

103rd Annual Hightstown Memorial Day Parade

Monday, May 26, 2025
Program of Events

*Hosted by Hightstown Mayor Susan Bluth and
Hightstown Borough*

*Master of Ceremonies: Joshua Jackson,
Hightstown Borough Council President*





2025 PARADE ROUTE

The Hightstown Memorial Day Parade begins on Stockton Street at the Grace N Rogers Elementary School at 9 am, and will end on the corner of Morrison Avenue and Harrison Avenue.

The parade stops at the Civil War Memorial on Stockton Street

The Hightstown Fire Department Color Guard
 VFW 5700 21 Gun Salute
 Jewish VFW Wreath Presentation
 Beth El Rabi Kornsgold, Prayer
 Hightstown High School Choir sings the National Anthem
 Hightstown High School Buglers play Taps

The parade stops at the Grand Stand (located on Main Street in front of the Hightstown Engine Company) for Grand Marshall CMSgt James P. Kana (Retired) speech.

The parade stops at the World War II Memorial on Franklin Street

The Hightstown Fire Department Color Guard
 VFW 5700 21 Gun Salute & Wreath Presentation
 United Methodist Church of Hightstown, Rev. Dr. Joy Arroyo, Prayer
 Hightstown High School Choir sings the National Anthem
 Hightstown High School Buglers play Taps

The Hightstown Fire Company Wreath Presentation at Peddie Lake simultaneously.

The parade stops at the Memorial Rock on Main Street

Wreath Presentation by the Hightstown Apollo Lodge
 National Anthem & Taps

The parade then continues to its endpoint.

The VFW 5700 invites everyone to their Memorial Day Picnic at 140 Dutch Neck Road, Hightstown.



2025 GRAND MARSHALL



BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT JAMES P. KANA

CMSgt James P. Kana (Retired) was the Senior Enlisted Leader of the 514th Maintenance Group, 514th Air Mobility Wing, Joint Base McGuire-Dix- Lakehurst, New Jersey. He served as the principal senior enlisted advisor to the 514th Maintenance Group Commander, ensuring the professional development of the enlisted force and providing oversight of all maintenance matters for three squadrons supporting the KC-10A Extender, KC-46A Pegasus and C-17A Globemaster III flying operations. He ensured all maintenance personnel were effectively utilized, trained, and equipped to support rapid global mobility requirements.



A New Jersey native, CMSgt Kana enlisted in the Air Force and reported to Lackland Air Force Base, Texas in August 1985. Upon completion of basic military training, he attended technical training at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi graduating as an Avionic Navigations Systems apprentice in June 1986. He accumulated broad skillsets at the unit and group staff level to include: Flightline Maintenance Expediter, Unit Deployment Manager, Programs and Resources Manager, Wing Inspection Team Lead, and Quality Assurance Superintendent. CMSgt Kana was a Flying Crew Chief on the KC- 10A Extender, accumulating over 400 flight hours. He has four deployments and joint experience supporting numerous contingency and combat operations throughout the world and participated in Operations DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM, PROVIDE COMFORT, NORTHERN WATCH, SOUTHERN WATCH, JUST CAUSE, PROVIDE COMFORT, NOBLE EAGLE, ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM and INHERENT RESOLVE. CMSgt Kana has operational experience at home station or deployed locations on the following airframes: KC-10A, C-17A, C-141B and C-130E.

EDUCATION

1986 Avionic Navigation System Technician Course, Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi
1988 USAF Airman Leadership School, Pope AFB, North Carolina
1994 AFRC Noncommissioned Officer Leadership and Development Course, McGuire AFB, New Jersey
1998 Noncommissioned Officer Academy Correspondence Course
2010 Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy Correspondence Course
2011 AFRC Senior Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Course, McGuire AFB, New Jersey
2015 Senior Noncommissioned Officer Joint PME I Correspondence Course
2015 Senior Noncommissioned Officer Joint PME II Correspondence Course
2016 Associate's Degree in Avionics Systems Technology, Community College of the Air Force
2017 Jet Engine Mishap Investigation Course, Sheppard AFB, Texas
2018 FAA Aviation-Communication with Radar Endorsement License Certification, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Sep 1985-Jun 1986, Student, Keesler Technical Training School, Keesler AFB, Mississippi
2. Jun 1986-Mar 1989, Avionic Systems Apprentice, 317th Avionics Maintenance Squadron, Pope AFB, North Carolina
3. Mar 1989-Sep 1991, Avionic Systems Technician, 315th Aircraft Generation Squadron, Charleston AFB, South Carolina
(Deployed - Sep 1990-July 1991, Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm)
4. Oct 1991-Aug 1995, Avionic Systems Specialist, 514th Component Repair Squadron, McGuire AFB, New Jersey
5. Sep 1995-Sep 2009, Integrated Avionics Systems Craftsman/Flying Crew Chief, 714th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, McGuire AFB, New Jersey (Deployed - Feb 2001-Mar 2001, 380th Air Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron) (Deployed - Mar 2002-May 2002, 379th Air Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron) (Deployed - Feb 2003-Sep 2003, Camp Sarafovo, Bourgas, Bulgaria)
6. Oct 2009-May 2012, Programs and Resources/Unit Deployment Manager, 514th Maintenance Operations Flight, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey
7. Jun 2012-Feb 2020, Quality Assurance Superintendent, 514th Maintenance Group, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey
8. Mar 2020-Aug 2024, Chief Enlisted Manager, 514th Maintenance Group, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters
Air and Space Commendation Medal
Air and Space Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster
Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with 12 oak leaf clusters

