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**SERVING ALL MILITARY, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

**\*\*\* Apr 2026 \*\*\***

### *PRESIDENT'S CORNER*

Spring is here! Well, we're getting there, but occasional winter-like detours are frustrating!

The month of March kicked off the first of our six chapter dinner programs for this year, and what a program it was! Our annual MOAA ROTC/JROTC Awards program is always special, and you can read and see more about it later in the newsletter.

This time of year, also brings MOAA's 2026 Advocacy in Action (AiA) campaign, which will take place in Washington DC the week of April 13-16, 2026. Much more to read on this subject later in the newsletter. The Genesee Valley Chapter will be well represented again, with the three-person New York team led by GVC's own Norma Weissend as the New York Council of Chapters President, along with myself and Matt Sprenger from the Mid-Hudson Chapter. Team-NY also has two MOAA staff and one MOAA Board member visiting NY legislators.

On May 18, 2026, the chapter will take part in the "Our Community Salutes" 2026 High School Enlistee Recognition Ceremony event for Monroe County, where high school seniors will be ceremoniously sworn into the branch in which they have chosen to serve.

Find out more about Honor Flight Rochester: <https://honorflightrochester.org/>.

### **Honor Flight Rochester Missions:**

- Mission 94, Apr 18-19, 2026 (59 vets)
- Mission 95, May 16-17, 2026 (59 vets) (M95 is the First HFR All-Female Mission!)
- Mission 96, Jun 13-14, 2026 (59 vets)

### **UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS**

**Sat 25 Apr 2026, 1 pm / 2 pm >NOTE DAY!<**  
**Location: Rochester Yacht Club**  
**Guest Speaker: Kim Gould, President, HFR**  
**Designated Charity: Honor Flight Rochester**

With each chapter dinner we target one specific charity for donations, with April's dinner we are asking for your support of Honor Flight Rochester. Since 2008, Honor Flight Rochester has flown 4,766 veterans through Mission 93.

**Sun 14 Jun 2026, 1 pm / 2 pm**

**Location: Canandaigua Yacht Club**

**Guest Speaker: Maj Gen Dawne Deskins, USAF (Ret) – 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 9/11 Focus**

**Designated Charity: Veterans Outreach Center**

**Sun 13 Sep 2026, 1 pm / 2 pm**

**Location: Canandaigua Yacht Club**

**Guest Speaker: TBD**

**Designated Charity: Honor Flight Rochester**

**Sun 25 Oct 2026, 1 pm / 2 pm**

**Location: Spencerport Legion Post**

**Guest Speaker: TBD**

**Designated Charity: Wreaths Across America**

**Sun 6 Dec 2026, 1 pm / 2 pm**

**Location: Brook Lea Country Club**

**Program: Annual Holiday Party**

**... and Ugly Sweater Contest!**

**Designated Charity: Veterans Outreach Center and NEW Winter Clothing Drive**

### ***Annual ROTC/JROTC Awards Dinner***

We recently had the privilege to honor five cadets from area ROTC/JROTC programs: RIT Army and Air Force ROTC, SUNY Brockport Army ROTC, Rochester Early College International HS Army JROTC, and Padilla HS Army ROTC. Unfortunately, the University of Rochester Navy ROTC awardee was unable to attend, but we will present the award to their awardee at a unit awards day program in the near future.

As each commander or instructor cadre briefed the audience about their awardee, it was clear why they were chosen; all very impressive individuals with exceptional leadership qualities and accomplishments at such a young age! These are not your average students.

### **GVC MOAA ROTC/JROTC Awards Dinner 22 Mar 2026, Spencerport American Legion**



*L-R: Cadet Zerenity Clarke, Padilla HS JROTC; LTC Bill Carr & Cadet Janiah Marion Morris, Rochester Early College International HS JROTC; Cadet Gian Malcolm, RIT AF ROTC; Cadet Owen Lee, RIT Army ROTC; Cadet Clayton Parkin, SUNY Brockport Army ROTC, Capt Jonathan Rivera, RIT Army ROTC, and Lt Col Robert Crespo, RIT AF ROTC. Back Row: Tim Vaughan, President, GVC MOAA.*



