

# CAPITAL DISTRICT CHAPTER, NEW YORK MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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4-Star Chapter - 2015 & 2009



## MOAA LEGISLATIVE GOALS

Included in this newsletter for extra emphasis are the Top Ten Legislative Goals for MOAA this year:

1. Ensure that Tricare reform sustains top-quality care
2. Prevent disproportional Tricare fee increases
3. Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector
4. Block erosion of compensation and commissary benefits
5. Protect military retirement/COLAs
6. Sustain Wounded Warrior programs and expand caregiver support
7. End disabled/survivor financial penalties
8. Fix Guard/Reserve retirement
9. Improve spouse and family support
10. Assure timely access to the VA, and eliminate the VA claims backlog.

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The specifics of each of the issues are available at [MOAA.org](http://www.moaa.org). Here is the web address; the link is also found on our Chapter website:

<http://www.moaa.org/Content/Take-Action/Top-Issues/Currently-Serving/MOAA-s-Top-10-Legislative-Goals-for-2016.aspx>

### NEVER STOP SERVING

Knowing the issues is the first step, but the next step is equally vital, and that is to send the MOAA post cards, e-mail or write to your elected representatives to communicate your support for the MOAA position. MOAA is committed to defending the pay and benefits of the one irreplaceable "weapon system" in the Armed Forces arsenal – its people. As our Chapter President wrote in the last issue, "Now we are in an organization where taking care of the troops IS our mission!"

*For those of you who haven't attended a meeting in a long time, come on back and take a look. Enjoy a delicious meal, warm camaraderie, friendly banter, and a great presentation. The April 10 meeting is a must for all you American History buffs.*

## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

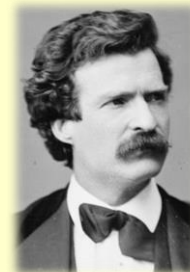
**NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - APRIL 10, 1300 - 1600 hours at the Edison Club, Rexford, NY [The luncheon reservation form is on page 5.]**

GUEST SPEAKER: **Steve Trimm**, Ulysses S. Grant Cottage State Historic Site

SUBJECT: **General Grant's Friendship with Mark Twain**



**REMINDER #1:** Please get your reservation and payment to ROCCO ACQUILANO [NOT in photos] NOT LATER THAN Wednesday morning **Apr 6**. 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. Include 2016 chapter dues, if you have not yet paid.



**REMINDER #2:** We are still accepting soft-covered books, puzzle books, automatic pencils or markers, DVD's (with plastic cover), CD's, board games (with all pieces and directions in a box in good condition), playing cards, dice, small dictionaries, coloring books and crayons for **Books For Troops, Inc.** of southern Saratoga County.

**NEXT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING – May 14**, 1000 - 1200 hours (+/-) at the NYS Military Museum, Saratoga Springs. ALL MEMBERS are welcome to attend.

### CHAPTER NEWS

- If you missed our **last meeting**, you missed a compelling presentation by Ms. Carolyn C. Adamczyk, Director, Lt Col Bryant A. Murray Veterans Center, Excelsior College, Albany. The Murray Veterans Center offers an impressive array of information, resources, and online services to help veterans returning to civilian life "connect with fellow veterans about education, career and life." Check out their program yourself at <http://veterans.excelsior.edu/>.
- The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual **Stride Welcome Banquet** to kick-off this year's Winterfest for wounded warriors was held at the Hilton Garden Inn, Troy, on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Our chapter and several individual chapter members donated funds to support the event that helps wounded and traumatized combat veterans to regain confidence and hope through participating in skiing and other winter sports at Jiminy Peak. Our chapter was well represented by *Dana Berntson, Chris Costigan, Rocco Acquilano, Marty & Milena Leukhardt, Ralph & Vicki Folger, Al & Mary Memole, and Skip & Mary Lou Bebernitz*. [See photos on page 4.]
- **COMMITTEE CHAIRS needed.** If you step up to be a leader, others will step up to help.
  - Program Committee – You can do this. It's just like being a staff officer in Plans & Ops, but part-time. Your committee puts on the show – plans the meetings, coordinates with the host facility, enlists guest speakers, and collects dinner reservations. Only five meetings per year – no sweat.
  - Public Relations – If you can schmooze, here is your opportunity to be a PAO. Meet the press (radio, TV, and even social media) to give our Chapter and MOAA some local visibility.
  - Transition Assistance – Help our comrades leaving active military service to transition to civilian life and find employment in the Capital Region.
  - Surviving Spouse Liaison – Looking for a "strong shoulder" for others to lean on in their time of loss and after.

