

MARINE SECURITY GUARDS

NEWSLETTER

MARINE EMBASSY GUARD ASSOCIATION



DUTY

VIGILANCE

SERVICE



MARINE EMBASSY GUARD ASSOCIATION

SERVING AMERICA'S "AMBASSADORS IN BLUE"



Spring 2026

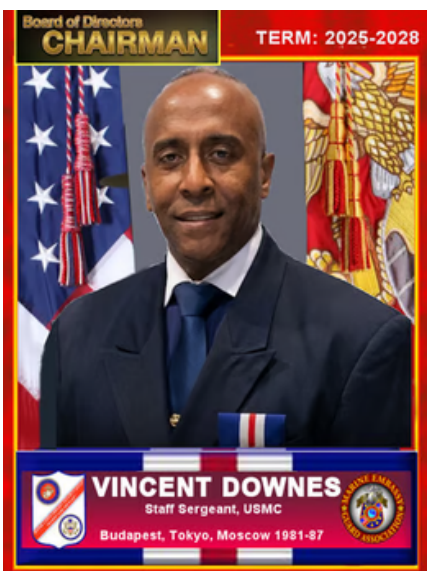
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In the Spotlight



This presentation commemorates
MGySgt Wagner's historic achievement



Message From The Chairman

In a world marked by rising tensions and uncertainty, particularly amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the role of the Marine Security Guard (MSG) remains as vital and unwavering as ever. Stationed at American embassies and consulates across the globe, today's MSGs stand on the front lines of diplomacy—quiet professionals safeguarding not only classified information and facilities, but also the lives of U.S. personnel serving abroad.

Recent developments in the Middle East have reminded us all that global stability can shift rapidly. In these moments, Marine Security

Guards are called upon to operate with heightened vigilance, professionalism, and resolve. Whether posted in high-threat environments or regions experiencing sudden unrest, MSGs embody the Marine Corps' core values—honor, courage, and commitment—every hour of every day.

Their mission is unique. MSGs are not traditional combat forces, yet they operate in some of the most complex and potentially dangerous locations in the world. They serve as a visible symbol of American strength and discipline, while simultaneously working behind the scenes to ensure the security and integrity of diplomatic operations. In times of crisis, they are often among the first to respond and the last to leave.

As tensions persist overseas, we are reminded that these Marines are far from home—standing post in unfamiliar lands, separated from family and loved ones, yet fully committed to their duty. Their presence provides reassurance to embassy staff and represents a steadfast commitment by the United States to maintain its diplomatic missions, even in the face of adversity.

Today, we pause not only to recognize their service, but also to lift them up in our thoughts and prayers. We pray for their safety, their strength, and their continued vigilance.



Message From The Chairman

We pray for their families, who share in the burden of service from afar. And we pray for peace—so that their mission may one day be carried out in a more stable and secure world.

To all Marine Security Guards currently standing watch: know that your service does not go unnoticed. You carry forward a proud legacy, one built on decades of sacrifice, professionalism, and excellence. In uncertain times, you remain a constant—faithful to your duty and to one another.

Semper Fidelis.

Vince Downes, Chairman MEGA



Treasurers Report

Your MEGA continues to maintain its financial strength and soundness.

Our MEGA website has been reworked and is now set up to accept Lifetime membership upgrades on-line. Consider this option that is now available during your next membership renewal.

Would you like to learn about additional financial support resources? Check out the free financial resources available from the Marine Corps Combat Service Support Schools (<https://www.mccsss.marines.mil/Schools/Financial-Management/>). They offer personal financial literacy help to Marines and their families. Here is a link to their Quantico site, <https://quantico.usmc-mccs.org/marine-family-support/personal-financial-management>. It has a wealth of great information.

Another example of personal financial support available is the suite of useful financial calculators available from the USA Learning Financial Readiness web site, <https://finred.usalearning.gov/ToolsAndAddRes/Calculators>. They offer free calculators for Personal Finance, Housing, Investing, Taxes, Retirement and many other applications. You may also want to check out their many other helpful resources available here, <https://finred.usalearning.gov/StartHere/RoadToFinancialReadiness>

Finances can be confusing. But don't despair, help is available!

