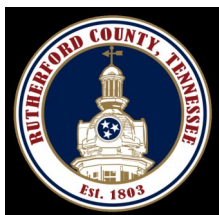


STONES RIVER MOAA CHAPTER

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

CW4 (Ret) Keith R. Prather, MSW

It's Election Season!



The Autumn season is approaching, and we are winding down our travels. School has begun for our children and grandchildren. However, for those of us who have matured beyond the school years, it is still a time to study.

The election season is upon us, and we will soon perform our civic duty and vote for our elected officials at the local, state, and national levels. Also, I encourage you to vote for our MOAA national officials too. They represent us across the nation and speak on our behalf to those that represent us in public office. Moreover, they ensure that those officials hear our demands in regard to preserving the benefits that we have earned.

Therefore, I urge you to please take time to review the candidates' credentials running for our MOAA national positions, and support one of our very own members from middle TN, LT. Col. Karon Uzzell-Baggett, USAF (Ret) is vying for a position on the MOAA National Board of Directors.

This year voting will be online only beginning 1 August and ending 31 August. Information/instruction on the online voting process can be found in the August issue of MOM on pages 14 - 19. Also, members can cast their votes by going to <https://www.moaa.org/> and following the voting instructions provided.

If you desire to vote but do not have an online MOAA account, please call MOAA Member Services Center at 1-800-234-6622 for assistance.

Never Stop Serving,

Keith R. Prather, MSW
President
Stones River Chapter, MOAA



Salute to Service Discount—Tennessee State Parks

COMPLIMENTARY STAYS & PLAYS ON SERVICE BRANCH BIRTHDAYS

Tennessee State Parks is proud to celebrate all branches of service and offer a "Salute to Service" with complimentary camping and golf to veterans on each service branch birthday leading up to the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. All veterans of any service branch are eligible for a complimentary one-night camping stay and waived green fees on the following dates:



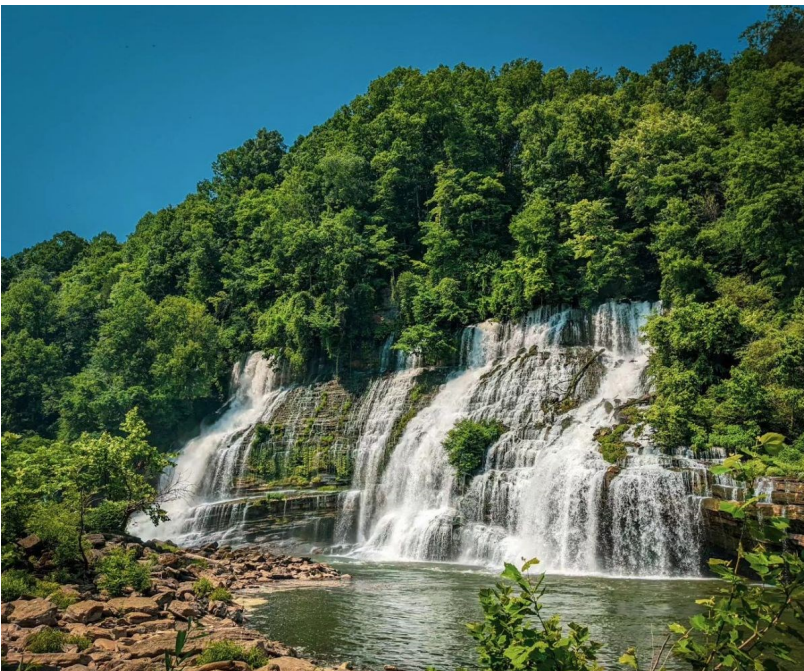
Sgt. Alvin C. York State Historic Park

- Sunday, Aug 4, 2024 (Coast Guard)
- Wednesday, Sept 18, 2024 (Air Force)
- Sunday, Oct 13, 2024 (Navy)
- Sunday, Nov 10, 2024 (Marines)
- Monday, Nov 11, 2024 (Veteran's Day)
- Friday, Dec 13, 2024 (National Guard)
- Friday, Dec 20, 2024 (Space Force)
- Saturday, June 14, 2025 (Army)
- Monday, Aug 4, 2025 (Coast Guard)
- Thursday, Sept 18, 2025 (Air Force)
- Monday, Oct 13, 2025 (Navy)
- Monday, Nov 10, 2025 (Marines)
- Tuesday, Nov 11, 2025 (Veterans Day)
- Saturday, Dec 13, 2025 (National Guard)
- Saturday, Dec 20, 2025 (Space Force)
- Sunday, June 14, 2026 (Army)



For more services and information available to veterans and active duty military, visit

[https://tnstateparks.com/about/veterans?
utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Learn%20More&utm_campaign=emma-salute-to-](https://tnstateparks.com/about/veterans?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Learn%20More&utm_campaign=emma-salute-to-)



@adrianelynellimagery on Instagram

Stones River Chapter Directory Committee Met July 2, 2024



Committee members were hosted by Norma and Harry Shumate and included Malinda Gilbert, Kathy Pursley, Susan Taylor, Jim Parks, and Chair Sandy Warner.

Officers and Board Members

President

CW4 Keith R. Prather, USA (Ret)
kprather52@gmail.com

First Vice-President

LTC Douglas B Gilbert, USA (Ret)
dqusarmy@gmail.com

Secretary

Diana Neely
dianamoa1@gmail.com

Treasurer

MAJ James Heuberger, USA (Ret)
jamesheuberger@gmail.com

Membership

LTC Larry Ellis, USAF (Ret)
lellis1143@outlook.com

Surviving Spouse Liaison—Holly Kyle
hollyreading@yahoo.com

Director Legislative Liaison Phil Short, USMC (Ret)
ps0622@charter.net

Director MAJ Jim Parks, USA (Ret)
src-tn10@comcast.net

Director Treasurer LTC Debora "Gail" Sharp, USA (Ret)
tsharp939@comcast.net

Director LTC Pete Warner, USAF (Ret)
pswarner333@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President Betty Moshea
betty.moshea@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor

Malinda Gilbert
malindacgilbert@gmail.com

Published by the Stones River Chapter Military Officers Association of America

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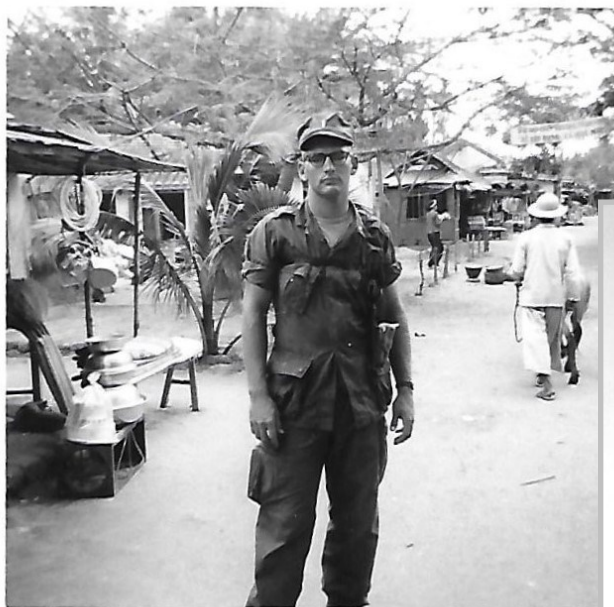


IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!

