

NEW YORK STATE CAPITAL DISTRICT CHAPTER OF THE 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.



NEVER STOP SERVING. ®



Visit us at cdnymoaa.org

5-Star Chapter – 2024

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

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 4, JUL-AUG 2025 // THIS ISSUE CONTAINS:

- HIGHLIGHTED CHARITY: VETERANS MIRACLE CENTER, p. 2
- CHAPTER HAPPENINGS:
 - Out Last Chapter Meeting, June 7, pp. 2-3
 - Remaining Chapter Meetings for 2025, p. 3
 - Chapter Due\$ - Cheddar Up, p. 3
 - Board of Directors Meeting, August 9, p. 4
 - Proposed Chapter Meetings for 2026, pp. 5-6
 - Legislative Affairs Committee Report, pp. 6-7
 - Presentation of MOAA JROTC Awards, p. 8
- MEMBER TRIP REPORT – The Museum of the United States Army, p. 9
- BOOK REVIEW – MASTERS OF THE AIR: America's Bomber Boys Who Fought the Air War Against Nazi Germany, pp. 9-11
- BOOK REVIEW – THE ADMIRALS - NIMITZ, HALSEY, LEAHY AND KING: The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea, pp. 11-12
- OTHER NEWS & EVENTS OF INTEREST, p. 12



MOAA
INSURANCE
PLANS

**Standing with you
at every stage.**

1-800-247-2192

www.moaainsurance.com/plans

100392

HIGHLIGHTED CHARITY for this issue → THE VETERANS MIRACLE CENTER

“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 is open by appointment-only to veterans and active duty military and their families, who must present their DD-214 or current military ID.

The Albany VMC offers a variety of personal and household 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.

Our Chapter makes a modest donation annually to the VMC, but anyone can donate money or volunteer to help at the store during operating hours (Mon-Thurs 9-4 and Fridays 9-3). To volunteer, please call the VMC at 518.486.8398 or email them at info@vmcalbany.org to schedule a time. To donate, please visit the VMC website at the web address shown in the box above.

VMC Albany

10 Interstate Avenue
Albany, NY 12205

Website: www.vmcalbany.org

Phone: 518.486.8398

Email: Info@VMCAlbany.org

Hours: By appointment only,
Monday – Thursday, 9 am – 4 pm;
Friday, 9 am – 3 pm.

CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

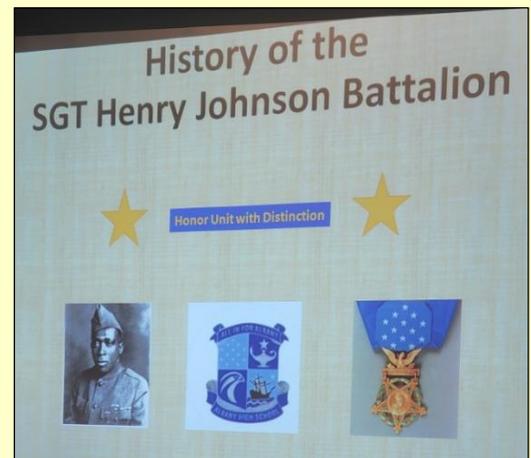
Our Last Meeting, June 7, at Norrine’s Restaurant

(By Al Memole)

If you missed our June meeting, you missed: a delicious meal, great conversations, and a chance to meet a couple of wonderful guest attendees – *Peggy Philips*, LTC USA Ret., a past Council President from the Southern Tier Chapter, and *Robert Giordano* – You also missed a compelling presentation by guest speaker *Dave Erickson*, MAJ USA Ret., a member of our own Chapter.

Dave was the main driver in establishing from scratch the Army JROTC program at Albany High School. He served as their Senior Army Adviser for 10 years, finally retiring this year. He recounted the many challenges in getting the program off the ground – recruiting cadets, getting buy-in from the school and recognition by the Army, getting funding and decent fitting uniforms for the cadets, among many other things. The corps of cadets is organized and designated as the SGT Henry Johnson Battalion, named after the Albany native who earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for extraordinary bravery in action during WWI. Representatives from SGT Johnson’s unit, the 369th Infantry Regiment (the Harlem Hellfighters) of the NY National Guard, maintain ties with and support the battalion.

