

# 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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4-Star Chapter – 2022

5-Star Chapter: 2021, 2020, 2018 & 2017

## VOLUME 14, ISSUE 5, SEP-OCT 2023 // THIS ISSUE CONTAINS:

- CHAPTER HAPPENINGS:
  - NEXT LUNCHEON MEETING: OCT 15 at BELLINI'S Italian Eatery in LATHAM, p. 2
  - CHAPTER MEETINGS REMAINING FOR 2023, p.3
  - HIGHLIGHTED CHARITY – WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA™, p. 3
  - CHAPTER NEWS & OTHER LOCAL ITEMS OF INTEREST:
    - Legislative Affairs Committee Report, pp. 3-5
    - Various upcoming events & activities, pp. 5-6
    - Run to Remember 5K flyer, p.7
    - Wreaths Across America™ Order Form (printable), p. 8
    - Instructions for ordering wreaths online, pp. 9-10
    - Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery Map & Info, pp. 11-12
    - New USS Albany Memorial Park information, pp. 13-14
- NYS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS 2023 CONVENTION: SEP 17-20, 2023, pp.15-17
- CHAPTER LEADERS; JUN 11 LUNCHEON INFORMATION & RESERVATION FORM, p.18



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## CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

### OUR NEXT CHAPTER LUNCHEON MEETING IS OCTOBER 15, at BELLINI'S Italian Eatery



**624 New Loudon Rd, Latham, NY**

*(That's Route 9, about halfway between SR 155 and Siena College)*

We've been trying to find a new venue that is centrally located in our area, suitable for meetings and guest speakers, does not require a minimum number of guests that is too high, has decent food, and is affordable. It's been tough finding a place that meets all of our criteria, but Bellini's comes pretty close, so we thought we'd give it a try.

**DRESS CODE: Casual** (our new standard for all meetings *except* our annual business meeting and Christmas party) – Collared shirt & slacks for the guys; for the gals, the equivalent (you know best); *no t-shirts, shorts or jeans, please.*

#### **PROGRAM:**

***1300 hrs:*** Check-in; Buy your 50/50 tickets; **Choose your entree**; Mix & mingle

***1330 hrs:*** Welcome; Pledge of Allegiance; Prayer for Service Members

***1345 hrs:*** Lunch served; Guest Speaker's presentation

***1530 hrs:*** Announcements; 50/50 drawing; Benediction and Farewell



**FARE:** A lunch that features:

**Italian Bread & Salads served family-style:** *Your choice of DI CASA (greens, tomatoes, dried berries, shaved Reggiano, balsamic vinaigrette) or CAESAR (Crisp romaine leaves tossed with homemade Caesar dressing, shaved Parmigiano)*

**Entree:** *Choose one of four options - CHICKEN PARMIGIANO (Pan-fried cutlet, Bellini's marinara cream sauce, rigatoni); MARSALA (Chicken medallions, wild mushrooms, sweet marsala sauce, risotto); LINGUINE (meatless - linguine pasta, roasted broccoli, alfredo sauce); BOLOGNESE (meat sauce, Stanislaus tomatoes, pappardelle, shaved parmigiano)*

**Dessert:** *Homemade mini cannoli [and leave the weapon]*

**Drinks:** *Water, coffee, tea, soft drinks come with the meal; Cash bar available for adult beverages*

**GUEST SPEAKER:** **ROY McDONALD**, Friends of the New York State Military Museum, Saratoga.

**COST & RESERVATIONS:** Increased prices for restaurant meals have finally caused us to raise the price we charge you to **\$37 per person**. Please call or email **CHRIS COSTIGAN** by **Friday, OCTOBER 6<sup>th</sup>**, to confirm your attendance, because we owe the restaurant a final count of guests one week in advance. If you prefer, you may mail the luncheon reservation form found at the [very end](#) of this newsletter along with your payment (check) to Chris but he **must** receive it by the due date above.

**NOVEMBER 15<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

**OCTOBER – 15<sup>th</sup> LUNCHEON MEETING – Guest Speaker: Roy McDonald, Friends of the NYS Military Museum**

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

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

## HIGHLIGHTED CHARITY for this issue → WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA™

Wreaths Across America™ (WAA) is a 501(c)(3) corporation whose mission is to **Remember, Honor, and Teach** Americans of all ages about the sacrifices made by those who served in the Armed Forces of our nation. Our Chapter supports this worthy cause in two ways:

