



# *The Michigan Reservist*

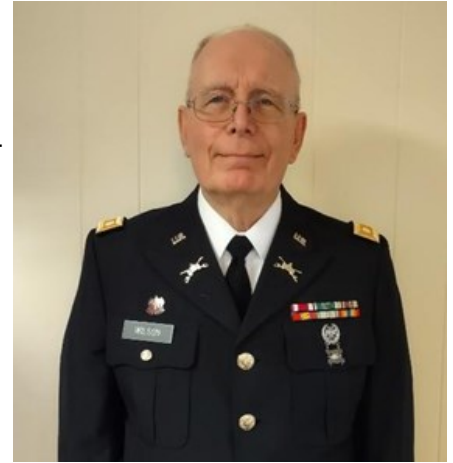
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**Issue 2 – 2024**

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army, Retired, President

The ROA-Michigan Department State Conference was convened Saturday, 20 April 2024 at Mulligan's, Selfridge ANG Base. The theme focused on the U.S. Space Force. Members were able to attend in person and enjoy a luncheon buffet or by a Zoom connection. A Space Force flag was added to complete our military flag set. An honored guest was MG Robert Smith III, a past president of ROA-National, who made brief opening remarks. Charles Galbraith, COL, USAF, RET, Senior Resident Fellow for Space Studies, Mitchell Institute opened the presentation by discussing the Space Force from a strategic perspective regarding the defensive mission in an expanding military environment. Stuart Pettis, COL, USAF, RET, discussed the start up and operations of the Space Command from a practical perspective, having recently served two years in the Space Force.



Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army,  
Retired, President

Matthew Schwartzman, ROA-National, Director of Legislation and Military Policy, brought us current updates and comments about ROA-National activities. He urged us to stay current and involved by using the ROA-National Website, [www.roa.org](http://www.roa.org).



Michigan 2024 Department Convention

The ROA-Michigan State Business Meeting was convened following the Conference and attended by the attendees. The draft of the new Constitution and Bylaws was discussed and approved by a unanimous vote. The EXCOM was thanked for their teamwork during the past three years on this major project. The financial report showed that we are financially sound. The operating income could use membership support through the Buck-a-Year Program, which was explained. We are fortunate to have so many Members for Life, who continue their support with this voluntary donation.

The EXCOM team worked together regarding involvement and interaction with ROTC and JROTC. COL Jack Bronka networked with units throughout the State to provide medal sets and certificates for top students, coordinate with ROA members to be onsite presenters, and received articles written by cadets for our Newsletter.

In accordance with the Bylaws, the current EXCOM officers serve a two-year term. The next elections will be held at the 2025 ROA State Conference.





## From the Army President

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army Retired, President

# Basic to Include Counter-Drone Training

Army recruits learn to identify and counter drone threats in basic training.

Many of our ROA-Michigan Dept. members have served with the 70<sup>th</sup> Infantry Training Division and been involved with basic infantry training of new U.S. Army recruits. The basic training subjects are continually being revised to keep pace with new developments on the battlefield.

Army Times reported that this evolution is continuing. The Army wants soldiers at every level to understand the danger of small drone attacks and plans to equip units down to the squad level with devices to take down those drones.

“It’s going to become a basic soldier requirement to identify, report and in some cases react to the threat,” said Sgt. Maj. Demetrius Johnson, senior enlisted advisor for the Joint Counter-Small Unmanned Aerial Systems Office (JCSUASO). “It’s MOS agnostic, it’s not specific to an air defender to be able to employ these handheld systems.” Maj. Gen. Sean Gainey, the office director, at the Center for Strategic and International Studies announced that the center released a report, titled “Countering Small Uncrewed Systems.”

The pair said that the Army’s Center for Initial Military Training is rewriting doctrine to include counter-drone training in boot camp as the force fields equipment, and opened the Joint Counter Small Unmanned Aerial Systems University, at Fort Sill, OK. The university’s first course is expected to be fully staffed in 2024.

The shift is a result of the growing air threat from hypersonic and cruise missiles down to hobby quadcopters, which has placed a premium on air defense platforms and soldiers. As the Army shifts its focus to large-scale combat, air defense battalions will integrate into the divisions, Gainey said. Each division will have a counter-drone battery manned by air defense soldiers. The Army plans to issue handheld gear for smaller drones down to the squad level. Gainey said his office is working to revise strategy with U.S. Special Operations Command, which has been tasked with attacking air threats before they launch, rather than relying on detection to stop an incoming attack.

Whether soldiers manning radars in Poland, for the Russia-Ukraine War, or aerial defenses across the Middle East, following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas War, air defense is now part of every deployment.