Semper fidelis,

Paul



MARINE EMBASSY GUARD ASSOCIATION

SERVING AMERICA'S "AMBASSADORS IN BLUE"



Board of Directors

Board of Directors
CHAIRMAN TERM: 2025-2028

VINCENT DOWNES
Staff Sergeant, USMC
Budapest, Tokyo, Moscow 1981-87

Board of Directors
VICE CHAIRMAN TERM: 2025-2028

STEVE REYNOLDS
Staff Sergeant, USMC
New Delhi, Rome, Hamburg 1972-74

Board of Directors
SECRETARY TERM: 2024-2026

STEPHEN HARDESTY
Staff Sergeant, USMC
Belgrade, Rabat 1976-78

Board of Directors
TREASURER TERM: 2024-2026

PAUL STORM
Sergeant, USMC
Santiago, Georgetown Beijing 76-79

Board of Directors
DIRECTOR TERM: 2024-2026

ED VASGERSIAN
Sergeant USMC
Cairo 1956-59

Board of Directors
DIRECTOR TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE TERM: 2024-2026

FRED SAMARELLI
Sergeant, USMC
Karachi, Manila 1977-79

Board of Directors
DIRECTOR TERM: 2024-2027

RICHARD LEYDET
Sergeant USMC
Paris, Beirut, Stockholm 1982-85

Board of Directors
DIRECTOR CHAPLAIN TERM: 2024-2027

DAVID HALE
Staff Sergeant, USMC
San Salvador, Guatemala City 1979-81

Board of Directors
DIRECTOR TERM 2024-2026

STEVEN MAXWELL
Sergeant, USMC
Kuwait, Santiago 1983-86

Board of Directors
DIRECTOR TERM: 2026-2028

JOHNATHAN ROSS
CWO4, USMC
Valletta, Bucharest, Dushanbe, Munich, Algiers



Director Dale L. Clark



First Career Detachment Commander

As the Chairman of the Marine Embassy Guard Association Chairman and on behalf of the Marine Embassy Guard Association's Board of Directors and its membership, I had the distinct honor to recognize MGySgt Wagner on his promotion and new assignment as the "First Career Detachment Commander"

Master Gunnery Sergeant Wagner was presented with a framed Marine Security Guard School "Trilogy Legacy" artwork, commissioned by GySgt (Retired) Charles Wolf, creator of the Marine Corps comic strip Sempertoon's. This remarkable print depicts the historic schoolhouses of Henderson Hall, Marshall Hall, and the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group compound—symbols of the legacy, professionalism, and excellence that define the Marine Security Guard program.

This presentation commemorates MGySgt Wagner's historic achievement in becoming the first career MOS 8157 Detachment Commander. This is not only a personal milestone, but a landmark moment in the proud history of the Marine Security Guard community.



Cont.



First Career Detachment Commander

His achievement in being selected for this prestigious position is the envy of all past Marine Security Guards and serves as a powerful inspiration to current and future Marines who will follow in his footsteps.

On behalf of the Marine Embassy Guard Association, we extend our sincere happiness, pride, and congratulations on his promotion and his new MOS. We wish him the very best of luck and continued success in your new assignment.

Congratulations, Master Gunnery Sergeant Wagner. BZ



Master Gunnery Sergeant Jesse W. Wagner
MCESG,MSG Training Center Chief/Senior Enlisted Leader



Jesse Wagner was born in Bethlehem, PA in February of 1984. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in July of 2001 from Raleigh, NC and attended Recruit Training at MCRD Parris Island graduating as the Platoon Honor Graduate and Private First Class from Platoon 2093 2d RTB in October 2001.

He reported to VMAQ-3 in May 2002 where he was deployed to Iwakuni, Japan from January 2003 to July 2003. He obtained the qualifications of Collateral Duty Inspection and Quality Assurance / Safety Observer for the Ordnance Division and was meritoriously promoted to Corporal on September 2, 2003 and Sergeant on January 1, 2004. Upon promotion to Sergeant, he was issued orders to Center for Naval Aviation Training Unit (CNATTU) Whidbey Island, Marine Aviation Support Training Group (MATSG) 53 as an Aviation Ordnance "C" school Instructor. Sgt Wagner reported to MATSG-53 in February 2005 and began executing the duties of an EA-6B Ordnance Instructor.

At the completion of his Instructor tour, he was assigned to Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron (HMH) 463 in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Sgt Wagner arrived to HMH-463 in May 2008 and was assigned as the Ordnance Division Chief and was selected for promotion to Staff Sergeant and promoted on December 1, 2008. While assigned to HMH-463 he deployed twice to Helmand Province, Afghanistan where he became an Aerial Observer/Gunner on the CH-53D and was certified as Naval Aircrew and flew more than 80 combat missions. While deployed, SSgt Wagner volunteered for Marine Security Guard (MSG) duty and was selected to report to MSG Class 2-13.

