

Summer 2023

### Educate - Inform - Connect





## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT:

Rebuilding Our Leaders, Moving
Forward

Hello Everyone. How'd you like that first edition? We would like to

know! I thought it was very informative, educational, entertaining, and well written---what are your thoughts, feedback, and recommendations? Do forward your comments to our editors, Leif (pohickcreek@yahoo.com) or Bob (sempek97@comcast.net).

Summer is about over, and now, we are moving forward into the fall season with our upcoming major events: a September board meeting and "get together" in Charlottesville, Virginia; our 2023 Annual AUSA convention in October (9-11); and our annual Christmas holiday celebration, here this year in Central Virginia.

The 2023 AUSA Annual Meeting Theme is - "Be All You Can Be." AUSA says "this theme allows the ARMY to shine a light on the need to recruit differently and on the new ARMY brand." The registration has opened, and the deadline is Friday, 1 September; we would like your participation. Housing for the 2023 AUSA Annual Meeting & Exposition is now open also. If you receive your "News You Can Use," check it out; it has all the necessary information for your advanced planning.

I have been informed by our members that other events are on the fall horizon, read more included within this edition.

Board members have voted to change our quarterly meeting dates to monthly, therefore, starting September, we will implement this new schedule, minus special events.

Board members were delighted to hear some positive feedback from members concerning the first edition that their expectations of the newsletter were met and exceeded. I know that you would enjoy this

second edition, as you did the first, and as noted before, recommendations are always welcome.

The chapter needs you to participate in, or otherwise support, our programs. Together, we can make a difference and take the next steps to grow our chapter and find new ways to support AUSA and the ARMY community.

To our future: rebuilding our leaders and moving forward.

Thomas (Tom) House Chapter President

#### CHAPTER HONORS MG (RET) TIMOTHY P. WILLIAMS

by LEIF JOHNSON



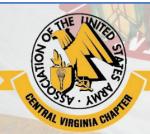
The Central Virginia Chapter proudly celebrated and honored MG (Ret.) Tim Williams on the occasion of his retirement from active service on Thursday evening, 20 July at Roma's Ristorante Italiano in Mechanicsville, VA. Hosted by the Chapter President, Tom House, members of the chapter, along with MG Williams met for an informal gathering to thank MG Williams for his many contributions to the Commonwealth, the Army, and the Nation, most recently as the 28th Adjutant General of Virginia.

It was a star-studded affair as attendees included chapter members LTG (Ret.) Patricia

McQuistion, AUSA former VP for Membership and Meetings, BG (Ret.) John Mountcastle, noted Army Historian and BG (Ret.) Walt Mercer, Chapter Senior Military



Advisor. COL (Ret.) Glenn Yarborough, AUSA 2nd



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Region President, also took time to drive from Northern Virginia for the event. Glenn gave a quick AUSA/2nd Region update that included current challenges in Army recruiting, AUSA's Young

Professionals Program, AUSA's Annual Meeting, and the topic of food insecurity for service members.

The food was great, the company better, and the conversation lively. MG Williams, a graduate of VA Tech, gave as good as he got from those more loyal to VMI. Personal tributes from the attendees punctuated the significant impact and personal relationship MG (Ret.) Williams had with those in attendance. Some funny, many poignant, it was clear to all that MG Williams is a deeply respected and much-admired Army leader.

The gathering concluded with the presentation of tokens of appreciation for MG Williams and his wife, Cheryl. Tom House, assisted by Walt Mercer and Bob Sempek presented MG Williams with a Central Virginia polo shirt and a Certificate of Appreciation. A bouquet of flowers was presented to Mrs. Williams.

Though retired from the Army, MG (Ret.) Williams is not through serving the Nation. He will soon assume a new position Principal Advisor for



Strategic Communications to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

#### **UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS:**

**19 September 2023, 1800 -** Chapter Executive Committee meeting via Zoom. Now recurring on third Tuesday of every month

21 September 2023, 5:30 pm-Chapter Social - Meet Basketball stars Ralph Sampson and Terry Gates @ Ralph Sampson's American Tap Room, 973 Emmet St N,



Charlottesville. All Chapter members, families and guests are welcome. Registration details forthcoming via email.

**9-11 October 2023 - AUSA Annual Meeting.** Walter E. Washington Convention Center, 800 Mount Vernon Place NW, Washington DC 20001

**11 October 2023, 0700-0900 -** 2nd Region Breakfast at AUSA Annual Meeting. Tickets required.

**17 October 2023, 1800 -** Chapter Executive Committee meeting via Zoom. Now recurring on third Tuesday of every month

**21 November 2023, 1800 -** Chapter BoD meeting via Zoom.

**TBD December 2023 - Holiday Luncheon & General Membership Meeting.** Details forthcoming at www.ausa.org/chapters/central-virginia-chapter and via Chapter email.