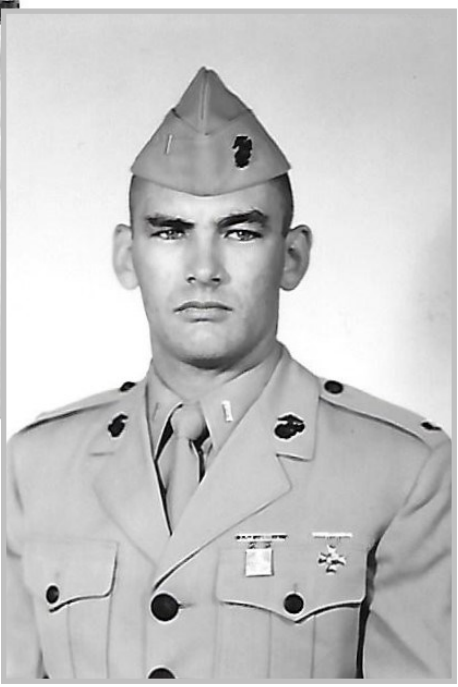


We started a new series about each of our Stones River Chapter Members. Our goal is to capture your military story in video and pictures as a way of creating history for the chapter. You can either volunteer, or you can wait to be nominated by an officer of SRCMOAA. Our intent is to contact you and record your most memorable military event. However, it is imperative that we have accurate contact information such as your phone number, email address, and home address. We would like to feature at least four members per newsletter.

—Editor and producer Malinda Gilbert



**Captain (Retired)
James D Witherspoon,
USMC**



Don graduated from Middle Tennessee State College (MTSC) in Murfreesboro TN in 1964 with a B. S. in Economics.

Having attended Officer Candidate School during summers while in college, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps (USMC) upon graduation. He served on active duty for three years, including a tour in Viet Nam in 1966 with Third Battalion, First Marines. Don was presented the Navy Commendation Award with Combat "V" for service during that tour. He was promoted to Captain in 1967, while serving with the Fourth Battalion, 10th Marines. Following his tour with the USMC, Don began a career in logistics with Pfizer Inc that spanned 33 years and 7 locations.

Don married to his college sweetheart, Hanna Romans Witherspoon, following their graduation from MTSC in 1964. They feel blessed to be involved in community, civic, and University activities.

He retired from Pfizer Inc in 2000 as the Director of Logistics. Following retirement Don returned to Murfreesboro TN and has been involved in several community, civic and MTSU activities. Don either has or is currently serving on the following University Boards of Directors: MTSU Foundation (past President); MTSU National Alumni (past President); MTSU Athletic Association (past President); Honors College Board of Visitors; Community Affairs Committee; Veterans Affairs Committee and other various committees.



Don and Hanna Witherspoon

In the community Don has been very active since retirement. He is involved on several committees and has served as the Chair of the United Way de Tocqueville and Legacy Giving Committees. He serves on the City of Murfreesboro Industrial Development Committee, the local Alive Hospice Board and Mindful Care. Don has and currently serves in his church on several committees including Veterans Affairs Committee and Board of Stewards.

CLICK HERE

Click on the link to hear Don and Hanna tell about their military experiences.

<https://youtu.be/MnpbGZ80fcc>

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!



Royce Taylor Captain USNR (Ret)



Born August 28, 1944, Vanderbilt Hospital. Currently, my wife Susan Turner Taylor and I live on our farm on Sulphur Springs Road, Murfreesboro, Tn. where I was reared. Joined the Naval Reserve in October 1961 as a Seaman Recruit. Graduated from Central High School in May 1962. After graduation, flew from Nashville to Chicago on my first commercial flight with eight classmates for boot camp at Great Lakes Naval Training Center. Upon return, flew from Nashville to Washington, D. C. and was sworn in as a Midshipman Fourth Class at the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. Commissioned an Ensign upon graduation in June 1966 and reported to the USS DeHaven (DD-727), a World War Two destroyer in Yokosuka, Japan. Deployments to Viet Nam in 1966 and 1967 with liberty in Hong Cong and ship repairs in Subic Bay, The Philippines. Attended Basic Underwater Demolition School from January 1968 to May 1968 In Little Creek, Va. and Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. Reported to Underwater Demolition Team - 22, Little Creek, then attended Underwater Swim School, Key West, Fl., June and July, then Army Airborne School, August 1968. Upon return to Little Creek, began training for deployment as officer in charge of a detachment of 20 frogmen aboard the USS Fort Snelling (LSD-30), a dock landing ship, along with other ships in the squadron, as part of a Marine ready group, which deployed to the Caribbean in 1969. Our first dives were in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Beach surveys were conducted for a full Marine amphibious landing on the Island of Vieques. Our wet submarine and divers conducted searches for two Seabee drowning victims. Liberty in St. Thomas and San Juan before jungle warfare training in Panama. Finally, liberty in Caracas. Returning to Little Creek, I was assigned weapons officer which included underwater conventional and nuclear weapons. I was also assigned to the Atlantic Apollo Recovery Team. In August 1970, I was transferred to SEAL Team One, Coronado, Ca. and was officer in charge of a detachment in Viet Nam in 1971. In 1972 I resigned my commission to attend law school at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Susan and I now had three children with our youngest daughter born the month before law school started. We lived on the farm, and I commuted weekly to Knoxville. I rejoined the Naval Reserve in 1973 as a cryptologic officer in Nashville. I served as commanding officer of units in Nashville, Bessemer, Al. and Pensacola, Fl. and on the admiral's staff in Millington, Tn. Annual active duty for training occurred at the National Security Agency, Fort Meade, Md., Adak, Ak. and Key West, Fl. I was recalled to active duty in New Orleans, La. for four months during Desert Storm in 1991. I retired from the Naval Reserve in 1995 as captain. I practiced law in Murfreesboro for 23 years until I was elected circuit court judge in 1998 for Rutherford and Cannon Counties. I retired to the farm in 2020. Susan retired in 2014 after 33 years at Middle Tennessee State University with the last 15 years as Executive Director of Leadership Middle Tennessee. In addition to our three children, we have six grandchildren and one great granddaughter with one more on the way.



