

# 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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## CHAPTER PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Chapter members! The July-August issue of the newsletter is the only one that does not precede a luncheon meeting. We won't meet again formally until *October 15*; the next issue will provide all of the details – time, place, and menu. Our guest speaker will be *Jack Kelly*, author of *The Battle of Valcour Island*, who was unable to make our meeting in February. Make sure to mark your calendar and plan to attend. Promoting camaraderie among serving, former, and retired officers is a major part of our Chapter mission, but to do that well, we need YOU! For the past two years, only a small percentage of our Chapter has been attending meetings regularly, yet we always have a great time. It would even better if more members would show up. If you aren't attending Sunday afternoon luncheons because they are inconvenient or "not your cup of tea", then please let us know what you would prefer. The Chapter is its membership. You have a direct stake and a say-so. Please give me call at **518-641-8664** with your suggestions and ideas. Thank you for your continued support.

*Al Memole*

## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

### 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."*

#### **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

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.

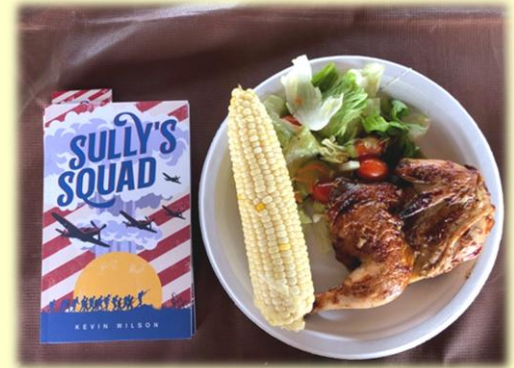
### Chapter News and other local items of interest

- **CHAPTER MEMBER DUES (yet another reminder)**

*So far this year only 16 members have paid the annual Chapter dues (\$30)! Dues payments are the primary source of funding for our Chapter. The monies enable us to cover operating expenses, such as website hosting, Post Office Box fees, meals for guest speakers, ROTC/JROTC and USMAPS awards, Council dues, etc. After meeting Chapter obligations, we donate from our treasury account to local military/veteran support and military history organizations, as part of our Chapter mission, retaining enough funds to meet unexpected emergency needs. **So, if you haven't paid dues for this year**, you can mail a check, payable to NYS CDC MOAA, to CDC MOAA, PO Box 373, Waterford, NY 12188-0373, or pay by credit or debit card online through the MOAA website. You can find instructions for paying online in our May-June 2021 newsletter on page 7.*

• **OUR LAST LUNCHEON – JUNE 11 at THE VETERANS OF LANSINGBURGH, Troy**

Well, we tried a couple of things that we've never done, or at least not in a long, long time: We held our luncheon meeting in an open air pavilion on the banks of the Hudson River, with an informal dress code. **It was a huge hit with those who attended.** We were blessed with a beautiful, not too warm, sunny day. Food provided by the VoL was excellent – thanks to our cooks Loretta, husband Joe (Go Navy!), and daughters. The menu featured burgers, hot dogs, AND a half chicken, along with corn on the cob, potatoes, salad, watermelon, and coffee & cookies for dessert. It was all delicious, but WAY more than we could eat. We ended up bringing a lot of food home in containers. The consensus was that we should use this venue again for a future luncheon or luncheons.



We were pleased to welcome guest speaker, **KEVIN WILSON**, a local author who wrote **Sully's Squad**, a “coming-of-age” historical novel about a Saratoga youth, Arty, who enlists in the Army in WWII and ends up in Operation HUSKY, the invasion of Sicily. Arty is assigned to Sully's squad. Sully is NOT a fictional character. He was Kevin's uncle, Salvatore “Sullivan” Fringi, who was killed in the war. Kevin recalled being fascinated by a photo of his uncle in uniform, and, learning of his fate, wanted to honor his memory. Kevin is a professional Certified Public Accountant who loves to tell stories and loves history. He took up the “hobby” of writing after a chance encounter with an author on a plane trip. He wanted to write an action novel aimed at older adolescents (and young adults) in order to offer them an alternative to being glued to electronic devices and leisure [in]activities removed from the real world, the human condition, and real history. His book has already been acquired by a number of school libraries in the Capital District and beyond. Kevin brought several copies of his book for sale, for a very reasonable price of \$10, and signed copies for those of us who bought them.

