

# VETERAN OF THE MONTH

## CDR James “Otto” Stutz, USN (Ret.)

**James “Otto” Stutz**, is a native of Oradell, New Jersey and attended River Dell Regional High School. After graduation in 1976, he attended Drexel University/University of Pennsylvania under a Navy ROTC Scholarship, before attending the U.S. Naval Academy in 1977. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1981 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Systems Engineering. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy and designated a Naval Aviator in December 1983.

In December 1984, he joined the “SUNLINERS” of VA-81 in Jacksonville, Florida flying the A-7E CORSAIR II and had multiple deployments to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean in the USS SARATOGA (CV-60). In February 1988, Otto reported as an instructor to the Naval Strike Warfare Center (“Strike U”), Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon, Nevada and continued to fly both the A-7E and F/A-18. In May 1991, he reported to the VFA-83 “RAMPAGERS” for his Department Head tour flying the F/A-18C, where he then again deployed in the USS SARATOGA (CV-60). Subsequently, in October 1993, he was selected for and stood up a new Naval Aviation billet as a Fire Support Officer (FSO) at the Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. During his assignment there, he deployed and participated in numerous real world joint operations.

Otto reported to the Staff of the Chief of Naval Operations, Air Warfare Division (OPNAV N88) in January 1997 as the Air-to-Air Missile Requirements Officer. While there, he was responsible for ensuring Fleet/Joint requirements and proper Department of the Navy

budgetary resourcing for such new weapons as the AIM-9X SIDEWINDER and AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM), as well as sustainment support of legacy inventories.

Upon selection for Command, he reported to the Strike Fighter Weapons School, Atlantic (SFWSL) at NAS Cecil Field, Florida in July 1999 as the Executive Officer. After a successful Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) move to NAS Oceana, Virginia, Otto then assumed Command of SFWSL in February 2000.

With over 20 years of service, Otto retired at the rank of Commander (O5) in January 2002. Some of his awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (2), Navy Commendation Medal (3), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (4), and multiple other medals and ribbons awarded during his service.

After his retirement from the Navy, Otto continued his service to the nation while working for the Department of Defense as an engineering and requirements consultant, supporting all Navy/Joint present and future Air-to-Air Missile requirements and design.

Meg and Otto Stutz were married in Dec 2019 and built their dream home in Tellico Village in 2020, where they continue to live today. Together, they have four children (Jeannette, Mark, Tyler, and Jimmy), four grandchildren (Jordan, Alexis, Maya and Aiden) and one great-grandchild (Daisy Lee). Otto has been a member of VFW Post 12135 for two years and is the current Assistant Webmaster and leads the Post’s Scouting Outreach Program.

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.tellicovillagevfwpost.org/>

