterrorism and cybersecurity. A stocky history nerd with dark brown hair, he spent hours memorizing school trivia and passed his cap shield exam in near-record time. But he soon came to see the exam as an empty ritual. It revolved around lofty

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principles, yet often culminated in a "cap shield handshake," wherein plebes point the prick of the badge toward their palm and accept a vigorous clasp. A minor stabbing, perhaps, but telling of more extreme hazing that campus leaders seemed willing to tolerate, and sometimes even take part in.

When Schumacher disrupted the hazing session, the plebes were relieved, the bullies annoyed. Afterward, one emailed him a screed claiming he lacked the traits of a US Marine. "That pissed me off," Schumacher recalls. "These cadets were clearly out of line. They had the wrong idea of what service and tradition really are." But he was even more frustrated with the school for creating an environment in which college kids were saddled with responsibilities beyond their age and experience. Cadets were meant to be supported by adult TAC (teach, advise, counsel) officers, many of whom are military veterans. Yet in recent years, Forge administrators had laid off some of the best TACs and replaced them with less-enlightened ones. "We were no longer in the military. We were civilians," notes one Marine veteran who worked as a TAC from 2005 to 2019. "We were there to be a role model for these kids, not a drill instructor. Many of my co-workers didn't understand that. They ruled by intimidation and fear." Schumacher and a handful of other cadets thus took it upon themselves to shield fellow students from bullies and twisted TACs alike. They did their best to prevent fights, and would rush injured kids to the hospital. One filled in as school chaplain, holding religious ceremonies and counseling suicidal cadets as young as 13. These self-appointed protectors also stayed with students experiencing mental health crises to ensure they didn't harm themselves, and organized shifts to track down comrades who had fled the campus—a frequent occurrence. "It's kind of like prison," one former student said.

Schumacher found respite at the stables, where he and other members of the school's mounted battalion spent hours each week "dealing with the horses" and "dealing with ourselves." He almost dropped out when the Forge, to cut costs, abruptly disbanded its calvary and repurposed the polo arena for paintball. But it was confronting the cap shield bullies a few days later that sent him over the edge. Schumacher stormed back to his dorm afterward, gathered his belongings, and threw everything in his truck, yelling and banging doors as he vented his rage. As he sped off, he began crying. He didn't know whether he wanted to go on living: "I was just mentally shattered." His friends found him later, parked on the roadside in a state of shock, and urged him to come back to campus. (Ten other cadets went AWOL that weekend, some for a temporary taste of freedom, others hoping to escape permanently.) Schumacher returned to the dorms but quit the school for good soon after. Now a bona fide Marine, he believes Valley Forge fashions leaders only insofar as it exposes cadets to behavior unbecoming of an officer. "It brings out the best and the worst in people," he told me. "I don't want to say that's a goal of the school, but it's something that happens. It showed me who I didn't want to be."

Valley Forge has long billed itself as the kind of institution that breaks young people down in order to build them back better. Many business, political, and military leaders have embraced that tough-love approach. As alum General Norman Schwarzkopf, architect of the first Gulf War, put it, "West Point prepared me for the military. Valley Forge prepared me for life." The Forge has churned out other bigwigs, including Gustave Perna, the retired four-star general who led the

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Operation Warp Speed vaccine push, and General H.R. McMaster, Donald Trump's former national security adviser. But most famous of all is the novelist J.D. Salinger, whose parents sent him to the Forge in 1934 after he flunked out of a Manhattan prep school. It was here Salinger honed his writing skills—a sentimental poem he wrote about the school is still recited at its gatherings. His masterwork, *The Catcher in the Rye*, opens with Holden Caulfield at Pencey Prep, a fictionalized version of the Forge. Aspects of Salinger's rendering ring true to cadets today, from the "crumby" food to a culture of bullying and entitlement perpetrated by "phonies" and "crooks." "It was a terrible school, no matter how you looked at it," Holden observes. The fictional Pencey maintained strict rules and excellent academics—virtues, if ones Holden couldn't live up to. "I got the ax," he informs readers. "They give guys the ax quite frequently at Pencey." These parts of Salinger's depiction no longer seem so apt. According to internal documents, police records, legal complaints, and interviews with more than 50 sources close to the school, including current and former cadets, parents, staff, and board members, campus leaders have allowed an environment of neglect, abuse, and impunity to fester.

Over the last four academic years, the Radnor Township Police Department has been summoned to campus more than 300 times. While rule breakers once got the ax, staffers have allegedly overlooked serious misdeeds while retaining the offending students and banking their tuition dollars. (Tuition, plus room and board, starts at just under \$38,000 per year for middle and high school and \$48,000 for college.) One student stabbed a classmate with scissors; another bashed his peer with a baseball bat—neither met serious repercussions. Once a citadel of leadership, Valley Forge today is "basically a sleepaway camp for troubled kids with very little supervision," says graduate **Ray Bossert**, a retired Army colonel and former TAC. "It's more *Lord of the Flies* than *The Catcher in the Rye*." Walt Lord, a popular but short-lived school president, agrees: "It became 'Last Chance U,' which was a revenue driver but also cancerous to the Corps of Cadets."

Amid money woes, administrators have curtailed sports, slashed courses, and assigned teachers to unfamiliar subjects, leading to an academic decline so steep that some Forge cadets complain certain colleges no longer accept transfer credits for many of their courses. The campus is crumbling, too, its barracks periodically infested with rats, cockroaches, and mold—cadets have also complained of burnt and moldy food in the dining hall. Lawlessness is commonplace. Over the last four academic years, the Radnor Township Police Department has responded more than 300 times to incidents on campus. Police reports obtained by Mother Jones from the last decade involve cadets as young as 13 experiencing psychiatric crises, including suicidal behavior. In 2016, an 18-year-old cadet took his own life in Lafayette Hall. The police data, and campus security logs, document a litany of allegations, including assault, arson, burglary, larceny, narcotics and weapons possession, stalking, and rape. A recent post on a private Instagram account titled "Valley Forge Sucks" shows two cops peering into a schoolroom, with the caption: "Normal day at the Forge."

Valley Forge administrators declined to respond to detailed questions about the concerns raised in this story, or to make named staffers, administrators, or trustees available for interviews. Citing privacy concerns, retired Marine Col. Stuart Helgeson, the school's president, said in a statement that the Forge has "zero tolerance for hazing and illegal and inappropriate activity,"

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"thorough policies and procedures in place to address allegations of wrongdoing," and "a proven track record of taking action to address concerns quickly and appropriately." The school, he added, "will continue to manage matters that arise according to law, policy, and the best interest of the cadets entrusted to our care." School trustees and senior administrators, according to legal documents and numerous sources, have minimized rather than remediated the problems. An institutional focus on protecting the Forge's reputation above all else has created, in the words of one former teacher, "a chocolate-covered onion." Amid a steady drip of scandals, lawsuits, and pissed-off parents, leaders have clammed up, countersued, and compiled a list of perceived enemies who are barred from campus. Officials "constantly worried about themselves and covering their own asses," says a former longtime TAC. "All they cared about was that there was no negative press, even if it meant that kids were being sodomized or kids were having inappropriate sexual relations, or getting drunk or getting high, or whatever. They didn't care."

A twisted drill sergeant mentality took root. One TAC extinguished a cigarette in the palm of an underage cadet caught smoking, a former administrator told me. A former TAC said he nearly came to blows with a colleague who'd beaten up a 14-year-old. In 2015, the school's then–Title IX officer warned of a "'Gomer Pyle' method of training," referring to a character from Full Metal Jacket whose brutal hazing by others pushes him to commit a murder-suicide. "The culture was rife with abuse of every part of a person's being," says one alum. Recalls another: "I didn't feel like a human the majority of the time I was there."

In addition to recruiting military personnel, the school brought in former cops and prison guards to oversee cadets. A couple of the TACs came from Glen Mills, a Pennsylvania penal school that the state shut down in 2019 amid allegations of child abuse. **Bossert** and another former TAC singled out one Glen Mills colleague whom the Forge hired in 2016. This officer frequently got physical with students, according to his former co-workers, one of whom distinctly recalls him body-slammng a cadet in the mess hall.

Another controversial figure is J.J. Rivera, until recently the school's commandant, or head TAC, whose verbal attacks on cadets and flirtatious behavior with female cadets raised eyebrows. In a grainy video recently shared on the Valley Forge Sucks Instagram, Rivera, now chief of staff, can be heard screaming "Shut the fuck up!" at a whimpering young cadet. He then grabs the boy. Schumacher and another former cadet remember Rivera at one point declaring his intent to give cadets an experience the commandant likened to a deployment in "one of the shit-istans." This consisted of TACs berating and belittling the cadets and robbing them of sleep. "It was, 'Toughen the fuck up! If I hear you have problems, then fucking leave...I don't need a broken soldier,'" another former cadet recalls. Several alumni who serve in the armed forces told me that nothing in their military experience has been as harrowing as their years at the Forge. Young Sheng, a 2015 graduate, recalls a punishing world of sleep deprivation, verbal abuse, and "smoking"—extreme physical conditioning that caused cadets to puke and pass out. The mistreatment "amplified my anger issues," Sheng said, and led him to abuse others in turn. "It's extremely negligent to let students have this level of power over each other's lives," he said. "The culture was rife with abuse of every part of a person's being." Recalls another alum: "I didn't feel like a human the majority of the time I was there."

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Formal military education emerged in Europe during the 18th century and was embraced by the colonial brass during the Revolutionary War. "We are fighting against a people well acquainted with the theory and practice of war, brave by discipline and habit," American General Henry Knox wrote in 1776 to John Adams, who then chaired the Continental Congress' Board of War. Knox argued that the new republic needed to bring its own soldiers up to snuff at any expense. In response, the Continental Congress promptly developed the first Army academy, West Point. Major Sylvanus Thayer, an early superintendent, set forth the standards by which US military schools would henceforth operate, building fighting men through a curriculum of tactical engineering, physical training, strict rules, and harsh discipline. According to *Cadets on Campus*, a history of military schools, Thayer defended his commandant, Captain John Bliss, after Bliss brutally assaulted a cadet. When cadets circulated a petition demanding Bliss be held accountable, Thayer expelled its 189 signatories and court-martialed the five organizers for leading a "mutiny." The incident helped codify a punitive atmosphere that has plagued military academics and the armed services they populate ever since. In 1898, a gentle cadet named Oscar Booz was critically injured in West Point's underground fight club. During a subsequent congressional inquiry, New York Rep. Edmund Driggs described the academy's hazing culture as "detestable, disgraceful, dishonourable, [and] disreputable."

Military schooling took off nevertheless during the early 20th century, with roughly 280 institutions opening in the United States between 1903 and 1926. The five academies operated by military branches, including West Point, were the elite. The rest—private, religiously chartered, or state-run—attracted a more eclectic student body, ranging from aspiring officers to troubled adolescents whose parents felt they could use some discipline. Enrollment peaked after World War II, but by the end of the Vietnam War, 65 percent of the institutions had closed their doors. Military schools increasingly became associated with discipline for kids with behavioral issues.

Valley Forge was founded in 1928 by Lt. General Milton Grafly Baker, a veteran of World War I and close confidant of West Point graduate Dwight D. Eisenhower. At the height of its enrollment in the late 1960s, Valley Forge had 1,169 cadets—most white and all male. By the time Navy Rear Admiral Peter Long took over as president in 2000, the Forge was down to a few hundred students and on the verge of bankruptcy. "People could do whatever they wanted," recalls a former cadet who says she was sexually assaulted by a classmate. "Rules weren't being enforced. I felt unsafe." A former provost of the Naval War College, Long focused, with some success, on improving academic programs, and he managed to get the school on steadier financial footing, thanks in part to a post-9/11 enrollment surge. But in November 2004, the board of trustees booted Long for an alleged pattern of sexually harassing employees. (Long sued the school, claiming the allegations were cooked up by a trustee who disapproved of his management style. The case was settled out of court.)

The Forge has since cycled through eight presidents. By many accounts, its trustees and administrators—mostly former military men—have downplayed the school's problems by concocting positive images and suppressing scandals. To close budget gaps, they chopped haphazardly, deferring major maintenance projects, gutting academic programs, and laying off

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

dedicated employees. A few years ago, the school began rationing toilet paper. It also relied on well-to-do foreign students, who pay higher tuition. Students of color and female cadets were admitted, if not with open arms. In a 2007 racial discrimination lawsuit, Forge teacher Harold Price, chair of the foreign languages department, claimed the school wasn't painting over racist graffiti—the suit cites one Black cadet who likened the campus atmosphere to a "race war." Other sources told me racial slurs were common: "15-year-old white boys with silver spoons in their mouths saying the n-word. It was disgusting," says a 2020 graduate.

Last August, a mother sued the Forge, alleging that Black cadets were punished far more harshly than others. Non-Black administrators collectively referred to Black cadets as "a gang," the lawsuit claimed, and unruly non-Black cadets—one literally spat in the face of a staff member; another elicited a swat response by threatening to "blow up the school"—were allowed to remain on campus, while her kid was suspended over a racially charged fight he wasn't even involved in. (In a response to the lawsuit, the school disputed her account of the incident.) The decision to admit women into the junior college was made in 2005 by Long's successor, Charles "Tony" McGeorge, the Forge's first civilian president. The move evoked a vehement response from powerful alumni (including McGeorge's son), who complained that Valley Forge was losing its character. And the female cadets were met with hostility. "The rumors were that we were all sluts, and that we were easy," one of them told the local paper.

Therese Dougherty, who oversaw student activities and the school's summer camp for McGeorge's successors, filed a gender discrimination lawsuit in 2013 contending that administrators treated her in a "condescending and demeaning manner" and showed favoritism toward male employees. In an internal 2019 survey I obtained, cadets complained about inadequate physical security. The school "doesn't want to deal with sexual harassment," a female cadet wrote, and students guilty of sexual misconduct saw their behaviors "pushed under the rug." Another former cadet who attended around the same time told me she was drugged at an off-campus party and then sexually assaulted by a male Forge cadet while unconscious. She shared her story with several friends at the time (I spoke with two who confirmed this), one of whom proceeded to "beat the shit out of" the guy. When the TACs started asking questions and she gave them her account, "one of them said it was my fault." The alleged assailant was allowed to remain on campus for the semester. "People could do whatever they wanted," the young woman told me. "Rules weren't being enforced." "I felt unsafe," she added.

The most comprehensive account of abuses at Valley Forge came in 2015, when Robert Wood, the school's Title IX officer, filed an explosive whistleblower complaint alleging that child abuse and sexual misconduct cases had been mishandled. The still-pending complaint warns of a "propensity" among TACs "for cadet allegations to be covered up and interfered with." Wood also alleges that his attempts to investigate claims were repeatedly met with implicit threats by top officials, including William Gallagher, a retired Army colonel who held various senior roles. In a contemporaneous memo to the Department of Education, Wood wrote that his efforts to investigate a sexual assault complaint involving two male cadets were impeded by Gallagher, who demanded Wood "cease" his work. During another standoff, Gallagher emailed an HR official asking when Wood's contract was up for renewal. This prompted the school's lawyer to

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warn that firing him would amount to a "retaliatory discharge" based on Wood's efforts to uncover "serious breakdowns" in how abuse allegations were dealt with. Wood quit the Forge that year, in any case, after seven years on the job. But by the accounts of some cadets, their situation hasn't improved. Based on the school's own data, Valley Forge logged at least 30 incidents of alleged sexual misconduct from 2015 through 2020, from stalking and fondling to rape; two ongoing lawsuits claim the school has attempted to impede investigations by its Title IX office. Wood also alleged that middle and high school students were left unattended at night, which he described as "indefensible."