Dave was very understanding with the students and their struggles, but was also demanding. He enforced high standards of conduct and attendance, which the cadets and their parents appreciated.



*A slide from the presentation showing the JROTC battalion’s designation.
(photo by Ed Balaban)*

Continued on next page



Chapter President Al Memole, presents Dave Erickson with a MOAA mug in appreciation for his presentation. (photo by Ed Balaban)

JROTC taught these young people responsibility, discipline, selflessness, teamwork, physical fitness, leadership, and citizenship, through classroom instruction, drill, and military skills training. The program gained popularity and enrollment expanded greatly over the years. Immigrants and children of immigrants have made up a substantial percentage of the cadets.

Dave also forged ties with local veteran service organizations such as the American Legion and others that have provided material and moral support to the cadets. The program has been a success and has helped many students on the path to responsible adulthood. A number of cadets were selected for leadership positions at Boys State and Girls State. More than a few went on to enlist; others gained acceptance to service academies and ROTC programs.

Remaining Chapter Meetings For 2025

NOTE: Our October meeting was originally planned for Saturday October 4. However, because that date was only days after the NY Council of Chapters annual convention, the Board of Directors voted in April to reschedule it to later in October, tentatively, October 25. However, the NYS Military Museum in Saratoga Springs is hosting the Veteran of the Year awards ceremony that same day at 2pm. At least three of our members are committed to that event and others may be planning to attend. Therefore, we chose to meet the following day, *Sunday, October 26*. **Please mark your calendars!**

MEETING DATE & TYPE	MEETING LOCATION, NOTES
OCT 26 (Sunday), Luncheon Meeting	<i>Norrine's restaurant, Waterford</i>
<i>NOV 15, Board of Directors Meeting</i>	<i>NYS Military Museum, Saratoga Springs, 1000-1200</i>
DEC 6, Holiday Party-Annual Business Mtg	<i>Norrine's restaurant, Waterford</i>

Chapter Due\$ - Cheddar Up

We have closed the annual dues collection for 2025 on the Cheddar Up platform. *Twelve* members out of 35 (34%) paid 2025 dues through Cheddar Up. We will open the 2026 annual dues collection in Cheddar Up sometime in November, and will let everyone know in the next newsletter.

For the June 7 luncheon, members paid for 16 out of 20 meals (80%) and selected their entrée through Cheddar Up. We will open separate collections for the October and December luncheon meetings at the appropriate times.

Cheddar Up is a secure online payment platform offered by MOAA free of charge for all affiliated Chapters and state Councils. It makes payments easy for members who have no issues paying by credit card – no need to write checks or pay cash. And it makes tracking and depositing payments received way easier for Chapters. Let's make good use of this technology.

Board of Directors Meeting, August 9 at Bolton Landing

Thanks again to Ed and Jennifer Scheiber for hosting the Board meeting at their beautiful home on the shores of Lake George. Looking at the photo at right (taken by Al Memole, looking out from the Scheibers' backyard), you can imagine that it was a challenge for the Board of Directors to stay focused on MOAA and Chapter business. The key take-aways from the meeting are:



