

*We Remember  
The Battle of Exercise Tiger  
April 28, 1944*

Walking the beautiful town square of downtown Mexico, Missouri, visitors are surprised to come upon a ship's anchor permanently mounted on display at the northwest corner of the grounds of the Audrain County Courthouse. This anchor is the foundation of the Exercise Tiger Army & Navy Anchor Memorial and serves as a reminder of the sacrifice that more than 200 Missourians, 8 from Audrain County, made during World War II as American soldiers and sailors prepared to help liberate France from the Germans.



**Exercise Tiger  
Army & Navy Anchor Memorial  
at Audrain County Courthouse,  
Mexico, Missouri.**



**LST 289 after the battle of  
Exercise Tiger**

*“Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation, for it comes only once to a people. Those who have known freedom and lost it, have never known it again.” — Ronald Reagan*

# Exercise Tiger Association

*“Out of many ... One”*



## Adopt A Serviceman Banquet & Awards Ceremony

September 21, 2007  
Stoney Creek Inn  
Columbia, Missouri



*The Exercise Tiger Association's recognition programs began with awarding three plaques to veterans of the WWII Battle of Tiger in 1989. Since then, more than 15 separate categories have been established to honor all veterans. The association provides special recognition to active members of our armed forces and to those that provide support for our veterans and our active troops. Since 1989 more than 800 awards have been presented to veterans, elected officials, students, military units, journalists and others. Each recipient must be nominated and must meet the criteria for the award for which they have been nominated.*



## THE EXERCISE TIGER ASSOCIATION'S ADOPT A SERVICEMAN PROGRAM

The "Adopt A Serviceman" Program is an annual event for the state of Missouri. It began in 1999 as the "Adopt An Airman" program and honored 4 airmen and NCOs as well as the Company Grade Officer of the Quarter from the USAF's Air Combat Command's 509th Bomb Wing. The program was met with outstanding support from Columbia and surrounding mid-Missouri communities. In 2000, the program was expanded to honor ALL branches of military service. As long as there is a need for our armed forces to serve, there is a need to honor those who are routinely placed in harm's way. It is truly an honor to recognize the individual efforts of enlisted NCOs and the personnel of the United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Navy and Marines. The Association began to recognize those who serve and protect us here at home by including police officers and firefighters in 2001. In times of conflict and during peace, our military, police and firefighters are always there serving. The Missouri chapter of the Exercise Tiger Association is proud to sponsor this program.



The advertisement for Stoney Creek Inn features a dark red background with a large, stylized logo on the left that reads "STONEY CREEK INN" in green and white. Below the logo, the text "Welcome to the Northwoods." is written in white, followed by "Columbia" in a large, elegant script. A central banner reads "The Official Hotel of Mizzou Athletics" with a globe icon. To the right, a list of locations is provided under the heading "Locations:" with a small globe icon. The locations are: Missouri (Le Creuse, Wausau), Missouri (Columbia, St. Joseph), Iowa (Des Moines, Waukon), and Missouri (East Peoria, Galena, Quad Cities, Quincy). At the bottom right, the text "Reservations:" is followed by the website "www.stoneycreekinn.com" and the phone number "toll free 800.659.2220 local 573.442.6400". A small logo is visible in the top right corner of the advertisement.

**STONEY CREEK  
INN**

Welcome to the Northwoods.  
*Columbia*

The Official Hotel of Mizzou Athletics

**Locations:**

- Missouri**  
Le Creuse  
Wausau
- Missouri**  
Columbia  
St. Joseph
- Iowa**  
Des Moines  
Waukon
- Missouri**  
East Peoria  
Galena  
Quad Cities  
Quincy

Reservations:  
[www.stoneycreekinn.com](http://www.stoneycreekinn.com)  
toll free 800.659.2220 local 573.442.6400



## The Exercise Tiger Association National Commemorative Foundation

The New Jersey Exercise Tiger Association began in 1989 with two veterans of the battle, Bud

Carey, LST 507, and Tom Glynn, LST 289. The executive director, Walter Domanski, Jr., is the son of the late "Tiger" vet Walter "Guns" Domanski, Sr., LST 496, and a former U.S. Navy Midshipman from the University of Missouri's NROTC unit. In 1996, with the creation of the Missouri chapter, the New Jersey Exercise Tiger Association was renamed The Exercise Tiger Association, National Commemorative Foundation. Since 1995 the national association has grown to include over 300 members as well as select honorary members.