There were "many, many fights where one student was beaten to a bloody fucking pulp before anyone intervened," says a former supervisory officer. Other sources back that up. In 2018, one former TAC said he was tasked with a night shift overseeing "four buildings, or 300 kids" by himself. The TACs were willfully "inattentive" to misbehavior, a 2021 graduate said. "There are many fights—I mean many, many fights I have seen that played out completely," he added, "where one student was beaten to a bloody fucking pulp before anyone intervened." (In December, the Valley Forge Sucks Instagram posted a video of two young cadets in camouflage freely pummeling one another in a bathroom.) Supervising officers got burned out, Schumacher told me, and began ignoring even blatant misbehavior: "They'd shut their door to the TAC office."

While many secondary schools grapple with some amount of egregious behavior, the military model made for a more challenging environment. "When a structure is set up on rank, power, and pain, you're going to have problems," a former Forge official explained. Wood's complaint cites parental concerns about supervision and abuse dating as far back as 1997. In 2004, a 17-year-old cadet was charged with stalking, "involuntary deviate intercourse"—a category of felony crimes ranging from forced oral and anal sex to other forced nonvaginal penetration—and sexual assault against a fellow student, prompting two other cadets to come forward with related allegations against him. This led to further charges, including assault and "terroristic threats." (According to a local news report, a juvenile judge ultimately convicted the assailant of three lesser counts, and sentenced him to home detention.) In 2007, two parents told the Philadelphia Inquirer they were pulling their sons from the Forge after one of them, age 16, was brutally beaten by peers, and the other, a 13-year-old, was "repeatedly tormented," kicked while doing pushups, and branded with a five-pointed star. In 2017, a 16-year-old cadet was allegedly subjected to a sadistic hazing ritual called "tooth-pasting." The now-former cadet alleges in a lawsuit that fellow cadets hit him with a lacrosse stick, pushed it down his throat, and then tried to shove it into his anus. He was also waterboarded, he claims, and had his head slammed into a wall. The same suit claims that after a 13-year-old classmate reported his own abuse to school officials, his tormentors branded him with a "B"—for "bitch."

Based on the school's nonprofit tax filings, Valley Forge has spent more than \$4 million on legal fees over the last two decades. Perhaps the school's most formidable foe these days is Stewart Ryan, the Philadelphia-based lawyer who prosecuted Bill Cosby. He now represents the former cadet who filed the tooth-pasting lawsuit, and three others who allege that, as minors, they, too, experienced tooth-pasting and other abuse at the Forge from 2014 to 2018. Additional clients,

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Ryan says, are preparing complaints that stem from the Forge's "intentional ignorance. "Ryan Niessner, who submitted a sworn affidavit for one of Stewart Ryan's cases, told me he was sexually assaulted as a 15-year-old Forge cadet in 2009. As he returned from the shower one night, a door flung open and five cadets dragged him into a room and attempted to penetrate him, first with fingers, then a coat hanger: "I struggled for a little bit, but five, six other people—numbers just kinda won that." Soon after, he fought off another tooth-pasting attempt. He became withdrawn and depressed, and would eventually require therapy. In junior college, hoping to thwart such attacks, he and some of his Forge classmates took on overnight surveillance shifts. "We were the only adults in the building with high schoolers and middle schoolers," he recalls. In his affidavit, Niessner testified that when he reported his abuse to the TAC office, an officer asked, "Will your parents sue?" (They did not.) "After this meeting," he wrote, "I was discouraged from reporting this incident to anyone else." A few years later, he shared his story with the police, who spoke to school officials. Niessner doesn't know how the Forge responded. But when a former administrator reported a different tooth-pasting attack to her superiors, "they didn't do anything about it," she said. **Bossert** told me that some of the dozen or so cadets thought to have participated in tooth-pasting assaults were dismissed, only to return the following semester. None of them tried it again, to his knowledge. "But think of the type of kids that would do that," **Bossert** says. "They are going to do hell across the board."

In another troubling case that Wood discussed with a local newspaper in 2017, four male college cadets conspired with a fifth to covertly film his sexual encounter with a drunk female cadet. A disciplinary board advised that all of the perpetrators be dismissed, but the school's president ignored the recommendation and allowed three of the five to stay. As punishment, they were ordered to paint the commandant's house. One of the boys spoke at graduation, and "the young lady who had been assaulted had to sit there and listen," Wood said. When a former TAC raised concerns about Symantha Hicks—a Forge guidance counselor who, according to police records, was suspected of giving alcohol to minors and performing oral sex on a 16-year-old—a school official allegedly tried to convince him not to go to the cops. Hicks denied engaging in sex with the boy, but was convicted of "corruption of minors." The Forge had hired her to replace another female counselor whose comportment with students came under scrutiny. But when an administrator raised concerns with the HR office about that counselor—who was later convicted of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old at another school—"I was told that it was none of my business, to just stay out of it." Valley Forge also briefly employed a former soldier named Steve Stefanowicz as a TAC overseeing middle and high schoolers, until staffers discovered he'd been a key player in the Abu Ghraib torture scandal.

Walt Lord's appointment as president in 2018 heralded a brief period of reform at Valley Forge. The son of working-class parents, Lord grew up in an Irish Catholic neighborhood in South Philadelphia. He received a full ride as a Forge cadet in the 1980s, and even got married in the school chapel. He ascended through the Army ranks to the position of major general and served in Sarajevo and Afghanistan. Square-jawed and warm, Lord believed the only way to save his alma mater was by listening to people's concerns. He met frequently with students and staff, snapped selfies with cadets, and cultivated closer relations with alumni and parents. He focused on positive reinforcement, using military challenge coins to reward good behavior. Lord also

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provided intense guidance to misbehaving cadets and booted a handful whose behavior had become threatening. "He didn't just kick somebody out," a former trustee told me. "He had a valid investigation into what the issue was, and the punishment fit the crime." This new approach quickly netted the school dozens of new students. Yet Lord felt micromanaged by the trustees, including board chair John English, who served briefly in the Marines before founding a consulting firm. English demanded a say in day-to-day decisions but neglected systemic issues, according to the former trustee, who adds that most board members were disengaged: "Everyone told war stories. We didn't get anything done." These concerns were echoed in an audit undertaken on behalf of a board member by the Healey Education Foundation, which warned that "Valley Forge is not going to survive by looking backwards." A draft report, leaked to the press in 2019 and cited in a lawsuit that was later dismissed, noted that enrollment had declined 40 percent in the previous five years, and the school was nearly \$7 million in debt. The authors laid most of the blame on the trustees' hasty "Ready, Fire, Aim" decision-making style.

Lord felt confident he could tackle the Forge's cultural issues. He also arranged weekly meetings with Vince Vuono, the chief financial officer, to get a better handle on the money woes. But Vuono would provide only the most basic, generic information: "My biggest point of frustration was the fact that I couldn't get the CFO to open up and tell me exactly where we stood financially," Lord told me. "It was the most bizarre thing in the world." Other administrators were similarly perplexed. "Nobody knew where the money was going," one recalled. Lord and others alluded to a multimillion-dollar donation from the family of an alum, the son of Ettore Boiardi, a.k.a. Chef Boyardee, which they believed was intended for building upgrades that were never completed. (The Forge has previously denied that the funds were misdirected.) The school is now being monitored by the US Department of Education for "financial or federal compliance issues," which may stem, at least in part, from its sloppy handling of Pell grants. The Forge wasn't adequately communicating with students about the Pell program, and multiple cadets said they never received money they were promised. "I never really felt like they were following financial aid procedures," one former staffer recalled. Lord resigned in March 2019, after less than a year on the job, citing the board's incompetence. Trustee Jessica Wright, the former head of Pennsylvania's National Guard, announced her resignation shortly thereafter in a scathing letter that inveighed against the board's "reprehensible" apathy toward the school's challenges. As the news swept the campus, cadets showed up at Lord's living quarters with cake, cookies, and a teddy bear. "We wanted to open up dialogue and fix the school," says one Valley Forge alumnus and parent. "What we got was silence."

Days later, hundreds of alumni arrived from around the country for a tense meeting with school officials at Mellon Hall, a stately building with a checkerboard-tiled ballroom. Nearly 4,000 parents and alumni signed a petition imploring the board of trustees to work out their differences with Lord so that he could be reinstated. Instead, school officials blacklisted their most vocal critics, Lord included. "We wanted to open up dialogue and fix the school," said Scott Newell, an alum and parent of a former cadet. "What we got was silence. Parents were blocked on social media, concerns were ignored, and ultimately [certain] alumni were barred from the campus." Less than a month after Lord's departure, a Forge cadet was assaulted and hospitalized. The local ABC News affiliate reported he'd been "mistakenly targeted as ratting out a group of

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cadets for underage drinking." Thus began the latest phase of what the Inquirer called a battle for Valley Forge's soul. Lines were drawn. On one side were concerned parents and alumni, and Lord; on the other an increasingly bellicose group of trustees and administrators, including Lord's replacement, current president Stuart Helgeson. "We keep hoping these guys would go away," Helgeson complained to the newspaper. "They're weakening the brand." Helgeson addressed the budget shortfalls by slashing college sports programs and eliminating the 16-horse cavalry. A prime slice of campus was sold off to developers for \$1.6 million. Helgeson also tried some new revenue streams, such as licensing the Valley Forge name to a K–12 school in Qatar and submitting a proposal to the local school board to establish a public charter school on the grounds. (The board rejected the plan, citing trustees' dearth of educational experience and a lack of competent curriculum guidelines, and accused the Forge of trying "to subsidize its private school with taxpayer dollars.") Finally, in a decision the cadets would feel acutely, Helgeson promoted TAC J.J. Rivera, a fellow Marine, to the title of commandant.

At least five cadets I interviewed identified Rivera, a former helicopter pilot who didn't respond to multiple requests for comment, as one of the most abusive TACs. **Bossert** and another former TAC told me Rivera sometimes slow-walked investigations—including one that involved a rape. As Rivera's former supervisor, **Bossert** recalls cautioning him about his demeanor with the young women on campus.

One former administrator went so far as to call him a "creepo," noting that female cadets often complained to her about Rivera's behavior. Two female former cadets recalled to me how, after they were caught trying to sneak off campus, Rivera threatened to look in on their rooms at night when they slept. Another one recalls Rivera flirting with her repeatedly and saying she reminded him of his wife. That cadet said Rivera once made her remove a shirt that violated the dress code—she had to extract the garment from underneath her sweatshirt: "He was right there, watching me." A male former cadet told me that Rivera—after learning he'd drilled with an ROTC unit at a base where Rivera also had trained—advised the boy, then still a minor, to check out a nearby strip bar called Club Risqué. (Two of the cadet's former classmates confirmed that he told them this story shortly afterward.)

In 2020, fed up, Schumacher and a dozen or so other cadets created a PowerPoint and presented it to school officials. Titled "State of the Forge," it detailed squalid living conditions, flawed Covid-19 policies, and ongoing bullying, including an attempted "lynching"—in which Black cadets offended by a white student's racism allegedly tried to choke the kid with a belt. The presentation claimed that five classmates had either tried to kill themselves or had spoken to leadership about doing so that school year. The cadets I interviewed, along with an internal list of student grievances I obtained, say the Forge frequently minimizes mental health issues, with a school nurse once scolding a student for "sending up red flags that don't need to be sent up." Another slide depicted Rivera as particularly abusive, a contention bolstered by numerous staffers and cadets, including one who remembers Rivera routinely ordering Schumacher into his office just to scream at him. Rivera was "well-contained" during the presentation, Schumacher said, but their effort to speak truth to power amounted to naught. "It was a 'brush off the shoulder' kind of thing," he said. From the early West Point scandals to recent reports of hazing

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at the Virginia Military Institute, abuses at military schools have been codified in American culture through media reports, literature, and Hollywood tropes. *Taps*, a 1981 movie filmed at the Forge, follows a group of cadets who rebel violently against the proposed closing of their fictional academy. By the accounts of those I spoke with, the Forge has indeed come to mirror many of the worst aspects of military culture—the lies and cover-ups, the unwillingness to deal appropriately with sexual assaults, and the lack of financial transparency. The word "snafu" comes from a military acronym meaning "situation normal: all fucked up." And that's a sentiment the Forge and like-minded institutions seem to be imprinting upon the next generation of military leaders. The deliberately punitive ethos of military schools rests on the false assumption that it wrings out bad habits and encourages good ones. But Michael Karson, a clinical psychologist and professor at the University of Denver who specializes in child abuse, told me that one of the few hard laws in his field is as follows: "Punishment doesn't work" to change people's character, he says. It merely "makes them obedient." This truth helps highlight the moral clarity of dissenters such as Salinger and Schumacher, whose insubordination was a clear-eyed response to abuse, a righteous rejection of bullying masquerading as command and control. Valley Forge "was on the whole a thoroughly bad joke, its pretenses and posturing irreversibly sham, contemptible," author J.D. Salinger wrote to a friend.

One can reasonably argue that the military must instill compliance and cohesion in its combat units. But the kind of torment Valley Forge kids were subjected to, trauma that can leave psychological wounds as deep as those borne by soldiers on a battlefield, is impossible to justify. Numerous parents have spoken of the ways, large and small, that their children were scarred by the Forge, and many former cadets, Schumacher included, have sought therapy to process their experiences. One mother told me that ever since her boy was raped at Valley Forge, a trauma incurred many years ago, he sleeps with a hunting knife under his pillow. And then there was the 18-year-old cadet who never made it to graduation. Even the famously reclusive Salinger would eventually open up about his ambivalence toward the Forge. In an unpublished 1995 letter to a friend and former classmate, shared with me by the J.D. Salinger Literary Trust, the author, then 76, seemed to regret the untitled three-stanza poem he wrote shortly before graduation, which was placed on display in the school chapel after Salinger got famous. It begins:

Hide not thy tears on this last day— Your sorrow has no shame; To march no more midst lines of gray; No longer play the game.

"I've planned for years to stop by and either tear the exhibit down or at the very least add a little obscene graffiti at the bottom," Salinger wrote. He reflected, too, on the "interesting collection of misfits" he'd befriended at the Forge, and the memories they shared, bad and good. But it was escaping the campus that brought him the greatest joy: "Though [the Forge], to me, was on the whole a thoroughly bad joke, its pretenses and posturing irreversibly sham, contemptible," Salinger wrote, "I wonder if I ever again felt as free, as gratefully on the loose, as I did on that pretty walk to Wayne and the diner on a Sunday after signing out."

