



MOTOR POOL MESSENGER

the official monthly newsletter of the **MILITARY TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION**
visit us online at www.MTAofNJ.org

Issue: April 2024.

Editor: David Steinert



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ON THE COVER...



A U.S. Army Bell AH-1 Cobra helicopter, fondly nicknamed the 'Snake', flies over a remote jungle area in Vietnam.

The Bell AH-1 Cobra, categorized as a single-engine attack helicopter that was designed, built and developed by the reputable American rotorcraft manufacturer, Bell Helicopter. A member of the prolific Huey family, the AH-1 is also referred to as the HueyCobra or "Snake".

The AH-1 was rapidly developed as an interim gunship in response to the United States Army's needs in the Vietnam War. It used the same engine, transmission and rotor system of the proven Bell UH-1 Iroquois, which had already demonstrated itself to be a capable platform during the conflict, but paired it with a redesigned narrow fuselage among other features. The original AH-1, being a dedicated attack helicopter, came equipped with stub wings for various customized weaponry, a chin-mounted gun turret, and an armored covered tandem cockpit, from which it was operated by a pilot and gunner. Its design was shaped to fulfill a need for a dedicated armed escort for transport helicopters, like the Huey and Chinook, giving the latter a much greater survivability in contested environments.

forward after a Pentagon study group, called the Howze Board, recommended the creation of the Air Cavalry Combat Brigade in 1962 with a contingency of establishing a new rotary aircraft.



In the late summer of 1965, the Bell Helicopter company presented its prototype *Model 209* as a modified UH-1 and was selected in August 1965 for further development and the first prototype flew on September 23, 1965. Flight tests and an Army evaluation led to modifications in the initial design. Four pre-production models were finished by late October 1966.

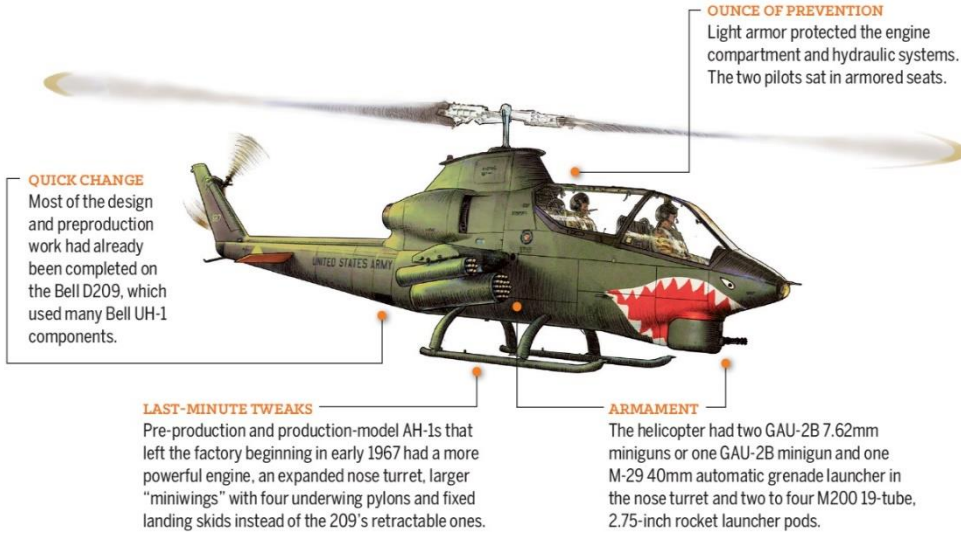
The hastily adapted Bell UH-1C Iroquois gunships had firepower but lacked the engine power, agility and speed for the full range of missions envisioned for attack helicopters.

The Lockheed AH-64 Cheyenne won the initial 1964 contract competition, but the Cheyenne project had a long development period and the war's escalating requirements drove the Army to seek an interim design that could be deployed rapidly. During June 1967, the

first examples of the AH-1 entered service with the US Army and were promptly deployed to the Vietnam theater.

It mostly provided fire support to friendly ground forces, also escorted transport helicopters, and flew in "hunter killer" teams partnering with Hughes OH-6A Cayuse scouting helicopters.