1. **SPONSOR WREATHS. Please ask your families, friends, local organizations and businesses to sponsor wreaths through our Chapter.** The cost to sponsor a single wreath is now **\$17**. Donors may sponsor one or more wreaths by mailing a check along with the form on pg.8 of this newsletter to WAA at their Maine address, *or, through the WAA website at <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>* following the instructions on pages 9 & 10 of this newsletter,. Our Chapter's WAA group code is **NY0087P**. Wreaths sponsored through us are designated for placement at the *Gerald B. H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery*, located at 200 Duell Rd, Schuylerville, NY. For each wreath sponsored through our Chapter, WAA returns \$5 to us. *We turn this revenue back to the community by donating to other worthy local charities benefitting the community, local veterans, and historical and military-related organizations.*
  - A total of **7,132** wreaths have been sponsored as of September 22, representing **47.2%** of the total number needed. **7,968** more wreaths are needed before December's wreath laying event.
2. **LAY WREATHS ON VETERANS' GRAVES.** There are 15,100 veteran graves at the Saratoga National Cemetery. *Volunteers* from our local community lay all these wreaths, pausing after placing each wreath to salute and remember the veteran, saying his or her name. *We encourage all of you to attend the ceremony and help place wreaths if you are able.* This year's wreath laying event at Saratoga will be held on **Saturday, December 16. Wreath placement begins at 10:30 AM**, followed by a solemn memorial ceremony honoring the fallen and deceased veterans of each military service at the flagpole **at 12:00 noon**. This is a very moving experience.

## Chapter News and other local items of interest

- **LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

*(Submitted by Pat Piccirilli, Legislative Affairs Committee, Sep 13, 2023)*

In theory, everyone knows what the 2024 defense budget will be. The debt ceiling deal signed into law in May set a cap on total defense spending of \$886 billion. However, as Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 winds down, the Senate and House defense authorization committees have each passed their versions of the FY 2024 NDAA. In the coming months, leaders from the Senate and House of Representatives will meet in conference to reconcile the two chambers' versions of the NDAA to produce a compromise bill (the current two separate NDAA versions are H.R. 2670 and S.2226. MOAA will continue to engage with Congress, the executive branch, and other

*Continued on next page*

important stakeholders as the FY 2024 NDAA makes its way through the legislative process to ensure the issues most important to the uniformed services community remains at the forefront of this year's bill. **You can help by lending your voice to our cause by signing up at the MOAA Legislative Action Center.** Here's what you should know about the contents of the House version ([H.R. 2670](#)), which passed on July 14, and the Senate version, ([S. 2226](#)), which passed July 27.

### Topline Authorization

The Senate FY24 NDAA calls for \$886 billion in accordance with a debt ceiling deal, while the house version calls for \$875 billion. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and in both chambers painfully acknowledge DoD has not passed an audit and are committed to ensuring an audit is completed for improved oversight of spending taxpayers' dollars. A tough negotiation is expected in the conference given the lower topline number in the House NDAA.

### Pay, Benefits, and Quality of Life

- **5.2% Pay Raise.** While you won't find it in the legislative text of either the House or Senate version, Congress supported the pay raise by keeping it tied to the Employment Cost Index – a [key MOAA priority](#). The defense appropriations bill may seek to address [pay table reform](#).
- **Needs Allowance (BNA).** MOAA prefers the House language, which removes the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) from BNA eligibility calculations to ensure families struggling with food insecurity have access to this needed benefit. The Senate bill extends the authority of service secretaries to determine high-cost areas or “a demonstrated need” in the implementation of the BNA.
- **CONUS COLA.** The Senate included a provision to increase access to the CONUS cost-of-living allowance (COLA) for servicemembers stationed in high-cost areas. Currently, the rate is paid when a servicemember or their family is in an area where non-housing expenses are 8% over the national average. The Senate language would reduce it to 5%.
- **Family Separation Allowance.** The House bill contains a provision increasing Family Separation Allowance II (FSA-II) from \$250 per month to \$400 per month. FSA-II was raised to \$250 in 2004 and hasn't been adjusted since. This payment provides a vital source of income to help families offset additional costs when their servicemember is away.
- **Housing.** The House version would authorize \$200 million more than requested by the administration to improve housing and barracks. Both chambers included the establishment of a Military Housing Readiness Council to provide enhanced oversight and more consistent engagement with stakeholders.
- **Child Care.** DoD, like the nation, is experiencing a significant shortage of child care providers. In an effort to address the shortage, the House NDAA includes a standardized program to provide discounted child care for DoD child care employees, starting with no fee for the first child and no more than 50% for the second child. Both NDAA versions address the need to focus on recruitment and retention of employees for child development programs. The House version also requires DoD to conduct a recurring review and revision of pay for child care staff.
- **Spouse Employment.** The House version expands the military spouse licensing and business costs reimbursement program to include more transitioning spouses. It also provides a modest amount of student loan deferment for dislocated military spouses. Both the Senate and House bills contain provisions that would provide military spouses with assistance in obtaining doula certifications.

*Continued on next page*

### Military Health Care

- **Pharmacy Network Cuts.** Both the House and Senate responded to MOAA's call for a report on how TRICARE pharmacy network cuts have impacted beneficiary access to prescription drugs. The Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) included directive report language for a Government Accountability Office (GAO) evaluation on beneficiary access in their committee report. The House bill includes a provision for DoD reporting on access changes resulting from the narrowed network.
- **Military Health System Reform Oversight.** The SASC report includes a directive for a GAO assessment of military medical staffing at military treatment facilities (MTFs) to address reported challenges with competing priorities between the services and the Defense Health Agency (DHA). The SASC also requires a DoD brief on military personnel staffing of MTFs and the management structure for DHA's authority, direction, and control of those facilities.