*Pictured above right: the main features of our luncheon (taken by Al Memole); below left: author Kevin Wilson describes his book and his journey as a writer, in the background - the Hudson River and Peebles Island; below right: Chapter President Al Memole with Kevin Wilson (both photos taken by Ed Balaban)*



**SEPTEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>** is the deadline for submitting **news articles, photos, bio's, stories, or reviews of books, movies, food, or wine** for the *next* issue! Please e-mail your input to newsletter editor Al Memole at [ammemole@gmail.com](mailto:ammemole@gmail.com).

- **CHAPTER MEETINGS REMAINING FOR 2023**

**AUGUST 12<sup>th</sup>** – Board of Directors Meeting at Ed & Jennifer Scheiber’s house on Lake George

**OCTOBER – 15<sup>th</sup> LUNCHEON MEETING** – *Guest Speaker: [Jack Kelly](#), author of "The Battle of Valcour Island" (rescheduled from February)*

**NOVEMBER – 4<sup>th</sup>** Board of Directors Meeting

**DECEMBER – 10<sup>th</sup> XMAS/HOLIDAY PARTY & ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

- **MOAA & A MOVIE, TAKE 3 - OPPENHEIMER**

Sunday, July 27, was the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the truce that ended combat in the Korean War. Four Chapter members (*Skip Bebernitz, Tony Ficara, Al Memole, and Pat Piccirilli*) met to remember that significant date and attend the premiere of the new movie, “Oppenheimer” at Regal Cinemas, Colonie Center. (Tony wanted to see the “Barbie” movie because someone told him that “Oppenheimer” was a “bomb”, but the other three convinced him that he probably heard that incorrectly.) As Skip put it, “Oppenheimer” is a drama, not a documentary, but it presented a raw and highly accurate portrayal of the complex and conflicted protagonist, Robert Oppenheimer, lead scientist of the Manhattan Project.

The acting was excellent, overall, but the story line was a little bit hard to follow because it occasionally jumped back and forth in time. The directing and cinematography was generally good, although the purpose of scenes switching from color to black & white was not readily apparent. Also the portrayal of Oppenheimer’s perceptions during real interactions made for some strange scenes, which was probably the intent. Special effects were pretty good – there were a lot of LOUD explosions, as one might expect in such a movie. It succeeded as a drama. Although the movie ran for three hours without an intermission, it moved along so well that it didn’t seem like three hours. What did seem like three hours or longer were the 20+ minutes of annoying (and some funny) commercials and movie previews before the show. Thankfully, the popcorn was really good! Anyone interested in seeing “Barbie”?

- **LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

*(Submitted by Pat Piccirilli, Legislative Affairs Committee)*

It’s that time of the year again and that is the posturing time for the NDAA (National Defense Authorization Act). While this act is generally comprehensive it is also the tool for passing bills and actions that did not meet muster in the House or Senate. Per the latest MOAA Newsletter there are two clear victories for MOAA and its members within the FY 2024 (NDAA) and those victories are *not* in either the House or Senate version of the bill. First, the NDAA drafts include no TRICARE For Life enrollment fees or deductibles, a key priority for MOAA’s advocacy efforts. And, second, the legislation includes no mention of planned staffing cuts at military treatment facilities (MTFs), as last year’s NDAA included MOAA-backed language shelving such moves for at least five years. At this time here are a number of advocacy items being sought:

- restoring the pharmacy network system under Tricare which was a key point doing this year’s “Advocacy in Action” (AIA) campaign;
- provide a no-premium TRICARE dental plan to National Guard and Reserve service members – a bipartisan, MOAA-backed proposal which would help ensure the readiness of the reserve component;