The coy Cobras, quickly proved their value in early combat missions, starting in October 1967, but



The premise of a gunship helicopter had first been considered in the 1940s when practice bombs were thrown by hand from hovering Sikorskis, which were some of first designs of vertical lift aircraft.

In 1950, Bell engineers went to the US Army's armory, signed out a bazooka to mount on one of the skids of their two-seater chopper, and successfully hit targets on a test firing range. The effort advanced

the AH-1s truly cemented their reputation in the heavy fighting during the Viet Cong's Test Offensive in early 1968.

More than 388 Cobras were in Vietnam by 1969. The severity of the tropical weather in Vietnam initiated the addition of cockpit air conditioning in 1970 and infrared countermeasure equipment in 1971.

U.S. Army AH-1Gs served with Marine Corps units until the Marines' twin-engine choppers AH-1Js entered Vietnam in early February 1971. Some 1,126 Cobras were built, and more than 300 were lost during the war.

In the Vietnam War alone, the Cobra fleet cumulatively chalked up in excess of one million operational hours. Furthermore, numerous export sales were completed with several overseas countries, including Israel, Japan, and Turkey.

The Cobras were retired from Army service in 1999, but their capacity to assimilate new avionics, engines, technologies and weapons has ensured their continued service with the Marines and America's allies to this day.

ATTENTION MEMBERS!

THE NEXT MTA MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 4th 2024... MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE WHIPPANY AMERICAN LEGION IN THE MEETING ROOM IN THE BASEMENT



Food at 6:00PM...Meeting starts at 7:00PM

MTA Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 7, 2024 at the American Legion Hall in Whippany, NJ
Submitted by Michele Heusel

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Ken Gardner and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and a

moment of silence. A motion to approve last month's minutes was made by Jean Swanick and seconded by Pete Shaw.
Motion carried!

The monthly financial report presented by Al Mellini is as follows:

Financial Report – Ending February 29, 2024

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Beginning balance | \$42,016.82 |
| Income | \$ 3,180.00 |
| Expenditures | -\$ 2,289.73 |
| Closing balance | \$ 42,907.09 |

Treasurer Report - A motion to approve the Financial Report was made by Jean Swanick and seconded by Jack McDivitt.
Motion carried!

President's Message - Gary Schultz mentioned we are getting close to the April show and we need members to sign-up to volunteer for all dates April 25, 26, 27 & 28th. A volunteer show sign-up sheet was passed around at the meeting. April 25th is critical, we need as many hands as we can get to help set-up. **Those not in attendance, please reach out to Gary if you are available to help.**

MTA flags that were pre-ordered were distributed at the meeting. Aluminum show plaques are available to order as well. It has two strips of magnetic material on the back of that peels off and you could mount it on your truck. Gary showed samples of both the flag & plaque. Please email Gary if you're interested in purchasing either a flag, price is \$18 and the plaque is \$6.

Our 7th annual **Hot Dog Johnny's Trail Run** is set for Saturday, May 11th with a rain date of Sunday, May 12th. Breakfast at 9am at the Marketplace in the Panther Valley Mall on Rt. 517. Second trail run to **Sunrise Mountain, Highpoint Memorial and Stokes State Forest** is scheduled for Saturday June 29th at 9am. Please reach out to Gary for more details and let him know if you are planning to attend.

Membership News – *Nothing new to report!*

Newsletter – Dave Steinert thanks Michele Heusel for her continued support of the MTA as Secretary.

Parades – Al Mellini spoke about Memorial Day Parades specifically. They are coming up fast and there is a lot of information because we will be doing 9 parades! Parades are the either the largest or the second largest income generator for the club. Last year it was the largest because the Swap Meet in 2023 did not do as well due to weather. Contracts have been sent to all towns and two have already come back under contract. Al is open to ideas to replace the Florham Park 4th of July parade. Florham Park has become an administrative catastrophe for the club! If anyone knows of another 4th of July parade to replace it with, please let him know. Al is also looking for a member to take over the handling of parade contracts and partner with Andrea as he is experiencing some health concerns.

