



The Michigan Reservist

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army, Retired, President

Your ROA-Michigan Department has been hard at work. A Vision Statement has been written that provides goals and projects for the upcoming year. A major goal is the updating of our Michigan Department Bylaws and Constitution, which had become outdated.

Your Executive Committee (EXCOM) took the time to research existing Departmental and National documents and examine our current organizational structure and operations. The result is a draft set of updated documents that reflect how we operate in today's environment. Draft copies of both documents will be posted on our Website, www.roami.org.



Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army, Retired, President

All members are encouraged to review these and post comments. The Bylaws and Constitution will be an agenda item at our State Convention on 20 April 2024 at Mulligan's Golf and Conference Center Selfridge Air National Guard Base. Members will be asked to vote on the proposed Bylaws and Constitution.

Reaching out and working with other military organizations is another goal. We plan to work with the Retiree Support Office at Selfridge ANGB to help recruit volunteer workers and inform military retirees from all service branches of the services available. We have worked with college and high school ROTC battalions throughout Michigan by providing medal sets for top students. We hope to expand our role and serve as mentors and share our experiences with career minded cadets. We will continue to work with the International Armed Forces Council and build networking relationships with Canadian officers.

Events throughout the year may be open to ROA Members. Tours of TACOM, the Selfridge Air Museum, and the Yankee Air Museum are being considered to encourage membership involvement. We plan to host other events of interest where you can create new friendships and renew existing ones. Mulligan's at Selfridge ANGB as the location for the ROA-MI State Conference April 20, 2024 We hope that these energetic efforts will create more involvement and more new members for the ROA-Department of Michigan.





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

Patrol Squadron 45 conducts rare, all-female P-8A Poseidon flight

When Lt. Sahara Graft checked into Patrol Squadron 45 in February 2021, she and a few other women in the squadron shared a dream: to one day complete an all-female flight together aboard the one of the squadron's P-8A Poseidon aircraft.

"We always talked about how cool it would be for us to all fly together one day and even have an all-female flight," Graft told Navy Times Thursday. "At the time, it didn't seem possible."

Sheer numbers stymied the dream at the time, Graft recalled, because there were not enough qualified women to fill each crew position in the Poseidon, which requires nine personnel to conduct its anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions.

Still, in the coming years, as more and more female crew members joined the squadron, Graft and her fellow squadron mates, Lt. Sarah Hoffman and Lt. Kelsey Smallwood, didn't lose sight of their goal.



The flight included 12 aircrew members: eight officers and four enlisted sailors. Five women were also involved as ground crew and maintenance personnel.

11 percent of the Navy's winged population are women, according to the Navy.

The Navy conducted an all-female flyover of F/A-18E/F Super Hornets in 2019 to honor retired Navy Capt. Rosemary Mariner at her funeral in Tennessee.

Graft said the significance of what she and her fellow female comrades had accomplished set in as she left the plane after their dream flight had become reality.



Patrol Squadron 45 conducted its first all-female flight aboard a P-8A Poseidon aircraft out of Jacksonville, Fla., Sept. 21..

And when another woman pilot, Lt. j.g. Aubrey Ossenmacher, joined the squadron a few months ago, the women of VP-45 were adequately manned to pull off an all-female flight.

The milestone took place on Sept. 21, out of Jacksonville, Florida, during a training event that involved not only an all-female aircrew, but a ground and maintenance crew that were also all women. All told, 16 women were involved in the flight. All-female flights – especially ones including female ground crew and maintenance – are rare in Navy aviation, recognized as a particularly male-dominated field in the service.

While roughly 21 percent of the Navy's active-duty force were women as of Fiscal Year 2023, just more than



From the Army President

Louis Wilson, LTC, US Army Retired, President

U.S. Army Embracing Tele-Maintenance Beyond Ukraine

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Army is applying remote tele-maintenance to its most challenging logistical theaters, in Europe and the Indo-Pacific. The virtual maintenance effort that began last year has grown dramatically. The Army built a stand-alone facility and a repair parts warehouse. Ukrainian soldiers can now communicate with staff at the Army's U.S.-based depots, giving maintainers access to expert engineers and original equipment manufacturers. Experts stateside and in European depots and installations are communicating with Ukrainian maintainers via text message chats, pre-recorded video or live stream to work through issues or guide a repair.



Ukrainian soldiers prepare a M777 howitzer to fire. U.S. and Allied troops and contractors are providing real-time maintenance advice to troops on the battlefield

Remote capability isn't new, but the connection between international coalition forces and Ukraine is growing by the day and providing a road map for future battlefield plans, Lt. Gen. Christopher Mohan, the deputy chief of Army Material Command (AMC), told Defense News in an interview. "It has been a great enabler to the war fighting in Ukraine," Gen. Charles Hamilton said. "It's one of the game changers in a sense."

After Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, the United States quickly began sending weapons to Ukraine. Ukrainian troops soon needed help maintaining M777 howitzers and other equipment that they had received. So, the Army began offering remote maintenance support from Poland. Hamilton has witnessed tele-maintenance in action. In one case watching maintainers talk Ukraine soldiers through fixing a piece of equipment "that was already blown up" to get it back into the fight.

Now, AMC, working with U.S. Army Pacific and the 8th Theater Sustainment Command, is readying to use this tele-maintenance capability in the challenging environment of the Indo-Pacific. It will first try it in exercises, including the Defender series and Talisman Sabre in Australia.

"Not only are we going to take it to INDO-PACOM, we're going to take it to national training centers at Fort Irwin, CA, and Fort Polk, LA. We can make it a part of our doctrine and how we train," Hamilton said. "That's how good of an enabler it is."

The Army is using this experience to reform its thinking about "distributed sustainment operations on a highly lethal battlefield," said Mohan, who previously led Army Theater Sustainment in Europe



From the Air Force Vice President

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

Boeing F-15EX Eagle II

In 2018, the United States Air Force (USAF) and Boeing discussed the F-15X or Advanced F-15, a proposed single-seat variant based on the F-15QA to replace USAF F-15C/Ds. Improvements included the AMBER (Advanced Missile and Bomb Ejector Rack) system to carry up to 22 air-to-air missiles, infrared search and track, advanced avionics and electronic warfare equipment, AESA radar, and revised structure with a service life of 20,000 hours.

Single and two-seat variants were proposed, called F-15CX and F-15EX respectively, with identical capabilities. The USAF opted for the two-seat variant, which can be flown either by a single pilot or by a pilot and WSO for complex missions and, someday, controlling collaborative combat aircraft. One reason for this decision is that only two-seat F-15 models remained in production

The USAF bought the F-15EX to maintain fleet size as F-22 production ended, the F-35 was delayed, and its F-15s aged. Although it is not expected to survive against modern air defenses by 2028, the F-15EX can perform homeland and airbase defense, enforce no-fly zones against limited air defenses, and deploy standoff weapons. In July 2020, the U.S. Defense Department ordered eight F-15EXs over three years for \$1.2 billion. In August 2020, the USAF announced plans to replace F-15Cs of Air National Guard units in the Florida and Oregon with F-15EXs. The F-15EX made its maiden flight on 2 February 2021. The first F-15EX was delivered to the USAF in March 2021, and was flown to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida for further testing.

On 7 April 2021, its official name Eagle II was announced.[12] The FY2021 defense appropriations bill funded F-15EX procurement at \$1.23 billion for 12 aircraft, bringing total orders to 20 aircraft. By May 2022, the USAF had ordered 144 F-15EXs. It has proposed

reducing its orders to 80. The first operational F-15EXs are not to receive conformal fuel tanks. The Air Force's proposed budget for fiscal 2024 includes funds to buy 24 more F-15EXs,[16] which would bring the planned fleet up to 104 aircraft. On 18 April 2023, the USAF announced that the California and Louisiana Air National Guards would replace their F-15C/D fleets with the F-15EX. On 25 May 2023, it was announced that the 173rd Fighter Wing at Kingsley Field ANGB, Oregon, would become a Formal Training Unit (FTU) for the F-35A rather than the F-15EX. Basic F-15 training, for both the F-15E and F-15EX, will instead take place at Seymour Johnson AFB,





From the Army Vice President

Charles Thornell, LTC, US Army Retired, Army Vice President

AI, Big Data and Wireless Communications

WASHINGTON — Classes into the fields of artificial intelligence, big-data analytics and wireless communication technologies are now available across the U.S. Department of Defense.

In November, the Defense Department's Chief Digital and AI Office, or CDAO, announced the launch of "Digital On-Demand," providing both military and civilian workforces access to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's online learning library.

The initiative, made possible through the Air and Space forces' Digital University, is meant to foster a baseline understanding of AI and other emerging technologies. The CDAO office was established in 2021 to expedite the defense world's embrace of AI and best-in-class data practices.

"This resource demonstrates to the DoD workforce how they fit into the future of these advancements and further enables their adoption throughout the department," he said in a statement.

Results of a previous pilot show a vast majority of participants found the teachings relevant. The tools are available as the Defense Department invests money into AI and advocates for its ethical employment on the battlefield and in the boardroom.

U.S. Army Artificial Intelligence Integration Center (AI2C) implements Army's Artificial Intelligence Strategy. The launch of AI2C allows the Army to better connect with the broader artificial intelligence (AI) community and focus their efforts in this dynamic field. As part of Army Futures Command (AFC), AI2C will leverage the AI Hub and engage universities and companies from across the nation by building upon initial successes at Carnegie Mellon University and vibrant robotics and AI communities.



Synthetic Environments, Sensing, Communications & Networks, Internet of Things (IoT), and Human Performance. For more information, see Defense News' "Pentagon teams with MIT on artificial intelligence, big-data education" by Colin Demarest.