“In a crisis, the President usually reaches for the (Navy) carriers first, but they usually reach for air defenses second,” Tom Karako, director of CSIS’s Missile Defense Project stated. “The op tempo for Patriot personnel has been among the highest personnel tempo in the joint force, and with good reason.”

“We don’t have enough air defense capacity relative to demand, and we never will. Look at the way in which Ukraine has been expending air and missile defense interceptors and translate that over to what we would need in a China conflict. We are going to need to increase capacity a lot more.”

Traditional air defenders are manning the larger, more complex systems such as long-range interceptors and high-energy lasers for area defense, while maneuver forces use guns, nets and other handheld platforms for smaller threats. Currently, the Dept. of Defense offers a two-week counter drone course at Yuma, AZ, which is planned to lengthen to three weeks in fiscal year 2025. The Army conducts a master trainer course at the Maneuver Center of Excellence, Fort Moore, Georgia. Starting next year, the Joint Counter-UAS University at Fort Sill will offer separate, two-week operator and maintainer courses. Soldiers who pass these courses will receive additional MOS skill identifiers that will help units track the personnel capabilities in their formations.





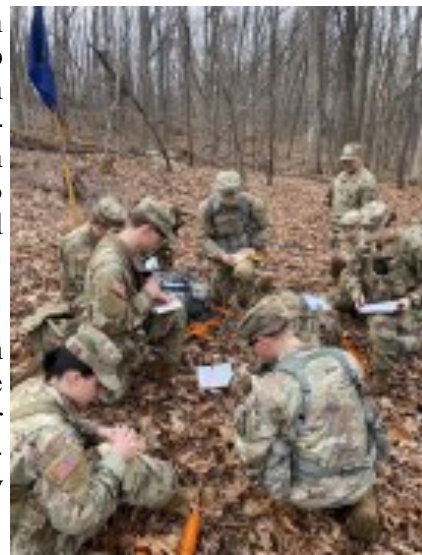
## ROTC / JROTC

Cadet Devin Barz, MSIV, University of Michigan ROTC

# Leaders and Best: Army ROTC at the University of Michigan

The mission of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program across the nation remains ever important in providing quality leaders to help the force remain ready to meet the threats faced by our nation at any given moment. The University of Michigan Army ROTC program "Wolverine Battalion" is home to over 60 cadets training to be future officers and leaders in the United States Army. The Wolverine Battalion works to prepare cadets to commission into all three components of the army from Active, Guard, and Reserve.

Even in the Wolverine Battalion the "Michigan difference" is seen through the caliber of our cadets. Indeed, nearly every one of our cadets have received a scholarship of some kind for their performance in high school or college, an attribute that few other schools can claim. While at Michigan, cadets continue to excel in academics, athletics, ROTC, and other activities they are involved with on campus.



Within ROTC, the Wolverine Battalion provides several unique opportunities to cadets for them to challenge themselves and develop as officers. This year, two teams were sent to compete in both the Bataan Memorial Death March as well as the Norwegian Foot March for the first time. In addition to this, cadets have access to professional development opportunities through meeting with alumni and other experienced officers during our annual officer panel, as well as guests hosted throughout the year such as Lt. Gen. Jody J. Daniels the 34th Chief of Army Reserve and 9th Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command



One of the highlights of the Wolverine Battalion experience is the annual staff ride for the senior class to Normandy, France. Staff rides are an important commissioning requirement for all cadets across the nation, however, the Wolverine Battalion took it a step further to become the first and, until recently, only school to conduct a staff ride in France. Cadets were able to learn a great deal about the history and sacrifice of the largest amphibious invasion in history while standing on location. From this experience, cadets reflect on the past to help prepare them for their future as second lieutenants in the army.

This year, the Wolverine Battalion will commission 17 new officers across all three components with a diverse range of branches. We also look forward to the rising class of juniors who will be attending cadet summer training (CST) at Ft. Knox this summer. We know that these and all our future classes will continue with the legacy of being Leaders and Best among their peers.



# Department Events of Interest



Department 2024 Conference

ROTC Awards and Award Dinner



Captain Hannagan Wall of Gold



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

Commander Matt Johnson, CO and LCDR Colin McFerran, XO

### Navy Reserve Center Detroit and the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions

The mission of NRC Detroit is to prepare Selected Reserve (SELRES) Sailors administratively, medically, and physically for active duty service in Fleet and Joint Force formations conducting world-wide operations across the spectrum of conflict. The NRC serves hundreds of SELRES, supported by a full-time staff of a few Sailors and civilians, and serves as a crucial hub for Sailors transitioning from civilian life to active duty during times of need. At any given time, we have 30–50 Navy SELRES deployed around the world, supporting the active component.