SSgt Wagner reported on January 2, 2013 to Marine Corps Embassy Security Group (MCESG), Quantico, VA and began training as a Student Detachment Commander. He graduated as the class Honor Graduate in March 2013 and was assigned as the Detachment Commander at American Embassy, Canberra, Australia where he was promoted to Gunnery Sergeant on 1 October 2014 and was reassigned to be the Detachment Commander at American Embassy Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and further selected to perform the duties of the MSG Recruiting, Advertising, and Screening Team (RAST) Chief. Upon successful completion of MSG Duty, Gunnery Sergeant Wagner received orders to Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 14 in Cherry Point, NC



Master Gunnery Sergeant Jesse W. Wagner
MCESG,MSG Training Center Chief/Senior Enlisted Leader

In December of 2021, Master Sergeant Wagner reported to Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron (VMU) 1 in Yuma, AZ as the Ordnance Chief and was tasked with creating an ordnance capability on the MQ-9A Unmanned Aircraft System.

The ordnance program was archived in March of 2022 and MSgt Wagner was reassigned to VMA-223 as the Ordnance Division Chief. He completed his tour with VMA-223 in June 2023 and was assigned as the MSG Training Center Chief with MCESG Headquarters in Quantico, VA.

Master Sergeant Wagner was selected for a new Primary MOS in October 2025 and currently serves the MSG program as an 8157 Career Detachment Commander and was promoted to Master Gunnery Sergeant on 1 March 2026.

Master Gunnery Sergeant Wagner's personal decorations include the Air Medal (bronze strike/flight "2"), Navy Commendation Medal (x4) Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (x4), Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (x7), and the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal.

He is joined by his high school sweetheart and current Wife, Salla, to whom he married in 2002 and his two Daughters Summer and Capri.



Professional Resume For Master Gunnery Sergeant Jesse W. Wagner

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



MGySgt, MCESG
MSG TRAINING CENTER
27277 BROWNING ROAD
MCB QUANTICO, VA 22134

DSN:
Comm: 703-784-4924 707-
Work Cell: 847-8156
Email: wagnerjw@state.gov

MAJOR AWARDS & DECORATIONS

AIRMEDAL-STRIKE/FLIGHT (BRONZENUMERAL 2)
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL x5
NAVY AND MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL x4
MILITARY OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL
MARINE CORPSGOODCONDUCT MEDAL x7

COMBAT & DEPLOYMENTS

0302-0308 VMAQ-3 UPD MCAS IWAKUNI, JAPAN OEF
0909-1003 HMH-463 - Camp Bastion, Afghanistan OEF
1103-1109 HMH-463 - Camp Bastion, Afghanistan

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date of Rank: 20260301
Spouse Name: SALLA
Children/Age: SUMMER / 21
CAPRI / 14

POB/Date: BETHLEHAM PA / 19840207

EDUCATION (Civilian & Military)

2001 RECRUIT TRAINING, MALE
2001 MARINE COMBAT TRAINING
2002 AVIATION ORDNANCE 'A' SCHOOL
2002 EA-6B ARMORMENT SYSTEM TECHNICIAN
2004 SERGEANTS COURSE DEP
2005 SNCO CAREER COURSE DEP
2009 SNCO ADVANCED DEPWF NON-RES (8200)
2011 SENIOR ENLISTED JOINT PME (NONRESIDENT)
2011 LEADING MARINES DEP
2012 SNCO CAREER

2013 DETACHMENT COMMANDER
2013 PEACETIME/HOSTAGE DETENTION (CLASSIFIED)
2013 PEACETIME/HOSTAGE DETENTION (UNCLASSIFIED)
2013 OC SPRAY LEVEL 1
2017 MAWTS-1 EXPEDITIONARY ORDNANCE COURSE (MEOC)
2019 SNCO ADVANCED COURSE DEP
2019 ADVANCED SCHOOL SEMINAR PROGRAM
2020 1STGT/MSGT SEMINAR

CHRONOLOGY OF ASSIGNMENTS

0107-0306 MCRDPISC, MCT, MOSSchool VMAQ-3,
0306-0502 CHERRY POINT, NC CNATTU WHIDBEY
0502-0805 ISLAND, WA HMH-463, KANEOHE BAY, HI
0805-1102 HMH-463, KANEOHE BAY, HI HMH-463,
1102-1301 KANEOHE BAY, HI MCESG QUANTICO, VA
1102-1301 AMERICAN EMBASSY CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA
1301-1303 AMERICAN EMBASSY BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN
1303-1410 MCESG HQ QUANTICO, VA MALS-14, CHERRY
1410-1512 POINT, NC MALS-14, CHERRY POINT, NC
1512-1612 MALS-14, CHERRY POINT, NC VMAT-203,
1612-1801 CHERRY POINT, NC VMU-1, Yuma, AZ VMA-
1801-1907 223, CHERRY POINT, NC MCESG QUANTICO,
1907-2004 VA
2004-2111
2111-2205
2205-2306
2306-PRES