### Arlington National Cemetery

A provision in the House version of the NDAA signals lawmakers' intent to [protect burial with military honors](#) and prevent a reduction in service-earned benefits. The House version contains language from the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act ([H.R. 1413](#)) requiring a joint report from DoD and the VA with "a proposal to increase national cemetery capacity through the expansion or modification of a national cemetery that has, or will have, the capacity to provide full military honors."

### Basic Allowance for Housing

As reported in the September issue of **Military Officer** the Senate reintroduced its version of the BAH Restoration Act (S.1823) matching the House's version (H.R. 2537) introduced in April. Both bills will require Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) to mirror 100% of the cost of rent and utilities.

### Major Richard Star Act

Additionally, neither the House nor the Senate version of the FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) includes language from the Major Richard Star Act, a bipartisan bill supported by nearly 400 lawmakers to support combat-injured veterans.

### 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>
- **5K RUN TO BENEFIT GOLD STAR FAMILIES AT RPI in Troy – 30 September**  
**Air Force ROTC Detachment 550**, at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is putting on a 5K run, "Remember 5k" to be held 30 Sep from 0700 to 1100 hours at the East Campus Athletic Village (ECAV) in Troy. Registration fee is \$15 and 60% of the proceeds will be donated to America's Gold Star Families. *All skill levels are welcome* and parking is plentiful. See **page 7** for copy of the flyer that has contact information for registration.

- **LEATHERSTOCKING HONOR FLIGHT – 14 October**

Liz Reinhart, Veterans Coordinator for the Leatherstocking Honor Flight (LHF), is looking for any veteran interested in participating in the next flight on **Oct 14**. It is a 1-day flight – no overnight stay: **Oct 14 Albany to Baltimore #WN3277, departs Albany at 11:10 am; returns to Albany on #WN1441 arriving at 10:10 pm.** You may sign up through your local *Veteran Service Officer*. The Honor Flight is coordinated by the LHF Veterans Initiative, Inc., 665 Latimer Hill Rd., Canajoharie, NY 13317, tel: (518) 339-2464.

- **24th ANNUAL VETERANS BREAKFAST, SUNDAY, 5 NOV, 2023**

The Veterans Breakfast will be served at **Melvin Roads American Legion Post #1231, 200 Columbia Tpk., Rensselaer** [actually, East Greenbush but in the Rensselaer ZIP code], **8:00 am–10:00 am**. The breakfast, sponsored by the Rensselaer County Executive Steven F. McLaughlin and the Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency, is **FREE** to all Veterans and immediate family members!

- **CORNELL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR VETERANS WHO FARM OR LOOKING TO START A FARM**

Cornell has scholarships for Veterans looking to start a farm or are already farming. Please pass this news along with the links below to any veteran you know who might be interested. Links to web pages with details:

<https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/projects/farm-ops/veteran-scholarships/>

<https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/2023/08/farm-ops-offering-nys-veteran-cohort-for-tree-fruit-production-online-course/>

<https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/2023/08/farm-ops-offering-nys-veteran-cohort-for-starting-at-square-one-online-course/>

- **YOUR OPPORTUNITY FOR FAME – if you know something about military food!**

Chapter member and recently promoted **Colonel Sean Piccirilli, USAF**, is writing a book and is looking to interview veterans for source material. Sean writes that he is ...

... conducting research to write a US military history through the lens of food. The working title is “Chow is Morale: Bread and Bonding From Bunker Hill to Baghdad.” The narrative will touch on a number of topics related to food (cultivation, preservation, transportation, etc.), but *the primary focus is on individual stories of servicemembers and how their health, morale, and social cohesion were impacted by food or the lack thereof.* [Emphasis added] I plan to organize the book with chapters on each of our major conflicts, plus a chapter on the Indian Wars of the 19th Century and a chapter on Cold War garrison duty in Europe and Asia. I'm wholly dependent upon written source material for our earliest wars but would love to include oral histories for our more recent conflicts. If any members of the chapter are interested in participating in an interview for possible inclusion in the book, please have them contact me at [sean.p.piccirilli@gmail.com](mailto:sean.p.piccirilli@gmail.com).