With the Executive Board's approval, Al proposed a club incentive: if you attend 5 parades in this club year, your dues for the following year of 2025 will be waived. We need members to realize how important our participation is in parades. Most towns require that we have at least 3 vehicles, now two towns are requesting 5! Please reach out to **Andrea Antonelli** for parade sign-ups. Refer to the list of list of parades, dates and details that follows:

| MTA 2024 Parades | | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-------------|---------|----------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 393 | TOWN | PARADE DATE | LINE UP | KICK OFF | MUSTER LOCATION | MTA CAPTAIN |
| | Hawthorne | 27-May | | | WAITING FOR DATA | Lesione |
| | Intrepid Carrier | May 25-26 | | | WAITING FOR DATA | Dolan |
| x | Madison | 27-May | 8:30 | 9:30 | 31 Kings Road | Dolan |
| | Maywood | 4-Jul | 8:00 | 9:00 | East Hunter Ave | Lesione |
| x | Midland Park | 25-May | 9:00 | 10:00 | 280 Godwin Ave | Lesione |
| x | Morris Plains | 25-May | 8:30 | 9:30 | Franklin Place and Speedwell Ave | Dolan |
| | | | | | | |
| x | New Milford | 27-May | 8:00 | 9:00 | Cecchino Dr by H.S. & River Rd | Lesione |
| x | Nutley | 27-May | 10:00 | 11:00 | The Nutley Oval on Franklin Ave | Vecchiarelli |
| x | Parsippany | 27-May | 11:00 | Noon | Route 202 | Dolan |
| | Randolph | 6-Jul | 10:00 | 11:00 | Quaker Church Rd at Dover Chester Rd | Schultz |
| | | | | | | |
| | Rochelle Park | | | | WAITING FOR DATA | Lesione |
| x | Secaucus | 18-May | 10:30 | Noon | 11 Enterprise Ave North | Lesione |
| x | West Caldwell | 27-May | 8:30 | 9:30 | Bloomfield Ave and Forest Ave | Vecchiarelli |
| x | Wyckoff | 27-May | 10:30 | 11:30 | Cornerstone Church, 495 Wyckoff Ave | Lesione |
| | | | | | | |

Memorial Day parades in yellow Midland Park, Morris Plains and Secaucus are SATURDAY parades

Pat Dolan spoke about *Fleet Week* In NYC, also Memorial Day weekend. This is another opportunity for the club that we are always invited to. It's a lot of fun, we are offered a covered spot, can display vehicles and a banner with our club info. If anyone is available May 25th or 26th that is not participating in a parade and would like more info about attending this event please contact Pat.

Quartermaster – Gary Schultz reported 20 men's and 20 ladies shirts are ordered for purchase to sell at the show. Men's shirt is green with yellow MTA "since 1972" logo, ladies shirt is an army green v-neck with white MTA "since 1972" logo. Members price is \$15 and show price is \$19

Swap Meet – Tim Swanick updated the group that only 2 tables are left in the Richard's Building. Please don't wait if you want to rent a space. There are 2 covered and 2 uncovered outdoor spaces available as of tonight. Please contact Tim if you want to rent a space, first come, first serve! Vendor rentals have brought in a total of \$6,525 so far.

Tim Swanick spoke with **Rudy Garbely**, and Rudy has created a list of vendors, what they are selling and their location to post on the MTA website. Also included are the nonprofit and veteran organizations that are coming to our show as well as the food vendors. It has been posted in a Word doc and PDF to both the MTA website and Facebook page. The hope is this will get people more excited to attend the show knowing in advance what will be available.

Ken Gardner had lawn signs available for distribution tonight and they will also be available at the April 4th meeting. If you've got a great spot, please get a sign for it! We are looking for more locations to advertise with 4' x 8' banners. Please reach out if you have a spot to advertise with a banner.

Website News - Gary Schultz announced he decided to remove the store from the MTA website as it was not generating any sales for quite some time.