Ceremonies to commemorate Exercise Tiger have been conducted on the east coast and in the midwest; five at VFW Post 3729 on Long Beach Island, three at the Philadelphia Naval Base, one at the Lakehurst Naval Air Station, the 1997 Midwest ceremony at VFW Post 280 in Columbia, Missouri. In 1996 the nuclear submarine USS Nebraska, part of Sub Group 10 based in Kings Bay, Georgia, held the first ceremony by a US sub while underway. The 1998 tribute was hosted by the Navy ROTC and held at Crowder Hall on the University of Missouri campus and the USS Maine, also part of Sub Group 10, held the first tribute to "Tiger," with veterans of the battle, while at sea. In 1999 the Indiana Tiger Chapter held the first ceremony in Indiana at Indianapolis and a stretch

of US Highway 54 between I-70 and Mexico, Missouri was dedicated "The WWII Battle of Exercise Tiger Expressway". Construction was completed on the Missouri Exercise Tiger Army & Navy Anchor Memorial and dedication ceremonies were held in 2000 in Mexico, Missouri, at the Audrain County Courthouse. The memorial was the site of the national commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Exercise Tiger on April 28, 2004.

Each year, the Barnegat Light [NJ] Coast Guard Station, has laid a wreath in the Atlantic Ocean to commemorate the Battle of Exercise Tiger. In 2006, through coordination between Barnegat Light and Bodega Bay Coast Guard Station [CA], memorial wreaths were laid simultaneously in the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans.

The Exercise Tiger Association is recognized by the Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of the Navy, Office of the Under Secretary of the Army for International Affairs, the US Coast Guard, the Governors of Missouri and New Jersey, by members of the Congress and Senate, and, in 1998, by the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It continues to promote and educate Americans about the historic battle of Exercise Tiger, advocates and conducts annual ceremonies in honor of the men and the memory of Exercise Tiger, and serves to advocate and lobby for all veterans of the United States. The Exercise Tiger Association, National Commemorative Foundation is a nonprofit organization, federal ID number 22-3273160.

*To join the Association, or to make a financial contribution, write  
c/o The Exercise Tiger Assoc. PO Box 246 Columbia, MO 65201*

## ONE TEAM, ONE FIGHT, ONE FUTURE...

**"No man is entitled to the blessings of freedom unless he  
be vigilant in its preservation."**

*- General Douglas MacArthur*

**One Team, One Fight** captures the spirit of cooperation. It brings together the entire Air Force, Army Marines, Navy, Coast Guard and civilians who have joined efforts towards achieving a common objective. In a time of profound change, we must build on our military branches and civilian alliances, form new fighting structures, capitalize on the information revolution and create one agile, responsive, effective force from our many individual parts.

**One Team** - Our forces are now unrivaled in might on land, sea and air. Combined in new ways, armed by the power of information in addition to weapons, the 21st century war-fighter will be prepared for the full range of operations that confront us in an asymmetric world. Augmented by our homeland defenders, intelligence community, and Coalition partners these capabilities position us to successfully engage in a far-reaching and unyielding campaign to defeat those who threaten peace stability, and justice at home and abroad.

**One Fight** - To defeat adaptive enemies, we must out-think them as well as out-fight them. By realizing a heightened state of shared situational awareness and knowledge amongst all elements of our team, we are positioned to achieve situational dominance. And, by implementing command and control structures focusing on interoperability and integration, we dramatically increase survivability, timeliness, and responsiveness.

**One Future** - Only recently has our training technology matured sufficiently to provide the training agility required to support operational agility on the Joint and Combined scale. Now, for the first time training as one team, through live and virtual exercises, we seek to provide an integrated suite of tools to address the full scope of staff to individual combatants across the Services. Our future is behind us in that our young students and children will build upon what we have built for them. We must give our best combined effort for them as they will carry on the vigilance for our country in the future.

