



The Michigan Reservist

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Issue 1 – 2024

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army, Retired, President

As we welcome in the new year 2024, I am looking forward to a great new year for all of our ROA members. Your EXCOM is busy planning events for the upcoming year. We are organizing the annual Reserve Organization of America Michigan Department (ROA-MI) Conference. Mark Saturday 20 April 2024 on your calendar and plan to be at Mulligan's, Selfridge ANG Base, Mt. Clemens, MI. 48043, for the Conference. The EXCOM has worked to update the Department Bylaws and Constitution. A proposed copy is posted on our Website at www.roami.org. Take a few minutes to review the two documents and be prepared to vote on their approval at the Conference.



Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army,
Retired, President

We are reaching out to other military organizations such as: The Retiree Activities Office – Selfridge, R.O.T.C. battalions throughout Michigan, The International Armed Forces Council, Naval Sea Cadets, and more. Our goal is to open lines of communication and share resources, opportunities, and events with military groups throughout Michigan.

Our R.O.T.C. Awards Coordinator, LTC Jack Bronka, U.S. Air Force (RET) is in touch with R.O.T.C. units throughout Michigan regarding award ceremonies and medal sets. Hopefully, an R.O.A. member can attend. R.O.T.C. cadets and staff are invited to attend all or part of our Conference via Zoom at no cost, or in person for a luncheon fee. Associate R.O.A. Memberships are available for free to military under 35 years of age.

The Department Conference – The U. S. Space Force



Save the date Saturday, 20 April 2024 for our annual Department of Michigan Conference. The main presentation topics will be centered on the U.S. Space Force. How is it organized? What are its mission, defense strategies, and future outlook? The conference will be offered in both onsite in person and remote Zoom formats. Come and renew old friendships and learn new information. Looking forward to seeing you there. An agenda and registration form are included in separate pages of this newsletter.



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

**2024 STATE CONFERENCE
20 April 2024
Mulligan Golf Center
Selfridge ANG, Michigan**

Theme: Space Force: Offensive and Defensive Review

Schedule of Events

0930-0945 Conference Welcome & Introduction

0945-1045 Charles Galbraith, COL, USSF, Ret: Senior Resident Fellow for Space Studies, Mitchell Institute

1045-1055 Break

1100-1145 Space Force Speaker 2- TBA

1200-1300 Lunch and ROA National speaker

1300-1430 Department Business Meeting

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 13 April 2024
If attending via Zoom, Zoom link will be provided at time of confirmation.**



From the Army President

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army Retired, President

AI On and Off the Battlefield

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a crucial tool for many nation's militaries, both on and off the battlefield. With the wars in Ukraine and Gaza driving innovation, AI's role is likely to grow. Congress is pressing the Pentagon through legislation to move faster on AI to avoid falling behind on this nimble, but critical technology. The technology of the United States is one of our greatest assets. War is an accelerant of innovation. The longer that these wars go on, the more that we are going to see military AI innovations.

The V.P. and Director of Studies at the Center for a New American Security, Paul Scharre, recently commented in a PBS News article, on how militaries have adopted AI both on and off the battlefield, and how it might be used on the battlefield in the future. Scharre is also a former Army Ranger, Pentagon official, and the author of "Four Battlegrounds: Power in the Age of Artificial Intelligence."

Artificial Intelligence is already being used on the battlefield, not completely autonomous, by warfighters. "Now, humans are still in control of the fighting. But, AI is helping to process information faster. AI sifts quickly through satellite images and drone video feeds, and that helps militaries to better understand what is happening on the battlefield, make decisions faster, and target the enemy more quickly and accurately," said Sharre.



AI is only a guide or tool. What happens when we do consider having humans not be at all in control when these systems are fully automated? We are already seeing drones used in Ukraine that have the components needed to build fully autonomous weapons that can go out over the battlefield, find their own targets, and then attack those targets without any further human intervention. This raises very challenging legal and moral questions about human control over the use of lethal weapons.

AI can be applied to military logistics. Ask most operational commanders what they want for battle, and the answer will be more: fuel, munitions, and vehicles that are quickly delivered. What matters most, however is keeping the soldiers hydrated, fed, clothed, healthy, supplied, and armed. In warfare, those militaries that can keep their soldiers alive in the chaos of combat succeed. Those militaries that cannot do so fail.