OMS7 – Pat Dolan updated everyone that he along with **Pat Tipton** and **Dennis Vecchiarelli** have been working on a white weasel and should be ready for the show in April. Everything we've been doing you can watch on Portrayal Press's YouTube

Channel. It's amazing to see what that weasel started out as and where it is now!

Old Business – Nothing to report tonight!

New Business– Rich Naprawa mentioned he knows of a location in Homdel, NJ called Triple C Farms that has about 20 Deuce's for sale, all are 5-ton automatics with low mileage, plow frames and pumps. The price ranges from \$4k +. There are a couple of good ones for about 10K. They do need some TLC, but the gentleman selling them has all the parts, tires and canvases. If anyone is looking for a good opportunity to own a truck this may be your chance! Contact Carmine at Triple C Farms if you would like more info, 732-851-4400 ext. 3 or email: cccnursery@aol.com.

For the Good of the Club – Nicholas Heusel gave an update on his donation drive, "Fill a Willy's Jeep" to benefit local Veterans." He has received a lot of donations through his school and Amazon wish list. Delivery date and convoy of vehicles to bring items to the VA Medical Center in Lyons, NJ is planned for Monday, March 25th at 1pm. If you have a vehicle and would be interested in participating in the delivery please contact Nick at naheusel@gmail.com or 973-610-2895.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm. Motion to approve by **Alan King**, 2nd motion by **Dennis Vecchiarelli**

NEXT MEETING – THURSDAY APRIL 4th – Legion Hall – Food 6:00pm, Meeting 7:00pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Michele Heusel

Secretary



The AH-1 Cobra attack helicopter was the world's first dedicated attack helicopter

FILL A WILLY'S JEEP OR HOW ABOUT A HUMVEE?

