

CHAPTER NEWS

* Support for Soldiers; All Components, All Ranks *

2018 AUSA Annual Meeting & Exposition

The Association of the U.S. Army will conduct its 2018 Annual Meeting and Exposition on October 8 to 10 at the Washington (D.C.) Convention Center, located between 7th and 9th Streets, N Street and New York Avenue.

The meeting is North America’s largest exhibition of land power vehicles and equipment, and features discussion panels, workshops, and professional development sessions.

Last year our Chapter was chosen as Best Chapter for 2017 (250 members or less) This year we have 348 members.



Admission is free to AUSA members, but some events (Guard/ Reserve Breakfast, etc), require tickets in advance. Go to AUSA.org

For those wanting to visit for just a day, AMTRAK often offers roundtrip specials along the Northeast Corridor.

Delaware Chapter Awards Superior Merit Award at OCS Graduation



The Delaware Army National Guard conducted the graduation ceremony for Officer Candidate School Class 61 at the 193rd Regional Training Institute in Bethany Beach, Sunday, August 5. This year’s class graduated five candidates from the Delaware OCS program. Second Lieutenants Anthony Cuesta, Althea Davidson, Mathew Dorazio, Richard Idler and Eric Nelson received their commissions and were pinned their new ranks during the ceremony. The new second lieutenants took the oath of office in front of family, friends and distinguished guests. OCS Class 61 selected Brigadier General (Retired) Richard G. James as this year’s class speaker. BG James was a member of the first Delaware OCS graduating class in 1957.

We were honored to present the AUSA Superior Merit Award to Althea Davidson. Lieutenant Davidson also was awarded the Physical Fitness Award for scoring 300 on her



PT Test, the highest in her Class. That award was presented by Major General Carol Timmons, the Adjutant General of Delaware.

Congratulations and good luck to all of the graduates!



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**> Join us October 27 at 9:30am for a Chapter Social with Tour of the Air Mobility Command Museum at DAFB. Look for the Flyer....**

### Veterans Corner

Did you know the “Forever GI Bill” allows certain members of the National Guard and Reserve to transfer into the Post-9/11 GI Bill after they lost their educational benefits in 2015?

The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, known as the Forever GI Bill, passed into law last August, made several changes to Veterans’ educational benefits. One of the changes restored eligibility to those who were eligible for the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP), but lost it due to the sunset of the program.

Those who lost eligibility may now use that eligibility under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) sent notification letters to eligible individuals. The letters included a “Choice of Election” attachment that can be completed and returned to the address indicated in the letter. Those who return it receive a formal determination indicating if they are eligible for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and the number of months they have remaining.

Think you might be eligible or know a member of the Guard or Reserve who may be? If you didn’t get a letter and think you are eligible, you can apply by submitting a VA Form 22-1990 [here](#).

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Army News

No Fitbits on Deployments



Deployed troops will have to leave their Fitbits, Apple watches and other “geolocation devices” at home. A Defense Department policy announced Monday also forbids any device or app that tracks the location of the user.

Col. Robert Manning III told reporters at the Pentagon, “Effective immediately Defense Department personnel are prohibited from using geolocation features and functionality on government and nongovernment-issued devices, applications and services while in locations designated as operational areas.”

Portable Plasma

The U.S. Army has been granted emergency approval by the Food and Drug Administration to use a new type of freeze-dried plasma on the battlefield. The plasma comes in durable plastic bags, is more portable and less susceptible to damage than the current glass bottle system, as well as easier to reconstitute for medical use.

What to watch: The freeze-dried plasma is an example of Army Medical Command’s efforts to advance battlefield trauma care, part of a larger effort preparing for future wars in which evacuation of the wounded from front lines may be complicated.

Quote of the Month:

“The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the Veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation.”

President George Washington

President signs a bill to grow Army by 4000

President Donald Trump has signed into law a bill that moves the U.S. Army closer to its goal of a 500,000-member Regular Army. A 2.6 percent military raise, the largest increase in nine years, is part of the new law. He signed the bill surrounded by 10th Mountain Division soldiers.