Many informational tools have helped to better organize logistics, such as the telegraph, radio, telephone, email, cell phones and the time phased forced deployment data (TPFDD) of today's joint force. These tools have been studied and integrated into military science. Efficient command and control of logistical flow to the front lines provides great efficiency and advantages. Civilian supply chains are undergirding the success of the U.S. military in logistics and offer new opportunities. Amazon's logistical system, that uses AI, has great efficiency and speed. Opportunities exist to use artificial intelligence to do predictive analysis for combatant commanders. E-commerce portals could contact ordering officials about purchasing an item again based on their purchase history.



ROTC / JROTC

John Dolbee, Capt, USAF, Flight Commander, MSU ROTC

Air Force ROTC at Michigan State University



Currently hosting around 90 cadets, Michigan State University is home to the largest AFROTC program in the state. Providing a commissioning source for the United States Air and Space Force, it trains students from Michigan State University, Western Michigan University Olivette College, and Lansing Community College.

The program is available to all full-time students and encompasses approximately six to eight hours of military training per week depending upon the program level the cadet is in. Although designed as a four-year program, it can be completed in as little as three years by doubling years one and two or with prior military service.

During the academic year, students engage in academics, physical training, leadership development, and field craft to prepare themselves for leadership roles once on active duty. Several times per week, the cadets gather to complete these tasks with lectures and assignments based on leadership, defense policy, deterrence strategy, and near-peer competition.

In addition to formal training, the cadets also engage in activities outside of ROTC. Last year, nine cadets completed the Air Force Marathon, five completed the Norwegian foot march and two teams competed in the annual regional basketball tournament at Notre Dame along with a warrior skills competition at the University of Illinois.

In 2023, the Detachment commissioned 12 officers into the Active Duty Air Force and Space Force in the Pilot, Combat Systems Officer, Cyberwarfare, Intelligence, Nursing, Maintenance Developmental, and Civil Engineering career fields. This year the detachment will commission six Airmen into the Pilot, Combat Systems Officer, Remotely Piloted Aircraft Pilot, Chemist, and Judge Advocate General Corps.

The strong foundations of teamwork, discipline, and dedication are the building blocks for leader development of the next generation of Air and Space Force Officers. If you are interested in learning more about Air Force ROTC at Michigan State University or are an interested Alumni reach out to AirForce@msu.edu.



From the Naval Services Jim Semerad, CDR, SC, U.S. Navy, (Retired)

Jim Semerad, CDR, SC, U.S. Navy, (Retired)

Who Are the U.S. Naval Sea Cadets?

“We give young Americans skills, knowledge, and confidence through an amazing variety of training opportunities. Sea Cadets wear uniforms, work as a team in a disciplined environment, and adhere to our core values of honor, respect, commitment, and service,” explained CMDR, SC Jim Semerad (RET). More than 7,000 young men and women participate in our program each year.

The Sea Cadets are young adults, 11-17 years old and are organized like the Young Marines. These cadets drill once each month in Navy uniform, and frequently support Veteran events, parades, color guards, etc. As an adult supervisor, I organize weeklong or weekend training opportunities in honor guard, seamanship skills, how to handle a line or drive a boat. The young adults have a curriculum to follow that allows them promotion, similar to real Naval seaman, attend Boot Camp at Recruit Training Command for two (2) weeks, properly wear a Navy uniform, and render honor and respect. Adult Supervisors frequently lend their U.S. Naval skills to impart this discipline.



Sea Cadets in training on a Coast Guard boat.



Organized by the efforts of the U.S. Navy League, the U.S. Naval Sea Cadets has units in Michigan and around the world. The STEM program promotes Sea Perch (underwater robots), Cyber Patriot (Air Force competition on Cyber), and drones via the Navy League STEM Committee. Sea Cadet Headquarters is collocated with the Navy League in Annandale, VA across the Potomac River from the Lincoln Memorial at 2300 Wilson Blvd, Suite 200, Arlington, VA 22201. It is led by RADM Andrew Lennon, USN (Ret).

“While our cadets gain an appreciation for the sea services and military life, there is no requirement to join the military. Many former cadets enlist, and dozens attend service academies or R.O.T.C. Cadets who complete our “recruit training” are well prepared for the rigors of boot camp or officer indoctrination,” stated CMDR Jim Semerad (RET).