We are a team. We share a common mission. We must build a common future. One Team, One Fight captures the spirit of cooperation and brings individuals together from across the entire Armed Forces, whether active duty, Reserve, Guard, or civilian, joining efforts towards achieving a common objective. This spirit of cooperation, along with the courageous and selfless acts of our American military men and women exemplifies the spirit of "Tiger".

It is in the spirit of "Tiger" that we have come here this evening, to honor and remember true American heroes - our armed forces of today. These men and women are routinely placed in harm's way because they have chosen to protect and defend the rights and freedoms that we enjoy every day as American citizens and to place God and country above all else.

*continued on page 4*



The events of this weekend are only one small way that we, as citizens, can let these vigilant guards of our God-given right to freedom know that we recognize all of the sacrifices that they, as well as their families, make for us each and every day. It was extremely difficult to select just a few of them honored here today. If possible, we would honor all of the members of our armed forces in this manner.

We honor our elected officials, veterans, journalists, military units, community leaders, students and everyday citizens that support our military during times of peace and times of war. We also honor their support of the efforts of the Exercise Tiger Association, National Commemorative Foundation, as it strives to advocate for, and bring recognition to, all veterans of the United States.

To each of you here today, **“Thank you”** for your service to our country. As we honor these servicemen and women that are here with us today, we also remember those who are here with us in spirit; those who have served, or continue to serve, in both world wars, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Grenada, the Gulf War, Afghanistan, Iraq and other places in this world where freedom and basic human rights are in jeopardy.



## EXERCISE TIGER ASSOCIATION AWARDS

### Captain Gregory G. Faughner Trophy for Excellence

Named in honor of CPT Gregory G. Faughner, USAF (ret). CPT Faughner began his 28 year military career in 1968 as a US marine serving in the Republic of Vietnam. He received 5 medals including the Bronze Star. In 1970 he moved to the United States Air Force. He taught at the prestigious Air Force Academy and made his final stop as the Missile Launch Officer of the 321<sup>st</sup> Strategic Missile Wing at Grand Forks. In all, Faughner received more than 18 major medals and decorations, including two unit citations while at the 321<sup>st</sup> for unit readiness. Faughner served as a Senior Aerospace Science Instructor in the Air Force JROTC program.

*Award is presented to outstanding units, enlisted personnel and officers.*

### Sergeant Rudy Baginski Marine Corps Trophy for Outstanding Enlisted Excellence

Named in honor of Korean War veteran SGT Rudy Baginski, USMC. In 1943 a 17 year-old boy dreamed of being the best. Too young for the Marines, he made a deal with the Navy to be assigned to the famed 2<sup>nd</sup> Division as a Navy Combat Corpsman beginning a journey that took him from the blood-soaked beaches of Saipan in 1944 to the bloody hills of Korea in 1952. As a corpsman with Marine Assault Group 53, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, Rudy not only treated Marines, but fought as one. On July 7, 1944, history's first Bonzai charge was made with 4,000 Japanese soldiers attacking the 2<sup>nd</sup> Div. The marines lost 10,000 men on Saipan. Rudy and his unit received the Presidential Unit Citation. By 1952 Rudy was a US Marine with the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division. On July 21, 1952, Rudy's 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment, Anti-Tank Company engaged communist Chinese forces less than 60 miles from Seoul during which his unit was virtually destroyed before help could arrive. Wounded, Rudy continued firing with his 75mm gun. For his actions, he received the DSM and Bronze Star. In all, Rudy received more than 22 medals and ribbons.