We have Chapter members who served during the Korean and Viet Nam wars, the Cold War in various locations, and recent conflicts including Iraq and Afghanistan. So, if you have had experiences regarding the impact of meals/food/nutrition, preparing or consuming, please contact Sean to tell your story. [Editor's Note: *The subtle irony about the opportunity for fame, is that the word “fame” means “hunger” in Italian (pronounced FAH-may).*]

# Run TO REMEMBER 5K



30  
SEP

ECAV

7AM  
~  
11AM



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please email [cara.nalbandian@optimum.net](mailto:cara.nalbandian@optimum.net)



## WREATHS *across* AMERICA

### 2023 Wreath Sponsorship Order Form



Sponsored wreaths are placed on grave markers at state and national veterans' cemeteries, as well as at local and community cemeteries each December for National Wreaths Across America Day. **Your donation will ensure the placement of a veteran's wreath for one or more veterans laid to rest at the participating location of your choice.**

*All sponsored veteran wreaths are shipped directly to the location selected by the sponsor on this form. Wreaths are not shipped to individual wreath sponsors.*

For quicker processing and the convenience of paying with a credit card, debit card, Google Pay, or PayPal, veteran wreaths may be sponsored online by scanning the QR Code above or by visiting:  
<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/18601/Overview/?relatedId=0>

*You should be the only one to enter your credit card information at checkout on the Wreaths Across America website. For your security, do not share this information with anyone else who offers to place an order for you. To verify the validity of the QR Code, always check that wreathscrossamerica.org is part of the web address when sponsoring wreaths online.*

If you prefer to pay with a check, please complete this form and mail it along with your check to Wreaths Across America at the address listed in the box above.

SPONSORSHIP TYPE	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Individual = 1 Wreath	\$17.00		
Family = 4 Wreaths	\$68.00		
Small Business = 10 Wreaths	\$170.00		
Corporate = 100 Wreaths	\$1,700.00		

Please make checks payable to:  
**Wreaths Across America**  
 PO Box 249  
 Columbia Falls, ME 04623

Call 877-385-9504 with any questions.  
*Thank you for your sponsorship and for joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor, and Teach!*

CHECK #	CHECK DATE	SPONSOR NAME FOR DISPLAY <i>if different than name on check.</i>
GROUP ID(s)	NY0087P	EMAIL ADDRESS
LOCATION ID(s)	NYGSNS	PHONE #
DOLLAR AMOUNTS(s)		MAILING ADDRESS

*To split your donation between multiple groups and/or locations, please list the IDs and dollar amounts for each.*

#### SPECIAL REQUESTS

*Please note in memory/honor of requests do not place a wreath on a specific loved one's grave.*


**Thank you for supporting our mission to REMEMBER, HONOR, and TEACH!**

IN MEMORY OF REQUEST	The "In Memory Of" Name will be listed on the Wreaths Across America online Remember Wall, along with your personal message.	IN HONOR OF REQUEST	An email will be sent to your chosen recipient from Wreaths Across America letting them know of your donation of sponsored veteran wreaths in their honor.
NAME FOR MEMORY WALL POST		RECIPIENT NAME	
SPONSOR EMAIL ADDRESS		RECIPIENT EMAIL ADDRESS	
MESSAGE (optional)		MESSAGE (optional)	



# Wreaths Across America™ - Guidance for Sponsoring Wreaths Online

**1**



REMEMBER, HONOR, TEACH

Remember our fallen U.S. Veterans. Honor those who serve. Teach our children the value of freedom. It's the mission of Wreaths Across America. You can join us by sponsoring a wreath, volunteering or partnering with us on National Wreaths Across America Day and every day.

SPONSOR WREATHS

Or sponsor a Specific Cemetery or Local Sponsorship Group

On the home page, under the red “SPONSOR WREATHS” button, find and click on the tiny heading labeled “or Local Fundraising Group”. That opens a box titled “Wreath Sponsorship; Choose Your Local Sponsorship Group”



**2**

## WREATH SPONSORSHIP

### CHOOSE YOUR LOCAL SPONSORSHIP GROUP

Did you know that Wreaths Across America now offers recurring sponsorships? You can select the amount and frequency of your sponsorship anytime! Register now by completing this [form!](https://tinyurl.com/n735zrbt) (<https://tinyurl.com/n735zrbt>)

*What does it mean to sponsor a wreath?* It means you are supporting a yearlong mission to Remember our Veterans.

**Number of Wreaths to Sponsor**

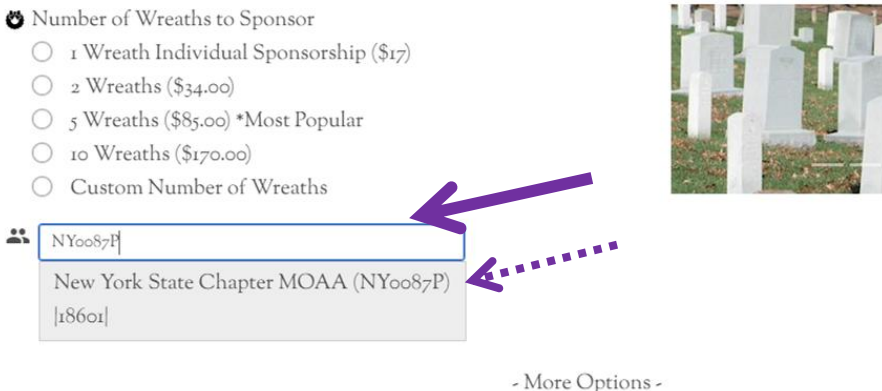
- 1 Wreath Individual Sponsorship (\$17)
- 2 Wreaths (\$34.00)
- 5 Wreaths (\$85.00) \*Most Popular
- 10 Wreaths (\$170.00)
- Custom Number of Wreaths