1. **Chapter Health:** The Chapter is financially and organizationally in good shape, but we need to increase membership and member involvement.
2. **Recruiting:** Board member Vince Memole will be spreading the word about MOAA and our Chapter to officers of the 42nd Infantry Division, NYARNG, at an upcoming unit reunion for veterans of the Global War on Terror (GWOT). Next year, the Chapter will also see about setting up recruiting tables at local county fairs.
3. **Liability Insurance:** The Chapter has coverage now for Chapter officers and directors for 2025. MOAA has recently contracted with another provider who might be able to provide general liability coverage at an affordable price, which the Chapter will explore.
4. **Moving the luncheon meeting scheduled for October 4 to a date later in October:** The 25th was set as the tentative date in April, but several Chapter members have a commitment that same day for the Veteran of the Year award ceremony in Saratoga Springs, so the Chapter considered an alternate date. [We arranged with Norrine's restaurant for Sunday, October 26th.]
5. **Annual Chapter Dues** will remain \$30 for 2026.
6. **Schedule of Meetings for 2026:** The Board selected meeting dates for next year and will confirm those dates at the November Board meeting, *unless* members would prefer an alternative schedule consisting of different types of group activities. [SEE THE NEXT SECTION, "PROPOSED Chapter Meetings For 2026".]



Relaxing in the Scheibers' backyard with a picnic lunch after the meeting. Pictured from left to right are: Jennifer & Ed Scheiber, Liz Stevens, Vince Memole, Mary Balaban, Lance Richardson, Vicki Folger, Ed Balaban, Ralph Folger, and Christine Richardson. Not in the photo, Chis Costigan.
Photo by Al Memole

*** PROPOSED Chapter Meetings For 2026 ***

The Board of Directors drafted a proposed schedule of meetings for next year, shown in the chart on the following page (Option 1 – Traditional). It follows the same basic model or pattern that the Chapter has followed for many years, except that meetings will be held on *Saturdays* as we did this year, rather than on Sundays, as done in years past. The Board will review and approve or make changes to this schedule at the November board meeting, **UNLESS YOU**, dear Chapter members, would like to try something different. Our Chapter is offering Option 2, a new approach to meetings that adds different types of activities for Chapter members along with a reduced number of traditional sit-down or buffet meals.

Okay, so why are we considering a new approach to meetings? The traditional luncheon meetings are standard for MOAA chapters, and there is nothing wrong with them per se. Attendees at our meetings have always had a great time and almost always a delicious meal, and enjoyed very interesting guest speakers. However, there are two major concerns. First, attendance has declined from previous years, and it's overwhelmingly the same members who show up. The majority of our members rarely or *never* attend meetings. This might be due to one or more of these circumstances: you are much too busy and cannot afford to spend time at Chapter events; the weekend meeting dates, days, or times are not convenient for you; it costs more than you want to pay; the type and format of our meetings do not interest you in the least.

Regardless of why most members don't attend meetings, it isn't conducive to building and maintaining a vibrant chapter, and it isn't fair to all dues-paying members. It's your chapter, too, and Chapter meetings should serve you and encourage you to serve others.

The second concern is that we invite knowledgeable and interesting guest speakers to our meetings who give their presentations to a small audience – embarrassingly small at times. Nearly all of the presentations

that we've had really deserved to have been heard by a much larger group and broader demographic. When our Chapter invites a guest speaker we need to make it worthwhile for that speaker.

Some ideas for a new approach include a diversified offering of opportunities for members to meet and interact. This wouldn't exclude meetings centered on meals, but perhaps fewer, and maybe on different days or at different times (brunch, dinner), and without a guest speaker, so that the focus would remain on conversation. This approach would work towards a key objective as stated in the Preamble of our Chapter's Constitution: *"To create harmony and a spirit of camaraderie among all officers of the uniformed services of the United States through an organization program of social and fraternal activities to accomplish these aims."* We like the tradition of guest speakers, but maybe we could host separate presentations at public libraries or museums around the Capital region, open to the public. This would be consistent with another stated aim and objective of our Chapter to *"To promote and stimulate love of our Country and our Flag."* It would also enhance our Chapter's the visibility and name recognition in the Capital region.

To achieve another key aim, *"To aid active and retired personnel of the uniformed services, their dependents and survivors, in every proper and legitimate manner"*, we might consider gathering whoever is available as a group to run or participate in various service projects throughout the year. In recent years we've had a few individuals show up for Wreaths Across America and, last year, a couple helped Toys For Tots. What military/veteran-related causes do *you* think we should support as a chapter? And, finally, again to build that spirit of camaraderie, we could organize informal outings for any Chapter members who are interested and available. We've tried that a few times over that past few years ("MOAA & a Movie", ValleyCats baseball games, museum visits), and attracted a handful of members. What activities would you like to do along with other officers?

