

The Arena, the Pillars, and the Path Ahead

By Keith Bucklew, Executive Director

Six months ago, I stepped into the Executive Director's chair and opened my first message to the membership with a fundamental truth: MAPS is not simply the hangar, the static exhibits, or our restored aircraft—MAPS is you. Walking these floors, watching our tour guides breathe life into military history, and seeing families connect with our heritage has only deepened that conviction. Serving in this seat has truly been my dream job, which is why sharing this next step comes with heavy emotion: effective August 31, I will step down as Executive Director of MAPS Air Museum.

This decision comes down to the honest realities of timing, family, and operational necessity. After 21 years of service in the Marine Corps and a professional career that requires frequent travel, my family has sacrificed and endured through multiple combat deployments, cross-country moves, and the relentless operational tempos of military and civilian life. They have stood faithfully by my side through every chapter, and at this critical juncture, they deserve my full attention, presence, and focus.

At the same time, my six months as Executive Director have yielded a crystal-clear operational analysis: MAPS is no longer an organization that can be run on a part-time basis.

This is a full-time position. MAPS is in a premier financial and marketing position to professionalize and capitalize on its superior reputation and unmatched product. You have built an incredible environment where families and friends gather not just to look at vintage airframes, but to deeply understand the strategic interests, societal conditions, ethics, and values that our nation committed during our defining battles and aviation endeavors. To sustain that high-tempo trajectory, expand our footprint, and manage daily operations, MAPS deserves a passionate, competent, and full-time professional Executive Director who can commit everything they have to this amazing non-profit, every single day.

When considering the extraordinary effort it takes to keep this museum flying, I am continually reminded of President Theodore Roosevelt's timeless words from his "Citizenship in a Republic" address:

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly"

Keith's article continued on the following page

HOURS OF OPERATION

SUNDAY	11:30 - 4:00
MONDAY	CLOSED
TUESDAY	9:00 - 4:30
WEDNESDAY	9:00 - 4:30
THURSDAY	9:00 - 4:30
FRIDAY	9:00 - 4:30

ADDRESS and PHONE

Address: 2260 International Parkway
Green, Ohio 44720

Phone: 330-896-6332

Mission Statement

MAPS Air Museum is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating people about the history of aviation and its impact upon society. It accomplishes this mission by acquiring, restoring, preserving, studying and exhibiting the impact of aviation on the culture of man.

MAPS DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Keith Bucklew

EDUCATION DIRECTORS

Reed Kimball

Todd Kustra

EVENT DIRECTOR

Kynsey Koch

MUSEUM DIRECTOR

Debbie Bussinger

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Dave Conner

MUSEUM CURATOR

Scott Denniss

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rich Ashley

Dennis Bachtel (Chair)

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GIFT SHOP

Bob Hollis

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MILITARY HISTORY PROGRAM

Debbie Bussinger

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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OMM DISPLAYS

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Ron Duplain

Jim Jackson

SAFETY / SECURITY

Dave Conner

SCOUT COORDINATOR

Jim Felner

TOUR COORDINATOR

Todd Kustra

TREASURER

Roger Herbst

VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

Rich Ashley

Sheryl Felner

Keith's article continued...

The true credit for the triumph of MAPS has never belonged to the title of Executive Director—it belongs entirely to the people fighting in the arena every single day.

There are foundational pillars here that must be fiercely protected, honored, and sustained: our unwavering commitment to education and historical preservation, our beloved volunteer corps, and our steadfast, loyal employees. The backbone and cornerstone of this museum are the leaders who pour their sweat and passion into its mission week after week: Reed Kimball, Debbie Bussinger, Dave Conner, Scott Denniss, Bob Hollis, Jim Jackson, Denny Bachtel, Doug Perry, Marylou Thompson, Peg Deibel, Kynsey Koch, Roger Herbst, and an unnamed roster of selfless contributors too long to list. You are the heart and soul of MAPS. They are the best of the best, and have my eternal gratitude.

