



MARINE EMBASSY GUARD ASSOCIATION

SERVING AMERICA'S "AMBASSADORS IN BLUE"

MEGA-NEWS | OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MARINE EMBASSY GUARD ASSOCIATION | SUMMER 2024



MESSAGE FROM
THE CHAIRMAN



COMMITTEE REPORTS



WELCOME TO THE
NEW BOARD OF
DIRECTORS

THIS IS AN AI GENERATED ILLUSTRATION

Message from the Chairman



Robert L. Lighty

I am thrilled to report that the reunion in San Antonio was a smashing success! Among the many positive comments I heard, the most frequent were the valuable time spent together catching up and socializing the fun and well-organized excursions, and the heartfelt and moving ceremony during the formal dinner. Our guest of honor, Major General Juan Ayala, USMC Retired, delivered an inspiring speech at the banquet. We were also honored by the San Antonio Young Marines, who presented the colors at the banquet, adding to the evening's significance. Several people shared with me that the ceremony helped them understand our organization's importance and potential impact.

Our Reunion Chairman, Frank Arechiga, and his wife, Linda, were gracious and busy hosts, as they helped us keep the Marine bar fully stocked, gathered decorations, coordinated with the hotel staff, and even operated as an Uber for us. I'm grateful for all our hands on deck, including several Board members, their spouses, and even numerous attendees who helped with registration, set up, clean up, excursions, and general problem-solving. The reunion was so motivating to multiple attendees that they volunteered to run as Board members and officers!

I am pleased to introduce our new Board Members:

- Vice Chairman: **Bill Stanson**
- Treasurer: **Paul Storm**
- Secretary: **Steve Hardesty**
- Director: **Glenn Parsons**
- Director: **David Hale**

Additionally, we have new Committee Members who will play vital roles in our ongoing efforts:

- Ships Store Committee Chairman: **Anton Koszuth**
- Ships Store Committee Members: **Bill Carey and Luis Lavarreda**
- Election Committee Chairman: **Bill Pederson**

As for the Chairman of the Board position, I am honored to thank all the board members for electing me for a second term. It is a privilege to serve this organization and to work alongside dedicated individuals who want our association to reach its full potential.

We are currently seeking volunteers to help with the Detachment Pages. If you want to contribute to this vital effort, please get in touch with me at robert.lighty2@gmail.com or (717) 433-1105.

Looking ahead, I am excited to announce that our 2025 reunion will be held in Nashville, Tennessee, in May 2025.

I encourage all members to mark their calendars and plan to join us for what promises to be another memorable event.

David Hale and his wife, Anna, have volunteered to help chair the Reunion Committee for the Nashville reunion. If you want to help with the reunion, please get in touch with David at ssgthale@hotmail.com.

Thank you once again for your trust and support. I look forward to continuing to work together to advance MEGA's mission.

Semper Fidelis,

Robert Lighty

Chairman of the Board

Marine Embassy Guard Association

Message from the Vice-Chairman



Wm "Bill" Stanson

Dear MEGA Members,

I am thrilled to announce some exciting developments within our organization. As we embark on a new chapter, I want to express my enthusiasm for the talented individuals who have stepped up to lead us forward.

A Dynamic Board of Directors

During the recent San Antonio reunion, our members participated in an election that brought fresh faces to the Board of Directors. Joining us are:

- **Paul Storm (Treasurer):** Paul's financial understanding and commitment to our mission make him an invaluable addition.
- **Steve Hardesty (Secretary):** Steve's organizational skills and attention to detail ensure effective communication and smooth operations.
- **Glen Parsons (Board Member):** Glen's passion for our founder, "Big Bob" Kienietz's dream, fuels our collective energy.

Moving Forward

Our newest BOD members bring innovative ideas and a willingness to engage. Their fresh perspectives will invigorate our organization, propelling us toward our goals.

In addition, we are excited to announce progress on two key fronts:

