



---

**CG Column**  
**November 2010**

---

November always holds a special place in our hearts normally because of Thanksgiving and Veterans Day. This year, November also contains a bit of anticipation as USASMDC/ARSTRAT attempts to have a satellite launched into space for the first time in about 50 years.

SMDC-ONE is a nanosatellite and will be the first Army satellite launched into space since October of 1960. USASMDC/ARSTRAT has worked for the past several years developing a capability for Warfighters to be able to harness the power of satellite communications at lower echelons. Hopefully, we will see the fruits of our labor this month as SMDC-ONE is launched into space as a secondary payload on a delivery vehicle. SMDC-ONE will be deployed in a low-Earth orbit for about 30 days. During the satellite's 30-day life-span, we will attempt to demonstrate that it is possible for nanosatellites to augment traditional military capabilities

What provides us great excitement is the responsiveness that nanosatellite systems may provide to the Warfighter. We anticipate that shortening the time from receiving a requirement to putting a satellite in space will provide us the ability to quickly respond to the evolving needs of the Warfighter. Additionally, the nanosatellites we developed don't require unique ground terminals, which save money and train-up time. Another attractive aspect of our approach is the short "farm-to-market" time. That means our technology is usually no more than 2-3 years old and can be updated as needed. Ultimately, we believe nanosatellites will provide needed space capabilities at the lower echelons where strategic satellite capabilities are unable to meet all the users' needs.

We anxiously await the successful launch of the first space-flight demonstration of our nanosatellite.

And now, let me turn from discussing nanosatellites to a more traditional dialogue honoring America's Veterans.

There is always a sense of awe when I hear the cannon go off at the 11th minute, of the 11th hour, on the 11th day, of the 11th month, to commemorate the service and sacrifice of America's veterans. Celebrating Veterans Day each year reminds us as a nation that our freedoms have been hard-won and sustained by a small corps of Americans. Only about seven percent of Americans have served in our country's armed forces. The 23 million veterans, who live among us, quietly go about their lives unheralded and in relative obscurity, save for one day out of the year.

Veterans join the military for many reasons and come from every walk of life. After serving their nation, either after a short enlistment or long career, Veterans return to their neighborhoods to go about their lives, just like any other citizen. Veterans may look ordinary on the outside, but there is nothing ordinary about them on the inside. They continue to exude the confidence gained from building their physical and mental capabilities while wearing the uniform and still seek to serve their communities. They teach in our schools, protect our homes as firefighters, protect our loved ones as police officers, nurse the sick, work in restaurants and ball parks and in many other occupations.

Throughout the American experience, Veterans have served in war and in peace to protect our freedoms by serving at home and abroad in places like: Minot AFB, Fort Hood, Camp Pendleton, Kandahar, Fallujah, Panama, the Fulda Gap, the Ia Drang Valley, Inchon, Normandy, San Juan Hill, Gettysburg, Lexington, and all the posts, camps, and armories around the country.

This month, as we hope for a successful launch of SMDC-ONE, or as we sit down to celebrate Thanksgiving with friends and family, let's also give thanks for the many blessings of liberty provided to us by the countless Americans who served throughout our history and whom we call – Veterans.

**Secure the High Ground**