Continued on next page

So, what are the next steps? First, we need your input, which you can send via email to the President (pres@cdnymoaa.org) or call (518-641-8664) if you prefer to discuss your ideas. At a minimum, we need to know the following:

- Which do you prefer over the other – the traditional meetings or a new approach?
- If you prefer to stay with our traditional meetings with guest speakers, do Saturdays work for you, or would you prefer a different day of the week? Are luncheon’s okay, or would you prefer brunch in the morning or dinner in the evening?
- If you’re game to try a new approach, what do you think about the ideas mentioned above? What ideas do *you* have? What would make you want to participate in the Chapter? What types of events/activities are you willing to organize and lead for the Chapter?

If a majority of members who respond are interested in the new approach in place of traditional meetings, the Board of Directors will develop a schedule for 2026 by the November Board Meeting based on the inputs responding to the last bullet, above.

TWO GENERAL APPROACHES TO CHAPTER MEETINGS	
OPTION 1 – TRADITIONAL	OPTION 2 – A NEW APPROACH
<i>[PROPOSED 2026 SCHEDULE]</i>	<i>[CONCEPT]</i>
Saturday, February 7 , luncheon	Board of Directors meetings: <i>same as proposed</i>
Saturday, April 18 , luncheon April 25 , Board of Directors	Brunch/Lunch/Dinner Meetings: Three events, suggested for <i>March, June, and December</i>
Saturday, June 6 , luncheon	Guest speakers open to the public: Four events, <i>one per quarter, each at a different venue around the Capital region</i>
August TBD , Board of Directors	Service projects: Wreaths Across America (<i>placement in December, pick up in March</i>), Toys For Tots warehouse (<i>November</i>), <u>other ideas?</u>
Saturday, October 3 , luncheon	Outings: Museum visits, MWR tours, sporting events (<i>ValleyCats, horse races, West Point football</i>), picnics, outdoor activities (<i>golf, hiking, cycling, paddling, snowshoeing, skiing, etc.</i>)
November 21 , Board of Directors	
Saturday, December 5 , luncheon (Holiday Party-Annual Business Mtg)	

Legislative Affairs Committee Report

(Submitted by Pat Piccirilli, Legislative Affairs Committee)

It’s that time of the year; how quickly it comes. Congress has made significant strides in the last few days to advance its most critical defense policy bill, the annual **National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)**. This legislation will authorize military pay, benefits, and support programs for fiscal year 2026.

Senate: The Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) reported its bill out of committee July 11 with near-unanimous support (26-1 vote) following a swift, bipartisan markup.

Continued on next page

House: The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) reported its version out of committee late July 15, also with a near-unanimous (55-2) vote after a longer process, debating over 700 amendments.

The next big hurdle for both versions will be full floor consideration. Here's a look at some of the points in both bills after their committee markups, and how you can help MOAA's work on the must-pass legislation:

Military Pay: Both the House and Senate versions support a base pay increase of 3.8% in 2026, which would keep pace with the Employment Cost Index.

Separation Pay: The House version would boost the Family Separation Allowance to \$400 per month. Previous authorizations allowed DoD to increase the allowance from \$250 to \$400 per month; this provision creates a new floor.

Allowances: The House version requires studies to improve the accuracy of both the Basic Allowance for Housing and the Basic Allowance for Subsistence, a long-standing MOAA priority.

Food Security: The House bill excludes BAH from the eligibility calculation for the Basic Needs Allowance, a long-standing MOAA priority.

Housing: The House bill requires a Government Accountability Office (GAO) review of privatized military family housing inventory.