RECRUIT, STUDENT EA-6B ORDNANCE TECHNICIAN
AVIATION ORDNANCE "C" SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR
CH-53D ORDNANCE DIVISION CHIEF CH-53D
QUALITY ASSURANCE REPRESENTATIVE CH-53D
AIREAL OBSERVER/GUNNER STUDENT
DETACHMENT COMMANDER MSG DETACHMENT
COMMANDER
MSG DETACHMENT COMMANDER
MSG SCREENING TEAM CHIEF
FIXED WING MUNITIONS DIVISION CHIEF
ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT CHIEF
SQUADRON GYSGT
AV-8B ORDNANCE DIV CHIEF
MQ-9 ORDNANCE DIV CHIEF
AV8-B ORDNANCE DIV CHIEF
SCHOOL CHIEF/SENIOR ENLISTED ADVISOR (8157)



Ships Store



Ship Store Sale – Diplomatic and Official Passport Plaques

Submitted by Vince Downes

I am pleased to announce the release of two new Ship Store items that I believe many of you will truly appreciate. As Marine Security Guards, we have always taken great pride in having been entrusted with the Black Diplomatic Passport and the Maroon Official Passport—both enduring symbols of our unique mission and distinguished service.

The custom-designed Black Diplomatic Passport plaque honors the legacy of the MSG Schoolhouse as well as the title Marine Security Guard. The Maroon Official Passport plaque is geared toward those MSGs who were stationed at Henderson Hall prior to transitioning into the Diplomatic Passport program.

Cont.



Ships Store

Each plaque measures 6 x 8 inches and is crafted from durable hardboard material. They are suitable for framing or can be displayed on a tabletop stand, making them a versatile addition to any office, home, or “I Love Me Wall.”

The Black Diplomatic Passport plaques were initially introduced through the MEGA Facebook page and other MSG social media platforms, where they sold out within days. I am pleased to announce that we are now preparing a second production run. It is my intention to offer several variations of these plaques. Future versions will include options such as “Detachment Commander” wording, and the Official Passport plaque will also feature the MSG ribbon along with “Henderson Hall” inscription.

If you are interested in purchasing either of these items, please contact me at embmarine@gmail.com or vincent.downes@embassymarine.org. At this time, I am accepting PayPal or check by mail while we continue working through Ship Store software updates.

Final pricing, including shipping, is currently being finalized. However, I do not anticipate the cost exceeding \$55, consistent with the initial release.

These plaques make an excellent addition to any MSG’s collection and serve as a meaningful tribute to our shared experience and service. I hope this product resonates with you and reflects the pride we all carry as Marine Security Guards.

Semper Fidelis,

Vince Downes

Chairman

Marine Embassy Guard Association



Ships Store

*****Now Available – MEGA*****

Submitted by: Vince Downes

The Marine Embassy Guard Association (MEGA) is proud to announce the availability of a truly meaningful addition to our Ship Store—the Schoolhouse Trilogy Legacy Coin.

This custom-designed coin pays tribute to the three historic pillars of Marine Security Guard training and heritage: Company F, Headquarters Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps (Co F HQBN HQMC)

Henderson Hall

Marshall Hall

Marine Corps Embassy Security Group (MCE5G)

Schoolhouse Trilogy Coin Front



Schoolhouse Trilogy Coin Back



Cont.



Ships Store

Each of these locations represents a distinct chapter in the evolution of the Marine Security Guard program, shaping generations of Marines who have stood post in defense of our nation's embassies and consulates around the world.

The Trilogy Coin brings these legacies together into one striking design—symbolizing the continuity, professionalism, and pride that define the MSG community. Whether you walked the halls of Henderson Hall, trained at Marshall Hall, or served under MCESG, this coin connects every Marine to a shared lineage of excellence.

Crafted with attention to detail and historical significance, this coin is more than a collectible—it is a tribute to the Schoolhouse legacy and the Marines who carried it forward.

This item is ideal for:

Personal collections

Gifts for fellow MSGs

Display alongside other MEGA memorabilia

Honoring your time in the program

Quantities are limited, and demand is expected to be high among our membership and alumni community.

To purchase or for more information, please contact directly at embmarine@gmail.com or vincent.downes@embassymarine.org

Continue to honor the legacy. Carry the history. Represent the brotherhood.



