



# *The Michigan Reservist*

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jack W. Bronka, LtCol, USAF, Retired, President

As we enter fall and look forward to the holidays, I do hope all of our members had a healthy and prosperous year. Quite a year for ROA, celebrating our 100 years in existence advocating for our reserve forces. In October, two of our department members attended the National Conference and celebration in Washington D.C.

Interesting to note that still today the issue of whether the Space Force will have reserve or guard units affiliated with it is not resolved. Last article I read had the Secretary of Air Force indicating this remains a federal role, which implies a possible reserve presence.

Over the past five years membership nationally and to a lesser extent in Michigan continues to decline, so in this newsletter you will find a flyer about membership that we hope you can pass on to a reservist you know that may not be a member. As we all have learned numbers matter when advocating to congress.

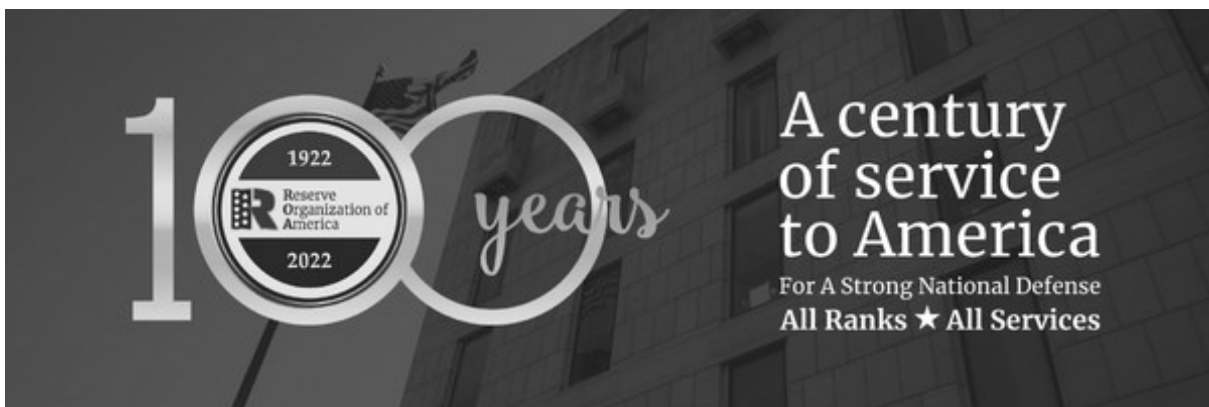
In November the EXCOM will start planning the Spring 2023 Department Conference. It will be held again at Mulligans on Selfridge on a Saturday in April. At the 2023 conference we will also have elections of officers. We can always use member input on the theme. Once the theme is set, then we work on identifying and inviting speakers. Full details will appear in our January newsletter. If you have not yet shared your email so we can send you the newsletter electronically, please do so.

As always, our thoughts and prayers are with those still serving and in harm's way.

Jack



Jack W. Bronka, LtCol, USAF, Retired, President





**Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, NOAA**  
 Captain Ventz Potochnik, USN (Retired), Sea Services, Vice President

## Heritage Foundation Strength Study and Military Leadership

The following is an article from Marine Times by Sarah Sicard detailing the relative strength of all military branches in a study conducted by the Heritage Foundation:

While branch rivalry appears to be alive and well among troops serving in today's military, a new study from the Heritage Foundation may have just outlined a definitive service ranking. The big report, called the 2023 Index of U.S. Military Strength, found the entire U.S. military's warfighting capabilities to be unusually deficient. "In the aggregate, the United States' military posture can only be rated as 'weak,'" the report notes. One branch, however, the U.S. Marine Corps, has managed to rise above the rest despite the collective failures outlined in the report.

Branches were rated on a scale of "very weak," "weak," "marginal," "strong," and "very strong," with the criteria deciding these categories comprising capability, capacity, and readiness. The breakdown of the ratings were not reflective of troops themselves, meanwhile. Rather, the study looked at "current assessments of force levels likely needed to defend U.S. interests against major enemies in contemporary or near-future combat operations."

And while the Marine Corps was labeled as the only "strong" branch, Heritage also noted that the rating isn't enough to make a major difference. "The Marine Corps and nuclear forces are 'strong,' but the Corps is a one-war force, and its overall strength is therefore not sufficient to compensate for the shortfalls of its larger fellow services," the study's authors wrote. On the other end of the spectrum, the Air Force received a grade of "very weak," with reasons including pilot training and retention issues, reduced flight hours, and an ever-aging fleet of aircraft. The statuses of the Navy and Space Force, meanwhile, were reported as being "weak," while the Army was viewed as "marginal."