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[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

<https://thrivingearthexchange.org/meet-our-april-2022-cohort-of-community-leads-in-wisconsin/>

AGU Thriving Earth Exchange
18 April 2022

Meet Our April 2022 Cohort of Community Leads in Wisconsin
The Village of Port Edwards, Wisconsin

Raymond “Boz” Bossert Jr., Colonel (Retired), serves as the Village Administrator for the Village of Port Edwards. In this role, he is responsible for 37 Village employees, 15 square miles of Village limits, 50 miles of Village roadway, and 5 Village wells that provide over 600,000 gallons of water a month.

Colonel **Bossert**'s 36 year Army Combat Engineer career in commanding troops in austere environments and establishing many large base camps gives him a unique perspective on water quality and its importance. He also has expertise and experience in Joint, Coalition, Inter-agency and Multi-National commands and over 14 combat deployments and assignments.

Colonel **Bossert** most recently served as the Senior Advisor on Engineering, Infrastructure and Economic Stabilization at the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute. He feels that this partnership with Thriving Earth Exchange will energize this important project to provide Village residents a product that captures the true water quality of Wood County's water sources. **Ray**'s Goal is to create a model for any community to provide a tangible “dashboard” style water quality tool for citizens, investors and developers in any City, Town or County.

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<https://www.townofportedwardswi.org/uploads/1/2/4/8/124829778/2022minutesmarch.pdf>

**TOWN OF PORT EDWARDS
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 14, 2022**

Water research idea;

Ray “Boz” Bossert presented. He has been the Village of Port Edwards administrator for just over two years now. He noted clean water is important to everyone. He would like to see a more aggressive approach to understanding the water concerns in our area than what the County has adopted. Both municipal and private wells in the County need to be canvassed. The County has not been very supportive of his ideas. They told him that the Land Management department will get to it in about two to three years.

Under his plan, he would like to see at least 34 municipalities contribute \$10,000 of the ARPA grant monies they received. **Boz** would use this money to fund a part-time employee for at least one year who would be tasked with gathering all of the necessary information to make the water quality data complete. Saratoga and Grand Rapids towns are willing to contribute. **Boz** would like to see a June start date for this part-time employee (who would be employed through the Village of Port Edwards). **Boz** provided the Town Board with a packet outlining his proposal. The subject will be carried forward to next month’s agenda for discussion by the Town Board

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https://dev.saratogawisconsin.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Minutes-03_09_2022-1.pdf

Town of Saratoga
Plan Commission
March 9, 2022

Comprehensive Plan

Raymond “Boz” Bossert, Zoning Administrator presented a draft Future Land Use map showing an update of the commercial districts, revised residential districts, and adding an expanded public utilities district to include the solar project.

Discussion followed regarding ending the Highway Commercial District at Evergreen Avenue and designating Highway 73 as Light Commercial.

Multiple Family housing was also discussed as a separate district or included in the Highway Commercial District.

Bossert will update the proposed map and present it at the next meeting.

Information from commission members

Snyder said she suggested the Town Board provide a large map of the Town available for Public meetings. It was agreed having a town map, zoning map and future land use map displayed in the conference room would be helpful.

Public Comments
None

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<https://www.ngaga.org/awards/the-ngaga-awards/the-georgia-minuteman-award>

National Guard Association of Georgia
2022

GA Minuteman Award.

The Georgia Minuteman Award is the highest recognition bestowed upon an individual NGAGA member. It recognizes exceptional achievement, a patriotic act, highly distinguished service or an outstanding contribution to a military organization, community, state, nation, and to the National Guard Association of Georgia.

Description

A 13-inch pewter sculpted minuteman, mounted on a walnut wood base with an inscription plate appropriately engraved with the name of the recipient. The award also comes with an official certificate of appreciation from the acting NGAGA president that bestows the recipient with an honorary NGAGA life membership.

Criteria

The individual to be selected should have made sustained contributions of exceptional and far-reaching magnitude to the defense and security of the state or nation in a highly distinguished manner worthy of such recognition. Although a single deed or action may be considered as qualification for this award if it is of sufficient magnitude and significance, weight should be given to sustained contributions.

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAGA, or Adjutants General may nominate an individual to receive this award. The letter should contain clear and detailed statement of the nature and magnitude of the nominated individual's contributions to an improved defense posture of the Georgia National Guard or the nation. The Georgia Minuteman Award is usually presented not more than once annually. However, if in the view of the Awards Committee or the Board of Directors, no individual has met the requirements of the award, no award will be given. An individual may not receive the Award more than once.

Past Recipients

2014

COL **Raymond Bossert, Jr.**

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https://dev.saratogawisconsin.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Minutes-05_12_2021.pdf
May 12, 2021

Town of Saratoga Plan Commission

Plan Commission Members Chair Dave Barth Sarajane Snyder, Co-chair Josh McDonald Tom Grygo, Secretary: Gordon Wipperfurth, Alternate

Sarajane Snyder opened the meeting of the Town of Saratoga Plan Commission at 6:3 PM on May 12, 2021, at the Saratoga Town Hall. The meeting was officially noticed.

Motion by Barth to approve the minutes of April 14, 2021, Plan Commission Meeting, second by McDonald, motion approved.

Pam Pitrowski talked about working on a bicycle trail in Nekoosa and also the Village of Port Edwards. She said Sue Peterson contracted her about working on a bicycle trail in the Town of Saratoga.

Pitrowski introduced the Village of Port Edwards Administrator **Ray “Boz” Bossert**. He provided a handout of proposed bicycle trail signs available through Wood County. Each municipality would receive five trail signs and one trail head sign and install the signs using their public works crew.

Discussion followed about trail planning and signing. Pitrowski said she is willing to work on bicycle trail plan for the town and present the plan to the Plan Commission. The Plan Commission agreed to have Pitrowski work on planning a bicycle trail route and report back to the Plan Commission

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<http://www.vi.portedwards.wi.gov/docview.asp?docid=27543&locid=199>

Village of Port Edwards
SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER

I hope you have had a chance to meet our new Administrator, who began his duties with the Village in July 2020. If you have not, I encourage you to stop on down to the Municipal Building and get to know him. Raymond "Boz" Bossert has served as a Colonel in the Army Corp of Engineers and has a wealth of training that suits the duties of Village Administrator. The Village Board did a fantastic job in their search for a new administrator. Welcome aboard Colonel "Boz".

FROM THE DESK OF THE VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR

Howdee residents of The Village of Port Edwards. I am your Village Administrator, Raymond "Boz" Bossert. I have been on the job since early July 2020 and my family and I are enjoying every day here in Port Edwards. Personally, I start each day by citing, "what can we do today to make Port Edwards the best it can be". Trust me we are making progress. We have all weathered thru another Winter season and it has been very interesting. Not as much snow as expected, some very cold days and of course all with the overshadowing of the COVID pandemic. The end is in sight. The Vaccine is flowing out and by the time of this newsletter over 30% of our Village will have received the vaccine. We hope by the end of the year we will be 100% vaccinated. We still don't know for sure how COVID will endure in our bodies, will it be an annual shot we get or once we reach immunity levels will it go away? The experts are working on these questions and others and we all hope for the best. In the end, like I mentioned in my State of the Village report in December, we have come thru this better and stronger as a community and I thank each and every one of you for your support to make that happen.

Now onto Village Business.... We have approved and are executing our 2021 Budget. All looks good. We bring in about \$4.5 Million dollars annually in revenue and this year's budget we planned to expend about \$3.5 million. The difference is kept in our Reserves. We will begin the 2021 Budget process in July and will keep you informed on our progress towards continued Fiscal stability in our Village.

We will be taking on some major infrastructure projects this year. We plan to complete a total rebuild of our 3rd street from Edwards Ave to Le tendre Ave. We also plan to resurface our 1st street from Le tendre to Ver Bunker Ave. There will be some minor alley repairs, and this will be the first year we

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improve our Bike trails working on the northern section from Ver Bunker to Seneca Road. We will as usual repair about 1000' feet of curb and gutter as well as sidewalks throughout the spring and summer. We continue to improve our parks and we hopefully will have a ribbon cutting on our New Dog park in late Spring, more to follow. We continue to make progress with DMI and the Old Mill property and hope to unveil some development plans for the site. We will also start our dialogue with the NEPCO lake residents planning for the Boundary agreement to end in a few years. Those 200+ residents will return back to the Village and we hope to make that a seamless and positive transition.

It continues to be my goal to make this a very **Professional, Ready and Relevant** Village staff. We have numerous challenges ongoing and ahead that we all need to work together to overcome. Our Village services need the right investment to support all our residents and businesses in Port Edwards. We must be good stewards of our tax funds and choose wisely on investments and budgets. The best use of tax funds and service fees are only amplified when we have resident “buy in” on our initiatives and projects. I look forward to working on these issues together moving forward. I am excited to be here and look forward to the challenges. Let’s get to work and stay “PORT PROUD!”

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<https://www.wisconsinrapidschamber.com/news/details/momentum-on-the-wood-county-consolidated-trail-network-project>

Heart of Wisconsin
Chamber of Commerce
December 17, 2020

MOMENTUM ON THE WOOD COUNTY CONSOLIDATED TRAIL NETWORK PROJECT

The Village of Port Edwards, Wisconsin --- Two early holiday gifts for the Village of Port Edwards and the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce Leadership team 2021. On December 1st, 2020, the Village of Port Edwards Board of Trustees voted 7 to 0 to approve a New Dog park in the Village. This 4-8 acre Dog park, located in the Villages Ripple Creek park system, will not only serve the 1800 residents of Port Edwards but also the 72,000 residents of Wood County, Wisconsin. Currently there are no major Dog Parks within a 15 mile distance from this location and this will be a great asset to the inventory of our recreational activity network.

This initiative is in collaboration with a non-profit organization, SCENTRAILs Bark Community park Inc., a very enthusiastic group of citizens wanting a safe and secure place to visit with their animals. The Total project will cost close to \$40,000 once complete (funded by donations from interested citizens and organizations) and it will be maintained in partnership by the Village of Port Edwards and Scentrails inc. to ensure its well-groomed, clean and operated effectively. The Village looks at this collaboration as a win-win for the partners and the region. This also will be a great marketing draw for visitors to our County, since its located along the existing trail network for Bikers, Hikers, ATVs and Snowmobiles.

The second gift came in the form of a \$19,000 Grant from the Wood County Conservation, Education & Economic Development Committee. On December 15th, 2020, the County generously awarded these funds to provide Trail Head signage across the communities of The Village of Port Edwards, The City of Nekoosa, The Town of Saratoga, the Village of Biron and the Town of Grand Rapids. This cooperative was an initiative by the Recreational Trail Team as part of the Heartland Chamber of Commerce Leadership 2021 group.

“Having the County support this endeavor will provide signs that will be purchased and installed locally and will be a great start to our project, this will be matched by funding to install the signs in 2021 with the five communities that have partnered to support this effort.”, stated **Ray “Boz” Bossert**, the Village administrator for Port Edwards and the leadership 2021 group project chair. The funds will be utilized to design and purchase signs that will be standardized, informative and durable and then placed along the network of trails in the local communities. A partnership between the five communities will meet monthly to discuss the signs and installation timeline. “I visited all the communities and participated in their monthly board meetings, they all enthusiastically supported this effort and all agreed that having a standardized sign under a

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

HEART (Heartland, Education, Activity and Recreational Trails) network will help inform their residents as well as provide a marketing tool for the region”, stated **Ray “Boz” Bossert**.

The individual communities will have the ability to personalize the signs with local mottos, trail names and government logos, but they will be under the umbrella of the HEART network to help identify the collection of trails and destinations in our region. The Chamber leadership group hopes to expand the communities involved throughout the County over the next year and as well as neighboring counties and their trail networks.

They also hope, working with the County, to “digitize” the trails and other destinations with a user friendly application that any smartphone or table can utilize to better inform users of the vast amount of options they have along our trail networks. “ The information is out there in various formats, in many cases it’s collected by the County, Villages and Towns. We seek to collect all this data, consolidate it, provide a platform that is user friendly and then see the gaps in the network that we can work with the communities to address. It will show trails for Hikers, Bikers, Snowmobilers, ATV’ers as well as boat ramps, parks, restrooms, libraries, playgrounds, Veterans memorials as well as other destinations along our trails in the region, with the ability to add stores, restaurants and vendors in the future. We want this to be a one stop shop for the network and the user but sustainable over time,” stated **Ray “Boz” Bossert**.

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Philadelphia Inquirer, The (PA)
July 26, 2020

Battle at Valley Forge - This time, it's over the running of the military academy.

Author/Byline: Sam Wood and Erin Arvedlund

Citing falling enrollment, weak finances, and mismanagement at Valley Forge Military Academy and College, a rebellious faction of school alumni is openly seeking regime change on the current board of trustees, claiming that a complete housecleaning is needed to preserve the institution. "It's dire," said 1988 alumnus Dan McSweeney, who said the academy had 750 students during his time, compared with fewer than 175 planned for this year's class. "This could be the academy's last year. And if not this year, then soon."

The school that produced Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf, who led Desert Storm; H.R. McMaster, a former national security adviser to President Donald Trump; and author J.D. Salinger, among others, has been in a downward spiral, say upstart alumni who point to manifold problems. The school has had seven school presidents in the last decade, an insufficient endowment, and allegations of brutal student hazing. Incumbent trustees on Valley Forge's board say the criticism is overblown and that they are moving aggressively to tackle its problems. The trustees are "right-sizing" the institution, paying off debts, and licensing the Valley Forge brand online to raise money. The current board chairman, John English, who runs a defense contracting consultancy, described the angry alums as a "collection of malcontents." "This place isn't closing," said English. "Not after all the work we've done. They have no clue."

Founded in 1928, Valley Forge Military Academy and College offers an all-boys' prep school for cadets through high school, and a two-year co-ed junior college program. Priced at roughly \$45,000 for tuition, room and board, it is the last military academy in Pennsylvania. Valley Forge is one of roughly 40 accredited military schools nationally, and its declining attendance tracks America's move away from a militarystyle education that includes uniforms and a hierarchy aimed at teaching leadership. Ray Rottman, executive director of the Association of Military Colleges & Schools of the United States, said about 10,000 student cadets now attend military prep schools, and 11,000 more attend military colleges. That's down from a peak of roughly double that student body size in the 1950s. Only about 3% of all these school graduates go on to join the military.

Who owns Valley Forge? Like most military academies, it's a nonprofit run by a board of more than a dozen trustees and "they're responsible for strategic vision," Rottman said. "The board of trustees is the leadership, not the president" at schools such as Valley Forge, he said. Valley Forge Military Academy's board of trustees numbers 14 currently, and membership is by appointment by other trustees only, as is standard practice for nonprofits. Some trustees have been on the school's board for decades, fueling criticism that the board has become ossified and resistant to change.

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

To shore up prospects for the 92-year-old institution, a group of Valley Forge alumni, former school officials, and former trustees this month launched the nonprofit Medenbach Foundation, aiming to support “the school’s improvement and long-term success.” The foundation is named after the late Lt. Gen. Milton H. Medenbach, a past president and superintendent of Valley Forge Military Academy. The foundation’s stated intent is to financially support cadets and supply oversight of the school. But it also seeks to serve as a parallel administration in exile.