**Select Group to Support**

NY0087P

New York State Chapter MOAA (NY0087P)  
18601

- More Options -



In the box just above the red button labeled “Review of Sponsorships”, click on the space to the right of the icon of two people labeled faintly “Select Group to Support.” With your cursor in the space, type in our group code **NY0087P**. The entry “New York State Chapter MOAA (NY0087P) (18601)” will appear *below* the space. **Click on it.**



**3**

### WREATH SPONSORSHIP


CHOOSE YOUR LOCAL SPONSORSHIP GROUP

Did you know that Wreaths Across America now offers recurring sponsorships? You can select the occurrence and frequency anytime! Register now by completing this [form!](https://tinyurl.com/n735zrbr) (<https://tinyurl.com/n735zrbr>)

*What does it mean to sponsor a wreath?* It means you are supporting a yearlong mission to Remember the fallen, Honor the heroes.

**Number of Wreaths to Sponsor**

- 1 Wreath Individual Sponsorship (\$17)
- 2 Wreaths (\$34.00)
- 5 Wreaths (\$85.00) \*Most Popular
- 10 Wreaths (\$170.00)
- Custom Number of Wreaths



**Organization:** New York State Chapter MOAA (NY0087P) [18601]

**Location to Support:** Gerald B. H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery, Schuylerville, NY

**REVIEW MY SPONSORSHIPS**

- More Options -

When you have clicked on “New York State Chapter MOAA (NY0087P) (18601)”, the location “Gerald B. Solomon National Cemetery, Schuylerville” will appear below, to confirm you have the correct fundraising organization.

**4**

### WREATH SPONSORSHIP

CHOOSE YOUR LOCAL SPONSORSHIP GROUP


Did you know that Wreaths Across America now offers recurring sponsorships? You can select the occurrence and frequency anytime! Register now by completing this [form!](https://tinyurl.com/n735zrbr) (<https://tinyurl.com/n735zrbr>)

*What does it mean to sponsor a wreath?* It means you are supporting a yearlong mission to Remember the fallen, Honor the heroes.

**Number of Wreaths to Sponsor**

- 1 Wreath Individual Sponsorship (\$17)
- 2 Wreaths (\$34.00)
- 5 Wreaths (\$85.00) \*Most Popular
- 10 Wreaths (\$170.00)
- Custom Number of Wreaths

**Select One**



**Organization:** New York State Chapter MOAA (NY0087P) [18601]

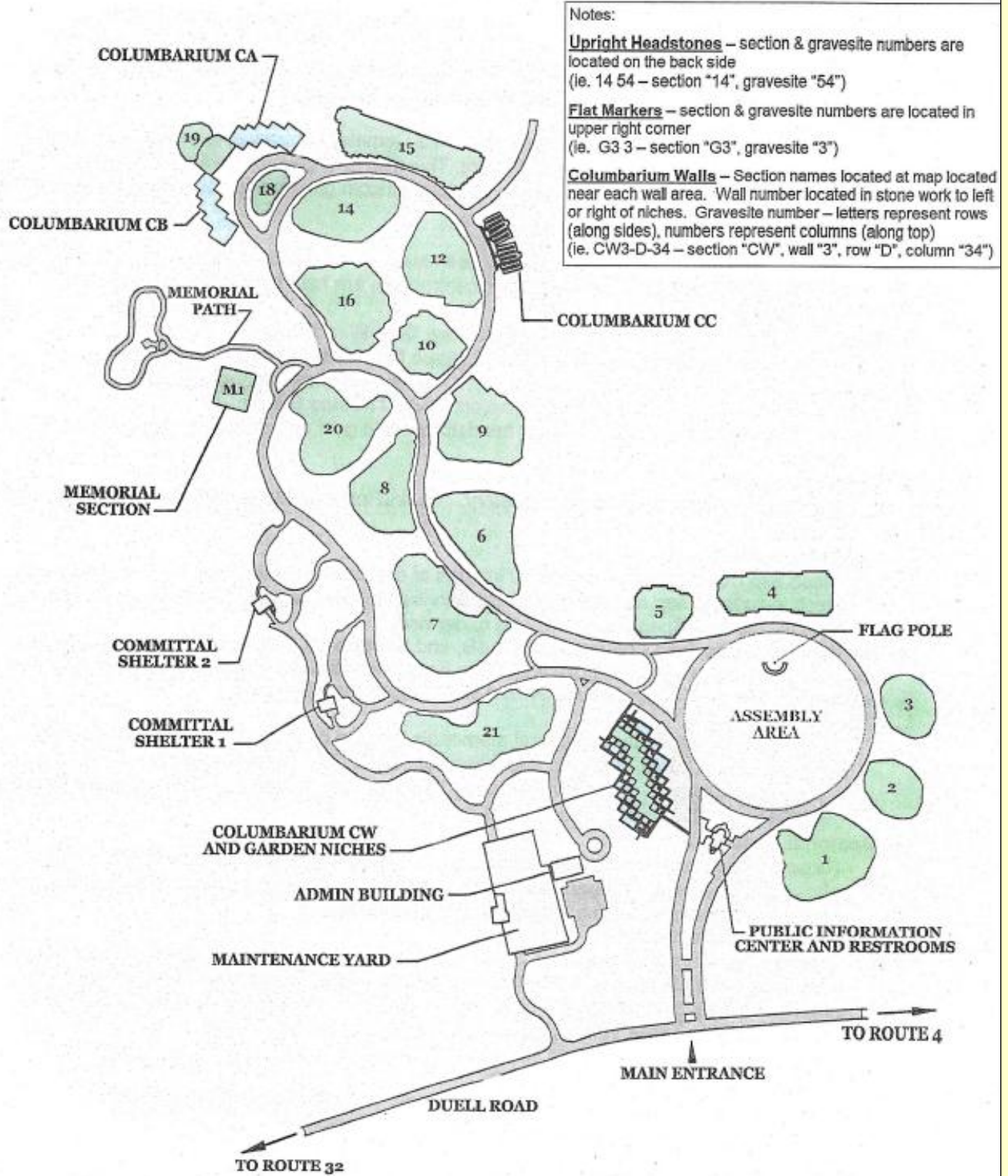
**Location to Support:** Gerald B. H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery, Schuylerville, NY

