

# CAPITAL DISTRICT CHAPTER, NEW YORK

## MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Volume 6, Issue 2

March 2015

Visit us at [cdnymoa.org](http://cdnymoa.org)

2009 4-Star Chapter

## 2015 – TIME FOR ACTION

Spring

It is THAT time of year again. MOAA is gearing up to storm Capitol Hill in April to persuade key members of the new Congress to preserve the hard-earned benefits that compensate military personnel, both serving and retired, for their (our) many sacrifices. According to the NY Council of Chapters MOAA

Legislative Affairs Primer, “2015 will be an important year for attacks on all our benefits.” The Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC) includes recommendations that could negatively impact military personnel, and force readiness.

NY Council of Chapters President, Ben Margolius, and First Vice President, Peggy Phillips, are planning to meet with New York legislators including both NY senators, on April 25. Currently, they also plan to call on **Congressman Chris Gibson**, COL USA RET, 19<sup>th</sup> District, and **Congresswoman Elise Stefanik**, 21<sup>st</sup> District, who represent the southern and northern parts of our Chapter’s region.

While it is true that a relative handful of MOAA’s many members actually storm the Hill, ALL members are encouraged to take initiatives to support the effort. Ben and Peggy encourage MOAA Chapter members to stay informed about legislation that affects our benefits. The best way to do that is to subscribe to the MOAA Legislative Affairs weekly update on the MOAA web site, <http://www.moa.org/legislative/>. MOAA leadership prioritizes the main issues for us in their MOAA’s top issues page at <http://www.moa.org/topissues/>.

Our Council of Chapters leaders are also encouraging each Chapters to “visit their New York State legislators to communicate MOAA issues,” especially any representatives that the storming teams will NOT be meeting. For our Chapter, that would be **Congressman Paul Tonko**. The Council would like us to emphasize the three main issues the NYS storming teams will discuss with the NY senators and representatives. The MOAA goals on these issues are to:

- **Sustain currently serving pay and benefits for FY 2016.** The FY 2016 budget proposes capping pay below private sector pay growth for a 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year, possibly four more, reducing Basic Allowance for Housing by up to 5%, and reducing commissary savings for uniformed service families by 66%.
- **Reject disproportional TRICARE fee hikes and plan changes**, such as combining TRICARE healthcare plans; increasing fees & establishing a means-tested enrollment fee for TRICARE for Life; re-labeling the TRICARE Prime enrollment fee as a “participation” fee for working age retirees with no guaranteed access to care and with no evidence of a planned or managed network of available providers; forcing working age retirees to pay to be seen at military treatment facilities; and increasing pharmacy copays beyond the median of civilian plans.
- **End the harmful effects of sequestration** by supporting a bipartisan debt reduction package that avoids disproportional penalties on servicemembers and their families. ☞



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- STORMING THE HILL, 2015 p. 1
- CHAPTER ACTIVITIES, pp. 2-3
- SPACE-A TRAVEL, pp.3-4
- MEMBERS ONLY, p.4
- CHAPTER OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS, p. 5
- LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM, p. 5



## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

### Schedule of Chapter Meetings for 2015

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

- **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

### New York Naval Militia Military Emergency Boat Service (MEBS)

New York State ranks 8th out of the 50 states in water area, with well over 9,000 miles of shoreline, and a 330 mile international water border with Canada. In 2001, NYS identified a need for a boat service to support homeland security efforts, particularly at the Indian Point Energy Center on the Hudson River, in Buchanan. This effort created the New York State Military Emergency Boat Service (MEBS) with its fleet of all-aluminum, high speed patrol boats. These boats operate in waters throughout the state, including the Atlantic Ocean, Lakes Champlain, Ontario, and Erie, the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, and throughout the state's canal system.

Some of the MEBS missions and operations include: port security, support of law enforcement, surveillance, evacuations, maritime transport, critical infrastructure protection, joint maritime operations, and vessel escort (force protection).

[Source: NY Naval Militia website, <http://dmna.ny.gov/nynm/>]

### YOU ARE INVITED TO COME ON BOARD!

April 12, 1300 - 1600 hours at the Edison Club, Rexford, NY

*REMINDER: Please get your reservation and payment to ROCCO ACQUILANO NOT LATER THAN Wednesday morning **April 8**. 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.*

If you have not done so - please pay chapter dues for 2015!!