Among the foundation’s leaders is the school’s previous president, Walter Lord, a retired twostar Army major general. In March 2019, Lord resigned after less than a year on the job, citing a lack of integrity by the trustees. He is now barred from campus.

Charges of board meddling

Veteran military leaders who attempted to fill the role have accused the trustees of micromanaging day-to-day operations. The near constant meddling made the work untenable, said Lord. “I resigned,” said Lord, adding that he offered to stay in 2019 for the remainder of the fiscal year. “Then they fired me.”

Following Lord’s dismissal, trustee Maj. Gen. Jessica Wright, a former undersecretary at the U.S. Department of Defense, quit the board in support of Lord. In her 2019 resignation letter, she called the “present governance structure and apathetic attitude” of the trustees not only “troubling” but “reprehensible.” “I empathize with the reason for his resignation — the lack of governance and intensive micromanagement he endured through his tenure,” Wright wrote. “A combat-tested, exceptional leader. . . General Lord requires no micromanagement. The fact that board members call and instruct VFMAC operational staff is both breathtaking and embarrassing.” She urged the board to take the recommendations of an outside consultant’s report. The insurgents believe that the school’s finances are dismal and that the board hasn’t acted decisively to change that. The school has lost money in six of the last 10 years, according to its tax returns.

Current board chair English responds that Valley Forge has paid off all the school’s longterm debt. It has formed a partnership that will license the school’s name to a “leadership academy” in Doha, Qatar. And he said it will launch a Valley Forgebranded online school next year. In cost-cutting moves, the school’s associated junior college eliminated all sports programs and ended a day-school program that educated civilians with no interest in military careers. That was before the pandemic. In June, the school disbanded its cavalry and sold off 16 horses. “We only had seven kids returning who were interested in the program,” said the current school president, Col. Stuart B. Helgeson. “Economically, there wasn’t a demand for it. We’ve started an eSports team, instead.”

Last year, the school sold off a prime parcel of real estate at the corner of Upper Gulph and Radnor Roads to a developer for \$1.6 million, a price the insurgents say was too low. “There are many schools that are shedding things to shore up finances,” said Helgeson who called the price fair. Helgeson and English acknowledged falling enrollment — which is expected to number

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between 150 and 175 cadets on the 100-acre Wayne campus this fall — but English attributed the decline to the impact that the coronavirus is having on all boarding schools.

Helgeson said the number of administrators and faculty in the academy was reduced from 21 to 17. An additional 10 tactical officers watch cadets during non-academic hours “We’re going to right-size, and we will break even this year,” English said. “We’ve got a plan. The school is in no way close to closing. It’s just not the case. I know what we’re doing. They don’t.”

A decade of turmoil

“The Forge” has been wracked by turmoil for the last decade. The school’s endowment has languished at about \$11 million for years, which means it relies more on cadet tuition, room and board. (The similarly sized Church Farm School in Exton has an endowment of \$150 million.) Many students at Valley Forge receive heavily discounted tuition.

A study by the Healey Educational Foundation, a Haddonfield-based consulting firm, found that enrollment at VFMAC had declined by more than 40% over the five-year period ending in 2018. The independent study, paid for by a trustee close to the insurgents and provided to The Inquirer, said the reason was that “the academy was not living up to its promises to parents.” While praising then-president Lord, the Healey study also warned that “the school will not survive if the board continues in its present form and function” due to its “lack of strategic vision” and inability to put its financial house in order.

The Healey report excoriated the board, saying it had “not executed its fiduciary responsibility to the school” by accumulating \$7 million in debt and running a deficit. The debt was paid off last year, but the rebel alumni suspect that the board did so by misappropriating money earmarked for scholarships and using funds intended for a new building to be named after the family behind food giant Chef Boyardee.

Several investigations were launched in recent years into alleged cadet-on-cadet brutality and violent episodes of hazing, including waterboarding and a practice called “toothpasting” that involved ritually sodomizing fellow students with a lacrosse stick. A 2015 whistle-blower complaint filed by a former dean of student services alleged instances of boy-on-boy and boy-on-girl rape. One member of the Medenbach Foundation alumni group has filed a complaint with the Pennsylvania attorney general, alleging mismanagement by the nonprofit school, said Lord. The AG’s office regulates nonprofits. Former chairman Bill Floyd held that position for 12 years and has been on the board for 15 years total. English, the current chair, has been on the board six years, and one board member, Bob Bacine, served 30 years, Lord said.

Parents in focus groups complained about little discipline, students cutting classes, disruptions in class, light supervision of study halls, and, worse, physical and sexual abuse, according to the Healey report. In a lawsuit filed last year in Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas, a former student alleged that he was sodomized with a lacrosse stick as part of the hazing ritual called “toothpasting.” Brian Kent, a lawyer for the former student and his parents, said the Title IX lawsuit is ongoing and is now in the discovery phase.

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Alumni banned from campus

While the struggle for control goes on, the physical plant keeps deteriorating, said **Ray Bossert**, a retired U.S. army colonel and Valley Forge alumnus who served as a senior tactical officer at the school before he quit last year in solidarity with Lord. “When I walked back in three summers ago, I found my name carved into the same furniture from the ’80s,” **Bossert** said. “There’s been little to no investment. We can’t compete with Main Line boarding schools with sleek furniture and IT that’s state of the art. The schoolrooms are woefully outdated. The gyms, the pools have suffered because of money problems.”

Alumni and parents sued the trustees in March 2019 to have Lord reinstated, but the case was thrown out last November for lack of standing. When the school’s official alumni association board of directors again challenged the trustees on multiple issues in 2019, the trustees simply disbanded the alumni group. Current board chairman English confirmed the dissolution of the alumni association. He said the school “didn’t need another layer of bureaucracy.”

Several of the alumni — including Lord — were banned from campus. “I’m still considered persona non grata,” Lord said. “And security has been told that if my wife steps foot on the grounds, they are to call the police.” English said the ban was because some of those alumni posted images on social media depicting trustees in the cross-hairs of a rifle scope. Alumnus Al Ciardi, a longtime critic of the board of trustees, denied that, saying the FBI had investigated and determined that the alleged threats were unfounded. Current president Helgeson, who runs the school day to day, decried the insurrectionist alumni. “We keep hoping these guys would go away,” Helgeson said. “They’re weakening the brand.”

When Helgeson arrived at the academy in 2017, the school “had some challenges,” he said. “But the wounds, the challenges now are more self-inflicted with this group continuing to promote unrest. “It’s disheartening. For all the time they’re putting into this they could do something positive,” Helgeson said. “Why wouldn’t they want to see their alma mater succeed?”

Carrie Picone, a 2009 graduate of the College, described the establishment of the Medenbach Foundation as “an act of hope.” “We have to be honest about the fact that we are fed up with the current leadership failures at Valley Forge,” Picone said. “It’s time to get serious about holding the trustees accountable for the damage they continue to inflict and their deliberate lack of transparency. “It’s become a case study in how not to run an education institution.”

Helgeson, the school’s current president, hopes for the best. Asked directly what the prospects were for keeping Valley Forge open, he sounded a note of warning. “I can’t stand here and say I have a crystal ball,” Helgeson said. “But I can say if we won’t stand together, we all will fall.”

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

<https://cupdf.com/document/vfmac-newsletter-presentation-of-cadet-regimental-commander-saber-regimental.html?page=1>

Valley Forge Military Academy and College
VFMAC Newsletter
September/October 2019

Presentation of Cadet Regimental Commander Saber, Regimental Executive Officer Saber and Battalion Sergeant Major Sword

Author: Alumni Association

It is a great pleasure to recognize excellence when it presents itself. This year the Alumni had a special participating duty helping with Cadet Leadership Detail. The Committee that was chosen to assist the Commandant, Colonel J. J. Rivera, USMCR and Senior TAC Colonel **Raymond “Boz” Bossert, Jr.** ’85,and many others who gave of their time to build and train the 92nd Corps of Cadets.

[AND]

Parents Association and Recognition Weekend

On Saturday we held the recognition parade under the production of Colonel J. J. Rivera, USMCR, Commandant of Cadets, and Senior TAC Colonel **Raymond “Boz” Bossert,** ’85 USA (Ret.), and led by Regimental 1st Captain Hunter Hernandez ’20C and Regimental 2nd Captain Calista Bond ’20C and their Cadet Officer and NCO Corps. After the parade, Shannon Hall and Hart Hall were open for Parents to meet and greet their cadets’ professors and teachers.

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
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https://www.vfmac.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-August-Newsletter_FNL.pdf
August Edition 2018

Valley Forge Military Academy and College
Alumni Newsletter

Colonel **Raymond “Boz” Bossert**, USA (Ret.), '85

It is with great pleasure that we announce the appointment of a new Lead TAC Officer, in the mold of some of our greats, like COL Stanley Harris, COL Stuart Mulkerns, and Colonel Thomas Medearis '66.

Colonel **Raymond “Boz” Bossert**, USA (Ret.), '85 has come home to be a Lead TAC Officer at the College. We welcome **Boz**, his lovely wife Kristi, and their children as a returning part of our VFMAC family.

In Colonel **Bossert**'s own words: “Well its official, I will be wrapping up a 34-year Army career and heading to my Alma Mater to become a Lead Tactical Officer. Looking forward to working with the VF team. The Class of '85 will be well represented and all alumni are welcome to drop by anytime when you are in the area to chat about old times. I will make time to update you on the Corps under our new President and Commandant. Contact info will follow once we get settled, my cell is 706-215-4567.” “It’s been a fun ride, but now the adventure really starts.”

On August 2, 2018 the Alumni Association hosted the annual TAC Officers/Commandant's Department Dinner at the Erin Pub in Norwood, Pennsylvania. This annual event is sponsored by the Alumni Association in appreciation for all they do during the year for our Cadets and our School. Our special guests included Col Ken De Treux, Commandant, Ken Seitz, Rik Thornton, Charles Anderson, **Ray “Boz” Bossert** '85, Kevin Bradley, Mike Davis, Vincent DeMarro, Bandmaster, Chris DeSanto, Libby Graves, Debbie Hammer, Director of the Health Center, Gary Hammond, Stephen Kurtz, Jonathan Lemmon, Maria Metz, Director of Horsemanship, Bill Mott, J.J. Rivera, Peter Ross and Kristin Shoemaker, Director of the Counseling Center. These outstanding people will make and shape our 91st Corps of Cadets and we thank them for their effort and leadership.

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CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

<https://www.democrats.senate.gov/12/07/2016/wrap-up-for-wednesday-december-7-2016>

Senate Democrats
December 7, 2016

WRAP UP FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2016

Executive Business
Confirmed the following
Executive Calendar #764

To be Brigadier General:
Col. **Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.**

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[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

<https://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/1256.pdf>
August 2016

During the 1st week of June 2016, PKSOI's Chief of Stability Operations, COL **Raymond "Boz" Bossert** conducted a lecture and site visits to the Nigerian Armed Forces. His initial meeting was with MG Shonduke and BG Azez, the commandant and deputy of the Nigerian Engineer school in Makuda, where he provided a stabilization update and a training assessment to the Engineer School staff, and conducted site visits to local civic projects: a bridge, a water tower and a road project.

COL **Bossert** subsequently provided a lecture to the entire National Defence College class and many Nigerian interagency partners, as well as invited guests from the government and ministry of defense (about 800). The lecture was followed by an impromptu office call with the 4th highest ranking general of the Nigerian military, LTG Ojumbi, where COL **Bossert** received a brief on Nigerian operations in the north and delta regions from their respective commanders and key ministry staff. LTG Ojumbi was interested in learning whether Nigerian operations aligned with doctrine, while also gaining insight into applicable lessons learned.

The next meeting was with the Ministry of Defense campaign planning team, led by MG Okono, to discuss the formation of a strategic plan to address the fight for the next few years. COL **Bossert** applied his stability expertise to assist in validating the planning efforts.

The final phase of the visit was a roundtable discussion composed of over 40 members of the civilian ministries, military and NGOs. BG Bashir, the Deputy Commandant of the Nigerian Defence College, headed the committee.

An impromptu visit by the Professor Yemi Osinbajo, the Nigerian Vice President, and Ambassador Danjuma Sheni, the Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Defence, opened the session and highlighted the importance of the roundtable. An in-depth discussion revolved around the need for phase 0, steady state stability activities to be a joint and interagency effort with all participants receiving the same training. The roundtable turned into a question and answer period on how the US implemented stability activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, and can any of these activities be incorporated into Nigerian efforts.

The three ending points made and agreed to were:

- Successful stability operations must be conducted early, often and always, and cannot be limited to a single phase or portion of an operation.
- Stability activities must be a whole of government and interagency approach.
- Stability must follow a strategic campaign plan and not be fought one year at a time

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The (GA)
November 6, 2015

YOUR TAX DOLLARS - Our teams lead in 'paid patriotism' - Georgia National Guard will no longer pay for recognition events.

Author/Byline: Dan Klepal, Daniel MalloyStaff

A soldier throwing out the first pitch at a Braves game. Eighty Georgia Army National Guard members holding a huge American flag on the field before a Falcons kickoff. A color guard ceremony at three Hawks games. Those are just a few Atlanta examples that a U.S. Senate report gives describing how the Defense Department used millions in taxpayer cash to buy events honoring the military at major sporting events over the past three years. Those examples -- and many more -- were included in the report called "Tackling Paid Patriotism," released Wednesday by Arizona U.S. Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake.

The Georgia National Guard announced late Wednesday that it will no longer pay the city's professional sports teams to honor troops, although the statement also says it will continue with other marketing agreements with the teams. "The Director of the Army National Guard has recently implemented interim guidance to ensure no sports marketing programs include requirements for patriotism/salutes, and a long-term policy is being developed at the national level," says a prepared statement attributed to Lt. Col. Thomas J. Lesnieski, who is the Georgia Guard's director of public affairs. "As such, there are no 'paid patriotism' events in our current contracts with any sports team."

The report says Atlanta is ground zero for military tributes bought and paid for with taxpayer funds: the Falcons (\$879,000), Braves (\$450,000) and Hawks (\$225,000) each led their respective leagues in Defense Department contracts that included military tributes. The Braves took issue with the report Thursday, saying the four identified instances attributed to them were separate from its marketing contract with the Georgia Guard.

The report cites as evidence three Georgia Army National Guard contracts -- by year, amount and contract number. "All military celebrations are not part of a sponsorship and are not paid for," the Braves said in a prepared statement released Thursday to The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "The Georgia National Guard partnership is a separate arrangement and is primarily designed to support advertising for their recruitment initiatives."

A Falcons spokeswoman acknowledged the accuracy of the report but said the team supports the military in a variety of ways as part of its "community outreach and philanthropic activities." She also said the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to causes in partnership with the Georgia National Guard. "There is plenty of unpaid work that we do to support all of the Armed Services, including the National Guard," the Falcons' statement says.

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A Hawks spokesman declined to comment, saying that the team's contract with the Georgia Guard concluded after the 2013-14 season. J.C. Bradbury, a sports economist at Kennesaw State University, said not acknowledging these events as paid advertising could make people cynical about them in the future. "I was surprised because they're portrayed as community service ... which everybody thinks is a good thing," Bradbury said. "It's something that seems genuine and people don't question it. This takes some of the sincerity out of it."

