

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

*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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**5-Star Chapter –**  
**2021, 2020, 2018 & 2017**

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## PRESIDENT’S MID-SUMMER MESSAGE

The “dog days” of summer have arrived! I hope all of you reading this are in good health, doing well, and enjoying the seasonal warmth and sun. This is the one issue of our newsletter that does not have a luncheon meeting reservation form at the end. That’s because we won’t meet again to “break bread” as a Chapter until October 9. (Some of us will be sharing the company of MOAA members at the NYS Council of Chapters 50<sup>th</sup> annual convention.) During this stretch of months from June to October without a formal Chapter gathering, we can easily lose track of each other and the issues affecting military personnel, veterans, and their families. That’s the purpose of *this* newsletter – keep us connected to each other and to the greater military community until we meet again. So, while we deal with our own challenges, responsibilities, and recreational activities, let’s resolve to meet regularly to expand and support our MOAA community. Thanks!

*Al Memole*

## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

### CHAPTER MEETINGS REMAINING FOR 2022

Meeting dates, times, and locations are always subject to change. Changes will be posted in newsletters.

<p><b>AUGUST</b></p> <p><b>20 – Board Meeting</b>, at Scheiber’s house on Lake George, starting 1100 hrs</p> <hr/> <p>SEPTEMBER – none</p> <hr/> <p><b>OCTOBER</b></p> <p><b>9 – Chapter Luncheon Meeting</b>, TBD</p>	<p><b>NOVEMBER</b></p> <p><b>5 – Board Meeting</b>, 1000-1200 hrs., NYS Military Museum, Saratoga Springs</p> <hr/> <p><b>DECEMBER</b></p> <p><b>11 – Annual Xmas/Holiday Party &amp; Business Meeting</b>, TBD</p>
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### HIGHLIGHTED CHARITY for this issue → **VETERANS MIRACLE CENTER (VMC)**

*“The Veterans Miracle Center is a special place for Veterans and Active-Duty Military Personnel as well as their immediate families to receive daily life necessities absolutely free.”*

The VMC in Albany stocks a variety of items essential for living, to include “brand new clothes, shoes, personal care products, kitchenware, children’s toys, beds and more.” They also offer a complimentary van transportation service to and from their store. The VMC is open by appointment-only to Veterans by presenting their DD214 or current military ID. Monetary donations and volunteers are always welcome. To donate or volunteer your time, please visit the VMC website at the web address shown in the box at the right.

#### **VMC Albany**

10 Interstate Avenue

Albany, NY 12205

Phone: 518.486.8398

Email: [Info@VMCAlbany.org](mailto:Info@VMCAlbany.org)

Website: [www.vmcAlbany.org](http://www.vmcAlbany.org)

Hours: Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, by appointment only

If you know officers who are *not* MOAA members or who are members of MOAA, but not members of our Chapter, please invite them to join, or at least attend a meeting to check us out. Share the MOAA website or give them a Chapter membership application, which you can download here: [Chapter Membership Application Form](#)

## Chapter News and other local items of interest

- **MOAA AT THE MOVIES** (Submitted by Al Memole)

Well, our attempt to attract both prospective and current Chapter members to a fun event **failed**. But, undeterred, *Skip Bebernitz, Rocco Acquilano, and I* went anyway to see “**Top Gun: Maverick**” at the Regal Cinema, Colonie Center, on the afternoon of Monday, June 6, the anniversary of D-Day. The movie did not disappoint – IT WAS AWESOME. And the theater seats were so super comfy – not like the old days. We had a great time. **We wish more of you could have joined us.** Full disclosure: *Rocco* is the only one of us three who actually served on an aircraft carrier, the Essex-class USS Antietam.