VA DELIVERY DROP #1

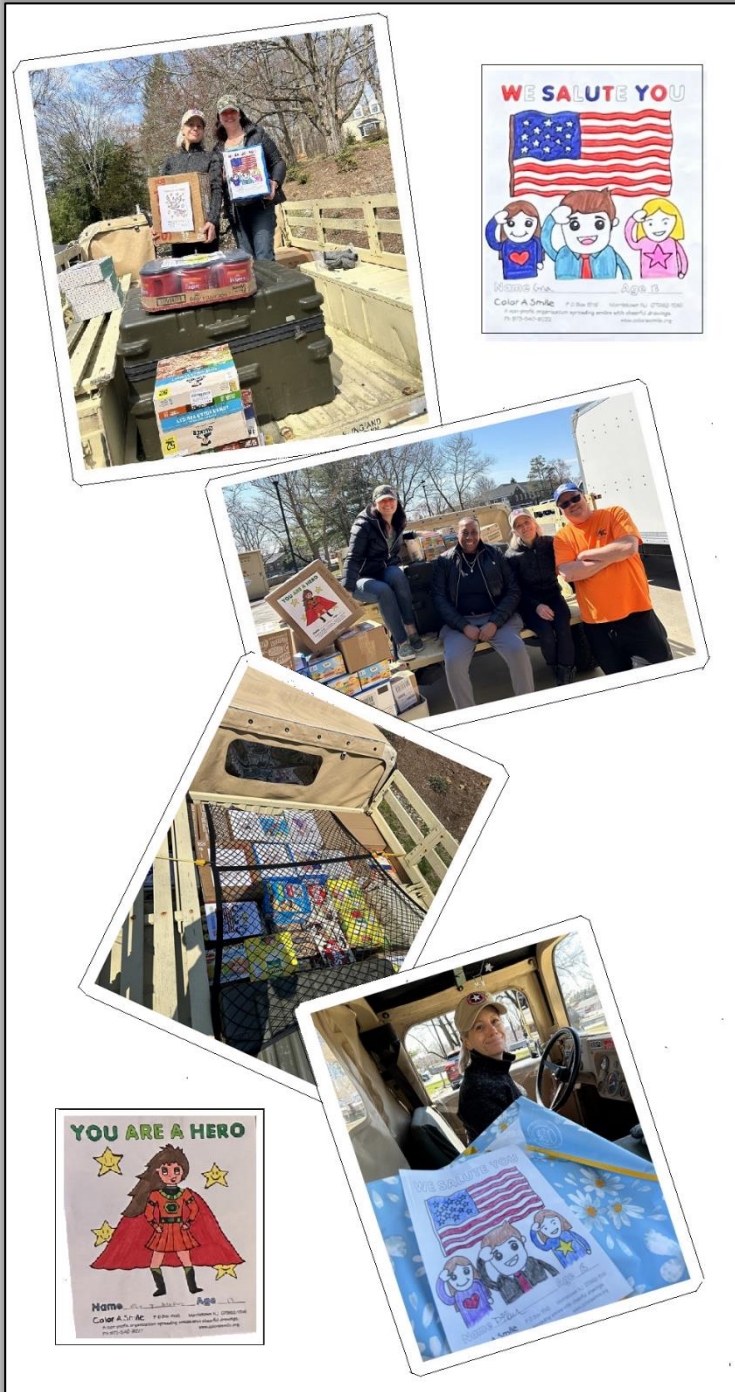
Friday, March 22, 2024

Hi Team,

Sharing some pics from our successful 1st delivery drop that Andrea Antonelli and I made in the Humvee to the VA today! They were so grateful and very excited for the vets to get these items! Looking forward to Monday.

Andrea, thank you so much for helping out today!

Michele (Heusel) xo



THE "HELICOPTER WAR" – VIETNAM

Part 3

"Bring in the Snakes!"

By David Steinert

On Sept. 4, 1967, a lone Bell AH-1G Huey Cobra Helicopter in flight to Muc Hoa, Vietnam noticed a Chinese sampan boat carrying four armed Viet Cong on the waterway below. The 1st Aviation Brigade commander on board the Cobra gave the order to attack. He achieved the recently deployed Cobra's first combat kill in Vietnam, by sinking the sampan and killing its crew with both rocket and machine gun fire. The day of the specifically designed attack helicopter had arrived.



Cobras were the muscle for many missions. In April 1971, these Snakes escorted CH-47 Chinooks as they flew commandos into Laos.

Six Bell AH-1G Cobra Helicopters had arrived at Bien Hoa Air Base near Saigon just five days earlier. Three were hand-built, pre-production prototype models. The designation AH stands for "attack helicopter," and the Cobra had the weaponry to back it up. The Cobra was flown by two airmen, like a World War II-era fighter. The pilot sat in the rear and could fire dozens of rockets from wing-mounted launchers. Up front, the co-pilot controlled a rotating "chin turret" armed with a minigun and a grenade launcher.

In an air assault the Cobras would race ahead—they could comfortably cruise at 120 knots, almost 140 mph—and lay down cover fire to clear the landing zone for the troop transporters. If a ground commander was taking enemy fire, he

would “drop smoke” (a smoke grenade) and call in the Cobras to suppress the threat.

Upon joining the Army, Larry Taylor was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division, one of the Army’s first Cobra companies in Vietnam.

On June 18, 1968, then-First Lieutenant Taylor, team leader of a helicopter light-fire team, received an urgent radio call from the long-range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP) – “We’re surrounded!”. The LRRPs were being attacked by gunfire and quickly becoming surrounded by the enemy force. Fully aware of the danger, Taylor started up the Bell AH-1G Cobra, and flew straight into the battle zone.

Upon arrival, Taylor was faced with intense enemy gunfire. After completing low-attack runs for nearly 45-minutes, the Bell AH-1G was running low on fuel and ammunition. At that moment, Taylor learned that the extract of the four LRRPs was cancelled due to the intensity of enemy gunfire. Taylor refused to accept that fate.

Taylor devised a plan to extract the four LRRPs himself – a mission that has never been attempted while using the two-seater Bell AH-1G. Using the Bell AH-1G’s landing lights to distract the enemy, the LRRPs quickly ran to the extraction point that Taylor designated. As the LRRPs reached the designated site, Taylor landed the Bell AH-1G where two of the LRRPs quickly grabbed onto the rocket pods while the other two clung to the skids. Taylor then proceeded to successfully fly all four men to a safe location.