10 June 2024 - Army Birthday Golf Tournament







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# CHAPTER LEADER CONTINUES TO LEAD AND CONTRIBUTE

SOURCE: WTVR RICHMOND, Va. --

Cadets at Franklin Military
Academy are joining the ranks
of this season's graduates ready
to make their marks on the
world. Each has a backstory of
perseverance, dedication and,
according to COL (R) Carlton



Day, who runs the Richmond Public Schools JROTC program, lots of hard work and service to the community. "Since I've been at Franklin, we've done over 140 community service events,"

COL Day, also a JROTC senior Army instructor stated that cadets support the community by "providing Color Guards, supporting Veterans Administration events, Wreaths Across America, Coats for Kids, and food drives - just so many ways to contribute, I think kids get a sense of belonging. A sense of self-worth and a sense of giving back."

COL Day's role at Franklin Military Academy, the Nation's first public military academy involves lots of guidance and a little bit of tough love. "I think all kids want some type of discipline regardless," COL Day said. "I think they like direction. They want to learn. They want to grow, and they want to develop. And this JROTC program teaches that. Along with making better citizens, they are learning, growing and developing — and you can see that over the course of freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years."

But students and FMA administrators credit COL Day and his team with guiding these students on a journey to success. For the past 7-1/2 years, the highly-decorated military veteran has poured his heart and soul into the more than 500 JROTC students across Richmond Public Schools. Students and supporters said COL Day's passion is evident as he make sthe nearly two-hour trek to Richmond daily to

shape these students into responsible cadets and citizens.

Itziana Mesatovar, a recent Franklin Military Academy graduate, said COL Day is special. "He has something amazing that you don't see in just anybody," Mesatovar said. "He has such dedication, and he sees opportunities that are difficult for others to see." COL Day hasn't just guided the students at Franklin Military Academy, he has also led the JROTC program at four other Richmond Public Schools. "As they grow and develop with this short stint in JROTC, hopefully they will be positive citizens in their own communities," Col. Day said.

Additionally, COL Day has helped students earn more than \$24 million in scholarships over seven years. In fact, COL Day recently reviewed college scholarship options with Mesatovar, focusing on her next academic move that will save her family thousands. "That excites me. I didn't know that was possible," Mesatovar explained. "I didn't think I would go to college not having to pay a dime. They've helped me tremendously with every single step of the way." Her payback to COL Day, like many other cadets before her, is succeeding in the next phase of her academic journey. She is thankful and grateful for life



lessons and life skills she gained from a man who pushed his students to walk in their purpose and maximize their true potential.



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"Students reaching back out to you saying, 'Thank you.' To me, that's the most gratifying," COL Day said. "You can't put a price tag on that."

#### CHAPTER CONNECTS WITH CONGRESS

by Leif Johnson

On Thursday, 3 August the Richmond Virginia Chamber of Commerce hosted one of its Connect with Congress morning meetings. In this case featuring Senator Tim Kaine. The purpose of the meeting was to allow chamber



members and the public to hear and dialogue with Senator Kaine. Chapter President Tom House attended on behalf of the Chapter and presented Senator Kaine with an invitation to attend the AUSA Annual meeting.



#### Why Attend the Annual Meeting?

THE ARMY'S MOST POWERFUL EVENT COVERS EVERYTHING YOU NEED – ALL IN ONE PLACE.

The Association of the United States Army's Annual Meeting is *the* largest land power exposition and professional development forum in North America. Taking place over three days, the Annual Meeting is designed to deliver the Army's message by highlighting the capabilities of organizations and presenting a wide range of industry products and services. AUSA accomplishes this task throughout the entire event by providing informative and relevant presentations on the State-of-the-Army, panel discussions and seminars on pertinent military and national security subjects, and a variety of valuable networking events available to all that attend.

The AUSA Annual Meeting is designed to deliver the Army's message by highlighting the capabilities of

Army organizations and presenting a wide range of industry products and services. In addition to the expansive show floor filled with 700+ exhibitors, attendees have access to:

- Informative and relevant presentations on the state of the Army
- Panel discussions and seminars on pertinent military and national security subjects
- A variety of valuable networking events including ticketed dinners and receptions
- A hands-on opportunity to experience the latest technology in action

AUSA's Annual Meeting includes the total Army – Regular Army, Guard, Reserve, civilians, and family members. It is one of the three key communication platforms employed by the Army to educate and inform government, academic, civic and veteran advocates and leadership on Army priorities and issues impacting today's Army.

