

**M**ILITARY **P**OLICE  
**R**EGIMENTAL **A**SSOCIATION  
OF **R**HODE **I**SLAND



20 February 2026 ~ Elks Lodge #1697

West Warwick, Rhode Island

[WWW.MPRARI.ORG](http://WWW.MPRARI.ORG)

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# PROGRAM OF EVENTS

**Reception & Cocktails**

**Dinner Service**

**Presentation of Awards**

**Closing Remarks &  
Social Hours**

# ORDER OF THE MARECHAUSSEE



~ ~ ~ SILVER ~ ~ ~

**COL(R) Gerald C. Stewart**  
**(POSTHUMOUS)**

~ ~ ~ BRONZE ~ ~ ~

**SFC(R) Richard Bartkowiak**



~ ~ ~ STEEL ~ ~ ~

**SFC Christopher Chobanian**



# HISTORY OF THE MARECHAUSSEE

The Marechaussee Corps, established during the American Revolution, is considered the first military police force in the U.S. Army. It was formed to address disciplinary issues and maintain order within the Continental Army.

## **Formation and Composition**

At the request of General George Washington, the Continental Congress authorized the formation of the Provost Corps, known as the Marechaussee, on May 27, 1778. It consisted of five (5) Officers, one (1) clerk, eight (8) Non-Commissioned Officers, two (2) trumpeters, and forty-seven (47) privates (including 4 who served as executioners).

The name was derived from the French term for provost troops. The corps was commanded by Captain Bartholomew von Heer and was organized and equipped as a unit of light Dragoons.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

The main purpose of the Marechaussee Corps was to perform police functions and maintain discipline. Their extensive duties included:

- Patrolling camps and surrounding areas to arrest rioters, deserters, and stragglers.
- Detecting and apprehending spies.
- Securing the army's rear and flanks during troop movements and guarding river crossings.
- Managing the collection and security of prisoners of war.
- Supervising merchants who supplied the army.

Over time, their role expanded to include intelligence gathering, serving as dispatch couriers, and at times, supplementing Washington's Life Guard. The corps also saw combat, participating in the Battle of Springfield and the Battle of Yorktown.

## **Disbandment**

Following the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, the Marechaussee Corps was one of the last units deactivated after the Revolutionary War in November 1783. The functions and legacy of this unit established a foundation for the modern Military Police Corps.

# ORDER OF THE MARECHAUSSEE

Established in 2000, the Military Police Regimental Association's (MPRA) Order of the Marechaussee recognizes individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication, competence, and significant contributions to the Military Police Corps Regiment over an extended period.

The award is presented in four tiers: Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Steel. The inaugural ceremony was held on September 29, 2000, at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. As of 15 January 2026, there have been 176 Orders of the Marechaussee awarded in Gold; 586 in Silver; 5,457 in Bronze; and 580 in Steel.



# COL(R) GERALD C. STEWART

Colonel (R) Gerald C. Stewart enlisted in the Rhode Island Army National Guard in 1960. After several years of outstanding enlisted service and promotions, he was called to active duty as an MP platoon sergeant for service in the Republic of Vietnam.

In Vietnam COL Stewart distinguished himself as an MP platoon sergeant during 1968-1969 as he provided truly exceptional leadership. His platoon successfully accomplished numerous missions in areas infested with enemy soldiers, insurgents and North Vietnamese sympathizers—to include during the Tet Offensive. Regardless of the dangerous assignments, because of COL Stewart's outstanding stewardship, his platoon suffering only minimal casualties. COL Stewart was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his actions in Vietnam.

