



# MOTOR POOL MESSENGER

the official monthly newsletter of the  
**MILITARY TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION**  
visit us online at [www.MTAofNJ.org](http://www.MTAofNJ.org)

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Editor: Dave Steinert



LATER



THEN

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**THEN-** The Dodge WC-56, WC-57 and WC-58 (Radio) Command/Reconnaissance Military trucks were a variant of the Dodge WC series. The WC series was a prolific range of light 4WD and medium 6WD military utility trucks, produced by Dodge / Fargo during WWII.

Together with the ¼-ton jeeps produced by Willys and Ford, the Dodge ½-tons and ¾-tons made up nearly all of the light 4WD trucks supplied to the U.S. military in WWII – with Dodge contributing some 337,500 4WD units (about half as many as the jeep).

The Dodge WC-series came in many different, purpose-built, but mechanically uniform variants from the factory, much akin to the later family of High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles.

The WC-56 Truck, Command Reconnaissance, ¾ ton, 4x4 w/o Winch Dodge (G502) was a command and reconnaissance vehicle akin to a large Willys Jeep. It did not prove popular as it was heavier and not as maneuverable as the Jeep, and its distinctive profile made it a target. The soft-top included side-curtains, for better weather shielding. 21,156 units were built.

The WC-57 Truck, Command Reconnaissance, ¾ ton, 4x4 w/Winch Dodge (G502) was identical to the WC-56, but fitted with a Braden MU2 7,500 lb. capacity winch at the front bumper. 6,010 units

The WC-58 Truck, Radio, ¾ ton, 4x4 w/o Winch, Dodge (G502) was identical to the WC-56 Command / Reconnaissance Car, but fitted with a Signal Corps Radio set in front of the rear seat, and a 12-volt electrical system. Some WC-58 models may have been built, based on the WC-57 with winch, as well. A total of 2,344 radio equipped units were built, but it is unclear whether these were included as part of the WC-56 and WC-57 production.

**LATER-** Vietnam 1969, the M577 is a US tracked armored command post vehicle. It is based on an M113 armored personnel carrier chassis and is a member of the same vehicle family. Despite its age the M577 is still used around the world.

The M577 is basically an M113 with a raised rear part of the roofline. This vehicle is used as a tactical operations center. Hull of this armored vehicle is welded

## MTA 2020 Officers and Key Committee Heads

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of aluminum armor. Up to 40% of vehicle components are manufactured from light alloys. The armor of this vehicle provides protection against small arms fire and artillery shell splinters. Vehicle is also fitted with NBC protection system.

Vehicle has a crew of 5, including the driver. Crew enter and leave the vehicle via rear power-operated ramp with integral door. There is a commander's hatch. The M577 has a tent extension. It is attached at the rear, when vehicle is stationary. It provides additional work space for command staff. Furthermore, multiple M577 command vehicles can be connected via the tents. In traveling order the tent is carried on top of the vehicle. Onboard the vehicle there are map boards, folding tables, computers, radio and other command and control equipment. This command vehicle has a hand-cranked extendible antenna for long-range communications. This command vehicle has no defensive weapons.

This armored vehicle has good cross-country mobility. It can travel over sand, snow and mud. Despite its bulky appearance this vehicle is fully-amphibious. On water it is propelled by its tracks.

Although the M577 was developed as a command post vehicle it was also used for other roles. Due to its large internal volume it was used as an armored ambulance, medical treatment vehicle, fire direction center and for other roles.



**THE NEXT MTA MEETING WILL BE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5th 2020 AT THE WHIPPANY AMERICAN LEGION, LEGION PLACE, WHIPPANY, NJ. MEETING BEGINS PROMPTLY AT 7:00PM. GET THERE EARLY FOR PIZZA AND OTHER ITALIAN DELICACIES!**



## **Military Transport Association**

### **The MTA January 2nd 2020 Monthly Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at about 7:00PM by MTA President **Al Mellini** followed by The Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence led by Sergeant-at-Arms **Andy Salzano**.

**Approval of Minutes for December 2019**– Approval of the minutes made by **Dennis Dutcher** and seconded by **Dennis Vecchiarelli**. *Passes unanimously.*

**Treasurer's Report:** As reported by Al.

<b>Military Transport Association, Inc.</b> <b>Summary of Funds Activity</b> <b>For the Month Ending December 31, 2019</b>	
	<b>All Funds</b>
<b>Beginning balance from last month</b>	<b>\$ 55,756.22</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>60.60</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>(3,187.69)</b>
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>\$ 52,629.13</b>

Al reinforced the fact that despite the low income received from this year's Swap Meet because of the terrible weather that put a damper on attendance, the club still had a fabulous year financially. With incomes from parades, movies and TV shows, the club remains financially sound.