"This is the logical consequence of years of sustained use, underfunding, poorly defined priorities, wildly shifting security policies, exceedingly poor discipline in program execution, and a profound lack of seriousness across the national security establishment even as threats to U.S. interests have surged," the report concluded.

**As a corollary to this analysis, the Wall Street Journal has featured several articles recently regarding the caliber of senior military leadership and its effect on morale and recruitment:**

America's military is in decline for three critical reasons ("The U.S. Military's Growing Weakness," Review & Outlook, Oct. 18). First, many generals aren't world-class field officers but inexperienced desk jockeys who rose to star status with keen politics. Second, our brass is too socially savvy, concerned with matters of race, gender and Washington politics, rather than with winning wars of consequence, which we've not done in 75 years. Third, our servicemen are underpaid, undereducated and underappreciated.

These are tragic mistakes given our volunteer military and the multiple threats we face today. The military runs on pride. Poor leaders, political game-playing and public indifference are hard to overcome.

In a world where Russia puffs, China snorts and Iran wants to blow us to bits, we are playing Russian roulette with our children's future by experiencing declines in weaponry, preparedness and battlefield leadership. That is one game we can't ever afford to lose. Capt. Richard Klitzberg, USA (Ret.)

The op-ed by the secretaries of the Army, Air Force and Navy ("Uncle Sam Wants You for a Military Job That Matters" by Christine Wormuth, Frank Kendall and Carlos Del Toro, Oct. 25) is an interesting piece of recruiting. What's left out is that those same secretaries would rather have critical race theory taught to our servicemen than work to create a warrior ethos.





## From the Army Vice President

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

# HIMARS Launchers Shift Momentum in Ukraine

The M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) is changing the battlefield in Ukraine. "This capability has given the Ukrainians the potential to completely change the momentum, and the direction of this war," said retired Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, former commander of the U.S. Army in Europe.

HIMARS, which fires a 200-pound warhead up to 190 miles and hits within 10 feet of its intended target, has reduced Russia's numerical advantage. "You don't have to have hundreds of artillery rounds to achieve the same effect as one rocket fired from a HIMARS," said Hodges.



HIMARS at White Sands Range

Since June 2022, the U.S. has shipped Ukraine 16 HIMARS launchers and thousands of rockets, which defense officials say the Ukrainians have used to attack more than 350 Russian command posts, ammo dumps, supply depots, and other high-value targets far back from the front lines. The Ukrainians are limited to firing on targets within Ukraine, and not to fire across the border into Russia.

In service since 2010 and built by Lockheed Martin Corp., the HIMARS can be mounted on a standard U.S. Army M1140 truck frame and operated by a three-member crew. It is simple to operate and can traverse 360 degrees. Young Ukrainian soldiers, 18-20 years old, are effectively being trained in less than one week. Deployed in a hiding position, the HIMARS can roll out quickly to a firing site. Once out in the open, it has about five-to-seven minutes to find its firing position, train its rockets on the target, and fire – one rocket every few seconds.

It carries 6 rockets and can move at speeds of 55 mph on road or 35 mph off-road. The launched rocket leaves a white vapor trail that can mark the firing position. The successful tactic is to "shoot and scoot." The Ukrainians have also deployed wooden decoys of the launchers to confuse and divert Russian fire. After being deployed for 3 months, none of the 16 HIMARS have been hit, despite Russian claims to have destroyed 30 launchers.

On Saturday, 3 August, the Ukrainian armed forces said that in one day Russia had lost an additional 25 tanks, taking the total number of such vehicles reportedly destroyed since the start of the invasion, on February 24, 2022, to 2,034. In its daily update, Ukraine also said that Russia now had lost a total of 4,403 combat armored machines, with 37 destroyed on a single day, and more than 1,000 trucks. "The opponent suffered the biggest losses in the Donetsk and Kryvyi Rih directions," referring to the center and east of the country.

When asked about the number of HIMARS sent to Ukraine, Hodges responded, "It's nowhere near what I think Ukraine could use. I mean, look at the effect they've achieved with 16. Imagine if they had three or four times that many."



