



2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

**GENESEE VALLEY CHAPTER
MILITARY OFFICERS
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**

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Serving Members and Their Country

February 2015



**FROM THE
PRESIDENT**

Federal Legislation. The last few years have seen a late budget submission from the President, which has pushed the Congress to hold hearings later in the year and pressure them

to come up with a budget by September 30th. This year is different. There are three things that are going to make the 2016 Fiscal Year process a complex one. **First**, the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission (MCRMC), established by the Defense Authorization Act of 2013, reported to the Congress on 29 January. The Commission suggests 15 radical reforms. None of these suggestions are included in proposed legislation for 2016 but may be added as things progress. They will be thoroughly vetted by various groups before they see the light of day in the 2016 budget. A more likely scenario would be the 2017 Budget. **Second**, the President submitted a Budget that broke the Sequestration

cap, which by law is in effect for 2016. **Third**, there is a whole new set of leaders and congressmen and women sitting on the various legislative committees dealing with defense issues. As VADM Ryan commented during the Annual MOAA meeting, ‘A significant amount of time will be spent in briefings on various defense issues and developing relationships with the new members.’

A broad brush look at the Commission’s Recommendations:

- Military Retirement – Replace the current 20 year cliff-vesting system with a blended defined benefit and 401k-style package. The proposal would be optional for the current force, and mandatory for new entrants. Current retirees would not be affected by the recommended reform.
- Health Care – Eliminate TRICARE for military families and working age retirees and replacing it with a selection of commercial insurance plans similar to those available to federal civilian employees. The cost of the insurance would be subsidized.
- Survivor Benefit Plans (SBP) – Create a new cost structure for the SBP deductibles.
- Consolidate the Commissary and

Exchange Systems.

- Expand Space-A travel to families of service members deployed for 30 days or more.
- Consolidate 30 Reserve component duty statuses into six.
- Create a four star joint medical command structure across the services.

The President's 2016 Budget Request is strikingly similar to last year. An active duty military pay cap, increase in out-of-pocket housing costs and higher TRICARE fees.

Specifics of the proposal include:

- Cap the FY 2016 active duty pay raise at 1.3% versus the 2.3% dictated by law.
- Reduce overall military end strength by 11,300.
- Reduce the Basic Allowance for Housing.
- Phase-in of a \$1 Billion cut in the annual commissary subsidy. This equates to a 66% loss in savings for commissary shoppers.
- Establish a means-tested TRICARE For Life enrollment fee for retirees over 65.
- Consolidate TRICARE Prime, Standard and Extra programs into one program. Working age retirees would pay to use Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs) and absorb the Prime enrollment fee plus the Standard copays.

With so many important issues on the table, each MOAA member needs to be engaged. A visit to your elected Federal official's office is the best as it affords face-to-face dialogue on issues that are important to you. A second option is to respond to the Congress as legislation progresses. MOAA provides two vehicles to do that. Although the *Military Officer* monthly magazine often has articles on issues and prepared responses to our legislators, the magazine is not timely once the fast pace of the legislative process begins. Subscribe to the MOAA *News Exchange* (NEX) which is a biweekly e-newsletter that delivers information on all topics of importance to veterans and their families. And, MOAA's *Legislative Update*, delivered each Friday, advises you of special alerts on congressional votes affecting you and

your family. The MOAA Team in Washington does a great job advising our elected officials of our position on defense issues, BUT it takes all 380,000 members to keep our presence and positions known to legislators in our districts. We will only speak with One Powerful Voice with everybody's involvement. The sage advice given to me while I worked in the Navy Budget Office was, "Don't let the ***** eat your lunch!". The Admiral injected a few more expletives, but you catch the drift.

New York State Legislative Issues

In 2013 State legislators amended the existing Alternative Veterans Tax Exemptions to include school taxes. Although some school districts have enacted these exemptions, the majority have not. It is not that they fail to recognize the contributions that veterans have made but a recognition that enacting the exemptions would increase the taxes for those who are not eligible. So, it is being treated as another State imposed unfunded mandate. I believe that we must work with the legislators for the State to fund the exemption.

Chapter Highlights

Membership. Ken Carlsen has done a superb job in cleaning up our membership list and making it match the MOAA National list, no easy task. Incorrect addresses, phone numbers, email and MOAA National membership status to name a few. Please, notify Ken of any changes in this information and he will contact the Treasurer and Newsletter Editor of these changes. Numerous phone calls and letters were sent to members who had not paid their dues. And, although I take the non renewals somewhat personally as a failure of my leadership, we must move on. We started the year with 107 members and on December 31st we had 115. Our retention rate was 92%. Somehow this doesn't look right but is correct when you take in non renewals according to the formula used by National. Now, it is up to us to keep our membership growing and reducing our lapsed members. It is then that we will have a vibrant Chapter and activity base to serve our service men and women in addition to

having grass roots clout with our elected representatives. "Every member get a member"!

The Board of Directors is working hard to resolve unfinished business before the new Board is elected on June 14th. The Nominating Committee will publish a list of candidates in the next Newsletter.

A high five to the Spouses Club for organizing our participation in the Christmas Gift Wrap. The Chapter had the largest group of elves at the VAMC and we wrapped over 900 gifts for inpatients and outpatients in a little over 2 hours. Our celebration of the season took place at Burgundy Basin with live music and a gift exchange on December 7th. The event was a very successful fund raiser for the Spouses Club which sold seasonal gifts for their projects.

Save these dates.