Bringing on a dedicated, full-time professional Executive Director will provide long-term institutional stability and ensure these core pillars remain strong. It will protect our local partnerships while aggressively expanding our influence far beyond Stark and Summit County. With the right full-time leadership steering this ship, MAPS is poised to transition into a regional and national powerhouse—an institution with the stature, funding, and reputation that will entice visitors from across the country to experience this unmatched gem of American society.

Though my name will no longer be on the payroll after August 31, my dedication to this museum is permanent. You cannot spend time inside these hangar walls among these aircraft and these people without leaving a piece of your heart behind. I will remain actively engaged as a member, advocate, and volunteer, standing ready to support MAPS in any capacity required to ensure our continued success and prosperity.

Thank you for the profound honor of serving as your Executive Director, for your trust, and for welcoming me into the arena with you. Keep the flight line moving, protect the pillars, and know that as long as our volunteers and staff continue to dare greatly, the finest days of MAPS Air Museum are straight ahead.

*Keep the flight line moving...
Protect the pillars...
Dare greatly...*

Keith, we can't thank you enough for the leadership you have provided over the last six months. You helped us to think outside the box, and expand our horizons to new and exciting possibilities for MAPS of the future.

We wish the very best for you and your family.

MAPS Board of Directors



September 11, 2026 marks the 25th Anniversary of the horrific terrorist attacks on American soil that killed almost three thousand people. The Twin Towers in NYC, the Pentagon and a field in Shanksville, PA were all sites of destruction and loss.

To those born after 9/11, it is a day learned about in school or something talked about on the news. To those of us who lived through that day, the images and sorrow are forever seared in our hearts and souls.

On 9/11, first responder fatalities, those who rushed in to help, were devastating - 343 Firefighters, 71 Law Enforcement Officers and 8 EMS/Paramedics lost their lives.

Thousands of off-duty police officers, firefighters and EMTs from across the U.S. traveled to NYC to relieve exhausted local first responders. Since 9/11, over 2,000 first responders have died from toxic dust, cancers and respiratory diseases linked to their work at Ground Zero.

On this Anniversary, it is fitting that we honor our MAPS first responders. All are retired now, but all answered the call and were the first on scene during an emergency.

- ◆ **Bill Barracato - Paramedic**
- ◆ **Dave Conner - Firefighter and Paramedic**
- ◆ **Scott Denniss - Law Enforcement Officer**
- ◆ **Ted Mathies - Army Medic**
- ◆ **Bob Schwartz - EMT**

Dave Conner was one of the thousands of Americans who traveled to NYC to assist with clean-up efforts.

Tribute in Light

The two ghostly columns of light rise each September 11th, replicating the shape of the Twin Towers that were destroyed on 9/11.



Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER

WED, SEP 9	DIRECTOR MEETING	1 PM
SAT, SEP 12	MEMBERSHIP MEETING	11 AM
THU, SEP 10	T-34 FLY-IN	VARIABLE
- SUN, SEP 13		

OCTOBER

SUN, OCT 4	CAK 5K RUN	5 AM-11 AM
WED, OCT 7	DIRECTOR MEETING	1 PM
SAT, OCT 10	MEMBERSHIP MEETING	11 AM
SUN, OCT 25	FALL MILITARY SHOW	9 AM-4 PM
WED, OCT 28	HALLOWEEN IN THE HANGAR	5 PM-8PM

NOVEMBER

SUN, NOV 1	HAMFEST	6 AM-1 PM
SAT, NOV 7	VETERANS PROGRAM	4 PM-10 PM
WED, NOV 11	DIRECTOR MEETING	1 PM
SAT, NOV 14	MEMBERSHIP MEETING	11 AM

DECEMBER

SAT, DEC 5	MAPS CHRISTMAS PARTY	
SUN, DEC 6	720 HOLIDAY MARKET	9 AM-4 PM
	VISIT WITH SANTA	
WED, DEC 9	DIRECTOR MEETING	1 PM
SAT, DEC 12	MEMBERSHIP MEETING	11 AM

Please call MAPS or check our website, Facebook or Instagram for details about events and news about any updates or changes.