## From the Air Force Vice President

Graydon W. Dimkoff, Lt. Col., USAFR, Retired, Vice President Air Force Section

### B-21 Raider Stealth Bomber to be Revealed on 2 December 2022

The Air Force and Northrop Grumman will roll out its new B-21 Raider Stealth Bomber on 2 December 2022 on Northrop's Palmdale facility. It will be the first time the Air Force has unveiled a new bomber since the B-2 Spirit's November 1988 debut at Air Force Plant 42 in Palmdale. The B-2's first flight took place in July 1989.

To date, the bomber has only been glimpsed as concept art, leaving its exact profile a matter of some speculation. Moreover, in spite of its roll out, it is not expected to be actually flown until sometime in early 2023. The exact date of its first flight will be set upon the results of ground tests. There are now six B-21 test aircraft being assembled at the Palmdale facility. The first B-21 finished its first set of a series of ground tests at Plant 42 in May of this year. That phase included loads calibration tests, meant to verify the bomber's structural integrity by subjecting it to stress, among other tests, including powering up the bomber and testing its subsystems, and applying coatings and paint.



This first new stealth bomber in over 30 years will be based at Ellsworth AFB in South Dakota, with Whiteman AFB in Missouri, and Dyess AFB in Texas to follow.

### Our Aging Fighter Fleet is being Slowly Modernized

The F-16 Fighting Falcon was the backbone of allied air power in Europe for a generation. Deployed in the Kosovo War in the late 1990s and later to the Middle East and Afghanistan, the Fighting Falcons have served as a deterrent to keep Russia from making moves in Eastern Europe.

However, today the fourth-generation fighters are aging: the average Fighting Falcon is more than 30 years old, and some started flying in the 1980s. Top Air Force officials have long said the service should buy at least 72 fighters each year. While the Air Force is hopeful that some will keep flying into the 2040s, the general in charge of planning for the service's future knows a replacement is inevitable. What makes the equation a problem for Lt. Gen. Richard Moore is that replacement fighters, particularly F-35As, aren't arriving fast enough. Although the 2023 congressional budget calls for 57 new fighters, 24 F-15EXs and 33 F-35As, the senate is attempting to add 7 more new F-35As, that will cost another \$921 million. The 57 new fighters, or at best 66, still leaves Lt. Gen. Moore's request 6 short. Andrew Hunter, who oversees Air Force Acquisition, is particularly concerned with China's accelerating modernization, and said the need to modernize our own fighter fleet is urgent. Hunter pointed out that the Air Force is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and that for roughly half that time the F-16 has been a stalwart. He added, however, the time is coming when we will be without it, and that we must get serious about funding fighter procurements to face the future.



With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and China's threat to Taiwan, the Air Force will continue to be under pressure to determine its future force posture, and the size and nature of its fighter fleet.

## From Rifles to Robot Tanks, 24 New Weapons the Army is Fielding in the Next Year

Input from Donald Gates, COL, US Army Retires.

The Army is transforming from the soldier up, from the rifles they carry to the missiles that fly over their heads. By the end of 2023, soldiers will go into the field with 24 new weapons and other combat systems, either prototypes or fully operational equipment.

The two dozen systems currently or soon to be rolled out are the backbone of the Army's plans to fully modernize the weapons and equipment it uses in nearly every aspect of how it fights by 2030, officials said in early October at the annual meeting of the Association of the US Army, or AUSA, in Washington, DC.

Over the next decade, the Army will field more than 30 new systems, from rifles to tanks and drones to the continent-crossing 'Dark Eagle' missile system. Army Futures Command officials told Coffee or Die Magazine that 14 of those systems, including enhanced night vision gear, are already in the hands of soldiers. With more than half of the systems not yet in the field, the next couple of years are key for delivery.

The full list of the two dozen Army systems expected by the start of 2024, with the fiscal year in which they were delivered or are expected to be fielded:



### Squad-Level Small Arms and Gear

1. NGSW: Next Generation Squad Weapon, the Sig Sauer rifle and automatic rifle (FY22).
2. IVAS: Integrated Visual Augmentation System (FY22).
3. ENVG-B: Enhanced Night Vision Goggle-Binocular (FY21).
4. RVCT: Reconfigurable Virtual Collective Trainer (FY23).
5. SiVT: Squad Immersive Virtual Trainer, a software suite for the IVAS (FY23).
6. OWT/TMT/TSS: One World Terrain/Training Management Tools/Training Simulation Software (FY23).