**May 20** is the deadline for submitting news articles, photos, bio's, and stories for the *next* issue. Please e-mail your input to newsletter editor Al Memole at [amemole1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:amemole1@nycap.rr.com)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT

It is my sincerest hope that this message finds all of you well! This truly was a great winter, unless you enjoy winter sports.

Our earned benefits will continue to be under attack. Many lawmakers will find it preferable to take money away from the DOD *and us* to fund social programs in an election year. DOD will be interested in sustaining weapons and equipment programs over personal benefits.

There have many times in the past where there has been a shortage of funding for the needs of the Armed Services or for veterans. One such period was after the Civil War that led in part to the birth of the Grand Army of the Republic that fought to attain and retain pensions for veterans. There was the Pension Riots in the 1930's. There was such a lack of funding for the Armed Services that broomsticks replicated rifles in training. In his book "Beyond the Band of Brothers", Major Dick Winters wrote that when they jumped into Normandy before D-Day, one of his troops spotted a German sniper. The troop aimed his rifle and yelled "BANG, BANG" from muscle memory! The sniper then shot and killed that soldier.

MOAA has annually been rated as the top lobby organization for military personnel issues. This rating is achieved by the participation of us all. *Please continue to mail the message cards that are occasionally attached to your issue of the Military Officer magazine and forward any CAPWIZ messages found contained in MOAA's weekly Legislative Updates.*

*Skip Bebernitz* 

## CHANGES TO THE CHAPTER CONSTITUTION and BY LAWS

### Proposed changes to the Constitution and By Laws, 30 January 2016

#### **Constitution:**

Article III Membership:

Section 2.2. "Auxiliary members" shall be changed to "Surviving Spouses" and all subsequent references shall also be changed.

Section 3. "Retired Officer Community" shall be changed to the "Military Officer Community".

Section 5. Shall be changed to "Membership shall not be denied based on: Race/Ethnicity, Color, National Origin, Sex, Disability, Age, Citizenship Status, Genetic Information, Marital Status, Sexual Orientation, Political Activities, Use of Service Dogs or any other protected Class as defined by United States Law or the Law of the State of New York."

Article VII. Shall be changed to read "The reading of proposed amendment(s) or a new Constitution is made by the Board of Directors at a given Chapter meeting and posted on the Chapter website. It is tabled until the following Chapter meeting whereupon the Board of Directors presents its recommendation(s) as to the merit. The amendment(s) or new Constitution are voted upon and must be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present."

#### **By Laws:**

Article IV Officers: Section 2. Change to "Elections shall be held in even numbered years."



*Continued on page 4.*

## Changes Continued

Article V Committees.

The following committees shall be added: "Transition Assistance Program, Community Action, and Surviving Spouse".

Article VI Amendments

Section 1. Shall be changed to read "These By Laws may be amended or repealed in whole or in part by a majority vote at any organized meeting of the Chapter, provided that a copy of the amendment(s) proposed for amendment has been read at a meeting and posted for 15 days at the Chapter's website at least 15 days before the meeting at which the vote is to be taken."

## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST FOR 2016

**April 12:** Navy Sea Chanters at the Palace Theater at 1900

**April 30:** Retiree Activity Day, Cadet parade at West Point

**May 28** (Saturday of Memorial Day weekend): Volunteers needed for flag placement at the Gerald B. Solomon National Cemetery. The ceremony starts at 8:00 am; should have plenty of parking this year (parking areas on the grass); Flag removal is the following Tuesday, May 31.

