

# CAPITAL DISTRICT CHAPTER, NEW YORK

## MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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2009 4-Star Chapter

### NYS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS CONVENTION



The *Southern Tier Chapter* hosted the 2014 COC Convention at the Radisson Hotel Corning. Our Chapter was well represented by Chapter President Tony Ficara, Marty Leukhardt, Ed and Jennifer Scheiber, Alex and Dolores Yvars, John and Connie Foley, and Al and Mary Memole. Here is a brief summary of the event:



**Business:** Reports from the Chapters for the Annual Business Meeting proved that the Chapters are still running strong across the State, even though we all face the same recruiting problem. Among the many presentations, the Genesee Valley Chapter recounted its pivotal role in getting the NYS Legislature to pass the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. (NY was one of the last States to do so.) Southern Tier Chapter summarized the host of activities they support to help veterans. But, the brief talk by the thirty-something delegate from the State's newest Chapter, based in midtown Manhattan, was like a blast of fresh, invigorating air. The core of this new NYC Chapter is a group of young professionals who recently left military service, but wanted to maintain ties to the military. Their needs and concerns differ in some ways from those of many of us older retired members, but they represent MOAA's future. Their input can help the Chapters reach out to younger officers in our areas. Unfinished business: Who will host next year's convention, and when and where will it be held?

**Social Events:** Everyone had a great time. The first evening's dinner at the Radisson was quite nice. Attendees gathered in the hospitality suite afterwards where the Navy contingent cut and served a special cake to celebrate the Navy's birthday. The formal dinner and ceremonies, held at the local American Legion hall on the 14<sup>th</sup>, capped off the convention. Chaplain Lewis Brown, CAPT USN (Ret.) gave a deeply moving talk citing various parts of scripture that illustrated one core value espoused by each of the services.



**Local Tours:** Corning is an absolute gem of a place to visit! Conference attendees visited the *Rockwell Museum of Western Art*, just a short walk from the hotel. The museum featured paintings and sculptures by Remington, Charles Russell, Native Americans, and other famous artists. After the business meeting, we toured the *Corning Museum of Glass (CMOG)*: The extraordinary art, history, science, and technology in this one-of-a-kind museum are indescribable - YOU MUST VISIT. The downtown itself, with the Market Street shops and restaurants, is worth the trip.

[Museum photos by Mary Memole]



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Do you dream of returning to Japan, Germany, or Spain? Want to see new places like Alaska, Puerto Rico, or the Azores? Are you interested in Space-A travel, but don't know how it works? Don't sweat it. Southern Tier Chapter member Joe Brown has all the answers. His tireless research on flights, destinations, sights, and accommodations is at your disposal. To learn more, contact Al Memole, or e-mail Joe ([kb2avb@gmail.com](mailto:kb2avb@gmail.com)). Future newsletters will provide more info about Space-A.

## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

### Annual Chapter Business Meeting & Christmas Party December 14, 1300 - 1600 hours at the Edison Club, Rexford, NY

*On the cusp of Chanukah, Christmas, and the New Year, we invite you to celebrate the spirit of the season with us. Enjoy fine food, animated conversations (peppered occasionally with jokes), and military camaraderie.*



*If that's not enough, there is an optional grab bag event. If you wish to participate, bring a wrapped gift (\$10 limit) - that's "wrapped" not "warped". Each person who brings a gift may select one. You never know what you'll get, even if it appears to be shaped like a bottle!*

**REMINDER:** Please get your reservation and payment to ROCCO ACQUILANO NOT LATER THAN Wednesday morning **December 10**. The Edison Club needs a final count by the Wednesday before our Sunday meeting. If you plan to attend, even if you aren't 100% sure, please pay in anticipation. If for any reason you can't attend, we will refund your payment, no problem.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO PAY CHAPTER DUES FOR 2015!!**

### If you missed our last meeting on October 19, you missed ...



... a fascinating presentation by guest speaker Dave Hubbard, Site Manager for the Grant Cottage on Mount McGregor in Wilton, NY. Dave gave a brief history of Mount McGregor and the buildings erected there: quite a story in and of itself. The highlight of the talk covered President Grant, his situation and health in 1885, and the details of his final days on Earth. Not enough space in this newsletter to tell it all. If you missed this meeting, no problem - visit the cottage when it opens for the 2015 season next May. For updated info visit <http://www.grantcottage.org/>

