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# Lancaster Chapter News

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Lancaster, PA Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America  
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Chapter web site: www.moalancasterchapt.org

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<b>We next meet on December 7 at Millersville University's Gordinier Hall</b>
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December 7. If you have any questions, please contact James Cunningham at 581-5299.

The Lehr Dining Room in Gordinier Hall at Millersville University will be decorated for the season. Our Social Hour is from 1-2 p.m., with wine and soda available at no cost to you. The luncheon will begin at 2:00 p.m. with brief introductory remarks by President Dennis Benchoff.

At this meeting, we will recognize those of us who have been members of our chapter for 25 years or more. These are the members we'll be recognizing, with the year they joined:

The menu is:

*Spinach and Apple Salad with Orange Dressing*

*Sirloin Tips sautéed with Garlic, Onion, and Sliced Portabella Mushrooms*

*Garlic Red Skin Mashed Potatoes  
Roasted Vegetable Medley*

*Assorted Crusty Rolls and Butter*

*Black Forest Cake*

*Coffee, Hot Tea, Iced Tea, Ice Water with Lemon*

The cost is \$27.00 per person and reservations can be accepted up until Monday, December 1st. As always, your check is your reservation and should be made payable to Lancaster Chapter MOAA and mailed to Lancaster Chapter MOAA, ATTN: Meeting Reservations, P.O. Box 5031, Lancaster, PA 17606-5031. Be sure to write the names of any guests on your check for name-tag purposes and also let us know if you need a vegetarian meal.

Cancellations may be made by calling James Cunningham at 581-5299 up to the day before the event. Cancellations cannot be honored on

Bud Mearig	1975
John Schuppert	1975
George Steedle	1975
Bob Porter	1981
Harry Mann	1982
Rosemary Snyder	1982
John Waltman	1982
June Welk	1982
Jim Cunningham	1986
Hank Kadel	1988
Bob Wilcox	1988
Victor Bove	1989
Lloyd Henry	1989
Biddle Wigham	1989

This is also the meeting at which we bring small, gift-wrapped presents for hospitalized veterans. We'll later deliver them in time for Christmas. Many of these veterans have no family, no visitors. So our gifts are something very special for them. The hospital suggests paperbacks, games, envelopes, and stamps, etc. But avoid anything alcoholic or sharp. Attach a note describing the contents of your gift and gender of the recipient.

To get to Gordinier Hall from Lancaster, take Millersville Pike (Rt. 999) to Millersville and go left on George St. Go through two traffic lights, then turn left in the first driveway, and park in the large parking lot at your left. We're on the second floor of Gordinier Hall. See you at the punch bowl!

### **Rain drops were falling on our heads...**

To grace our picnic, the day featured “steaming temperatures combined with humidity that hit a high of 96 percent, according to the newspaper. But how about that rain! Undaunted, we moved inside the Willow Valley Cultural Center, and festivities went on as planned.

Since our editor had to miss the event, he asked our president to tell us what went on then. And Dennis explained, “ We had 46 attend the reinstated chapter picnic. I believe everyone enjoyed the event, even though we had to exercise the inclement weather plan and hold it inside. We did confirm Dick Smith as a member of the board of directors to complete Paul Wedel’s uncompleted term this year and confirmed Barry Hitchcock as chapter treasurer to complete Gary Snyder’s uncompleted term this year.”

Very rarely have we ever had bad weather impact our picnic, and let’s hope that we’ve now had our share for years to come. Our picnic has been a traditional treat of our Chapter year, offering us all a way to comfortably get to know each other better. Willow Valley turned out to be a fine choice...with its handsome Cultural Center to house our event in a worst-case scenario.

### **Despite rain, Bent Creek meeting went well**

Two young men parked cars, which helped a lot, since it rained off and on as we arrived. Our speaker spoke briefly, with emphasis on the strong leadership he was fortunate to have had in his military assignments.

During the introduction of new members, Dan Horting introduced Michael and Ann Burski, while Dave Roy introduced Norman LaGeux, Karen Davis, and Louis Krisay.

The food was, as expected, especially good.

