

VETERAN OF THE MONTH

September 2024

VFW Post 12135 - Matt Manifold



Matthew "Mutt" Manifold was born in Dayton, Ohio, the birthplace of aviation. His influences in flying included Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (AFB) and the Air Force Museum. He received his pilot's license at the age of 16. After graduating high school, he attended college at The Ohio State University, where he was a tight end for four years on the football team and participated in the Air Force ROTC Program. During his time in ROTC, he served as a Cadet Wing Commander and was awarded his Class's Leadership award. Upon graduating college, he was a Scholar Athlete, Varsity O Member, and was on the Dean's list. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Aeronautical Engineering and continued towards his Master's from Embry-Riddle in Aeronautical Engineering.

After college and Air Force ROTC, Matt joined the Air Force in 1991. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant and started his long-storied career in the Air Force. He served in multiple combat zones throughout his career. Some of the major campaigns he participated in are: Allied Force, Northern/Southern Watch, Desert Fox, Provide Comfort, Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn, and Enduring Freedom. He was a Fighter Pilot, Commander, Combat Pilot, and Test Pilot, all culminating in seven (7) combat tours with 28 years of service.

Matt recognizes the sacrifice his Family has made to allow him to be successful throughout his career. His wife, Brandy, is an Air Force Veteran, who served nine years. Together they have two daughters Brittany and Bailey who were a part of 13 moves, at least six different schools, and are very successful in their lives. Both daughters are college graduates, and Brittany married

Tim Oetter, who is a Biomedical engineer. The Family recently welcomed their first grandchild, a granddaughter named Tatum Grace. The Manifold's are very fortunate and thankful that all their family lives in Knoxville now. The Manifold Family always placed God, Family, and Country as a central part of their lives throughout their military journey and today.

In 2019, he retired as a Brigadier General (O-7). At the time of retirement, he had over 5,300 hours of flying in the F-16 and flew 250 combat missions, making him #1 on the world-wide list for most hours flown in the F-16. His awards and decorations include Distinguished Flying Cross, nine Air Medals, a Legion of Merit and multiple other achievements throughout his career. He always believed that no matter what, always take care of your people!

After retirement, Matt continues to be a pilot. He now serves as a Corporate Pilot and Instructor Pilot. He also consults for multiple defense companies.

Matt joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post #12135 in July 2021. He has tons of fun and enjoys the friendship and growth found within the veteran community. He also loves the Saturday breakfast at Little Italy's, which is an informal time where veterans meet together every second Saturday of the month. Additionally, he volunteers as the lead organizer for the annual run of the Boat Rides for Vets and really enjoys the VFW Golf outings.

Matt also serves on the NASA Board of Directors for their S.T.E.M. Program. Their goals include engaging high school students across the United States in opportunities connected to NASA missions, aeronautics, aviation themes and/or programs. Matt also supports both Civil Air Patrol detachments locally, which are located at the Knoxville Airport and Downtown Airport.

The Tellico Village VFW Post #12135 General meeting is held at 7:00 p.m. in the Tellico Village Yacht Club every third Wednesday of the month. Further information can be found on the Post website at: <https://www.tvvfw.org/>.