



GENESEE VALLEY CHAPTER MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA NEWSLETTER



2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

VISIT US AT gvcmoaa.org

Serving Members and Their Country

March 2014

FROM THE PRESIDENT



For all those who are not snowbirds, I think enough is enough (snow that is). The folks at Bristol Mountain (a couple of miles away from our house) probably wouldn't agree, but I can find other means of exercise besides shoveling the walk and clearing three foot drifts in front of the garage door that faces west. But the light at the end of the tunnel should be getting brighter according to our 'Furry Forecaster' from Gobbler's Knob, Pennsylvania and soon we'll be complaining about the heat wave.

Recent Events: In somewhat chronological order, I plan to highlight the events since the November Newsletter. In **November**, Rosemary and I traveled to Colorado Springs to receive the Chapter Five Star Level of Excellence award from General Tilelli, Chairman of the MOAA Board. The Awards Banquet was the

highlight of the two-day MOAA meeting, which included workshops, an annual meeting and a banquet honoring those local organizations and individuals providing exceptional care to our returning wounded/injured service members. For me, experiencing the dedication and passion of MOAA's President, VADM Ryan, to serve the needs of our service members and their families is an example that inspires MOAA Staff, Council and Chapter leaders to follow.



2013 Geneesee Valley Chapter Level of Excellence Award; L to R: GEN John Tilelli Jr, (Chairman, MOAA Board of Directors) & CAPT Jerry Luzum (President, Geneesee Valley Chapter).

In **December**, we celebrated the holiday spirit with the GVC family for the last time at the Green Lantern. It was kind of sad to say goodbye to the wait staff and a facility that had served the Chapter for many years. In the middle of the month, we spent the afternoon wrapping gifts for the patients at the Canandaigua VAMC. We were the largest group there and our assembly line wrapping system guided us in wrapping about 1000 presents in a couple of hours.



Standing L to R; LtCol Bob Bienvenue (Outgoing NYS Council President), COL Ben Margolius (Incoming NYS Council President), CAPT Jerry Luzum (President, Genesee Valley Chapter). Seated L to R; Sue Margolius, LTC Peggy Phillips, President, Southern Tier Chapter, Rosemary Luzum.

2013 Reflections, The end of the year gave me the opportunity to relax and reflect on the year. As host Chapter of the Council Convention, we did a fantastic job in planning and executing our vision for that event, but at a cost of physical and emotional stress mixed with the satisfaction of a job well done. An unexpected outcome was the request from the MOAA Assistant Director of Council and Chapter Affairs to provide his office with the planning guide we used for the Convention. Their idea was to get the best ideas from host chapters around the country for a MOAA guide for those states who do not hold

conventions on a regular basis. Since I had all the information, I also submitted the guide for a MOAA Communications Award. I plan to provide the guide to next year's convention host Chapter, the Southern Tier. The time also gave me a chance to reflect on those who have passed from our midst, who served in leadership roles and were my mentors during the short time that I have been a Chapter member. Col Woody Mench and Col Phil Tierney contributed much to the Council and Chapter and will be greatly missed.

2014 / Membership, It's a new year and we get to do it all over again . . . not so fast! When I became a commanding officer, I got some old Navy sage advice, "Don't steer by your wake or you will put this thing on a reef or run into somebody". Since membership is our lifeblood, we have to stay focused on new Chapter members and retention. That is the pointy end of the organization and we all need to understand that we are all recruiters and retainers of the Chapter and the legacy it will leave behind. I think we did well last year, 7 new members and one conversion to Life Membership. But our losses prevented us from attaining a MOAA 90% retention rate goal. Some of this had to do with administrative bean counting, but some was not. We want to work on what was not. We are off to a good start this year with two Life Membership conversions, COL Peter Ingalsbe and LtCol Norma Weissend. Thank you and welcome.

I think we are sometimes frightened when the officer asks the question, "Why should I belong"? or "What's in it for me"? There are at least two answers to those questions. First, From a financial or quality-of-life standpoint, our earned

benefits are rooted in bills enacted in the Congress and signed into law by the President. Likewise, changes to those laws follow the same route. The power of an organization such as MOAA and its 375,000 members provides a voice and information on bills before the Congress. Remember, only about 20% of those members have served in the military. With rare exception, an individual does not have the same influence on legislation. MOAA has 10 registered lobbyists, all retired officers, with one being VADM Ryan, to do this job. The **second** reason is more philosophical. My family and I enjoy the earned benefits today due to those who came before me and worked so hard for those who were serving. **So pay it forward**, and become involved in an organization that works on those issues, so they will be available for future military. If you don't, who will?

