

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

Walking the beautiful town square of downtown Mexico, Missouri, visitors are astonished to see a ship's anchor permanently mounted on display at the northwest corner of the Audrain County Courthouse lawn. This anchor is on permanent loan to the Exercise Tiger Association for the National Exercise Tiger Army & Navy Anchor Memorial. It serves as a reminder of the sacrifice that more than 200 Missourians 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.

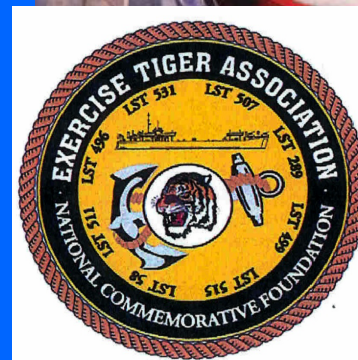


LST 289 after the battle of  
Exercise Tiger

*“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

# *National Exercise Tiger Association*



## *Adopted Servicemen & Women National Awards Banquet*

*September 12, 2008  
Boone Tavern & Restaurant  
Columbia, MO*

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## THE EXERCISE TIGER ASSOCIATION'S Adopted Servicemen & Women Program

The "Adopted Servicemen & Women" 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 United States Air Force Air Combat Command's 509th Bomb Wing. The program was met with outstanding support from Columbia and surrounding mid-Missouri communities and businesses. 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 military, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard.

The Association began to recognize those who serve and protect us here at home by including police officers and firefighters in 2001 after the national trauma and bombing of the World Trade Center and Twin Towers on September 11th. In times of conflict and during peace, our military, police and firefighters are always ready to serve. The Missouri chapter of the Exercise Tiger Association is proud to co-sponsor this program with other state and national entities.

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

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## 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.

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



## 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.

## As We Remember....

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.

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.



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# EXERCISE TIGER ASSOCIATION AWARDS

## **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 478<sup>th</sup> US Army combat Truck Company, US 1<sup>st</sup> 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 478<sup>th</sup> 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.*

## **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 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.*

## *Exercise Tiger Awards cont.*

## **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.*

## **Chief Officer Ronald McCready Trophy The Coast Guard Achievement Award**

Named in honor and recognition of Chief Officer Ronald McCready, US Coast Guard, who has been demonstrative for more than ten years coordinating the Exercise Tiger Association's Wreath Laying at Sea Ceremonies. Chief McCready has demonstrated great determination, leadership, and dedication to continually respect and recognize those who have served this great country on the seas from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans. He personally escorted WWII Exercise Tiger Veteran and members of the Exercise Tiger Association out on to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans for laying of the memorial wreaths honoring those who have served, those who are currently serving, and those who have gone before us.

*Award is presented to US Coast Guard enlisted personnel, NCOs, and officers*

## **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.*

## **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*



# **The Exercise Tiger Association's Adopt A Servicemen and Women Awards Ceremony**

## **~Sequence of Events~**

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### **~ Music ~**

Steve Meyerhardt

### **~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~**

Columbia City Official

### **~The Lord's Prayer~**

Steve Meyerhardt

### **~ Invocation ~**

Reverend John Kerr

### **~Dinner~**

### **~Awards, Recognition and Remarks~**

#### **Master of Ceremonies**

Susan Haines, National Associate Director

#### **Selection Committee**

MSgt. Don Daly, USAFR (r) Missouri State Director

#### **Remarks by Exercise Tiger National Foundation Dir**

Walt Domanski, Executive National Director

#### **Recognition by Missouri Governor Matt Blunt**

BR GEN Craig McCord, MOANG

#### **Recognition by US Congressman Kenny Hulshof**

Tim Freeman, District Director for Congressman Hulshof

#### **Remarks by Columbia Police Department**

#### **~Presentation of Tiger Awards~**

Adopted Servicemen & Women  
Legislator of the Year Award  
Police Cadet Award  
Alexander Toth Scholarship  
Outstanding Educator  
Missouri Director's Award  
Spirit of Patriotism & Tiger  
Military Community Relations Award  
MSGT Wm Jackson Memorial Trophy  
Exercise Tiger Unit Awards

#### **Recognition by Lt. General Bradley**

COL Anthony D. Johnson 442<sup>nd</sup> FW Vice Commander

#### **Recognition of Secretary of the Navy**

Capt. Robert Wilson, Jr., Commander UMC Navy ROTC

#### **Recognition by President George W. Bush**

BR GEN George B. Forsythe USA (r)

#### **Pat Kerr, Veterans' Ombudsman~**

#### **Benediction & Closing Song**

Reverend John Kerr

*America The Beautiful* by Steve Meyerhardt

### **~News About The Key Note Speaker~**

Dr. George B. "Barney" Forsythe was born at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy at West Point, and an M.A.C.T. degree in Social Psychology and a Ph.D. in Education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Forsythe was appointed as the 20th President of Westminster College in February 2008, after serving as Acting President since October 2007. He came to the College in 2005 as Senior Vice President of the College and Dean of Faculty following his retirement from the United States Army in the grade of Brigadier General after 35 years of commissioned service.

Prior to joining the Westminster community, he served at the U. S. Military Academy as the Vice Dean for Education for nine years. From 1977 to 1980, he was an instructor and assistant professor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the West Point. He returned to the Military Academy in 1984 as an associate professor and was promoted to Professor of Psychology and Leadership in 1991. In 1991 he founded the Center for Leadership and Organizations Research served as the center director until 1996. From 1994 to June, 1996, he served on the Dean's staff as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. His teaching includes undergraduate and graduate courses in leadership, education, research methods, and human development.

Dr. Forsythe's scholarly achievements comprise over forty publications and presentations (including one university-press book, ten book chapters, and ten peer-reviewed journal articles) on leadership and student development, post-secondary education, and assessment. He has received three awards for Best Paper by an Established Investigator from the Division on Education in the Professions of the American Educational Research Association. His current research involves leadership development, college student development, and assessment.

Dr. Forsythe has extensive consulting experience in the areas of higher education and leadership development. He has consulted with faculty at numerous colleges and universities on curriculum design and program assessment. He developed a leadership program for the Military Academy in Bangladesh, advised the Los Angeles Police Department on leadership training and development, and most recently led an international team that developed the concept plan for the National Military Academy of Afghanistan.

He and his wife, Jane, have grown children, Jennifer and Bryant, and two grandsons, Gavin and Graham. Jane is a retired pre-school teacher. They make their home in Fulton, Missouri.