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MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

P.O. BOX 36 ROME, NY 13442-0036

www.grucmoaa.org

2013 for our chapter is now history and we look forward to a much more successful year in 2014.

70 years ago this June, the most intense battle ever attempted in the history of mankind took place on the shores of Normandy. We look forward to recalling this history changing event along with our Memorial Day Ceremonies this year. The president is attempting to organize a ten day Space-A trip in early June to visit and take part in the 70th anniversary on the beaches of Normandy as well as to visit several of our National Cemeteries in Europe. If you would like to take part in this historical adventure let us know.

So what exactly can we be proud of having accomplished in 2013?

1. We continued to increase our emphasis on our main objective, which is to support the three JROTC programs at RFA, Proctor and Notre Dame. In February awards were given out to winners at the Proctor Drill Meet. Thanks goes out to Brian Burke for presenting the awards. In May over \$1,000 was disbursed in scholarships for the JROTC units and another \$800 for Proctor cadets attending two weeks of summer military training at Newport, Rhode Island. Then again in the fall Proctor cadets were supported in their weekend trip of Leadership Training from Fred Weiner, on the battlefield at Gettysburg.
2. Two of board member Bill Hamelin’s initiatives were quite successful in 2013. “Adopt-A-Platoon” was supported by several chapter members who packaged and sent gifts to a forward based platoon out of Ft. Drum in Afghanistan. Then in December, Bill and his wife Lori took the big plunge into Long Lake in support of the Wounded Warrior Project. \$600 was raised for this worthy cause by chapter members and as a result Bill’s team was awarded a certificate and trophy for the team raising the most money.
3. Tony Kimball, Ginny Craiglow and Herb Skogland continued to read to the schoolchildren at Gansevoort School on a weekly basis. Then in June several members attended their Flag Day Ceremony and presented awards to top essay writers from grades K to 4. Any member wishing to help out in this initiative is more than welcomed. Just let Tony know. It’s a rewarding experience to see the interest and excitement on the children’s faces when going one-on-one or reading to a class of students.
4. Support for the House of Good Shepherd in New Hartford continues. Last December Christmas gifts and \$200 were donated for the young people at the home. Thanks to all those who answered the call to assist.

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Spring 2014 (continued)

5. Support at the Rome VA Clinic: Jim Martinez was active with the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) driving veterans to the Syracuse VA Hospital. Bill Hamelin volunteers two days a week enrolling veterans in the "MyHealTheVet" program. If you're interested in taking part, contact Jim or Bill.
6. Again last year, in what has now become our main fundraising event, chapter members helped to get wreaths sponsored, and placed on veterans' graves at local cemeteries. Last year 3 cemeteries were honored with ceremonies and remembrance wreaths placed on December 14. The Rome Cemetery had over 450 wreaths placed, the Evergreen Cemetery in Lee over 200 and almost another 200 at the Presbyterian Cemetery in Westernville. Thanks goes out to a busload of Proctor Cadets who took part in the ceremonies at each cemetery. Chapter members who helped with the unloading of wreaths from a truck two days before the events, and also with the placing of wreaths at the Rome Cemetery, are also to be commended. Thanks also goes out to chapter member Jim Martinez who served as master of ceremonies at the Evergreen Cemetery, and along with the Lee Legion made sure that this event went as planned. The Westernville Legion Auxiliary was responsible for the ceremony and wreath placement at the Westernville cemetery. Not to be forgotten are the over 300 community members, area business volunteers, Boy and Girl Scouts, schoolchildren from Stokes School, politicians, legion members, Marine Corps League members and veterans who braved the harsh winter conditions-10 degrees, snowing and 20 knot winds- to honor our fallen veterans with remembrance wreaths. The bulk of the chapter's revenues for last year came from these three events. Photos are in this newsletter.

So how can we top those initiatives of 2013? We'll certainly continue many of those initiatives in 2014 and seek to better many of them. We also have a few more new initiatives that we can become involved with. Here is our bucket list for 2014.