Click on the link to hear Royce Taylor tell his military experiences

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nwxK1HpL90>

CLICK HERE

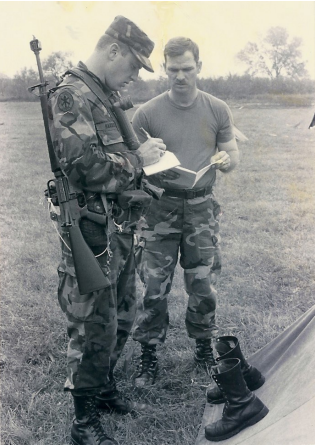
IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!



Brigadier General R. David Ogg, Jr. US Army (Retired)



Brigadier General R. David Ogg, Jr. served our Nation for over 32 years with the US Army. He retired as a Regular Army Armor officer in 2010 having commanded formations commensurate with his rank of 2nd Lieutenant to a one star, Brigadier General.



David graduated and was commissioned in 1978 as a Distinguished Military Graduate with a Bachelor of Science from Middle Tennessee State University. With this graduation he became a third generation MTSU graduate and a second-generation US Army officer commissionee. As a result of his promotion to Brigadier General, he was recognized as only one of 17 MTSU ROTC alumnus to obtain the rank of general and was selected for the ROTC Hall of Fame. While on the MTSU cadre he was the founding alumnus for the MTSU Military Science Alumni Chapter in 1986. And after his retirement he served nine years as its President representing more than 1,500 Army officers commissioned over the past 70 plus years at MTSU. He also received a Master of Science degree from MTSU and a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

His initial Army assignment was in Germany followed by duty at Fort Knox, KY. Then next was his best assignment as an Assistant Professor of Military Science on the cadre at MTSU, 1984-88. This assignment highlighted the fact that David and his father, also

once assigned to the MTSU cadre in the early 1960s, were the first father-son team to have taught in the ROTC Department.



David's next assignment started a more than 22-year period in the Army Acquisition Corp (AAC) with responsibilities for developing, producing, fielding and sustaining ground combat vehicles for the US Army and international forces. Key AAC leadership assignments: 1) Project Manager of the Stryker Brigade Combat Team office responsible for an entire family (10 variants) of combat vehicles. This vehicle was the Army's first new production vehicle in 15 years. The Chief of Staff of the Army heralded him and his office's accomplishments as the keystone of the Army's modernization resulting in his selection as the Army's Project Manager of the Year '03; and 2) as a newly promoted to Brigadier General he was selected as the Program Executive Officer for Ground

Combat Systems. He led a workforce of more than 1,100 military, civilian, and contractor professionals, responsible for an annual budget of more than \$35 billion; and for 270 other Army vehicle programs. This was his last Army assignment.

Upon in 2010, BG(R) Ogg was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal – the Army's highest award outside combat operations. During his total active-duty service time, he received thirteen other Army awards, medals, and ribbons.

After his military retirement, David supported our national defense in the private sector. As President and CEO of an 8A Native American small business; next a Business Manager for Navigation Systems with Northrop Grumman; and lastly a senior Strategic Analyst with the Missile Defense Agency.

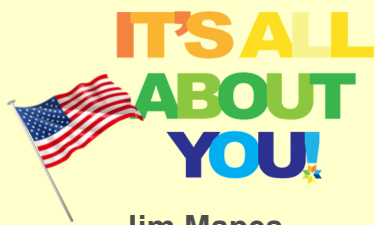


In 2014, David and his wife Pam moved back home to Murfreesboro to enjoy family: a newly born granddaughter, two sons and a daughter-in-law.

Watch video of David's military story at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pQsnlsWc_w

CLICK HERE



Jim Mapes Lieutenant Colonel, US Army (Ret)

I was born in Tokyo, Japan (1 September 1947), one day before the 2-year anniversary of the signing of the Japanese Surrender Document in Tokyo Harbor. With that said, I consider myself an “Occupation Baby,” rather than a “War Baby,” we always hear about. My father, a veteran of the War in the Pacific, was assigned to Occupation Duties there at the time. Early in 1948, we were shipped “state side” where I continued my tour as “Army Brat” for the next eighteen-plus years (still serving by the way).

In 1949, after attending Airborne School, my father was assigned to Camp Campbell, KY and the 11 th Airborne Division. Our family joined him and set up the household in nearby Clarksville, TN where we remained for the next few years. With minor exception, my elementary, middle school, and high school educations were completed in Clarksville until 1965. My enrollment at Tennessee Tech University (TTU) followed, and I lived there until I received my degree and Army Commission 21 March 1970.

My Military Schools and Assignments included Infantry Officer Basic Course, US Army Airborne School, US Army Ranger School, Infantry Mortar Platoon Officer Course, Infantry Officer Advanced Course at Ft Benning, GA; Officer Rotary Wing Aviator Course (Primary), Ft Wolters, TX; Officer Rotary Wing Aviator Course (Advanced), AH-1 “Cobra” Attack Helicopter Qualification Course at Ft Rucker, AL; UH-60 “Blackhawk” Utility Helicopter Qualification Course, Ft Rucker, AL & Ft Campbell, KY; US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft Leavenworth, KS; US Army Inspector General Course, Ft Belvoir, VA

Assignments: 82 nd Airborne Division, Ft Bragg, NC -2 nd Battalion 505 th Parachute Infantry Regiment (1970-1972); Heavy Mortar Platoon Leader; Battalion S-1 Officer; 8th Infantry Division, Mainz, Germany – D Troop 3 rd Squadron 8 th US Cavalry (Air) (1973-1976); Aero Scout Platoon (Section Leader); Aero Scout Platoon (Platoon Leader); 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Ft Campbell, KY -1 st Brigade (1977-1979); Assistant Brigade S-3 Officer; Brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company-Commander; A Company 2nd Battalion 502 nd Infantry- Rifle Company Commander; 2nd Infantry Division, South Korea, - D Troop, 4 th Squadron, 7th US Cavalry (Air) (1980-1981); Troop Operations Officer; 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)-2nd Squadron 17th Cavalry (Air) Ft Campbell, KY (1981-1984); Squadron S-3 Officer; C Troop- Commander; US Army Aviation Center and School Ft Rucker, AL (1985-1988); Department of Combined Arms Tactics- Doctrine Division Chief; US Army Berlin (USAB) Berlin, Germany (1988-1992); Inspector General Total Army Personnel Command, Force Integration Directorate, Alexandria, VA (1992-1994); Force Structure and Personnel Requirements Division- Chief;

Retirement from active duty- 31 August 1994—My retirement in 1994 led to my continued service as a JROTC Senior Army Instructor back in my home state of Tennessee. That endeavor lasted three years until the end of the 1997 school year. Although rewarding, I learned a lot about the changes made in the high school learning environment since my days in the classroom. “Hail Clarksville Wildcats, 1965!”