After being commissioned in 1972, COL Stewart served in numerous full-time and part-time capacities in the 43d Military Police Brigade, Rhode Island Army National Guard. As a platoon leader, assistant S-3, S-1, battalion executive officer, and battalion commander, COL Stewart always caused subordinates and peers to excel. He established numerous, highly successful training programs, administrative/logistical programs, and war plans programs that were years ahead of other Military Police organizations. Never taking credit himself, he constantly mentored subordinates and peers motivating them to learn and succeed. COL Stewart's actions caused the 43d MP Brigade to remain constantly ready for all contingencies. Almost single-handedly, he ensured the Brigade's success during numerous key exercises and during several emergency activations. He was the primary force behind the Brigade's highly successful participation in several REFORGER, FLINTLOCK, and multi-brigade MP exercises. He untiringly drove the Brigade to prepare exemplary contingency plans and ultimately led the very successful execution of those plans during several state activations for hurricanes, state employee strikes, a week(s)-long pursuit of a highway sniper, and a prison uprising. COL Stewart's actions were clearly above and beyond the Governor's and Adjutant General's expectations and caused the Brigade to succeed in every endeavor. His leadership led the Brigade to such an outstanding readiness level that three of its units were called upon in 1990 to serve in the Persian Gulf War.

As Commander, 118th MP Battalion, Rhode Island Army National Guard, COL Stewart worked relentlessly around the clock to prepare the battalion and its four previously unaligned wartime subordinate companies for the Gulf War mission. Under his leadership, mobilization and movement to the theater of operations were accomplished flawlessly. In the Gulf, before the war began, COL Stewart quickly molded the battalion's previously unrelated MP companies into a well-led, well-trained, cohesive fighting organization.

Days before the ground war (Operation Desert Storm) began, COL Stewart led the battalion as it entered several miles into Iraq with combat engineers to clear mines and mark

eight breach lanes for combat divisions to attack north. COL Stewart ensured the mission was successful and all MPs and engineers returned safely.

During the actual ground war, the battalion was attached to the combat divisions, mostly to the 1st Infantry Division (Mech.) With C2 extremely difficult, COL Stewart still managed to lead the battalion to unqualified success on the battlefield. In only six days while moving from Saudi Arabia, through Iraq, and into Kuwait, COL Stewart's battalion cleared over 1200 entrenched Iraqi infantry from bypassed bunkers and captured and/or handled over 7,000 EPW. Primarily because of COL Stewart's leadership, the battalion was awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation for its wartime actions. COL Stewart was awarded his second Bronze Star Medal.

After the Gulf War, COL Stewart continued to serve with extreme distinction. As brigade executive officer, State Mobilization/Readiness Manager, and Chief - State Area Command Plans, Operations & Military Support, COL Stewart made dramatic improvements to every program he managed. His aggressive, future-minded planning was again far ahead of other states' National Guard organizations and other reserve component MP commands. His actions and achievements were clearly above and beyond the requirements of the positions held.

From 1994-1997, COL Stewart served as Deputy Commander, 43d MP Brigade, Rhode Island Army National Guard. Upon his return to the Brigade, he quickly caused a complete turnaround in several key programs that had suffered during his absence. Most effective was his constant and outstanding mentorship of brigade leaders at every level, both full-time and part-time. Under his leadership, unit readiness levels increased dramatically across the entire Brigade. Because of COL Stewart's untiring efforts, his numerous personal sacrifices, his superb leadership, and, most important, because of his 37 years of undying love for the 43d MP Brigade and for the Military Police Corps Regiment and its soldiers, the Brigade remained constantly ready for its peacetime and wartime missions.

COL Stewart's awards include the Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Defense and Liberation of Kuwait Medals, the Bronze Star Medals for both Vietnam and the Persian Gulf, Humanitarian Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Rhode Island Star.

COL Stewart retired in 1997 and in retirement continued to mentor Military Police officers and NCOs through his participation in the Military Police Regimental Association - Rhode Island. COL Stewart passed away in 2013 at the age of 71.

Given his outstanding achievements, and his many sacrifices for the nation, the United States Army, the Rhode Island Army National Guard, and the Military Police Corps Regiment, it is our great honor to have recommend COL (R) Gerald C. Stewart for this award.

# SFC RICHARD BARTKOWIAK

Sergeant First Class Richard Bartkowiak has demonstrated exceptional professionalism, integrity, and enduring contribution to the Military Police Corps Regiment throughout more than 18 years of distinguished service. Since enlisting in the Rhode Island Army National Guard as a 31B Military Police Soldier in 2007, SFC Bartkowiak has embodied the values and traditions of the MP Corps through exemplary leadership, steadfast character, and unwavering dedication to his Soldiers and mission.