**Railroad Operation Battalion:** Al let **John Sobotka** give his reports first as John had to leave early (*but he sure had time for the food, though, wolfing down a couple slices of pizza and a few meatballs before he left*). John informed members that the Johnson Family appreciated everything the Club did for them since Sven's passing; John read a note sent to him from the family expressing their appreciation.

**T4T:** John gave the final update. He then informed members that the president of his company mentioned the MTA and their contributions to T4T on their website (photos were handed out). John asked for **Jack Pellington** to give the update on the toy count for 2019. Jack read out the donations by city. Total count: 21,420 toys. A round of applause for a job well done!!

**Membership Dues:** Al mentioned we collected \$3730 in dues last year and that payment of dues helps the Club fulfill its mission. Al reminded everyone that the **DUES ARE DUE NOW!! SEND CHECKS TO: MTA, P.O. Box 391, Budd Lake, NJ 07828.**

**Elections:** Al recognized **Ms. Anita Roberts** as the new Recording Secretary and he re-appointed **Andy Salzano** as the Sargent at Arms (*who then vigorously slammed the gavel to quell the dissent of boos!*)

**Donations:** Motion to allocate \$5,000 for additional donations for 2020 made by **Gary Schultz**, seconded by **Pat Dolan**. *Vote was unanimously approved!*

**Pat Dolan** recommended a donation of \$250 to the Fire Department of **Dennis Dutcher's** late brother, Michael, who was a fireman and First Responder. Motion made by **Bill Dekker** and seconded by **Frank Shane**. *Vote unanimously approved!*

**Frank Shane** recommended a donation of \$1000 to the *American Vet Dogs*. Discussions ensued about what the donation would cover, veterinary bills, training of the dog, placement of the dog with needy veterans. After a tearful plea by Frank from his knees, a motion to approve was made by a merciful **Pat Dolan** and seconded by heartbroken **Dennis Vecchiarelli**. First reading at January meeting, then published in newsletter with the second reading for approval at February Mtg.

Donation request for \$500 to the *Military Technology Museum of New Jersey* in Wall Township was made by **Gary Schultz**. Motion to approve was made by **Fred Schlesinger** and seconded by an emotionally drained **Frank Shane**.

**There then were discussions about a trip to the museum in February. If ten people are interested, a van will be provided. Gary has identified Feb 8 and February 15 as possible dates. Members interested should contact Gary at [garyschultz@gmail.com](mailto:garyschultz@gmail.com) or call 973 207 8955.**

**Quartermaster Report:** Gary Schultz reported that patches would be available for purchases and MTA car magnets will be purchased for sale. New T-shirts and hats are available for purchase. **Tim Swanick** suggested windshield stickers with the MTA Logo be created for members - Tim will investigate further. Al is also giving away XX size colored t-shirts. If you want one, email Al with color. He has red, blue and black. All calls will be held in confidence.

**Parades:** Discussions ensued about tossing candy from MTA vehicles during parades. It was pointed out that the club has a rule not to permit the tossing of candy. Al said his decision is that NO candy will be tossed from MTA vehicles in any sanctioned parade. (The reason being that sometimes kids situated along the parade route are so anxious to jump out to grab the candy that has been thrown, they don't realize that a deuce or a 5-ton could be in danger of hitting them).

**Swap Meet:** there was some confusion as to what Al meant at the December meeting when he said that despite there being no vendor dinner, overnight MTA workers would get "taken care of". What he meant is that the Club will support the overnight workers with free food by providing coupons to be used at the Rotary Kitchen. No decisions have been made yet on how to get free food to Scouts and Vets. The food subcommittee is working on it.

**Presentation:** **Pat Dolan's** presentation was on Women and their role in WW2; 350,000 women served during WW2. Women volunteered they were not drafted, they served in the WAACs (Women's Auxiliary Army Corps), WAVES, WASPS and the Coast Guard. He had a display of women's uniforms and gear worn during WW2. Pat spoke of the contributions and sacrifices made by women during wartime; women who flew B-52s and various other aircraft, who served as nurses in combat zones and on the front lines; women who were captured as

POWs in Okinawa, and the Philippines; wounded on hospital ships, women who were awarded the Bronze and Silver Star for their service. *NICE PRESENTATION PAT!!*



# COLLECTOR'S CORNER

## The LARC-LX

By Harold "The Ole Geezer" Ratzburg

So there I was, cruising west on SR16, out of St Augustine, FL, when I noticed, beside the road, the BIGGEST, wheeled U.S. Army vehicle I had ever seen. It was parked in front of the Military Museum of North Florida in Green Cove Springs, FL, as an attention getter for the museum, and believe me, it really got my attention. Of course, being in the Military Vehicle hobby, anything that is OD gets my attention, but this thing had lettered on its side "U.S. Army LARC-LX 46". And...it was BIG and on wheels! At this time, my little Frau and I were on our way to a BBQ cook off, but I knew I would have to come back.