Transition Help: This amendment is particularly important to Retirees and Veterans. The House bill enhances the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) by standardizing the presentation of VA offerings while introducing transitioning servicemembers to VA-approved veterans' service organizations who are able to assist with the transition into civilian life and navigating benefits available to servicemembers and their families.

Dental Readiness: The House bill provides no-cost dental coverage under TRICARE for members of the reserve component.

Improved Access to Care: The House bill would create a pilot program designed to streamline access to OB-GYN care by providing it without a referral to TRICARE Prime beneficiaries. It would also institute a five-year pilot treating pregnancy as a qualifying life event for the purposes of eligibility to enroll in TRICARE Select.

How can we help? Go to the [Legislative Action Center](http://www.moaa.org/takeaction) (www.moaa.org/takeaction), if you haven't already done so. Use the Legislative Action Center when contacting your legislators regarding military related issues. Or if you prefer, you can call MOAA's Capitol Hotline at [866-272-MOAA \(6622\)](tel:866-272-MOAA), a toll-free line to the U.S. Capitol switchboard, to connect directly with lawmakers. Ask to speak with the military legislative assistant or legislative director. If neither staff is available, ask to schedule a follow-up call when they are available. One other resource for keeping up to date with legislation and happenings on Capitol Hill is www.moaa.org/advocacy-news.

MOAA is NOT an organization of officers concerned *only* about officers. We are an organization of officers dedicated to protecting the earned benefits and welfare of ALL RANKS in all of the uniformed services.

Presentation of MOAA JROTC Awards

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

Our Chapter presented the MOAA JROTC award to the following cadets in May and June:

May 28, La Salle Institute, Troy. Chapter President Al Memole presented the MOAA JROTC award to Cadet Lieutenant Colonel, **BRAEDAN HOURIGAN**, captain of the La Salle wrestling team, who is interested in pursuing a degree in finance or business at the University of Kentucky. La Salle sponsors an Army JROTC program led by Senior Army Instructor *Paul Peters*, First Sergeant USA (Ret), and *Durvell Smith*, First Sergeant USA (Ret), who retired at the end of this school year. (Photo by Lawrence Clark) →



June 2, Albany High School. Chapter President Al Memole presented the MOAA JROTC award to Cadet **DELEE FORD**, whose favorite subject was Earth Science, but hopes to study culinary arts at Schenectady County Community College. Her forte is pasta! Albany HS sponsors an Army JROTC program started by *David Erickson*, Major USA (Ret), who was succeeded at the end of this school year by Senior Army Instructor *Michael Hutchinson*, Lieutenant Colonel USA (Ret). (Photo taken by a classmate, courtesy of Al Memole) ←

June 5, Amsterdam High School. Chapter Public Relations Officer Ed Balaban presented the MOAA JROTC award to Cadet Second Lieutenant **KIMBERLEY MALDONADO**. Amsterdam HS sponsors a Marine Corps JROTC program led by Senior Marine Instructor *James Bautista*, First Sergeant USMC (Ret). (Photo courtesy of Ed Balaban) →



← **June 6 Schenectady High School.** Chapter President Al Memole presented the MOAA JROTC award to Cadet **ANDERSON SERAM** in his classroom among fellow cadets. Anderson is a Cadet Corps Commander and Color Guard member whose goal is to become a commercial airline pilot and has already been accepted at flight academy. Schenectady HS sponsors an Air Force JROTC program led by AFJROTC Instructors *Denny L. Richardson*, Chief Master Sergeant USAF, and *Kevin C. Willoughby*, Master Sergeant USAF (Ret). (Photo by Kevin Willoughby)

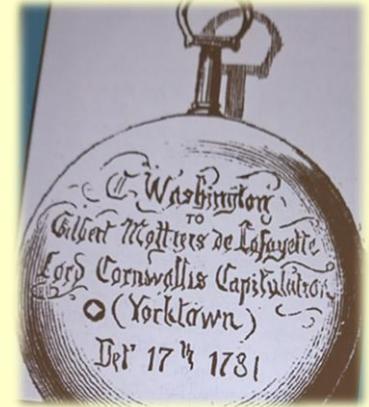
MEMBER TRIP REPORT – The Museum of the United States Army