**REVIEW MY SPONSORSHIPS**

- More Options -

Select the number of wreaths you wish to sponsor, and click on the red “Review of Sponsorships” button to be able to complete the transaction.

## Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery



**Notes:**

**Upright Headstones** – section & gravesite numbers are located on the back side  
(ie. 14 54 – section "14", gravesite "54")

**Flat Markers** – section & gravesite numbers are located in upper right corner  
(ie. G3 3 – section "G3", gravesite "3")

**Columbarium Walls** – Section names located at map located near each wall area. Wall number located in stone work to left or right of niches. Gravesite number – letters represent rows (along sides), numbers represent columns (along top)  
(ie. CW3-D-34 – section "CW", wall "3", row "D", column "34")

**Gerald B.H. Solomon  
Saratoga National Cemetery**

Self-touring the cemetery, starting at the Public Information Center (PIC), the following structures, items, notable graves, and locations are indicated below by letters A through O.

**A. The Public Information Center (PIC):**

- Water fountains and public restrooms are available from dawn to dusk at the PIC.
- The office at the PIC is operated by volunteers most days to answer questions, provide various information sheets and brochures, and to assist in locating the final resting places of loved ones.
- A computer Kiosk is also located at the PIC for visitors to locate the gravesites of those laid to rest in the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery.

**B. The Gettysburg Tree:**

- On the west end of the PIC, the end toward the Cemetery entrance, is a small tree near a Memorial Bench for the Gold Star Mothers. This tree is a "cutting" from an actual tree that was standing, and still is, at the site where Abraham Lincoln gave his famous Gettysburg Address.

**C. Ships bell from the USS Saratoga, CV-3**

**D. The Main Flagpole & Assembly Area:**

- This is where the major ceremonies are held, such as for Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Wreaths Across America. Various other ceremonies are held here and throughout the cemetery during the year as well.

**E. Section 7, Site 124 - The Grave of the Unknown Civil War Soldier:**

- It is the only headstone that is a different shape than all the others in the cemetery.

**F. Section 7, Site 103 - Medal of Honor Recipient - Spec. 4th Class Raymond Wright**

**G. Section 8, Site 530 - Medal of Honor Recipient - Sgt. Thomas Baker**

- The lettering on the Medal of Honor headstones is in gold as opposed to the black on all others.

**H. Columbarium C:**

- The newest columbarium in the cemetery. The first interments in this area were in the spring of 2022.

**I. Columbarium's A & B:**

- These two Columbarium's are mirror images of one another, separated by a common area which includes a flag for each Branch of Service. Another flagpole is planned to be erected soon for the new Space Force Branch of Service.

**J. Section 18, across from Columbarium's A&B, and Section 19, behind the Branch of Service Flagpoles, are designated for those who have been cremated but wish to be buried in the ground.**

**K. Section 20, Site 7 - Congressman Gerald B.H. Solomons' gravesite.**

**L. The Memorial Path:**

- The Memorial Path features several memorials erected by various veteran and fraternal organizations in honor of events and fallen comrades. The Carillon, a tower with speakers, and a digital control panel at the Administration Building, was donated by The American Veterans (AMVETS) in 1999 and upgraded in 2022.

**M. Memorial Section:**

- These are Memorial headstones for deceased active-duty service members and Veterans whose remains have not been recovered or identified, are buried at sea, donated to science or whose cremated remains have been scattered elsewhere.