MAPS Endowment Fund

*A message from the Executive Director
and the Board of Directors*

Our Endowment Fund has been set up to ensure the long term survival of the organization. If you plan to have a financial review done, MAPS Air Museum would appreciate being considered in your plans.

THANK YOU!

Commemorative Air Force Visits MAPS

The Commemorative Air Force's *Flying Legends of Victory Tour*, provided a week long visit at the end of June for two iconic WWII planes; the B-25J Mitchell and the B-17G Flying Fortress. Just over 2300 visitors came out to MAPS to explore these historic Warbirds up close through ground tours and then on Saturday and Sunday were able to book rides on these incredible aircraft for an unforgettable experience..

Many in the community told us of hearing the planes flying over their homes. Justin Deierling, paramedic and firefighter with the Greentown Volunteer FD posted on his Facebook page, "A huge thank you to the MAPS Air Museum and the Commemorative Air Force for bringing the B-25 and B-17 out! It was incredible to finally see these historic aircraft up close and capture them from one of my favorite plane spotting locations.

I also want to give a special thank you to the crews and the MAPS Air Museum volunteers. Everyone was so kind, welcoming, and happy to share their knowledge and passion for these amazing aircraft. Your dedication to preserving aviation history truly shows, and it made the experience even more memorable.

There's nothing quite like seeing—and hearing—these warbirds in person. It was an unforgettable day, and I'm already looking forward to the next visit!" Thank you Justin!



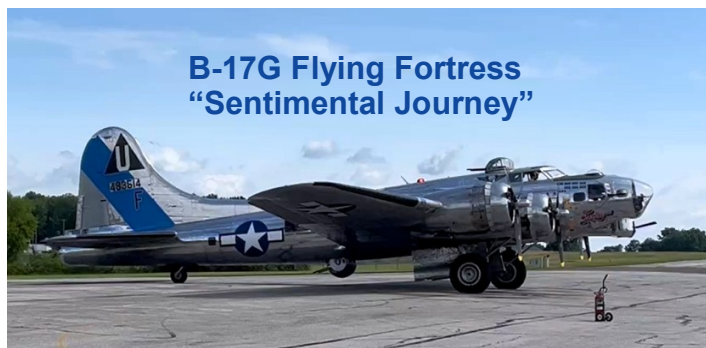
Maid in the Shade's Crew L to R:
Dave Kennerly, Tony DiLorenzo, Tim Thorstad, Mel Pepitone, John Mummery and Francois Bergeon



Sentimental Journey's Crew L to R:
Chris Reeder, Fred DeWitt, Bob Clarke, John Smutny, Ken Russell, Gege Adkins, Freddie Stamper, Dave Crowder, Al Wilson, and Jackie Wilson



**B-25J Mitchell
"Maid in the Shade"**



**B-17G Flying Fortress
"Sentimental Journey"**

The Commemorative Air Force® (CAF) was founded in 1957 to preserve history by restoring historic World War II aircraft back to flying condition and to educate new generations of Americans on the value of military aviation in assuring our nation's freedom. These airplanes, and the men and women who built, flew and maintained them – changed the world forever! We can never let them be forgotten.

Perfect Day For a Car Show!

Saturday, June 13, 2026 dawned with clear skies and sunshine! MAPS had over 500 cars (almost a record) and almost 1400 visitors that day. The pride of ownership could be seen in each of the cars on display.

Of the many cars, Steven and Abby Larch of Tallmadge, entered their red and white 2021 Mini Cooper's Paddy Hopkirk edition. A very sharp looking car indeed!

