

# MISSION CHAMPIONS



## Ms. Doris C. Baker Teacher/Principal

**Maintaining peace and security in Europe throughout the Cold War produced countless military and political heroes whose stories are well known and documented in history.**

However, for every publicly celebrated hero, there are scores of soldiers, diplomats, and Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees whose heroic actions and noble service never achieved notoriety beyond their communities. Nonetheless, the dedication and contributions of those who were supporting soldiers and their families serving on the frontiers of freedom made a vital difference to the readiness and wellbeing of the force.

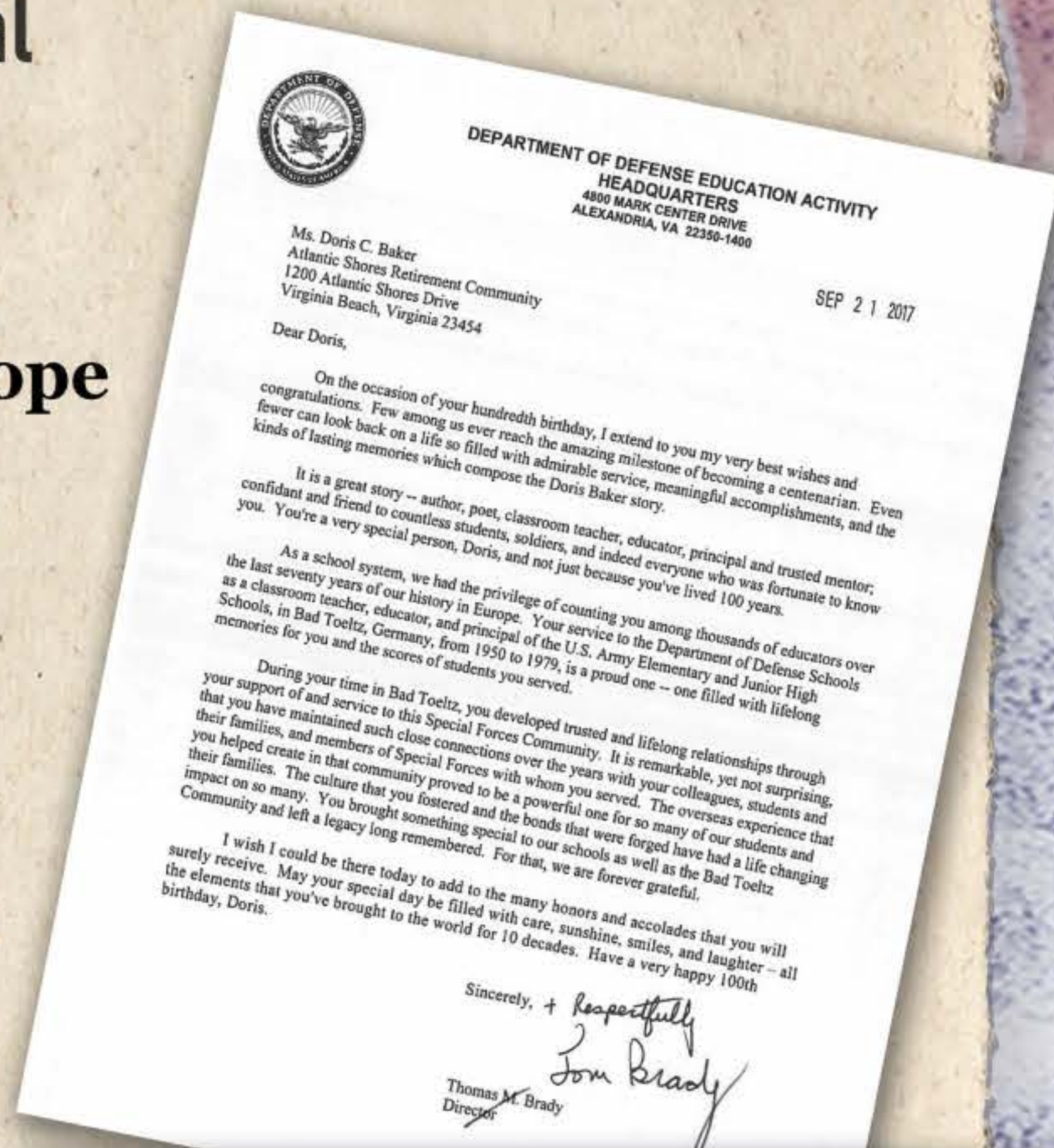
Doris C. Baker, a teacher and principal of the U.S. Army Elementary and Junior High School on Flint Kaserne in Bad Toelz, Germany, is a wonderful example of one such hero. Her story is representative of the experiences of countless DoD civilian employees who consistently and admirably performed in a variety of support roles to the active duty forces and their families. Their stories, many of which are lost with the passing of time, were heroic in many ways.