Marty Zobel has held Falcons season tickets since 1980. The Roswell man said the news of paid military tributes made him feel "uncomfortable." "It's not a good use of taxpayer money, I don't think," Zobel said. "Every time I see one of these now, I'll have a question in my mind: Is this a paid advertisement or a public service?"

The report shares those same concerns, blasting the feel-good events as "paid patriotism," a misuse of legitimate recruiting funds for the Defense Department. It also says the Defense Department could account for only 62 percent of its 122 contracts with the professional teams, and that the report accounts for just 70 percent of about \$10 million in contracts. "If the most compelling message about military service we can deliver to prospect recruits ... is the promise of game tickets, gifts and player appearances, we need to rethink our approach," the report says. "Given the immense sacrifices made by our service members, it seems more appropriate that any organization with a genuine interest in honoring them, and deriving public credit as a result, should do so at its own expense and not at that of the American taxpayer."

The report is a more detailed version of what was first reported about NFL teams by NJ.com earlier this year. The National Football League and the Defense Department initially denied having troop recognition as part of their marketing agreements. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell sent a letter to McCain and Flake on Monday saying the league is now auditing all Defense Department contracts and will pay back money improperly allocated for events honoring troops. "We strongly oppose the use of recruitment funds for anything other than their proper purpose," Goodell's letter says. "The NFL (has) issued guidance to each of its 32 clubs to make clear that any on-field recognition, community events, or other activities that are not specifically in the form of recruitment or advertising should never be included in contracts or otherwise performed for payment."

Col. **Ray Bossert**, a Georgia Army National Guardsman from Douglasville, said he agrees with the Georgia Guard's decision to stop paying for such events and that the money could be better used funding storefront recruiting stations. "It is a great decision that we don't get involved in funding that type of stuff," he said. "It should be either donated or not done at all. It's more just patriotic and emotional, and everybody thinks great things, but you are not going to get a stream of people running to recruiting."

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[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

https://www.vfmac.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Alumni-Newsletter_December-2016.pdf

Valley Forge Military Academy and Collage
July 2014

Alumni Newsletter

A Chronicle of VFMA&C Cadet and Student Activities

COURAGE, HONOR, CONQUER!

Congratulations to our very own Colonel **Raymond "Boz" Bossert '85**, PA ANG on being nominated to be elevated to the rank of brigadier general. **Boz** is on the list with 70 other colonels who have earned the distinction of being nominated for that exalted position. We wish you all the luck in the world for your advancement because we know you have all the hard work and desire already going for you. You are an example for others who follow you and we are proud you are a member of the "Long Line of Grey."

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The (GA)
July 1, 2014

Ga. Iraq vets fear 'it's all for nothing' - Soliders differ on how the U.S. should respond to current turmoil in region.

Author/Byline: Jeremy Redmon

Joe Johnson asked to be deployed to Iraq after his 22-year-old son was killed by a roadside bomb there. Seeking to serve his country and avenge his son, the Georgia Army National Guard member escorted supply convoys and Civil Affairs missions across deadly parts of Iraq in 2005 and 2006, manning a machine gun atop a Humvee.

Like other veterans of that war, the North Georgia resident now watches with a mixture of anger and regret as huge swaths of that country fall to Sunni Muslim extremists amid sectarian violence. These veterans are now pondering the profound sacrifices their families made, and they wonder what America could have done differently to prevent Iraq from crumbling. While they don't agree on what should be done to save Iraq, they share hard feelings about what has happened there now. "I'm pretty much like any other guy who served over there -- we are pretty (angry) about it," said Johnson, a staff sergeant who lives in Lyerly. "We all feel like we should have left a sizable force there because we all knew this was going to happen. It was just a matter of time." And about the many months he served in Iraq, Johnson had this to say: "It's all for nothing."

Johnson is among 1.1 million American service members who have deployed to Iraq since 2003, Defense Department figures show. Of those, 4,491 died in the war, including 142 Georgians. Johnson supports the Obama administration's decision to send up to 300 military advisers to Iraq to help shore up that country's security forces. But he worries that number is too low. He also supports launching a U.S. military strike against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or ISIS, which has captured parts of the country Johnson once patrolled and is seeking to create its own Islamic state.

Others such as 1st Sgt. Joshua Winchester of Jesup are weary of sending more U.S. troops to Iraq. Like Johnson, Winchester spent many months there apart from his wife and kids. "We can go over there," Winchester said. "We can advise. We can help. We can equip. We can train. But if they are not going to use it, then why keep doing it? Why spend all the money and the resources and the personnel and time and give up lives to do it again?" "Like we tell our kids: 'You have got to learn your lesson,' " he said. "When you put your hand on the stove and you get burned, you don't put your hand back on the stove, right? We were there for years ... and what has happened? We are back to square one." Winchester bemoaned the deaths of U.S. troops in Iraq, the serious injuries many survivors suffered and the marriages that fell apart under the weight of months-long deployments.

Sgt. 1st Class Scott McElroy of Canton has similar concerns, particularly about how U.S. veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder are taking the grim news out of Iraq.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr. (Articles are in reverse chronological order)

During his deployment to Iraq, McElroy helped build bridges between Georgia National Guard members and Iraqis in a restive area south of Baghdad called the Sunni Triangle of Death. He suffered a traumatic brain injury from a roadside bomb attack there in 2005. "Having invested so much of myself into that place, it's pretty disheartening seeing how it is going now," said McElroy, who serves as vice president of Georgia's Wounded Heroes, a nonprofit that aids veterans wounded in combat. "One thing that has to happen is the Iraqis have to stiffen their resolve. They have to step up and show a sense of commitment to their nationalism."

Col. **Ray Bossert** of Douglasville served in the same area south of Baghdad, training Iraqi military officers. Operating out of a cavernous potato factory in Yusufiyah, **Bossert's** 17-man team was responsible for the 4th Battalion of the 4th Brigade of Iraqi's 6th Infantry Division, a unit with 550 soldiers. **Bossert** said he keeps in touch with some of them by email and they tell him they aren't getting the equipment they have been promised.

This month, Iraqi soldiers shed their uniforms for civilian clothes and abandoned their weapons and military vehicles when ISIS stormed through northern Iraq. The militants claim to have massacred hundreds of the soldiers they captured, posting photos of a mass execution. "When we put all that sweat and blood and treasure to train them up and they just collapse on themselves -- that is definitely disheartening," **Bossert** said.

Bossert said the crisis in Iraq demands a multifaceted response. "There is a military solution to everything, but that is probably not the best solution," **Bossert** said. The U.S., he added, needs to look at "all the instruments of power -- diplomatic and economic -- and really come up with a forceful response."

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<https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-col-ray-Bossert-receives-an-award-at-the-66th-annual-ngaga-and-eangga-173989489.html>

ALAMY
June 6, 2014

Col. **Ray Bossert** receives an award at the 66th Annual NGAGA and EANGGA Conference by Georgia National Guard

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Forsyth County News (Cumming, GA)
May 25, 2014

City honors veterans

Author/Byline: Crystal Ledford

Eleven more veterans have joined the ranks of those who are honored by the city of Cumming every Memorial Day weekend. On Friday, city leaders held their annual holiday observance at the Veterans War Memorial. As part of the ceremony, the families of the 11 deceased veterans unfurled flags in their memory, joining the city's Avenue of Flags along Veterans Memorial Boulevard across from the Cumming Fairgrounds. Each year, during Memorial and Veterans Day events, the Avenue of Flags is displayed. Each American flag represents one or more veterans from the Forsyth County area. The display has grown to include more than 200 flags, which are donated by the veterans' family members and friends.

Linda Gravitt was among the family members who had the honor of unfurling their loved one's flag during the event. "It was a beautiful ceremony," said Gravitt. "It was my daddy and my brother, so it was beautiful to see." Gravitt's father, Johnny Clay Cowart, and brother, Billy Charles Cowart, who both served in the U.S. Army, were honored together on one of the 10 new flags.

Teresa Fowler Bennett honored her husband, William Everett Bennett, who also served in the Army. "I think it's such a wonderful thing for the community to know what the men have done for this country and I'm very proud of him," Bennett said of her husband, who passed away in March 2012. "I'm very grateful that the city of Cumming does this. They do a great job with it."

Cumming Mayor H. Ford Gravitt welcomed the crowd of several hundred to the event, reminding attendees that they can never express too much gratitude to all our nation's veterans. "They never get enough thank you and admiration for the work they've given for the freedom of our country," he said. "We're here today to celebrate the veterans who have given the utmost, their lives, for the freedom that we share here today."

The Forsyth County Fire and Sheriff's Department Honor Guards also took part in the event, presenting the colors and a rifle salute. In addition, the North Georgia Barbershop Singers performed several patriotic songs, and Nancy Kay Duncan conducted a dove release, representing all veterans and a wish of peace for the world.

Friday's program also included a few remarks from the master of ceremonies, Col. **Raymond D. Bossert Jr.**, the brigade commander for the 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade. "Remember when you're driving by here," **Bossert** said of the Avenue of Flags, "that's blood on a foreign soil, that's a boat at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean, that's a tank somewhere in a desert or jungle island. "There's a name, there's a face behind every one of these [flags] and we honor those gentlemen for serving. And we honor the ones who made it back from those hard times and died honorably in the states, amongst their families and friends."

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

<https://fddocuments.in/document/nato-meritorious-service-medal-awards-autumn-2012-nato-meritorious-service-medal.html?page=1>
Autumn 2012

TRANSCRIPT OF NATO MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL AWARDS AUTUMN 2012 ·

NATO Meritorious Service Medal Awards
Autumn 2012

Lieutenant Colonel **Raymond BOSSERT** JFCB USA

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

<https://www.dvidshub.net/image/475503/648th-meb-road>

CAMP BLANDING, FL, UNITED STATES
October 15, 2011

Defense Visual Information Distribution Service [dvids]

648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade convoyed from Fort Stewart to Camp Blanding Joint Training Center Oct. 15 for phase two of their predeployment training. HHC's soldiers reported to Fort Stewart last month for individual soldier readiness and premobilization training assistance element. The two week training event at Florida Guard premier training installation, CBJTC, will consist of simulated forward operating base operations for the unit and validation for the unit's movement and command post teams.

Soldiers from Georgia Guard units 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade and 348th Brigade Support Battalion were on hand at both locations for support.

Here Lt. Col. **Raymond Bossert**, 648th deputy commander, gives in brief to arriving HHC soldiers regarding the two week training exercise XCTC.

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.voanews.com/a/a-13-2005-10-07-voa71-67367777/273976.html>

VOA News
October 29, 2009

US and Iraqi Forces Finalizing Security Plans for Next Week's Referendum

The U.S. military say it is confident that the recent seizures of large weapons caches and the on-going military offensives against insurgents in western Iraq and will help minimize violence in next week's constitutional referendum. The U.S. military and Iraqi security forces are finalizing plans they believe will be able to create a relatively safe environment for voters and thousands of polling stations in central, west and northern Iraq. Vehicle traffic will be severely limited in most areas on October 15. Tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers are expected to establish countless checkpoints, searching for car bombs and potential suicide bombers wearing vests or belts. Streets near polling sites will be closed off with razor wires and concrete barriers. In the capital Baghdad, where the threat of suicide attacks is the greatest, no civilian vehicles will be allowed on the road that day unless drivers have a special permit.

U.S. Army Major **Ray Bossert**, whose unit is helping secure voting centers in the notorious Sunni triangle area south of Baghdad, says Iraqi voters will have little choice but to walk long distance to polling sites. "If they are to vote, we will bring them into a staging area, where they will leave their cars. And from that point on, it is an all-walk zone," he said. "The only thing here moving is Humvees, Iraqi army trucks or election official vehicles."

Similar security measures were used on January 31, when the country held its first democratic elections. Although suicide bombers did stage attacks at several polling sites in Baghdad and elsewhere, casualties were relatively light and the elections were considered a major success. American military commanders say they believe two large-scale U.S.-led military offensives in the restive Sunni-dominated Anbar province in western Iraq should also help tamp down the violence next Saturday. On Thursday, the spokesman for coalition forces in Iraq, Major General Rick Lynch, told reporters that those operations have killed or captured several regional insurgent leaders, destroyed insurgent safe houses and weapons caches.

U.S. soldiers in another Sunni insurgent stronghold near Taji, north of Baghdad, say they recently discovered several large caches of explosives, totaling more than 38,000 kilograms. Colonel Dave Bishop, whose unit patrols the sprawling rural area, says most of the munitions were found buried in the desert. "Up here, there are huge caches that we think feed the insurgency in Baghdad," he said. "How we found it was just through some dynamic soldier power. They just drove through the desert and found some areas that looked kind of different. Soldiers notice that stuff and they started poking around with shovels."

Still, the commander of the U.S. Army's Third Infantry Division, Major General William Webster, cautioned that Baghdad could still see a dramatic spike in insurgent attacks between now and next Saturday. "We know that Baghdad is considered the center of gravity, the center of

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
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the Iraqi government and it holds a fourth of the population of the country," he said. "So this is the place where all roads lead to, and we believe that the insurgents will try to make a surge in their attacks inside Baghdad because of its value in trying to convince the people that this government cannot protect them."

The Pentagon announced Friday that it has temporarily increased its force in Iraq from about 138,000 to 152,000 troops to provide extra security for the October 15 referendum. But the U.S. military says it will be Iraqi security forces, who will take the lead in protecting the voting process. As they did during elections in January, American troops are expected to provide support for Iraqi forces, but only when needed.

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The (GA)
November 9, 2008

ELECTION 2008: The Challenge of Change - Family - Obama heavily courted the middle class in his quest for the White House. Now that he has won, what does the middle class have to say? The AJC asked three families -- one led by a National Guard lieutenant colonel in Douglasville, another by a businesswoman in DeKalb, and a third by a widowed mother in Lawrenceville. Here's what they had to say:

Author/Byline: Moni Baus, Gracie Bonds staples, Gayle Whiestaff

Army officer fears new leader will be too hasty in pulling out of Iraq

In just over two months, **Ray Bossert** will answer to a new commander in chief. He intends to respect and obey him just as he has all his other presidential bosses, but that doesn't mean he can't take issue. And **Bossert**, 41, a career military man from Douglasville, has a few issues. The lieutenant colonel in the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Infantry Brigade is a veteran of Panama, Bosnia, the Gulf War and Iraq (where he spent 30 months on two tours) and is now preparing for Afghanistan. "I have a different perspective of things," he said about President-elect Barack Obama. "In Desert Storm, we didn't stay to finish the job. That was the problem."

Now, Americans are clamoring to pull out troops from Iraq, and Obama, who opposed the war from its inception, has laid out a 16-month timetable for withdrawal. **Bossert** calls it shortsighted. "We ran into this problem in Vietnam and Korea. And those are the wars we lost." He says he has no doubts that U.S. soldiers will have to return to Iraq at some later date if Obama abandons military operations there now.

That's a frightening notion to **Bossert's** wife, Kristi, 31. "It's difficult to think about," she said, worried that she might have children called up to fight where her husband did.