*Continued on next page*

- The **Star Act** cleared the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) on June 21, but was not included in that chamber’s NDAA legislation. While the bill could proceed to the House floor for a standalone vote, budgetary rules remain a problem. The emphasis is now in the Senate to include the bill in the NDAA. The bill is currently in the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) for review.
- Restore **BAH**. Service members and their families living on-base have their BAH cover 100% of the rent and utility costs. However, those off base only have BAH cover 95% of rent and the utilities. We need to end this cost-cutting measure for our troops. Our nation expects 100% from our service members, so please help us ensure they get 100% of their housing allowance by supporting BAH restoration.
- Support the All-Volunteer Force (**AVF**). This year is the 50th anniversary of the all-volunteer force (AVF) and it should be a celebration, not a recruiting crisis. Since the end of the military draft in 1973, the AVF has protected our nation at home and abroad. But now, DoD finds itself in a war for talent: The active component faces an environment where personnel shortages result in increased workloads and reduced quality of life amidst a recruiting crisis, while the National Guard works to rebound from the stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic and its largest mobilization since World War II.

How to contact your legislator:

- Use the MOAA Legislative Center (<https://moaa.quorum.us/>) which lists the issues and guides you through the process by becoming a member of the advocacy network.
- Call or write your Congressional representatives including our two Senators. If you need to know who your representative is just type in your address using this website: <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>

*Happy News! AWARDS & PROMOTIONS!*

- **US MILITARY ACADEMY PREP SCHOOL (USMAPS) AWARD**  
(Information provided by MOAA members Stan Warwick and Skip Bebernitz)



LTC (R) Stan Warwick and CC José A. Gonzalez  
(Photo by USMAPS Staff)

On May 12, the United States Military Academy Preparatory School (USMAPS) presented achievement awards to several graduating Cadet Candidates (CC) at Ike Hall, West Point. MOAA Chapters from NYS, *including ours*, sponsored many of the awards, funding purchase of the engraved award plaques. We sponsored the Robert O. Barnum award, named for the Mathematics Department Director at USMAPS from 1955 to 1969. It is awarded to the graduating CC who ranks first in Mathematics. CC José A. Gonzalez received this year’s Barnum award. **Stan Warrick, LTC USA (Ret.)**, West Point Class of 1977, and MOAA Life Member from the **Mid-Hudson Chapter**, presented this award to CC Gonzalez, and other MOAA-sponsored awards to other graduates.

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USMAPS staff and faculty select the award recipients a couple of days before the award ceremony. Students are unaware they are getting an award until the ceremony, which takes place on the evening before they graduate. They graduate the following morning and are off on vacation by noon. They come back to West Point on Reception Day (R-Day) in late June, when they are considered to be New Cadets, along with students admitted directly from high school. On or about August 7th they complete cadet basic training (Beast Barracks) and swear in officially to the Corps of Cadets. Only about 20% of the CC's have prior military service. The rest are either athletes recruited for the NCAA Division 1 teams who do not currently meet USMA entry standards or scholars who do not meet USMA fitness standards. CC's attend USMAPS for one year of junior college level courses, an intense fitness regimen, and a military academy lifestyle orientation. If they fulfill all requirements for graduation, they are guaranteed admission to the next Plebe class at the Academy.

• **MOAA AWARDS PRESENTED TO LOCAL JROTC CADETS**

*(Submitted by Al Memole, ROTC/JROTC Awards Committee)*

Since the last newsletter, I attended three more award ceremonies at local high schools, in my dual role as ROTC/JROTC Awards Committee Chair and Chapter President, to present the MOAA medal and certificate to deserving HS JROTC cadets completing their junior year.

○ **May 31, La Salle Institute, Troy, NY (Army JROTC, led by ISG Paul Peters USA Ret.)**

This year's award recipient is Cadet Lieutenant Colonel **CHRISTOPHER CHENETTE**. Chris is a quarterback on the La Salle football team and an athlete on their track & field team, who competes in shot put, discus, and 200 meters. His favorite academic subject is History, and he is thinking about applying to the University of North Carolina.

