

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.



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5-Star Chapter – 2025
2024, 2021, 2020, 2018 & 2017

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CHAPTER HAPPENINGS

Our next Chapter meeting is **SATURDAY, JUNE 6, at NORRINE'S RESTAURANT**

405 Hudson River Rd, Waterford, NY 12188

(a.k.a. Routes 4 & 32, in the town of Halfmoon)

Please invite officers whom you know who are not members of MOAA or not Chapter members. Tell them about MOAA and our Chapter and send them this link): [Joint MOAA-Chapter Membership Application](#)

GUEST SPEAKER: PAT CHAISSON, LTC USA (Ret.), will present the dramatic story of **D-DAY**, the Invasion of Normandy, June 6, 1944.

DRESS CODE: Business casual (*jacket & tie optional; no jeans or t-shirts, please*)

COST: \$40 per person, members and guests.

PROGRAM:

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

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

1345-1400 hrs: Entrées served

about 1445 hrs: Guest Speaker Presentation

1545-1600 hrs: 50/50 drawing; announcements and farewell

ENTRÉE SELECTIONS (choose one):

STEAK w/potatoes & veggies

CHICKEN PARM over pasta w/garlic bread

HADDOCK (lightly breaded & seasoned) w/linguini and white wine buttery lemon sauce

With the meal: Salad, dessert, coffee, tea, and soft drinks

Also available: Wine, beer, adult beverages are available at the bar - pay as you go or ask for a tab.



(Photos by Mary Memole)

RESERVATIONS AND ENTRÉE SELECTION(S) REQUIRED NLT Friday, MAY 29th because we owe the restaurant a final count of guests and entrée selections one week in advance. You may ...

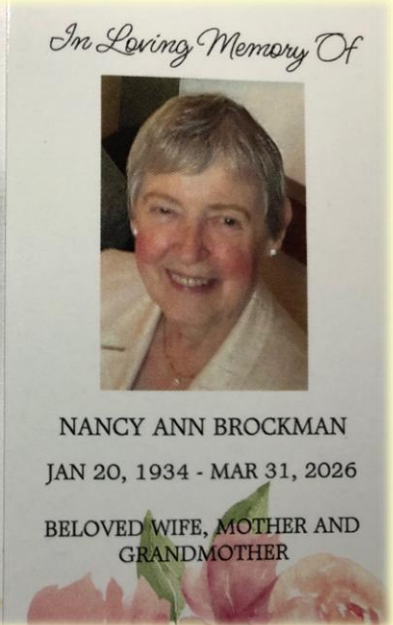
Make your reservation *before* the deadline by selecting your entrée(s) and paying through the Cheddar Up online payment platform, which you can access here: <https://treas-4444.mycheddarup.com>. **OR**

Email your reservation and entrée selection(s) to pres@cdnymoaa.org or call Al at 518-641-8664 *before* the deadline (please leave a voice message), and pay when you arrive at the meeting.

You can park on the side lot near the entrance which also has a couple of Handicap Parking spaces, or behind the restaurant. The lots are not paved. The entrance has a wheelchair ramp.

R.I.P. – Nancy Brockman

Nancy was the loving wife of long-time MOAA and Chapter member **Harold J. Brockman**, LCDR US Navy (Retired), who passed away just two years ago on May 11, 2024. Nancy and Harry were regular attendees at our luncheon meetings, sometimes accompanied by their daughter, Amy. They were both very interesting people. Nancy was delightful company, fun to converse with. She passed away on March 31 this year at the age of 92. We will miss her, but we rejoice that she may once again be united with Harry.



(Photo of funeral program and remembrance card by Al Memole)

WELCOME NEW CHAPTER MEMBERS!