Bossert, who speaks Arabic and helped train the Iraqi army, is certain the Iraqis are not yet ready to fend off al-Qaida without American muscle behind them. "Sadly, I foresee me going back there before I retire. We'll have to lose new souls. It ain't worth it."

Bossert once briefed John McCain when the Arizona senator visited Iraq's Anbar province in 2004. **Bossert** felt McCain, given his military background, was the kind of man who would heed the advice of soldiers. "He would weigh [what was said] and make a decision," **Bossert** said. "I don't get that impression of Obama."

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<https://www.statesboroherald.com/local/change-of-command-ceremonies-held-for-48th-special-troops-battalion/>

Statesboro Herald

Updated: Jul 3, 2008

Published: Jun 18, 2008

Change of command ceremonies held for 48th Special Troops Battalion

Author: Araina Reaves

Lt. Col. Thomas J. Bright makes a point during change of command ceremonies at the National Guard Armory in Statesboro. Bright assumed command of the Georgia National Guard 48th Brigade Special Troops Battalion.

Bright assumes command from Lt. Col. **Raymond Bossert Jr.**, who is leaving after two years in command. Bright said: "I'm proud to be a new resident of Statesboro. I'm proud to serve with a great collection of soldiers in the 48th IBCT who are getting ready to make some history."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

[https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/560th_Battlefield_Surveillance_Brigade_\(United_States\)](https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/560th_Battlefield_Surveillance_Brigade_(United_States))
October 1, 2007

560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade (United States)

Overview

Since its inception on 1 October 2007, the brigade's mission has been to provide command and control of reconnaissance, surveillance, and intelligence operations in support of a division, corps or joint task force. The headquarters provides command, control and supervision of the tactical operations of the brigade and attached units, while the headquarters company provides unit administration and logistical support for the brigade staff sections. The 560th is authorized an estimated 1,108 Soldiers with which to carry out that mission.

In October 2010, the 560th BFSB changed command for the first time since its formation, with Col. Peter VanAmburgh relinquishing full-time command of the 560th to Col. Thomas Carden, JFHQ's former military personnel officer.[2]

Commanders

2013–Present LTC(P) **Raymond D. "BOZ" Bossert Jr.**

Accomplishments

- In 2010 all units of the 560th BFSB were federally recognized
- Dedication of Blair Drop Zone at Catoosa Training Area in honor of 1st Sgt. John Blair
- Taught the first Intelligence Officer Basic Courses in Rwanda and the country of Georgia
- Conducted airborne operations every quarter
- Opened Language Training Center at Clay National Guard Center in June, 2010 and taught 12 classes
- Conducted five iterations of Pre-Deployment Training at Fort Stewart, GA, over a five-month period in preparation for overseas operations.
- The October and November 2011 XCTC rotation was the first exercise to conduct classified operations, to include a classified Command Post Exercise (CPX).
- The October and November 2011 XCTC rotation was the first XCTC exercise to use Active Component Observer Controllers. This was also the first exercise where National Guard, Active Duty, and Reserve Soldiers and Military Intelligence Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) worked together to evaluate National Guard Soldiers in preparation for deployment.

Missions

The 560 BFSB has been involved in a number of missions since its inception.

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The (GA)
November 26, 2005

GEORGIA'S GUARD: THE 48TH: IN IRAQ: Georgians train, praise Iraqi troops

Author/Byline: Jeremy Redmon

Yusufiyah, Iraq -- U.S. soldiers have nicknamed the young Iraqi private 'Jackrabbit' because of the speed with which he runs down insurgents. Kadhum Hamad Dakhil boasts that he helped capture two Syrian insurgents in October. A few words of Arabic are scrawled on his desert tan boot: "No to Terrorism." "They are criminals, and we are chasing them until they die," Dakhil, 25, said.

U.S. military advisers say Dakhil is among the bravest soldiers they have trained in the 4th Brigade of Iraq's 6th Army Division, a unit based in this violent area known as the Triangle of Death. The Iraqis are gutsy, the advisers say, because they patrol every day in civilian pickup trucks that offer little protection from insurgents' roadside bombs.

Some Iraqi soldier have no body armor or helmets. Some have no bullets for their pistols. And often the insurgents are better armed. Since June 1, scores of 4th Brigade soldiers have been killed or wounded. "If I could have Bronze Stars for these guys, they would have a bunch," said Maj. **Ray Bossert**, 38, of Douglasville, who helped train Dakhil and other Iraqi soldiers for Georgia's 48th Brigade Combat Team. "Just give them the right stuff, and they will go kick [butt]."

Bossert and other National Guard soldiers from Georgia, Alabama, Illinois and Missouri were among the trainers for Dakhil's unit until October, when soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division took over. Many of the trainees are from southern Iraq. They have come here to make a living. Their pay is roughly the equivalent of \$300 U.S. a month, which is high in this rural community. But another reason they cite for joining the budding army is the defense of their country from foreign terrorists they call "Ali Baba." "Like a child yearns for Santa Claus, they yearn for a confrontation with Ali Baba," said Sgt. Chris Hancock, 43, a police officer from De Soto, Mo., who reported to **Bossert**.

The Iraqi soldiers are good allies, U.S. soldiers say, because they speak the language, know the terrain and can quickly identify foreigners, many of whom turn out to be insurgents from Syria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. "These guys know what to look for. They can tell just by talking to people where they are from," said Lt. Col. Ben Sartain, 42, of Cleveland, Ga., who led the 48th Brigade's training in this area south of Baghdad. "These guys get a piece of intelligence, and they are out of the gate."

Dakhil was a self-employed street vendor and professional soccer player in the southern city of Basrah before joining the army. He hopes to get married and have children some day. Even though he has not been paid in four months, he is still focused on fighting. Hundreds of other soldiers in his brigade have gone without pay just as long. U.S. soldiers blame the problem on

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illegal recruiting practices. Con artists have been charging people to join the Army, leaving them with no paperwork certifying they are in the military. "It's taking advantage of the poor," Sartain said. "Short of the Americans guaranteeing the system, there is nothing we can do about it." Even with the chronic payroll problems, Dakhil plans to remain in the army "all of my life." "This is my country and we are in charge of making people safe," he said.

Like many other soldiers in his unit, Dakhil argues the U.S. military should remain in Iraq until it is stable. He predicts there will be more violence if the U.S. troops pull out too early. "There will be blood. There will be killing and beheadings," he said. "If the Americans go home, we will go home."

Dakhil serves with two other men their Georgia advisers say are extremely courageous. They are Amjed Sa'ad Abais and his brother, Arshad. They are from the central Iraqi city of Hillah. The brothers joined the same unit a year ago so they could be together. Both are first sergeants. Amjed served in Saddam Hussein's army for two years. When U.S. troops invaded Iraq in 2003, Amjed said, he handed his weapon to his commander and said of Saddam, "Let him go to hell."

Amjed said he got in trouble for cursing Saddam once before in 2002. He said Saddam's regime threw him in jail for six months and whipped him 150 times. He shrugs off the punishment. "Six months is like a holiday," said Amjed, 24, who is married with a 7-month-old daughter. "Others have spent 20 years or 25 years in jail. What about them?"

His 19-year-old brother, Arshad, said he missed him while he was in jail. "I was worried. I didn't know where he was," Arshad said. Arshad continues to worry about his older brother now that they are fighting insurgents. But Arshad said he doesn't let his fears distract him from his duty.

Part of a yearlong series that will follow the lives of the citizen soldiers of Georgia's National Guard and their families back home.

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The (GA)
November 4, 2005

GEORGIA'S GUARD: THE 48TH: IN IRAQ: Struggles to train Iraqis stymie 48th

Author/Byline: Jeremy Redmon

Yusufiyah, Iraq -- Six months after American soldiers began training Iraq's budding army, Georgia National Guard trainers say the new force still lacks the equipment, leadership and discipline necessary to effectively combat a raging insurgency. The Bush administration has repeatedly pledged to begin drawing down American troops as Iraqi security forces become self-sufficient. But there is little indication that will occur anytime soon in this Sunni-dominated region known as the Triangle of Death. American advisers say the Iraqis are still outgunned by the insurgents, have problems getting even basic equipment from their defense ministry and frequently go months without being paid.

The Iraqis complain about the same things. Some lack the trust of their American trainers, who refuse to brief them about upcoming missions for fear they will tip off insurgents. "It has been the most frustrating thing I have ever done, but when something successful happens you bounce off the walls," said Lt. Col. Ben Sartain, 42, of Cleveland, Ga., who led the training by the 48th Brigade Combat Team in this area south of Baghdad. "If we could get them self-supporting, they would be able to take over their own battle space, which is the key to getting us out of here."

Readiness a long way off

American military officials believe the unit they have been training, the 4th Brigade of Iraq's 6th Army Division, needs at least another year of work before it will be able to operate on its own. The 48th was responsible for that training until last month, when a brigade from the 101st Airborne Division replaced it. Among the biggest problems:

- Many Iraqi soldiers have no body armor or helmets, and those who have the protective gear often refuse to wear it. Others insist on patrolling in civilian clothes. Many wear masks for fear of being identified by insurgents.
- The Iraqis patrol in civilian pickup trucks that offer little protection against roadside bombs. Their U.S. trainers ride alongside them in armored Humvees.
- Some Iraqi soldiers have new pistols with no bullets. Others have night-vision goggles but no batteries.
- Some U.S. training teams didn't have enough Arabic interpreters.

"When I came in, we had high expectations, and then we went back and started taking baby steps," said Maj. Chris Voso, 38, of Marietta, who helped train the Iraqi 1st Battalion. The trainers note the Iraqi brigade was formed only earlier this year and has demonstrated some progress. Iraqi soldiers guarding polling places Oct. 15 enabled more than 50,000 voters in this

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area to safely cast ballots on the proposed national constitution. The 48th trained the Iraqis to shoot, patrol, search buildings and vehicles and set up traffic checkpoints.

They took the Iraqi brigade from a readiness level of "minimum" to "intermediary" in nearly six months. But the lack of decent supplies and communications systems is holding the unit back from the third and final step of "fully operational," U.S. trainers said. "Our military equipment is not sufficient compared to what the terrorists have, which is a big problem," said Brig. Gen. Mahdi Chark Zier Kadim, commander of the Iraqi 4th Brigade. "Our soldiers are brave and courageous, but they need the equipment. With the weapons I have now, I cannot fight the terrorists."

Some U.S. and Iraqi soldiers blame the supply problems on a corrupt Iraqi Defense Ministry, which was reorganized by American authorities following the 2003 invasion. Last month, Iraqi government officials issued an arrest warrant for former Defense Minister Hazim Shaalan and 27 other officials in the alleged disappearance of more than \$1 billion from the ministry that was intended for weapons to modernize the army, The Associated Press reported. Over the past six months, the ministry frequently rejected the brigade's requests for supplies, Sartain said, so his troops ended up equipping the Iraqis. "Working with the Iraqi Defense Ministry drives me nuts. You beat your head against the wall," said Maj. **Ray Bossert**, 38, of Douglasville. "It's frustrating. Calls are never returned. It truly takes U.S. generals to call and get involved, and it shouldn't be that way."

Supply woes to linger

Typical of the supply problems is that suffered by Mahmud Abdul Karim, 24, of Nasiriyah, one of the Iraqi soldiers trained by **Bossert's** men. He is proud to carry his unit's most powerful weapon: a grenade launcher captured from insurgents. But he has only one grenade for it. Meanwhile, the Iraqis are not expected to receive armored vehicles until at least next year, possibly later, Sartain said. Yet, there are vast graveyards of captured Iraqi tanks and other armored vehicles at U.S. bases throughout the country. "That was a big mistake. Now we are having to spend millions on equipment they could have just fixed up," **Bossert** said.

But it is unclear whether the Iraqi soldiers would have the parts or the expertise to maintain the aging vehicles. Partly because they lack armored vehicles, the Iraqis have a high casualty rate. In the 4th Battalion alone, 17 have been killed and 143 wounded since June 1, **Bossert** said, more than 25 percent of the unit.

Meanwhile, 424 soldiers in the brigade have not been paid for four months.

Pvt. Yunis Azaldeen Salih has not been paid for more than three months. A veteran of Operation Desert Storm, he rejoined the military to help support his pregnant wife and two children back in Kirkuk. Iraqi soldiers are paid roughly the equivalent of \$300 a month, which is high for this farming community. Salih, 41, suspects he is not getting paid because of corruption in the Iraqi Defense Ministry. He continues to serve because, he said, "I have nothing to do if I go back."

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Salih is among a small number of troops U.S. trainers consider dependable. At least once a week, an Iraqi soldier accidentally shoots himself, usually in the foot, the trainers said. Many Iraqi soldiers are trigger-happy. After the polls closed Oct. 15, the Iraqis rode back into the base they share with U.S. troops with AK-47s blazing. The American soldiers scrambled for their gear, thinking it was an attack. Their commanders stepped in when they realized the Iraqis were only celebrating.

Lack of discipline noted

Some Iraqis become distracted while on patrol. During a night patrol in Lutayfiah last month, U.S. soldiers repeatedly told their Iraqi counterparts to stop standing around chatting. The lack of discipline frequently extends to the Iraqis wearing civilian clothes on patrol, which allows them to quickly flee if insurgents attack. One day last month, **Bossert** spotted an Iraqi soldier at a checkpoint wearing a simple black T-shirt and shorts. "This is the civilian-clothing-is-optional checkpoint," he joked.

Several U.S. trainers suspect Iraqi soldiers are cooperating with insurgents. So the Americans don't fully brief their counterparts until just moments before they leave the base, if they brief them at all. "There are informers," Sartain said. "You have to keep them in the dark."

The Iraqis told **Bossert** that U.S. authorities made a big mistake firing many officers from the former Iraqi military who were suspected of being Saddam Hussein loyalists. The 4th Battalion has a severe shortage of experienced officers. The unemployed officers are now suspected of cooperating with cash-rich insurgents. Now, the Iraqi government is asking some junior officers who served in Saddam's army to return in an effort to weaken the insurgency and bolster the ranks of the new military, several American newspapers reported this week, citing Defense Ministry officials.

When asked what would happen if the U.S. troops were to pull out of the country, the Iraqi officers laughed and joked they would flee to America. But in a separate interview, their general offered a sobering response to the same question. "The whole country will fall apart," Kadim predicted. "And the terrorists will take advantage of that. These people are very well-armed. We don't have the capability or the weapons to fight these guys."

Part of a yearlong series that will follow the lives of the citizen soldiers of Georgia's National Guard and their families back home.

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The (GA)
October 19, 2005

GEORGIA'S GUARD: THE 48TH: IN IRAQ: Shared language, bond of brothers

Author/Byline: Jeremy Redmon

Forward Operating Base Yusufiyah, Iraq -- At nightfall, the Iraqi army officers shed their uniforms, slip into athletic sweat suits and sandals and crowd into a small office in what once was a cavernous potato factory. As they smoke cigarettes and drink hot tea in their makeshift base, they watch "The Simpsons" on TV and tease each other, laughing uproariously.