Bell AH-1G, similar to the aircraft that Taylor flew

On September 5, 2023, Army Captain (Ret.) Larry Taylor was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Joseph Biden during a ceremony alongside Army personnel and Bell officials to honor his heroic and life-saving actions while flying a Bell AH-1G during the Vietnam War.

It is estimated that Taylor completed over 2,000 missions as a Bell AH-1G and Bell UH-1 pilot, engaging with enemy fire 340 times.

Jim Kane’s Vietnam tour abruptly ended one day in February 1971. NVA troops shot down a Cobra, killing the crew. Kane was dispatched to the crash site in another Cobra with copilot Jim Casher. While they were circling the wreckage, enemy rounds hit their ship. Kane recalls, “The vibrations were so harsh I had to return to base camp at Khe Sanh,” seven

miles from the Laotian border. Upon landing, an inspection revealed a damaged pitch link, a rotor head component so critical that had it failed, they too would have crashed.

“We got into another aircraft and went back out. We were about ready to call in tactical air support to blow up the wrecked ship when another Cobra took a lot of fire. So I engaged the enemy, but didn’t make it out of that one.”

“We got hit by incendiary .51-caliber rounds, and the phosphorus ignited the Cobra’s hydraulic fluid. The flames covered my boots and lower legs. It was the same for Jim. I still have scars on my legs—it was terrifying. I tried to move the stuck controls and prayed for a place to set down.” It took all of Kane’s strength to pull out of a steep dive, and they crash-landed with a horrific thud. *“Jim was unconscious when I helped pull him out of the burning aircraft.”*

Kane’s commanding officer flew his command-and-control Huey to the ravine where Kane and Casher huddled. The Huey descended gingerly into a clearing smaller than its main rotor diameter, the aircraft’s rotor blades chopping tree limbs as it descended. Kane and Casher were pulled aboard and returned to Khe Sanh, but the Huey barely made it back; slicing trees had left its blades shredded, and the tail section had almost separated. It never flew again.



A Bell AH-1G in flight over Vietnam

William Reeder Jr., who served two tours in Vietnam as a U.S. Army pilot, was shot down on May 9, 1972, while flying a mission in a Bell AH-1 Cobra helicopter. He barely survived a forced march along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, only to become a prisoner in Hanoi.

Recently, Reeder was asked his opinion of the Bell AH-1 Cobra Helicopter and did it get the job done in Vietnam? Reeder responded, “The Cobra was superb. It was the first U.S. Army helicopter designed specifically as a gunship. It sported seven and 19-shot rocket pods on its stubby wings and mounted a 7.62 mini-gun and 40 mm grenade launcher in the moveable nose turret. Some of our aircraft, mine included, also had a 20 mm Vulcan Gatling gun under one wing. Our Cobras were heavy in Vietnam and difficult to hover on a hot day with full ordnance and fuel. Nonetheless, once airborne there was not a better close support weapons platform at the time. Our mission had us routinely covering the hot, tactical emergency,

extraction of special forces teams with us firing within a few yards of friendlies.”

Reeder survived his combat experiences in Vietnam to write eventually write a book, *Through the Valley, My Captivity in Vietnam*, a deeply moving memoir of combat aviation in Vietnam and the POW experience.

The U.S. Air Cavalry’s “hunter-killer” tactics worked well for a few years, but by the time the United States left Vietnam, it was obsolete.



The commanders of the Mission Command and Control ship confers with the leader of the AH-1G Cobra gunships from the 235th Aviation Company (AH), 214th Combat Aviation Battalion, 164th Combat Aviation Group, 1st Aviation Brigade NARA 111-CCV-90-CC71512

In 1972, as U.S. troops slowly withdrew, the NVA began a major push that became known as the Easter Offensive. The campaign included the first major use in the war of Soviet-built, shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles. SA-7 Grail heat-seeking missiles could down a scout helicopter before its crew even realized they were under fire. The Cobras high above had a few seconds of warning—they could spot the missile’s exhaust plume—but were all the more tempting because at their higher altitudes they were more easily seen than the smaller scout choppers. The North Vietnamese deployed hundreds of the missiles, and from then on, both hunter and killer tried to stay well hidden.