1. Continue the scholarships for our top graduating JROTC cadets at the three schools and possibly increase their value. This year GRUC will recognize the accomplishments of 11 JROTC Cadets at ceremonies held at each school during May. If you would like to attend let us know. We'll also look to fund any cadet training event that may come up during the year. A new initiative this year at RFA will be the presentation of an award to the highest GPA graduate who has enlisted in the military and will be leaving after graduation. This will take place during the awards ceremony at the school in June.
2. Support for the House of Good Shepherd at Christmas will continue with hopes of increasing that support also this year.
3. Members' support of the Rome VA Clinic remains on the agenda as well as the "Gansevoort Reading Program. We could use more volunteers for both of these initiatives.
4. A new GRUC initiative for this year is support for one WWII veteran from Rome, NY on Honor Flight Mission #3 on April 10th. Mr. Richard Boston's trip will be funded by GRUC. We look forward to supporting another Oneida County war vet for a mission in the fall. Thanks go out to Bill Gray for the leg work putting this together.
5. Another new initiative for GRUC is to become involved with the Rome Veterans Coalition. We have become members of the coalition and look to help them financially with their current project of installing an arbor in Veterans' Park in Rome. We look forward to aiding other veteran projects and organizations in Oneida County when the opportunity presents itself. We thank the Rome Marine Corps League for their help in last year's wreath events and their willingness to help again this year. GRUC members Joe and Marg Maurer are to be commended for their involvement with veterans of the local area as Joe was MC and Marg helped to plan the ecumenical services on Veterans Day at St. Mary's/St. Peter's church last November.
6. The wreath project will be expanded for "Wreaths Across America Day" on Saturday Dec 13th. We hope to have ceremonies and wreath placing at five local cemeteries this year. The Marine Corps League of Rome has already volunteered to handle the Wright Settlement Cemetery near the Griffiss Technology Park. Another possibility is to have the Proctor NJROTC unit handle a new cemetery in Utica. We are looking at placing over 1,000 wreaths this year and this will take an expanded effort on the part of the chapter members. We can never honor and remember our veterans enough.

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7. To keep pace with technological advances, effective February 11, 2014, GRUCMOAA Membership Renewals and New Member Registrations can be completed on-line! MOAA provides the service and GRUCMOAA receives dues on a monthly basis direct to our account. There are currently 2 membership levels offered, Regular Member and Auxiliary Member. The chapter can reconcile the renewal fees to match our membership fee schedule.

These are our initiatives for 2014 and once again we could use some help in all of them. As former officers, it's time to step up in retirement and give back to our fellow veterans and communities.



Veterans after wreath laying



Young girl places wreath

SOCIAL EVENTS

The chapter had six "First Wednesday of the Month" dinners last year which were well attended with 20 to 35 members attending each dinner held at various locations in the Utica/Rome area. The dinners featured reports from our cadets in the JROTC units which proved to be very well received. Monthly dinners have again been lined up for this year. Our first attempt was cancelled due to weather, but we'll try again on April 2nd with dinner at "Teddy's". Attempts will be made to line up programs/speakers for many of these dinners. Your suggestions on new restaurants in which to hold these dinners, and speakers to invite, are always welcomed. As a matter of fact, suggestions for a November venue are being solicited.

The larger events such as the "Spring Fling," the summer picnic hosted by Jim Tilly, and our annual "Pearl Harbor Day Dinner" all proved to be very successful. Again this year, one of the highlights of the chapter's social events was the presentation given at the Pearl Harbor Day event. "Fighting in Cyberspace" was the topic of Col. Timothy Lunderman. Tim is the commander of the first cyberspace unit in the New York Air National Guard, the 222nd Command and Control Squadron based at the Griffiss Business and Technology Park in Rome.

Not to be outdone, however, was the talk given by Congressman Richard Hanna at the "Spring Fling." Congressman Hanna filled members and guests in on some of the latest military initiatives before Congress. His talk was well-received by members and the general public and many questions and answers followed. Congressman Hanna was made an Honorary Member of GRUCMOAA. This year's event, on Sunday, April 27, will return to The Beeches for their famous Sunday Brunch, and unlike last year will be more social than business.

Where the summer picnic and "Burger Burn" will be held this year has yet to be determined. Your suggestions on locations for these two events would be greatly appreciated.

The Pearl Harbor Day Dinner will once again be held at the Lake Delta Inn, on the 7th of December. We look forward to inviting more war veterans to this event and to have another presentation of current significance.