We also had our youngest entrant ever this year - Jetson, 15-month old son of Steven and Abby entered his very own "mini" Cooper!

We hope to see all the Larch's again next year!



Above: the Mini Cooper and the "mini" Cooper

Below: Jetson posing for a photo op in the hangar



Many thanks to Don Sitts and the Don Sitts Auto Group, Cuyahoga Falls, for again sponsoring and supporting this year's Annual Car Show. For the past 16 years, car enthusiasts look forward to the show which is held on the 2nd Saturday in June each year.



720 December Market Comes to MAPS



Get ready for the 720 DEC MKT Holiday Shopping Party on Sunday, December 6th from 9 am - 4 pm. MAPS will be filled with some of Ohio's best makers, bakers, brewers, and growers - curated and brought to you by 720 Market.

This festive indoor shopping event features around 80 artisan, seasonal, and food vendors surrounded by historic aircraft and museum galleries. Visitors will enjoy a festive shopping atmosphere and unique photo opportunities among aviation history exhibits.

Soak in all the festive, family-friendly shopping fun at Santa's Workshop and Mrs. Claus' Gift Boutique shopping areas. Kids will have an opportunity to visit with Santa plus other fun activities.

9/11 Memorial T-34 Fly-In

Come join us for a weekend of flying and flyovers at MAPS.

The 9/11 Memorial Flight & MAPS Fly-In takes place September 10-13, 2026, at the Akron-Canton Airport and MAPS Air Museum.

This special weekend event features formation arrivals, flight exhibitions, and coordinated flyovers honoring the anniversary of 9/11 and those who have lost their lives in the fight against terrorism.

The event features a series of memorial flyovers and formation flights, beginning Thursday afternoon and continuing throughout the weekend.



Chairman's Notes

By Dennis Bachtel, Chair, Board of Directors

Now you see her...Now you don't!



Thursday August 28, 2025 was the beginning of a new journey for Jean Ann II, MAPS P-51 entrance guardian - the day Jean Ann II was removed from the pole she had been attached to for 12 years. Those years of continuous exposure had taken its toll; she was peeling paint, had cracks and delamination of her fiberglass and an accumulation of algae and mold.

But...a little history first.

In 2011, MAPS received the remnants of a fiberglass mock-up of a P-51 Mustang fighter. This particular one had been on display outside the 100th Bomb Group Restaurant near Cleveland Hopkins Airport until a storm and wind gusts mangled and toppled it from its perch. It was moved to MAPS for restoration.

During the same timeframe, MAPS officials approached the City of Green with a proposal to create a memorial park at the intersection of Massillon Rd. and International Parkway. Approval was granted in 2013 and the park was created around the full-sized Mustang fiberglass model. The aircraft was painted to replicate the combat aircraft of a MAPS member and WWII veteran, Bob Withee and his plane, "Jean Ann II".

In 2014, the aircraft was mounted on a pole that was built to allow the P-51 to turn with the wind. Two weeks later, the dedication ceremony included guest of honor, Lt. Robert Withee. In 2015, granite plaques were added to the memorial—one honoring the 112th Fighter Squadron, the first unit to occupy what was to become the MAPS facility, and another honoring Lt. Withee. Sadly, Withee passed away in 2018 at the age of 97.



In order to remove Jean Ann, the canopy needed to be removed to give access to the lift point, fiberglass panels were removed on the underside to give access to the bolts holding her to the pole and MAPS crane was employed to lift her off the pedestal. Some of the same people that placed her on the pole 12 years ago helped remove her. Anytime we do lifts like this, weather is always a factor; airplanes are made to fly, so we needed calm winds while she was suspended!

Once she was removed from the pole, she was placed on a cart that had been fabricated in our welding shop, and towed with one of our tugs up the hill to the parking lot. The short journey wasn't uneventful, some signs needed to be removed, trees had to be avoided and tractor trailers had to be held up until we cleared the roadway.