#### **CHAPTER OFFICERS & ADVISORS**

#### **Executive Committee**

President: 1SG Tom House, USA RET

Vice President for Programs: LTC Dave Sitler, USA

RET

Secretary & 2nd Vice President for Individual Membership: LTC **Erik Peterson**, USA RET

Vice President for Community Partners: Mr. Brian

#### Fortier

Treasurer & Immediate Past President: LTC **Bob Sempek**, USA RET

Vice President for Young Professional Program and Editor Chapter Newsletter **COL Leif Johnson**, USA RET

Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Ms. Jackie Fuller

#### **Council of Advisors**

**BG Walt Mercer,** USA RET – Distinguished Senior Advisor

**COL Carlton Day**, USA RET - Membership & ROTC/JROTC Programs





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COL Aaron Stanek, USA RET

Mr. Pete Svoboda

Mr. James Boykin

COL Tom Stephen, USA RET – Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)

LTC Ron White, USA RET – Governmental Affairs **COL Mike Flanagan,** USA RET – Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA), Central Virginia



medical needs.

#### **CAMP HOLIDAY TRAILS** SUPPORTS CHILDREN OF WOUNDED

BY LEIF JOHNSON

Just West of Charlottesville, Virginia, not far from I-64, at the end of a secluded country road sits a little slice of heaven - Camp Holiday Trails (CHT), a nonan outdoor learning and fulfillment experience for children ages 7-17 with

For the week of 31 July, though, CHT hosted another non-profit with an important mission - Camp Corral. Camp Corral aims to enrich the lives of children of wounded, ill, and fallen military members by providing learning, enjoyment, advocacy, and enrichment programs; in this case a week of fun programs provided by the counselors and staff of The symbiotic relationship between Camp

Corral and Camp Holiday Trails was a win for everyone, most importantly for the 47 kids in attendance Tuesday, 1 August was a special day for the campers as the Virginia Army National Guard was on station with two front



line ambulances and a cadre of officers, NCOs, and Soldiers to support the Camp. In addition, SGT Hero, AUSA's brand ambassador was there to support and entertain the kids.

Central Virginia Chapter, AUSA represented by COL (R) Leif Johnson. This was a recon of sorts for the chapter as COL (R) Johnson talked with personnel of both Camp Corral and Camp Holiday Trails as to a viable role for the chapter going forward - specifically in 2024. That will be up to the chapter to decide. Regardless of the decision, it was obvious that the 47 kids on site were having a great time and thoroughly enjoying being with SGT Hero and the Soldiers of A Co. 3-116 Inf and C Co (MED) 429 BSB.



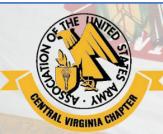
#### Want to do more?

Thanks to your engagement and support the Chapter continues to grow, and we are looking for new and energetic volunteers so we can continue to provide quality events that support our Army community. On-the-job training will be provided. Benefits: Doing Good & Feeling Good!

Vacant Chapter Leadership Positions Include:

- Vice President for Charlottesville Area
- Vice President for Civilian Affairs
- Vice President for NCO and Soldier Programs
- Advisor for Army National Guard Affairs
- Advisor for Army Reserve Affairs
- Advisor for Army Recruiting

Interested? Please contact Tom House, Chapter President at thouse5857@aol.com



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The Central Virginia Chapter urges you to patronize our valued Community Partners

- local businesses, merchants, defense contractors, and professional service providers who, by their membership, strengthen our Nation by supporting

America's Army!





If you are a small business owner, entrepreneur, or professional service provider, consider becoming a Community Partner with The Central Virginia Chapter and AUSA. AUSA and the chapter provide a platform to network throughout the area, access to professional development, benefits and discounts, a voice on Capitol Hill, direct support of Soldiers, Army Civilians, Veterans and Army Families while keeping you informed on what is happening to and for your Army.

Please go to <a href="www.ausa.org/membership">www.ausa.org/membership</a> for additional information and application. Or contact Brian Fortier, Chapter Vice President for Community Partners, <a href="mailto:fortierbj@gmail.com">fortierbj@gmail.com</a>, (804) 364-9846

#### CHAPTER DONATIONS NOW ON-LINE

Two things make our chapter a success. Active volunteers and funding. Your tax-deductible donations to the Chapter, including its Scholarship

Fund, can now be made on-line at www.ausa.org/chapters/central-virginia-chapter.