Awards and Decorations--Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (w/3 OCL), Army Commendation Medal (w/2 OCL), Army Occupation Medal, National Defense Service Medal w/star, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (w/numeral 2), Skill Badges, Senior Army Aviator Badge, Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab, Air Assault Badge, German Parachutist Badge (Bronze)

Mapes Household—wife Freda, daughters Amanda and Lindsey, and Taylor, Lindsay’s husband



[CLICK HERE](#)

Click here for Jim’s story <https://youtu.be/mSBt5POfX0A>

Alumni Association



MTSU names 2024-25 top alumni award honorees; to be recognized at Sept. 20-21 homecoming events

by RANDY WEILER AUGUST 5, 2024 ALUMNI NEWS

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — **Middle Tennessee State University** is again recognizing outstanding alumni who represent excellence and distinction through their professional careers, loyal support of their alma mater and service to the broader community.

Since 1960, the **MTSU Alumni Association** has recognized accomplished alumni with the association's highest honor: the Distinguished Alumni Award. For the 11th consecutive year, **True Blue Citations of Distinction** are being awarded. This year's honorees included

Military Service

David Ogg ('78 and '87),

Health and Physical Education/College of Behavioral and Health Sciences David Ogg

Ogg's 32-year career included 22 years in the Army Acquisition Corps, responsible for developing, producing, fielding and sustaining ground combat vehicles for the Army and international forces. As project manager for the Stryker Brigade Combat Team office and with a \$9 billion budget and 2,200 personnel, they delivered 300 vehicles ahead of schedule, earning him the 2003 Army's Project Manager of the Year.

With the Program Executive Office for Ground Combat Systems, he led 1,100 military and civilian personnel to develop 270 material programs, rapidly responding to warfighter requirements and challenges stemming from Iraq and Afghanistan combat operations.

At his 2010 retirement, Ogg received the Distinguished Service Medal — the Army's highest honor outside combat operations.

In retirement, Ogg supported U.S. national defense as president and CEO of an 8A Native American small business, as business manager for Navigation Systems with Northrop Grumman and senior strategic analyst with the Missile Defense Agency.



New Leadership and new goals for 2024-2025 at the MOAA Tennessee Council of Chapters

Submitted by Pete Warner

With the advent of the new year, the leadership team lineup at the TN CoC got some new blood. Here is the leadership line-up for this year:

President - Pete Warner

Membership Chair - Doug Minton

Treasurer - Monroe Gildersleeve

Secretary - Sandy Warner

Surviving Spouse - Patricia Berquist

Chaplain - Eddie Sumbler

President Pete Warner has articulated the TN CoC Goals for 2024-2025:

1. Hold a state convention at Arnold Air Force Base, invite all chapters and members, make the event educational and informative.
2. Revitalize the Knoxville Chapter, a once vital part of the community that has now gone dormant.
3. Increase the collaboration and communications between our state chapters and the council. There are a lot of good ideas out there that need to be shared and incorporated into our business model.
4. Recruit a younger generation of members into the chapters by constructing a value proposition that shows a meaningful return on their investment of time and energy.

The Stones River Chapter wishes President Pete Warner and his excellent team every success and are eager to join the dialogue and support the stated goals.

June Chapter Meeting Speaker—Pete Warner with new banner and coin



July Chapter Meeting Speaker—Dena Kilgore from National MOAA



August Chapter Meeting Speaker—John Dyess spoke on ESGR





Submitted by Diana Neely

Treasurer James Heuberger stated that the sale of Texas Roadhouse gift cards was going very well and at this point there is about a \$300 profit that will be going to the scholarship fund. He also signed up with Publix for grants and scholarships. Additionally James suggested selling gift cards from Publix because everyone eats and buys food. Treasurer James Heuberger said that Texas Roadhouse would love to host SRCMOAA dinner meetings where members could order off the menu. He stated that we could have an earlier meeting time so that members would not have to drive home in the dark. Director Jim Parks said that ordering off the menu had been tried in the past at other restaurants, and there was always a problem with getting everyone served in a timely manner.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Contact James Heuberger to buy your gift cards for family, friends, postal carrier, etc for Christmas.



AEDC Tour October 4, 2024

Director Phil Short brought forms and other information about the Oct 4, 2024 AEDC Tour. The Tour Roster with the name, citizenship and rank of each visitor along with a "Hold Harmless" agreement must be submitted to the AEDC public affairs office. Director Short asked that he have that information two weeks prior to the Tour. Anyone not listed on the roster will not be allowed to tour.

There is a dress code for the Tour, **no high heels or open toed shoes or sandals** allowed. The Tour group will meet in the parking lot of the Lakeside Lodge at 1330 and two buses will pick us up at 1400.

Director Phil Short had flyers about AEDC Tours stating "**No Cameras or video recordings are permitted during the tour**". We will meet at 1730 at the Lakeside Lodge four seasons room for an after tour meal and fellowship.

The Lakeside Lodge will have food available although we may have the meal catered. There will not be a band but there is a possibility of a DJ if we open it up to the public. It was suggested that Jim Mapes' son-in-law may be able to accommodate us because he is a DJ. He also suggested that this would be an opportunity for recruitment.

Director Phil Short and Suzanne have graciously invited the AEDC Tour group to his house for brunch at 9:30 AM to gather and 10:00 AM to eat. He needs a headcount of members coming for brunch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1o7LvqPOeEA>



Take pictures and videos of dancing and brunch; text to Malinda.

Surviving Spouse Liaison Holly Kyle will host the meeting at her home at 10:00 AM on September 26, 2024.



I look forward to seeing you.

The next Stones River Chapter MOAA Board Meeting will be Wednesday, September 11, 2024, 12:00 PM at TriStar Veterans Resource Center, 439 Rice St. Murfreesboro, TN 37130.

The next Stones River Chapter MOAA Dinner Meeting will be a picnic at Royce and Susan Taylor's home at 5:00 PM, September 19, 2024. Slick Pig is catering. Desserts requested if you have a favorite recipe.



We promise you will have a great time.

We have a large covered space in case of rain.



MOAA Legislative Update

Submitted by Philip Short
Legislative Representative,
Stones River Chapter, MOAA

The MOAA national legislative action center has the current legislative action campaigns that we need support by communications with our Congressional delegation from Tennessee.