(Article and photos by Skip Bebernitz)

On Friday, 8 August, Mary Lou and I went to the **Museum of the United States Army**. It is located very near Fort Belvoir, Virginia. The first floor has several rooms, each dedicated to a separate era/war in the Army's history and the exhibits displayed there are relatively permanent. The second floor is where temporary exhibits are shown. The first time we went a few years ago the displays featured soldier art: line drawings, paintings, carvings, models, and any other type of artwork. Last year, it was an 18 million dollar display in honor of the 80th Anniversary of D-Day sponsored by the French Government.



This year, it honors the 250th Anniversary of the Revolution with 250 never before displayed artifacts. The third floor has a Medal of Honor Garden.



All of the items in the 250th anniversary show are extremely significant, however the two that stand out in my mind were, first, shortly after you enter the room hosting the display there are George Washington's Commission Papers. Shortly before exiting the room there is a display case holding *the two pistols he carried throughout the war* (at left), and *the engraved pocket watch that Washington gave to Lafayette as a thank you after Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown*, shown above.

BOOK REVIEW

MASTERS OF THE AIR:

America's Bomber Boys Who Fought the Air War Against Nazi Germany

Author: Donald L. Miller; 525 Pages

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

A fantastic book about the newly activated 8th Air Force, an Army Air Corps unit formed in January 1942 outside Savannah, Georgia, which became the unsurpassed largest Army Air Corps unit in the entire Second World War. Miller covers the painful and at times chaotic beginning days, from newly-built airfields (40 in total) constructed in rural Southern England by segregated army engineers in the winter of 1942, all the way to the transfer of the newly liberated American and Allied POWs three and one-half years later in May 1945. His well-researched book goes into the meticulous detail about the Air War over Europe that this amateur historian had not previously read about.

Beginning in early 1942, the newly created Combined Chiefs (American and British Service Chiefs) as well as the senior American Army Air Corps Generals wanted to get the American bombers into action for military, political and even personal reasons. Militarily, but more so politically and privately, they wanted to hit back at Nazi Germany in support of military objectives: first, to meet FDR's and

Continued on next page

Churchill's "Europe First" policy; second, to take pressure off the RAF that had been fighting singlehandedly for almost two years straight; third, to justify the hundreds of millions of dollars being spent on thousands of bombers and thousands of men being drafted into the Army Air Corps. This drastically affected the Army Ground Force Commanders' demand for 100 divisions in order to win the War. (Ultimately they formed only 91 divisions, not including the six divisions of the USMC, with only two that did not see combat.) Privately, the leaders in the Army Air Corps knew if they could prove that strategic bombing was effective, they would get their own independent branch of service.

Miller's detailed research tells how the bomber boys coped with the horrors of war. If the oxygen system were to be hit by enemy gun fire the pilots had about five minutes to get their planes down to an altitude where oxygen wasn't needed. Frostbite and loss of fingers would occur in less than 15 minutes with temperatures routinely at -25 to -35 degrees Fahrenheit. In the beginning, the goal of surviving 25 missions in order to rotate back to the States was considered a cruel hoax because less than 20% of bomber crews reached 25 missions in 1942 and 1943 without being seriously wounded, maimed, killed, captured, or going insane. The author tells about how the Army Air Corps rushed psychiatrists to England to treat the bomber crews and created "rest homes" where crews that were experiencing severe signs of "battle fatigue" would be sent for four or more days of R&R. When the "Rest Homes" filled up, commanders sent many of their crews on four-day passes to London where airmen were dropped off in the middle of Piccadilly Circus, usually at the front door of the many brothels and pubs found there. Commanders did everything they could do, including "looking the other way" at insubordination as well as drunk and disorderly conduct by pilots, navigators, and bombardiers, just to keep the bombers flying.