When you move a plane with a 37-foot wingspan you need to plan for every eventuality. When we got to the gate between the parking lot and the flight line we needed to make another move, the wings were too wide to go through the gate and they were too low to clear the top of the fence. The solution was to set up the crane and lift the plane, with cart attached, over the fence to the flight line side. Once in place, she was towed just outside the hangar door to begin her restoration.

It had been decided that this would be a "Rosie the Riveter" project and the ladies went to work after she had been pressure washed to remove as much paint and crud before they started. Eight to ten "MAPS Rosie's" along with a few aviation students from Stow got to work sanding and wire brushing the entire aircraft. Within a few weeks Jean Ann was ready to be moved into the hangar for needed repairs and restoration.

Article continued on the following page

Chairman's Notes *continued...*



Sanding completed!



Fiberglass work begins

Now the transformation begins, Kathy Jo Wells started doing her magic. The silver paint used on Jean Ann is very temperamental and requires a slow, steady, consistent application. Kathy Jo has the touch! Sandy Hollis was her faithful "sidekick" - keeping her supplied with paint, rollers, rags and whatever else she needed.



**Kathy Jo on the wing,
Sandy at the ready**

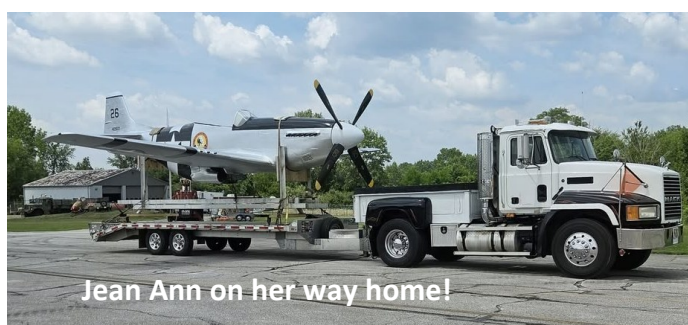
After several coats of primer, (also done by MAPS "Rosies") and finish paint, she's ready for her jewelry. Jean Ann's name was painted, invasion stripes were added, the tail numbers and identification were applied and the squadron emblem was affixed. She looks like a masterpiece!



After close inspection, it was determined that Jean Ann needed some extensive fiberglass repair to her wings, fuselage and several of her underside panels. Help was enlisted from the restoration department to make the necessary repairs. The fiberglass repairs continued on and off over the winter due to the cold conditions in the hangar. Fiberglass needs minimum temperatures to cure. Spring arrived and the fiberglass repairs were completed.

Before she could be placed back on the pole, the pole and axel assembled were inspected and it was discovered the bearing that supported Jean Ann had completely disintegrated and needed to be replaced. That task completed, she's ready for installation.

Finally, Jean Ann is ready to be placed on the pole. Saturday August 1, 2026 was the date for installation. On Friday before installation, a group of us met at MAPS to place Jean Ann and the new cart she was on, on **Jerry Leek's** trailer, in preparation for Saturday. MAPS crane and forklift were employed to accomplish this task.



Jean Ann on her way home!

Saturday morning arrived and everyone met early at MAPS. Due to the higher position on Jerry's trailer, Jean Ann's wings could now clear the fence to leave the flight line but that caused other issues. Because of her greater height she wouldn't clear the trees along the roadway. We had anticipated this and had made arrangements with the city of Green to go through the back entrance of their facility, around the buildings and through the front parking lot to Jean Ann's final destination. Everything went well with the move, we stopped truck traffic for a short period as Jerry weaved his way through Green's property.

Once in place with the crane, Jean Ann and the tag lines attached to the wings, front and tail, we were ready to lift. As we prepared to start the lift, the crane wouldn't start, when we did get it to start it wouldn't keep running. After some investigation it was determined we had bad fuel and the small amount of fuel in the tank needed to be removed and replaced with new fuel and a new fuel filter. Problem solved, and the lift proceeded without a hitch.