**June 11-12:** Blue Angels airshow in Syracuse

**September 3-4:** Thunderbirds airshow in New Windsor, CT

**44<sup>th</sup> NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS CONVENTION RESCHEDULED TO SEPTEMBER 13 – 16** – hosted by our Chapter

*[The convention had been planned tentatively for October, as reported in our last issue.]*

Location: **Fort William Henry & Conference Center, Lake George, NY**

Main scheduled events, so far:

9/13: Check in and registration, 1 – 5 p.m.; BBQ dinner, 6 p.m., guest speaker - **ADM Walter Doran**, MOAA Board member and future Director of the Board

9/14: Luncheon Cruise on Lac du Saint Sacrament, Dinner and Show at the Lake George Dinner Theater

9/15: Convention Business Meeting, Council of Chapters Business and Reports; Tour of Historic Fort William Henry; NYS CoC Banquet, guest speaker - **COL Barry Wright**, Director of Councils and Chapters for MOAA

9/16: Farewell buffet breakfast; room checkout by 11 a.m.

*We will be providing additional information and updates in our upcoming newsletters. If you want to help us with planning and/or assist with any or all of the convention events, or if you want more information about Chapter needs, please contact any Chapter Officer or Directors, listed on page 5.*

**December 17:** Wreaths Across America™ at the Gerald Solomon National Cemetery, Schuylerville



*Stride Winterfest Welcome Banquet for wounded warriors, photos courtesy of Ottmar Klaas: (l) The Berntsons, Chris, Rocco, with NY Assembly rep Steve McLaughlin & friends; (c) a wounded warrior honoree; (r) the usual suspects.*

**CHAPTER OFFICERS**

<b>CHAPTER OFFICE</b>	<b>INCUMBENT</b>	<b>E-MAIL</b>
President	Ernest "Skip" Bebernitz, MAJ USA, RET	pres@cdnymoaa.org
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Christopher J. Costigan, CDR USN, RET	1vp@cdnymoaa.org
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Emanuel "Manny" Biondi, MAJ USA, RET	2vp@cdnymoaa.org
Secretary	Ralph Folger, LCDR USNR, RET	secr@cdnymoaa.org
Treasurer	Fred Ames, CW4 USA, RET	treas@cdnymoaa.org

**BOARD MEMBERS**

Anthony J. Ficara*, COL USA, RET	
Rocco D. Acquilano, CDR, USNR, RET	Thomas W. Lenahan, Capt USAF, RET
Martin Leukhardt**, RDML USNR, 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

\* Immediate Past-President

\*\* Former President

## Luncheon Reservation Form

Date: **April 10, 2016**

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

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

**Menu Choices:**    *FLAT IRON STEAK*    *CHICKEN ALEXANDER*    *PECAN-ENCRUSTED SALMON*

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

***To pay Chapter dues for 2016, please add \$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)  
14 Rugby Road  
East Greenbush NY 12061-2110

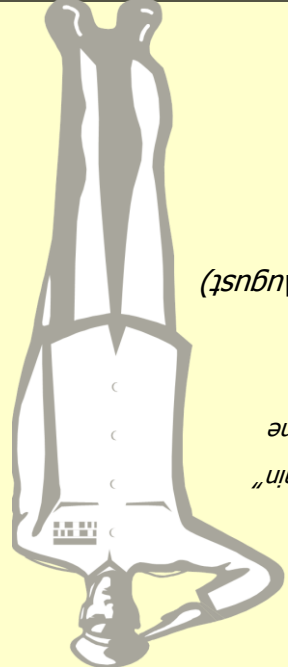
*Please make your reservation Not  
Later Than Wednesday, April 6.*

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Choices:

Number of persons attending: \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Qty</u>	<u>Menu Item</u>
_____	Flat Iron Steak
_____	Chicken Alexander
_____	Pecan-Encrusted Salmon



**Upcoming Chapter Meetings for 2016**  
 (Edison Club, Rexford, NY)

- **Apr 10** Guest Speaker – TBA, Grant Cottage; "The friendship of General Grant and Mark Twain"
- Jun 12 Guest Speaker - Mr. Ray Mickiewicz, KAPL: Four Generations of the Sea Wolf Submarine
- Sep 18
- Dec 11

**General Membership Sunday Luncheons**

**Chapter Board Meetings (NYS Military Museum, Saratoga Springs, except in August)**

- **May 14**
- Aug 20 (Lake George)
- Oct 1

*KEEP THIS HALF OF THE PAGE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE*

*The NYS Capital District Chapter and the Military Officers Association of America are non-partisan member organizations that honor, assist, and advocate for all who serve and have served honorably in the uniformed services of the United States of America.*



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 Military Officers Association of America  
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