

## *Operational Desert Shield: What you didn't know*

*By CAPT Doug Brook, SC, USNR, (Ret.), 2013 Distinguished Alumnus*

On 8 August 1991, my wife Mariana and I were celebrating our 17th wedding anniversary at a restaurant out in the Virginia hunt country. Driving home after dinner, being the romantic guy that I am, I turned on the radio to listen to the news. To our surprise, President George H.W. Bush was announcing the launch of Operation Desert Shield. We listened for a while, then turned off the radio and drove a few miles in silence. Then, Mariana turned to me and asked, "How do you pay for that?" I was stunned. I didn't know – and I was the assistant secretary of the army for financial management!

It turned out, no one else had a ready answer either. It was too late in the fiscal year to have funds available for cash flowing, reprogramming or transfers. Extraordinary short-term measures were eventually taken but it was that night when I first experienced what I call the comptroller's rule of warfare: Don't go to war in the fourth quarter!"

CAPT (ret) Doug Brook was commissioned through OCS in 1968. He served one active duty tour aboard USS LASALLE (LPD-3) and served in various Naval Reserve units, including CO of NEXCOM HQ Reserve Unit. CAPT Brook retired in 1998 and since, he has served in presidential appointed positions as assistant secretary of the army (financial management), assistant secretary of the navy (financial management & comptroller) and acting undersecretary of defense (comptroller). He was named a Navy Supply Corps Foundation Distinguished Alumnus in 2013. CAPT Brook and his wife Mariana live in Elon, NC.