Here are the issues that you can weigh in on at the MOAA legislative center website on their national website: Learn about your legislators!

Active Legislative Campaigns

Summer Advocacy in Action: Contact Your Lawmakers During August Recess

Members of Congress are home for their August recess – let them know about important provisions that should be included in the National Defense Authorization Act.

Urge Your Elected Officials To Support Comprehensive VA Health Care

This bipartisan package of veterans legislation will expand VA assisted living programs, improve caregiver support, remove unfair penalties from surviving spouses, and address a host of other MOAA legislative priorities.

Support Military Family Access to Children's Hospitals

MOAA and The Military Coalition are working to preserve access to care for families who need it most.

Urge Your Legislators to Support Concurrent Receipt

Contact your representative and senators and urge them to support the Major Richard Star Act, which would authorize combat-injured veterans to receive their full DoD retirement pay earned for years of service and their full VA disability compensation for life-long injury.

Urge Your Legislators to Pay Full Housing Costs for Servicemembers

MOAA seeks to restore the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to 100%. Our nation expects 100% from service members and we need to ensure they get 100% of their housing allowance by supporting BAH restoration.

I encourage all of us to engage our legislators on the matters.



SRCMOAA RECRUITING

A warm welcome to our newest member Henry (Hank) Rohling and his wife Linda. Hank is a retired Navy Seal and resides in Murfreesboro. Hank moved us to a strength of 109 members.

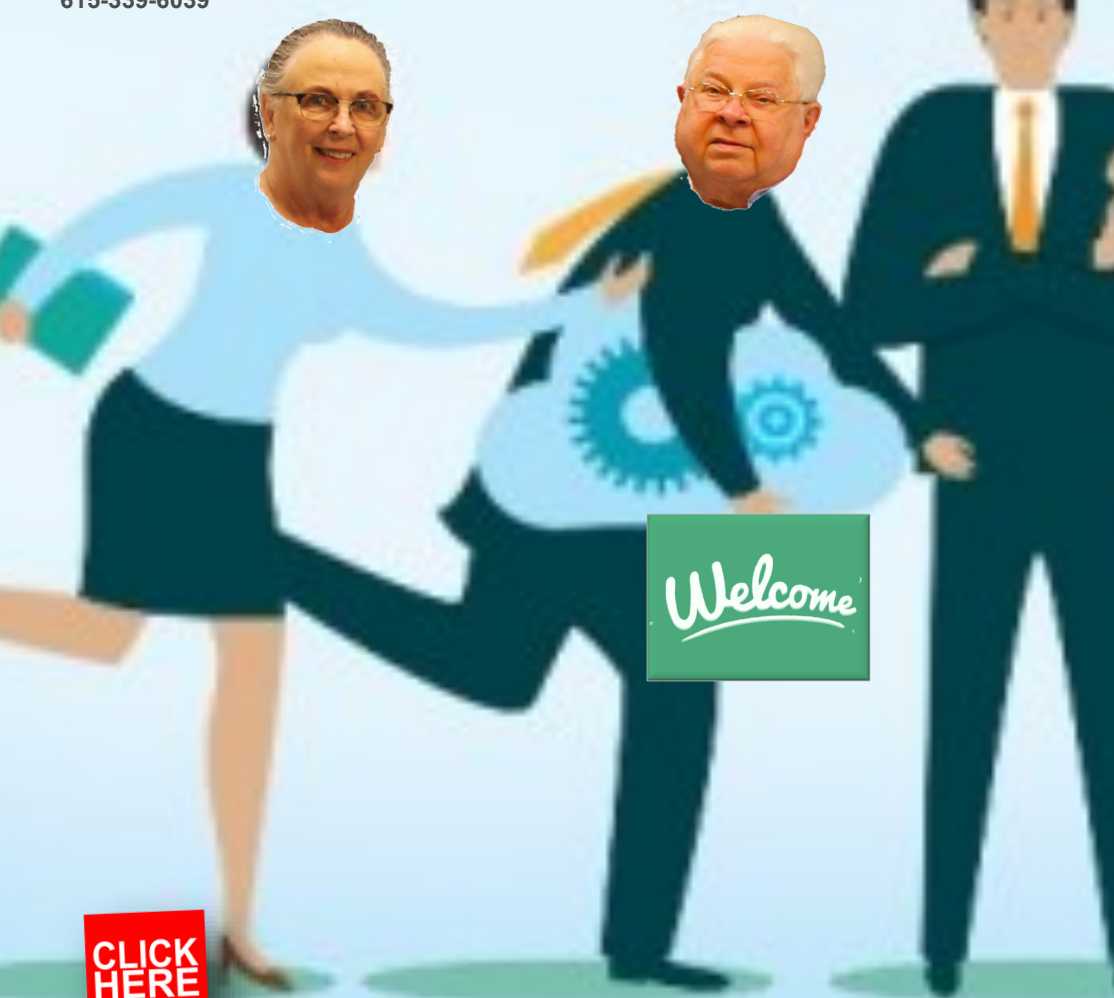
MOAA National still does not have their committee module up and running so we are not receiving contact information of possible recruits in our area. Most of our new members come from current member referrals anyway, so keep up that effort.

For those nonmembers reading this newsletter, there is an application form below. We represent all components of the uniformed services with a focus on support of the military, legislative advocacy, philanthropy, and camaraderie. The chapter meets monthly on the third Thursday (6:00 PM) at Through the Grapevine, 630 Broadmor Blvd. Murfreesboro, TN. All enjoy socializing, having a great buffet meal and listening to interesting, invited speakers. Our intent is to have speakers share information, or their experiences, on local, state, or national-important topics. Complementing our monthly dinner meetings are the annual picnic and Christmas program. The chapter has also taken trips such as a resort in Germany (tentative plans to repeat) and an overnight trip to Arnold AFB with dinner at the o'club and guided tour of the base.

Should you choose to join, just fill out the application and send it back by email or fed mail to me. The chapter dues are \$20.00 annually (made payable to SRCMOAA) and can be mailed to me or paid at the monthly dinner. Additionally, if you haven't already done so, you'll be asked to join the National MOAA Organization. You can accomplish this by accessing their on-line application at MOAA.org. At the top of the opening page, you should select the Join box, and enter your information to complete the process. Three categories of membership are offered: Life, Annual, or Basic. The Basic membership is FREE!

We look forward to meeting you and your plus one if applicable. To assist you in joining, or just visiting with us, please contact me—information follows. I am excited about speaking with you further about our group and its great people. Come join us!