*Award is presented to Navy Corpsman, enlisted Marines and NCOs.*



# SPONSORS

The Exercise Tiger Association is proud to recognize this weekend's Adopt A Serviceman program sponsors:

University of Missouri Athletic Department  
 University of Missouri Air Force, Army & Navy ROTC  
 Officers and Staff of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing, Whiteman AFB  
 Officers and Staff of the 509<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB  
 Missouri National Guard  
 Robert and Carol Julian  
 WWII Exercise Tiger Veteran Charles Griffey  
 Banastre Tarleton Band  
 Jack's Gourmet Restaurant  
 Cosentino's Price Chopper, Lee's Summit



Country Kitchen



COLUMBIA



BENNETT  
PACKAGING



“Our nation’s military and law enforcement personnel work hard to protect us. We must thank them for their continued vigilance. Without their sacrifice we would be less capable of protecting our nation.” — Leonard Boswell

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**MSGT William E. Jackson Memorial Trophy  
for Military Career Achievement**

William E. Jackson began his career of service to his country by joining the United States Army in 1943 where his first tour of duty included an unfortunate stint as a POW in Germany during 1945. Following his rescue from the POW camp by GEN Patton, he remained in the European theater until 1949. His second tour of duty during the Korean War took him to Korea from 1950 to 1956. He retired from the Army in 1964, but continued to serve his country as a civilian working for the department of defense in Vietnam. During his military career, Jackson was awarded many medals including 7 Army Good Conduct medals. His volunteer duties included hand-to-hand combat military training instructor, military advisor - Saudi Arabia - instructed infantry tactics, ROTC instructor at Indiana University where he trained officers in military education and as an Integrated Armored Infantry instructor. He later decided to serve God by becoming a Baptist preacher. Four of Jackson's sons and two grandsons have continued the tradition of serving their country.

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**2007 Honoree for  
Military Career Achievement  
COL George D. Burgess, USAF (Ret)**

Colonel George D. Burgess entered active-duty service in 1973. Desiring to continue in service to his country, he entered the Air Force Reserve at Richards-Gebauer AFB in 1983. Since joining the USAFR, he has been promoted to Major in 1987, Lt. Colonel in 1993 and to Colonel in 1999. He has received numerous awards and decorations including the Meritorious Service Medal with two devices, Air medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with two devices, Army Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, and Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. His assignments as a member of the USAFR include A-10 pilot, instructor pilot, flight examiner, flight-test pilot, commander of the 442nd Operations Support Flight, commander of the 303rd Fighter Squadron, both deputy commander and commander of 442nd Operations Group, vice-commander, 442nd Fighter Wing and, finally, commander of the 442nd Maintenance Group.

As commander of the 442nd Maintenance Group, 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman AFB, MO, COL Burgess was responsible for the manning, training and combat readiness of two squadrons and one flight, which provide aircraft maintenance, munitions maintenance, and sortie generation and weapons loading support for the 303rd Fighter Squadron training and combat readiness. The group also manages the wing quality assurance program and maintenance training program.

COL Burgess is rated as a Command Pilot and has logged a total of 3,856 flight hours, 2,622 of those in the A-10. He has also flown the T-37 and T-38.

COL Burgess has also been actively involved with the Wright Flight program in Missouri.

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**Petty Officer Walter Domanski, Sr. Memorial Trophy  
The Naval Petty Officer Achievement Award**

Named in honor of Gunners Mate 3rd Class Walter "Guns" Domanski, Sr. Domanski served in the US Navy during WWII. During the now famous Battle of Exercise Tiger on April 28, 1944, "Guns" and his crew on board LST 496, began firing back at the attacking German Navy "E" boats. On June 11, 1944 (D-Day plus 5), LST 496 struck a mine only hundreds of yard off the Normandy coast. "Guns" was critical with a broken back and lacerations and made AP news as one of the first Navy casualties of D-Day. Petty Officer Domanski also served aboard the DE USS Keith and the Destroyer DeHaven. He saw combat in the North Atlantic, the Pacific and the Mediterranean. He participated in three major amphibious operations and received 10 awards and ribbons, including the Purple Heart.

*Award is presented to Petty Officers and CPOs.*

**Sergeant Charles Griffey Trophy for Army Achievement**

Named in honor of SGT Charles Griffey, Independence, Missouri. While serving in WWII, SGT Griffey was assigned to the 478th US Army combat Truck Company, US 1st Div. His first baptism by fire was during the Battle of Exercise Tiger when his LST was attacked. During D-Day, June 6, 1944, Griffey ferried troops from the beaches over the flooded marshes and into the hedge country of France. Griffey and the 478th fought German troops all the while transporting 1st Div. Army soldiers and supplies into Northern France. Griffey received more than 8 medals and ribbons, including 3 major battle stars and the Rhienland Campaign and Croix De Guerre with palm medals.

