



The Michigan Reservist

The Official Publication for the Reserve Organization of America
Department of Michigan—www.roami.org

Issue 1 – 2023

FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

Welcome to the year 2023. I certainly wish that it will be a good one for our members. For some of us who were commissioned in the 60's, including myself, it's a number hard to grasp.

As we review recent events such as the impact of inflation on our military, the conflict in Europe, the age of the aircraft in the Air Force inventory, plus the dwindling stockpile of our munitions due the conflict, and recently the discussion of sending F16's out of our inventory to the conflict; one can only hope we have the right people in DOD and congress who can intelligently deal with these issues. However, we can do more than hope by reaching out to our elected officials to do the right thing without impacting our country's preparedness.

On the plus side I was glad to see the following headline, "That Pisses Me Off: Congressman to Lead Panel on Struggles for Troops Focusing on Pay, Food Insecurity." Congressman Don Bacon from Nebraska, a former USAF Wing Commander, is asking for a quality-of-life panel in the House Armed Service Committee. On the questionable resource side, the Air Force is asking for funds to hire additional agents to investigate domestic abuse.

DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE—UKRAINE / RUSSIA WAR



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

Save the date: Saturday 22 April 2023, for our annual department conference. The EXCOM selected An Analysis of the Ukraine/Russia War as our theme. We will have a speaker outlining a historical perspective of the relations between these two countries and the context behind the invasion. Also, speakers from the Army War College will present lessons learned from the war. The conference will again be held at Mulligans on Selfridge. Hope to see you there. A registration form is included in this newsletter.

Jack



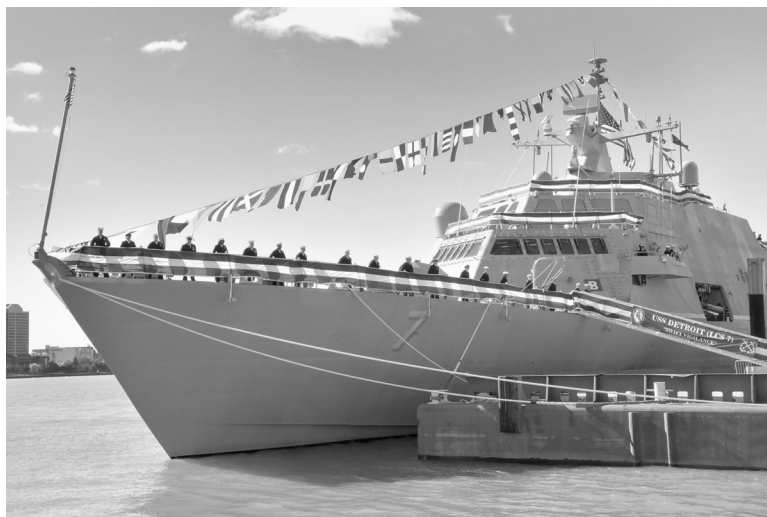
Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, NOAA

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

Is This Waste, Fraud and Abuse?

The U.S.S. Detroit, LCS-7, is a candidate for removal from service after only 6 years in the fleet and an initial cost of about \$440 Million. Commissioned in Fall 2016 with great fanfare in front of the Renaissance Center in Detroit, the Freedom Class littoral combat ship is a candidate for divestment along with 3 others ships of the same class, all built in Marinette, Wisconsin.

Nine Freedom Class were proposed for retirement by the Navy to save money but Congress required it to retain 5. The LCS class design began after 9/11 as part of a multipurpose fleet of small, quick ships that could operate close to the shore and handle a variety of missions such as maritime security, mine countermeasures and anti-submarine warfare in addition to dealing with threats like pirates in waters as shallow as 14 feet. The projected service life was 25 years. Two designs were proposed by 2 different builders, the Freedom variant and the Liberty variant, and both went in to production. Six more littoral combat ships are in some stage of construction with a total of 35 planned. At 389 feet in length with a displacement of 3,400 metric tons, it has a top speed of 45 knots.



The U.S.S. Detroit is based at Naval Station Mayport near Jacksonville, Florida and remains operational with an assigned crew and the timeline for final distribution that remains TBD. She had her maiden deployment in 2019.

Congressional comments include “complete financial malpractice”. The ships will either be sent to a disassembly yard for scrap, sold to foreign allies under the foreign military sales (FMS) program or transferred to foreign countries for free as “excess” de-

fense articles no longer needed by the U.S. military. No one in the Navy or in the Washington bureaucracy seems to be taking a fall for this fiasco. Your money, you be the judge.