Larry D. Ellis, Lt Col, USAF (ret)
2323 Lionheart Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
lellis1143@outlook.com
615-339-6039



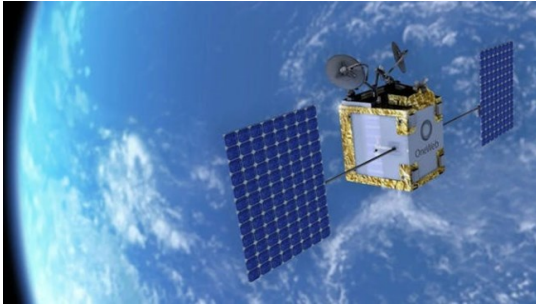
Click for [application](#)

Submitted by Larry Ellis

Northrop Grumman to broaden constellations of commercial satellites for path-agnostic military communications

DEUCSI seeks the ability to move and share data seamlessly among a wide variety of fixed and mobile operating locations using high-bandwidth SATCOM.

MilitaryAerospace.com | John Keller | July 23, 2024



WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio – Military space communications experts at Northrop Grumman Corp. broaden the number of **commercial satellites** to distribute important information to military forces for high-speed decision-making.

Officials of the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, announced a \$79.3 million order earlier this month to the Northrop Grumman Mission Systems segment in San Diego for the Defense Experimentation Using the Commercial Space Internet (DEUCSI) program.

DEUCSI seeks the ability to move and share data seamlessly among a wide variety of fixed and mobile operating locations using constantly available, high-bandwidth, beyond-line-of-sight communications.

This **military communications** contract seeks to establish the ability to communicate with military platforms via several commercial space internet constellations in various orbits using common user terminal and hardware.

This order seeks to expand the number and types of satellite constellations with which the terminals can communicate and will include waveforms capable of communications through military as well as commercial satellites.

DEUCSI space-based capability will be called **path-agnostic** communications because its users will be able to communicate reliably to any location in the world without explicitly specifying which nodes of a communication network to use.

The vision for path-agnostic communications is becoming possible due to the burgeoning commercial space industry, Air Force officials say. Several commercial companies plan to establish space internet constellations consisting of hundreds to thousands of commercial satellites, each to create global internet services.

The DEUCSI program seeks to establish resilient, high-bandwidth, high-availability Air Force communications and data sharing capabilities by leveraging developing commercial space internet networks.

This approach differs radically from traditional military satellite communications programs in which the government typically specifies and funds every aspect of the program, Air Force researchers point out.

Instead, taking advantage of the commercial space internet will concentrate government efforts on the few areas that are unique to Air Force applications.

The project has three phases: establish connectivity between several Air Force sites using commercial demonstration satellites and terminals; expand connectivity to many Air Force assets by proliferating user terminals to several locations and vehicle types; and special experiments to address military-unique requirements not otherwise met by commercial space internet vendors.

For more information contact Northrop Grumman Mission Systems online at www.northropgrumman.com/who-we-are/business-sectors/mission-systems, or the Air Force Research Laboratory at www.afri.af.mil.



New Army policy expands reimbursement for spouse

www.army.mil By Army Public Affairs June 4, 2024

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Army is expanding its financial support for military spouses by enhancing the reimbursement program for business costs and relicensing fees. The [new directive](#) permits reimbursement of up to \$1,000 for business-related expenses, in addition to the already authorized \$1,000 for relicensing fees resulting from a relocation.

registrations. For business owners, reimbursement is available for equipment relocation, new technology purchases, IT services and inspection fees.

Details on qualifying expenses and how to apply for reimbursement are available on the Military OneSource portal at [Licensure Reimbursement PCS Moves](#).

USAG Wiesbaden library set to begin artificial intelligence instruction in the fall

www.army.mil By Michael Kenfield and Roland Schedel, July 23, 2024

The U.S. Army is committed to expanding its development and use of artificial intelligence, or AI, to enable Soldiers on the modern, and future battlefield. The Artificial Intelligence Integration Center was created, at Carnegie Mellon University, to lead the Army's implementation strategy to operationalize AI within the force.

To bring more clarity to the mystery of AI, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden's Library is organizing AI and coding classes to be offered, to members of the garrison military community, this fall. The first hour-long class is scheduled to take place on September 15, beginning at 2 p.m.

Emerging technologies can be a game changer in our lives, think back to the development, rise and usage of the internet in the last decades of the 20th century.

AI is a growing industry that has rapidly become a large part of society through the everyday use and interactions with such companies that include Amazon, Facebook, Google, and many others that are using AI technology.

New possibilities with AI

Tasks such as polishing emails, analyzing information, planning vacations, writing cover letters, and many more can become more streamlined using AI.

To help accomplish such chores, students entering into the AI classes will be introduced to such tools as Canva, ChatGPT 3.5, Bard, and Texta.ai in greater detail, as part of the library's AI program of instruction.



“Army spouses face unique challenges, especially during a relocation,” said Lt. Gen. Kevin Vereen, Deputy Chief of Staff for G-9. “We owe it to them to provide any opportunity to not just have a job but build a fulfilling career.”

Spouses often face logistical and financial challenges in transferring licenses or businesses to new jurisdictions. This new directive aims to alleviate these barriers, ensure continuity in their careers and enhance the well-being and readiness of Army families.

The new policy, which builds upon previous efforts initiated in 2018, aligns with the Fiscal Year 2023 National Defense Authorization Act Public Law 117-263, which authorized expanded reimbursements, and Fiscal Year 2024 NDAA Public Law 118-31, which adjusted eligibility criteria to include those moving from active duty to the reserve component. It also includes those authorized a final move or placed on the temporary disability retired list.

Qualified relicensing costs cover exam fees, continuing education, certifications, business licenses, permits and

National Guard Chief Warns of 'Unintended Consequences' of Transferring Air Guard Units to Space Force

Military.com | By Thomas Novelly | Published July 19, 2024 at 5:07pm ET

Gen. Daniel Hokanson, the outgoing chief of the National Guard Bureau, said a proposal to transfer certain Air National Guard units into the Space Force could take away key resources from states and may lead to serious repercussions if passed.

In an exclusive interview with *Military.com* this week, Hokanson -- who is set to retire as the Army and Air National Guard's top officer in August -- urged caution as the Air Force wages a legislative fight to move the Guard units with space missions into the active-duty Space Force by bypassing state governors' authority. The Air Force sent a proposal to Congress, hoping it will pass legislation allowing the shift.

"Anytime you change a law or a precedent that's been in effect for a while, you want to be careful of the unintended consequences that may be related to that," Hokanson said. "Anytime you change things, you have to kind of be concerned about 'Where does it start? Where does it end?'"