Here's a funny coincidence. My wife Mary's maiden name is Chenette, but she did not recall any relatives who had a son named Christopher. It turns out that Christopher is my wife's cousin twice removed: Christopher's late paternal grandfather was Mary's first cousin; his dad, Jim, Mary's cousin once removed. *(Disclaimer: I did not influence ISG Peters to nominate Chris.)*



*Left: Chris Chenette receives the MOAA JROTC award; Center: Chris and two fellow cadets after promotion to the rank of cadet LTC; Right: Al Memole with his "in-laws" – Chris and his proud parents.*

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- **June 1, Amsterdam High School, Amsterdam, NY (Marine Corps JROTC (led by 1stSgt James Bautista, Senior Marine Instructor)**

This year's award recipient is Cadet 2<sup>nd</sup> LT. **PARKER McHEARD**. Parker's best academic subject is English, but History is his favorite. He has not decided yet what college he would like to attend, but his older brother is currently at the University of Connecticut pursuing a degree in Exercise Physiology. Parker's dad is a Pastor at a local Dutch Reformed Church; his mother is a teacher at Amsterdam HS! One can understand what (and who) motivates this young cadet to excel.



- **June 9, Albany High School, Albany, NY (Army JROTC, Sgt Henry Johnson Battalion led by our own MAJ Dave Erickson, USA Ret., Senior Army Instructor)**

This year's award recipient is Cadet **EH SHAR BLU SAY**. Cadet Say also loves History. However, her main interest is in the field of health and medicine. Although she has not made any decisions about college, she is looking into Dental Hygiene programs.



*Top: Parker McHeard with his brother and parents; Center: Amsterdam HS MC JROTC cadets waiting for the ceremony to begin; Bottom: Albany HS cadets of the Sgt Henry Johnson Battalion; Left: Cadet Eh Shar Blu Say receives the MOAA JROTC award from Chapter President Al Memole*

- **MILITARY PROMOTIONS**

- TO COLONEL: Chapter member, **SEAN PICCIRILLI**, USAF, son of Chapter member *Pat Piccirilli*, our Treasurer, promoted on July 7 at the National War College, Fort McNair, Washington D.C.
- TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL: **MARC BALABAN**, USAF, son of Chapter member *Ed Balaban*, CDR NYNM Ret., promoted on June 30 at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland.



*CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Attention to Orders! Lt Col (P) Sean Piccirilli is promoted to Colonel; COL Sean Piccirilli takes the Oath; Alix and sons pin the eagles on Sean; proud papa Pat applies the finishing touch, replacing the epaulettes; newly promoted Lt Col Marc Balaban and his dad, Ed, looking just as sharp and bursting with pride!*

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](#)



- **MOAA NORTH-EAST REGION CHAPTER LEADERS WORKSHOP, JUN 2-3**



Four Chapter members and two spouses attended the two-day workshop in Providence, RI: *Skip and Mary Lou Bebernitz, Pat Piccirilli, Kathy Gates, and Al and Mary Memole*. Skip and Pat were representing the NYS Council of Chapters as Council President and Legislative Liaison, respectively. Al and Kathy represented our Chapter in their roles as President and Legislative Liaison Committee rep. The workshop included a panel discussion with MOAA Senior Leaders, including CAPT Erin Stone, Senior Director of Council & Chapter Affairs, and CAPT Jim Carman, VP for Council/Chapter and Member Support, among others. Three break-out sessions covered Chapter Management, Legislative Training, and Surviving Spouse Liaison Training (attended by Mary Lou and Mary). Participants received excellent guidance and instruction regarding MOAA Council and Chapter roles and duties, which will help us to improve our organizations' operations.

- **NYS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS ANNUAL CONVENTION at THE TIOGA DOWNS CASINO RESORT, Nichols, NY, SEP 17-21**

A reminder for those of you who sent in your registration packets and down payment: FINAL PAYMENT IS DUE NLT 26 AUGUST 2023!

- **NY YANKEES MILITARY APPRECIATION GAMES**

From Josh Katz, Sales Associate for the NY Yankees (*emailed to Skip Bebernitz*): “The New York Yankees are offering 5 games in conjunction with Military Appreciation Games where we will be showing our appreciation to the dedicated men and women of New York and nationwide who serve and served in our Military!! We will be offering discounted tickets to all who have served in our military along with their friends and families; each ticket also comes with a hot dog, soft drink/beer as well as a customized Yankees camouflage t-shirt.”