Among their group is an American visitor, Maj. **Ray Bossert** of the Georgia Army National Guard. He nods knowingly and laughs along with them as they joke in Arabic. **Bossert** has a tremendous advantage in his job as their U.S. military adviser: He grew up in Lebanon and speaks Arabic. "You are on the inside" as an Arabic speaker, said **Bossert**, 38, a Douglasville resident and veteran of Panama, Bosnia, Operation Desert Storm and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. "The bond is a lot closer." **Bossert** is one of hundreds of American soldiers building and training the Iraqi army, including dozens from Georgia's 48th Brigade Combat Team. Military officials are reluctant to disclose exact numbers for security reasons, but that training is seen by the Bush administration as a major step toward stabilizing the war-torn country and allowing the U.S. military to pull out. In Yusufiyah, **Bossert's** 17-man team is responsible for the 4th Battalion of the 4th Brigade of Iraq's 6th Infantry Division, a unit with 550 soldiers. U.S. soldiers occupy one side of the potato factory and the Iraqis occupy the other. But they mingle throughout the day and share guard duty.

Solid relationships

Bossert has spent a great deal of time over the last three years training Iraqi soldiers and police. In 2003 and 2004, he worked with Iraqi security forces in the insurgent hotbeds of Ramadi and Fallujah while attached to the 82nd Airborne Division. Those experiences have enabled **Bossert** to cultivate relationships with the Iraqis away from the battlefield. It is through informal gatherings like the one with the Iraqi officers where he says he can get business done. Between tall tales and jokes, they plan missions to hunt insurgents. "We work together like brothers, like family," said the Iraqi battalion commander, Lt. Col. Kadhim, who asked that his full name not be used for fear of insurgent retaliation. **Bossert** has gained such respect from the Iraqis that fellow U.S. soldiers have nicknamed him Master Yoda, the "Star Wars" movie character who has unusual powers. They gave him that name after witnessing him persuade obstinate Iraqis to agree to missions by simply waving his hand, almost as if he is using some unseen brainwashing power. "I like doing stuff that has an impact," said **Bossert**, a compact man with green eyes and a shaved head. "The little steps we take make you feel good at the end of the day."

Setting an example

Bossert's men have followed his example in bonding with their Iraqi counterparts. Many have become friends by spending hours together in guard towers or on patrol outside their base. They greet each other with warm handshakes and brotherly hugs. The Iraqis cook them meals of rice,

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Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

boiled chicken and fried fish. Occasionally, they play soccer on a concrete surface beside piles burning garbage. The Iraqis mark the goal posts with their sandals, and some play barefoot. There seems to be no out-of-bounds. The play is somewhat rough. The Iraqis never lose.

The men look out for each other, too. Last week, U.S. medics treated three Iraqi soldiers wounded by a roadside bomb. Before that incident, Iraqi soldiers evacuated three of **Bossert's** men from the field after they were injured in a similar bombing. "All of the Iraqi people will remember what the American people did for Iraq because they brought down Saddam Hussein," said Kadhim, 48, who said he was jailed and tortured by Hussein's regime for being a Shiite.

Bossert meets with Kadhim almost daily. One night last week, the major showed up at Kadhim's spare office to talk. The Iraqi rose from his desk and asked in Arabic if he wanted tea. **Bossert** said yes in Arabic. A young Iraqi soldier appeared at the door, holding a silver tray with Styrofoam cups full of dark tea. He stomped his right foot on the floor as a salute to Kadhim. As the two sipped the hot tea, Kadhim teased **Bossert** about his bald head. Then, the conversation turned to **Bossert's** plans to leave soon. **Bossert** will be taking on a new mission in the southern Iraqi city of Basra as the 48th Brigade Combat Team's liaison to British forces. The brigade is changing missions and spreading out across Iraq.

'We will miss them'

Kadhim joked that he will get **Bossert** an Iraqi wife to keep him in Yusufiyah, a town of about 20,000 Sunnis and Shiites where a violent insurgency persists. "We will miss them," Kadhim said of **Bossert** and his men. And then he shyly admitted, "I am an emotional guy." Kadhim said **Bossert** has helped him immensely, teaching him to be patient and assess battle situations before acting. "That's interesting because I thought I learned patience from him," **Bossert** replied. Kadhim complained to **Bossert** how U.S. soldiers recently didn't recognize him at the front gate to the base. He said they kept him waiting nearly an hour until they could confirm his identity. **Bossert** promised it would not happen again.

Later that same evening, Kadhim stopped by **Bossert's** office. Kadhim was in uniform but was wearing some blue Fila flip-flops. **Bossert** was ready for bed, wearing a T-shirt and underwear. He sipped from a green bottle of non-alcoholic St. Pauli Girl beer. One of **Bossert's** men quickly fetched Kadhim a cola. They sat across from each other near a wooden wall dotted with gaping shrapnel holes from an insurgent's mortar round. Kadhim had some news for **Bossert**. A one-star Iraqi general was coming for a visit the next day. He wanted to check security at some Iraqi polling places for the Oct. 15 vote on the national constitution. As the two worked out their plans, Kadhim picked up a Halloween toy **Bossert's** wife sent him. Kadhim pushed a button on the spring-loaded toy and a Count Dracula head popped up, announcing, "You can Count on me." Kadhim chuckled. He teased **Bossert** for working too hard and not coming over to the Iraqi side for meals as often as he should. The two chatted like that for many moments, switching back and forth between English and Arabic and laughing as the night wore on.

Part of a yearlong series that follows the lives of the citizen soldiers of Georgia's National Guard and their families back home.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Raymond Dempsey Bossert, Jr.
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
October 15, 2005

Blog - The 48th Goes To War: Latest dispatches from Iraq - Soldiers note Iraqi voter turnout higher than back home

Author/Byline: Jeremy Redmon

Yusufiyah, Iraq - The woman in the black abaya and bright blue dress zigzagged through a maze of concertina wire, around rifle-wielding Iraqi soldiers and into an elementary school to cast her ballot this morning. One poll worker checked Sadia Ali Mutar's identity. The next volunteer handed her a red, white and blue ballot. And a third man led her behind a cardboard screen. She checked "Yes" on her ballot, signifying she supports the proposed national constitution.

Mutar proudly disclosed she had studied the document before arriving at her polling place. She hopes it will boost security in her mostly rural farming community, located about 10 miles south of Baghdad. This area is nicknamed "The Triangle of Death" for its violent insurgency. "I know it very well. It's a very good constitution," she said through an Arabic interpreter who was working with Georgia National Guard soldiers at the voting sites. "I accept it 100 percent."

Mutar, a homemaker and mother of nine, added she was glad she could vote in the referendum. "Women are very important in society," she declared. She dropped her folded ballot in a clear plastic container. And then an election official led her to a small table with an orange bottle of indelible ink. She dipped her right index finger in it. The blue stain lasts for 72 hours and protects against people voting more than once.

Mutar smiled as the poll workers encouraged her to show off her ink-stained finger. While she prepared to leave, a visitor asked her if she thought the constitution would pass. "Inshalah," she responded in Arabic for "If God wills it." A few hours later, insurgents mortared a separate polling place several hundred yards away. They fired a mortar at a third polling place Thursday, slightly injuring a small girl. They also fired a rocket-propelled grenade at the U.S. base here and fired mortars and detonated roadside bombs near surrounding U.S. and Iraqi checkpoints Friday. No one was injured in the attacks.

Poll workers paused for about 10 minutes when the mortar rounds exploded near them in an open field today. And then they resumed work. "It's like I heard music. We hear that everyday," said Abtisam Abbas, 38, a pharmacist from Baghdad who was frisking female voters at the entrance to the site. Like Mutar, Abbas voted for the constitution. "We have to show the Arabic countries that we have democracy in Iraq," said Abbas, who wore a cream-colored headscarf and blue floral-print dress.

Of the three polling sites in this town, Abbas was at the busiest. About 1,700 voters showed up there by 2:45 p.m. Turnout was light in the two other locations this morning. Less than 10 appeared at one site in the first hour. Dozens of poll workers -- who are each being paid the equivalent of \$200 -- stood around at one site with little to do, complaining that they wanted to

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eat. They predicted, however, that turnout would increase as the day wore on. The polls were set to close at 5 p.m. Amad Hussein Asey is one of 265 volunteer poll workers who arrived here from Baghdad on cattle trucks Friday afternoon. He said he dreamed of his three young children as he slept Friday night at Sadir Al Yusufiyah, a girls secondary school. "First of all, it is for my country," said Asey, 37, a national treasury employee. "The situation in Iraq is bad. People need security and to stabilize their country."

About 20,000 people were expected to vote here by the end of the day. The only requirements to vote: you must be an Iraqi citizen, at least 18 years old and have photo identification. Prisoners were allowed to vote earlier this week. Ali Hatim Hussein, 22, a specialist in the Iraq army, took a break from manning a checkpoint today to vote. He said he hopes a new constitution will increase his county's stability and make it unnecessary for U.S. forces to be here. "We appreciate the coalition for what they did for us and we will never forget it. But it is important for the Iraqi citizens to see an Iraqi army protecting them," he said. Sgt. Casey Roberts stood guard outside the school where Hussein voted, observing people streaming in and out. "It's a better turnout than what you get back home," said Roberts, 31, a police detective from Statesboro. "These folks are facing bodily harm to come here, but they are coming out. It's kind of neat, something I can look back on and tell my kids about."

Roberts is a medic, so he was popular this morning. An elderly man who showed up to vote approached him, complaining of involuntary shaking. Roberts said he appeared to have Parkinson's disease. He promised to help him get medical care in Baghdad. Earlier in the morning, one of the top Iraqi election official politely asked for Roberts and the other U.S. soldiers to stay outside the polling places. Maj. **Ray Bossert** agreed, instructing his men to keep a low profile. They were stationed at the voting sites, he said, only in case of emergencies. The Iraqi army was in charge of security. "That's the way it should be," **Bossert**, 38, a retiree from Douglasville, said as he walked through the town's garbage strewn streets. "There should be an Iraqi face on the whole thing. We should be in the background."

Tahir K. Kadhim was one of the first voters to show up at his polling place this morning. The 63-year-old repairman wore his blue Ministry of Electricity jumpsuit to vote. It was open at the collar, revealing dark reddish skin weathered by Iraq's scorching sun. He showed a poll worker his orange and blue government employee identification card. "Just sign yes or no. You don't need to write down your name," a volunteer told Kadhim as he handed him a ballot. Kadhim checked "yes" on the ballot, which reveals seashell designs when held up to the light. Kadhim said he cannot read but he heard about the constitution on TV and has faith it will make things better in Iraq.

"In Saddam Hussein's time, there was security. But now we can't feel secure in our city," said Kadhim, who boasts about his two wives and 18 children. "We need security. And the people will get jobs. There are a lot of people who have no work. God bless everybody." Before leaving, Kadhim dipped his finger in the indelible ink. He said he wouldn't try to conceal the stain or scrub it off, despite threats from insurgents. He said he wasn't scared. God, he said, could take his life at any time.

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[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Raymond Dempsey Bossert, JR.** is listed below.]

Press of Atlantic City, The (NJ)
January 23, 1989

LOCAL YOUTH NAMED 'BLACK HISTORY MAKER'

Author/Byline: Michael Fleming Staff Writer

ROTC commander

A Somers Point student has been named brigade commander of the ROTC Unit at North Georgia College.

Raymond Dempsey Bossert Jr. will head more than 500 cadets at NGC. NGC is one of four essentially military colleges in the United States. **Bossert** is majoring in history and political science.

Research Compiled by: Sarah Linares
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Section 4

CB&A Reference Notes

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Mr. John King - Major General, Insurance Commissioner of GA (770)-318-3206

Mr. King has known Mr. Bossert roughly since 2000. They first interacted at war combat school for the United States military which propelled them into work situations with each other in many diverse locations.

Mr. Bossert served in the United States military in parallel organizations to Mr. King. Mr. Bossert is honest. He has integrity and will never compromise under pressure but will push to explore every option available. On many occasions in combat, there was no positive option, yet Mr. Bossert took upon himself every option to formulate an un-prescribed schoolhouse action plan to yield the desired positive solution.

Mr. Bossert's innovative approach was an asset. Every idea was communicated on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis in the form of military debriefings as well as informal communications. He offered multiple solutions to his supervisors, rather than just presenting the option he preferred.

Mr. Bossert cultivates and fosters culturally diverse teams to ensure not everyone offers the same solution. His time spent overseas in Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, and Georgia is the source of his desire to build culturally diverse teams. The newness of a community, both within the culture of his teams and in the public is something he strives to foster.

In high-pressure environments Mr. Bossert creates a solid foundation for his teammates and supervisors. In 2005 Mr. King and Mr. Bossert were in South Bagdad. Tension between the Sunies and the Shiah led to armed conflict. Mr. Bossert negotiated with the Sunies, the minorities in the conflict, in their native tongue to facilitate a meeting between them and the Shiah. Mr. Bossert diffused the tension with good humor and navigated the environment with diplomacy.

Financial stability is one of his strong suits. Mr. Bossert has been entrusted to negotiate million-dollar international contracts. He negotiated with Egypt an excess of millions of US taxpayer dollars without compromise. The contracts he verified and handled have never been in question by his teammates, rather relied upon.

While Mr. Bossert navigated many military crises in austere conditions, he always took care of his comrades and fellow soldiers. To approach helping others, he starts with listening equally to the individual as well as the audience. He is a coach and mentor to all individuals.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Leader,
- Extremely honest,
- Culturally astute,
- Ethically and morally focused,
- Sense of humor, and
- Calm under pressure.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Strengths: Cultural awareness and inclusivity, understands complex audiences and individuals, exceptional listener, thrives in pressured settings, speaks Lebanese and multiple dialects of Arabic.

Weaknesses: Mr. Bossert is aware that he needs to tone down his military problem-solving approach in local government settings.

Mr. Lance Pliml - Chairman, Wood County, WI (715)-213-4002

Mr. Bossert and Mr. Lance Pliml have worked parallel with each other roughly since 2018. Mr. Pliml has been on the periphery of Mr. Bossert's current job as a village administrator. From Mr. Pliml's view of the community, it did not take Mr. Bossert long to become part of a community in which he was not raised.

Attending community meetings is something Mr. Bossert lives by. He frequents local organizations and group meetings that have not established a board so that he can be a support, a voice, and an ear. He desires to help the minority groups have an equal voice in the community. Every member of the village knows Mr. Bossert has an open-door policy. He welcomes every individual's opinion and issue, controversial or not and does not show bias toward any group. He deals one-on-one with the public in his office and expands his community reach to help the police force, highway crews, and a variety of village workers. He is a decisive, direct, and open leader to stride forward with the community instead of walking on a tight rope around the village.

Communication with other administrators and neighboring counties has always been open. Mr. Pliml has been kept up to date monthly on progress made with projects and newly tabled issues. He makes sure that his understanding of the community is considered by the higher governance. Ready with attention and integrity, Mr. Bossert is ready to portray and convince the board of his decisions; however, he takes direction and follows orders, despite his personal opinion.