**N. Committal Shelters 1 & 2:**

- Special honors are bestowed to a deceased Veteran which include a Military Honor Guard, a Rifle Detail who will provide a Three Volley Salute, and a Bugler who will play Taps. The American Flag which drapes the coffin will be removed and folded. The Flag and three bullet casings from the Three Volley Salute are presented to the Next of Kin.
- After the Military Honors a short service and comments are typically given by the funeral home representative and/or family members.
- In the case of a non-veteran, such as the spouse or dependent child of a Veteran, the procedures are the same except there are no Military Honors.

**O. Columbarium and Garden Niches G1 - G32:**

- This area consists of 24 Walls with Niches for the interred cremains and 32 Sections in the ground for those who wished to be buried. The markers for those buried in this area are flush to the surface of the ground.
- Section G12 - Site 001 Medal of Honor Recipient - Tech Sgt. Peter J. Dalessandro

- **NEW USS ALBANY MEMORIAL PARK**

The Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency forwarded information from Wayne V. Van Amburgh that the USS Albany Association and the City of Rensselaer have entered into an agreement to provide a Memorial Park to honor all those that proudly served aboard any ship named “Albany” from 1846 to present. The contractor that was selected, A-Z Landscaping Inc., is headed by owner-operator Steve Noel, a Marine Corps Veteran. Steve expressed his willingness to work with the Association as they conduct a public fundraising campaign. [Here is a link to some of his work & projects: <https://www.facebook.com/people/A-Z-Landscaping-INC/100057146032578/>]

Due to rising costs of materials, the project is trying to downscale, renegotiate, or change requirements and specifications. They are looking for support from electrical & lighting contractors, vendors, businesses, state agencies, Rensselaer County, veteran groups, military organizations, and the general public, as well as from members of the USS Albany Association who have been extremely generous. Currently, the memorial fund has \$30,000 in the bank *and needs about another \$50-60,000*, based on recent quotes and material costs, to complete the project. They are confident that they will be able to bring this to fruition with help from private and public donors.

The memorial stone and flagpoles have been ordered and meetings with state and county reps are scheduled. They have been making some cost-effective modifications and are confident that they can pull this together and complete it between the end of September or October 2023. The site location is in the City of Rensselaer’s Riverfront Park overlooking the Hudson River, the Albany skyline and the backdrop of the USS Slater (DE766). Here is the Concept Drawing:

Concept Drawing:



The following page has a copy of the benefactor contribution form. This form is found also on the USS Albany Website, [www.ussalbany.org](http://www.ussalbany.org), and has been distributed to the media.

**USS Albany Memorial Park Benefactor Contribution Form**

**The new Memorial Park will be located in the City of Rensselaer River Front Park, Broadway & 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Rensselaer, New York 12144.**

**This memorial will overlook the Hudson River, viewing Albany, New York & the USS Slater DE-766 Memorial Ship.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code : \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Association Member:     Yes    No   Hull # \_\_\_\_\_ Dates onboard \_\_\_\_\_

General Donation       

Contribution **"In Memory of "Name or Corporation/ Business**

Any \$ amount \_\_\_\_\_         **"In memory of "**    **"Corporation Name"**

**Make Check payable to:**

**USS Albany Association Heritage Exhibit**

**PO Box 515**

**Rensselaer, New York 12144**

**"Please Note on check "Memorial Park Fund"**

*"The USS Albany Association, Inc. is a 501-C (3) non-profit organization, with its primary purpose of providing educational value on the rich history of all USS Albany's from 1846 to our present namesake, USS Albany SSN-753."*

**For additional information about the USS Albany Association or Membership please visit us at [www.ussalbany.org](http://www.ussalbany.org)**

**Thank you for your valued support to preserve our military history for future generations.**

*Wayne Van Amburgh*

*USS Albany Memorial Park Chairman*

# NYS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS ANNUAL CONVENTION

## 17-20 September, 2023

Last year's convention celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the NYS Council of Chapters. There was no way that this year's convention would surpass that. Yet, this year's event at the Tioga Downs Casino Resort in Nichols, NY, was a great success. Kudos to **Terry and Evelyn Bale** from Southern

The NYS Council of Chapters has the longest streak of consecutive conventions of any MOAA council in the nation, holding a virtual convention even in 2020 when in-person gatherings were near impossible.

Tier Chapter and Council leaders for all their hard work planning and organizing everything. Those of you who have never been to a state convention have missed the opportunity to experience the warm camaraderie and cohesion of our Council, as those of us who attended this one enjoyed. We were also honored by the presence of two "Rock Stars" from MOAA

Headquarters: **Frank "Tank" Michael, CAPT USN Ret., Program Director, Council and Chapter Affairs, and Dan Merry, COL USAF Ret., Vice President, Government Relations.** Their presence and encouragement exemplify the dedication that MOAA has to support Councils and Chapters.