**2026 GVC MOAA ROTC Awardees:**  
*L-R: Cadet Gian Malcolm, RIT AF ROTC; Cadet Owen Lee, RIT Army ROTC; & Cadet Clayton Parkin, SUNY Brockport Army ROTC.*

**MOAA Legislative Action Center:**

**<https://moaa.quorum.us/>**

**Take Action Now!!!**



**2026 GVC MOAA JROTC Awardee:**  
*L-R: MSG Eric Meister; Cadet Zerenity Clarke,  
 Padilla HS JROTC; Cadet Clarke's Mother  
 Angel Rogers.*



**2026 GVC MOAA JROTC Awardee:**  
*L-R: LTC Bill Carr; Cadet Janiah Marion-  
 Morris, Rochester Early College International  
 HS JROTC*

***April Dinner Preview – Honor Flight  
 Rochester President, Kim Gould***

We are honored to have Honor Flight President, Kim Gould, as our guest speaker for our Saturday, April 25, 2026, dinner.

Kim became HFR President effective July 1, 2025, and is the fifth president of the organization. Kim is a co-founder of Honor Flight Rochester and was an original board member. She was even part of the Mission 1 crew in October 2008, and she and her late husband, Jeff Gould, have left a lasting legacy of service and support.

The Genesee Valley Chapter has strong ties to Honor Flight Rochester and is proud to support its mission to honor America's Veterans for their many sacrifices. Please join in welcoming Kim Gould to speak at our April dinner meeting.



***MOAA Advocacy in Action 2026 Takes  
 Forefront... <https://www.moaa.org/AIA>***

MOAA's Advocacy in Action (AiA) 2026 is in full swing and very soon six New York AiA team members will conduct meetings with New York legislators in Washington DC. This year's campaign will focus on four important initiatives designed to strengthen support for the uniformed services and veteran communities:

- **Shutdown Fairness Act (S. 3168)**
- **Military CARE Act (H.R. 6796)**  
 (Military Care, Access, Reporting, and Evaluation (Care) Act)
- **GUARD VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1732)**  
 (Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act)
- **Major Richard Star Act (S. 1032 / H.R. 2102)**

Each of these issues has a dedicated point paper that does a deep dive into the issue, which can be found on the MOAA AiA website.

In the meantime, however, listed below are summaries of the “Ask” and “Background” of each of the four important initiatives:

### **Shutdown Fairness Act (S. 3168)**

**Ask:**

- Cosponsor the Shutdown Fairness Act to ensure continued pay and benefits during funding lapses
- Encourage inclusion of all uniformed services in final bill text (USPHS & NOAA)

**Background:**

- Servicemembers must continue working during shutdowns without guaranteed pay
- Guard and Reserve training is often suspended, harming readiness and retirement credit
- Government shutdowns and continuing resolutions are recurring
- Financial strain on military families undermines trust in the all-volunteer force

### **Military CARE Act (H.R. 6796)**

(Military Care, Access, Reporting, and Evaluation (Care) Act)

**Ask:**

- Cosponsor the Military CARE Act to establish a standardized digital platform to report and track access-to-care complaints

**Background:**

- Persistent appointment shortages, referral delays, and access barriers at MTFs
- No standardized, systemwide mechanism to capture and track access problems
- Inconsistent enforcement of access-to-care standards
- Beneficiaries often cannot switch TRICARE plans when MTF care is unavailable
- Limited transparency prevents DHA and Congress from identifying systemic issues

### **GUARD VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1732)**

(Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act)

**Ask:**

- Pass the GUARD VA Benefits Act to reinstate criminal penalties for unaccredited individuals charging unauthorized fees

**Background:**

- Only VA-accredited representatives may legally charge for claims assistance
- Congress removed criminal penalties in 2006, creating an enforcement gap
- VA can only issue cease-and-desist letters — repeat offenders continue operating
- Veterans can be charged nearly \$20,000 for assistance that is legally available for free

### **Major Richard Star Act (S. 1032 / H.R. 2102)**

**Ask:**

- Pass the Major Richard Star Act to extend concurrent receipt to combat-injured veterans medically retired before 20 years

**Background:**

- ~54,000 combat-injured veterans lose retirement pay due to a pay offset
- Military retirement pay and VA disability compensation serve different purposes
- Offset can cost affected veterans an average of ~\$1,200 per month
- Congress ended this offset in 2004 for retirees with 20+ years —this bill extends parity
- Does not create a new benefit —corrects a long-standing oversight

### **How Can You Make an Impact?**

When Team New York meets with lawmakers and their staff on Capitol Hill April 15, for MOAA’s annual Advocacy in Action Hill Day, to share these priorities directly that should not be the first time they hear about them. That is where you come in. Our Hill Day engagements will be stronger when lawmakers have already heard from you, their constituent, back home.