A ground vehicle and drone are seen at Fort Moore, formerly Fort Benning, during a robotics and autonomous systems industry day in August 2018.



From Retiree Council Chair

Noreen Diedo, COL (Ret), Council Chair

Military Retiree and Spouse Volunteer Opportunities

Military retirees of all services in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan have a resource to call on when an issue or a question regarding retirement arises. The Ft McCoy Lower Michigan Retiree Activities Council, located at the Selfridge Air National Guard Base dining facility is a source for either answering your questions or providing a contact where a benefits provider can help you directly. The Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) Conference, held in September, is the most visible example of what we do. We host the experts involved in managing your retiree benefits. They discuss any changes, and you have an opportunity to have face to face discussions about your topic. Throughout the year, volunteers staff the office weekly to answer phone calls, emails, and personal visits from fellow retirees and spouses.



Col (Ret) Noreen Diedo

The office is run and staffed comfortably by 12 military retirees of all ranks as well as spouse volunteers from all services. To date, we have nine volunteers and are in need of three (possibly four) new volunteers. We had two long standing volunteers depart on their final mission this year, and one after 18 years is moving on to new ventures. Our volunteer mission includes staffing the office four days a week plus hosting the September RAD Conference. The individual volunteers three or six hours per week; office assignments (your choice) are flexible. Your job will be to answer questions from as simple as, "What is the telephone number of the Exchange?" to "How are my TRICARE for Life benefits changing this year?" to the most serious: "My retiree spouse just deceased -- what do I do?" I guarantee all new volunteers will learn something new that benefits them each day they volunteer. Volunteers will feel a deep sense of reward by helping and giving back.



Please join us, or at least come in and visit with a volunteer staff member Tuesday through Friday. We like company. Our telephone is 586-239-5580. Email is selfrao@yahoo.com, and SANG Base address is Room 122, 164 Wagner St.

Noreen Diedo, COL (Ret), Council Chair

Selfridge Air National Guard Base or Selfridge ANGB is an Air National Guard installation located in Harrison Township, Michigan, near Mount Clemens. Selfridge Field was one of thirty-two Air Service training camps established after the United States entry into World War I in April 1917.





ROTC / JROTC

Scott Bunnay, CAPT, USN: University of Michigan, NROTC

Wolverine Battalion Midshipmen Are Focused on the Fleet

In support of Department of Defense priorities, the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) Unit at the University of Michigan trains student midshipmen and officer candidates to become commissioned officers in the world's most powerful naval force, one that continues to defend the Nation, our allies, our values, and our interests. As Ensigns in the U.S. Navy and Second Lieutenants in the U.S. Marine Corps, NROTC Michigan graduates will become critical components of our combat ready naval forces to campaign, deter, and as necessary, win conflicts and wars through sustained forward naval presence in support of the Joint Force.

NROTC Michigan has students from both the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University, comprised of scholarship and college program midshipmen and Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP) and Seaman to Admiral 21 (STA-21) program officer candidates. NROTC Michigan will commission nine midshipmen and officer candidates in spring and summer 2024 who will be Marine Corps ground officers and Navy Submariners, Surface Warfare Officers, Naval Flight Officers, and Naval Aviators.

In the summer of 2023, NROTC Michigan midshipmen and officer candidates participated in variety of rigorous summer training opportunities with the Navy Fleet and Marine Corps Fleet Marine Force. Incoming freshmen completed New Student Indoctrination at Naval Station Great Lakes, Illinois with new midshipmen from NROTC Units across the country. Based out of Norfolk, Virginia and San Diego, California, rising sophomore students spent a week with the Marine Corps and each of the Navy's surface, submarine, and aviation forces. Rising juniors spent time with Marine ground forces and on ships and submarines and across the globe with the operational units. Rising Navy options seniors trained with Navy submarine, aviation, and special warfare units.

NROTC Michigan prepares midshipmen throughout the academic year to be successful during summer Fleet interactions. The Fall 2023 semester kicked off with New Student Orientation of incoming scholarship and college program midshipmen. In September, Marine option midshipmen complete a Fall Field Exercise at the Fort Custer Training Center in Battle Creek Michigan, where the entirety of the evolution was conducted out of garrison for the first time. The Unit trains students on customs and traditions, where activities included

all hands teaming together over a 24-hour period to collectively run 248 miles, in honor of the 248th birthdays of the Navy and Marine Corps. Rear Admiral Darryl Walker then joined the Battalion for a Birthday Ball celebration.

In support of the vital interests of the United States, NROTC Michigan is proud to educate, train, and graduate warfighting officers to contribute to the maintenance of combat-credible U.S. naval forces needed to deter conflict and protect the security of our nation. Developed in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government, Unit graduates are highly motivated for naval service and are truly the leaders and best.



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The Michigan Reservist

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