The weather cooperated, our crew performed well, there were no injuries and after the minor equipment issue was resolved, the crane performed well.

The last step, attaching the canopy was done with the assistance of **Hartville Hardware**.

See next page for more pictures



**Scaffolding
erected in preparation for Jean
Ann II's return**



On her perch!



As you enter or leave MAPS, take a few minutes and pull into Green's parking lot, get out and look closely at Jean Ann II - she shines in the sun and is as beautiful as the day she was built.

Thanks to everyone who had a hand in this restoration - there were many!

CAK Celebrates 80 Years!

Akron-Canton Airport (CAK) officially opened and was dedicated with a grand two-day ceremony on October 12–13, 1946. Scheduled commercial passenger service officially began operating at the airfield beginning in July of 1948.

Events are still in the planning stage to celebrate the 80th Anniversary in October.

CAK 5K on the Runway

As the Akron-Canton Airport celebrates its 80th Anniversary this October, it will sponsor the 10th CAK 5K on the Runway on October 4th.

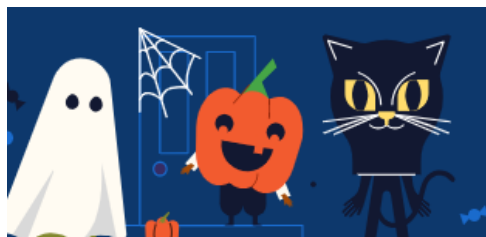
Runners and walkers alike look forward to this event every year. It is a unique community race allowing participants to go behind the scenes from the MAPS Air Museum straight onto the airport taxiways, and a chance to run through the Ohio Air Guard Facility and right down the airport runway.

Awards will be presented in the MAPS hangar.

Coffee, water, juice, muffins and granola bars will be available in the hangar before and after the event.



Halloween in the Hangar with CAK



Join us on Wednesday, October 28th from 5 to 8 PM for some Halloween fun!

CAK is moving their very popular *Trick-or-Treat* event to MAPS this year! There will be

- 25+ candy stops provided by local sponsors and organizations
- A "touch a truck" station—the Airport firetruck
- A "soft play" station in the banquet hall for the tiny kids
- Craft tables
- Vendors
- Food trucks and other fun things.

Watch for more information on our website and Facebook coming soon.

Veterans Program 2026

As the 250th Birthday of our great nation draws to a close, join us for the 14th Annual Veterans Program to be held on Saturday, November 7, 2026 as we celebrate...

VOICES OF VALOR A LIVING HISTORY - 250 YEARS OF AMERICAN MILITARY

Voices of Valor brings history to life through the real words of those who lived it. Guests will experience a moving blend of live readings, immersive character portrayals, and visual storytelling spanning over 250 years of American military history.

Portrayals span the War of Independence, A Divided Country, The Great War, The Greatest Generation, The Forgotten War, The Vietnam War and the War on Terror.

We celebrate and honor the men and women who fought for our independence and freedoms for 250 years.

Watch for more information coming soon on MAPS website and Facebook.

MAPS New Board Members

At the June 20th Membership Meeting, the newly elected Board members were announced.

Welcome to **Rich Ashley** and **Bob Stoller** as first time Board members!

Bob Hollis was re-elected for another term.

The role of the Board of Directors at MAPS is an important one - especially as we move forward to the next exciting phase of MAPS' growth.

THANK YOU!



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Commercial Printing
& Graphic Design



MAPS thanks The Print Shop of Canton, Inc.
for sponsoring "THE BRIEFING"



Friday, July 3rd was a sweltering, humid day with temps in the 90s! However, that didn't deter 1754 visitors from spending some time at MAPS.

We had plenty of cold water and posted hydration safety signs.

Despite the weather, everyone was in good spirits and enjoyed their visit. Many families thanked us for providing such a special community event. Even more said they had never been to MAPS before and were impressed with our galleries and collection of aircraft.