The fiscal 2019 National Defense Authorization Act signed by Trump at Fort Drum, N.Y., increases Regular Army troop strength to 487,500, a 4,000-soldier boost that keeps the Army on course to achieve active-duty end strength of more than 500,000 by 2028 or earlier.

Army Vets do Alaska to Argentina Trek via Motorcycles

Four U.S. Army vets had a crazy idea; saddle up for a 19,000-mile journey from the Arctic Circle to the tip of South America, and become the first team to do it entirely over land.



After months of planning, it all came down to getting permission to negotiate the Darien Gap, a 100-mile stretch of nearly impenetrable jungle that straddles the border between Panama and Colombia. Even after nearly two years of emailing and communicating with Seafront, the agency in charge of protecting Panama's borders, Wayne Mitchell, the group leader, had received no clear answer. So there was only one way to find out if the group would be approved to cross through the Gap with their motorcycles; *Drive down from Alaska and ask.*

The team came together after the service to use their military skills and training to accomplish something nearly impossible. For 43-year-old Mitchell and his teammates—Mike Eastham, 50; Simon Edwards, 54; and Rich Doering, 59, it was doing one big adventure while they all could still ride. The search for sponsors was daunting, but eventually they were able to get enough support to acquire motorcycles, equipment and supplies for the trip. One sponsor paid for a camera crew, and Gerber knives even provided a 9600 lb. cargo van and supplies.

So on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2017, the four U.S. Army veterans set out on 650cc Kawasaki dual-sport motorcycles fixed with custom sidecars to provide the stability they'd need during the first leg of the journey. In order to reach the Darien Gap during Panama's dry season, they had to start in the dead of the Alaskan winter, where 35-mile-per-hour winds blasted sheets of snow so thick they could see only the ghost of the pavement in front of them.

It started on Day 1. They were 135 miles north of the Arctic Circle, just starting up the 4,739-foot Atigun Pass, when Edwards' electrical system malfunctioned amid the snowstorm. "I had no headlight, no taillight—nothing," he says. They started taking shelter in their tents when a truck rolled up. The driver told them the weather was going to worsen (-18°), and, "you have to make it to Atigun, or you'll freeze out here."



So after drilling fresh studs into their tires, the team drove on with Edwards navigating by the glow of Mitchell's taillight, the only thing he could see. They made it out, fixed the bike's electrical system, but 3 days later, in British Columbia, a car spun out and smashed into Doering, damaging the bike, and sending him to the hospital. He was OK, but very sore. Afterward, he struggled to keep up with the group on the twisty roller-coaster roads in northern California.

More to follow next month...or view the documentary, 'Where the Road Ends'

Future Events...

Chicks for Charity September Dinner - 18 September 2018 at 6pm, benefiting the Delaware Veterans Trust Fund, at Hooked Seafood and Martini Bar, 18585 Coastal Hwy, Rehoboth Beach. RSVP to chicksdinner@gmail.com. Great raffle and silent auction items!

Veterans, Military & Family Wellness Day - Sunday, 7 October 2018, Glasgow Park
The Delaware Military & Veterans Suicide Prevention Coalition Presents: "The Veterans, Military & Family Wellness Day". The event is free and open to all. In addition to the 5K, there will be family fun, face painting, food, music & more following the run/walk! 5K is at 10:30 a.m. (Pavilion opens at 10 a.m.), Glasgow Park, Pavilion #5 (at red barn). Help us raise awareness for suicide prevention!
Register at:

<https://www.signup82north.com/beventLive.aspx?EventID=NBI94200640>

National Meeting and Exposition, Association of the U.S. Army - 8-10 October 2018, Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC.

👉 **Chapter Meeting and Tour** - Saturday, 27 October 2018 at 9:30am, Air Mobility Command Museum, 1301 Heritage Road, Dover AFB, DE 19902

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Remember: AUSA membership is not an expense, it is an investment in soldiers and their families!