Baker, a native of Montana born on September 25, 1917, earned her way into the hearts of Special Forces Soldiers and their families in Germany while serving with great distinction and dedication in Bad Toelz. The original 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) was located in Bad Toelz, and for 30 years, Baker mentored the children of the Special Forces families from 1950 to 1979, and adopted the Green Berets as her own, calling them "her lads."

Her experiences of living among the first Special Forces Group in Europe served as the basis for Doris' book "The Originals" – the only book about the Green Berets ever written by a woman – which chronicles an American woman caught in the dangerous lives and fortunes of these extraordinary men. The book was awarded semi-finalist in the William Faulkner Creative Writing Competition, The Pirate's Alley Society in 1998. Her extensive travels after World War II were blended into her book, "I'll Let You Know When I Get There."

The original 10th Special Forces Group continued to remain in Ms. Baker's heart throughout her life, and she later assisted in the acquisition and preservation of archives, photos and memorabilia for the Airborne & Special Operations Museum Foundation at Fayetteville, North Carolina. In order to keep the legacy of the 10th alive, she also has spoken to various military groups, and incoming commanders and their spouses on the topic of Special Forces history.

Also a world-class photographer, Doris' photo collection of Cold War-era photos from Europe is featured in exhibit at the Swem Library at the College of William & Mary in an exhibition entitled "Viewing the World – Travel Photography through Doris Baker's Lens."



### Who is teaching your children?

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Because of the large number of personnel involved, the series, Teachers in USASCHUR, will be expanded to a four-part series, this being the third.  
Bad Toelz American Elementary School, the largest in USASCHUR, is directed by Miss Doris Baker, principal. She is a native of Bancroft, Mich., and holds an M.A. from the U. of Michigan.  
Keeping the health of the students above par is the school's health nurse, Mrs. Peggy Tsutsui of Portland, Oregon. She received a B.S. in nursing from the U. of Oregon and was em-

ployed in Anchorage, Alaska, before coming to Bad Toelz.  
Miss Jo Libby Johnston, a southern belle from Monroe, La., is one of two second-grade teachers. She received her B.S. in education from LSU and taught in Coronado, Calif., before being assigned to Bad Toelz.  
Her partner in the second grade is Mrs. Cleo Hammill. Mrs. Hammill hails from Wenatchee, Wash., and attended Central Washington State College where she graduated with a B.A. in education. Her prior teaching was done in Seattle and Munich.  
First-grade teacher Miss

Margret Sullivan calls New York City her home. She received her M.A. from Queens College and taught before in Wiesbaden.  
Two very important people in any school system are the librarian and the supply clerk. Bad Toelz is fortunate to have the positions filled by two long-time employees who know what make the jobs click.  
Mrs. Franziska Haaf, librarian, keeps her references (and cross references) in the open and in strict order. She is a native of Graz, Austria, and has been in Bad Toelz for 11 years. Before joining the school system, she was a secretary with the then 10th Special Forces.



FIRST GROUP--Miss Doris Baker, Herr Eric Fichtner, Mrs. Peggy Tsutsui, Miss Jo Libby Johnston, Miss Margret Sullivan, Mrs. Cleo Hammill and Frau Franziska Haaf take time out from their busy schedules in Bad Toelz. (U.S. Army Photo)

Everything from nuts to bolts... well, almost. Herr Eric Fichtner feeds the demands of the school with his supply section and keeps everyone smiling at the issue point. He is a native of Lengries and has been working within the Army system since 1946.

**In 2014, thirty-six years after her retirement as a school principal, Doris was inducted as an Honorary Member of the Special Forces Regiment. Ms. Baker is one of only nine other distinguished individuals worldwide to ever receive this elite designation. Principal Baker died on February 3, 2021.**

**Hooah, Principal Baker!**