Military.com first reported on the Air Force's legislative proposal to bypass state governors and rewrite sections of Title 32 and Title 10 of the U.S. Code to transfer hundreds of Air National Guardsmen serving in space missions in multiple states to the active-duty Space Force. Guardsmen in Alaska, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii and Ohio could be affected by the move, according to the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The proposal has been met with fierce opposition from National Guard lobbyists, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and, notably, every governor in the country. In May, officer and enlisted Air Guardsmen from Alaska, Colorado and Hawaii took aim at the proposal, calling it an "existential threat" to them.

Many of those states have relied on the space knowledge within the Air National Guard units to respond to stateside emergencies, such as the California Air National Guard's 234th Intelligence Squadron, which has used its satellite capabilities to track, monitor and assess wildfires in the Golden State.

Hokanson said if those Air National Guard units are transferred to the active-duty Space Force, states would lose those resources.

"If we don't have that capability anymore ... that, in effect, goes away because they perform that in a state active-duty status, and work with a lot of state federal agencies to provide a really valuable service," Hokanson said.

The months-long fight has now led to a tug-of-war between the House and Senate Armed Service Committees' versions of the National Defense Authorization Act, the annual must-pass defense policy bill.

The GOP-led House has rewritten the proposal so that governors would need to weigh in on such a move, while the Democratic-led Senate's language would allow those transfers to go ahead -- without state approval -- but with slightly more limited size and scope.

As negotiations between the House and Senate committees' versions of the NDAA continue, those Air National Guardsmen in space missions are left in limbo.

But even Guard officials in states that would have no units affected by the Air Force's initiative, called Legislative Proposal 480, are speaking out against it.

Maj. Gen. Thomas Mancino, the adjutant general who oversees Oklahoma's Army and Air National Guard, told *Military.com* in an interview Friday that the Air Force's plan did not seem well thought out.

"The current LP480 proposal is an ill-conceived, poorly planned and executed proposal that seeks to subvert states' constitutional and statutory protections for unclear and uncertain reasons," Mancino said. "I hope the Senate agrees with all governors and the House in removing the offending language from the NDAA."

Notably, many Air Guardsmen don't want to join the active-duty Space Force: Internal polling from 14 Air National Guard units in seven states shows anywhere from 70% to 86% of those surveyed have no desire to become Space Force Guardians, *Military.com* previously reported.

Hokanson told *Military.com* that many of those Air National Guardsmen had a reason for joining their specific unit, whether it was family, location or duty status. He said that if their unit is transferred to the Space Force and they don't want to go, they can find another job within their state.

"So, my pledge to them is if they're put into the Space Force, and they want to go there, we'll do everything we can to help make that transition smooth," Hokanson said. "But if they want to stay where they're at, they want to stay in the Guard, we will find them a position in the same duty status that they're in within their state, because their experience is absolutely valuable and we need to retain that. And we made that pledge to them to take care of them."

U.S. Navy and Allied Aircraft Carriers and Submarines are Now Training for a China War

The National Interest | by Stavros Atlamazoglou | July 17, 2024



Summary and Key Points: The Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) 2024 is underway in the Indo-Pacific, showcasing the combat capabilities of the U.S. and its allies.

-Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti emphasized the importance of interoperability, partnerships, and submarines in future conflicts, particularly with China.

-The exercise involves dozens of countries, numerous warships, aircraft, and thousands of troops. RIMPAC highlights the U.S. commitment to defending the region and maintaining peace and stability. The U.S. Navy's submarine fleet, the largest in the world, plays a critical role in this deterrence effort.

RIMPAC Is Aimed Right at China

Rim of the Pacific Exercise 2024 is currently underway in the Indo-Pacific, with dozens of countries participating. One of the largest military exercises in the world, RIMPAC illustrates for China the combat capabilities of and its allies. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti, the top naval officer in the U.S. military, and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy James Honea visited the units participating in the exercise. Their statements hinted at the Navy's priorities in any future showdown with China.

Interoperability, Submarines, and Partnerships

"RIMPAC is the world's premier joint and combined exercise in the maritime domain. It's a great opportunity to operate, to train, and to build interoperability with an amazing cross section of Allies and partners, from the Indo-Pacific to the Americas and to Europe," Franchetti said in a press release.

Dozens of countries are taking part in the exercise. They bring scores of warships and support vessels, hundreds of combat aircraft, and thousands of troops.

"It's really important that we work together on areas of mutual concern to maintain freedom of the seas and uphold the rules based international order that has supported peace, stability and prosperity for so many years," the top officer in the Navy added. During their visit, the officials focused on the importance of submarines to U.S. military deterrence. "Central to my America's Warfighting Navy is the need to put more players on the field, and that applies to our submarines," Adm. Franchetti stated. "I know that we can't deter and win against our would-be adversaries without getting all our submarines on the field. Whether it's new construction ships or those in maintenance, we need to get these platforms in and out of the shipyard on time and on cost," she added. The U.S. Navy operates the largest and most capable submarine fleet in the world, with more than 70 nuclear-powered submarines of several different types. With attack submarines and ballistic-missile subs, the Navy's submarine fleet can do a lot in a potential war. "And, we have to get all the people – with the right skills, tools and training – to man our submarines. That's all more players on the field, and you did that. I am so proud of you for all that you accomplished," Franchetti said.

In response to Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific, the United States is presenting as a powerful block of allies and partners as deterrence. Beijing might be investing hundreds of billions of dollars every year on its military, but its authoritarian approach to global affairs is alienating neighbors, who instead turn to the U.S. for protection and security. Despite the ongoing challenge of the Ukrainian conflict, the U.S. remains strong in the Indo-Pacific, the area of operations that is most important to the future. Exercises like RIMPAC are designed to highlight America's commitment to defend the region from malicious activity.

"The United States is an Indo-Pacific nation. We know that our partnerships in this region make a difference—that friendship is strength. We don't take that for granted," said Franchetti.

RIMPAC is the largest international maritime exercise in the world. It started in 1971, and this year's is the 29th RIMPAC. The training covers a range of mission sets, including carrier operations, anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, air combat, amphibious operations, Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure, maritime security operations, and disaster relief.

RECRUIT DEFIES ODDS TO FOLLOW DREAM OF BECOMING MARINE

WWW.MARINES.MIL

12 JUL 2024 | Cpl. Elliott Flood-Johnson

MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT SAN DIEGO, Calif. --

MARINE SNIP-IT

U.S. Marine Corps Pvt. Carlos Paz-Sosa, who was recruited out of Recruiting Station Riverside, wasn't always the most physically fit growing up; he struggled with his weight throughout his childhood. During his senior year of high school, he decided he wanted to embark on the journey of becoming a Marine. However, this would prove to be no easy task. If he wanted to have the privilege of going to recruit training, he'd have to lose more than 100 pounds.