Please make a special effort to attend the ROTC/JROTC Awards Dinner on Sunday, March 8th. Be sure to give a warm welcome to all the Commanders, especially the three who are new to the area. And, it's always a real shot in the arm to talk to the award recipients and wish them well in the career to serve our great nation.

April 26th General Meeting at the Canandaigua Yacht Club. Our featured speaker will be Naomi Wadsworth, navigator and pilot of Whisky 7, a restored WWII cargo plane that participated in the D Day invasion and flew from Geneseo to Normandy to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of that event.

June 14th General Meeting and election of officers at Burgundy Basin. The new officers will be inducted by a MOAA National staff member who will also be our featured speaker.

Honor Flight. Honor Flight Rochester (HFR) has scheduled three missions for the first part of the year. Mission 40 : May 2-3, Mission 41:

May 30-31, Mission 42: June 20-21. 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.

Toiletries for VAMC. Please bring some personal hygiene products and place them in the donation box at the check-in table.

New Members. Please welcome our newest member Col Timothy Vaughan and his wife Jean and new Chapter Life Members: Major Fred Jackson, CDR Jim Nielsen, LTC Art Cohen, CAPT John Davis, COL Richard Lent, COL Barbara Green and MG Norbert Rappi.

Taps. It is with sincere sorrow that we note the passing of Father Paul Freemesser LtCol (Ret) Died on December 23, 2014. Our condolences to his family and many friends,

Spouses Club Information: In December, our members again were able to enjoy a wonderful meal at Rheinblick's Resturant and then went to the Canandaigua VA to wrap gifts for our Veterans. Our Christmas table with raffles, crafts and bake goods net us \$255. The Christmas Dinner was a great success and everyone enjoyed a the get-together. Thanks to all who made purchases for our fund raiser. The Christmas order of gift cards gave us a return of \$109. I will continue to accept orders for gift cards through Shop with Scrip as a fundraiser. Just go to www.shopwithscrip.com using the GVC MOAA code: DSCLFDBF3L831. Once you have entered your order, send a copy of the order and check to Karen Murphy 1463 Camborn Dr. Macedon, NY 14502, Our club

earns from 2 – 15% for each card ordered. There are over 300 retailers to choose from. If you have any questions contact Karen at kcarlom@icloud.com or phone 585-749-8989. Our next meeting will be at noon on March 18th at Monroe's Restaurant. Contact Eileen Carlsen at: emc918@frontiernet.net if you are able to

attend. Sick call: if you are aware of anyone who is ill or in need of help please contact Eileen Carlsen at the above address.

GVC/MOAA BOARDMEMBERS 2013-2015

President: Gerald (Jerry) Luzum, CAPT, CEC, USN (Ret)

(H) 585-396-1406, cell 585-355-0562 Email: roni39@earthlink.net

1st Vice President: Norma Weissend, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

585-746-2904 Email: normaweis@roadrunner.com

2nd Vice President: Ken Carlsen, CDR, USN, (Ret)

585-377-5665, Email: kcarlsen@frontiernet.net

3rd Vice President/Transition Liaison: **VACANT**

Member at Large: Peter Ingalsbe, COL, USA (Ret)

585-749-3390, (cell) Email: pingalsbe@gmail.com

Secretary: Joseph Ballister, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

585-334-9775 Email: ballister@earthlink.net

Treasurer: Russ Green, LTC, USA (Ret)

585-425-4292, Email: russgreen@aol.com

Immediate Past President: Dave Szczygiel, BG, USA (Ret)

585-346-3736 Email: mszczygiel@rochester.rr.com

Past President: Robert Zale, Col, USAF (Ret)

585-594-8422 Email: sigbobzale@aol.com

Past president: Barbara Green, Col, USA (Ret)

585-330-2708 Email: bgreenanc@gmail.com

Auxiliary Liaison: Marion Mench

585-217-1779, Email: mosimpli@rochester.rr.com

2015 Dues are now \$20.00 Please forward to the Treasurer Russell Green, LTC, USA, (RET), 2 Winding Brook Drive Fairport, NY 14450 or you may also include your dues payment with your dinner reservation.



**Genesee Valley Chapter
Military Officers Association of America**

54th Year, Fourth Meeting

Sunday, 8 March 2015

Valicia's Ristorante

2155 Long Pond Rd
Rochester, NY 14606

1300 hours: Cocktails and Cheese and Crackers

1400 hours: Dinner

Starters: Salad, bread and butter, coffee, or tea

Entrée choices:

12 oz Prime Rib with baked potato and mixed vegetables

Shrimp Scampi with pasta and mixed vegetables

Chicken Angello - boneless chicken breast sautéed in sherry wine and butter with artichoke hearts, black olives, broccoli and roasted red peppers, and baked potato

Dessert - Vanilla ice cream with chocolate sauce

Program: ROTC Recognition Dinner

Reservations due ASAP but NLT Saturday, 28 Feb 2015. Please use form provided below

Cancellations NLT 1200 hours, Friday, 6 Mar 2015.

Future Meetings

2015

April 26, 1300 hours – Canandaigua Yacht Club

June 14, 1300 hours – Burgundy Basin

Reservation for 8 March 2015 Meeting

Name _____ Spouse _____

Guest _____ Guest _____

Prime Rib _____ Shrimp _____ Chicken _____

Check for _____ total meal(s) at \$30.00 each

2015 Dues \$20.00 _____

Total: _____ enclosed.

Please make checks payable to GVC MOAA and mail to:

GVC MOAA
C/O Norma Weissend
4587 Ridge Rd
Canandaigua, NY 14424