Federal Legislation, Over the past two months, several pieces of Federal legislation affecting the military have been brought before the Congress in order to beat certain budget deadlines. MOAA has asked that you weigh in on these issues by emailing your concerns to your congressman and senators. On the COLA issue alone, MOAA members sent over 295,000 messages over the past two months. Through these efforts and the MOAA and the Military Coalition staff, they did listen and on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 11th and 12th, Congress approved legislation to repeal the COLA cuts for military retirees under age 62 and the currently serving. During a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing on the COLA cuts for working-age military retirees established in the Bipartisan Budget Act of

2013 (BBA), Pentagon witnesses repeatedly talked about curbing military personnel costs. It became crystal clear the Pentagon does not intend to wait until the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission's (MCRMC) completes its review in February 2015 to start adjusting currently serving compensation and benefit programs. They will introduce changes in the 2015 budget due to be submitted on March 4th. From the perspective of MOAA's Director of Government Relations, Col Mike Hayden, the gains over the past 13 years are now targets for cuts with the following forms of pay and benefits being leading candidates. These, and maybe more, are facing the chopping block. More clarity will surface once the budget rolls out March 4.

- Capping pay raises or even freezing pay;
- Making additional end-strength cuts;
- Changing basic allowance for housing to make service members assume more of the costs;
- reducing the commissary benefit savings; and
- means-testing TRICARE fees and establishing TRICARE For Life /TRICARE Standard enrollment fees.

The bottom line: The Pentagon will push pay and benefit cuts, and they will be more than "tweaks." These proposed changes will definitely impact the purchasing power of military families.

New York State Legislation, Legislation for the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children has been sponsored in the NYS Senate and Assembly since 2008. The latest bills are

S.1213 and A.5787. This legislation would make the State a member of a Compact focused on alleviating many of the academic challenges posed by different state educational systems that the children in military families face when moving from state to state. Between 1/3 and 1/2 of the 14,000 school-age children of active duty military families who reside in NY because of military orders transfer in and out of our state every year. This is disruptive enough without having to deal with overly bureaucratic barriers to their successful transition and fulfillment of educational goals. New York State now has the largest population of school-aged children of active duty service members in the 4 states that are NOT members of this Compact. While the Senate has passed their version unanimously for the last three years, the Assembly Bill has not made it out of the Education Committee each legislative session since 2008. We must press Assembly members in our Districts that are on the Education Committee to hold hearings on A.5787.

Personal Affairs/TFL As part of the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, all TFL beneficiaries must enroll in home delivery through Express Scripts for maintenance medications and remain in the program for one year, after which beneficiaries may opt out of the program. Express Scripts may issue individual waivers on a case-by-case basis. Nursing home patients and those who use a military treatment facility are exempt. Enrollment begins February 14th and may be done either online or by calling Express Scripts at (877) 363-1303.

March Meeting, We will again feature the local College and University ROTC/NROTC

programs in the Rochester area. The Chapter will honor the outstanding ROTC/NROTC Cadets and Midshipmen from the University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology and SUNY Brockport with the MOAA Medal. Several Chapter members commented last year on the enthusiasm of these young men and women who have shown a strong sense of dedication, patriotism and commitment to serve our nation as a part of the All Volunteer Force. The Cadets and Midshipmen commented on the feeling of acceptance and camaraderie of the Chapter that continues to serve a new generation of officers long after they have left active service. The Cadre at these units appreciated the opportunity to talk to veterans from different military services and specialties represented in our Chapter. The Cadre and honored Cadets from the two JROTC programs will be included in the program. The MOAA scholarship recipients and their parents have also been invited. Again this year the Chapter has been successful in obtaining a grant from USAA to partially offset the cost of this event. This is a unique opportunity to meet and mingle with the future military leaders. Don't miss it, details are on the last two pages of the Newsletter.