- **OUR LAST LUNCHEON MEETING, JUNE 12.**

Members and guests had a wonderful time at the Barnsider in Colonie. The room there was comfortable, the service excellent (we ordered drinks from the wait staff who brought them to us), and the meals very good. We were honored to have as our Guest Speaker, **Christine Rem**, COL



USAR (retired), the Executive Director of **Capital District Women Veterans (CDWV)**. Christine served on active duty and in the reserves as an Army Nurse (RN and Doctor of Nursing Science) for 30 years, including a tour in Iraq with Civil Affairs. She spoke about her military experiences, education and training, and what she had learned over the years. Christine explained how she became aware of the needs of women veterans in the Capital District, many of whom are either unaware of the resources available to help them or unable to access them. A number of women vets struggling in the shadows, including single mothers, are in need of housing and guidance. Christine founded CDWV to provide both. Inspired by Guardian House for homeless female vets in Saratoga County, Christine converted one of her family’s generational homes on First Street in

Troy to that purpose. For more information about the CDWV and to make a donation to help, please visit their website at <https://www.cdwv.org/>.

*Pictured above left: COL Christine Rem. At right: COL Rem receives a MOAA coffee mug from Chapter President Al Memole as a token of our Chapter’s appreciation for her spending time with us at our luncheon and speaking to us about her program. [Both photos courtesy of Chapter member Ed Balaban]*



**September 16<sup>th</sup>** is the deadline for submitting **news articles, photos, bio’s, stories, or book, movie, food, or wine reviews** for the *next* issue! Please e-mail your input to newsletter editor Al Memole at [ammemole@gmail.com](mailto:ammemole@gmail.com). THANKS!



- **LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT, JULY 2022.**

*(Submitted by Pat Piccirilli and the Chapter's Legislative Affairs Committee)*



This is the latest move by proponents of the concurrent receipt concept. More than 50,000 combat-injured veterans would benefit from long-sought changes to unjust compensation practices if an amendment to the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) becomes part of the must-pass legislation.

The text of the **Major Richard Star Act** (H.R. 1282/S. 344) was submitted as NDAA Amendment No. 98 by Reps. Raul Ruiz (D-Calif.) and Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.) along with 29 other members of Congress. There is a very short window this week for your representative to sign onto the amendment and

support combat-injured veterans.

The amendment would provide over 50,300 combat-injured veterans with concurrent receipt of vested retirement pay and VA disability. At present, these veterans lose a dollar of retirement pay for every dollar of VA disability received. Another advocacy push is critical to build significant co-sponsors for Amendment No. 98 and influence the Rules Committee's decision on whether the amendment will be found "in order" and can proceed to the House floor for a vote.

While concurrent receipt was one of the issues covered in the 2022 Advocacy in Action (AIA) initiative, it was followed by the **Stop CoPay Overpay Act** (HR4824) and a push for a minimum of a 4.6% pay raise

If you have not already contacted your federal representative, please consider doing it now. Online you may use this link to take you to the Legislative Action Center <https://moaa.quorum.us/?0>

- **MOAA JROTC AWARDS.**

**Albany High School JROTC** held its end of year awards ceremony and change of command on June 9 at the Joseph E. Zaloga American Legion Post in Albany. Chapter member *Dave Erickson*, MAJ USA (Ret.), is the Senior Military Advisor of this dynamic and successful program that has grown and matured tremendously since 2016.

*Chapter President Al Memole and Council President Skip Bebernitz* attended the ceremony. They presented the MOAA JROTC award to Cadet **Christ Ta Eh**. MAJ Erickson noted that Cadet Eh "definitely leads from the front". He is captain of the all-male Raider Team, to whom the Brigadier General from cadet command presented a coin for having the top PT score at the Brigade Raider competition in May.