"It took about a year," Paz-Sosa, a Marine with India Company, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, Recruit Training Regiment, said about his weight loss journey. "It took a lot of going to the gym and eating healthy. My mom makes good food, so portion control was probably the hardest part."

Not only did he have the support of his recruiter, but his family also saw his desire to join the Marine Corps as something that would have a positive impact on his life. Having been overweight for most of his life, once they saw him starting to lose weight, they realized how important this journey this would be for him.

"My mom was really supportive." Paz-Sosa stated. "She said, 'If this is what you want to do go ahead. My brother definitely talked some smack at first, but once I started to make progress; he began to support me, which was a really good feeling.'"

Today, Paz-Sosa has accomplished his goal; he graduated recruit training on July 12, 2024. His journey through bootcamp has been had its literal uphill battles at times, but those around him have noticed a change in who he was and who he is now.

His Senior Drill Instructor, U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Douglas Perez, noticed Paz-Sosa was a little more reserved than some of the other recruits. As time went on, he began to see a change in him.

"When Pvt. Paz-Sosa first got to the platoon, he was very timid," Perez stated. "He didn't communicate well. As time progressed there was a giant change. He became more vocal with the platoon. If he saw somebody mess up, he'd go fix them; and he kept losing weight throughout training. His transformation was pretty noticeable."

Paz-Sosa formed strong bonds during recruit training. There was one Marine in particular who he got very close with.

"Pvt. Lincoln Jameson was my rack mate for the entirety of boot camp," Paz-Sosa said. "We would give each other a hard time here and there, but at the end of the day we are now Marines and probably best friends for life."

"Some of the recruits needed more help than I did and helping them felt really good. It was a heartwarming experience to help them become Marines. The entire experience was definitely my, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, Recruit Training Regiment Paz-Sosa's mother, Maria Sosa, spoke with pride when talking about seeing her son for the first time in three months.

"When I first saw him, I said, 'I love you. I'm so proud of you.'" Sosa explained.

His recruiter, U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Aubrey Larsen, was impressed by his transfor-



mation and determination while going through recruit training.

"When I first saw him, I was like, 'Where's the other half of you?'" Larsen exclaimed. "He had lost so much weight before he left and even more while he was in training. I asked him, 'Did you believe you were going to make it?' and he said, 'Yes. The whole time.'"

She also reflected on his thoughtfulness during a time when some recruits might get tunnel vision and think to only write their closest friends or family. Paz-Sosa's empathy for others shined through in an unexpected way.

"Something that stood out to me was a letter in which he wrote every single poolee," Larsen stated. "He wrote catered letters for all of them. Every letter was so personal. He wrote about 15 of them; it was incredible."

As he concludes recruit training, Paz-Sosa brings with him the knowledge and experience of what it feels like to accomplish a hard-won goal. Additionally, Paz-Sosa found joy in helping others along the way.

Paz-Sosa's journey from struggling with weight to becoming a Marine exemplifies the essence of resiliency and camaraderie. His story is a powerful reminder that the path to achieving one's goals is paved with hard work, determination, and the unwavering support of family.

Sports Founder Dave Portnoy Rescued by U.S. Coast Guard: 'No Power, No Radio, No Anchor, No Nothin'

People Magazine | By Kimberlee Speakman | July 16, 2024

Barstool Sports founder Dave Portnoy is happy to be back on dry land.



PHOTO: MIKE COPPOLA/GETTY

On Monday, July 15 Portnoy, 47, revealed in a video on X that he had been rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard after he decided to take his mom “on a boat ride” off Nantucket, Massachusetts, and his vessel suddenly lost power.

“Captain Dave unhooked himself to the buoy before he turned the boat on to make sure the boat wasn’t dead. Well no power, no radio, no anchor, no nothing. Heavy heavy winds. Next thing you know Captain Dave is lost at sea,” Portnoy recalled.

He went on to explain that the strong winds blew his boat out of the harbor and that he had to try to steer it to “not to crash into the ships.” He said he eventually used a flare gun to send a “distress signal” but “still nothing” happened.

Portnoy said after “screaming” for “help” he eventually caught the attention of a girl in a what appeared to be a “rowboat” who passed by. She then climbed aboard his boat and he was able to use her working radio to call the Coast Guard to his location.

“[I’m] out at sea going back and forth rocking, [thinking] my life is over,” he explained in the video. “Thankfully the Coast Guard, God bless... tied me up, brought me back... Captain Dave lives to tell another tale.”

Portnoy went on to claim that because of the incident, he “may never go on a boat again.”

In response to his post, the First Coast Guard District of Boston, Massachusetts, wrote, “You’re welcome, Dave. Tell Miss Peaches we said hi and remember to boat safe! #SemperParatus.”

Coast Guard officials shared in a statement to local affiliate WFXT, that they received a report that a “28-foot pleasure boat” belonging to Portnoy had broke free from its mooring buoys. Officials said that service members from U.S Coast Guard Station Brant Point, who had been conducting training exercises at the time, had “diverted” to help tow Portnoy back to the harbor.

“We are glad that he used distressed signals and applaud the Good Samaritan for having a VHF radio ready to hail the Coast Guard,” a spokesperson for the U.S. Coast Guard First District told WFXT.

Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST) Seattle 91101 to conduct waterborne missions in Homer, Alaska

United States Coast Guard News Department of Homeland Security | Press Release July 15, 2024

HOMER, Alaska — The Coast Guard is scheduled to conduct waterborne operations in the Homer vicinity over the summer as Sector Western Alaska and U.S. Arctic augments its capabilities with small boat teams from Maritime Safety and Security Team Seattle (MSST) 91101.

MSST 91101, utilizing two 29-foot response boat crews, will patrol harbors, fishing grounds, and trafficked waterways including areas with significant traffic convergence to enforce living marine resources (LMR) regulations on domestic, commercial, recreational, and charter fishing vessels.

“For the next few months, our teams will be conducting operations around Homer in support of various missions, including search and rescue, recreational and commercial vessel safety, and protection of Alaska’s living marine resources,”

said Lt. Karl Gunther, Sector Western Alaska and U.S. Arctic enforcement chief. “Teams will maintain a regular presence on the water and conduct routine boardings at sea to inspect a vessel’s catch, gear, and other items to ensure regulatory compliance as well as safety.”

Mariners are advised to research the federally mandated safety and fishery requirements for their vessels prior to conducting operations in Kachemak Bay and to prepare for the highly likely occurrence that a Coast Guard boarding team inspects their vessel for compliance.

Coast Guard boarding teams have the authority to (at any time) go aboard any vessel operating under the jurisdiction of the United States, and address inquiries to those on board, examine the ship’s documents and papers, and examine, inspect, and search the vessel as outlined in 14 USC 522.