### **Say hello to our new members**

Mrs. Karen M. Davis  
1416 West View Drive  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
Joined: October 6, 2014  
Sponsor: Dennis Benchoff

MAJ Richard A. Whitesel  
USA-RET CH (Cell: 717-799-7217)  
1304 Crown Vetch Drive  
Landisville, PA 17538  
Spouse: Theresa  
Joined: October 2, 2014  
Sponsor: John Shaeffer

LtCol Michael L. Burski  
USAF-RET. 717-397-6574  
74 Deer Ford Drive  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
Spouse: Ann  
Joined: October 8, 2014  
Sponsor: Dan Horting

LCDR Louis A. Krisay  
USN-RET  
1416 West View Drive  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
Joined: October 6, 2014  
Sponsor: Dennis Benchoff

### **From our president’s desk**

As we approach this year’s holiday season, we have our annual opportunity to meet at MU’s Gordinier Hall for our Christmas luncheon. It is also an opportunity to provide gifts for the veterans at the VA hospital in Lebanon. I hope as many chapter members as possible will attend and support our veterans.

Unfortunately, over the past several years the attendance at the Christmas luncheon, and in fact, all of our bimonthly meetings have been in decline. Your chapter’s leadership has tried to determine the cause and find remedies for this decline without success. Therefore, I am asking all members who have ideas or suggestions about how we might be able to make changes to make our meetings more appealing to more members to let me know of them. For example, are the meetings too frequent, do we need to find different venues; can the menus be more appealing or less costly? Are there any other factors such as our guest speakers that need to be considered and changed?

I would personally like to solicit your input on this matter. You can call me with your comments, at 560-1260, or either send me a note to 380 Arbor Road, Lancaster, PA 17601 or an email message at [dlbencho@hacc.edu](mailto:dlbencho@hacc.edu). Any information provided will be most welcome.

Along this line of thought, the chapter is considering a possible tour of the state capitol and Civil War Museum in Harrisburg in lieu of the annual picnic in August. If you would be interesting in learning more about it, please let me know.

On a more positive note, our chapter member, Col Ed Hurston, USAF, (Ret.) has been appointed OIC of the McCaskey Junior ROTC detachment now in its second year. Any member, and in particular, any former Air Force officer who would like to volunteer some time to assist Ed in his management of this highly rated program for young Americans should call him at 923-0181.

Thank you again for your continued support of our chapter, and I hope to see you at the Christmas luncheon on December 7th.

Dennis

### We install our leaders for 2015

Our December 7 meeting at Millersville University is also the time when we'll be installing our officers and director for 2015. This year, as always, we're fortunate in having so many capable members volunteer to provide the kind of leadership a dynamic chapter like ours requires.

Your presence at our December meeting will accentuate the pride we take in installing this strong team of chapter leaders:

President	Dennis Benchoff
Vice President	Tony Cerase
Corresponding Secretary	Jim Cunningham
Recording Secretary	Cliff Mingle
Treasurer	Barry Hitchcock
Director for 3 years	Dina Cerase
Director for 3 years	Brian Remmy
Director for 2 years	Dan Cooper
Director for 2 years	Dan Horting
Director for 1 year	Harry Mann
Director for 1 year	Dick Smith

### Our members made news

**Dennis Benchoff**, who was a former chief of staff for the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, wrote the Intell/New Era to note that "the Defense Department estimates that 71 percent of the roughly 34 million 17- to 24-year-olds in the U.S. would fail to qualify to enlist in the

military if they tried." He further noted, "Included in the recently passed state budget is a \$10 million increase for the Pre-K Counts program that will expand high-quality pre-K to an additional 1,670 more at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds throughout the state." He then encouraged readers to join him in supporting Pre-K for PA by visiting the Campaign's website at [prekforpa.org](http://prekforpa.org).

He was the subject of a feature article in *b Magazine* that told of his wartime experiences in Vietnam and the many other increasingly major commands he held before his retirement from the Army as a Lieutenant General in 1998.

**Dan Cooper** was the subject of an article in *Senior News* that told of the highlights of his Navy career leading to his retirement as a vice admiral. It also told of the six years after his Navy retirement when he served our government as Undersecretary for Veterans Benefits, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Cricket Johnson** was pictured in the Willow Valley magazine in an article that highlighted the ability of residents "to tend flowers, vegetables, and more in gardening plots or raised beds throughout the communities." The article noted that Cricket, in Virginia after retiring from the United States Navy as a rear admiral with 35 years of service, sold produce at a local stand and farmers markets from his 167 fruit trees, including apples, apricots, peaches, nectarines, and sweet & sour cherries, plus five kinds of berries and an assortment of vegetables." It told of how he has pursued that rich past at Willow Valley "as he continues to grow "delicious raspberries, asparagus, and blackberries which he often shares with other residents.