Property in Wisconsin is tax-centric, meaning tax is regressive and aggravates many individuals trying to establish businesses or build homes. Mr. Bossert considers all angles on how to keep property tax low with multiple viable options to help those affected. He is trustworthy in addressing high-pressure issues and executing innovative processes regarding any type of tax exchange and communal entity.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Energetic,
- Forthright,
- Thoughtful,
- Ready to stand up to a board,
- Assertive, and
- Cordial.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Strengths: He has a high level of understanding of the community.

Weaknesses: The spiderweb-like chain of command instead of a military linear chain of command causes frustration from time to time.

Mr. Rick Schmidt - Public Works Director for Nekoosawi, WI (715)-572-3614

Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Bossert have been professionals in adjacent villages/cities since 2019. Working in adjoint cities has provided the opportunity to work together on regional projects with shared resources. Their relationship has remained strictly professional. Mr. Bossert documents and communicates his side of shared efforts very well.

Mr. Bossert is a man who rolls up his sleeves and digs into a project, whether it be assigned or by his own admonition. A pedestrian bridge connects Mr. Bossert's village and Mr. Schmidt's community and concerns about the bridge's integrity and safety arose in both communities. Mr. Bossert immediately initiated the project of fixing the bridge and made safety his mission. Updates on the project were communicated to Mr. Schmidt's community on a weekly basis. His approach to solving problems is not to hope someone else will take care of it. If a need arises, Mr. Bossert is driving the efforts to resolve it.

Being out in the community is how Mr. Bossert leads. He is highly involved in leadership roles in his village. He also helped several bordering communities in a sign project for the local intertwining trails between communities. He navigated the earmarks and aided with funding to mark the trails. The result of this project was clearer trails as well as strengthened communities, beyond his Village.

The financial, mentorship, hiring, and stress response skills of Mr. Bossert have not been seen firsthand by Mr. Schmidt. However, the projects between their parallel communities show Mr. Schmidt the broad experience Mr. Bossert has. He is enjoyable to work with because he knows how to get a job done. Mr. Schmidt would be sad to see Mr. Bossert leave the village because of his great impact.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Professional,
- Well-spoken,
- Extremely organized,
- Fits the dynamic,
- High communicator, and
- Willing to ask questions

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Strengths: Mr. Bossert is highly organized and has a strong ability to work with diversity.

Weaknesses: His newness to his current position. He does not yet have all the experience required to navigate the certain complexities of county and state resources.

Mr. Chris Voso - Contractor for Valiant Services, Govt. Contracting, GA (404)-623-1400

Mr. Voso has known Mr. Bossert since 1999. Their professional relationship began when they worked as members of the National Guard together.

Mr. Bossert is a man of innovation, change, and helps his peers be ready for whatever they will affront together or individually. His planning, coordinating, and task-oriented nature is reflected in his past brigade's respect. In Iraq, he was given the duty to lead a 16-man team of diverse ranks and structure to train hundreds of Iraqites towards a common team goal. 15 individuals on the team volunteered just from the knowledge Mr. Bossert would be leading their team. Every man was woken up in the austere condition of their camp with the motivation to serve under the command of Mr. Bossert.

On another account, Mr. Bossert led a brigade of soldiers (1,000+ individuals) in logistics, tactics, and personnel training. He truly placed every soldier's health, meals, and sleep before his own to ensure the safety of every individual. Every relationship was treated both personally and professionally. When executing commands, the task and vision were clear, he works independently but he arises on every occasion to lead and work with teams. He is not afraid to get his hands dirty to prepare a road for everyone to walk on.

Deciding to embark on a certain path is a strong suit for Mr. Bossert. His thought process is thoughtful and open to opinions and a combination of situations. Analyzing existing policies and deciding the course of action is something that adds to his planning, coordinating, and executing process and eliminates what he dislikes most, stagnation. He seeks opinions for a community solution.

Without a doubt, Mr. Bossert is involved with his local community and has good financial skills. Visiting local parks, fairs, and zoos is something Mr. Bossert enjoys serving the community and his family. In the past, he has supported and been involved with many local humane societies. He and his family sponsor events often. Likewise, his family has been involved in running and supporting local businesses. Their business, Plants by Design, negotiated contracts between and invested in local farms and local malls to improve the community.

Nothing in Mr. Bossert's background would concern an employer. Mr. Voso has high respect for Mr. Bossert and regards him highly as a leader of the community. Without a second thought, Mr. Voso would hire Mr. Bossert because of his compassion, direct vision, and communication.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Leader,
- Good listener,
- Family man,
- Friend,
- Devoted, and
- Trustworthy.

Strengths: Mr. Bossert is someone who leads, has compassion, and is direct with his vision.

Weaknesses: He allows everyone to have an opportunity in an assigned role and will offer all the necessary training, but if an individual is not equipped, he pushes too hard and demands progress. He expects high standards for high results.

Mr. Shane Blaser - Mayor for Wisconsin Rapids, WI (715) 421-8216

Mr. Blaser and Mr. Bossert have known each other since 2020. Port Edwards and Wisconsin Rapids are neighboring communities. They have worked side by side in overlapping town/village projects. Mr. Bossert is very professional in communications. Addressing issues before they can impact the surrounding communities is a strong suit of Mr. Bossert.

Transportation was a topic of conversation between Mr. Bossert and Mr. Blaser's town, seeing as Mr. Bossert is a resident. Mr. Bossert argued against the given stance. He drafted an email and approached the board with his information. In the end, it helped the board realize that the released information was not complete enough for the public to truly understand the situation.

One Sunday a street sewer was clogged. Promptly, Mr. Bossert arrived on the scene to help resolve the issue even though it was a weekend. His creative and determined decision-making is a topic of conversation among the residents and he is highly respected for his actions.

Securing grants and substantial funding for local projects is an aspect of Mr. Bossert's work residents often praise. He is highly trusted with the village's budget, starting at 2 million, by the residents. He operates and maintains the budget in the public eye.

Mr. Bossert is highly connected with Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) events, village board meetings, and community engagement. With the help of former veterans, the sheriffs, a rescue team, the fire department, and all other local services, Mr. Bossert led the village in disaster preparedness simulations. The simulations (an ATV accident, a chemical plant spill, etc.) were planned to overlap one another to help the community learn how to disperse resources. The simulations were highly participated by the residents, now a unified team.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Highly involved in a local ground water municipal group, Mr. Bossert helps accomplish tasks by planning and preparation. The issue of groundwater is of serious importance to Wisconsin communities. The goal is to protect the integrity of the water and welling systems. The board that he communicates with frequently is made of townships, residents, and county board members. He is very calm and collected when aiding the board affront difficulties and accomplishing the goal.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Intelligent,
- Straight forward,
- Approachable,
- Strong communicator,
- Funny, and
- Honest.

Strengths: Completes tasks thoroughly, attentive to details, always researches multiple accounts and sources before making a decision.

Weaknesses: At times Mr. Bossert was not fully informed on certain issues from his research and portrayed his ideas based on partial information.

Mr. Mark A. Merlino - VP for Raytheon, Development, MA (978)-501-0486

Mr. Bossert and Mr. Merlino began working with one another in the National Guard in parallel units. Mr. Bossert's unit entered Afghanistan to replace Mr. Merlino's unit. During their deployment in Afghanistan, Mr. Bossert managed bases of 11,000 soldiers and contractors. Leadership, responsibility, and a duty to the unit and overall common goal were necessary daily focuses for him.

Personnel issues do not make Mr. Bossert uncomfortable. In the National Guard, he regularly faced a tight budget and staffing limitations. Knowing how to operate in those challenging situations is one of Mr. Bossert's strengths. He is unafraid to address what needs to be changed and then do so with the means available.

Performing with flexibility characterizes how Mr. Bossert approached complex issues as a member of the National Guard. He is fully informed on how to develop the ends, ways, and means for both the individual and a group. Together, he and Mr. Merlino led a team of 200 men. Mr. Bossert's position was the leader team seat. He gave directions in both group meetings and the public. Likewise, he was a mentor to individual men.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Initiating projects for all 54 states/territories as well as his personal business life is something that solidifies Mr. Bossert's financial skills. He is a self-starter with businesses. He networks with supervisors and higher authorities as well as the front-line staff to build consensus on issues.

Mr. Bossert takes the organization's vision and then brings it to the next level with his comrades. Selecting, observing, understanding, and then improving a situation, policy, or person is what makes Mr. Bossert an innovator. He was at the starting point of a high-impact project in Afghanistan where he had the responsibility to assess bases for closure. Before the final decision was made, he supplied the solution for finances, staffing, and a plan for all the bases. His approach to change is to supply all the recommendations and solutions possible.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Leader,
- Strategic thinker,
- People person,
- Open communicator, and
- Builds winning teams.

Strengths: Organized, leads by example, strategically minded, gains respect through his actions, financially independent, strong sense of the priorities.

Weaknesses: The military mission focus does not translate exactly into the civilian world. Occasionally, his style in directing and accomplishing goals is perceived as direct or irritating to someone unfamiliar with military lifestyle/mannerisms.

Mr. James Van Emburgh - Planner for CDC of Atlanta, GA (770)-634-7553,

Mr. Van Emburgh and Mr. Bossert have known each other since 2000 in US Army deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Bosnia. When working together, it was clear that Mr. Bossert was the leader of the pack. He organizes and executes plans, whether designed by those in higher authority or by himself.

Mr. Bossert has many strengths, one being leadership. He analyzes all the best options which always leads to success. His decision process follows that of an engineering process. Mr. Bossert uses a sequence of causes and effects to enhance the course of actions. While used mainly for policies and plans, it is also used by Mr. Bossert in the hiring process. When he builds teams, he looks for the right people and gives them latitude and decentralized commands. He explores all the best attributes and abilities which place strong individuals in a strong team. This step-by-step process has led to resolving issues and creating strong teams.

Mr. Bossert leans forward into problem fixing. In 2009 Mr. Bossert and Mr. Van Emburgh were in the seventh province of Afghanistan. Faced with technology communication issues, Mr.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Bossert creatively resolved how to establish communication with the higher headquarters once again. During that time in Afghanistan, training younger Afghans, acquiring assets, and trading materials all required advanced communication and translators. Mr. Bossert navigated all essential aspects of the mission without stress. Stress and Mr. Bossert are nowhere close to being synonyms.

Mr. Bossert's high level of military clearance reflects years of hard work, leadership, and integrity. His clearance, meaning his access to highly regulated and sensitive assets and information is not to be compromised. He openly receives problems from the community and treats such with respect.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Determined,
- Persistent,
- Resourceful,
- Self-confident,
- Flexible, and
- Aggressive.

Strengths: Mr. Bossert's aggressiveness is manifested in his urgency to complete a mission or task. Leadership defines him.

Weaknesses: One perceived weakness could be self-confidence. Those not familiar with his background must get to know him to see that the directness and boldness are an effect of leadership as a military veteran rather than pride. However, he is more jovial since living in the civilian world.

**Major General Walt Lord - Retired Military Advisor, Austin Peay University of TN
(717)-645-1176**

Mr. Bossert and Major General Walt Lord were cadets together in the early 1980s at Valley Forge Military College. After many years, Major General Walt Lord returned to the college as the president of the institution and hired Mr. Bossert as a teaching advisor counselor (TAC). The college is a residential academy, meaning all enrolled cadets lived in a 24/7 operation. It was Mr. Bossert's role to handle the life of the cadets outside of the classroom.

Returning to the college created a small culture shock for Mr. Bossert. He realized the school had lost touch with the visions and standards upon which it was originally founded. Through rallying his fellow employees and cadets and leaders alike, a return to the standards started. The return required much change as many individuals were stuck in their ways. Determined to move the institution into the future through a return to core values, he slowly helped many individuals of high ranks, and the trustees remember the "why" to Valley Forge Military College.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

Daily engagement and communication with cadets were necessary to rally the individuals towards achieving personal goals and the overarching school vision. Instead of quarterly engagement, as the expectation was, Mr. Bossert directed weekly and even daily counseling discussions. He counseled each cadet in the professional setting as well as socially to fit the needs of the individuals. Both the cadet and Mr. Bossert discussed goals and expectations, and then he continued to help them grow. Daily contact and mentorship were critical for the return to the values of the school.

Mr. Bossert brings the overall vision into the daily processes to establish unity within teams. In Valley Forge, each unit was assigned to a small group of trainees, called plebes. He called a new form of training into action which delegated the cadets to take ownership of the plebes and lead training. Overseen and delegated by Mr. Bossert, ownership was dispatched and the unit-centric core was engaged.

Financial responsibilities did not fall under Mr. Bossert's job description, yet he realized that the customers and financial support of the school were the parents. Realizing that the more the parents knew of their son's success, the more funding and investments would be made, Mr. Bossert communicated to the parents of each plebe weekly by email. Beyond that, he formulated a personal monthly email to the families of each cadet. This external communication initiated by Mr. Bossert contributed greatly to the unity of the school.

Micromanaging is not in Mr. Bossert's vocabulary yet was a reason for controversy between him and the Valley Forge College's board of trustees. Mr. Bossert had a strong determination to help the college change, however, all his wished changes were futile considering the toxic board. He saw fit to resign quietly but media reports grew, and Mr. Bossert was named as an ally to Major General Walt Lord in this organizational controversy.

Vetted for top security clearance, Mr. Bossert does not have anything to hide. His integrity is of the highest and he is perfectly suited for any role given to him.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Dedicated,
- Loyal,
- Humble,
- Collected,
- Deliberate, and
- Social.

Strengths: Collaborative in decision making. He is smart enough to know that he is not the smartest person in the room. He has ownership over his decisions and helps everyone on the team have ownership of their ideas, solutions, and problems.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Reference Notes
Raymond D. Bossert, Jr.

**Angel Whitehead - President of the Heart of Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce, WI
(715) 422-4861**

Ms. Whitehead has known Mr. Bossert since 2018 when Mr. Bossert took over the role of village administrator. She frequently works with his community regarding economic resources.

Recently, Mr. Bossert attended a leadership program where he led an expansion project concerning trail signs and other community assets to make the community more organized. His forward thinking and strategy organizational management creates a successful environment.

Overseeing staff, transportation, utilities, and strategy while reporting to a council are all part of Mr. Bossert's current role in the village. When spearheading economic projects and collecting intel about available commercial properties that could add value to the community, Mr. Bossert discusses the factors and routes with a small group of councilmen. After the issue has been discussed by the council, Mr. Bossert brings the matter to the community. He reaches out to members of the public to hear their perspective.

A contract to upkeep a lake and the surrounding developments in Mr. Bossert's village perimeters will expire next year and the upkeep will become the responsibility of the residents. Mr. Bossert developed and now leads a lake organization to ease the community into taking lead and to assume the responsibility for themselves. His leadership and innovation have helped the community take pride in their village.

Ms. Whitehead would hire Mr. Bossert immediately. His skills and current actions taken as village administrator perfectly align with the roles of municipal manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Raymond Bossert:

- Dedicated,
- Efficient,
- Organized,
- Friendly,
- Outgoing, and
- Communication-oriented.

Strengths: Strategy, organizational management, forward thinking, exceptionally organized.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by: Liliana Sessions
Colin Baenziger & Associates