Of course, checks remain a viable and welcome option. Please make checks payable to the Central Virginia Chapter (#2809); mark them "Donation" in the memo area; and send them to CHAPTER TREASURER BOB SEMPEK at 14208 COVE RIDGE CT, MIDLOTHIAN, VA 23112. The chapter will provide a receipt by mail for your tax records. Your generous donations are deeply appreciated.

## HISTORY MAKING SELECTION FOR 7TH INFANTRY DIVISION

source: www.ausa.org

A career military intelligence officer with numerous combat deployments, including with the Army's most elite special operations forces, has been selected for another trailblazing assignment.



If confirmed by the Senate, Maj. Gen. Michelle Schmidt will command the 7th Infantry Division at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, making her the first woman to lead one of the Army's active-duty maneuver divisions.

She most recently was director of force development in the office of the deputy Army chief of staff for resources and plans, G-8. Her assignment to lead the 7th Infantry Division was announced in an Aug. 14 DoD news release.

Her selection comes after Maj. Gen. Laura Yeager became the first woman to assume command of a U.S. Army infantry division when she took command of the California National Guard's 40th Infantry Division in 2019. Yeager is now retired.

Activated in 1917, the 7th Infantry Division fought in Europe in World War I and the Pacific in World War II.



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Its soldiers also fought during the Korean War, remaining on the line at the Demilitarized Zone until 1971. The division deployed to Honduras for Operation Golden Pheasant and to Panama for Operation Just Cause. In

2015, the division headquarters deployed to Afghanistan for a yearlong deployment.

Today, it enables and sustains two Stryker brigade combat teams and a combat aviation brigade and participates in exercises and operations in support of U.S. Army Pacific and the Indo-Pacific region.

A 1992 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, Schmidt began her career as a platoon leader in the 2nd Infantry Division in South Korea, according to an Army biography. She was a company commander in the 82nd Airborne Division, served as the intelligence officer for the division's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment and later for the division, and was the senior intelligence officer and squadron commander for 1st Special Operations Detachment-Delta.

Schmidt also was the intelligence brigade commander for Joint Special Operations Command, chief of staff for the 82nd Airborne Division, chief of the Initiatives Group for the vice chief of staff of the Army, director of intelligence for U.S. Special Operations Command and deputy commanding general of the 10th Mountain Division. Before being assigned to the Army G-8, she was director of operations for the Defense Intelligence Agency.

In addition to a deployment to Haiti in support of Operation Uphold Democracy early in her career, Schmidt deployed numerous times to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan between 2003 and 2021.

In an episode of the Association of the U.S. Army's "Army Matters" podcast in September, Schmidt said she has enjoyed her Army career despite the tough jobs and numerous deployments. "The best part about it has, of course, been the people," she said.

About 10 years ago, a mentor gave her some advice about leading soldiers. "We can't just talk about it, you have to train it," Schmidt said. "You have to train folks how to be good leaders the same way we would train people how to shoot or do PT. You actually have to work on it."

And despite her years of experience, Schmidt said she's still working on her leadership abilities. "I learn every single day, and I take note of how to be better the next day," she said.

## CENTRAL VIRGINIA CHAPTER BY THE NUMBERS

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 3,832

LIFE MEMBERS: 118

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS: 3,400

BASIC MEMBERS: 60 FAMILY MEMBERS: 6

PREMIUM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS: 319

COMMUNITY PARTNERS: 2

#### MY MEMBER BENEFITS





# Exclusive Discount on Soldier Fuel Energy Drink

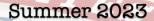
Soldier Fuel is the energy drink designed to be a point of pride for soldiers. It is their drink and is first aid for hard-chargers.

#### Features:

- No sugar
- 116 Mg Caffeine + Taurine. Studies suggest that taurine supplementation might improve athletic performance and that taurine combined with caffeine improves mental performance.
- 200% of 4 key B Vitamins.

Soldier Fuel dedicates 15% of its profits to pro-veteran charities. And AUSA members save 15% with promo code **AUSAMember** at checkout.





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## PODS Member Discount / Fall Savings

Members always save 10% on PODS, and from August 7th thru September 25th, you can combine your

member savings with their Fall Savings Offer (for new orders placed by 11:59 pm ET Sept 25:

- Local and long-distance moves are 30% off on initial delivery, first month's storage, re-delivery and final pickup.
- ADD your 10% member savings on transportation.

Choose from 2 container sizes or mix and match. Take your time loading on your schedule, right in your driveway. Keep it in your driveway or store at our secure location. We'll deliver your container to your new home, whether you're moving across town or across the country.