RECRUITMENT

Our membership continues to dwindle so it will be up to all members to help out with attracting new faces. All of us know some present and former officers, who might be enticed into joining. The board will attempt to attract new members from the "Potential List" that national MOAA sends out in April, but it will be up to all members to find that former officer who may be living next door or down the block. Become a recruiter for the sake of keeping our chapter vibrant and functioning on a high level. Thanks to all the members who have played a key role in the initiatives of last year. We look forward to another exciting and successful year, and with your help it will be a memorable one.

Bob Haley

GRUC-MOAA TREASURER REPORT 31 MARCH 2014						
BALANCE	12 JULY 2013 = \$5,223.50 31 DECEMBER 2013 = \$6,783.59				CURRENT	ANNUAL
INCOME						
DUES					\$620.00	\$620
WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA PROCEEDS 2013					\$1,375.00	\$1,375.00
PROCEEDS FROM SPRING FLING (RAFFLE INCLUDED)					\$0.00	\$0.00
PEARL HARBOR DAY DINNER PROCEEDS					\$0.00	\$0.00
PEARL HARBOR DAY DINNER RAFFLE					\$0.00	\$0.00
HOUSE OF GOOD SHEPHERD MEMBERS DONATION					\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL					\$1,995.00	\$1,995.00
DISBURSEMENTS						
PROCTOR DRILL MEET FEB 2014					\$100.00	\$100.00
POST OFFICE BOX					\$58.00	\$58.00
ROME VETERANS COALITION DUES					\$50.00	\$50.00
SPRING FLING AT BEACHES					\$0.00	\$0.00
MAY SCHOLARSHIPS					\$0.00	\$0.00
MEMORIAL DAY BURGER-BURN					\$0.00	\$0.00
GETTYSBURG TRIP - PROCTOR					\$0.00	\$0.00
ANNUAL WEBSITE COST					\$0.00	\$0.00
ANNUAL PEARL HARBOR DAY DINNER					\$0.00	\$0.00
NYS MOAA COUNCIL DUES					\$0.00	\$0.00
HOUSE OF GOOD SHEPHERD HOLIDAY GIFT					\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL					\$208.00	\$208.00
ANNUAL RESULTS:	INCOME - DISBURSEMENTS + BEGINNING BALANCE = CURRENT BALANCE					
	\$1,995.00 - \$208.00 + \$6,783.59 = \$8,570.59					
	CURRENT BALANCE - FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS = AVAILABLE BALANCE					
	\$8,570.59 - \$1,465.00 = \$7,105.59					

Comptroller: New York Veterans not informed on Health Benefit Options

On March 19th, New York State Comptroller, Thomas P. DiNapoli released a statement indicating the New York State Veterans are not properly informed about their Health Benefit options. The Comptroller's press release is available at this link: www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/mar14/031914b.htm?. The report indicates a poor coordination of benefits by the state Department of Health and the local social services departments. There is a dual impact because of this issue, veterans aren't made aware of all the possible benefit options available to them and that taxpayers are paying more for state benefit programs rather than having veterans referred to federal or other Veterans programs.

The full audit report is available at this link: www.osc.state.ny.us/audits/allaudits/093014/12s162.pdf. According to the Veterans Administration there are about 913,000 veterans in New York State.

If you have an interest in this or other information from the Comptroller's Office, online subscriptions are available at this link: www.osc.state.ny.us/email/

April 9, 2014 MOAA Storming The Hill

The **MOAA 2014 Storming The Hill** event will be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2014. MOAA Council and Chapter Presidents from all 50 states, together with members of the national Board of Directors and headquarters staff, plus members of MOAA's active duty, Guard, Reserve, spouse and auxiliary advisory committees will "storm" Capitol Hill on April 9, and visit nearly all 535 representatives and senators in support of key legislative priorities.

This year, the "Hill-stormers" will meet with their legislators, discuss the issues, provide fact sheets and brochures, and ask them to:

- Sustain military pay and benefits and avoid repeating past mistakes that destabilized the all-volunteer force;
- Reject disproportional TRICARE fee increases which shift costs onto beneficiaries while reducing access;
- Eliminate catastrophic sequestration cuts which threaten national security;
- And address remaining inequities for disabled retirees, survivors, and guard and reserve personnel.

The NYS Council of Chapters has two "Storming" teams comprised of Ben and Sue Margolis and Peggy Phillips. They will be "Storming" these offices: Sen **Schumer and Gillibrand**, Rep Bishop, King, Maloney, Owens, Maffei, Higgins, Rangel, Serrano, Gibson, **Hanna**, Reed and Collins.