On a return trip to the site, I was able to really look the vehicle over and visit the museum and meet some of the volunteer Veterans that were working there and kept the place in operation. The big vehicle was a LARC-LX, which stands for "Lighter, Amphibious Resupply, Cargo, 60 ton", and so, yes...it also floats.



**Motion to Adjourn:** Dennis Dutcher/seconded by Fred Schlesinger at which point 10 members crowded around Pat's display to get a closer look at his good stuff. *(Anita had her eye on one of the WAAC'S uniforms. She thought that would make her look more official at the meetings).*

**PS – DUES ARE DUE NOW!! SEND CHECKS TO: MTA, P.O. Box 391, Budd Lake, NJ 07828.**

Respectfully Submitted  
By  
Anita Roberts





The LARC-LX was used to transport wheeled and tracked vehicles, including beach preparation equipment and general cargo from ship to shore or to supply points inland. It was also capable of transporting 40-foot shipping containers which could be landed from the LARC either by crane, straddle carriers, or rollers. Because it was so big, it was the only amphibious vehicle in the U.S. Army service capable of landing on a beach through surf. As big as it was, the LARC-LX was carried as deck cargo on a commercial vessel or heavy lift ship to where it was needed overseas.



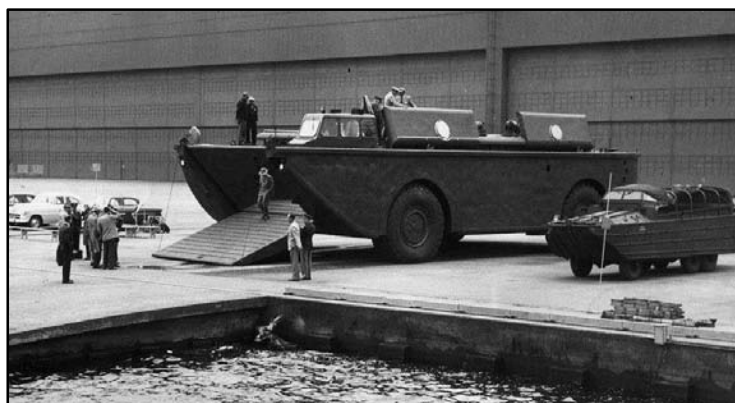
The LARC is a welded steel hulled amphibious cargo vehicle. It could carry up to 100 tons of cargo or 200 people, but a more typical load was 60 tons of cargo or 120 people. The vehicle was powered by four 265 hp GMC diesel engines positioned in the sides of the hull, each of which drove one wheel on land. Pairs of engines were coupled to drive each of the two 1.2 meter diameter propellers, which propelled the vehicles in the water. Its top speed was 20 mph on land or 7.5 mph when it was afloat. The operator drove from a small cab on the port (left side ---for us land-lubbers) on the rear of the vehicle. Size wise, the LARC as a wheeled vehicle is BIG. Its length is over 62 feet, its width is over 26 feet and its height is 19 feet. Kind of like the size of a billboard when you look at it from the side.



The first LARC type vehicle had its maiden voyage in 1952 in Washington State. The first action they saw was in 1967 when they were sent to Vietnam to support the 101st Airborne and the 1st Cavalry Division in 1968. The last amphibious LARC company in the U.S. Army was deactivated in 2001, so they had a service life of 49 years. I don't know how many LARC's were built, but to my personal knowledge, only two remain, the one in Green Cove Springs and another in the Marshall Museum in Overloon, Netherlands.



A retired USMC Sergeant Major Earl Salmons working at the museum told me what happened to some 40 of the old war vehicles in Vietnam. When they were no longer needed, they were piloted out into the Pacific Ocean and sunk, of use only to the fishes to hide in. It kind of brings a tear to my eye, but that's the way it is in this world.