MARINE EMBASSY GUARD ASSOCIATION

SERVING AMERICA'S "AMBASSADORS IN BLUE"



News You Can Use

MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL MAIL CHECKS TO TREASURER MR. PAUL STORM

Marine Embassy Guard Association
11600 E Calle Javelina
Tucson, AZ 85748

MSG School Graduation Dates

For those who may be interested in attending upcoming MSG school graduations, please find below the dates. All graduations are held at Little Hall (Base Theater) and commence at 1000.

Class	DetCmdr/MSG report date	Date Graduation
3-26	14 Mar 26	15 May 26
4-26	23 May 26	24 Jul 26
5-26	1 Aug 26	2 Oct 26
1-27	10 Oct 26	11 Dec 26
2-27	2 Jan 27	5 Mar 27
3-27	13 Mar 27	14 May 27
4-27	22 May 27	23 Jul 27
5-27	31 Jul 27	1 Oct 27

Visit the MEGA website and reconnect with fellow MSG's under MESSAGES - Guestbook:
<https://embassymarine.org/>



Reunion Update

To: MEGA Membership
From: MEGA Chairman, Vince Downes
Subj: 2027 Reunion Update

As the Chairman of the Marine Embassy Guard Association (MEGA) I continue to make steady progress in planning for the highly anticipated July 2027 MEGA Reunion, with recent efforts focused on securing a premier venue that reflects the pride, tradition, and camaraderie of our community.

I am pleased to report that a formal draft proposal has been received from the Hilton Alexandria Old Town. This location, situated in the heart of historic Old Town Alexandria, offers convenient access to Washington, D.C., along with a distinguished setting well-suited for our reunion events. Following receipt of the proposal, I, along with a few reunion committee members, have conducted a detailed review of all terms, including lodging rates, event space accommodation, and associated fees. As responsible stewards of the association's resources, our goal is to ensure that the reunion remains both memorable and affordable for all members and their families.

At present, I am actively engaged in discussions with the hotel's Senior Sales Manager to negotiate more favorable pricing and concessions. These discussions include efforts to:

Reduce overall room rates for attendees.

Minimize or waive certain venue and service fees.

Secure added value through complimentary amenities and services

Ensure flexible contract terms that best serve MEGA's interests.

cont.



Reunion Update

While the proposal presents a strong foundation, we are committed to due diligence before entering into any formal agreement. No contract will be signed until we are confident that the terms align with both our financial goals and the expectations of our membership.

The Hilton Old Town Alexandria remains (the location of our 2021 reunion) a highly attractive option, not only for its quality accommodation but also for its proximity to historic landmarks, dining, and transportation, making it an ideal destination for both reunion activities and personal exploration.

I will continue to keep the membership informed as negotiations progress and a final decision is reached. Your continued support and patience are appreciated as we work to deliver a reunion experience worthy of the Marine Security Guard legacy.

Semper Fidelis



New Career Path Announced: PMOS 8157 – Career Detachment Commander

Submitted by Vince Downes

The Marine Corps has officially announced the creation of a new and highly impactful career path for experienced Marine Security Guard (MSG) leaders—Primary MOS (PMOS) 8157, Career Detachment Commander (DetCdr). This initiative marks a significant step forward in strengthening the long-term leadership, readiness, and operational effectiveness of the Marine Corps Embassy Security Group.

Purpose and Strategic Vision

The establishment of PMOS 8157 is designed to build a professional cadre of seasoned Detachment Commanders who will serve in critical billets across the globe. These Marines will provide continuity, expertise, and leadership in support of U.S. diplomatic missions. With global demands increasing, the need for highly qualified Staff Noncommissioned Officers (SNCOs) to lateral move into this field is expected to remain strong for years to come.

What is a Career Detachment Commander?

Career Detachment Commanders are elite MSG leaders who serve in a variety of high-visibility roles, including:

- Commanding MSG detachments at critical U.S. embassies and consulates
- Supporting and liaising directly with the Department of State
- Serving as instructors and advisors at MSG School
- Leading operations, training, screening, and assignment sections
- These Marines can expect successive three-year tours, offering both stability and professional growth within the program.

cont.



New Career Path Announced: PMOS 8157 – Career Detachment Commander

Key Benefits of PMOS 8157

- Establishes a long-term MSG leadership career track
- Enhances operational readiness and mission effectiveness
- Provides opportunities for continued overseas assignments
- Supports promotion potential to Master Sergeant and First Sergeant
- Offers diverse assignments across operational and institutional roles

Eligibility and Prerequisites

Marines interested in this lateral move must meet strict criteria, including:

- Prior successful service as an 8156 Detachment Commander
- Completion of the MSG Detachment Commander Course
- Proven performance with Mission Capable inspection ratings
- Eligibility for Top Secret clearance with SCI access
- No adverse disciplinary actions in current grade
- Compliance with MCESG grooming and medical standards
- Endorsement via a formal selection board interview process

Additionally, applicants must be volunteers and submit a RELM package through their Career Retention Specialist, including a strong letter of recommendation.