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

2005 NCO of the Quarter, 514th Air Mobility Wing, McGuire AFB, NJ.
2005 Diamond Award recipient, 514th Air Mobility Wing First Sergeants Council, McGuire AFB, NJ.
2007 AFRC/IG Superior Performer Award, 714th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, McGuire AFB, NJ.
2011 AFRC/IG Superior Performer Award, 514th Maintenance Operations Flight, 514 AMW UEI Capstone
2017 AFRC/IG Superior Performer Award, 514th Maintenance Group, 514 AMW UEI Capstone

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Technical Sergeant	November 1 1999
Master Sergeant	September 1 2002
Senior Master Sergeant	July 1 2012
Chief Master Sergeant	June 1 2020

(Current as of July 2024)



2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Hightstown Police Department**

Led by Chief Frank Gendron, the members of the Hightstown Police Department are committed to protecting the lives, property, and rights of all people and being responsive to the community we serve through the delivery of quality services.

- **Hightstown Engine Company #1 & Hightstown Engine Company #1 Color Guard**

Proudly 100% volunteer serving Hightstown since 1835, and currently led by Chief Donald Derr and President Ryann Bennett

- **Hightstown Engine Company #1 Ladies Auxiliary**

President Brenda Snook. The Auxiliary supports the firefighters of the Hightstown Fire Department

- **Grand Marshall James Kana driven by Earl Groendyke**

- **Hightstown Mayor Susan Bluth**

- **Post 444 Jewish War Veterans**

- **Hightstown Post 5700 VFW**

- **Hightstown High School Marching Band**

The Hightstown High School Marching Band is under the direction of Justin Halat and Kristina O'Dea. This talented and award-winning ensemble consists of 66 dedicated members who compete at both the State and National levels in Group 3A. Over the past three seasons, the Marching Rams have achieved remarkable success, consistently earning Top 5 finishes at major competitions. Leading the group are drum majors Grace Zanghi, Juan Diego Chico, and Wishesh Ajwalia, who guide the band with exceptional leadership and musicality. Their hard work, discipline, and passion for music are evident in every performance. Let's celebrate the Marching Rams as they continue to represent Hightstown High School with pride and excellence!



2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **East Windsor Police Athletic League**

Children playing soccer, baseball, softball and t-ball

- **Cub Scouts Pack 53**

Cub Scouts Pack 53 has been a part of the East Windsor-Hightstown-Roosevelt area for over 50 years. We are always looking for new members, both boys and girls in kindergarten through 5th grade, who like going on adventures and giving back to our community.

- **Boy Scouts Troop 5700**

Scouts BSA Troop #5700 provides Scouting opportunities for male youth, aged 11-18, in the East Windsor/Hightstown area. The Troop is chartered by VFW Post #5700 and as a result of merging is currently the only Troop in the area.

- **East Windsor Area Girl Scouts – EWAGS**

EWAGS represents your local friendly and helpful Girl Scouts from East Windsor, Hightstown, and Roosevelt (NJ) who, with courage, confidence, and character, make the world a better place.

- **Hightstown Rams Pop Warner Cheerleading**

Hightstown Pop Warner is run by all volunteers who strive to coach boys and girls interested in cheerleading. There is also an emphasis on scholastics for participants in grades 5-8. Their program begins in late July and goes until early February, competing at competitions in Trenton, while trying to earn a place at the Pop Warner nationals and finishing off their season at YCADA globals held in Atlantic City. Go Rams!