Bell built 1,116 AH-1Gs for the U.S. Army between 1967 and 1973, and the Cobras chalked up over a million operational hours in Vietnam. The number of Cobras in service peaked at 1,081 and out of nearly 1,110 AH-1s delivered from 1967 to 1973 approximately 300 were lost to combat and accidents during the war.

Continued in the next issue of Motor Pool Messenger...

CLASSIFIEDS

To add or remove listings from the Classifieds, please email Dave Steinert at dsteinert@mtaofnj.org, or call 201-407-4035.

For Sale: Own the world's best tailgating/cooking trailer. MKT 95 in operational condition. Includes 2 M-59 Ranges and 4 MBU V3 burners, griddle, and V3 Power Converter with correct MBU Branch cabling. Asking \$5000. Call John at (973)600-9486.

For Sale: 1963 Dodge M43 B1 w/o winch in very good condition. Comes with a large amount of spare parts and accessories. If there is an interest, contact Michael Maglio at 973-697 9419.

For Sale- Military 500 Gallon Water Buffalo for sale; \$300 or BO. Call John Sobotka at (862)-266-6284.

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

WANTED: Hello MTA Members, I am in search of a 1953 Dodge Power Giant D300 early two-whole Hydrovac brake unit. This unit can be found on many similar sized vehicles. Please contact me for any information / leads @ Bob Leach (mobile) 201-663-1093 or Email : robertleach59@aol.com.

WANTED: Hello MTA Members, I Am In Search Of Garage Space To Rent. I have two antique vehicles and other items I need to store. Please contact me for any information / leads @ Bob Leach (mobile) 201-663-1093 or Email : robertleach59@aol.com.

MTA 2024 OFFICERS AND STAFF
ELECTED

President-Gary Schultz
Tel: 973-207-8955 email: garyrschultz@gmail.com

Vice President-Ken Gardner
Tel: 973-714-2271 email: kenneth.gardner@yahoo.com

Secretary-Michele Heusel
Tel: 973-723-9679 email: mheusel1@gmail.com

Treasurer-Al Mellini
Tel: 973-723-2166 email: albert.mellini@gmail.com

NON-ELECTED

Sergeant at Arms-Andrew Salzano
Tel: 973-831-0920

Newsletter Editor-Dave Steinert
Membership-Dave Steinert
Tel: 201-407-4035 email: dsteinert@optonline.net

Parades Chairman-Andrea Antonelli
Tel: 973-214-1383 email: andreaantonelli@aol.com

Swap Meet Chairman-Jim Mescher
Tel: 201-245-7521

Webmaster-Rudy Garbely
Tel: 973-800-9251 email: rgarbely@gmail.com

Quartermaster/MTA Archives Custodian
Gary Schultz

Military Transport Association

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THE NEXT MTA MEETING WILL
BE HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 4TH
AT THE WHIPPANY AMERICAN
LEGION POST AT 7 PM



22nd Annual

**MILITARY VEHICLE SHOW
& SWAP MEET**

APRIL 27-28, 2024

VENDOR CHECK-IN:

Friday, April 26th
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Saturday, April 27th
Starting at 7:00 AM

CONTACT:

Tim Swanick
170 Church Street
Rockaway, NJ 07866
973-647-0148

MTAVENDORSPACES@Gmail.com

SUSSEX COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

37 Plains Road, Augusta, NJ 07822

SATURDAY

April 27, 2024

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

SUNDAY

April 28, 2024

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

ADMISSION

adults - \$8.00

veterans & active duty military with ID - \$5.00

children 12 & under - free!

anyone in active military uniform - free!

Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts in uniform - free!

**NO LIVE
FIREARMS
OR AMMO!**



**VEHICLE DISPLAYS - REENACTORS
FOOD - CAMPING - MILITARY SURPLUS
SPECIAL EVENTS & DISPLAYS
VEHICLES, PARTS, UNIFORMS, & MORE!**

Visit our website for more information:

WWW.MTASWAPMEET.COM

The MTA is an MVPA affiliated club.