Application Process and Timeline

The initial rollout of PMOS 8157 will occur in two phases:

Phase I

- Focus: Marines currently serving as DetCdrs within MCESG
- Timeline: April–May 2025
- Outcome: Selected Marines receive Intended MOS (IMOS) 8157

Phase II

- Focus: Marines across the Fleet
- Timeline: June–December 2025
- Includes formal screening, interview, and final board selection

cont.



New Career Path Announced: PMOS 8157 – Career Detachment Commander

All applicants will undergo an interview with the MCESG Selection Board, either in person at Quantico or via secure video teleconference.

What to Expect After Selection

Marines approved for lateral move can expect:

- Assignment to MSG School or CONUS-based billets for at least 24 months
- Follow-on orders to overseas Detachment Commander positions
- Official PMOS 8157 designation effective in FY2027 (1 October 2026)

Why This Matters

The creation of PMOS 8157 reflects a deliberate investment in the future of the MSG program. By retaining experienced leaders and providing a dedicated career pathway, the Marine Corps ensures that its embassy security mission remains adaptive, resilient, and highly effective in an increasingly complex global environment.

Final Thoughts

For Marines who have already proven themselves as Detachment Commanders, this new MOS offers an opportunity to continue serving at the highest levels of responsibility and trust. It is not just a lateral move—it is a commitment to sustained excellence in one of the Marine Corps' most visible and strategically important missions.

Marines interested in applying are encouraged to contact their Career Planner and begin preparing their packages early.



2026 MEGA Scholarship Announcement



The Marine Embassy Guard Association has an established scholarship fund that benefits the children and grandchildren of former, or active Marine Security Guards. Fiscal support derives from individual and corporate donations as well as from the auctions that take place during the annual MEGA reunion. The application period will start on 1 February 2026 and end on 31 May 2026. This year we will award three \$750.00 scholarships.

The MEGA Scholarship Committee carefully reviews the applications and selects the most deserving recipients. You can download the application on the MEGA website at embassymarine.org. If you have any questions, please contact the Scholarship Committee Chairman, David Hale, at ssgthale@hotmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you. God Bless and Semper Fidelis!



Members Corner

An Unexpected but Meaningful Moment – MEGA Engagement with MSG Students An Impromptu Connection with the Next Generation

Submitted by Vince Downes Photos submitted by Fred Samarelli

In a moment that perfectly captures the enduring bond between past and present Marine Security Guards, MEGA Board of Director Fred Samarelli recently found himself in an unexpected—but highly meaningful—engagement with current MSG students.

While visiting a Men's Wearhouse in Reston, Virginia, Fred encountered a group of MSG students in the process of selecting their civilian attire in preparation for graduation from the schoolhouse. What began as a routine stop quickly turned into an impromptu meeting that reflected the very heart of the Marine Embassy Guard Association's mission: connection, mentorship, and legacy.



Cont.



Members Corner

A Shared Experience Across Generations

The students, on the cusp of entering one of the most unique and prestigious duties in the Marine Corps, were engaged in an important rite of passage—selecting the professional civilian attire they will wear while representing the United States abroad.

The students, on the cusp of entering one of the most unique and prestigious duties in the Marine Corps, were engaged in an important rite of passage—selecting the professional civilian attire they will wear while representing the United States abroad.

Fred took the opportunity to introduce himself, sharing his own experiences as a Marine Security Guard and offering words of encouragement and perspective. The conversation quickly evolved into a meaningful exchange, bridging generations through shared understanding of the MSG mission, challenges, and pride.

Carrying Legacy Forward

Moments like these reinforce the importance of MEGA's presence—not only at formal events, but also in the everyday spaces where Marines are preparing for the next chapter of their careers. Fred's willingness to engage, even in an unplanned setting, exemplifies the commitment of MEGA leadership to remain accessible and connected to those who will carry the torch forward.

The students were appreciative of the interaction, gaining insight from someone who once stood exactly where they are today. In turn, Fred was reminded of the energy, professionalism, and promise that defines each new generation of Marine Security Guards.



Members Corner

Strengthening the MEGA Mission

This spontaneous meeting serves as a powerful reminder that the MEGA network is always at work, whether at formal ceremonies, reunions, or even a suit fitting in Reston. It is through these connections that the legacy of the MSG program continues to thrive.