- MARK J. MOELLER, LTC US Army (Ret.), MOAA Premium Member
- MYRNA SMITH, MOAA Life Member surviving spouse of Robert Smith, CDR, US Navy (Ret.)
- JOSEPH ORENSTEIN, LTC US Army (Ret.), MOAA Life Member
- MARGARET GRIFFIN, Lt Col US Air Force (Ret.), MOAA Life Member

Legislative Affairs Report

(by Al Memole)

ADVOCACY IN ACTION (AIA) 2026 was completed on April 15. *If you haven't yet seen the report on MOAA's website, you can open it here: [AiA-2026-MOAA's-mission-continues](#).* Due to a change this year regarding the scheduling of visits to congressional leaders and their staffs, our Chapter Legislative Affairs team was not able (allowed) to schedule visits with our representatives' home offices. Instead, our team provided copies of all of the pertinent issue papers to the offices of Representatives Tonko and Stefanik and those representing districts in New York City and Long Island assigned to our Chapter.

A six-member New York team was part of the 160 volunteers who visited the available legislators and their staffs on April 15. They were able to visit both NYS Senators' offices and 11 out of NY's 26 Congressional District Offices. The team members were *Norma Weissend, Lt Col USAF RET*, President of the NYS Council of Chapters (NYCoC), *Timothy Vaughan, Col USAF RET*, 1st VP and Legislative Chair of the NYCoC, *Matthew Sprenger, COL USA RET*, President of the Mid-Hudson Chapter, *Myles Caggins III, COL USA RET*, member of MOAA's Board of Directors and our own Chapter, and two

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Above, Team NY, L-R: Erin Cardinal; Matt Sprenger; Norma Weissend; Tim Vaughan; Caitlin Grover; and Myles Caggins III. Photo courtesy of MOAA

MOAA staff members, *Erin Cardinal, CDR USN RET*, and Caitlin Grover. Their efforts were helped immensely by the more *than 25,000 messages* sent to the legislators through MOAA's Legislative Action Center (LAC). *Thanks to all of you who used the LAC to make your voice heard!*

Several MOAA-supported bills have picked up additional support: the **Major Richard Star Act** has 10 new co-sponsors in the House and two in the Senate; the **Shutdown Fairness Act** has 13 new co-sponsors in the House and one in the Senate; the **Guard VA Benefits Act** picked up 13 new co-sponsors in the House; the **Military Care Act** gained six new co-sponsors in the House. The Secretary of War also spoke out in favor of the Major Richard Star Act

in testimony before Congress. **This recent increase support does NOT guarantee that Congress will push any of these bills across the finish line.** MOAA is calling on councils and chapters to follow up at local congressional offices this August. But, you can help by signing up or continuing to use the LAC to send prepared messages to your elected officials. **“Take Action” at:** <https://moaa.quorum.us>.

We invite you also to join our Capital District Chapter legislative committee to participate in reaching out to our own Representatives. To sign up, please email Skip Bebernitz at <mailto:skip94ta@gmail.com>. When our members walk into congressional offices, they carry the collective voice of our nationwide community. Your work will help ensure Congress keeps faith with those who serve to protect our nation.



LET'S GO NEW YORK! L-R: Myles Caggins III, Matthew Sprenger, Maj Gen Gary Charlton, Asst. AG for Air & Air National Guard Commander, Norma Weissend, Timothy Vaughan, and MG Ray Shields, The AG, NY National Guard. (Photo by Caitlin Grover.)

Our Last Chapter Meeting – April 19

(By Al Memole)

Another great meal and great time at Norrine’s Restaurant! We were excited to have guest speaker **Mr. Jason Goman and his wife Johanna** join us. Jason is the coordinator for volunteers and community outreach at the **Stratton Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center, Albany**. Jason told about his journey from being a US Marine deployed to Iraq, to serving veterans, principally helping homeless vets find shelter and housing, to serving at the VA. He described the many ways that community members could volunteer to help at the VA center, from driving veterans to the hospital, to providing administrative support, visiting patients, and making monetary and material donations. Volunteers working at the VA or directly with patients are carefully screened for the protection of all. MOAA is registered with the VA as a partner organization. Thus, our Chapter can (and will) establish an ongoing liaison with the Stratton VA in order to stay up with their needs and to coordinate support. *We will keep you advised as things develop.*