Frank held an in-depth discussion on Council and Chapter "health", covering topics such as programs, recruiting, and retention, which are the most crucial issues facing all of our Chapters. He also presented MOAA Levels of Excellence (LOE) Awards for 2022 to the Council and Chapter Presidents who were present. **Skip Bebernitz in his role as President of the NYS Council of Chapters accepted a 5-star award for Council.** (5-star is the highest LOE.) Six New York Chapters earned LOE Awards – three 5-star, two 4-star, and one 3-star. **President Al Memole accepted a 4-star LOE Award for our NYS Capital District Chapter.** COL Dan Merry updated attendees on the status and priorities of MOAA's advocacy initiatives. He also gave a motivating keynote address at the convention banquet, driving home the reasons why we do what we do as a part of MOAA and "never stop serving".



Another powerful keynote speech was presented at the Convention's Welcome Dinner by **Capt. Jonathan Guagenti, 105<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, NY Air National Guard.** In August 2021, the 105<sup>th</sup> received the mission to airlift a special operations unit and its helicopter to Kabul, Afghanistan, as the situation there began to deteriorate rapidly. Because our Chapter wants to have Capt. Guagenti speak at one of our meetings next year, there will be no spoilers here, but suffice it to note that constantly changing orders and instructions along with deadly and hazardous flying and landing conditions made for no little excitement. Besides the initial mission, the crew made two refugee evacuation flights, and, on departure from theater, flew the remains of the 13 service members killed in the terrorist bombing to Kuwait, where they were transferred to USAF for their final flight home. Capt. Guagenti gave such a spell-binding account of dedication, courage, determination, perseverance, tragedy, and even humor. We really hope we can have him speak at one of our luncheons.

*Continued on next page*

Council conventions are not all business. Socializing and fun activities are a huge part as well. This convention designated Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> as “make-your-own-fun day” for those attendees who arrived on Sunday. Members of our Chapter did just that. Skip and Mary Lou Bebernitz toured the awesome Corning Glass Museum. Mary and Al Memole took advantage of the beautiful late summer weather to hike the trails at two nearby State Parks – Newtown Battlefield (American Revolution) and Two Rivers.



***Clockwise from above left:*** (1) View from a Tioga Downs Casino Resort hotel room – morning exercise on the harness track; (2) Glass chess set – “Catholics vs. Jews” – Corning Museum of Glass; (3) Glass “zHot Rod”, Corning Museum of Glass; (4) Al Memole at the scenic overlook at Newtown Battlefield State Park, Elmira, NY, with the monument to General Sullivan in the background (in case you hadn’t heard – we won that battle); Mary Memole at the open field portion of the “Green Trail” at Two Rivers State Park recreation Area, Waverly, NY. *Photo credits: (1) and (4) – Mary Memole; (2) and (3) – Skip Bebernitz; (5) – Al Memole*



*Continued on next page*





*Clockwise from top left:* Capt. Jon Guagenti NYANG; Skip Bebernitz receiving the Council's 5-star award from Tank Michael; Al Memole & Skip Bebernitz receive our Chapter's 4-star award from Tank; newly re-elected Council officers Skip, Norma Weissend, Tim Vaughn, and Suzann Hensley take the oath; Al Memole & Pat Piccirilli with our Chapter flag; Council & Chapter Presidents with their flags; COL Dan Merry gives the keynote address.



## CHAPTER OFFICERS

CHAPTER OFFICE	INCUMBENT	E-MAIL
President	Alfred M. Memole, LTC USA, RET	pres@cdnymoaa.org
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Kathy E. Gates, COL USA, RET	1vp@cdnymoaa.org
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	VACANT	2vp@cdnymoaa.org
Secretary	Ralph Folger, LCDR USNR, RET	secr@cdnymoaa.org
Treasurer	Patrick J. Piccirilli, LTC USAR RET	treas@cdnymoaa.org

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rocco D. Acquilano, CDR USNR RET	Ernest "Skip" Bebernitz**, MAJ USA RET
Christopher J. Costigan*, CDR USN RET	Anthony J. Ficara**, COL USA RET
Vincent A. Memole, Jr., LTC USAR RET	Edmund M. Scheiber, Jr.**, Lt Col USAF RET
VACANT	VACANT

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

## LUNCHEON RESERVATION INFORMATION

Date: **OCTOBER 15, 2023**

Location: **BELLINI'S Italian Eatery,  
Latham, NY**

Time: **1:00 PM** – Check-in; Social Mixer // 1:35 – 4:00 PM – Buffet/Guest Speaker

Price: **\$37** per person (Please make checks payable to: **NYS CDC MOAA.**)

You may pay Chapter dues for **2023** by adding **\$30** to your total.

Please make your reservation **Not Later Than Friday, October 6**

Send reservation form and check to: **Chris Costigan**  
153 Paisley Road  
Ballston Spa, NY 12020

**OR** e-mail Chris at [costigan4@hughes.net](mailto:costigan4@hughes.net) **OR** call him at: 518- 884-2943 (h) or 518-755-5697 (c)



## Mail-In Luncheon Reservation Form

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

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