*Award is presented to Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserves enlisted, NCOs and officers.*

**Master Sergeant Lee A. Messina Trophy  
for Outstanding Enlisted Achievement**

Named for retired MSGT Lee A. Messina, a 20-year veteran of the United States Air Force. In 1980, MSGT Messina was selected to teach Air Force basic training at Lackland AFB. While there, he received the famed Air Force Blue Rope as Master Military Training Instructor. MSGT Messina has been awarded more than 6 major medals and decorations. MSGT Messina received the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Award for Outstanding Instructor in the Nation in 1983. As an Aerospace Science Instructor with the 931st NJ Air Force JROTC, his drill team was named national champions 3 out of 6 years.

*Award is presented to outstanding airmen and enlisted personnel*

**Major William D. Hobbs Trophy  
for Outstanding Public Affairs**

Named in honor of Missouri's own Bill Hobbs, Major, USAF (ret). During a 39 year career of active, reserve, and national guard service, Hobbs made stops in Germany, Saudi Arabia, Hawaii, Panama, and Honduras, as well as several stateside bases. He served in various Public Affairs assignments both as an enlisted man and as an officer. One of his most unusual assignments was as manager of the only television station in Saudi Arabia at the time. During the French-Algerian War, as a civilian photo-journalist, his party was ambushed by Arab guerrillas. His two companions were killed and Hobbs, shot twice, survived by playing dead. He continues to write free lance articles for such publications as Army Aviation, Air Force Times, National Guard, and Family. Hobbs is a member of the Exercise Tiger Association and has served as MC for several of the association's past programs.

*Award is presented in recognition of outstanding public relations to military officers or units or to civilians.*

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# 2007 Award Honorees

## Officer Candidate Robert Leidy, USN

University of Missouri-Columbia, Navy ROTC

~ Assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Medical Battalion where supervised and implemented \$4.5 million medical equipment upgrade to radiology rooms and medical clinics, instructed all assigned radiologists and technicians in use of new procedures and cutting edge medical technology resulting in savings of \$240,000 annually; Combat Water Survival instructor resulting in qualification of 40 marines, organized and executed 1<sup>st</sup> annual battalion 5K run/walk raising in excess of \$3,000 for charity ~

## SSGT Edward Leslie, USMC

University of Missouri-Columbia, Navy ROTC

~ Assigned to 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit in support of OIF, squad leader participated in over 100 missions ranging from offensive combat to humanitarian aid; as company navigator was responsible for planning routes and being lead vehicle in all company operations; upon return from OIF, assigned as advisor to prepare battalions for deployment for operations in Iraq; active in Habitat for Humanity and builds community support for USMC speaking to school students about experiences in Iraq ~

## CPT Adam Minnich, USAF

509<sup>th</sup> Logistics Readiness Squadron, 509<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB

~ Expertly managed \$1.2M in armored bus assets; coordinated security transportation on Baghdad's deadly Route Irish, transported 21K personnel / 1.5M tons of cargo while exposed to enemy fire; led joint Army/AF staff to transport SECSTATE/NATO/foreign diplomats and furthered Iraqi security efforts; mentors local school children, counseled Hurricane Katrina victims; Deployed Troop Ministry volunteer sending care packages to deployed troops ~

## SFC Mickeal E. Pennington, MOARNG

1139<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company

~ As 4<sup>th</sup> Platoon Sergeant in Baghdad, in support of OEF, SFC Pennington took the initiative trains, lead, and motivate his soldiers to accomplish their missions safely and successfully. He is always willing to continue to train newly appointed soldiers to prepare them for the unexpected situations of today's battlefield during the platoon's free time, stressing the importance of being ready. With his belief that soldiers must be able to take control of whatever situation they face when given the opportunity to lead others, he ensures that his soldiers are trained in the positions above their rank. He takes the time to fully explain his expectations for his subordinates to ensure a clear understanding of their responsibilities to themselves and their peers. He is involved in many activities to provide children with the reinforcement that they need to succeed in life and assists other parents in coaching kids sport activities. ~