*Clockwise from top right: Al Memole with Cadet Christ Ta Eh; Skip Bebernitz looking very dapper; Albany High cadets with MAJ Dave Erickson (back row, at left)*

*(Continued on page 5)*

MOAA JROTC Awards, continued from page 4

The **Amsterdam High School Marine Corps JROTC** had to cancel its ceremony that was scheduled for June 8. The school arranged instead to hand out awards throughout the school day on June 13 at an informal picnic. In advance of the school picnic, on June 10, Chapter President Al Memole delivered the MOAA award for **Cadet Staff Sergeant Jefferey Kinder** to Senior Marine Instructor 1stSgt James Bautista. 1stSgt Bautista invited President Memole into the JROTC classroom briefly to meet some of the cadets before the start of their class. 1stSgt Bautista has been working diligently to reinvigorate the MCJROTC program at Amsterdam High which had lost momentum as a result of COVID restrictions. (There were no cadet officers left in the program.) He expressed his gratitude for our support with this award and invited our Chapter to visit their program anytime and speak to the cadets. [NOTE: Chapter President and JROTC Awards coordinator, Al Memole, will be in contact with 1stSgt Bautista to learn more about their needs and will announce the needs and opportunities in future newsletters.]

• **LOCAL EVENTS/ITEMS OF INTEREST**

- **Eighth Annual LTC Todd J Clark Golf Tournament** will be held on Saturday, September 10, 2022, at the Western Turnpike Golf Course in Guilderland. Registration will open at 7:30am with a Shotgun Start at 9:00 am. A Dinner and Awards Presentation/Raffle/Silent Auction will follow the Tournament at the Club House. The majority of the funds raised will support local Veterans, Veterans Organizations, and Veterans causes. REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS **AUGUST 10**. Register online at [www.ltctoddjclark.com/tournament](http://www.ltctoddjclark.com/tournament).
- **Naval Support Activity (NSA) Saratoga Springs MWR summer activities and events**

**NSA Saratoga Springs MWR Community Recreation Center (CRC) & Playground**  
 3569 Galway Rd, Ballston Spa, NY 12020  
 Phone: (518) 885.5138 x1; Email: [mwrsaratoga@gmail.com](mailto:mwrsaratoga@gmail.com)  
 Closed Sunday & Monday; Open Tuesday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Wednesday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- Join NSA Saratoga Springs MWR Sports for a **golf tournament at Airway Meadows Golf Course on Friday, August 19** from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost to participate is \$59 per person. We will be playing in teams of four. Light lunch will be provided. Registration is required. You can register online by or by coming in to the Community Recreation Center. The deadline to register is Friday, August 12.
- For the adventurous among you: **Whitewater rafting trips** are available along the Sacandaga River through September 5, and along the 17-mile Hudson River Gorge through October 9. To reserve your spot and for more information, please call 518-885-5138 (Ext. 1) or stop by the recreation center.



## BOOK REVIEW – Countdown Bin Laden; The untold story of the 247 day hunt to bring the mastermind of 9/11 to justice

**Authors:** Chris Wallace and Mitch Weiss; 322 Pages

**Reviewed by:** *Vincent Memole Jr., LTC, Infantry, USAR Retired*

An easy to read 322 page book that covers the events and actions from the first day CIA analysts asked to see the Director about a strange house at a dead-end street in Abbottabad, Pakistan, until the day the President personally shakes the hands of the men from SEAL Team 6 who were part of the mission.

Chris Wallace writes a fantastic book that gives the reader the feeling that he is sitting right there in the White House Situation Room when the the President is first told that maybe....just maybe the CIA has finally found Bin Laden. Wallace brings in all the key people from the CIA to Admiral McRaven's Command Sergeant Major in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, starting on day 247 and counting downward to the minute before the SEALs kill Bin Laden.

Wallace tells the reader how the CIA agents came to the conclusion that "The Pacer" is OBL. He tells us about the lives of the agents and their families, the key decision makers involved, and the SEALs themselves, as well as one very special member of SEAL Team 6. Wallace also brings the reader into the life of one spouse whose husband made the ultimate sacrifice on that terrible day in September.

In the end, Wallace wraps everything nice and neat telling the reader where the key people are in the weeks and months after the raid. A fast paced easy book to read that I could not put down. I highly recommend this book to anyone who can't get enough of anything related the 9/11, OBL, and the way that one day changed the entire world forever.