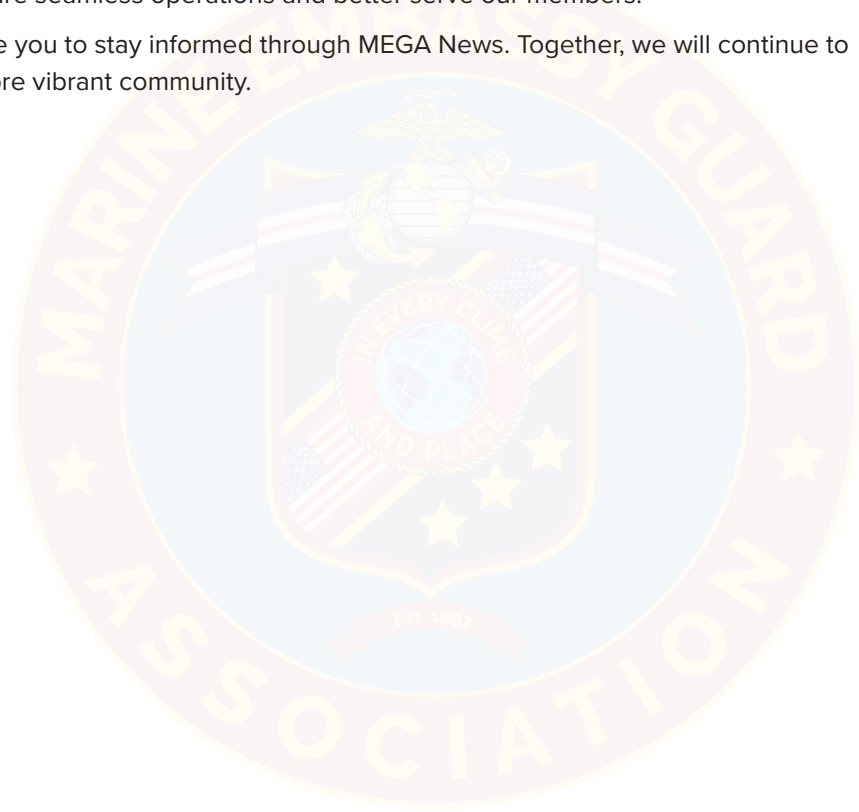
1. **MEGA Website Revamp:** Our team is working hard creating a new MEGA website. This update will enhance user experience, streamline information access, and foster community engagement.
2. **Infrastructure Improvements:** We recognize the need for modernization and are investing in critical infrastructure upgrades. These enhancements will ensure seamless operations and better serve our members.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stay informed through MEGA News. Together, we will continue to honor "Big Bob's" legacy and build a stronger, more vibrant community.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Sincerely,

Bill Stanson
Vice-Chairman



Message from the Treasurer



Paul Storm

As the newly elected MEGA Treasurer, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for this honor. Your votes and support are numbers and a testament to your trust in me. I am deeply humbled and will strive to live up to your expectations.

By way of introduction, let me share some of my background with you. I have successfully served as a Treasurer for other organizations. I was elected to serve on the Board of Directors for a public California Special District for eight years, which included fiscal management, budgeting, and fiduciary responsibility. I have also been the Treasurer for Toastmasters clubs and am currently the Treasurer of my classic car club chapter. I am retired, but when working, I produced budgets and accounts for large corporations and the management of defense contracts. My experience has prepared me well to be a Treasurer for MEGA.

My initial survey showed me that the MEGA finances are sound. It showed me that the fundamentals are there, and that the Association has a solid financial foundation. In addition to usual and customary Treasurer responsibilities, I plan to focus on the following areas: building on our fiscal foundations through enhanced and rigorous use of standards such as the guidelines established by the Colorado Secretary of State, restructuring of the Association banking accounts, including migration to using the Navy Federal Credit Union, and assisting the Chair, Vice Chair, Board of Directors and members with fiscal matters and special projects, such as any possible re-organization as a 501(c)(3) corporation.

I look forward to being your Association Treasurer and working with you all. I pledge to do my duty and fulfill the responsibilities as Treasurer to the best of my ability. I give you my word.

Paul Storm
MEGA Treasurer



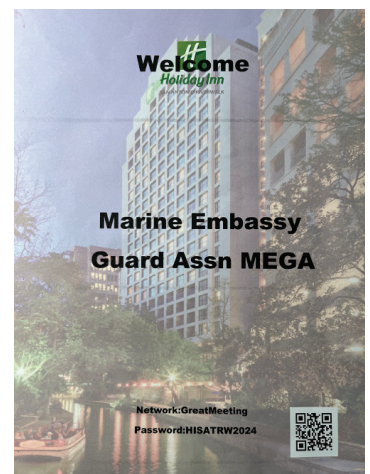
Thoughts from the Marine House

By Ed Vasgerdsian

We belong to MEGA, an exclusive military organization of men and women who have lived in countries that other military and civilian people find difficult to pronounce, let alone find on a map. Our duties were sometimes unusual, amusing, stressful, idyllic, informative, and dangerous. A yearly reunion does not serve as a catharsis by which we expel the past to provide for the future. Our reunion provides a venue to relive and share experiences with fellow associates, no matter the exaggeration and hyperbole. Ours was all of that and then some, and it was a fun time for all.