**GUEST SPEAKER: Commander Donald McKnight, New York State Naval Militia**

BIO: Commander Don McKnight is a native of Castleton on Hudson, and a graduate of SUNY at Oswego, St. Francis College, Loretto, PA, and the US Naval War College, Newport, RI. He was commissioned an Ensign, United States Navy in March 1983, and served five tours at sea as a

surface warfare officer [USS CONNOLLE (FF 1056), USS HERMITAGE (LSD 34), USS McKEE (AS 41), USS TRUETT (FFT 1095), and USS JOHN C STENNIS (CVN 74)].

Commander McKnight's Navy shore assignments included the Navy Recruiting District Cleveland Ohio, and Naval Coastal Warfare Group TWO, Williamsburg, VA, and command of the Navy Reserve Centers at Ebensburg, PA, Albany, and Glens Falls, NY.

Upon retiring from the U.S. Navy in November 2005, he affiliated with the New York Naval Militia. He served as Assistant Officer-in-Charge and subsequently Officer-in-Charge of Region TWO. He is currently the Commander, New York State Military Emergency Boat Service. His military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, the Naval and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (five awards), the Naval and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards), in addition to other campaign, unit and service awards.

[Bio and photo taken from NY Naval Militia website <http://dmna.ny.gov/nynm/>]



**Attention!** Deadline for submitting news, photos, bio's, and stories for the next issue is **May 13**. Please e-mail your input to newsletter editor Al Memole at [amemole1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:amemole1@nycap.rr.com)

## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS (CONTINUED)

Several Chapter members attended the **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary STRIDE Adaptive Sports Welcome Banquet for the Wounded Warrior Snowfest** at the Hilton Garden Inn, Troy, on March 6. The Chapter attendees were Marty and Milena Leukhardt, who made a very generous donation to STRIDE Adaptive Sports, Skip and Mary Lou Bebernitz, who directly supported this STRIDE event, Rocco Acquilano, Al Memole, and Dana Berntson. Dana's son grew up with the event keynote speaker, **Congressman Chris Gibson**, who is still a close family friend.

Congressman Gibson (*in STRIDE photo at right*) is a combat veteran who has "been there and done that." He gave a brief but heartfelt tribute to the sacrifices made by the wounded warriors and all who serve or once served our great country. Of course, the real celebrities that night were not the wonderful MCs from WNYT News or the many local politicians who actively support this program, but the Wounded Warriors themselves.



The 2015 Wounded Warriors, hailing from various places in New York State and other states, are **Doug Clifford**, SGT US Army (Albany), **Ashley Gallagher**, SGT US Army (Troy), **Logan Halthorn**, SPC US Army (Mississippi), **Elvis King**, SPC US Army (Hempstead), **Alexander Marmer**, US Army (Ft. Drum), **Roy Mitchell**, SFC US Army (Coithuge), **Steven Moulton**, US Army (Mississippi), **Stephen Onley**, SGT US Army (Wynantskill), and **Quinn Savell**, SSG US Army (Evans Mills). There were also 18 STRIDE alumni Wounded Warriors, including **Jeremy Walton**, Cpl USMC, who was a guest speaker at one of our Chapter meetings.



Appropriately, the Wounded Warriors and everyone in attendance gave a standing ovation to the woman whose vision and drive made STRIDE such an outstanding service organization, the CEO and Founder, **Mary Ellen Whitney** (*in STRIDE photo at left*). Mary Ellen initiated the Winterfest for Wounded Warriors ten years ago to start a psychological healing process for disabled veterans who had no idea they would ever be able to ski or snowboard again, or for the first time. For more information about this event and about STRIDE Adaptive Sports, visit their website at [www.stride.org](http://www.stride.org) or talk to Skip Bebernitz at one of our meetings.

## LOOKING FOR A CHANGE OF SCENERY? TRY SPACE-A TRAVEL

Well, if you missed our last meeting, you missed a very engaging presentation on Space-A travel by Chapter member **David Erickson**, MAJ USA (Ret). Eager to take advantage of this unbelievable military benefit, David did his homework and, like Southern Tier's Joe Brown, uncovered the secrets to making Space-A work for you.



Unfortunately, Dave's presentation lost some of its visual impact when we couldn't get the laptop to run the slideshow. So, Dave kindly offered the slides to use in this newsletter. Of course, this 2-dimensional space can't recreate the energy of Dave's presentation, but it provides a gist of some of his main points for the benefit of those among us who might currently be planning summer and fall vacations.

