

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

Volume 8, Issue 2

March 2017

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4-Star Chapter - 2015 & 2009



## WHO WAS THE GREATER HERO?

Our next general membership dinner meeting on **April 2<sup>nd</sup>** offers a special treat for everyone – a debate over an enduring historical controversy. Guest speakers Joe Craig and Larry Arnold will present their cases trying to convince *you* which American officer was the better leader and greater hero: **Horatio Gates** or **Benedict Arnold**. History buffs will love this, but so will those of us fascinated by the art of military leadership.



*Joe Craig*, a retired National Park Service Ranger, will advocate for General Gates; *Larry Arnold*, President of The Friends of the Saratoga National Battlefield Park, will make the case for Benedict Arnold (of course).

For those among us who may have forgotten what we learned in school about this famous battle in American history, here is a very brief overview to jog the memory and put this battle into an historical perspective:



In June 1777, British General “Gentleman Johnny” Burgoyne led a force of British and Hessian troops from Canada toward Albany, to link up with General Howe’s forces moving north from New York City. Their objective: cut off the New England colonies from the rest. (Another British force was moving eastward from Lake Ontario.) The link up never happened. Burgoyne’s troops forced the Americans to evacuate Ticonderoga, but, in August, the colonists defeated a Hessian raiding party at the battle of Bennington. Gates assumed command of the American forces, positioned near Saratoga on the heights overlooking the Hudson River to block the British advance. The opponents fought twice: September 19 (Freeman’s Farm) and again on October 7 (Bemis Heights), but Burgoyne failed to dislodge the Americans. With no help in sight, Burgoyne attempted to retreat, but was cut-off by the Americans and had to surrender. The surrender of a major British army to the rebels eventually helped to persuade France to aid the rebellion. Thus, Saratoga has been considered the turning point in our war for independence.

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## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

**NEXT MEETING/LUNCHEON – Sunday April 2, 1300 - 1600 hours at the Edison Club, Rexford, NY** [The luncheon reservation form is on page 5.]

**GUEST SPEAKERS: Joe Craig and Larry Arnold – the Horatio Gates vs. Benedict Arnold debate**

**REMINDER:** Please get your reservation and payment to CHRIS COSTIGAN NOT LATER THAN Wednesday morning **March 29**. The Edison Club needs a final count by the Wednesday before our 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.

If you haven't done so yet, please pay your **annual dues** (\$15) for 2017. You may include the dues with your dinner reservation.



### Opportunities to help others, for those attending the luncheon:

- **Books for the Troops.** Please bring along 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 that will be sent to deployed service members.

### ★ HIGHLIGHTED CHARITY for this edition ★

- **Guardian House**, 1214 Saratoga Road, Ballston Spa (photo below left), helping homeless female vets in Saratoga County since 2008 (houses about 13 vets), and



- **The Vet House of Saratoga County**, Village of Ballston Spa (photo above right), providing services to homeless male veterans since 1983 (houses 12 veterans).
- **What to bring:** Items such as dish soap, dishwasher soap, paper towels, laundry soap, or toilet paper. Chris Costigan will collect all donated items and deliver them to both the houses. If you have any questions you may contact Chris at 884-2943, or visit the website at <http://www.vethelpny.org/vet-help/>

### General Membership Luncheons 2017 (Sunday at the Edison Club, Rexford, NY)

- Jun 11 - Terrorism Counteraction briefing by Merle Schreckengost
- Oct 15
- Dec 10 - Annual Holiday Party

### Chapter Board Meetings 2017

- ❖ Aug 12 (Lake George -tentative)
- ❖ Nov 4 (NYS Military Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY)