For complete details on the issues and to send a pre-formatted email to your Senator and Representative, go to the MOAA web site www.MOAA.org and navigate to the 'Legislative Update'. If you're accessing this newsletter on-line, click on the above link to connect with MOAA.

April 26, 2014 Council of Chapters Mid-Year Meeting

The **2014 New York State Council of Chapters Mid-Year Meeting** will be held on Saturday, April 26, 2014 at the Quality Inn and Suites, 4105 Vestal Parkway East, Vestal, NY 13850 (607) 729-6371, http://www.qualityinn.com/hotel-vestal-new_york-NY413 . A block of rooms have been reserved at the rate of \$79.95 plus tax, mention MOAA to get this rate. The rate includes a full hot breakfast buffet.

On Friday, April 25th, a pre-meeting dinner is scheduled at the FujiSan Japanese Restaurant which is attached to the hotel, <http://www.fujisanjapaneserestaurant.com>.

On Saturday, April 26th, the event starts at 0930 and ends around 1530 hrs. Lunch will be catered and not to exceed \$20.00 per person. Coffee, tea, water and soft drinks will be served throughout the day, and cookies served for an afternoon snack. A screen and video projector will be available for Chapter presentations. Each Chapter is requested to bring 30 copies of your Chapter reports and anything else the Chapter wishes to distribute. Spouses and other chapter members are welcome and encouraged to attend the meeting. RSVP by Friday, April 18th to Ben Margolius, benmargolius@me.com. The Mid-Year Conference Agenda is as follows:

0930	Call to Order	1145	Storming The Hill and Council Symposium
0935	Roll Call	1240	President's Reports
0940	Reports	1300	Chapter Reports and Activities
1015	Recruiting and Membership status	1430-1445	Afternoon Break
1100—1145	Lunch and Social time	1445	New Business
		1530	Adjournment

2014 GRUC MOAA Events Schedule			
Date	Time	Event	Location
12-Mar-14	1700 HRS	Member / guest dinner	Event canceled due to inclement weather
2-April-14	1700 HRS	Member / guest dinner	Teddy's Restaurant
26-April-14	0930-1530 HRS	2014 NYS CoC Mid-Year Conf	Quality Inn and Suites, (Details on prior page)
27-April-14	1200-1500 HRS	Spring Fling	The Beeches Inn & Conference Center
26-May-14	1000-1200 HRS	Memorial Day Ceremony	Veteran's Park, Rome NY
26-May-14	1200 HRS	Burger Burn	TBA
4-June-14	1700 HRS	Member / guest dinner	The Moose River Restaurant
13-June-14	TBA	Flag Day Ceremony	Gansevoort Elementary School, Rome, NY
17-August-14	1300 HRS	GRUC-MOAA Picnic	TBA
3-September-14	1700 HRS	Member / guest dinner	Vescio's Franklin Hotel
1-October-14	1700 HRS	Member / guest dinner	Raspberries of Utica
TBA	Various	2014 NYS CoC 41st Convention	TBA
5-November-14	1700 HRS	Member / guest dinner	TBA
7-December-14	1530-2100 HRS	Pearl Harbor Remembrance	The Lake Delta Inn

Please Fold and Detach Here

5th Annual Spring Fling— Sunday 27 April 2014, 1200 to 1500 Hrs.

This year's event venue is The Beeches Inn & Conference Center on Turin Rd in Rome, NY.

RSVP by Wednesday, 23 April 2014.

Mail your RSVP and payment to: Treasurer GRUC-MOAA, PO Box 36, Rome, NY 13442-0036

Price per person:

\$ 16.00

Number of people in your party?

X

Name (Please Print)

Sub-total your Reservation cost:

\$

Street Address

If you haven't paid your 2014 Dues, you can still do so by including them today.

City, State Zip Code

2014 Dues Enclosed (See below):

\$

E-mail

\$ 20.00 Regular Member

\$ 10.00 Active Military / Auxiliary Member

\$ 5.00 Auxiliary Member—Non-attendee

Phone

Total payment enclosed:

\$

Make check payable to GRUC-MOAA

Check #:

Please do not send cash. Proceeds benefit GRUC-MOAA sponsored activities.

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