The author also goes into great detail about the early days of 1942 with the newly created 8th Air Force. He discusses the severe pressure the commanders were under both politically as well as militarily. General "Hap" Arnold, Army Air Corps Chief of Staff, pushed his commanders hard and was extremely demanding, knowing that if his bombers did well, he would get his Independent Air Force. His continued pressure would result in Arnold having not one, but two heart attacks during the war, which were kept classified for National Security reasons. The other pressure placed on the commanders of the 8th Air Force was to prove that daylight bombing was as effective as nighttime bombing which was how British RAF Bomber Command conducted their operations. The 8th Air Force was pushed hard to get a mission into the air soon because Churchill was pushing FDR to place the 8th Air Force under British Command – something that General Arnold completely opposed. Thus, the 8th Air Force conducted its first combat mission on July 4, 1942, with six A-20 Light Bombers, a mission that the 8th Air Force commanders in England did not want to fly, telling General Arnold that the Command was not ready yet. They were overruled by General Arnold after he briefed FDR, who loved the idea.

Miller describes the Air War over Europe as "the longest battle in WW2". His detailed research covers every aspect of the 8th Air Force operations in Europe from the beginning days but he also has chapters on General Eisenhower's plans needed to support the Normandy landings on June 6, 1944. Miller mentions some of the larger missions, like the attack on Berlin conducted on February 3, 1945 utilizing 1,000 B-17s (10,000 airmen). The author also has chapters on famous pilots like LTC Jimmy Stewart, and BG Jimmy Doolittle, as well as the heroes and their actions, and awards presented by the Commanders of the 8th Air Force, many of them posthumously.

Miller also has chapters on the crews that bailed out and were captured. He described life in the German POW camps and the hundred or so crew members who escaped and returned to England aided by resistance forces and neutral nations. One amazing small bit of information that Miller writes about that I found absolutely shocking was about how *Army Air Corps Chaplains "volunteered to parachute into Germany to be with American Prisoners"*! Another very interesting chapter Miller writes is when Germany POW camps in Poland (holding mostly British and American air crews) were evacuated due to

the rapid advance of Russia ground forces in the late winter of 1945. German Luftwaffe commanders “fought” with and persuaded both Hermann Goering and SS Commanders not to execute the POWs. These POWs were then force-marched west for 5-10 days away from advancing Russia ground forces where the conditions were as bad as or worse than the infamous Bataan Death March in the Philippines. Many American POWs died from frostbite, starvation, sickness, and exhaustion. At 525 pages, this was a long, detailed book on a critical part of World War 2 that I knew very little about and which I enjoyed a great deal. I highly recommend this book, even if you already watched the miniseries, which, shockingly, I have not!

BOOK REVIEW

THE ADMIRALS - NIMITZ, HALSEY, LEAHY AND KING:

The Five-Star Admirals Who Won the War at Sea

Author: Walter R. Borneman; 494 pages

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

Borneman writes a fantastic and fun to read book full of American Naval history from the years just before the Spanish-American War and Commodore Dewey’s destruction of the Spanish Fleet in Manila Bay to the final years of the Navy’s Fleet Admirals after the end of World War II. Readers will follow their lives from their late teens, growing up in the last decade of the nineteenth century and their entrance into the US Naval Academy on the Severn River at Annapolis, followed by their first assignments as Naval Cadets AFTER graduation. I learned a very interesting part of history that I never knew: The original term for midshipmen applied to Naval Cadets who had completed their academic classes at Annapolis and then went to sea for two years BEFORE being commissioned as Ensigns!