The LARC parked by the museum has an interesting history, as told to me by the curator, Herb Speidelman, (Lt Col, USMC Ret.) It seems that the government decided that old LARC No. 46 needed a rebuild at one point in its career. The Government then spent like \$400,000 on the rebuild and then decided to sell it off as surplus. (Notice a little waste of funds here?) Along came a man from New Jersey, a casket maker of all things, who must have made a lot of money at what he was doing. The man owned an island somewhere down in the tropics and wanted a LARC to help with construction work, so he bid on it and won it. Something went wrong and he parked No.46 about two or three miles from the Museum It stood there for about eight years. The Vets working at the museum noticed it of course, and proceeded to nag the guy about donating it to the museum instead of letting it set where it was and just rot away, unseen and unappreciated. Eventually, the man gave in



and made the donation and the Vets had a big bill board sized vehicle to park by the road. Then came the problem of moving the OD vehicle. After setting for 8 years or more, the main diesel fuel tank was fouled up and unreliable to hold clean fuel, so the resourceful Vets modified each of the engines----one for each wheel----so that a five-gallon fuel can could feed the diesel for running the couple of miles to the museum.



Of course, driving a 26-foot wide vehicle down a two lane highway uses up a lot of the available roadway, so permits had to be obtained from local traffic officials and police cars were needed for escort and traffic control. I wish I could have been there for the big day because it must have been quite a sight to see it rolling along on its own.

The LARC is certainly not a parade type vehicle to be privately owned. I have made a big deal about the nearby LARC as a big military vehicle, but I would like to emphasize that the museum by which it stands is well worth a visit. The museum has an excellent collection of other military vehicle, trucks, jeeps, trailers, etc.,---- parked around the outside of the large Quonset hut which is the museum's main building. The mementos inside are gathered with the idea of "Honoring Those Who Serve", and they do the job nicely, covering all branches of service, our nation's POWs, and most all time periods.





The Volunteer Vets who have put it all together have done a great job and I admire them for it. On the weekday that I returned to visit, there were about 6 Vets there, like Frank Haggard, USN, scraping paint from a vintage life boat, or building stuff to make the museum more complete and enjoyable, and I salute their efforts. One of the things that

struck me when I arrived was the abundance of old U.S. Army ammo boxes for artillery shells. It seemed that every wall or divider inside and outside the building was made up of stacked ammo boxes. I asked the guys there how that came about and they told me that all the boxes were donated by Camp Blanding Joint Training Facility which is located about five miles west on SR16. Camp Blanding was a WWII Infantry training base and has remained a training facility since then. Evidently, they trained Artillery troops also and had literally mountains of old wooden ammo boxes that they were happy to be rid of.



The Vets told me that they were able to haul truck load after truck load of boxes away for use in the museum. So that's it, Folks. If you get a chance to visit Florida and want to see what I consider the biggest U.S. Army wheeled vehicle plus a fine museum, set your GPS to ----1 Bunker Ave, Green Cove Springs, FL----and away you go.

## The Goal is to Double the Membership in 2019!

To accomplish this goal we need every member to recruit a new member, or to give a gift membership to a friend or relative.

To make a membership more attractive, the Board decided that from now through 1 January 2019 the dues for new or returning members will be reduced by \$5.00!

Active members renewing on or before their due date already receive a \$5.00 discount, and until 1/1/2019 EVERYONE does!

*This offer is only valid on Regular U.S., Canadian and Overseas memberships. Electronic memberships are excluded.*

A personalized gift card will be included with all gift memberships.

Recruiting and gift giving members receive \$5.00 in MVPA bucks for each new member, so its a win-win situation!

**ALSO in 2019 all active MVPA members are welcome to attend the York, PA convention with no registration fee charged! Proof of membership will be required.**

REGULAR MEMBERSHIPS - All included in the above offer:		OUTREACH MEMBERSHIP:
<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Second Class Postage - \$66.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Overseas Air Mail - \$70.00	<input type="checkbox"/> To Organization
<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. First Class Postage - \$78.00 \$45	<input type="checkbox"/> Canada Air Mail - \$68.00 \$45	<input type="checkbox"/> or School - \$68.00 \$45
<b>\$5.00 discount not valid after 1 Jan 2019</b>		

Gift from or Recruited by: \_\_\_\_\_ MVPA Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of recipient: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

16 Digit Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail application with a check or money order in U.S. funds to: MVPA, PO Box 520378, Independence, MO 64052  
 Call HQ to use a Visa, MasterCard or Discover at (816) 833-MVPA (6872) or (800) 365-5798  
 Gift memberships are not available online, please, contact MVPA-HQ

## A Soldier and His Jeep

By Dave Steinert

Many American soldiers who were lucky enough to attached themselves to a military Jeep during their tour of duty with the Armed Forces of the United States, usually acquired a special fondness for this small 4-wheeled piece of equipment. Why wouldn't they? It was arguably dependable, reliable, maneuverable, easy to drive, easy to fix and durable. Whether it was used as a reconnaissance vehicle equipped with machine guns and other defensive equipment, or a communications center with radios and transmission equipment mounted in its body, the Jeep was very versatile and could be adapted for many different roles.