### Schedule of Chapter Meetings for 2015

**General Membership Sunday Luncheons**  
(Edison Club, Rexford, NY)

- Feb 8
- Apr 12
- Jun 7
- Oct 4
- Dec 13



**Chapter Board Meetings**  
(NYS Military Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY)

- Apr 18
- Aug 15 (Lake George - tentative)
- Nov 7

## ITEMS OF INTEREST

- The **Commissary** now has commissary rewards cards available at the check outs. They have to be registered online upon receipt. After they are registered, coupons are available that you can load onto the cards. The more you use your card, the more coupons become available. And, for you hipsters and techie types, there is also an APP that you download to your smart phone.
- **Hello, music lovers.** Here is a list of upcoming performances by the **West Point Military Band**, close to home:
  - **Saturday, December 6**
    - West Point, 2:00 PM: A West Point Holiday at Eisenhower Hall Theatre
    - Albany, 7:00 PM: *Holiday Favorites at The Linda - WAMC Performance Arts Studio*
  - **Sunday, December 7**
    - West Point, 12:30 PM: A West Point Holiday at Eisenhower Hall Theatre
- The Welcome Banquet for the Stride Snowfest Weekend for **Wounded Warriors** is March 6, 2015.

**Attention!** Deadline for submitting news, photos, bio's, and stories for the next issue is **Jan 15**. Please e-mail your input to newsletter editor Al Memole at [amemole1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:amemole1@nycap.rr.com)

## CHAPTER MEMBER ACTIVITIES

### TOM & NANCY LENAHAN'S RUSSIAN ADVENTURE CRUISE, DAY 2

We awoke to the beginning of another busy day - breakfast at 7:00 and a time to meet new fellow travelers. Across the hall is a man originally from Utica. We had breakfast in the dining room early because our first tour gathered at 7:30 to leave for a trip to Pushkin to see the Catherine Palace.

The original palace was built for Catherine I, wife of Peter the Great, and it was expanded by their daughter, Elizabeth. The outside is blue and white, Russian baroque, 95 feet long. Elizabeth greatly enlarged it in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and Catherine the Great expanded it still further. The most famous room was probably the Amber Room, originally covered with amber carvings which had been given to Peter the Great. In 1941 the palace was looted by Nazis and by the end of WWII the amber panels had disappeared. Great efforts failed to find the panels and after much research they were recreated and installed. In 1997 a German tried to sell a small part of an amber panel and it was returned to the palace. It proved to be almost exactly like the piece that was created to replace it. We went through the extensive Catherine's gardens and enjoyed the trip immensely.



We came back to the ship for lunch and then had a tour of St. Petersburg by bus - but with a lot of walking. We visited the Smolny cathedral with five white onion domes designed by Rastrelli during the reign of Catherine the Great and The Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood whose spire reaches 81 meters. We saw St. Isaac's Cathedral, Saints Peter & Paul Cathedral with its tombs of the Russian nobility and the wonderful views of the center of St. Petersburg.

After dinner we went to a Cossack Folklore show with men and women doing Cossack dances and singers providing additional music. The show had lots of energy and was very good. We went just off the boat to a tent set up for the show. Then back to the boat for our cognac nightcap on the veranda overlooking the Niva River.

### DAY 3

We woke up late and had a cafe' breakfast in the Panorama Bar next to our room - croissants, yogurt, coffee - then safety instruction with life jackets at 9:00 and a shore trip to the Winter Palace and the Hermitage. The architecture was amazing and the art work in the Hermitage overwhelming. It is restricted to art of Western Europeans. It has some 400 exhibit halls and salons - many more than we could visit in our 5 hour tour. Its collections are varied - paintings, clocks, silver and gold artifacts. The building itself is beautiful and wonderfully maintained. We did our best - were delighted with the works we saw, but truly exhausted at the end. (See photo, right.)

We returned for lunch/dinner at 3:00 and then attended a musical presentation on the boat by Carlos D'Onofrio from the Mariinsky



Theater - very personable and very talented!! Then at 6:30 a shore excursion to see Swan Lake!!! We returned to the ship at about 11:00pm - had a small snack in the dining room, brought tea back to our cabin then a short cognac on the veranda - a long, busy day!!!

#### DAY 4

Internet service has been extremely slow!!! It's hard to believe but we took a half day off from sightseeing on shore. We were really tired and needed a little while to recover. We enjoyed a leisurely breakfast and spent some time sending our e-mails, chatting with other travelers and just doing whatever we wanted.

After lunch we went ashore with a small group to visit a "shared Apartment", a *communalka*. Our hostess was a retired woman who has lived in the same apartment for many years. She had one large room which serves as a living room, dining room and a bedroom for her, her daughter (an anesthesiologist) and her granddaughter (a medical school student). She shared a bathing room, a WC - toilet- a kitchen and a room with stoves with 4 other family groups - a total of 17 people that included a child of 6 years. She shared all kinds of information with us. A large number of people in St. Petersburg have lived in this kind of community including their president (Putin).