Above: Johanna and Jason Goman chat with Mary Memole before the meal. (Photo by Ralph Folger)

After Jason’s presentation, Skip Bebernitz, a past President of our Chapter *and* of the NYS Council of Chapters, pulled off a *double ambush*: He presented a **MOAA Leadership Award to Pat Piccirilli**, the former head of our Chapter’s Legislative Affairs Committee, for his years of dedication and tireless efforts in advocacy. For several years we had nominated Pat for MOAA’s prestigious Steven Strobridge Award for excellence in advocacy, but without success. The competition is extremely tough, since MOAA awards only *one* person each year from among all of the Chapters and *one* from among all state Councils. Pat had no idea he would be receiving this Leadership award. Then, sneaky Skip surprised *me* with the same award for serving in multiple roles concurrently over the past four plus years (Chapter President, Newsletter Editor, ROTC & JROTC Awards, and acting Treasurer).

Below left: Member Mark O’Rourke (*left*) is telling Pat Piccirilli (*center*) something that grabbed his attention, we don’t know what, while Chris Costigan (*right*) tries to listen in. (Photo by Ralph Folger) *Below Center:* Pat Piccirilli receives MOAA’s Leadership Award from Skip Bebernitz. (Photo by Ralph Folger) *Below right:* Al Memole receives the same MOAA award, presented by Skip Bebernitz. (Photo by Mary Memole)



Remaining Chapter Meetings For 2026

MEETING DATE & TYPE	MEETING DETAILS *
June 6 , luncheon (Saturday)	<i>Norrine's Restaurant, Waterford</i> Guest speaker: Pat Chaisson, LTC USA RET Topic: D-Day
August TBD , Board of Directors	<i>Scheiber's on-the-lake, Bolton Landing</i>
October 4 , luncheon (Sunday)	<i>TBD</i>
November 21 , Board of Directors	<i>NYS Military Museum, Saratoga</i>
December 13 , luncheon - Holiday Party / Annual Business Mtg (Sunday)	<i>TBD</i>

* Details in italics are *tentative*.

ROTC Award Presentations

The Spring semester is when Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs recognize the achievements and performance of their cadets and midshipmen. Once again our Chapter was honored to be able to present the MOAA ROTC Award to two deserving cadets and a midshipman in their junior (third) year of the program, who maintained good academic standing, showed high moral character, demonstrated a high degree of loyalty to their unit, school, and country, and demonstrated exceptional potential for military leadership. This year's recipients are:

JASON BASLE, Army ROTC, Siena College, Mohawk Battalion. The Mohawk Battalion, commanded by (MOAA member) *LTC Nicolas Ouimet*, held its award ceremony at the Norm Room in the Siena Dining Hall at 1700 hrs on April 16. It was an informal event by design, with pizza and soft drinks, so that the cadets could relax and enjoy themselves at the close of a challenging semester. Cadet Basle attends UAlbany in their Public Policy program. He hopes to serve in the Infantry and, at some point, attend law school. He seemed interested in MOAA's advocacy work.



Above left: Cadet Jason Basle receives the MOAA ROTC Award from Chapter President Al Memole. Above right: a candid photo of LTC Nicolas Ouimet, Mohawk Battalion Commander enjoying the event. (Photos by Gene Loparco)

Continued on next page



Above: The Midshipmen present internal awards at the beginning of the ceremony. (Photo by Al Memole) [Additional photos of the Award Ceremony will appear in a later issue after they become available.]

COLE THOMPSON, Midshipman 2nd Class, Navy ROTC Unit, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), Troy. The NROTC Unit held its awards and Change of Command ceremony at the Armory on RPI's campus at 1400 hrs on April 22. Chapter President Al Memole presented the MOAA ROTC Award to Midshipman Thompson. Following presentation of awards, the NROTC Unit held Change of Command ceremonies for the midshipmen and then for the Unit. *US Navy Captain David Latta*, who commanded the unit for the last three years, passed command to *Major Benjamin Allman, USMC*, in the interim until Captain Latta's replacement comes on board later in the Summer. Captain Latta is taking command of the Navy ROTC Program, part of the Naval Education and Training Command, headquartered at Naval Station Great Lakes.