### SO WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SPACE-A TRAVEL?

1. Be Active or Retired Military - (That's us!)
2. Have Patience - (OK, that's some of us.)
3. Have a Sense of Adventure - (Our Chapter members have that in spades!)

4. Flexibility - (No, Ralph, it does not involve gymnastics - it refers to your schedule.)
5. Desire to meet new people and visit unplanned locations - (Like when you drive around Troy.)

#### WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES TO SPACE-A TRAVEL?

1. Low to NO COST
2. No Baggage Fee
3. FREE plugs and blankets - (OK, it's loud and cold)
4. Shorter TSAR Lines
5. Usually MORE SPACE Than 1st Class — — — — — ➔
6. \$5.00 Wine - (Yo, Tony! Badda-bing!)
7. Unexpected Stops - (= Adventure!)



#### WHAT DISADVANTAGES MIGHT ONE ENCOUNTER?

1. No Reservations - ('Cuz it's SPACE-AVAILABLE!)
2. Last Minute Changes - (flexibility required)
3. TSA Rules Still Apply - (Destination - Frisk-o)
4. Unexpected Stops - (= Adventure, Excitement, maybe Anxiety)

#### HOW DOES ONE GO ABOUT SPACE-A TRAVEL?

1. Sign up
  - Categories - (e.g., Retired Military)
  - 60 days out (going and coming)
  - E-mail or fax
2. Where to Fly From
  - McGuire, Westover, Dover, BWI, Yakota, Singapore
3. Look for flights
  - Social media <http://www.spacea.net/social>
  - Space A.Net <http://www.spacea.net/>
  - Pepperd.com <http://www.pepperd.com/vb5/forum/>
  - Call <http://www.spacea.net/usa-locations>



#### DID YOU KNOW?

Unless the current federal law is changed, the Defense Department will have to cut an additional **\$54 billion** in FY 2016 and **\$269 billion** over the following five fiscal years, thereby re-creating the potential for a hollow force similar to previous years of budget cutting.

#### FOR "MEMBERS ONLY"

- **Is your member profile up to date with MOAA?** To make sure MOAA has the correct info, call MOAA Member Services at (800) 234-6622 or (703) 549-2311.
- **Don't stay in the dark!** Sign up for MOAA's weekly Legislative Affairs email. See <http://www.moaa.org/legislative/>
- **Do you personally know Congressman Paul Tonko? Do you have a connection to any of our federal or state elected officials?** Would you be willing to contact them or meet with them to present MOAA's position on legislative issues that affect uniformed service personnel and national security? Don't be shy! Step up!
- **Each Chapter needs a mission and a vision statement.** What ideas do YOU have about our Chapter mission and vision? Please let us know.

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, LCDR USNR, RET	secr@cdnymoaa.org
Treasurer	Fred Ames, CW4 USA, RET	treas@cdnymoaa.org

BOARD MEMBERS

Rocco D. Acquilano, CDR, USNR, RET	Ernest Bebernitz, MAJ USA, RET
Martin Leukhardt, RDML 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 USA, RET
Edmund M. Scheiber, Jr., Lt Col USAF, RET	

Luncheon Reservation Form

Date: **April 12, 2015**

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

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

Menu Choices: Flat Iron Steak    Chicken Alexander    Stuffed Sole

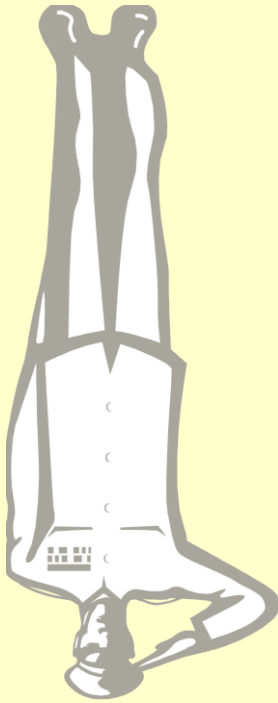
Price: \$30.00 per person    *(Please make checks payable to: NYS-CDC.)*

***If you still owe Chapter dues for 2015, you may pay 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, April 8. East Greenbush NY 12061-2110

	Qty	Menu Item
Your name: _____	_____	Flat Iron Steak
Number of persons attending: _____	_____	Chicken Alexander
	_____	Stuffed Sole



NEVER STOP SERVING



New York State Capital District Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America  
PO Box 293  
Guilderland, NY 12084