Borneman’s book follows all four of these famous admirals from The Academy, their two years as Midshipmen, and then onward throughout their naval careers and the history they would make. The reader learns about each man and his family, his shore assignments either as an instructor at the Academy, or to the “Bureau of Navigation” or the brand new “Bureau of Aeronautics”. We read about the way they thought and acted and the mistakes they made, as well as their ships and the battles they took part in. In Admiral Leahy’s case, we see how absolutely indispensable he was to President Roosevelt and later President Truman after being recalled out of retirement back to active duty in early 1942 to serve as an assistance to Roosevelt. This ultimately made him CONCURRENTLY the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the first Director of National Security rolled into one. One would think that, judging by the cover of the book, it is only about the war in the Pacific, and while there is a large and fantastic history of all the naval operations in the Pacific Theater, the account also covers all the conferences FDR, Churchill and the Combined Chiefs held all over the world, discussing how they were actually going to fight and win the Second World War.

In conclusion, Borneman wrote a fantastic book that I highly recommend. I found myself breezing through chapters quickly, stopping only when I realized I was up way past midnight! Finally, I recommend to those who pick up this book, to be sure to read the seven pages at the very end. The author gives in those pages a brief history lesson that is as important today as it was then, and is a veteran’s short but beautiful personal story.

OTHER NEWS & EVENTS OF INTEREST

Listed below are just a few of the local events and services that might be of interest to military personnel, veterans, and their families. The events are listed in date order to facilitate your planning.

- **Aug 29 – Sep 1**, The Grant Cottage State Historic Site, 1000 Mt. McGregor Rd, Wilton, is holding a **pop-up tent sale** with hundreds of clearance books of various genres, historical prints, and assorted merchandise, with savings up to 50%.
- **Sep 6, Retreat for Female Veterans.** The national veteran organization, *Higher Ground*, is organizing a daylong recreational retreat for female veterans on private property in Ballston Spa that has acres of land and a pool and pond for water sports. Activity options include hiking, forest bathing, water aerobics, kayaking, paddle boarding, yoga, qigong, and Pilates. The retreat will also provide a healthy home-cooked meal on-site. The retreat is FREE, but attendees must provide their own transportation to the site. To register, contact Margaret Currier, MargaretC@highergroundusa.org.
- **Sep 10**, a **Veterans Job Fair** will be held at the Holiday Inn, 400 Old Loudon Road, Latham, from 1300-1800 hours, with a Veterans' hour 1300-1400 hrs.
- **Sep 13**, our friend, *Dr. Daniel Way* is giving a talk about **the life and art of the famous north country photographer Seneca Ray Stoddard** (his great-great uncle) from 1:00 - 2:00 pm at the Grant Cottage State Historic Site, 1000 Mt. McGregor Rd, Wilton. Afterwards, Dr. Way will be signing copies of his latest book, Seneca Ray Stoddard: An Intimate Portrait of an Adirondack Legend.
- **Sep 20, Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD)**, Clark Hall Bldg 10720, Fort Drum. Registration opens at 0800 hours, followed by an opening ceremony at 0900, and program updates, tours, and vendor tables from 1000 hours. Craig McNamara, MAJ USA (Ret), a helicopter pilot who flew missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, and Kuwait, is the guest speaker.
- **Sep 27 & 28**, the Grant Cottage State Historic Site, 1000 Mt. McGregor Rd, Wilton, is offering **Historical Encounter Tours** – opportunities to interact with historical re-enactors in Victorian era period costume, and enjoy period music, costumes, and cider/donuts. Encounter start times are 2:00, 2:30, 3:00, 3:30, and 4:00 pm each day and last 40-45 minutes. There is a limit of 10 persons per tour, at a cost of \$25 per person or \$80 for a group of four.
- **Oct 4**, the Grant Cottage State Historic Site, 1000 Mt. McGregor Rd, Wilton, is offering a presentation for people of all ages by author Kurt Deion about his adventures visiting the grave site of every US President and Vice President, chronicled in his book, “**Presidential Grave Hunter: One Kid’s Quest to Visit the Tombs of Every President and Vice President**”. The presentation runs from 1:00 – 2:00 pm, followed by a book signing.

September 25th is the deadline for submitting **news articles, photos, bio’s, stories, trip reports, or reviews of books/movies/food/drink** for the *next* issue! Please e-mail your input to newsletter editor Al Memole at ammemole@gmail.com.