NEVER STOP SERVING

## CHAPTER NEWS & OTHER EVENTS

- On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, three couples from our Chapter attended the **STRIDE Adaptive Sports Welcome Banquet for the Wounded Warrior Snowfest** at the Hilton Garden Inn, Troy. Several local politicians attended, including U.S. Congressional Representatives Paul Tonko and John Faso. The banquet welcomed 12 new wounded veterans and six returning vets who serve as mentors. The guest speaker was William Reynold, CPT USA (Ret), a West Point grad, wounded warrior, and Board Member of Disabled Sports USA, Positivity Project, and US Military Endurance Sports, Deloitte Consulting LLP Manager.
- **Volunteers needed:** Don't just go along for the ride – claim the driver's seat. Please consider:
  - promoting our Chapter by heading or contributing to a *Public Relations Committee*;
  - helping follow officers changing careers and/or relocating to the Capital Region through a *Transition Assistance Program*;
  - helping surviving spouses as *Surviving Spouse Liaison*. (Spouses are welcome to participate.)
- April 22: The Department of New York **American Gold Star Mothers** (AGSM) 81st Annual State Conference will take place April 20 - 23 at the Century House, 997 New Loudon Road, Latham, NY 12110. Their conference banquet is set for Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the Main Ballroom at the Century House. Tickets are \$50.00 per person. No tickets will be sold at the door, so if you would like to get a group together to attend as representatives of our Chapter, please let Skip or one of the Chapter officers/directors know by April 10, in case others might be planning the same. If you prefer to make your own reservation, you can make your check payable to the Department of New York AGSM and mail to Cindy Roberts, 408 Upper Sherman Avenue, Queensbury, NY 12804.
- April 29: **Retiree Appreciation Day** at West Point
- May 21: The **West Point Band's Armed Forces Day Concert** from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. at Eisenhower Hall Theatre, 655 Pitcher Rd, West Point, NY 10996

## 2017 NYS COUNCIL of CHAPTERS ANNUAL CONVENTION

**ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS!** You are all cordially invited and encouraged to attend the 2017 convention at Lake George, which our Chapter is hosting, with other NYS chapters assisting. These annual CoC conventions are not exclusively for Council and Chapter officers and board members. Yeah, there's the MOAA business meeting part – but even that provides information of interest to all MOAA members. But, most of the program activities are for enjoyment and fostering camaraderie among members from across the state. So, any member can, and should attend, if able. We know it is not always possible. All of us have to weigh health issues, conflicts with family activities, work commitments, or finances. Still, please give serious consideration to participating in this year's convention.

The next issue of this newsletter will include all the details and the reservation forms. But, here is some preliminary information (thanks to Ed Scheiber) to help you plan:

- The **Fort William Henry Hotel** overlooking the lake is reserved at a fantastic room rate of \$100.00 per night from **September 19 to 22**.
- We have reservations for September 20: one with the Lake George Steamboat Co for a **luncheon cruise** and another with Lake Theater Productions for **dinner and a live stage performance**.
- Estimated costs, at this time, are around \$550 for an individual and around \$800 for a couple for lodging, all planned meals, and group events for the entire convention period.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPTER PRESIDENT

Mary Lou and I survived another winter. Hopefully you and yours weathered the winter well. Unfortunately, our 12 February Luncheon meeting did not.

The past few months I have been lauding **the Chapter's web site** and encouraging you to visit it. Regretfully, the February meeting was not the only thing that experienced extreme conditions. The web site was recently hacked, leaving a screen full of letters, numbers, and symbols. Ralph Folger, our webmaster, is a genius! He not only beat the hack, getting the site back up, but he took an already great product and made it Fantastic! THANKS, Ralph!

The first week in April members of MOAA State Councils will be once again "**Storming the Hill**". Their efforts are made significantly easier if our members of Congress are already somewhat familiar with this year's issues. If you have not already done so, send the blue letters from your copy of the February issue of "Military Officer Magazine". You can also help by writing an email or letter to your Representative and to both of our Senators.

The program for **the 2 April meeting** will be a debate as to who was **the real hero of the Battles of Saratoga**, Gates or Arnold. It is a very interesting presentation. If you have never been to a Chapter meeting or if it has been a long time since you last attended, please consider attending. I am convinced that you will enjoy yourself.

*The [Chapter] web site was recently hacked, leaving a screen full of letters, numbers, and symbols. Ralph Folger, our webmaster, is a genius! He not only beat the hack, getting the site back up, but he took an already great product and made it Fantastic! THANKS, Ralph!*



Planning for the **NYS Council of Chapters Convention** in Lake George is progressing well. The dates for the convention are 19-22 September at The Fort William Henry Hotel and Conference Center.