Due to growing strategic competition around the world, a renewed focus on maritime power has required the Navy Reserves to shift the way we train, man, equip, and prepare our SELRES for mobilization. As a result, in recent years, the Chief of Navy Reserve has released two initiatives that are currently guiding our Force to meet the Navy's future strategic demands. These initiatives are the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions (NRFI) and Battle Orders 2032. This article will focus on one of those initiatives, the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions.

Four years ago, the Navy Reserve Fighting Instructions were first introduced by the current Chief of Navy Reserves and Commander, Navy Reserve Force, Vice Admiral John Mustin, as an action plan to transform the Navy Reserves to meet the demands of an era of long-term strategic competition by ensuring every SELRES is "Ready on Day One." To accomplish this, the Chief of Navy Reserve's number one priority is **Warfighting Readiness**. To quickly and optimally achieve this, Vice Admiral Mustin put forth four lines of effort to **Design, Train, Mobilize** and **Develop** the Reserve Force.

**Design:** In line with Navy requirements, the Navy Reserve maintains warfighting capabilities best suited for the Reserve Force. This ensures all Reserve Force capabilities and capacity provide a net benefit to the Navy.

**Train:** Training and all time spent in uniform will prepare Sailors for their mobilization billets; therefore, ensuring all SELRES personnel are trained and ready now.

**Mobilize:** Develop the policies, procedures, and capability to mobilize the entire SELRES population of approximately 50,000 in 30 days when called to do so.

**Develop:** Instill a culture of excellence and harness the diverse talent resident in our Reserve Sailors and civilians to deliver warfighting readiness.

In conclusion, NRC Detroit stands as a vital asset in the effective implementation of the NRFI. By prioritizing training and readiness, the NRC ensures that reservists are prepared for the challenges of modern maritime warfare. As we look toward the future, NRC Detroit remains a beacon of excellence, embodying the resilience and dedication of the Navy Reserves and its Sailors.

The views presented are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the United States, the Department of Defense (DoD), or the U.S. Navy. The information above related to NRFI was derived from an article written by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Scott Wichmann





## From the Air Force Vice President

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

### Hurricane Hunter—An Exciting Career

The 53<sup>rd</sup> Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, a reserve unit from Keesler AFB, Mississippi, is presently finishing preparations for the next hurricane season, which starts June 1<sup>st</sup>, and ends November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. To the reserve personnel who make its missions safe and effective, a career as a Hurricane Hunter is beyond exciting.

An exclusive Air Force Mission, the Hunters are comprised of ten WC-130J aircraft loaded with weather-measuring equipment and five personnel each: two pilots, a navigator, an aerial reconnaissance weather officer, and a loadmaster. There are ten full-time and ten part-time crews operating during each season at Keester, and three separate storms can be fully covered simultaneously.

Part of the sheer excitement of a career as a Hurricane Hunter is the number of missions flown. In fiscal year 2023, the Hurricane Hunters flew 93 tropical missions into 16 named storms, and 48 missions during the winter. Since 2018, the demand for winter missions has increased more than 600%, and strictly hurricane missions has increased 18%. Neither type of mission is for the faint of heart.

Winter missions involve flying ahead of the system, rather than through it, like the hurricane flights do. Also, winter storm flights fly at altitudes of about 30,000 feet, rather than the 10,000 feet for hurricane flights. Winter flights track “atmospheric rivers,” or typical winter storms that can dump massive amounts of rain or snow along America’s coasts. The information obtained by these flights help to track, predict, and forecast the where, when, and how severe these and future storms may be. Both types of missions put strain on personnel, and also on the planes themselves.

Hail can be particularly damaging to the aircraft. A category 4 storm in September, 2022, required replacement of several aircraft components on one plane, as well as its carbon-fiber propellers. Also, violent shaking of the aircraft, the corrosive environment they endure, and the sheer number and pace of the flights, all make for both wear and tear, and high excitement on each flight. All of these factors are shadowed by the age of the aircraft fleet, the planes averaging 23 years of age, with each aircraft having flown more than 6,500 hours.

The net result of the remarkable planes and crews of the 53<sup>rd</sup> is that the accuracy of hurricane forecasts has increased by 20%, saving \$1,000,000.00 per mile of coastline damage. In addition, military bases are consistently forewarned of major storms, resulting in evacuation of planes and equipment that could total hundreds of millions of dollars. Who wouldn’t want to be part of something with such excitement and huge rewards?



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## 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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