



The Michigan Reservist

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Department of Michigan

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jim Semerad, CDR, SC, USN (Ret)

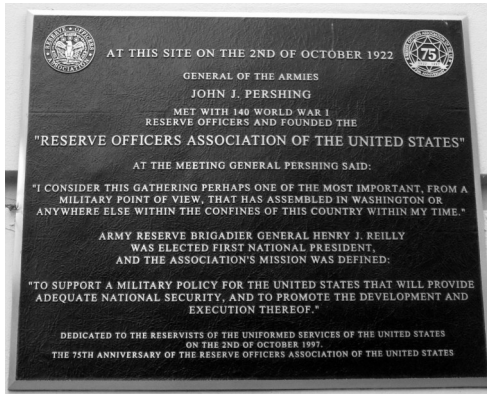
Happy Holidays to the Reserve Organization of America community in Michigan. We have over 700 members in Michigan. We strongly encourage you to reach out to the Reserve community and extend your support. The reality is many in the Reserve community are being asked to serve our country and are stepping up to the challenge.



Jim Semerad, CDR, SC, USN (Ret)

Our Annual Conference on April 10, 2021 will be conducted virtually, and possibly in-person. We will see what 2021 offers for in-person meetings. The next newsletter will include details of the annual conference. We expect at

least one Keynote speaker and a report from ROA Headquarters. Some of you attended the Virtual National Convention in September and it was very successful.



Reserve Officer Association - Focused on a Strong Reserve and National Guard

ROA HQ has been operating virtual. I join an ROA conference call almost each week. It is amazing that the staff and volunteers have not stopped supporting members and Reservists. We continue to present awards to outstanding Reservist and support persons. Please let me know if you want to extend an award. Col (Ret) Keith Sousa is preparing to present the ROTC and JROTC awards for 2021.

Many Reservists have been ordered to Drill remotely. Disaster relief is a mission Reserve members are trained and ready for. The ROA mission to support the Reserve members and family.

We are anxious to recruit and retain members. Bookmark www.roa.org and www.roami.org websites. As a Navy Junior Officer of the Year, I learned the value of ROA membership. I also found many people to mentor me in my career. You can provide a similar opportunity to a Reserve member.





ROTC Director

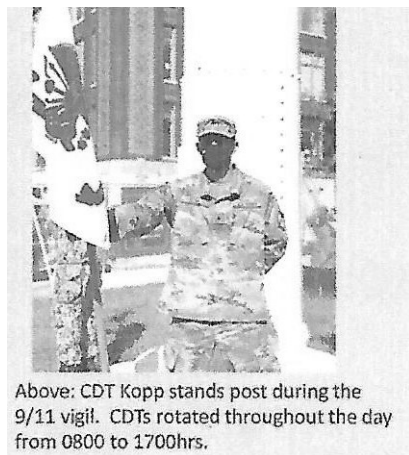
ROA Department of Michigan, Colonel Keith Sousa, US Army Reserve (Retired)

ROTC Training During COVID

ROTC training is still being conducted during the pandemic, although it looks different than during a normal training year. In polling the universities within the state, it was discovered that each university has adapted its own training programs within the limits of the virus. Here’s a summary of the programs within each university:

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Although classes within the university are conducted virtually, or on line, ROTC training is being conducted in person within the guidelines as stated by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). All labs (physical training, leadership, land navigation, weapons qualification, drill and ceremonies, etc.) are conducted in small groups during the week, and weekends as required. (See attached photos courtesy of LTC Jason Dye, Professor of Military Science).



Above: CDT Kopp stands post during the 9/11 vigil. CDTs rotated throughout the day from 0800 to 1700hrs.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY



Labs are conducted in person (again, under CDC guidelines), outside, in small groups. Normal classroom instruction is conducted virtually.

NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Actually classes are conducted in person under CDC guidelines, with masks and social distancing. Military labs are conducted in small groups. Students undergo surveillance testing regularly.

WESTERN MICHIGAN

Classroom instruction is completed virtually, while ROTC labs are conducted in person consisting of small groups of ten or less students. Again, CDC guidelines are followed



There were no reports received from Central Michigan University, Ferris State University, or Michigan Technological University, although it is assumed that all ROTC labs are conducted in person in small groups. It appears that ROTC recognition programs will proceed in the spring as usual, although at this time it is hard to determine whether these ceremonies will be conducted in person or by virtual means. If they are conducted in person, I am still looking for presenters to present medal sets and certificates to those outstanding cadets who are being recognized for their leadership within each of the various universities.



Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, NOAA

Captain Ventz Potochnik, USN (Retired), Sea Services, Vice President

The Marine Corps Pivot To Sea Denial Or Semper Fi Reworked

General David Berger released his Commandant's Planning Guidance (CPG) in July 2019. The guidance could mean significant changes in all areas of the force – from manning, training and equipping to the fundamental employment of Marine forces ashore. Most tellingly, in the conclusion of the document, the Commandant directs that the service must be able to “facilitate sea denial in support of fleet operations and joint force horizontal escalation”. Got that? What it means is after 30 years of large and small scale operations in the sand box of Southwest Asia, from large scale armored battles to intense urban warfare, the Corps, along with the rest of the Department of Defense, is turning to face our peer competitors in the Indo-Pacific Theater of operations and develop and practice sea denial.

Many have lauded Berger’s guidance as a “refreshing dose of reality”. With a culture that prides itself on a bias for action, Marines must exploit the gap in bureaucratic inertia that he has created. At a time when the Marines’ purpose is being openly questioned (e.g., Washington Post article by a senior Army officer asking “Why does the Navy’s army need its own air force?”), disruptive reorganization is imperative to utility and survival. To be the nation’s “naval expeditionary force-in-readiness and prepared to operate inside actively contested maritime spaces in support of fleet operations” the Marine Corps must become lighter, more versatile and more survivable. It can do his by fully integrating into the Navy’s fleet structure, specifically the composite warfare command (CWC) structure, abolishing its air wings and overhauling its ground combat forces.



Along comes Force Design 2030. This is a 10 year effort for the Corps to reinvent itself by trying any and all out of the box concepts. Experiments will focus on potential operational scenarios in the Indo-Pacific’s littoral regions. War gaming, along with modeling and simulation, will occur iteratively in conjunction with the experiments, and the Commanding General, Marine Corps War fighting Laboratory, will be in charge of the entire effort. A few bell ringers that have been mentioned include reducing the size of the Corps, eliminating heavy armor and most light-armored platforms, reducing artillery and eliminating tactical air. Wow! Now that I have got you attention, some of the more thought out concepts and changes include:

- The sea denial force must have its own mid- to long range surface vessels (perhaps analogous to the Navy’s Mk VI or riverine command boats),
- Ability to emplace various types of mines,
- Have access to multiple of anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCM’s) with differing ranges and flight profiles,
- The capability to provide its own targeting data using surface search radar, signals intelligence, artificial intelligence exploitation and national technical means,
- Be able to protect against long-range fires, gray zone operations, fleet engagement and other enemy actions

Overseeing all of these actions, many suggest that the Marine Corps must recognize the need to decentralize authority to enable distributed sea-denial forces to engage enemy forces based on their understanding of the commander’s intent – without centralized guidance or clearance. The new sea-denial doctrine will require far more decentralization than has been previously acceptable. The force needs to be lighter, more agile and more survivable. The currently fielded force has a signature that is too large and too tied to vehicular support to evade adversary targeting. Static, large footprint command posts at the battalion level and above must be eliminated as enemy use of unmanned aerial systems and long range precision fires have made them dangerous and outdated.

If a future mission of the Marine Corps is sea denial to support subsequent fleet operations, the reconfiguration of the force must be aggressive and immediate. Like the Marines of the interwar period, who assumed significant risk to the institution by developing concepts and plans for amphibious assault that were considered impossible, the Corps must now reconfigure the force to support the operations of the greater fleet. By fully integrating in to the Navy’s Composite Warfare Commander architecture, gaining efficiencies in aviation and the supporting establishment structure and overhauling its ground forces, the Marine Corps can reinvent itself as a more lethal and survivable naval expeditionary force-in-readiness.



From the Air Force Vice President

Jack W. Bronka Lt. Colonel, USAF, Retired, Air Force Vice President

Air Force Jr ROTC Flight Academy Is Reopening

The Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps Flight Academy is once again accepting application packages from exceptional student-citizens across the country who want to earn their wings in 2021.

The COVID-19 coronavirus forced Headquarters AFJROTC to shut down the Flight Academy for 2020. However, AFJROTC high school cadets who will be 17 by July 9, 2021, and are interested in earning a Private Pilot's Certification are encouraged to apply by Nov. 25.