Submitted by Pat Dolan

Mount a few brackets to its body and the Jeep is useful for holding stretchers to quickly evacuate the wounded from frontline positions to field hospitals or transporting high ranking officers to and from observation points to command posts. Chaplains could reach, preach and commune soldiers at the frontlines on the hood of a Jeep. There seems to be no end to the usefulness of the Jeep.



Submitted by Pat Dolan

The fascination and admiration that these soldiers had for their mechanical pets can be seen in the photos that are found in old family photo albums at yard sales and estate sales. The Jeeps were like family members or close friends baptized by their owners with nicknames and other painted

nomenclature that expressed their affection or even a "pet peeve" that was unique to their Jeep.



Submitted by Pat Dolan

## CLASSIFIEDS

To add or remove listings from the Classifieds, please email Dave Steinert at [dsteinert@mtaofnj.org](mailto:dsteinert@mtaofnj.org), or call 973-347-9091.

**Parts For Sale-** 230 CI M725 motor, ran when pulled, burns oil \$200, M725 litter racks-best offer, M725 Rear doors, some dents, no rust \$200 for the pair, M715 windshield frame, minor surface rust \$150, NOS in packing Southwind heater for M725 possible M-43 best offer, M37 windshield frame outer only \$75, M725-M715 rims with lock rings -make offer. Many more items available, too many to list. Call for more information. Call Matt Ziegler, cell 973-445-3890, email : [Matrziegler@gmail.com](mailto:Matrziegler@gmail.com)

**For Sale:** 1964 Ford M151, current Odometer: 34252. Currently registered and inspected in New York State. Comes with Army radio, mounted machine gun (disabled firearm) w/ mount and cartridges, trailer, plastics to go over vehicle (no photo included, but available at request) as well as two large boxes of extra parts. Vehicle has always been garage kept. Buyer is responsible for pick-up or to arrange for shipment for out of town sales. This vehicle has not been cut. Asking \$18,000. Located in Pine Island NY. Please contact Lodzia - 845-258-4493 or Vince - 845-728-9191.

**For Sale:** Replica 81mm mortar. M1 tube and bi-pod. M4 sight. Has incorrect M23A1 two piece base (Nam era?). The tube is original with 1 pin cross welded and a dummy cup welded on. Comes with one practice round (inert) in a newer tared tube. And a wooden ammo crate. Asking \$3000.00 . Will take a M35a2 ring mount in trade. Kirk Stinson 862-209-0933

**For Sale:** I have many Jeep and M37 parts for sale, call Tom Weaver @ 973-627-9448.



# Military Transport Association

P.O. Box 391  
Budd Lake, NJ 07828

The next MTA monthly meeting  
will be held on **Thursday, February 5th**  
**7:00PM** at the Whippany American  
Legion Hall, Legion Place, Whippany, NJ



a chapter of the Military Vehicle Preservation Association

The Military Transport Association is dedicated to the education and preservation of historic to present military vehicles. Members enjoy restoring, displaying, and operating military vehicles of all types, from bicycles to tanks.

But trucks and Jeeps aren't all we do! Join today and participate with us at our annual Toys for Tots train ride and toy drive, help at our annual Swap Meet at the Sussex County Fairgrounds, or attend our special events for veterans. Our lively, informative monthly meetings are held in Whippany, NJ.

You do not have to own a military vehicle to be part of this exciting and active hobby - you just need a desire to do your part in keeping our military history alive. All you need to join the MTA is to fill out the the form below, include your dues payment, and mail it to the address below. Alternately, you can give your form and dues to any MTA member you meet at any of our events.

for more information, visit our website at [www.MTAofNJ.org](http://www.MTAofNJ.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ (cell preferred)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

MTA Membership Level:  Single (\$30)  Family (\$35)

Are you a member of MVPA?  Yes  No

Military vehicles owned: \_\_\_\_\_

Return form with \$ \_\_\_\_\_ annual dues and \$ \_\_\_\_\_ donation to:

Military Transport Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 391  
Budd Lake, NJ 07828

*Contributions, gifts, or membership dues made or paid to the Military Transport Association, a 501(c)(4) organization, are non-refundable or transferable, and are NOT deductible as charitable contributions for federal tax purposes.*