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

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

Navy to allow those without high school diploma or GED to enlist

The U.S. Navy will start to enlist applicants who have not graduated from high school or obtained a GED as the service continues to struggle with its recruiting goals.

"We get thousands of people into our recruiting stations every year that want to join the Navy but do not have an education credential. And we just turn them away," Vice Adm. Rick Cheeseman, the Navy's chief of personnel, said of the change, according to a report in *The Associated Press*.



The new plan will allow recruits who don't have an education credential to enlist as long as they score a 50 or above out of 99 on the qualification test, according to the report, marking the first time the Navy has allowed such recruits since the year 2000. Cheeseman said the Navy turned away over 2,400 potential recruits last year because they lacked an education credential, roughly 500 of whom could have scored high enough to get in under the new rules.

"I'm hoping all my recruiters have called all 2,442 of them in the last 72 hours, and we'll see how it goes... We'll try to get some test takers this weekend," Cheeseman told the AP. The move marks the second time the Navy has lowered certain standards in a bid to fight its continued recruiting woes, coming just over a year after it allowed for a higher percentage of recruits who scored low on the Armed Services Qualification Test.

The Navy failed to meet its goal of enlisting 37,700 new recruits last year, bringing in just 31,834. That goal is higher this year, Cheeseman said, with the Navy looking to bring in 40,600 recruits and have a total end strength of 337,800. "I need these sailors. So it's a stretch goal. We're telling our recruiters to go get 40,600 people to join the Navy," Cheeseman said. "We don't fully expect to get that many. But we're going for it." The move to lower entry standards is rare and has been resisted by other branches of the military, with leaders fearing that the lower performing recruits are more likely to wash out of boot camp or fall victim to disciplinary issues during their time in service.

Cheeseman acknowledged that risk and said recruits enlisted under the lower test score standards last year did wash out of boot camp at a slightly higher rate, 11.4%, than those who achieved higher scores before enlistment, 6.4%. Nevertheless, the Navy felt it had to make the move in order to grow the pool of potential recruits and meet the demands of the service.

The spokesperson said that the Navy anticipates the about 500-2,000 additional Navy enlistments per year by opening up to what are considered "tier 3" applicants for the first time since 2000.

Editorial—With regard to the present world situation and political atmosphere, what do you advise your children and grandchildren? Would you recommend signing up for military duty or avoid it? The Navy Reserve Program has switched back to a strategic mode from the operational mode adopted after 9/11. Operational Support Centers (OSC) are going back to Navy Reserve Centers (NRC). More on this topic next newsletter.



From the Air Force Vice President

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

Officer Training School Re-energized

The Officer Training School is an USAF and USSF commissioning program located at Maxwell Air Base in Montgomery, Alabama. OTS is one of three commissioning sources for the USAF, the other two being AFROTC, and the United States Air Force Academy.

Historically, AFOTS has produced the fewest officers per year of the three sources, but due to its relatively short training regimen, has been used to surge when necessary to balance out USAF manning levels. That ability will soon allow 175 trainees per class up to 26 times per year, considerably more than historically.

The new class will experience a new curriculum intended to train these airmen to be operationally skilled, emotionally intelligent, more flexible, and more realistic than in the past. OCS will now consist of 60 days of training intended to far more closely reflect what they'll do in an operational squadron. To beef up the transition from combatting terror groups primarily in the Middle East, to enhanced competition from China and Russia, airmen will have access to more wargames, and a multi domain operations lab; software will prompt them to plan, brief and execute missions in response to combat scenarios.

They will also practice expeditionary combat skills in imitation deployments. Perhaps equally innovative, is that classes will be tested on how well they react to 25 situations ranging from a security breach at a base, to a force on force fight.

“No one else is doing that level of training when it comes to Mission Command.” OTS Vice Commandant Col. Derrick Iwanenko said. Col. Keolani Baily, the school's commandant, unequivocally stated: “We can confidently, say that this is the most historic transformation within OTS history since we've been around as an institution.”

For a more in-depth article on this topic, please see the October 20223 issue of the “Air Force Times, page 8: A NEW OTS by Rachel S. Cohen, from which this article was liberally drawn.



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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.

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