Future meetings, The April and June meeting dates and locations can also be found below. For the first meeting in the fall of 2014, we plan to meet on the west side of Rochester. Bob Zale is currently working with the Johnson House in Churchville for this dinner.

Honor Flight, Honor Flight Rochester (HFR) has scheduled four missions for the first part of the year. Mission 33 – April 5-6,

Mission 34 – May 17-18, Mission 35 – June 14-15 and Mission 36 – June 28-29. Please try to attend the homecoming of our WWII and Korean War veterans as they return to Rochester. It is an experience you will long remember. Check with the Rochester International Airport for flight arrival times. Donations to HFR to send veterans to Washington, DC, may be made in the collection box at our meetings or sent to our Treasurer, Russ Green.

Vacation trip ? Jim Tille is putting together a two week bus trip through the Pacific Northwest, US National Parks and into Canada during the second week in June for approximately \$1600. Jim has sponsored several trips for NYS MOAA members in the past. If interested, contact Jim through his email address: jimtille@yahoo.com.

Gerald (Jerry) Luzum, CAPT, CEC, USN (Ret), President, Genesee Valley Chapter/MOAA

Military Outreach Report,

222nd Military Police Company, NYARNG returned home with the final increment arriving Christmas eve. They are going through a 90-day reintegration period at this time. Once they return to their Hornell armory and normal drill schedule a ceremony will be conducted. Our chapter will be supporting this event.

We are committed to support our military with our personnel outreach program. We are currently evaluating new programs to reach out to. We are continuing are support

Please consider Chapter Life Membership

<u>Age</u>	<u>Life dues</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Life Dues</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Life Dues</u>
<45	\$270	61-65	220	81-85	110
46-50	265	66-70	200	86-89	80
51-55	250	71-75	170	90+	No charge
56-60	235	76-80	140		

to Honor Flight, Canandaigua VA and programs the spouses club supports.

Your Board of Directors receives several requests each year from organizations requesting support and we act on them. Your support and contributions give us the funds to fill most of those request.

Anyone wishing to support our military outreach program can send or give donations to our treasurer.

**Dave Szczygiel, BG, USA-Ret.
Military Outreach Liaison**

Spouses The next Souses Club meeting will take place at Monroe’s Restaurant on Monroe Ave, Pittsford, on 19 March 2014 at 1200 hrs. Call Eileen Carlsen to make a reservation (585) 377-5665.

2014 Dues !!

The Chapter does not mail statements, 2014 dues are now due. Dues are \$15.00 payable to GVC/MOAA. Colonel Green would be happy to receive your check for \$30.00 which is two year’s dues simplifying your checkbook and his accounts. Please mail your check to the chapter treasurer:

LTC Russell L. Green
2 Winding Brook Drive
Fairport, New York 14450

For your convenience, you may also add your dues payment to your dinner reservation.

Genesee Valley Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
53rd Year, Fourth Meeting
Sunday, March 9, 2014

Gatherings at the Daisy Flour Mill
1880 Blossom Road
Rochester, New York
585-381-0180

1300 Cocktails and Cheese and Crackers

1400 Dinner

Selections

Petite Tenderloin
Breast of Chicken w/ Lemon Basil Sauce and Rice
Baked Salmon w/ Mustard crème Fraiche

Dessert

PROGRAM

ROTC Awards

Reservations due Saturday March 1, 1200. Please use form provided.
Cancellations NLT Wednesday, March 5.

Future Meetings:

April 27, 2014 – Daisy Flour Mill
June 8, 2014 – Burgundy Basin

Reservations for March 9 Meeting

Name _____ Spouse _____

Guest _____

_____ Beef _____ Chicken _____ Fish

Payment is enclosed for the following:

meal(s) at \$25.00 each, totaling _____

_____ years dues at \$15.00/year, totaling _____

Lifetime dues for age _____, totaling _____

Check enclosed for a total of: _____

For more information/questions, or if your reservation may be late in arriving at the PO Box, call Barbara Green at 585-330-2708.

Please make checks payable to GVC MOAA and mail to the following address:

GVC MOAA
PO Box 2087
Rochester, NY 14602-0874

**Genesee Valley Chapter
Military Officers Assn of America
151 Galvin Court
Farmington, NY 14425**



March 2014 Newsletter

First Class Mail