As these soon-to-be graduates prepare to represent our nation at embassies around the world, they do so with the support and pride of those who came before them.



**Members Corner
Memories**

Submitted by: Jim Rexroad and Steven Maxwell

It started with a short message on the MEGA Facebook page. A watchstander was coming through the Tampa Bay area. He reached out to see if anyone was available to get together and share stories.

Although no one was available during the time he would be here, I was surprised at how many responses he received from MSG's from the Tampa Bay area.

Jim Rexroad
Frankfort, Germany
Manama, Bahrain

Scott Carlson
Bonn, Germany
Beijing, China
Rangoon, Burma

Miguel "Mike" Silva
Lagos, Nigeria
Nassau, Bahamas

Sean Ravenel
Amman, Jordan
Cairo, Egypt
Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic

David Edmonds
Reykjavik, Iceland
Oslo, Norway



Moises Villarreal
Rome, Italy
Seoul, South Korea

Bill Michitsch
Sanaa, Yemen
The Hague, Netherlands

John Anderson
Rome, Italy
Yaoundé, Cameroon

Trey Salmon
Calcutta, India
Bogota, Colombia
San Salvador, El Salvador

John David Bean
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Kingston, Jamaica

Rob Becker
Antananarivo,
Madagascar
Caracas, Venezuela

cont.



Members Corner

I gave a shout out to those that responded and asked if anyone would be interested in having a mini-reunion. The response was overwhelmingly positive . It turns out that some of the former watchstanders hadn't spoken with another Marine Security Guard in quite a while and were eager to get together.

We reserved a restaurant in Tampa,Florida . On March 15, a bright and sunny Sunday afternoon, 10 Marine Embassy Guard Veterans got together.

The company, and the conversation was amazing. A former MSG from the 1950's was our most senior Marine, and another that had just recently gotten out of the Corps was our junior Marine.

The stories that were told were absolutely amazing and the changes that have taken place to the program caught me off guard. Who would have thought they would ever get rid of the Marine House Bar?!?

Many memories both positive and negative, where made in the Marine house bar . I feel a slight sense of loss for those MSG's that never got to experience a New Year's Eve in the Marine House Bar .

I'd like to express my gratitude to all the MSG's that made it a point to meet up . Thank you for sharing your memories, stories,and your experiences as a Marine embassy guard.

Semper Fi Marines I'm hard at work planning our next get together.



**MARINE EMBASSY GUARD ASSOCIATION (MEGA)
CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS – LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

The Marine Embassy Guard Association (MEGA) is currently seeking dedicated and motivated members to serve in key leadership roles within the organization. We are now accepting interest for the following positions:

Secretary
Director

These positions offer a unique opportunity to contribute to the continued growth, organization, and success of MEGA while supporting our mission and preserving the proud legacy of Marine Security Guards.

We are looking for members who are committed, professional, and willing to actively participate in the planning, coordination, and execution of MEGA initiatives and events.

If you are interested in serving or would like additional information, please contact:

Vincent Downes

vincent.downes@embassymarine.org

Your involvement makes a difference—step forward and help shape the future of MEGA.

Respectfully

Vince Downes
Chairman



This Date in History

These events underscore the MSG role as a small but elite force—often just a handful of Marines per post—capable of decisive action in isolated, high-stakes diplomatic settings.

March 29, 1965: A bomb exploded outside the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, Vietnam, causing heavy damage and casualties. Marine Embassy Guards helped restore order and maintain security in the aftermath.

March 1968 (Tet Offensive period): During the Tet Offensive, MSGs at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon successfully repelled attempts by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces to breach the chancery building. Cpl. James Marshall became the first MSG killed in the direct defense of a U.S. embassy. MSGs held key interior posts under extreme pressure.

Final Moments: April 29, 1975 The last Marine security guards departed the embassy roof at 7:53 a.m. on April 30, 1975, with Master Sergeant Juan Valdez among the last out. MSG Cpl. Charles McMahan was killed in action.

April 18, 1983: A suicide truck bomb detonated at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 63 people (including 17 Americans) and wounding over 120. Marine Security Guard Cpl. Robert V. McMaugh was killed while on duty at Post One.

June 19, 1985 (Zona Rosa Attack): In San Salvador, El Salvador, off-duty MSGs Staff Sgt. Bobby Joe Dickson, Staff Sgt. Thomas Handwork, Sgt. Gregory Weber, and Sgt. Patrick Kwiatkowski were assassinated while eating at a restaurant.

May 1997: MSGs at the U.S. Embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone, helped facilitate the unplanned evacuation of the embassy amid civil unrest and conflict. Their actions were credited with greatly aiding the safe departure of personnel.

