



ANIMALS IN WAR & PEACE  
MEDAL OF BRAVERY  
AND  
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL  
CEREMONY

MARCH 8, 2023

WASHINGTON, DC

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## PAST AND CURRENT SUPPORTING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

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(at time of printing)

*The Honorable Jack Bergman (MI-1)*

*The Honorable Don Beyer (VA-8)*

*The Honorable Gus Bilirakis (FL-12)*

*The Honorable Sanford Bishop (GA-2)*

*The Honorable Julia Brownley (CA-26)*

*The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick (PA-1)*

*The Honorable Maxwell Frost (FL-10)*

*The Honorable Donald Norcross (NJ-1)*

*The Honorable Chris Pappas (NH-1)*

*The Honorable Mike Quigley (IL-5)*

*The Honorable Jamie Raskin (MD-8)*

*The Honorable Pat Ryan (NY-19)*

*The Honorable Dina Titus (NV-1)*

*The Honorable Susan Wild (PA-7)*

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## DISTINGUISHED GUEST

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*The Reverend Dr. Margaret Grun Kibben,  
Chaplain, U.S. House of Representatives*

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# SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

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## **Welcoming Remarks by Robin Hutton**

*President, Angels Without Wings, Inc.*

## **Invocation**

*The Reverend Dr. Margaret Grun Kibben,  
Chaplain, U.S. House of Representatives*

## **March on the Colors**

*Young Marines - 8th & I, Potomac River, Col. Wesley Fox Units*

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

## **Retire the Colors**

## **Chris Willingham**

*President, U.S. War Dogs Association, Inc.*

## **Introductions of Members of Congress, Mari Lou Livingood**

*President, The Livingood Group*

## **The Honorable Julia Brownley**

*California*

## **Presentation of Distinguished Service Medal**

### **DSM 4: Sgt York**

*Capt. Carlin Keally, U.S. Army Caisson Platoon Leader  
SPC Bryce DeGraca/ SPC Carlos Aispuro*

## **Presentation of Medal of Bravery**

### **MOB #12: K9 Jafar**

*Cpl. Jeremy Stevens, Baytown, Texas Police Department*

### **MOB #13: The Mocker**

*Tammy Call, Director, National Museum of the U.S. Army  
Paul Morando, Curator, National Museum of the U.S. Army*

### **MOB #14: MWD Paco P352**

*Brad Mrsny, U.S. Army, Handler/owner*

### **MOB #15: MPC Kay**

*Travis Harrison, 75th Army Rangers, Handler/owner*

### **MOB #16: MPC Shimanski**

*Brandon Marquez, USMC MARSOC, Handler/owner*

## **Procession of K9 Dog Teams and Veterinarians**

## **Blessing of the Animals**

## **Closing Remarks**

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## 2023 ANIMALS IN WAR AND PEACE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDALIST

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### DSM #4: SGT YORK

Army Caisson Platoon - Military Working Equine (MWE) (alive): A former harness racing horse, Sgt York served 25 years as one of the Caisson Platoon's most important and storied MWEs. He became a Caparisoned Horse (Cap Horse), a riderless horse that symbolizes an officer's final ride in battle, where empty boots are faced backwards in the stirrups. He was the Cap Horse in President Ronald Reagan's funeral, and countless other dignitaries. In 2004, he was selected as *Horse of the Month* by the US Trotting Association.

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## 2023 ANIMALS IN WAR AND PEACE MEDAL OF BRAVERY MEDALISTS

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### MOB #12: K9 JAFAR

Baytown Police, Texas, Multi-purpose SWAT, Narcotics Detection, Patrol, Belgian Malinois (alive): Jafar and his partner were called-up to a barricaded armed suspect situation where a suspect was reported to have piles of weapons and was firing shots from a handgun into his neighbors' homes. After an eight-hour standoff, K-9 Jafar was deployed into the residence, which had been heavily tear-gassed. Jafar located the suspect hiding in a pantry with two small dogs. Jafar apprehended the suspect, who in turn hit and grabbed Jafar by the head fighting with him as the cover officers moved inside and apprehended him without further violence.



### MOB #13: THE MOCKER

WWI, U.S. Army Signal Corps, Homing Pigeon: During the Battle of Saint-Mihiel in Sept 1918, Mocker arrived with a message from the frontlines, despite his right eye having been destroyed by a shell fragment and his head a mass of clotted blood. Thanks to Mocker's flight, the German artillery guns were silenced in only 20 minutes. Even with the loss of an eye, Mocker continued to fly once he healed, eventually credited with carrying 33 messages during the war.

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## 2023 ANIMALS IN WAR AND PEACE MEDAL OF BRAVERY MEDALISTS

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### **MOB #14: MWD PACO P352**

U.S. Army, Afghanistan, Belgian Malinois (alive): Deployed to Afghanistan in October 2012 in support of Operation Detachment Alpha/Special Operations Task Force. Paco led the unit during night raids on villages in extremely hostile territories. He was wounded with shrapnel but returned to duty after treated for injuries. Paco led a 30+-truck convoy 20 miles during an evacuation that was constantly fired upon with small arms and rocket propelled grenades. Paco positively identified 33 IEDs during different missions.