**Joe Pitts**, U.S. Rep., was reported in an Intell/New Era article to have hosted a forum in Lancaster on how federal policies affect development of new medicines.

In an Intell/New Era story on the proposed natural gas pipeline, Joe was quoted as saying, "As a member of the committee that has oversight over the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, I have already directly let commissioners know that Lancastrians are concerned about the affect this pipeline may have on our treasured lands. There are many serious questions that need to be answered."

He wrote an article for the Intell/New Era where he said, "As the world's indispensable nation, to whom all free peoples look for hope, we have borne the heavy weight of the responsibility that comes with prosperity and power." And he quoted Ronald Regan as saying, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it on to our children in the bloodstream. The only way they can inherit the freedom we have known is if we fight for it, protect it, defend it, and then hand it to them with the well thought lessons of how they in their lifetime must do the same."

The Intell/New Era reported that The National Federation of Independent Business had named Joe a "Guardian of Small Business" in recognition of his having voted for all ten of the House bills supporting small business in January through July.

At a Leola meeting for farmers, he warned that they are the "target of the federal government's sweeping rules on food safety." He noted that he had voted against the law three times and that "The U.S. food supply is the safest in the world."

**Craig Stedman**, District Attorney, was reported on the front page of the Intell/New Era to have said that his office will pursue a third-degree murder conviction in the case of a driver who was allegedly drunk and high on cocaine when he was involved in a head-on crash that killed a young man.

Craig was pictured on the front page of the Intell/New Era at an NCAA Forum on race and policing. He said he had seen the breakdown of family structures during his 23 as a prosecutor. Previously, parents enforced discipline at home. He doesn't see that anymore. "And it doesn't matter what your skin color is," he said, remarking that he sees it all across society.

### State Veterans Legislation

Many veteran and military-related bills passed the legislature before the legislature adjourned in July.

HB 43, now Act 86, expands the Give an Hour program by letting retired medical professionals volunteer to work with military families and work within their scope of practice. This includes mental health services to military personnel and their families.

SB 923, now Act 66, extended the Military Family Relief Assistance program for active duty soldiers and their families in Pennsylvania.

SB 403, now Act 78, provides for retention incentives for medical resident physicians of the PA National Guard.

SB 1115, now Act 82, Directs that federal GI Bills benefits be used before state National Guard Education Funds are used. Also specifies that only education related expenses can be paid and any excess funds will be returned to the National Guard Education program.

HB 1460, now Act 59, provides for Educational Leave of Absence for military mobilizations and requires the educational institution to return all fees or credit the military member or his spouse for later return to continue their education. It also enacts the Heroic Service Website which links to service websites naming soldiers who have won medals for valor. The web site will be hosted on the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs web site in the near future.

SB 1090, now Act 80, establishing free hunting and fishing licenses for disabled veterans paid at the 100 percent rate.

SB 1102, now Act 81, establishes reduced hunting and fishing licenses for \$1.00 to disabled veterans receiving a disability payment from the VA.

### Homestead veterans produce a stunning video disk of their military experience

Our Gene Moore heads up an active veterans group of residents of Homestead Village Retirement Community. One of the group's many activities is to conduct an annual ceremony on Memorial Day. Gene got thinking that it would be a fine addition to this year's program to include pictures of Homestead's veterans, those who actively put on the program, and those who simply support it through their presence.

So he invited all Homestead's veterans to submit their pictures of themselves and their activities during their military days. He was deluged with pictures. Great. Now, how to use them most effectively? One Homestead resident had had a lot of film-making experience and offered to make the photos into a professional video disc, with a stirring musical sound track.

Because all the work was donated, the cost was peanuts. And Gene says that when the finished product was played on Memorial Day, "It simply blew people away." Having had a chance to view the disk, your editor can easily see why, to say nothing of understanding the lump it must have raised in the throat of a lot of the viewers of such a truly remarkable production.

Do we have the ability to fashion such a product for our Chapter? If it sounds good to you and you'd like to help, give Dennis Benchoff a call at 560-1260.

**An anecdote from the military days of one of our members, past or present**



*The USS Enterprise, the nuclear carrier from which Jerry Zacharais flew his missions during the Vietnam War.*

Jerry Zacharais flew 87 combat missions over Vietnam, one of which won him the Navy Cross, the second-highest military decoration for valor that may be awarded to a member of the United States Navy, ranking just below the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Jerry remembers that mission as if it happened yesterday. His was one of five A-6 aircraft launched at night from the carrier *USS Enterprise* to attack Hanoi port facilities.