Military Appreciation Games will be played on the following dates:

9/5 – NYY vs. DET

9/6 – NYY vs. DET

9/7 – NYY vs. DET

9/8 – NYY vs. MIL

9/10 – NYY vs. MIL



\$85, \$70 – Field Level seats; \$55 – Second Level seats; \$45 – Third or Fourth Level seats

Using the link below, once one of the five games is selected, you will be able to see which seating sections are offered at each price; you will also be able to see what the view of the section will look like by clicking “SEATMAP” under each ticket option. Each buyer will be able to use this link to purchase tickets and confirm their own individual orders:

<https://offer.fevo.com/yankees-mgo-build-military-appreciation-games-group--4b821e2?re>

- **SARATOGA SPRINGS MORALE, WELFARE, & RECREATION EVENTS**

The MWR has a variety of activities scheduled between now and the end of September, so go to our Chapter website - [Military Activities](#) - and link to the MWR newsletter for details!

- **WEST POINT BAND SUMMER CONCERTS**

The Band has three more summer concerts remaining, so go to our Chapter website - [Military Activities](#) - and link to the West Point Band page *to get all the details*. The scheduled events are:

- Saturday, **August 19**: ENCORE! | WEST POINT, 7:00 p.m. Frederic V. Malek West Point Visitors Center, West Point, NY
- Friday, **August 25**, ENCORE! | Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, 6:30 pm.
- Sunday, **September 3**, LABOR DAY CELEBRATION | WEST POINT, 7:30 p.m. The Plain, West Point, NY

- **RETIREE APPRECIATION DAY (RAD) at FT. DRUM – SEP 23**

Army retirees may have already seen a mailed notice about the RAD. Registration runs from 0800-0900 at Clark Hall on post, followed by an Opening Ceremony and ribbon cutting for the new Retirement Services Center. Program updates run from 1000-1200 in Clark Hall. Activities include on the VA, Tricare, and DFAS info, ID Cards, legal documents (POA, wills, etc.), SBP updates, and a Wellness Fair at the Main Exchange.

- **LTC TODD J. CLARK MEMORIAL ANNUAL BENEFIT GOLF TOURNAMENT**

A benefit tournament in memory of LTC Clark (*son of Chapter member Col Jack Clark*) who was killed on June 8, 2013, will be held on **September 9** at the Western Turnpike Golf Course, 2350 Western Avenue, Guilderland, NY. **RSVP and payment are due AUGUST 18**. See info below.

**SATURDAY  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2023**  
7:30am Registration Opens  
9:00am Shotgun Start

**ONLINE REGISTRATION**  
[www.ltctoddjclark.com](http://www.ltctoddjclark.com)



**EVENT INCLUDES**  
18 Hole Round of Golf  
Golf Cart  
Practice Range 8:00am - 9:00am  
  
Lunch at the Turn  
11:00am - 1:00pm  
  
Dinner at The Hedge Bistro  
at Western Turnpike  
Happy Hour 2:30pm  
Banquet and Awards 3:30pm  
Raffle/Silent Auction



**TOURNAMENT FEES**  
Golfer \$150  
Guest Happy Hour/Dinner \$50

**Questions & Registration Assistance:**  
[golf@ltctoddjclark.com](mailto:golf@ltctoddjclark.com)

COL Jack Clark, U.S. Army, Retired President 518-669-9920	Pat O'Brien Vice President 518-423-4771
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**REGISTRATION**

RSVP with payment by  
August 18, 2023

**Please register online at**  
[www.ltctoddjclark.com/tournament](http://www.ltctoddjclark.com/tournament)



Registration fees can be paid  
online via credit or debit card.

If you prefer to pay by check or  
cash, please register online and  
use discount code **PAYLATER** at  
checkout.

Event will sell out quickly,  
so reserve your space early!

**DONATE**

Please consider donating a raffle  
item or making a monetary  
contribution on our website:  
[www.ltctoddjclark.com/donate](http://www.ltctoddjclark.com/donate)

**CHAPTER OFFICERS**

CHAPTER OFFICE	INCUMBENT	E-MAIL
President	Alfred M. Memole, LTC USA, RET	pres@cdnymoaa.org
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Treasurer	Patrick J. Piccirilli, LTC USAR RET	treas@cdnymoaa.org

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\* Immediate Past-President \*\* Former President