## 1LT Charles E. Sheller, MOARNG

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 129<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery

~ Established 2 maintenance support teams and complete 2,200 work orders in less than 4 months; managed over 1100 pieces of wheeled equipment traversing more than 1.5M miles in support of the 42nd ID in Iraq, maintaining 95% mission readiness on all equipment; responsible for requisition, storage and accountability of \$1M of shop stock with \$0 loss; ensured repair parts were ordered and stocked to keep unit battle-ready and mission-capable; active member of US Field Artillery Association and MO NG Association ~

## The Battle of Exercise Tiger



What began as a top secret naval operation, to prepare US Army and Naval forces for the June 6 D-Day invasion, would end with one of the highest losses ever suffered in combat by the US Army and Navy in WWII.

At 0135 on the morning of April 28, 1944, eight Tank Landing Ships (LSTs) and their lone escort, the British corvette HMS AZALEA, were en route to the landing area. Slapton Sands was selected because its beach looked every bit like the beaches at Normandy that would be code named Utah and Omaha by the allies.

The eight LSTs of LST Group 32 formed convoy T-4. They were the support group for elements of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and 188<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Group already ashore at Slapton Sands.

The LSTs were carrying the 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Special Brigade, the 3206<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Company from Missouri, the 3207<sup>th</sup> Company and 462<sup>nd</sup> combat truck support companies as well as other elements of the US Army's engineer, signal, medical and chemical corps, and some infantry.

Miles south in the mouth of Lyme bay, lay the bulk of the Tiger naval force. This portion of the force was protected by the cruiser USS AUGUSTA and the new British "O" class destroyers HMS ONSLOW and HMS OBEDIENT, as well as the Tribal Class destroyer

HMS ASHANTI, and a covering force of motor torpedo boats. Anchored along with LSTs 55 and 382, they would be of no help to the ambushed LST force of T-4.

Attacking in the pitch black night, 9 German Navy "E" boats (torpedo) struck quickly and decisively without warning. LST 507 was torpedoed first. Explosions and flames lit the night. At 0217 LST 531 was torpedoed; it sank in six minutes and 424 of the 496 soldiers and sailors on her died. It was on this ship that the state of Missouri lost some 201 of its boys of the 3206<sup>th</sup>.

LST 289 tried to evade the fast German "E" boats but was hit in the stern. LSTs 496, 515, and 511 all began firing at their attackers. LST 289 joined in, returning fire while lowering landing craft to pull it out of harm's way.

At 0225 LST 499 radioed for help. Minutes later the lead ship, LST 515, sent out an urgent and chilling message: " 'E' boat attack." Radio stations along the coast picked up the dramatic calls for help; unaware of the top secret operation underway, the calls go unanswered. Only after an alert radio operator heard the words "T-4" did the Naval Command realize that the calls were from "Tiger" and sent help.

By 0240, the horror was slowly realized - two LSTs sunk, a third lay crippled. Of the 4,000 man force, nearly a quarter were missing or killed. Official Dept.

of Defense records confirmed 749 dead; 551 US Army and 198 US Navy. The death toll made "Tiger" the costliest battle to US forces at that point in the war, after Pearl Harbor.

On April 28, 1944, the LSTs darkest, yet finest, hour occurred. For one hour, the men and ships of Convoy T-4 fought the greatest naval battle ever faced by an LST force in history. Against superior enemy warships, the Tiger amphibious force held its own.

The German attack did not stop Exercise Tiger. Landing operations resumed later on the 28th. To the credit of the tenacity and determination of the soldiers and sailors involved in Exercise Tiger, the D-Day invasion at Normandy occurred as planned.

The events surrounding Exercise Tiger were officially declassified in early August, 1944; two months after the Normandy Invasion. On April 28, 1996, Secretary of the Navy, John Dalton, stated in his remarks "Tiger. . . was the LSTs' finest hour."