BENJAMIN COLELLO, Air Force ROTC Detachment 550, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), Troy. Det 550, commanded by *Lt Col Ryan Coughlin*, held its awards ceremony at Mueller Center on the RPI campus at 0800hrs on April 28. Cadet Colello organized and executed AFROTC's 2025 Cadet Orientation Program for the largest incoming class in many years. As the Leadership Laboratory Commander, he organized weekly 2-hour labs that challenged cadets' leadership and teamwork skills. He ran 1.5 miles in 8 minutes and 15 seconds, and earned a rare perfect test at Field Training in Alabama last summer. He was chosen to be the next Cadet Commander of the Cadet Corps Wing. A Mechanical Engineering major, Cadet Colello is interested in serving in Civil Engineering (installations) in the Air Force. (Interesting fact: Lt Col Coughlin received the MOAA ROTC Award when he was an AFROTC cadet.)



Above: Det 550's Cadet Corps Wing prepares for the Change of Command ceremony in the RPI Armory. (Photo courtesy of AFROTC Det 550)

Right top: LTC Memole presents the MOAA ROTC Award to Cadet Colello; Right middle: Cadet Colello receives the unit guidon from Lt Col Coughlin; Right bottom: Cadet Colello and LTC Memole. (Photos courtesy of AFROTC Det 550)

Chapter Due\$ for 2026

Thanks to the following **23** members who have paid their dues:

*John Andonie
Edward Balaban
Ernest Bebernitz
Edward Choiniere
Stephen Cipperly
Christopher Costigan
David Erickson
Ralph Folger*

*Kathy Gates
Laurie Gates
Jeffrey Hughes
Peter Mehling
Alfred Memole
Vincent Memole, Jr
Mark Moeller
Mark O'Rourke*

*Joseph Peck
Patrick Piccirilli
Sean Piccirilli
Christine Richardson
Lance Richardson
Edmund Scheiber
Merle Schreckengost*

There are a few of you who haven't paid dues for this year. A reminder: We have *three* options for paying dues:

1. Paying by cash or check at a Chapter meeting,
2. Mailing a check to the Chapter PO Box, or
3. **THE EASIEST OF ALL** – paying online using [Cheddar Up](#), a portal provided through MOAA by which Chapter members may pay dues. Cheddar Up resides on the provider's site and Chapters have our own accounts and pages that we maintain. MOAA handles all fees. You can access Cheddar Up through the "[Pay Your Annual Dues](#)" link our Chapter website's Homepage, which opens our Chapter dues page on Cheddar Up.

Annual dues cover our administrative and operational expenses such as liability insurance, website domain fees, PO Box, and postage. Fees also enable us to provide ROTC and JROTC awards and modest financial support to local organizations that help veterans and families, or educate the public about US and NY military history.

MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

**Join MOAA Leadership and your fellow MOAA members
on these hosted cruises and land tours.**

July 12-21, 2026	Highlights of Eastern Europe River Cruise	9-nights from \$3,999
October 1-10, 2026	Western Europe Yacht Cruise	9-nights from \$4,999
April 25-May 2, 2027	Castles Along the Rhine River Cruise	7-nights from \$4,199
July 19-27, 2027	France & Spain Yacht Cruise	8-nights from \$5,799
September 14-25, 2027	Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise	11-nights from \$8,999
Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027	Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour	10 days from \$6,495

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Upcoming Chapter Events

Our Chapter is trying to offer a variety of activities, besides our regular meetings, for members to get together for fun, service, and camaraderie. Many of these are still in the planning stage, and some might not materialize. But, to give you a heads up, these are some proposals on the table:

1. **Helping out at the Stratton VA Medical Center**
2. **Handing out information about MOAA and MOAA scholarships, and recruiting new members at County Fairs in the Capital District.** We envision have a booth or table for four hours or so on one day of each fair, if possible, specifically on any day designated for military families and veterans. The fairs under consideration are: Saratoga (Jul 21-26), Schoharie (Aug 11-16), Altamont (Aug 18-23), Washington (Aug 24-30), Columbia (Sep 2-7), Scaghticoke (Sep 2-7).
3. **Helping Homeward Bound Adirondacks (HBA)** with their new outdoors retreat center near Malone, NY for veterans, especially those suffering from PTSD. (*MOAA approved for our Chapter a Foundation grant to acquire needed equipment for the center.*)
4. **Collaborating with the Saratoga Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) and the New York State Military Museum to put on a one-day Youth Leadership Seminar.** Currently we're looking at piloting this for about 30 Capital District High School students, probably starting with cadets from the local JROTC programs. The tentative date is Oct 3rd; tentative location is the NYS Military Museum in Saratoga Springs.

Please contact email pres@cdnymoaa.org if you want to participate in any of these activities or if you have ideas of your own for our Chapter.

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.

HIGHLIGHTED CHARITY for this issue →

CAPITAL DISTRICT WOMEN VETERANS (CDWV)

Christine Rem, COL US Army (Retired), founded and runs the CDWV. It is a 501(c) (3) charity with the mission to provide “supportive services, housing, and community, enabling women veterans in need to return to productive and independent roles in their communities and families.” CDWV helps these female veterans through a Case Management process. That entails performing “an initial intake assessment to determine the woman veteran’s unique needs,” followed by development of integrated care plans that address the veteran’s physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs, and then continuum of care plans to monitor the program.

For additional information on the CDWV, their needs, and activities, visit their website at: <https://www.cdwv.org/>.

NYS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS

54th ANNUAL CONVENTION

(By Chapter President Al Memole)

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS 54th ANNUAL CONVENTION!

ALL MOAA MEMBERS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND. ALL of the information you need about the Convention, including the agenda, pricing, dress code, and how to register and pay, you can find on our Chapter website, here: https://cdnymoaa.org/?page_id=1536

BELOW IS A SUMMARY OF KEY INFORMATION:

- DATES: Sunday, **27 September** through Wednesday, **30 September 2026**
- LOCATION: **Hotel Saranac**, 100 Main Street, Saranac Lake, New York 12983, (<https://www.hotelsaranac.com>)
- OBJECTIVES:
 - To advance the mission of MOAA in advocating on matters for all service-members;
 - To enhance the NYS CoC's relationship with MOAA National;
 - To establish a direct connection between our Chapters; and
 - Honor our deceased members at our Annual Memorial Service.
- TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:
 - **Sunday 09/27:** Check-in and Welcome Buffet Dinner – Keynote Speaker: *Viviana DeCohen, USMC veteran, Commissioner, NYS Department of Veterans Services*
 - **Monday 09/28:**
 - Morning: Latest Information from MOAA – *Frank Michael, CAPT, USN (Ret), Sr. Director, Affiliated Councils & Chapters (Chapter Management, Advocacy, Communications, and more)*
 - Afternoon: NYS Council of Chapters Annual Business Meeting
 - Evening: 54th Annual Banquet / Awards Dinner / Memorial Service – Keynote Speaker: *April Vogel, Maj Gen, USAF (Ret), Vice President, Government Relations, MOAA*
 - **Tuesday 9/29:** TOURS – Cloudsplitter Gondola Ride at Whiteface Mountain, lunch at the American Legion Post 326 in Lake Placid, and a self-guided visit to the Olympic Center Museum, home of 1980's "Miracle on Ice." Dinner on your own.
 - **Wednesday 09/30:** Check out.
- ATTENDANCE OPTIONS and PRICES:
 - **All options include** your choice of an air conditioned (no smoking) room, room configuration (number and type of beds), a daily Hospitality Room (a variety of beverages, snacks, and socializing), choice of entrée for meals, and all gratuities.
 - **SUPER DELUXE PACKAGE:** 3 nights lodging (Sun, Mon, Tue), 2 Lunches, 2 Dinners, and 3 Breakfasts (per person), tours to Whiteface Mountain and the Olympic Center Museum, and 3 Nights Hospitality Room. [**\$760 single; \$1,070 double**]