The presentation at **the June meeting** will be made by one of our newest members, Merle Schreckengost. He is an Air Force Reserve Major and Investigator with the New York State Police. He will be giving a Terrorism Counteraction Briefing.

Let's have a good turnout for all upcoming events!

*Skip Bebernitz* 🇺🇸

## MOAA LEGISLATIVE GOALS FOR 2017

MOAA's top goal once again is to persuade Congress to **end sequestration**, which is scheduled to take place this year and which threatens the defense budget with large arbitrary chunks, including pay and benefits, such as health care. MOAA will be pushing the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress to **reform Tricare** in a way that preserves Tricare For Life and bars fee hikes, reductions in service, and means tested benefits.

MOAA is also keeping watch as DOD develops new military retirement plans and stands ready to fight changes to COLA that would fall below the rate of inflation. Other goals focus on maintaining adequate force levels for the services and helping wounded warriors and caregivers.

MOAA needs the help of all members to meet these objectives. To stay informed and learn about what we can do, members are urged to subscribe to MOAA's e-newsletters by calling (800) 234-MOAA (6622) or visiting [moaa.org/email](http://www.moaa.org/email). For details about MOAA goals, see: <http://www.moaa.org/Content/Take-Action/Top-Issues/Top-Issues.aspx>

**May 20** is the deadline for submitting news articles, photos, bio's, or 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)

**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	Edmund M. Scheiber, Jr.**, Lt Col USAF, RET
Rocco D. Acquilano, CDR, USNR, RET	Thomas W. Lenahan, Capt USAF, RET
Martin Leukhardt**, RADM USNR, RET	Charles Marshall, CWO4 USNR, RET
Alfred M. Memole, LTC USA, RET	Ronald Neaton**, CAPT USNR, RET

\* Immediate Past-President

\*\* Former President

**Luncheon Reservation Form**

Date: **April 2, 2017**

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 **2017**, please add **\$15.00** to your total.

Send reservation form and check to:    **Chris Costigan**    (phone: 518-884-2943)  
153 Paisley Road  
Ballston Spa, NY 12020-2109

Please make your reservation Not Later Than Wednesday, **March 29.**

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

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

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



New York State Capital District Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America  
PO Box 373  
Waterford, NY 12188-0373

*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.*

## MILITARY AND VETERAN BENEFITS IN NEW YORK STATE

**SUCCESS!** On March 8, 2017, Chapter 299 of the Laws of New York went into effect, 180 days after Governor Cuomo signed the bill into law. Chapter 299 amended state education laws to make it easier for spouses of active duty members of the armed forces of the United States, National Guard or reserves who have professional licenses from other jurisdictions to obtain an equivalent NYS license so they might find gainful employment while stationed in NY. The law relates only to professions licensed through the NYS Department of Education.

The new law provides for an expedited review of an application for a license by any military spouse transferred to NY. The applicant must submit evidence of licensure issued by any other state, territory, protectorate or dependency of the US to practice an equivalent occupation. In addition to the expedited application review, an applicant with a license in good standing from another state shall be granted a temporary practice permit for a 6 month period, after which time, the full license will be granted if secure direct source verification of equivalency is obtained. Applicants may request an additional 6 months if necessary. Also, the initial licensure fee for applications submitted by spouses of active duty military personnel will be reduced by half of the normal fee.

**A GREAT RESOURCE FOR VETERANS SEEKING BENEFITS OR HELP.** The New York State Division of Veterans Affairs (DVA) has a phenomenal website packed with helpful information to assist military veterans. Veterans can find information and assistance (or you can use the site to help vets who lack web access) regarding various benefits - healthcare, housing, education, employment, compensation, claims, counseling, and veterans' events. Check out the web site to see for yourself:

<https://veterans.ny.gov/>



### WWII 75TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION EVENTS at the World War II Memorial, Madison Avenue, Albany

Tuesday, April 18: Doolittle Raid 75th Anniversary Commemoration

Thursday, May 4: Battle of the Coral Sea 75th Anniversary Commemoration

Monday, May 8: V-E Day Observance

Monday, May 29 Memorial Day Observance