This history was assembled by the NJ/MO Tiger Assoc. and based on Navy reports, DOD reports, and eye witness accounts.

# Adopt A Serviceman 2007 Award Presentations

~ **SGT Charles Griffey Trophy  
for Army Achievement**

**1LT Charles E. Sheller, MOARNG**  
*1st Battalion, 129th Field Artillery*

**SFC Mickeal E. Pennington, MOARNG**  
*1139th Military Police Company*

~ **MSGT Lee A. Messina Trophy**

**SSGT Dustin D. Wright, USAFR**  
*442nd Maintenance Squadron, 442nd FW*

**SSGT Vernon Verschelden, USAF**  
*509th Contracting Squadron, 509th BW*

**SMSGT Charles "Mike" Pignotti, USAFR**  
*442nd Maintenance Squadron, 442nd FW*

~ **Walter Domanski, Sr. Memorial Trophy**

**OC Robert Leidy, USN**  
*Univ of Missouri - Navy ROTC*

~ **SGT Rudy Baginski Marine Corps  
Trophy**

**SSGT Edward Leslie, USMC**  
*Univ of Missouri - Navy ROTC*

~ **CPT Gregory Faughner Trophy**

**CPT Adam Minnich, USAF**  
*509th Logistics Readiness Squad, 509th BW*

~ **MSGT William E. Jackson Memorial Trophy  
for Military Career Achievement**

**COL George D. Burgess, USAF (Ret)**

## Spirit of Patriotism Award

- ~ Reverend Philip Niekamp
- ~ Andrew G. Grinch, UMC Athletics Dept.
- ~ Columbia Conv & Visitors Bureau
- ~ Brown Printing & Publishing
- ~ Stoney Creek Inn
- ~ Maggie George-Murray
- ~ Carol & Robert Julian

## Spirit of Tiger Award

- ~ John McClane, Country Kitchen
- ~ Denise Hawkins, USAFR
- ~ Ken Applegate, Jack's Gourmet Restaurant
- ~ Robert Hayden, CEO, Sierra Bullets
- ~ Cosentino's Price Chopper, Lee's Summit
- ~ Ron McCready, USCG

## Military Community Relations Award

- ~ Jack Calegari, Kansas City, MO

## Outstanding MO Educator in Aviation

- ~ Larry Washington, USAFR  
442nd Fighter Wing

## Alexander J. Toth Memorial Scholarship

- ~ MIDN Emily Merritt, UMC-Navy ROTC

## MAJ William D. Hobbs Trophy for

### Outstanding Public Affairs

- ~ MAJ David Kurle, USAFR, *Mohawk*  
442nd Fighter Wing

# 2007 Award Honorees

## SMSGT Charles M. Pignotti, USAFR

### 442nd Maintenance Squadron, 442nd Fighter Wing, Whiteman AFB

~ During Operation Mountain Thrust deployment to Afghanistan, aggressively engaged all sortie production issues producing 488 combat sorties in 30 days; maximized airframe utilization exceeding maintenance production operations by 20% while maintaining 24/7 alert coverage allowing unit to meet increase close air support mission requirements; revamped alert procedures cutting scramble times by 25%; directed enhancement of TF-34-100A jet engine performance enhancement allowing A-10s to carry increased bomb loads; developed and implemented plan to successfully relieve and redeploy 55 maintenance personnel while maintaining continuity of combat operations; developed dynamic training plans used to upgrade train jet engine technicians on complex engine maintenance practices, lifetime member of VFW post 5789 ~

## 1LT Charles E. Sheller, MOARNG

### 1st Battalion, 129th Field Artillery

~ Established 2 maintenance support teams and complete 2,200 work orders in less than 4 months; managed over 1100 pieces of wheeled equipment traversing more than 1.5M miles in support of the 42nd ID in Iraq, maintaining 95% mission readiness on all equipment; responsible for requisition, storage and accountability of \$1M of shop stock with \$0 loss; ensured repair parts were ordered and stocked to keep unit battle-ready and mission-capable; active member of US Field Artillery Association and MO NG Association ~