- **St. Anthony of Padua Church and the Knights of Columbus**

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Serving the Community for 140 Years, Celebrating the Past, Shaping the Future along with the Hightstown Knights of Columbus in service to St. Anthony of Padua Church and the Hightstown Community.



2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Hightstown-East Windsor Historical Society**

Keep the history of Hightstown and East Windsor alive.

- **Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission**

The purpose of the Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission is to identify and promote Hightstown's creative potential, set goals for public arts and culture, create educational initiatives, community partnerships and collaborations reflective of our town's cultural diversity.

- **Melvin H. Kreps Middle School Band**

The Melvin H. Kreps Middle School Band, under the direction of Daniel Kim, Randy Longwill, and Daniel Smith, is comprised of 7th and 8th grade band members. The band rehearses diligently during the school year to perform a variety of concerts and festivals, while maintaining a strong sense of pride, community, and excellence.

- **Be The Warmth, Inc**

A local non-profit delivering blankets and other winter essentials to the homeless

- **Hightstown - East Windsor Republican Club**

Serve as a social and educational forum for people in the Hightstown and East Windsor communities.

- **Hightstown High School FIRST Robotics Team**

FIRST's mission is to provide students access to STEM education through a series of robotics challenges. Students learn technical, networking, and leadership skills that will benefit them in high school and beyond. This year, the team advanced to the FIRST Mid-Atlantic District championship, where they were quarterfinalists in the competition. They would like to thank their sponsors and supporters: DoD STEM, Bristol-Myers Squibb, East Windsor Regional School District, and the Team Mercury Parent and Mentor Association.



2025 PARTICIPANTS

- **Capitol City Cruisers**

A car club rooted in the church that drives cars to get people together who enjoy the car scene.

- **Fallen Soldiers Float**

Float honoring Hightstown and East Windsor Veterans

- **Muslim Center of Greater Princeton**

Nonprofit educational charity

- **Hightstown-East Windsor Lions Club**

Our club is 89 years old, we are Knights of the Blind.

- **Hightstown First Aid Squad**

Hightstown First Aid has been providing emergency medical services to the borough of Hightstown and surrounding areas since 1935

- **East Windsor Volunteer Fire Company #1**

100% volunteer fire department serving the western portion of East Windsor Township and assisting neighboring communities since 1969

- **East Windsor Volunteer Fire Company #2**

- **Cranbury Volunteer Fire Company**

The Cranbury Volunteer Fire Company which began in 1898 is led by Chief Charlie Smith and President Richard Zimmer

- **Cranbury Volunteer First Aid**

The Cranbury first aid squad is made up of volunteers who take great pride in serving and helping their neighbors since 1957.



2025 PARTICIPANTS

Not Marching but participating:

Hightstown High School Choir

Singing the national anthem will be students from the Hightstown High School Choirs.

Beth El Synagogue –Rabbi Jay M. Kornsgold

Rabbi Jay M. Kornsgold is the Senior Rabbi of Beth El Synagogue, a Conservative synagogue that has served the community since 1911. He has been at Beth El since 1994. Rabbi Kornsgold also serves as the President of the International Rabbinical Assembly, the association of over 1600 Conservative/Masorti rabbis.

Hightstown Apollo Lodge

Local Masonic Lodge promoting charity and fellowship.

United Methodist Church of Hightstown, Rev. Dr. Joy Arroyo

Rev. Dr. Joy Arroyo grew up in Michigan in the Wesleyan tradition. She is ordained in the Wesleyan Church and received a Ph.D. in Practical Theology from Princeton Seminary, focusing on spiritual formation. Her research focuses on faith formation in households and the intersections of spirituality and well-being. She loves helping individuals and families grow in their relationship with God and one another. She is also very passionate about writing and has spent the last four years teaching writing and research at Princeton University. She hopes to use her enjoyment of creativity and writing for the benefit of the church. She is married to the Rev. Dr. Sammy Arroyo and is blessed with a son, Gabriel, and daughter, Adeline. In her free time, she writes, reads and spends time with her family and friends.



THANK YOU

This Memorial Day, we honor and remember the brave men and women who gave their lives in service to our country. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all veterans and their families for their sacrifice, strength, and unwavering dedication. Your courage and service will never be forgotten. Thank you.

Special thanks to the
2025 Hightstown Borough Parade Committee.

Additional Recognitions

WREATH ARRANGEMENTS



2025 VFW PICNIC SPONSORS

The VFW 5700 invites everyone to their Memorial Day Picnic at 140 Dutch Neck Road, Hightstown.

