

Looking forward to life after the Navy

Retiring after 24 years of serving his country, Penfield resident Jeff Bartocci is setting out on a new career path.

By **AMY CAVALIER**

Messenger Post Staff

College was the last thing on Jeff Bartocci's mind as a junior at Churchville-Chili High School in the 1980s.

"I didn't think I'd ever pass college because I had such a hard time in high school and I wanted to leave," he said.

It was a big part of why he

enlisted in the Navy. "They told me I could work on airplanes. As soon as they said that, I said 'Show me the dotted line.' I thought that was the greatest thing in the world to work on airplanes."

Two weeks after graduating in 1985, Bartocci began 15 weeks of basic training at a base in Great Lakes, Ill. On Aug. 4, the aviation machinist mate will celebrate his July 22 retirement from the Navy after 24 years, with friends and family at a ceremony in Ellison Park.

Following basic training, Bartocci was stationed at a naval air station in Moffett, Calif. for three years. It was

there that he learned how to become an aircraft mechanic.

After three years, Bartocci returned to Rochester and joined a reserve unit here. Looking for a bigger challenge, though, shortly thereafter he moved to Denver to attend Colorado Aerotech, where he earned his federal license to work on aircraft as a civilian. While in school, Bartocci continued to serve in the Naval reserves, stationed at Naval Air Facility Atsugi for two years.

When he graduated from school in 1990, Bartocci landed a job with American Eagle Airlines in Schenectady, but in the face of a floundering econ-

omy, he was laid off after six months. He moved back to Rochester and joined the VP-64 patrol squadron out of Willow Grove, Pa. from 1991 to 1999.

From January 2000 to September 2005, Bartocci was stationed at Willow Grove, Pa. He has been stationed at a base in Brunswick, Maine since October 2005.

The squadrons Bartocci served fell under the umbrella of the war on terrorism. Their responsibilities included looking for submarines off the coast, as well as augmenting active duty squadrons on drug

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jeff Bartocci retires from the Naval Reserves after 24 years on Sunday. Here, he's with his family: Veronica Gertner, Dianne Schaumberg, son Davey Schaum-Bartocci, and daughter Jacqueline Gertner.

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patrols.

"From 1991 to 2007, we worked out of Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Belize and Ecuador," he said. "We were cutting off the money and drugs coming up from Central and South America."

Being in the reserves, stationed at bases out of state, has meant traveling often.

For his wife of 10 years, that was difficult to swallow.

"I wasn't happy with it," said his wife, Dianne Schaumberg. "It was hard for me."

Working full-time as a publishing specialist for Thomson-West, Schaumberg said it was difficult to juggle work with raising four kids alone when her husband was away.

Schaumberg said the Navy was a place for her husband to shine.

"He's caring and nurturing," she said. "In the Navy, I think he feels he's doing something important to help others."

Now that he's retiring, Bartocci is also getting ready to walk a new career path. In his spare time, he plans to commit more time to family, his duties as chairman of the Conservation Board and as a member of the Penfield Republican Committee, where he oversees retention and recruitment.

While serving in the Naval Reserves, Bartocci has held many manufacturing jobs. Many have been full-time contractual jobs, but none have been permanent, he said. That's why he's back in school for business management at Empire State

College. Bartocci said he hopes to get into human resources management or recruiting.

It will be quite a shift from working on airplanes.

"Right now that's something that's hard for me to understand. It's not something I can physically look at and say I worked on that, I fixed that, he said."

Schaumberg said she thinks her husband is ready for his next big challenge.

"I think he's proud of what he's done," she said. "When you feel like that, it's easy to move on."