Continued on next page

- **DELUXE PACKAGE:** 2 nights lodging (Sun, Mon), 1 Lunch, 2 Dinners, and 2 Breakfasts (pp), 2 Nights Hospitality Room, (NO TOUR) [**\$510 single; \$715 double**]
- **MINI PACKAGE:** 1 night lodging (Mon), 1 Lunch, 1 Banquet Dinner, and 1 Breakfast (pp), 1 night Hospitality Room, (NO TOUR.) [**\$265 single; \$380 double**]
- **A LA CARTE ITEMS:** your choice of specific activities, priced separately.

REGISTRATION and PAYMENT

- Registration and 50% deposit are due by 26 June 2026. The balance is due by 01 August 2026.
- Reservations received *after 01 Aug 2026* will be accepted on a space available basis. *There will be no cancellations/refunds accepted after 11 August 2026.*

Let it be known to all those present:

The New York State Capital District Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Has earned the MOAA 5-Star Level of Excellence (LOE) Award for 2025 and 5-Star Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards for the Chapter Website and Newsletter!



OTHER NEWS & EVENTS OF INTEREST

- **New York Global War on Terror (GWOT) Veterans Memorial and Exhibit.** Don't forget this worthy initiative. It requires substantial funding. **Donations can be made online at the Friends of the New York State Military Museum website** (<https://friendsnysmm.com/pages/strategic-priorities-global-war-on-terror-exhibit>).

Join Us for a Powerful Day of Giving Back

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ART 4 VETS
Supporting Veterans & Active Duty Families

SILENT ★ AUCTION

TO BENEFIT VETERANS & ACTIVE DUTY FAMILIES

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10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

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 .CHECK

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#VeteransSupport #VMC #SilentAuction #GiveBack
 #SupportOurTroops #CommunityStrong #AlbanyNY

CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2025-2027

CHAPTER OFFICE	INCUMBENT
President pres@cdnymoaa.org	Alfred M. Memole, LTC USA, RET
1 st Vice President	Kathy E. Gates, COL USA, RET
2 nd Vice President	<i>vacant</i>
Secretary	Ralph Folger, LCDR USNR, RET
Treasurer treas@cdnymoaa.org	<i>(Acting) Alfred M. Memole, LTC USA, RET</i>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2025-2027

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
Edward E. Balaban, LT USNR RET	Lance Richardson, MAJ USA RET

* Immediate Past-President

** Former President

CHAPTER COMMITTEES (in alphabetical order)

- LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS (ADVOCACY): *Skip Bebernitz (Ch.), Chris Costigan, Kathy Gates, Pat Piccirilli*
- MEMBERSHIP: *vacant*
- NEWSLETTER: *Al Memole (Editor)* newsletter@cdnymoaa.org
- PERSONAL AFFAIRS: *vacant*
- PROGRAM: *Skip Bebernitz (Ch.), Chris Costigan*
- PUBLIC AFFAIRS: *Ed Balaban (Ch.)*
- ROTC/JROTC AWARDS: *Al Memole (Ch.)*
rotc-jrotc@cdnymoaa.org
- SOCIAL MEDIA: *vacant*
- SURVIVING SPOUSE: *vacant*
- TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: *Skip Bebernitz (Ch.)*
- WEBSITE: *Ralph Folger (Webmaster)*

We know that you are very busy, but please consider filling a vacancy or joining a committee. Every committee needs help, and many hands make work light! You’ll get more out of your chapter membership by giving just a little of your time, even to do just one thing. Follow your interests and share your skills for the common good.

NOTE: The Chapter President is automatically considered to be a member of every active committee.

APPOINTED DUTIES

- CHAPLAIN: *vacant*
- HISTORIAN: *vacant*

CHAPTER MEMBERS HOLDING NYS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS POSITIONS

Vincent A. Memole, Jr., LTC USA RET - Eastern Region Vice President

Ernest “Skip” Bebernitz, MAJ USA RET - Council Advisory Committee