From the Army Vice President

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

Training and Equipment Provided to Ukrainians

General Milley visited Ukrainians at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, Jan. 2023. At his left is Brig. Gen. Joseph E. Hilbert, commanding general, 7th Army Training Command.

Monday, 16 January was Day Two for Ukrainian soldiers at the U.S. Army's new training program. The lessons they will get in the next five weeks on weapons, armored vehicles and more sophisticated combat techniques are critical as they prepare to defend their country against the Russian invasion.

“This is not a run of the mill rotation,” U.S. Army Gen. Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said as he met with commanders. “This is one of those moments in time, where if you want to make a difference, this is it.” Milley, visited the sprawling Grafenwoehr training area to get his first look at the new, combined arms instruction. He said that it will better prepare Ukrainian troops to counter any surge in Russian attacks. More than 600 Ukrainian troops began the expanded training program at the camp.



Reporters followed Milley and watched interactions with Ukrainian and U.S. troops and commanders. The U.S. has conducted training at Grafenwoehr for years, including for NATO Allied Forces in Europe. But limited instruction for Ukrainian forces began last year, shortly after the Russian invasion.



The training is an effort to hone the skills of the Ukrainian forces. The five-week course will teach them to coordinate company and battalion-size units in battle, using combined artillery, armor and ground forces. It includes classroom instruction and field work that begins with small squads and grows to involve larger units. It will culminate with a complex combat exercise of bringing an entire battalion and a headquarters unit together. Ukrainian troops also recently arrived at Fort Sill in Oklahoma for training on Patriot missile systems.





From the Air Force Vice President

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

STEALTHY SQ-58A VALKYRIE NEEDS NO RUNWAY

The Airforce has been working on the SQ-58A unmanned combat aircraft since 2019, and recently released pictures showing its newest addition being launched by a static ground-based launcher and its own rocket-assisted engine. This is an unmanned drone which does not require a runway of any kind, either to take off or to land. Runway independence is extremely advantageous where traditional airbase infrastructure may have been destroyed, damaged, or otherwise unavailable.



Officials at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida announced in November, 2022, that they had taken possession of a pair of these drones which were then assigned to the 40th Flight Test Squadron. According to an article by Joseph Trebithick in January, 2023 in *The Drive*, the vehicles can be launched with a total weight of 6000 pounds, reach an altitude of up to 45,000 feet, and travel approxi-

mately 3000 miles.

The Valkyries at Elgin primarily support the Autonomous Aircraft Experimentation (AAx) effort, which is tied to the Air Force’s Skyborg project. Skyborg is centered on artificial intelligence-driven “computer brain”, along with a suite of other systems and technologies pointed toward autonomous functionality.

The Valkyrie has proven its ability to fly in formation with an F-16C Viper Fighter Jet, proving it can stay in formation with crewed platforms in at least a semi-autonomous mode.



NEW ARMY LIGHT TANK UNDER CONSTRUCTION

By Zamone Perez

General Dynamics Land Systems began assembling the Army's Mobile Protected Firepower system in November, after being selected in June to build the light tank.

The first new combat vehicle to join the force in nearly four decades, the MPF system is meant to improve mobility, protection and direct-fire capabilities on the battlefield, originally reported by Army Times sister publication Defense News

The system includes a new chassis – or base frame – design. The turret is new, said Kevin Vernagus, the GDLS director for the MPF system, while working to maintain an interior and controls like an Abrams tank.

The service expects to spend about \$6 billion over the course of MPF's procurement process. Estimates suggest that the total life-cycle cost of the program will total around \$17 billion.

The first production of MPF will be delivered to the service in late 2023, with an initial delivery of vehicles. However, the contract stipulates that the Army is allowed to purchase up to 70 more over the course of early production for a total of more than \$1.1 billion.

Beating out competitor BAE Systems, GDLS delivered 12 prototypes to be evaluated by soldiers in the 82nd Airborne Division. Despite positive marks compared to its competitors, GDLS is coordinating with the Army to fix some issues with overheating experienced at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona.

Army leaders plan on buying 504 vehicles meant to be in the service's inventory for at least 30 years. Most of the procurement should be finished by 2035.



BRADLEY FIGHTING VEHICLES ARE PERFECT FOR UKRAINE FIGHT

A report from Bloomberg suggests the U.S. Government is “considering sending Bradley Fighting Vehicles to Ukraine” in a future military support package. Bradley mini-tanks are exactly the type of “inoffensive” and non-escalatory tool NATO is looking for to help meet Ukraine's need for modern armor. As an amphibious troop carrier, clocking in at half the weight of an Abrams tank, the Bradley offers Ukraine a defensive, albeit robust, armored presence. Not considered a weapon for offense, the Bradley is still quite capable of dispatching almost any Russian vehicle on the battlefield.