An unofficial, if not happenstance visitor, witnessed our Post 1 Ceremony. She, a retired Navy Admiral, was attending a reunion of the USS Ticonderoga Veteran's Association, an event taking place simultaneously with ours in an adjacent accommodation. Yes, she was impressed, and I didn't have to explain much; she understood the significance of our ceremony.

Our San Antonio Reunion was successful due to the efforts of members and associate members who collectively made things work—a huge “well done” to our San Antonio MEGA Members, Frank and Linda Arechiga. Also, kudos to Chairman Bob Lighty for pulling all the loose ends together and recruiting several members for committee work, thereby adding a positive outcome to our needs list.



Reunion Packet

Committee Reports



John Burke

Communications Committee Report

By John Burke

Dear MEGA Members,
I'm John Burke, and I'm excited to share the latest initiatives I've been working on as your Chairman of the Communications Committee over the past couple of months.

1. Launch of the MEGA Guestbook: I added a guestbook to the MEGA website in early May, open to all visitors. Since its launch, numerous members and non-members have signed in, creating a vibrant platform for former and currently serving Marine Security Guards (MSGs) to reconnect, network, and get involved in growing our organization. You can visit and sign up for the guestbook by clicking the main navigation on the MEGA website.

Call to Action: *Please take a moment to visit and sign the guestbook. Your participation helps us build a stronger, more connected community.*

2. Building Our Presence on LinkedIn: Another initiative I've been focusing on is enhancing our presence on LinkedIn. This platform is a powerful tool for professional networking, connecting currently serving MSGs with those who have transitioned to civilian careers. LinkedIn allows us to support each other professionally, offering guidance, job connections, and valuable networking opportunities.

Call to Action: *Search for the Marine Embassy Guard Association on LinkedIn, visit our page, and follow us. Engaging with our LinkedIn community helps us stay connected and support each other's career development.*



3. Enhancing the MEGA Website: I'm also expanding the MEGA website by adding community areas for various committees and creating regional pages to connect members across the United States and overseas. These detachment pages will facilitate local networking and support, but we need volunteers with website experience to bring this vision to life.

Call to Action: *If you have website experience and are interested in helping, please get in touch with me directly at john.burke@embassymarine.com or (561) 308-3177. Your expertise can make a significant impact.*

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization, and your involvement is crucial to our continued growth and success. Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to MEGA.

Semper Fidelis,
John Burke
Chairman of the Communications Committee
Marine Embassy Guard Association

Committee Reports



Chaplain's Report

By David Hale

It is with much regret that I forgot to announce the passing of longtime MEGA Member and Marine House bartender extraordinaire Bill Waller at our San Antonio, Texas reunion. Below is Bill's obituary. Until we meet again,

Bill, rest easy; we have the watch. God bless and Semper Fidelis!

William (Bill) Richard Waller, 87, of Massillon, passed away peacefully at Aultman Hospital on August 24, 2023. He was born in Massillon on August 18, 1936, to the late William and Mary (Boucher) Waller.

Bill, a proud graduate of Massillon Washington High School in 1954, was not only the football team's manager but also a dedicated Marine. He served in the United States Marine Corps from 1954 to 1959, with his primary mission being Embassy Duty in the Dominican Republic. His service and dedication to the Corps were unparalleled. OORAH!

Once he returned stateside, Bill worked for Tyson Roller Bearing for 8 years and then was employed with the former McLain Grocery Company, also known as Fleming Foods, where he drove trucks and retired after 30 years of service.

Bill's presence in our lives was a beacon of love and devotion. As a husband, father, and grandfather, his absence leaves a void that can never be filled. His memory will be cherished, and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

He is survived by his loving wife of 43 years, JoAnn (Zearley) Waller; his sons Renso (Cynthia) Waller, William "Rich" (Kimaura) Waller, Steven James Waller, and Joseph Daniel Waller; stepchildren Richard Lee (Nancy) Zearley and Linda (Richard) Powell; 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren; and two nieces.

In addition to his parents, Bill was preceded in death by his two sons David Wayne and Christopher Scott Waller, his brother Clarence James Waller and grandson Christopher David Waller.

Announcement of 2024 Marine Embassy Guard Association Scholarship Recipient

By David Hale

The Marine Embassy Guard Association (MEGA) is pleased to announce the recipient of MEGA's annual scholarship. The recipient will receive a \$750 scholarship.