### Long-Range Fires

7. PrSM: Precision Strike Missile, a short-range battlefield missile (FY23).
8. ERCA: Extended Range Cannon Artillery, the Army's latest effort to acquire a self-propelled Howitzer cannon after two failed attempts in the last two decades (FY23).
9. LRHW: Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon (FY23).
10. MRC: Mid-Range Capability, a medium-range missile (FY23).

### Combat Vehicles

11. FTUAS: Future Tactical Unmanned Aircraft System, a new battlefield drone system (FY23).
12. AMPV: Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle, a replacement for the M113 armored personnel carrier, originally fielded in Vietnam (FY23).
13. RCV: Robotic Combat Vehicle (FY22).
14. MPF: Mobile Protective Firepower, a light tank (FY21).



### Communications and Technology

15. UN: Unified Network (FY19).
16. COE, or Common Operating Environment: CPCE/MCE Command Post Computing Environment/Mounted Computed Environment (FY19).
17. CPI2: Command Post Integrated Infrastructure (FY21).
18. MAPS: Mounted Assured Positioning, Navigation, and Timing System (FY19).
19. DAPS: Dismounted Assured Positioning, Navigation, and Timing System (FY22).

### Air and Missile Defense

20. M-SHORAD: Maneuver-Short Range Air Defense (FY21).
21. IFPC: Indirect Fire Protection Capability (FY21).
22. LTAMDS: Lower Tier Air and Missile Defense Sensor (FY22).
23. AIAMD: Army Integrated Air and Missile Defense (FY22).
24. DE M-SHORAD: Directed Energy Maneuver-Short Range Air Defense (FY22).



# Membership Invitation

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Last \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Type of Membership

_____ Associate	FREE
_____ Term (1 year)	\$ 25
_____ Life	\$ 450



Checks payable to: ROA

Return this application to:  
ROA Department of Michigan  
39842 Golfview Drive  
Northville, MI 48167

## Membership Options

Associate - Under 35 years, FREE.  
Term - Pay as you go \$25 annually  
Life - One-time fee \$450.

## Join the today.

Get involved, have fun, share your military experiences and skills, and know what is happening that can affect your military pay and benefits.



Department of Michigan

Web Sites:  
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ROA National:  
[www.roa.org](http://www.roa.org)



Beneficial to your military career

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## What Is the R.O.A.?

Open to all branches of the services, the Reserve Organization of America is a professional association of commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, former officers, enlisted and spouses of the uniformed services of the U.S.A

Since 1922 and under congressional charter since 1950, Reserve Officers Association (R.O.A.), now doing business as the Reserve Organization of America, advocates for adequate funding of pay and benefits, equipment and training requirements, recruiting and retention incentives, and employment rights for all members of the Reserve forces. It advises and educates the Congress, the president, and the American people on national security issues.

## Formation

The ROA was founded on October 2, 1922, when several hundred officers, many of them combat veterans of World War I, gathered with General of the Army John J. Pershing at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., to formally establish a new organization to

voice the rights and concerns of military officers.

## What Does the ROA Do?

Conducts meetings and conferences at the department (state) and national level.

Hosts an annual competition for scholarships and awards open to R.O.A. members and their dependents.

Provides leadership awards to ROTC cadets.

Maintains a robust legislative agenda that is focused on national security and improving the lives of Reserve and Guard Component members.

Legislation and Policy Achievements include:

- Advocated Congress to authorize Reserve and Guard retirement and drill pay for the first time in 1948.
- Expanded lump sum retirement options for the Guard and Reserve.
- Helped secure \$207.5 million for the Navy and USMC Reserve to buy new C-40A Clipper aircraft.

- Helped to extend TRICARE to all serving Reservists and reduced TRICARE Reserve Select premiums.
- Help to halt the premature retirement of the A-10 "Warhog."

## Individual Benefits

In addition to the ROA voicing members concerns and needs to Congress at the national level, individual member's benefits include:

- Ability to network with old and new military friends.
- Access to current Congressional actions that may affect your pay and benefits.
- Entrance to the National and Mich.-Dept. ROA websites.
- Receiving Mich.-Dept. News Letter.
- Stay current with military actions that may affect you.
- Have a source to voice your concerns to Congress.

## Who is Eligible?

Any person who is a serving, retired, or former member of the federal uniformed or national services with separation under honorable conditions.

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## The Michigan Reservist

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