Speedy and with longer range than most main battle tanks, it is perfect for armored break-outs Ukraine has employed to win back territory. America's large stockpile of almost 6,000 M2/M3 Bradley fighting vehicles may well offer Ukraine just the right combination of armored mobility, supportability, and “inoffensive” offensive punch to evict Russian invaders.



**RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
Reserve Organization of America
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN**

**2023 STATE CONFERENCE
22 April 2023
Mulligan Golf Center
Selfridge ANG, Michigan**

Theme: Ukraine War; Historical context and Analysis

Schedule of Events

0930-0945 Conference Welcome & Introduction

0945-1045 Ukraine/Russia/US historical/context review
Dr Matthew Pauly, History Dept, Michigan State University

1045-1055 Break

1100-1145 Analysis of Russian War Operations
COL Sarmiento, LTC Dukes, LTC Chadwick; Army War College

1200-1300 Lunch and ROA speaker

1300-1430 Department Business Meeting and Election of Officers

All speakers will be via ZOOM#

COST: \$20 conference fee at the door to include light Continental breakfast and Lunch

**Please confirm your attendance by either calling LtCol Bronka at 248-879-7357, or by email at bronkaj@comcast.net NLT 15 April 2023
If attending via Zoom, Zoom link will be provided at time of confirmation.**

Civilian Gamers Leak Sensitive Data

War Thunder users, also known as “gamers” to those who play video games, have accidentally leaked sensitive F-16 secrets online. An anonymous user apparently posted information from the manual from an F-16A fighter jet, the data not being intended for public export.

According to an article by Kyle Mizokami in January 2023, as- sive multi-player online (MMO) games are designed to be im- mersive experiences, but one such game has a unique problem: a player base that keeps posting secret information about mili- tary hardware.

War Thunder is a free game which allows players to battle against each other on land, at sea, and in the air. It is one of the largest MMOs currently in operation. It offers realistic models of tanks, infantry fighting vehi- cles, war ships and fighter planes, allowing individual players to fight against one another in massive battles. Some diehard fans are so committed to the game, that they do their own research in an effort to uncover infor- mation that they hope will help their game; they can then upload such data to the developer of War Thunder, on its public board.

No doubt, the company’s moderators are being encouraged to hide the contents of posts that might violate In- ternational Traffic In Arms Regulations, as well as statutes here in the USA. However, with posts being sub- mitted from veterans of militaries all over the world, and at all times of the day and night, it has been and will continue to be a difficult challenge.



Bath Irons Works Delivers Destroyer Carl M. Levin to Navy

USS Carl Levin (DDG-120) at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works. BIW Photo General Dynamics
Bath Iron Works delivered the future USS Carl M. Levin (DDG-120) to the Navy last week, the service announced. The Arleigh Burke-class destroyer finished acceptance trials in December off the coast of Maine.

“A Flight IIA destroyer, DDG 120 is equipped with the latest Aegis Combat System. The Aegis Combat System provides large area defense coverage against air and ballistic missile targets, and also delivers superior processing of complex sensor data to allow for quick- reaction decision making, high firepower, and improved electronic warfare capability against a variety of threats,” the service said in a news release.



Carl M. Levin is slated to commission into service sometime this year.

The FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act included language allowed the Navy to ink another multi-year procurement deal for as many as 15 Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, as lawmakers push the service to work up to buying three destroyers per year. The last multi-year deal went through FY 2022.

ROA
Department of Michigan
6779 Serenity Drive
Troy, MI 48098



Phone: 248-879-7357
www.roami.org

EMAIL NOTIFICATION!
Yes I can help reduce the
printing and mailing expenses.

Please send your email address
to: smurdoch@imanor.com
And future newsletters will be
sent via email attachment.



The Michigan Reservist

Opinions expressed herein are those of the editor or columnists and are not necessarily those of the Department of Michigan or the Reserve Officers Association of the United States.

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

“BUCK A YEAR”

_____ \$ 1.00 – Buck a Year
_____ \$ 5.00 – Donor
_____ \$10.00 – Sponsor
_____ \$20.00 – Benefactor

Make your contributions payable to:

ROA Department of Michigan

Send to:

**39842 Golfview Drive
Northville, MI. 48167**

Name: _____ Rank: _____

Street: _____ City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Chapter: _____ Branch of Service: _____