From 2007 to 2016, SFC Bartkowiak served in the 115th Military Police Company, excelling as an MP, MP Team Leader, and MP Squad Leader. His technical competence, tactical proficiency, and innate ability to lead Soldiers set him apart early in his career. His performance culminated in his deployment with the 115th MP Company to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (2011–2012), where he supported detention operations and joint law enforcement missions essential to national security. His professionalism during this deployment earned him widespread respect and demonstrated his ability to perform with distinction in a high-visibility, strategic environment.

From 2017 to 2018, he served in the 118th Military Police Battalion, assuming increased responsibilities as a Maneuver and Mobility Support NCO and Plans NCO, where his analytical skill and operational insight significantly increased battalion readiness and planning effectiveness.

From 2018 to 2020, SFC Bartkowiak served within the 43d Military Police Brigade, expanding his influence across the MP enterprise as an Operations NCO, Law and Order NCO, and Corrections / Detention NCO. His contributions during this period were instrumental in shaping brigade-level operational processes, improving Law and Order integration, and increasing the brigade's ability to support federal mobilization and state domestic response missions.

He returned to the 118th MP Battalion from 2020 to 2023, serving as the Intelligence NCO and ultimately the Intelligence Section Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC). In this capacity, he developed and refined intelligence processes that elevated battalion situational awareness, enhanced threat assessment capabilities, and provided critical support to all battalion operations. His leadership and technical acumen directly improved mission readiness and force protection across the organization.

From 2023 through 2025, SFC Bartkowiak continued his exceptional service at Joint Force Headquarters – Rhode Island as an Operations and Training NCO, while simultaneously serving as the State OPSEC Officer, Antiterrorism Officer (ATO), and Physical Security Officer and Inspector. His work at JFHQ had enterprise-wide impact, strengthening statewide

readiness, improving compliance with protection policies, increasing the security posture of personnel and resources, and enhancing interoperability with state and federal partners.

Beyond his formal duties, SFC Bartkowiak has been a cornerstone of the Rhode Island Military Police community through his service as a member and past officer of the Rhode Island Chapter of the Military Police Regimental Association (MPRA) since 2016. In this role, he has consistently supported MP Soldiers, veterans, and families through mentorship, outreach, and regimental activities. His sustained involvement has strengthened esprit de corps, preserved MP traditions, and expanded support networks for MPRA members across the state. His dedication to the MPRA reflects his deep commitment to the Regiment's heritage and directly fulfills the Marechaussee requirement for enduring contributions to the broader MP community.

Throughout his career, SFC Bartkowiak pursued professional development with exceptional commitment, completing Warrior Leader Course (2011), Advanced Leader Course (2014), Senior Leader Course (2019), and the Master Leader Course (2022). His dedication to continuous improvement directly translated into stronger formations and better-trained Soldiers across every echelon he served.

SFC Bartkowiak's mentorship, empathy, and unmatched ability to influence Soldiers and leaders have been hallmarks of his service. From 2016 to the present, he has been a trusted advisor, mentor, and role model within the Rhode Island MP community. Countless Soldiers now serve as team leaders, squad leaders, and platoon sergeants credit their professional growth to his guidance and steady leadership.

His enduring contributions reflect not only operational and organizational excellence but also the unwavering character he displays every day. SFC Bartkowiak embodies the MP Corps motto "Assist, Protect, Defend" through his integrity, professionalism, and selfless commitment to mission success. He has strengthened every formation he served and left a lasting impact on MP operations, Soldier development, regimental heritage, and organizational readiness across the state.

SFC Bartkowiak's breadth of service, superior performance across multiple leadership roles, distinguished operational contributions, and profound influence on Soldiers and the MP community. His career stands as a testament to outstanding dedication and lasting service to the Military Police Corps Regiment, and it is our honor to recommend him for this prestigious award.