June 1997: MSGs assisted in the unplanned evacuation of the U.S. Embassy in Brazzaville, Congo, amid escalating violence; their presence helped enable a safe withdrawal.

March 1, 2026 (recent): U.S. Marines assigned to the consulate in Karachi, Pakistan, fired on protesters attempting to storm the facility amid regional tensions following strikes on Iran.



This Date in History

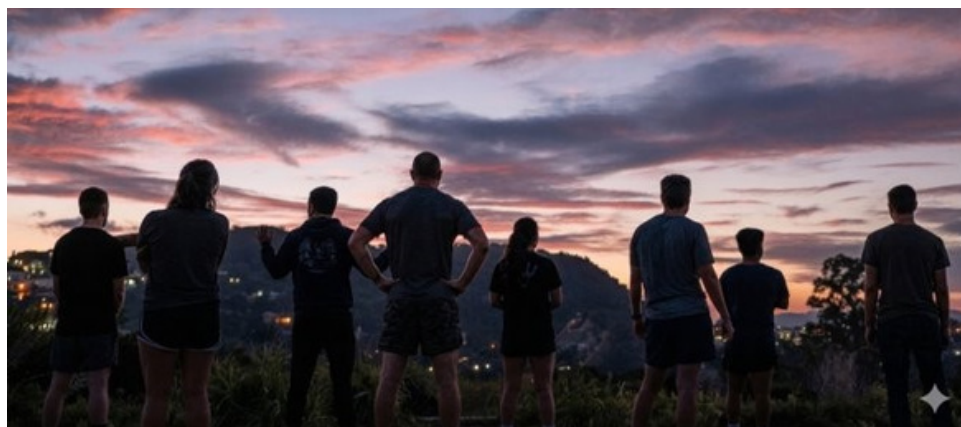
Broader context: MSGs have repeatedly supported evacuations, riot responses, and crisis management during regional unrest in these months (e.g., protests, civil conflicts, or natural disasters), though specific large-scale incidents are less frequently documented outside the major terrorist attacks listed. In response to the 2012 Benghazi attack (September), Congress later authorized a major expansion of the MSG program, increasing detachments and personnel for better coverage worldwide.

These events underscore the dangers of MSG duty and the Corps' longstanding partnership with the Department of State. MSGs operate under the operational control of the embassy's Regional Security Officer while maintaining Marine Corps standards. Fatalities among MSGs remain rare relative to their global footprint, but the listed incidents represent pivotal moments in diplomatic security history. For deeper details on specific posts or fallen Marines, resources like the Marine Embassy Guard Association provide extensive archives.



Hot off the Press

**Message to U.S. Marine Security Guard Detachment – Namibia
From Ambassador John Giordano**



Marines, It was an honor to join you for PT again this morning. Namibia's mornings are sharp and clear – a reminder that readiness begins before dawn.

As I mentioned, the United States does not deploy Marines overseas as a formality. You are here because our nation entrusts the Marine Corps with one of its most serious responsibilities: securing American diplomatic missions and protecting American lives abroad. At U.S. embassies around the world, across every clime and place, Marines stand guard.

The Marine Corps runs in my family, so I understand the standard your uniform demands. That standard does not bend under pressure. It is upheld every day – without exception.

Routine is an illusion. Deterrence exists because you stand watch. Calm exists because you are disciplined.

Cont.



Hot off the Press

Circumstances can change without warning. Readiness cannot be episodic – it must be constant. In a world where U.S. diplomatic facilities have been targeted, readiness is not theoretical. It is what protects American lives. I trust you are prepared for the full spectrum: professional engagement in one moment, decisive action in the next.

Inside these walls are American diplomats, locally employed staff, visiting officials, and families who rely on you without hesitation. Your bearing communicates before you speak. Precision. Alertness. Composure. Respect. These are not surface impressions – they signal discipline, control, and resolve.

Train seriously. Know your post cold. Know your procedures by instinct. Maintain standards without compromise. Look out for each other. Physical readiness is assumed. Mental clarity under pressure is decisive.

If nothing happens, you have succeeded.

If something happens, you will be ready.

I have complete confidence in this detachment and in the standard you uphold every day. You represent the best of the Marine Corps and the best of the United States.

Semper Fidelis,
John Giordano
U.S. Ambassador to Namibia



Note From The Editor

To all members, We truly appreciate your continued support and contributions to our newsletter. Anyone who would like to contribute can submit an article with or without photographs.

(Email: danny.baker@embassymarine.org)

Please note that MEGA is a nonpartisan organization. We therefore do not publish articles that contain political overtones or content.