On return we attended a captain's reception as we set sail from the pier of St. Petersburg to Lake Ladoga, the largest lake in Europe and on to Mandrogi. We enjoyed a champagne toast, a gourmet meal, and a very pleasant evening as we sailed off into the sunset - a lovely, balmy evening. Of course, we ended it all with a cognac on the veranda!!! Stay tuned

#### DAY 5

We sailed all night entering Lake Ladoga, Europe's largest lake, covering over 7,000 square miles. Some of our fellow travelers told us it is as large as Switzerland. The night was broken up by some rough seas. We found ourselves rolling about about 3:30 am but we had no ill effects and after about 15 minutes the water calmed and we went back to sleep. We had a leisurely breakfast and our tour escort Tatyana gave an hour presentation on this part of our tour followed by some information about souvenirs from this part of Russia presented by Ekaterina (Katherine).



After lunch we disembarked in Mandrogi. We arrived just at the end of lunch and were able to get off the ship a little early. Dmitry gave us information on this little area. It is made up of little shops where crafts people work on and sell their wares. There are a number of painters of Matryoshka dolls, carvers, vendors of lace, a painter of icons, etc. There were several homes, but all were on display as shops.

We returned to the ship and sailed off at about 4:00. The chef had a demonstration (with two passengers), making pelmeni - a sort of Russian dumpling of beef and pork in a thin dough, cooked in water and served with sour cream. We then had a briefing about tomorrow's activities and a glimpse at the optional tours to be selected for Moscow. Dinner was served at 7:00 and we enjoyed time with some new friends, and then our nightly cognac on the veranda. ☺

## CHAPTER OFFICERS

CHAPTER OFFICE	INCUMBENT	E-MAIL
President	Anthony J. Ficara, COL USA, RET	pres@cdnymoaa.org
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Patrick Piccirilli, LTC USA, RET	1vp@cdnymoaa.org
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Thomas W. Lenahan, Capt USAF, RET	2vp@cdnymoaa.org
Secretary	Ralph Folger, Lt Cmdr USNR, RET	secr@cdnymoaa.org
Treasurer	Fred Ames, CW4 AUS, RET	treas@cdnymoaa.org

## BOARD MEMBERS

Rocco D. Acquilano, Cmdr, USNR, RET	Ernest Bebernitz, MAJ USA, RET
Martin Leukhardt, RAdm USNR, RET	Thomas Magliocca, CWO2 USCGR, RET
Charles Marshall, CWO4 USNR, RET	Alfred M. Memole, LTC USA, RET
Ronald Neaton, Capt USNR, RET	William Potts, CW4 AUS, RET
Edmund M. Scheiber, Jr., Lt Col USAF, RET	

## Luncheon Reservation Form

Date: **December 14, 2014**

Location: **Edison Club, Rexford, NY**

Time: 1:00PM – Social Hour  
2:00PM – Dinner

**Menu Choices:**    Flat Iron Steak    Chicken Alexander    Stuffed Sole

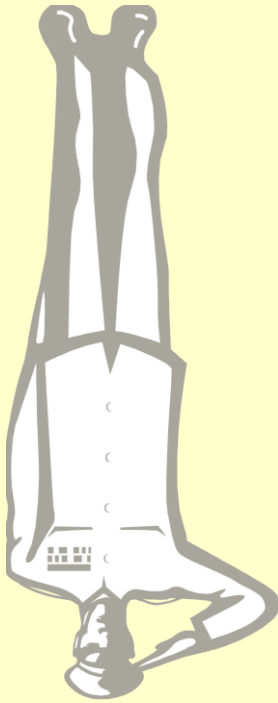
**Price: \$30.00 per person**      *(Please make checks payable to: NYS-CDC.)*

***Pay Chapter dues for 2015 by adding \$15.00 to your total.***

*If you not up to date with your dues, please add \$15 for each year you owe.*

Send reservation form and check to:    **Rocco Acquilano**    (phone: 477-5435)  
*Please make your reservation Not*    14 Rugby Road  
*Later Than Wednesday, December 10.*    East Greenbush NY 12061-2110

		<u>Qty</u> <u>Menu Item</u>
Your name: _____	Choices:	_____ Flat Iron Steak
Number of persons attending: _____		_____ Chicken Alexander
		_____ Stuffed Sole



STILL SERVING



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Military Officers Association of America  
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