The 2024 scholarship recipient is:

Liam Raney, Susquehanna University | MEGA Scholarship, \$750

The applicant was graded in the following six categories: Application Packet, Academic Achievement, Extracurricular Activities, Community Involvement, Leadership Activities, and Financial Hardship. The recipient excelled in all these areas.

"The MEGA scholarship is not just a financial aid. It's an opportunity for individuals like Liam to earn an education and dedicate more time to their studies," said David Hale, MEGA Director, Chaplain, and Scholarship Committee Chairman.

To be eligible for a MEGA scholarship, applicants must be a child or grandchild of a former or active Marine Security Guard. The scholarship committee carefully reviews all applications and selects the most deserving recipients based on academic achievement, extracurricular activities, community involvement/volunteerism, leadership activities, and financial need.

For questions and more information about MEGA's Scholarship Program, please contact David.Hale@embassymarine.org.

Texas Marines Seal

14 Jan 1836 – 24 Feb 1844

By Paul Storm

The Republic of Texas Marine Corps, also known as Texas Navy Marine or Marine Corps of the Republic of Texas, was a branch of the Texas Navy, based heavily on the United States Marine Corps of the time. The branch was only suggested under the Act and Decree Establishing a Navy, which was passed on 25 November 1835. Nonetheless, after Governor James W. Robinson wrote to the General Council, urging for the formal establishment of a Marine Corps on 14 January 1836, did the commissioning and recruiting of officers and enlisted men begin. However, the Marines were lacking in numbers, with over 350 enlists and 18 officers in the Corps before the Texas annexation into the United States

Every vessel of the Texas Navy had a dedicated Marine Guard composed of several marines and a commander. These guards were responsible for maintaining appropriate behavior among seamen on their respective vessels; and for ensuring the protection of their vessels when docked. However, Marines were also sharpshooters and boarders during engagements, with the sole duty of securing the enemy vessel's deck and then moving in to secure other areas of the ship. A worthy representation of this would be with the guard aboard the *Liberty* vessel, which swiftly boarded and secured the Mexican *Pelicano* on 3 March 1836.



Despite being a well-respected branch during the second phase of the Texas-Mexican conflict, the reputation of the Marine Corps deteriorated when, on 11 February 1842, the guard aboard the *San Antonio* mutinied along with some of the crew, killing Lieutenant Charles Fuller, the only person killed during the mutiny. The mutiny on the *San Antonio* was the only one in the branch's history.

On 29 December 1845, President of the United States James Polk signed a joint resolution, which admitted Texas as the twenty-eighth state of the Union, as of that resolution, the Texas Navy and Marine Corps ceased to exist. Wikipedia

Submitted by Paul Storm. *Paul and his wife Leann stayed another day in San Antonio to see the sights. While visiting the Alamo museum he saw the display that mentioned the Texas Marine Corps. Doing some research, he learned independent Texas created a Marine Corps modeled after the U.S. Marine Corps.*



Got something you want to sell...buy or donate?

Got something you want to sell, buy, or donate? We can help with an advertisement in our MEGA Newsletter. All transactions will be between parties. You write it up and include a photo if you wish.

Publication cost payable to MEGA General Fund:

Full Page \$100.00 – Half Page \$50.00 – Quarter Page \$25.00.
Per Publication

Marine Security Guard - MSG Duty Facebook Highlights

Submission by MEGA Member John Burke



Honoring the Fallen on Memorial Day 2024

Detachments Harare, Zimbabwe, and Paris, France, came together on Memorial Day and conducted physical training challenges to pay homage and respect to all of our servicemen and women who are no longer with us today. Their memories will live on, and their sacrifices will always serve as a reminder of the freedoms we enjoy today.

Find more photos and information
on our MSG by visiting
<https://www.facebook.com/MSGDuty>



On May 12, the Marines of Detachment Kathmandu, Nepal, in partnership with the Nepali Army, conducted a wreath-laying ceremony with U.S. Ambassador Dean R. Thompson in memory of fallen aircrew and passengers aboard a UH-1Y Venom helicopter, "Vengeance 01," with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 469.

Six U.S. Marines, two Nepali Army soldiers, and five civilians aboard the aircraft perished on May 12, 2015, while conducting flight operations during humanitarian relief efforts in the Himalayan Mountain region as part of Joint Task Force 505, Operation Sahayogi Haat (Helping Hands).

Photos



San Antonio Ladies Luncheon



Major General Juan Ayala, USMC Retired, (sitting at center) poses with former Marine Security Guards (MSG) who were at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran during the 1980 Iran hostage crisis. Major General Ayala was the guest of honor at the 2024 Marine Embassy Guard Association (MEGA) in San Antonio, Texas.