In its fourth year, the AFJROTC Flight Academy formed to help address the ongoing and foreseeable pilot shortage by getting young people excited about aviation while also increasing aviation diversity.

The Flight Academy, in essence, allows aspiring young aviators to get their Private Pilot's Certification at no cost during an eight-week summer course at partner universities. This incurs no military commitment while providing a college transcript and only requires that the attendees be exceptional cadets and agree to take part in an annual aviation-related survey for five years.

"The AFJROTC Flight Academy continues to receive glowing endorsements and increased support within the Air Force," said Todd Taylor, HQ AFJROTC Program Development Division chief. "Although there is no requirement for our cadets to join the Air Force, many are exploring this option through ROTC or the Academy for the excellent aerospace career opportunities and great family environments."

As an Air Force-funded private pilot's scholarship, the program is competitively boarded during the selection process. This ensures a quality investment by ensuring extraordinary young men and women are selected.

He continued, "We immerse students onto college campuses, surround them with likeminded peers, educators and mentors, connect them with pilots and put them in airplanes, and then offer them college credit, certification and a possible career pathway to reach their objectives. All with no cost, to include travel and lodging, or military commitment. What could be better than that?"

"AFJROTC is the Air Force's most diverse organization and its largest youth education and outreach program," said Taylor. "And the Flight Academy is just a winning formula."

Above article extracted in part from a news release from Maxwell Air Force Base



Air Force JROTC Flight Academy Resumes



From the Army Vice President

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army Retired, Army Vice President

Defender Europe Exercise: Green-light in Poland

After careful assessment and planning between U.S. Army Europe and the Polish Ministry of Defense, exercise Allied Spirit, a DEFENDER-Europe 20 linked exercise, took place at Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area, Poland, 5-19 June 2020. Modified from its original May design to ensure the safety of soldiers due to COVID-19, the U.S. and Polish bilateral exercise featured a Polish airborne operation and a U.S.-Polish division-size river crossing. About, 6,000 soldiers took part in the exercise. Around 4,000 U.S. soldiers came from the 1st Cavalry Division Headquarters; 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, and 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division; and 2,000 Polish Soldiers of the 6th Polish Airborne Brigade; 9th Polish Armored Cavalry Brigade; and 12th Polish Mechanized Brigade.

Allied Spirit was intended to be one of many linked training events across the continent, comprising the much larger Defender Europe 2020 exercise. The division-scale exercise was originally designed to test the deployment of roughly 20,000 U.S. soldiers from the continental U.S. to support activities across 10 European countries. The exercise was modified from its original design to ensure the safety of soldiers. The Army Europe press release reads “All COVID-19 precautionary measures will be taken to ensure the health and protection of participating armed forces and the local population.”

Although Defender Europe was scaled down due to the pandemic, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville said that the movement of equipment and soldiers to Europe still accomplished the “strategic readiness” goals. “We were able to get our forces over there; we have [drawn] from the pre-positioned stocks; and we’re still able to train with our allies and partners, although at much less capability,” McConville stated.

The Polish Armor units provided PT-91 Twardy main battle tanks. The PT-91 Twardy tank is an improved variant of the Soviet [T-72](#). The PT-91 was developed in Poland in the 1990s. A total of 233 tanks were delivered. The Polish Army also operates 120 older T-72M1 tanks (plus 470 in storage) and numerous German [Leopard 2A4](#) and [Leopard 2A5](#) tanks.



A PT-91 Twardy Main Battle Tank crew from the Polish Land Forces during a training exercise, Allied Spirit at Bucierz range, Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area, Poland, June 13, 2020.

No confirmed cases of coronavirus were reported on the base in Bemowo Piskie, but precautions were still taken. The soldiers were informed that they needed to stay on base. Travel to other locations in the Baltics was restricted. Polish civilians, who come onto the base daily for work, were medically screened for symptoms. The Army chief of staff, Gen. James McConville, responding to questions from reporters about [training through the pandemic](#) said, there are still missions that must be conducted. Measures can be taken, however, to mitigate the risk of training.

**Reserve Officers Association
Department of Michigan
6779 Serenity Drive
Troy, MI 48098**



Phone: 248-879-7357

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The Michigan Reservist

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Newsletter Editor LTC (Ret) Scott D. Murdoch smurdoch@imanor.com

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