## SSGT Vernon Verschelden, USAF

### 509th Contracting Squadron, 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB

~ Presented Defense Meritorious Service medal for actions at Victory Regional Contract, Baghdad; managed as \$6M vehicle lease program and saved the government, thereby taxpayers, \$3M; awarded contracts in excess of \$28M in support of 83,000 troops; became subject matter expert and then trained 12 contracting officers on Camp Victory's new procurement system; procured \$8.7M pesticide spraying contract for entirety of Iraq having a huge impact to Iraq's \$1B date industry ~

## SSGT Dustin D. Wright, USAFR

### 442nd Maintenance Squadron, 442nd Fighter Wing, Whiteman AFB

~ Recently returned from Afghanistan after his volunteer mission supporting Air Expeditionary Force tour of 120 days. His leadership, dedication and technical skills contributed to the fully successful A-10 war jet mission in Afghanistan in the fight against the Global war on Terrorism. Performs most critical tasks in Structural Maintenance career field accomplishing repairs, major rebuilding and manufacture of structural assemblies not normally authorized at field level; performed aircraft paint refinish overhauls saving \$80,000 per aircraft over contractor costs; collaboration of forces to support AEF resulted in rapid acquisition of equipment and parts critical to the support of the combat maintenance, exhibited extraordinary courage under threat of hostile fire to complete critical repairs to A-10 fleet and C-130s; trained both reserve and active duty personnel in combat zone in art of aircraft structural maintenance ~

## Legislator of the Year

## Missouri Statesman of the Year

## Missouri Director's Award

### Tiger Unit Awards

- ~ University of Missouri Air Force ROTC
- ~ University of Missouri Navy ROTC
- ~ Barnegat Light Coast Guard Station, NJ
- ~ 509th Contracting Squadron
- ~ 509th Logistics Readiness Squadron
- ~ University of Missouri Army ROTC
- ~ 1st Battalion, 129th Field Artillery, MOARNG
- ~ Bodega Bay Coast Guard Station, CA
- ~ 442nd Maintenance Section
- ~ 1139th Military Police Company, MOARNG



# The Exercise Tiger Association's ADOPT A SERVICEMAN PROGRAM

~ SEQUENCE OF EVENTS ~

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~ Soloist ~

*Name*  
, Missouri

~ Opening ~

## Introduction of VIP's and Honored Guests

*Tri-Service ROTC Sabre Arch Ritual Entry*  
University of Missouri Army ROTC  
University of Missouri Navy ROTC  
University of Missouri Air Force ROTC

## Welcome to Columbia

“The Lord’s Prayer”

*Name?*

## Invocation

*John Kerr??*

Affiliation  
Jefferson City, Missouri

~ Dinner ~

~ Awards, Recognition and Remarks ~

## Master of Ceremonies

*Susan Haines, National Associate Director*  
Exercise Tiger Association  
Columbia, Missouri

## Selection Committee

*John McClane, Chairman*  
Columbia, Missouri

## Recognition by Missouri Governor Matt Blunt

*BR GEN Larry Kay, Missouri Army National Guard*

## Recognition by US Congressman Kenny Hulshof

*Tim Freeman, District Director for Congressman Hulshof*

## Recognition and Remarks by Exercise Tiger Association

*MSgt. Don Daly, USAFR(r), Missouri State Chapter Director*  
Lees’s Summit, Missouri

~ Presentation of Tiger Awards ~

## Alexander J. Toth Memorial Scholarship Recipient

presented by

*John Toth*

*In memory of his brother*

*Alex Toth, WWII Exercise Tiger Veteran*

## MSgt. William E. Jackson Memorial Trophy

*MSgt. Robert Jackson, 442nd Fighter Wing, USAFR*  
Knob Noster, Missouri

## Recognition by Secretary of the Navy

*Capt J. Basil Read, III, Commander, USN, UMC Navy ROTC*

## Recognition by President George W. Bush and Remarks

*C*

, Missouri

## Closing Remarks

*Susan Haines, National Associate Director*  
Exercise Tiger Association  
Columbia, Missouri

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