The Revolutionary War Living History Display, under the wing of our C-130 was a hit for young and old alike!

A great way for MAPS to celebrate America's 250th!



Many thanks to Steve Toohey and
Operation Flags of Freedom for lining
our entrance with American Flags for
all of MAPS summer events!

MAPS Anniversaries

May 1, 2026 to July 31, 2026

**** designates Family Membership**

35 Years!

**Cavalena, Larry
Lindsay, Deborah**

25 YEARS

Cangemi, Carmello

Keller, Jim **

Marks, Gary

20 YEARS

Lott, Joyce **

Popovic, James

15 YEARS

Anderson, Brooke **

Hollis, Robert

Horning, Catherine

Kimball, Reed

Mesko, Pat

Schulz, Wayne

Tober, Clayton

5 YEARS

Alspach Jr, John

Antalek, Christopher **

Boone, David **

Coates, John **

Fain, Ron

Fernce, Michael **

Harig, Jack **

Jordan, Carol

Karam, Daniel

Kodak, Douglas **

Lerch, Daniel **

Lingler, Dennis

Miller, Douglas

Philpott, James **

Polimus, Martin

Rodgers, Dallas **

Sample, Matthew

Tabellion, Joseph **

Wells, Kathy Jo

10 YEARS

Bean, Steve

Breeden, Kevin **

Caner, Joseph **

Davis, Ronald **

Felner, Sheryl **

Forman, Roger

Frenz, David*

Genshaft, Neil

Reese, George

Ryerson, Peter

New Members

May 1, 2026 to July 31, 2026

**** designates Family Membership**

Barletto, Charles

Bodas, Rami

Canal Fulton Public Library

Clark, Alan **

Clark, Grady **

Cuiksa, Sarah

Davidson, Sara **

Davis, Donovan

Faidley, Bradley

Falls, Daniel

Flowers, Sheila

Fox, Brad

Frum, Robert **

Geier, Dierker **

Gerber, Steve

Glass, Brian **

Holder, Patricia

Hottinger, Benton

Kaster, Carolyn

Kotnik, Donald **

Lehman, Logan

Louisville Public Library

Mitchel, Anthony **

Niedermeyer, Caroline

Noble, Christian

Patchin, Jonah

Peavy, Daryl

Portage County District
Library

Ransa, Geoffrey

Reed Memorial Library

Robinson, Donald

Rocheleau, Blaine

Sari, Brian **

Schminky, Roy **

Scott, Nathaniel

Small II, John **

Stoller, Lauren

Vielheller, Timothy

White, Jonathan **

Willis, Daniel

Wilson, Mary



A Warm MAPS Welcome!



CONGRATULATIONS

Thank You For Your Continued Support!

Traveling Exhibit Comes to MAPS

The Catherine Richards Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the American Battlefield Trust are pleased to present the American Revolution Experience at the MAPS Air Museum.

It will be on display in the Banquet Hall from October 19 to 26, 2026. The innovative pop-up traveling exhibition is designed to bring Revolutionary War history directly into communities across America. It includes display panels and interactive digital kiosks that use storytelling, illustration, technology, unique artifacts and primary accounts to connect modern audiences with the people and places that shaped the birth of our nation 250 years ago.

This remarkable traveling exhibit includes:

- Personal narratives of courage, resilience, and hope
- Contributions of everyday people rather than only famous leaders
- Twelve educational panels spotlighting individuals touched by the war
- Three digital kiosks that offer a broader historical context



The American Battlefield Trust preserves America's hallowed battlegrounds and educates the public about what happened there and why it matters.

Many thanks to **Sharon Snowden, President of the Green Chapter DAR**, for her hard work in securing access to the display and for contacting MAPS to house the display.

As the celebration of America's birth winds to a close, we hope you and your family will visit MAPS to see this amazing traveling exhibit!