MOAA makes it easy for you to send messages to your elected officials through the Legislative Action Center. These messages will help demonstrate broad support for the issues our advocates will be discussing in-person on Capitol Hill.

## ***You can strengthen the advocacy effort by taking a few simple steps:***

- Watch for Advocacy in Action alerts and take action through MOAA's Legislative Action

Center: <https://moaa.quorum.us/>

- Share these advocacy opportunities with fellow MOAA members, chapter and council members, and advocates in your personal network.

- Encourage friends, family members, and others in your local community to participate and lend their voices.

## **Grass Roots Advocacy is Year Round!**

MOAA advocates for many issues beyond this year's four initiatives and grass roots advocacy at the chapter level has always been a factor in the success of their mission to Hold the Line on the earned benefits of ALL service members!

And don't forget, ANYONE, yes ANYONE, can use the Legislative Action Center...

***Go to the Legislative Action Center NOW!***

<https://moaa.quorum.us/>

## **When MOAA Speaks, Congress Listens!**

## **VA Warns of Common Government Imposter Scams Affecting Veterans**

VA News Extract, "Protecting Veterans from Fraudulent Scams," March 5, 2026, by J. Groom  
<https://news.va.gov/145291/protecting-veterans-from-fraud-and-scams/>

Sadly, bad actors increasingly target Veterans due to their association with government benefits and personal information with schemes designed to steal their personal information, financial resources and benefits. These scams often involve government impostors, direct deposit fraud, phishing attacks, identity theft, payment redirection and social media scams.

**Never Stop Serving®**

## **Common Types of Scams**

*Payment redirect/direct deposit fraud*

*Fake compensation claims assistance*

*Fake VA calls and emails*

*Phishing attacks (deceitful emails/texts)*

## **Fraud Prevention Advice**

*Protect personal information*

*Protect against identity theft*

*Be skeptical of unusual payment methods*

*Stay informed*

*Reporting suspicious activity*

Learn how to spot scams, identify red flags and report suspicious activity at [www.ssa.gov/scam](http://www.ssa.gov/scam).

Stay safe, stay informed and **always verify before you trust. (Great Advice!)**

## **Traveling to Washington DC?**

### **WW II Memorial Remains Closed**

The Memorial closed on Jan 9th ahead of a construction project with work expected to be completed NLT May 15, 2026, weather and site conditions permitting. The temporary closure supports fountain and lighting improvements ahead of America's 250th anniversary.

## **Farmington AMVETS 2025 Women Veterans Dinner Schedule**

Farmington AMVETS Post 332 hosts a women veterans' dinner on Wednesdays, 1800-2000, March 18, July 22, and October 21, 2026, at the Mertensia Lodge, Farmington.

<https://amvetsny332.org/>

RSVP to: Tammy Bresette, (262) 384-1302, or [bresettetammy178@gmail.com](mailto:bresettetammy178@gmail.com).

## **CompeerCORPS Male Veterans Dinner**

Male veterans group dinner on the first Wednesday of each month, 1530-1630, Golden Corral, Jefferson Rd. Find out more:

[www.compeerrochester.org/compeercorps](http://www.compeerrochester.org/compeercorps)

POC: [RYoung@compeerrochester.org](mailto:RYoung@compeerrochester.org)

## **GVC Support Coordinators**

Nancy Fine, (585) 944-5637, or

Tim Vaughan, (585) 412-6425

## GVC Chapter Dues

Have you paid your 2026 chapter dues? If you are not sure of your status, please reach out to Keith Harris at [kharris@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:kharris@gvcmoaa.org).

Reminder: GVC annual dues are \$25/year and are separate from MOAA National dues.

Use Cheddar Up to pay dues, it's fast & easy!

<https://gvc-payments.mycheddarup.com>

Want to Stop Paying Annual Dues...

Become a Chapter Life Member!