# SFC CHRISTOPHER CHOBANIAN

SFC Christopher Chobanian has demonstrated over twenty-three years of exceptional service, professionalism, and dedication to the Military Police Corps and the Rhode Island Army National Guard since enlisting in 2002. He began his career as an 88M Motor Transport Operator in the 1207th Transportation Company, where he deployed to Iraq from July 2006 to November 2007, supporting high-tempo convoy and distribution missions. His exemplary performance in this demanding combat environment established the foundation of discipline, resilience, and mission focus that has defined his career.

In February 2008, SFC Chobanian transitioned into the Military Police Corps and immediately distinguished himself through outstanding leadership and technical proficiency. From 2008 to 2009, he served as a Team Leader in the 115th MP Company, quickly gaining a reputation as a competent and dedicated MP NCO. His exceptional performance led to his selection as a Squad Leader from July 2009 to August 2011, during which he deployed with the 115th MP Company to Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay (2009–2010). Operating in one of the most sensitive and challenging environments within the MP Corps, he excelled as a frontline leader, ensuring disciplined, professional, and mission-focused detention operations that supported national-level strategic objectives.

From 2011 to 2012, SFC Chobanian served as an MP Instructor at the Regional Training Institute, where his instructional excellence, mentorship, and subject-matter expertise significantly enhanced the training quality and competence of MP Soldiers across the region. His ability to communicate complex concepts and enforce high standards elevated MP instruction statewide.

From 2013 to 2016, SFC Chobanian continued to demonstrate adaptability and professionalism, serving as a 92Y Unit Supply Specialist with Company A, 1/182nd Infantry Regiment. In this role, he excelled in property accountability, logistical systems, and organizational sustainment—directly contributing to the operational readiness of the infantry formation. His strong administrative and logistical skillsets further enhanced his ability to support units across multiple disciplines.

From 2016 to 2019, he also served within C Company, 1-126th Aviation Regiment, displaying exceptional versatility in a nontraditional environment as a supply NCO. During this assignment, he deployed to Kuwait from 2017 to 2018, supporting theater-wide aviation missions with professionalism, precision, and reliability.

In 2021, SFC Chobanian returned to the Military Police Corps, assuming the role of Law and Order (L&O) NCO in the 118th MP Battalion S3. In this capacity, he played a critical role in coordinating law enforcement support activities, ensuring accuracy of reporting, and providing operational oversight essential to battalion-level planning and mission execution. From August 2021 to January 2024, he served as the Detachment Sergeant of the 118th MP Detachment,

where he further improved readiness systems, developed competent junior NCOs, and fostered a culture of accountability and professionalism.

In January 2024, he returned to the 115th MP Company as the Readiness NCO, applying his extensive operational background, logistical knowledge, and administrative expertise to significantly enhance personnel readiness, training management, and the overall deployability of the company. Earlier in 2025, he transitioned again to a 92Y role, now serving as the S4 NCOIC for the 118th MP Battalion, where his logistics expertise and MP background uniquely position him to manage property accountability, sustainment planning, and battalion-level support with exceptional effectiveness.

Beyond his formal duties, SFC Chobanian is a dedicated and active member of the Military Police Regimental Association, Rhode Island Chapter, consistently volunteering his time to support MPRA events, Soldier recognition programs, and community engagements. His involvement strengthens esprit de corps across the MP community and ensures Rhode Island's Military Police Soldiers remain connected to the broader Regimental family and its traditions.

Throughout his career, he has pursued professional development, completed the Interservice Nonlethal Individual Weapons Instructor Course (INWIC), MP Advanced Leader Course (ALC), and MP Senior Leader Course (SLC), and applied that knowledge to elevate every formation he serves. Across his diverse assignments—team leader, squad leader, instructor, platoon-level leader, aviation support NCO, infantry supply specialist, battalion Law and Order NCO, detachment sergeant, readiness NCO, and battalion S4 NCOIC—he has consistently exemplified the values, discipline, and professionalism of the Military Police Corps. His mentorship has shaped countless Soldiers and NCOs, many of whom now serve in key leadership positions across the state.

SFC Christopher Chobanian's sustained excellence, operational experience across three deployments, exceptional leadership, and long-standing commitment to the Military Police Corps make him overwhelmingly deserving of this award.