On takeoff, his main attitude gyro tumbled, and he had to climb out on a 2-inch standby gyro. When the five planes reached the tanker to refuel, the first four planes did so. Then an electrical failure aboard the tanker prevented it from pumping any more fuel. Without that fuel, Jerry's chances of flying the mission, then coming back in one piece were marginal. But he pressed on.

Approaching Hanoi, he descended to 200 feet, flying at 450 knots. Soon, his missile warning receiver sounded and spotted missiles at 12 and 3 o'clock. Applying full throttle, he descended to 100 feet in the pitch black, hoping to get into radar's ground clutter. Even in the darkness, he could see objects passing by the aircraft and heard his bombardier/navigator calmly say, "You are level at 50 feet." Returning to 100 feet, he dropped chaff, and pulled a 5-G, 80 degree right bank turn. The missiles exploded nearby, buffeting the aircraft violently. "By the time I got to target," he says, "everybody in Hanoi was awake and shooting."

After dropping twenty-two 500-pound bombs on the port facilities, he flew over central Hanoi at 400 feet while leaving and took two more missiles on the way out. They came from the rear, so the only way he knew when to break hard left or right was when the missiles' plume started illuminating the cockpit. Breaking in a high-G turn, he saw one missile fly by while the other exploded on the ground. He returned to his carrier after a 2.4-hour flight with only 15 minutes of fuel left in the plane's tanks..

During his combat in Vietnam, Jerry dropped 1,144 bombs weighing 349 tons. He racked up 610 carrier landings, 124 of them at night. During his navy career, he held many important commands, both in the air and aboard ship. He retired from the Navy as a captain in 1978.

In 1992, he was elected to membership in the "Golden Eagles," a group of 200 Naval Aviators, "who are pioneers in some new aspect of Naval Aviation, or who are respected by their peers as leaders because of their outstanding skills as a pilot, their wide experience, good judgment, personal character, and their dedication to flying." Among them are John Glenn, Neil Armstrong, and many other world-famous aviators. Jerry was elected president of the group for a two-year term in 2004.

**We honor the memory of...**

**John Butz**, who died on September 11. He was the husband of Shirley (Myers) Butz, with whom he shared 48 years of marriage. He was appointed to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. After graduation, he enlisted in the Navy and attended Officer Candidate School. He rose through the ranks to Captain in both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Merchant Marine. He

served on board 28 ships, serving as Captain on 11 of them. He sailed to all corners of the earth, including tours in Antarctica, the Mediterranean, and both Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Surviving beside his wife are two grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. John had been a member of our chapter since January 2000.

**John (Jack) Hanley**, who died September 25. He was a Lancaster native who attended Franklin and Marshall College and Temple University School of Dentistry, graduating with his DDS in 1949. He served in the Navy from 1959-1962. He interned at Portsmouth, VA U.S. Naval Hospital, then served aboard the aircraft carrier *USS Shangri-La*. An issue of *Senior News* told the story of Jack's carrier proceeding at flank speed to Galveston, TX to help after the city had been devastated after a hurricane. The crew suddenly had their own problems when they heard the call, "*This is not a drill. Fire, Fire, Fire in the nuclear weapons compartment.*" Since each of the carrier's 85 planes carried two nukes, Jack said, "I found myself wondering how big a hole in the ocean floor it would make if all our nuclear weapons detonated at the same time." The fire was in the wiring to the air conditioners for the nuclear weapons and soon was safely put out.

Jack left Navy as an ensign in 1962 and set up his dental practice in Lancaster. He was a great lover of sports. He and your editor often played ice hockey together at Long's Park. His first love, however, was baseball, which he coached for 10 years at St. Leo's School. He played catcher at F&M and with other teams. And he served the community in a wide range of other ways. He retired in 2001 after 39 years of dentistry. He had been a member of our Chapter since 2001

**George Johnston**, who died September 3, 2014. He was the husband of Dawn K. Johnston. They would have celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary in October 2014. He graduated from the University of Colorado, with a B.S. in Chemistry, the Institute of Management, Northwestern University, and the Strategic Management Course, Columbia University. He served in the Naval Air Corps in World War II, flying carrier-based F6F Hellcat fighter planes. In 1947 he joined Armstrong World Industries as a marketing representative and rose to become a vice-president and chief planning officer. He was active in a broad range of local

organizations and activities. George had been a member of our Chapter since January 1999.