Contact Keith Harris, GVC Membership Chair at [kharris@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:kharris@gvcmoaa.org)

## Your Chapter Dues at Work...

GVC donates to Honor Flight Rochester, the Veterans Outreach Center, Wreaths Across America and MOAA Charities. Additionally, we conduct MOAA ROTC/JROTC awards programs each spring for cadets and midshipmen. We are grateful for the generous membership support of these programs.

## Surviving Spouse Liaison

Kathy Green is the chapter's Surviving Spouse Liaison (SSL). You may contact Kathy at, [kgreen@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:kgreen@gvcmoaa.org) regarding Surviving Spouse issues and MOAA membership.

Check out MOAA's Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter by emailing [mssvc02@gmail.com](mailto:mssvc02@gmail.com) or go online at: [MOAA - Surviving Spouse Corner](#).



## GVC/MOAA BOARD MEMBERS

2025 - 2027

**President:** Tim Vaughan, Col, USAF (Ret)

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**1st VP:** Keith Harris, CDR, USN (Ret)

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**2nd VP:** Paul (Keely) Costello, CAPT, USN

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**3rd VP:** VACANT

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**Treasurer:**

Ashley Coldwell, CWO3, USMC (Ret)

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**Member-at-Large:**

Paul Cannon, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

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**Legislative Chair & Past President:**

Barbara Green, COL, USA (Ret)

Email: [bgreen@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:bgreen@gvcmoaa.org)

**Membership/Recruiting Chair & Past President (& NY CoC President!):**

Norma Weissend, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)

Email: [nweissend@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:nweissend@gvcmoaa.org)

**Past President:**

James Nielsen, CDR, USN (Ret)

Email: [jnielsen@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:jnielsen@gvcmoaa.org)

**Past President:**

Peter Ingalsbe, COL, USA (Ret)

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**ROTC/JROTC & Transition Liaison:**

Tim Vaughan, Col, USAF (Ret)

Email: [tvaughan@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:tvaughan@gvcmoaa.org)

**Your MOAA & GVC Membership Matters!**

**Tim Vaughan, Col, USAF (Retired)**

**MOAA GVC President**

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

**Saturday April 25, 2026 <<< NOTE DAY! >>>**

**Rochester Yacht Club**

**5555 St Paul Blvd, Rochester, NY 14617**

**1300 - Social Hour (Cash Bar) / 1400 – Dinner**

**ENTRÉE CHOICES**

**Filet of Sirloin..... (\$45) or**

**Balsamic Chicken..... (\$42) or**

**Salmon Beurre blanc... (\$44)**

**All meals come with:**

Garden Salad, Mashed Potatoes &

Seasonal Vegetables

Dessert & Coffee

Cash Bar

**GUEST SPEAKER:**

**Kim Gould**

**President**

**Honor Flight Rochester**

**Please RSVP & Pay Here:**

<https://gvc-payments.mycheddarup.com>

**Reservations due ASAP, but NLT Wednesday April 15, 2026**

Cancellations NLT 1200 hours, Monday, April 20, 2026

**Questions: Ashley, [acoldwell@gvcmoaa.org](mailto:acoldwell@gvcmoaa.org)**

PLEASE CLIP AND SEND FORM BELOW **\*\*\* DRESS: BUSINESS CASUAL \*\*\***

*Participants may be photographed or recorded for MOAA chapter products.*



**RESERVATION FORM FOR SATURDAY April 25, 2026 GVC MEETING at  
Rochester Yacht Club, 8555 St Paul Blvd, Rochester, NY 14617**

ALL Name(s) Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please indicate number of each meal desired: Filet of Sirloin, \$45 ea x \_\_\_\_\_ or

Balsamic Chicken, \$42 ea x \_\_\_\_\_ or Salmon Beurre blanc, \$44 ea x \_\_\_\_\_

**Check included for (#) \_\_\_\_\_ Meal(s); Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Make an Honor Flight Rochester Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Grand Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**You Can RSVP, Pay & Make a Donation via Cheddar Up:**

<https://gvc-payments.mycheddarup.com> or use QR Code above.

**GVC MOAA**

**c/o Ashley Coldwell**

**1153 Johnson Rd**

**Palmyra, NY 14522**

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**Genesee Valley Chapter  
Military Officers Assn of America  
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**April 2026 Newsletter**

**First Class Mail**



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