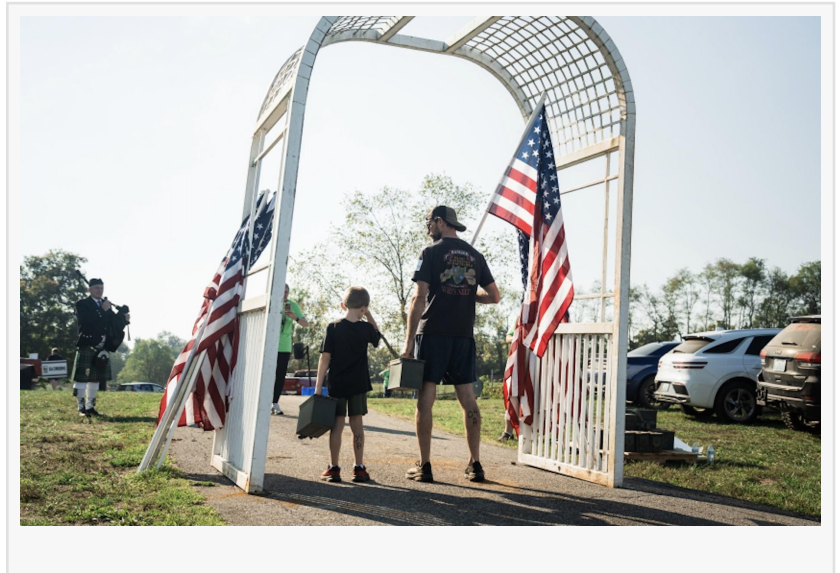


# John Chmela Set to Host Annual Mogadishu Mile: A Mission to Combat Veteran Isolation Through Communal Remembrance

GEORGETOWN, KY, UNITED STATES, June 19, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- John Chmela, tech entrepreneur and founder of Queenslake Horse Farm, has announced the sixth annual hosting of the Mogadishu Mile, a high-intensity remembrance event and veteran advocacy initiative. The event is designed to honor the 19 American soldiers who lost their lives during the Battle of Mogadishu in 1993 and serves as a critical intervention for veterans struggling with isolation and post-service trauma.



The Mogadishu Mile is structured as a communal endurance challenge that moves beyond traditional charity runs. Participants compete in teams of four, navigating a series of grueling physical obstacles—including tire flips, medicine ball slams, and a lake crossing—before completing a final mile through wooded terrain while carrying a 35-pound load. This physical "burden" is designed to simulate the conditions faced by soldiers during the historic "Black Hawk Down" mission.

"A soldier dies twice," Chmela noted. "Once when he takes his last breath, and again when his name is spoken for the last time. The Mogadishu Mile exists to push back that second death. By saying these names out loud while we are exhausted and breathless, we ensure these men are never forgotten by the country they died serving."

The event serves a dual purpose as a psychological "reset" for the veteran community. Chmela's advocacy work focuses on breaking the "90-day clock" of isolation, a timeframe he identifies as a critical window for veteran mental health. By bringing hundreds of veterans together on his 140-acre farm for shared physical exertion and communal remembrance, Chmela aims to provide a vital support network that prevents the descent into suicidal ideation.

The infrastructure of the event has grown into a permanent ecosystem of remembrance. The course at Queenslake features 19 permanent stone memorials, ensuring that the fallen are recognized year-round. The event has also garnered significant corporate support, with local bourbon companies producing etched memorial bottles and tattoo artists providing free Mogadishu Mile tattoos to participants committed to carrying the names of the fallen permanently.

Beyond the annual race, Chmela operates Queenslake Horse Farm as a full-service sanctuary, offering veteran appreciation dinners, fishing retreats, and a bed and breakfast. He is currently developing a national blueprint to scale this model, with a goal of establishing 100 similar advocacy farms across the United States to address the veteran suicide crisis on a broader scale.

### About John Chmela

John Chmela is a Kentucky-based serial entrepreneur, recovery advocate, and the founder of the Mogadishu Mile at Queenslake. With a background in tech innovation and a 33-year history in recovery, Chmela focuses on building "significant" enterprises that solve human problems through community and automation. Connect with John Chmela on LinkedIn.

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