### **MOB #15: MPC KAY**

75th Army Ranger Regiment, Afghanistan/Iraq, Belgian Malinois: MPC Kay served from 2007–2011 as a Multi-Purpose Canine trained in apprehension, tracking, explosive and article detection, area searches, and hunting down fleeing insurgents. MPC Kay successfully completed over 200 Special Operation nighttime raids, over 75 day operations, and apprehended several high-profile Al Qaeda and Taliban leaders during his four deployments. Additionally, Kay located an important phone sim card that was thrown by a high value target during a raid that was the key that unlocked a new web of leaders in a specific terror cell.



### **MOB #16: MPC SHIMANSKI**

MARSOC, Afghanistan/Iraq/Jordan/Somalia, Belgian Malinois (alive): MPC Shimanski served 4 tours in 7 years. During one operation in Sangin, Afghanistan, the Team Chief was fatally wounded. Shimanski, his handler, and two other members of the unit rushed to the point of injury. Under extremely heavy enemy direct and indirect fire, regardless of his own safety, MPC Shimanski exited the vehicle with his handler to begin establishing a safe path to their wounded teammate and the surrounding area. The team cleared two hasty helicopter landing zones to evacuate their Team Chief. Shimanski performed to the highest standard, under gravely dangerous conditions, without error.

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## YOUR HOSTS

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### **ROBIN HUTTON**

Robin is President of Angels Without Wings, Inc. and has spent all of her adult life working in major event productions and the motion picture business as a writer and producer. She is the author of a New York Times bestseller, *Sgt Reckless: America's War Horse*, and *War Animals: The Unsung Heroes of World War II*. Robin and AWW spearheaded the dedication of six national monuments to SSgt Reckless around the country, and MWD Lucca K458 in Ft. Worth, Texas.



### **MARI LOU LIVINGOOD**

Mari Lou is the President of the Livingood Group, LLC in Washington, DC. The Livingood Group specializes in securing national partners with attention to conservation, government relations and animal rights and recognition. For over 25 years, Mari Lou has worked with non-profit organizations to advance their legislative and philanthropic goals in the Washington, DC region.



### **CHRIS WILLINGHAM**

Chris retired after 20 years of faithful service in the United States Marine Corps. He dedicated the majority of his career to the Military Working Dog (MWD) Program and served in key billets from a K-9 handler to K-9 Program Manager. Chris and his MWD, Lucca K458, were featured in Maria Goodavage's New York Times bestselling book *Top Dog*. On 1 January 2021, Chris assumed the role President of the United States War Dog Association, Inc. which supports military working dogs and promotes the long history of their invaluable service.

**ANGELS WITHOUT WINGS, INC., AND  
THE LIVINGOOD GROUP THANK THE FOLLOWING  
SPONSORS AND DONORS:**

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**With Gratitude and Special Thanks**

The AWP Nominating and Advisory Boards wish to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Sponsors and Donors for their work, wealth, and wisdom in celebrating and recognizing the 2023 animal medalists, handlers and family members.

With special thanks to the dog teams and veterinarians who participated in the event and procession. Thank you for your service to our country.

We would also like to thank the Young Marines Color Guard from the 8th & I, Potomac River, and Col. Wesley Fox units for participating in the ceremony for the third year in a row.

We are indebted to the Members of Congress who have participated in the previous medal ceremonies and those who are with us today. We especially want to express our gratitude to Congresswoman Julia Brownley for her introductions and support at each ceremony since 2019, and to Congressman Gus Bilirakis for his sponsorship of the 2023 House Resolution.

With special and warm thanks to The Reverend Dr. Margaret Grun Kibben for her insightful and beautiful Invocation and Blessing of the Animals.

A very special thanks to Mardu and Ron Lydic at Military Animal Project, Inc. for the printing services of our program and flyers, and to Deb Hellman for creating such beautiful programs.

With thanks to the Holiday Inn - National Mall for their wonderful hospitality to our guests and our animal medalists.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO THE AWP NOMINATING AND ADVISORY BOARDS

**Robin Hutton** - President, Angels Without Wings, Inc.

**Mari Lou Livingood** - President, The Livingood Group LLC

**Ron Aiello** - Chairman and Founding Member, US War Dogs Association, Inc.

**Dr. Richard A. Vargus** - Former Manager, DOD K9 Program

**Chris Willingham** - President, US War Dogs Assoc., Inc., USMC Handler

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**Dr. Jay Coisman** - Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons

**David R. Kontny** - Department of Justice

**Jocelyn Russell** - Monument artist, Sgt. Reckless & MWD Lucca K458

**Alex Schnell** - US War Dogs Assoc., Inc. Board Member, USMC Handler



THE  
**TIMOTHY T DAY  
FOUNDATION**



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