**Geraldine Ranck**, who died September 17, 2014. She was the wife of our Wayne Rank, with whom she had enjoyed 32 years of marriage. She graduated from the Coatesville Hospital Nursing School in 1951 and was a passionate and dedicated nurse for 40 years. She belonged to the Iris Club, the Red Hats and many other organizations, and she enjoyed traveling around the world with Wayne throughout their years together. Beside her husband, she is survived by a daughter, two sons, and six grandchildren. Geraldine had been part of our Chapter family since 2002.

**Eston White**, who died September 3. He was an Army officer who fought in North Africa and Sicily before landing in Normandy with the first wave on D-Day. He then fought all the way across Europe to the Elbe River, where Ike ordered our troops to hold and wait for the Russians to meet up with us. As a major, Eston was ordered by his commanding general, to pick up a jeep and translator, then proceed through the 220,000 German troops who wanted to surrender to us... and accept the surrender from their commanding general. Eston promptly carried out the mission, only to learn later that Ike had ruled that no way would we take 220,000 prisoners of war. Half of them would have to go to the Russians. And that's what happened.

After many important post-war assignments in Europe and the U.S., Eston joined the faculty of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and spent the next 15 years teaching and writing some two dozen textbooks used in the school's curriculum before he retired as a colonel in 1987. Eston had been a past president of our chapter and a member since May 1988.

### **We need your new address**

When you move, don't forget us when you're advising people of your new address and phone number.

We want to keep your address and phone number correctly on our roster, and it costs us if we don't have the correct information. So it's important that you keep us informed. Send the new information to us at Lancaster Chapter, MOAA, P.O. Box 5031, Lancaster, PA 17606-

5031. Or e-mail it to us at the web site given in the masthead of this newsletter.

### **What's to know about Irish Coffee...**

And what's that got to do with our Chapter, anyway? Absolutely nothing. But many of us visit San Francisco occasionally. And, for people who travel there, having an Irish Coffee at the Buena Vista, in San Francisco, is a rite of passage right up there with kissing the Blarney Stone.

The famed drink was created and named by Joe Sheridan, a head chef at a restaurant at what became Shannon International Airport in the west of Ireland. Some American passengers disembarked from a Pan Am flying boat on a dank winter evening in the 1940s. Sheridan added whiskey to the coffee to warm them up and told them it was "Irish coffee."

Stanton Delaplane a travel writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, brought Irish coffee to the United States by encouraging the owners of the Buena Vista Café to start serving it on November 10, 1952. To say it was popular seriously understates the drink's appeal, since the café has served more than 30 million of the drinks in the years since. Making it barely starts with adding Irish whiskey to hot coffee, and no one makes this massively popular drink as does the Buena Vista!

If you've had a world-class experience of your own, let your editor know...and share it with the rest of us. We're all ears...or, in this case, palates.

### **What's to like about belonging to our MOAA Chapter? Besides meetings, of course.**

Members sometimes think, understandably, that the good thing about being a member, is going to our meetings, and meeting with folks with whom we have a lot in common.

All true. That's certainly the big thing to many of us. Yet there are so many more things to like about membership.

1. It's recognition of our accomplishment in becoming an officer in the service of our country.

2. Our Adopt-a-Kid, Adopt-a-Vet program permits our enjoying the satisfaction of treating youngsters to a glimpse of what it's like to be a member of our military.

2. Our membership provides support for the ROTC program at Millersville University, including an annual cash award to the outstanding cadet in that program.

3. It helps our offering an annual scholarship to an outstanding high school student who is militarily-related and who is headed for college.

4. It provides helpful guidance to us and our families about military matters they need to know about and benefit from.

5. It supports the highly important every day efforts of national MOAA in working for the best interests of our military.

So, if your hectic schedule prevents your attending our Chapter's meetings, please never feel that you, therefore, aren't pulling your weight with this Chapter. Your membership supports the Chapter in many other very important ways. And we hope you're as proud of your membership as we are to have you as a member.

### **You heard, of course...**

of the two farm ladies who met after several years.

One: "Mildred, is that you?"

Other: Yes that's me.

One: "Oh my goodness, I hardly knew you, you look so old and wrinkled."

Other: "Well, I wouldn't have recognized you either, except for that hat and that outfit."

### **Or, perhaps...**

of these signs in car dealerships:

"Don't go somewhere else to be cheated. Come in here!"

"Take a trial spin in one of our new cars, and you'll never walk again."

**MOAA Lancaster Chapter**



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