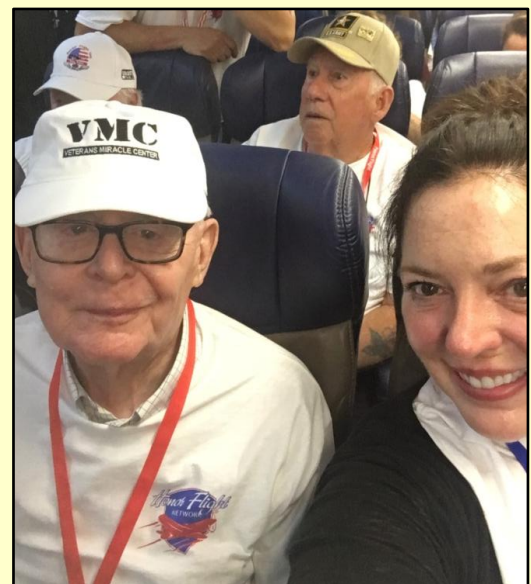
**Still haven't paid your 2022 Chapter membership dues?**  
Remember, you can pay by credit or debit card online through the MOAA website. Instructions for paying online are in our May-June 2021 issue, page 7, here: [Pay dues online](#)

## HAROLD BROCKMAN HONORED BY PATRIOT FLIGHT

Our esteemed Chapter member, **LCDR Harold J. Brockman, USNR Retired**, was honored by a Patriot Flight to our nation's capital on June 18<sup>th</sup>!

*Photo at right: Harold with daughter Amy on their way!*

**Patriot Flight Inc.** (<https://patriotflight.org/>) is the recognized Capital Region Chapter of the National Honor Flight Network. It is a 501(c) (3) all-volunteer not-for-profit organization that honors local veterans for all their sacrifices by flying them to Washington, DC to visit and reflect at their memorials for their service, sacrifices and memories. The one-day round-trip from Albany, NY to Washington D.C. and back is provided at no cost to the veteran. Top priority is given to Veterans "with too few tomorrows" – WW II Survivors



*(Continued on page 7)*



and Veterans from any war that have been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Subsequent priorities are given to Korean and then Vietnam War Veterans.

Harold was among 26 veterans honored to be part of the Flight. He ended up being the oldest person there and the only veteran with 25 years' service. The veterans gathered at 3 a.m. (yep, the wee hours of the morning) at Christian Brothers Academy (CBA) not far from the Albany International Airport. Before heading to the airport, they lined up to have a picture taken. At the airport, a group of what seemed like 200 to 300 people had assembled to cheer them on, shake hands, and see them off. On hand to give honor to the group were Congressman Tonko (20<sup>th</sup> Congressional District) and Albany County Executive Dan Mc Coy.

The Flight landed at Baltimore, where the group boarded a bus to Washington D.C. Most of their tour took place in the morning visiting the memorials at the Mall. They toured the Arlington National Cemetery in the afternoon. In the late afternoon they headed back to Baltimore, stopping for a bite to eat at a self-service eatery that didn't seem up to handling their group of 49 people. The "cold" dinner with few good options was one of only two disappointments of the day for Harold. The other was not having enough time to visit the gravesite of his cousin and spouse at Arlington. He greatly appreciated everything else. The Flight returned to Albany at 1:30 a.m., where the veterans were welcomed back – and each handed a framed photograph of the group that was taken just the previous morning!

Harold was greatly impressed by the huge amount of volunteer work needed to put the whole trip together and make it an unforgettable experience. (The couples who coordinated the trip paid their own air fare!) He was deeply moved and appreciative of this unique experience. And, while on the topic of unique experiences, Harold, a native of Nebraska, just turned 92 years old on August 7! That only happens once in a lifetime, if at all! *Happy Birthday Harold!*

*Clockwise from upper left: Nebraska state monument on the Mall; part of the Korean War memorial; the Air Force memorial on the hill behind the Pentagon; hosing down the tarmac in Baltimore; Welcome Flags in Albany; the honored veterans – Harold is 3<sup>rd</sup> from the right in the first row.*