Advertising

"Assault on the Paris Embassy" by Lawrence Martin *Now Available on Amazon*

The American Embassy in Paris is under attack. The famous Talleyrand Building has been taken over. Who is behind the assault? What do they want? Security Officer Brooks Keller and U.S. Marine Gunnery Sergeant Todd Walker need answers before responding. This historical novel, set in May 1967, unfolds against the backdrop of international intrigue involving Britain, France and the United States. Paris landmarks play supporting roles. The plot twists and turns. Nothing is as it seems.

Paperback \$12.95

E-book \$5.99

Free E-book download for Kindle unlimited members

Lawrence Martin, Ph.D. served as a Marine Embassy Guard from 1965 to 1968. He was assigned to the American Embassy Paris, France and the U. S. Political Delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Paris, France.

Assault on the Paris Embassy



Lawrence Martin

"A Diplomat in the Making" by Ed Vasgerdsian *Now Available on Amazon*

Surviving teenage angst, military boredom, and a predictably unpromising future, twenty-six-year-old Harry Finn embarks on a journey as a Foreign Service Officer with the Department of State. Posted to the American Embassy in Cairo, Egypt, Harry is unaware a bureaucratic error has labeled him a covert CIA Operative. His quirky character, coupled with the alter ego of a boyhood Western radio hero, starts an adventure of a chance meeting with a family member living as a French tailor under an alias identity.

When Egyptian President Gamal Nasser nationalizes the Suez Canal, Great Britain, France, and Israel plan to attack Egypt and retake Suez with a military attack and seize all financial assets for the canal's international usage. Harry receives critical information on Operation Three Musketeers from an unlikely source and must act to save the lives of 1200 ex-pat Americans. Summoning his alter ego and using his American intuition, Harry puts a plan in place which could make him the hero always he knew he could be.

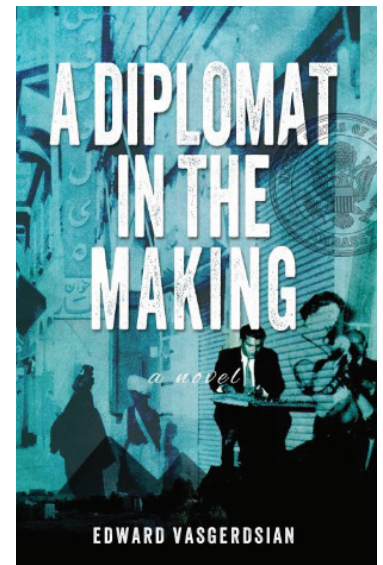
Outskirts Press (318 pp.)

\$24.95 paperback, \$9.99 e-book; \$24.95 paperback, \$9.99 e-book; ISBN: 9781977256317

Book Review

A novel with an intriguing plot, *A Diplomat In The Making* is a historical novel about a young U.S. Foreign Service officer in Egypt based on events during the 1956 Suez Crisis.

Throughout this novel, Vasgerdsian weaves a detailed story of Harry Finn's teenage American life, the adult training protocols of the Foreign Service, and love at mid-century.





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Annual dues for Regular Members is \$30.00 for 1 year and
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Please check your account on the website to confirm your due date.

Questions?

Email us at membership@embassymarine.org
or use the contact form available on the website.

For those members that would prefer to pay by mail, please make your check for
\$30.00 for one year (or \$75.00 for 3 years — a savings of \$15.00 over 3 Years) payable to MEGA and mail to:

Prefer to pay by Mail? Make checks out to MEGA and mail to:

Marine Embassy Guard Association
98 Chelmsford Dr.
Aurora, OH 44202-8811

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Bill STANSON | Vice-Chairman
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Paul STORM | Treasurer
Glen PARSONS | Director
Steven MAXWELL | Director
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Scholarship | Dave HALE
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Chaplain | David HALE
Communications | John BURKE
Legal Advisor | Hugo HARMAZT
Bylaw Review | Vacant
Fund Raising | Bob LIGHTY

** MEGA's Secretary & Treasurer are elected separately from other BOD members;
they also serve as the only standing "Officers" of the organization, in accordance with MEGA's Bylaws.*

To Contribute New Media to our website or newsletter: Go to <https://embassymarine.org/contribute/>
to submit photos, documents (PDF or Microsoft Word) and videos. The following file types are
authorized: pdf, doc, docx, xls, xlsx, png, jpg, jpeg, bmp, gif, mp4.

Please provide descriptions for photos as applicable. Be sure to reference the respective filename
for each description.