Access your member benefits at www.ausa.org/member-benefits

#### THE PACT ACT AND YOUR VA BENEFITS

source: va.gov

The PACT Act is perhaps the largest health care and benefit expansion in VA history. The full name of the law is The Sergeant First Class (SFC) Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act.

#### PACT Act changes include:

- Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras
- Adds 20+ more presumptive conditions for burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic exposures
- Adds more presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation
- Requires VA to provide toxic exposure screening to every Veteran enrolled in VA health care

- Helps the VA improve research, staff education, and treatment related to toxic exposures
- If you're a Veteran or survivor, you can file claims now to apply for PACT Act-related benefits.

## What does it mean to have a presumptive condition for toxic exposure?

- To get a VA disability rating, your disability must connect to your military service. For many health conditions, you need to prove that your service caused your condition.
- But for some conditions, the VA automatically assumes (or "presumes") that your service caused your condition; they call these "presumptive conditions." The VA considers a condition presumptive when it's established by law or regulation.
- If you have a presumptive condition, you don't need to prove that your service caused the condition. You only need to meet the service requirements for the presumption.

To apply for PACT ACT veterans benefits or for further information, go to <a href="www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits">www.va.gov/health-care/about-va-health-benefits</a>

#### AUSA 2023 National Awards Winners

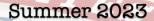
The George Catlett Marshall Medal for distinguished and selfless service will be awarded to GEN (R) Eric Shinseki, former Army Chief of Staff and Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**The General Creighton W. Abrams Medal** for exceptional service to the U.S. Army will be awarded to retired Lt. Gen. Robert Folev.

The Major General Anthony J. Drexel Biddle Medal for outstanding contributions to the Association of the U.S. Army will be awarded to retired Lt. Col. F.D. "Dick" Winter and Mary Jane Jernigan.

The Joseph P. Cribbins Medal for exemplary service by a Department of the Army civilian will be awarded to Renita Wickes-Deason, director of public affairs at Fort Irwin, California.





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The John W. Dixon Award for outstanding contributions to national defense from industry will be awarded to Harold Yoh III and Day & Zimmerman.

The Sergeant Major of the Army William G. Bainbridge Medal for contributions to the Army Noncommissioned Officer Corps will be awarded to retired Sgt. Maj. Scott Leeling, who served on active duty for 25 years and retired as the command career counselor for U.S. Army Europe.

The Lieutenant General Raymond S. McLain Medal is awarded to retired Maj. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, who retired in 2021 after serving as commanding general of the Texas National Guard's 36th Infantry Division.

The Major General James Earl Rudder Medal is awarded to retired Col. L. Gordon Sumner Jr., a member of AUSA's Potomac-Liberty chapter and Army Reserve Ambassador for Virginia.

The AUSA Volunteer Family of the Year Award for promoting the well-being of soldiers and their family members is presented to the family of Lt. Col. Robert "Jody" Shipley.



## First civilian receives payment for VNG Referral Enlistment Program

By Cotton Puryear | Virginia National Guard Public Affairs

Michelle Lard received a ceremonial check for \$500 as part of her participation in the Virginia National Guard's Referral Enlistment Program (REP) Aug. 6, 2023, at the State Military Reservation in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Lard, a guidance counselor at Salem High School in Virginia Beach, is the first civilian to receive the incentive.

Lard worked with area recruiter Sgt. 1st Class LaTesse Hall to enlist her son, Pvt. Ashton Lard, into the Virginia Army National Guard as an 88M motor transport operator in the Virginia Beach-based 1173rd Transportation Company, 1030th Transportation Battalion.

The REP awards Virginia citizens for providing qualified leads to the Virginia National Guard who enlist into the organization and complete their required training and the incentive is now \$1,000.

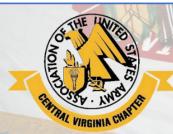
Lard and Hall developed a relationship because of Hall's frequent visits to Salem High School and working together to educate students about opportunities in the National Guard. She explained that as a counselor, she focuses on three "E"s for students: employment, enlistment or enrollment in a college and said some of students don't want to go to college, so she encourages them to consider enlisting in the military.

After talking with her son about options to pay for college, she thought on her experiences with Hall and suggested, "Get into the military, let them pay for your tuition."

The REP is open to any adult citizen of Virginia except those who work with a Virginia Army or Air National Guard recruiting element or who share a household with someone who does. Participation in the program requires interested individuals to fill out a few forms and become a Personnel Development Coordinator, or PDC.

The program has generated 36 enlistments, and a total of 53 people have completed the process to become PDCs. Incentive payments totaling \$13,000 have been paid out.





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## Newsletter

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