September is Hispanic Heritage Month

September honors the history, cultures, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans with roots in Spain, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.

While there are many Hispanics and Latinos who have contributed greatly to our country, one who stands out today is Sonia Marie Sotomayor. In 2009, she broke boundaries by becoming the first Latina, and the third woman, to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States, the highest court in the country.

October is Native American Heritage Month

October is a time to honor and celebrate the rich history, cultures, and contributions of Native Americans in the United States.

Native Americans have a long and significant history of military service in the United States and have participated with honor in every major conflict for over 200 years. Native Americans have served at a rate five times greater than the national average, enlisting in every branch of the military.

The Navajo Code Talkers became national heroes after the Battle of Iwo Jima in WWII. Their heroism in the battle is widely acknowledged as the pivotal act that turned the war.

MAPS Is Saddened By Two Losses

Leona Ruth Jarvis Neidert 1927-2026



It is with a heavy heart that we report Leona Ruth Jarvis Neidert passed away peacefully on June 29, 2026. Leona was born October 9th, 1927 in the West Virginia town of Chloe. She was the youngest and last surviving of nine children born to Calvin and Letha Jarvis.

When Leona was nine years old the family relocated to Seville,

Ohio, where she graduated with the honor of Salutatorian. She worked various secretarial positions. In 1949 she met her future husband, Donald Neidert. They were married December 23rd, 1950 and were devoted partners for over 75 years.

Don enlisted in the Air Force and during his time in the military he was stationed from Illinois to Mississippi and finally Alaska. Leona accompanied him to all his assignments and during their time in Fort Rich, Alaska, she worked for the Judge Advocate General's Office.

They returned to Don's hometown of Canal Fulton after his enlistment was over and Leona settled into her life as mother, wife and volunteer. She spent many hours volunteering for church, PTA, Meals on Wheels, Red Cross and the Military Aviation Preservation Society (MAPS).

Leona and Don enjoyed traveling, with many family camping vacations taking them all over the United States and Canada. In later years they would travel to Hawaii and back to Alaska many times.



Leona and Don joined MAPS in 1999 and were active members and volunteers for many years. Don still volunteers when he's able and Leona spent many years working in the gift shop and assisting our kitchen crew for our various events. Leona and Don received the MAPS Legacy Award in 2019.

John F. Sazpanski 1929-2026



MAPS is saddened to report that John Sazpanski, 96, passed away peacefully on Saturday, August 8, 2026. John was born in Cleveland and grew up at Parmadale Children's Village and St. Anthony's Home, later attending Holy Name High School.

Those years were filled by playing the trombone in the school band, being captain of the varsity basketball team,

working evenings, and of course studying. It was at Holy Name that he met a lovely young lady with whom he corresponded as he served in the Army. Upon completion of his military service, John and Ann (Blaha) married, a marriage of 68 years, until Ann passed away.

John continued his interest in the military by joining the American Legion, Posts 627 and 469. He was elected to a number of offices and finally, commander. That is where volunteerism became important in his life. For 53 years he volunteered assisting veterans at the Brecksville Veterans Hospital. His dedication to veterans was recognized when he was inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame, Class of 2016.

His interest in the military grew as he was a board member and officer in the Ohio Military Museum until it merged with the Military Aviation Preservation Society (MAPS). John's hobby, collecting military patches and displaying them, is currently featured at MAPS. He was a generous donor to the museum and many of his donations are on display.

A draftsman, John was an employee of Torq Corporation in Bedford for 40 years.

John was a quiet, gentle presence allowing his actions, instead of just words, to show his love and care. As one friend said, "He was the role model of a gentleman. One outstanding man!"

POW/MIA Recognition Day - September 18, 2026

This day is observed annually on the 3rd Friday of September. The day was established to honor veterans who were held as POW's and those who remain missing in action. It is a day set aside to honor and recognize the debt owed to those who sacrificed their freedom so that the nation might enjoy peace and liberty.