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# Lancaster Chapter News

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Lancaster, PA Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America  
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Volume 23 Number 1  
January 1, 2016

## Meet our MOAA Chapter's new president



CW3 Antonio Cerase, USA (Ret.)

Tony has served as our Vice President for the past two years, and the Board has elected him to be our President for 2016. He steps into some very large shoes as he follows Dennis Benchoff, who did a simply outstanding job in the position during the previous two years. What follows will help us all know and appreciate Tony's unusual and impressive background as he takes on his new responsibilities.

He is a retired US Army Criminal Investigation Command (CID) Federal Special Agent with 20 years of active duty retiring in December 1992.

In 1986 he received his Commission while stationed in Panama, making him a Commissioned Warrant Officer.

Tony is trilingual (Italian and Spanish), holds a

degree with a concentration in Criminal Justice and attended various DEA, Secret Service and FBI Behavioral Sciences courses becoming a FBI certified Hostage Negotiator.

He worked personal security at the Presidential, Vice Presidential, Cabinet, Flag Officers and Diplomatic levels throughout his career.

His overseas assignments included Europe (1980-1983) as Special Agent-in Charge (OIC) of the Livorno, Italy Branch Office, Honduras (1985-1986-TDY) as the OIC for the personal protection of visiting dignitaries under the auspices of the US Embassy, Panama (1985-1990) as OIC of the Atlantic CID Branch Office and ultimately assigned to SOUTHCOM CINCs personal staff as OIC for the personal protection of two Commanders-in Chief, Gen. Fred Woerner and Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman throughout Central and South America and including the invasion of Panama.

Among his professional achievements Tony, while stationing in Italy, participated in the investigation which led to the rescue of BG Dozier kidnapping by the "Red Brigades" a terrorist organization operating at that time in Italy.

In his investigative career, he held a high solve rate, which included the solving of two high visibility felony murders with Congressional oversight, one in CONUS and one in Honduras.

During Operation Just Cause, he assisted Gen. Thurman in the initial contact with the Papal Nuncio during the negotiations for the surrender of Gen. Manuel Noriega, who had taken refuge inside the nunciature (The Vatican Embassy), and later with his final surrender.

Tony has received numerous medals including 7 Meritorious Service Medals and 3 Commendation medals. He has been a Vice-Chairman, Chairman of the Lancaster County Red Rose Veterans Honor Guard, and currently is the OIC of the Color Guard.

He is a member of Lancaster County Lodge #16 of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), Chairman of the Awards and Recognition Committee for Lancaster County police excellence, and the Co-Chair of the FOP Scholarship. He is also a 32-degree Mason and a member of the Charles M. Howell Lodge No. 496, Millersville.

Tony has been married to US Army Major Enedina (Dina) Cerase, also a Special Agent, for 29 years. Tony and Dina are each members of our chapter and are life members of National MOAA.

#### **A gentle reminder...**

Dues for 2016 are now due. And, thanks to some shrewd management, they stay at \$15 for the seventeenth straight year.. If you were to write a check right now while you're thinking of it, you would make our treasurer a very happy man. Make it to Lancaster, Chapter, MOAA, and send it to:

Lancaster Chapter, MOAA  
ATTN: Dues  
P.O. Box 5031  
Lancaster, PA 17606-5031

#### **We next meet at Lancaster Country Club**

We meet for a luncheon on March 3rd at Lancaster Country Club, one of our favorite and most elegant meeting places.

The gathering will begin at 11:00 a.m. with a social hour with cash bar. The meeting will be called to order at noon with introductory remarks by our president, Tony Cerase. Lunch will follow at 12:15 p.m. The menu is:

Creamy Roasted Red Bell Pepper Soup

Choice of one of the following:

Horseradish crusted salmon in pepper coulis sauce

OR

Sliced pork loin in apple jack brandy jus

Whipped Sweet Potatoes, Asparagus and Baby Carrots

White Chocolate Mousse topped with red raspberry sauce and fresh blueberries

Assorted rolls and butter florets will be provided as well as coffee and hot tea

The cost of the meal will be \$27.00 per person. As always your check is your reservation and should be made out 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 your guests on your check for name tag purposes, and also include your entrée choice. By request a vegetarian meal will be available as a substitute for the above selections.

The deadline for receipt of all checks is Monday, February 29th. Cancellations may be made by calling Jim Cunningham prior to Monday, February 29th. If you have questions, please contact Jim Cunningham at 581-5299.

#### **December 6 meeting went smoothly**

Among our guests were three members of the ROTC unit from Millersville University: CPT Michael Podojil, Assistant Professor of Military Science; Cadet Nicholas VanLeuven, winner of our \$500 scholarship; and Samantha Lewis, winner of the Leadership Medal.

Dave Roy introduced these new members:

CW2 Steven and Karen Francis, USA-Ret.  
LtCol David and Carol Hartmann, USAF-Ret.  
COL Robert and Linda Jannarone, USA-Ret.  
LTC Gerald and Barbara Richardson. USA-Ret.  
LTC Shirley Spirk, USA-Ret

Gary Snyder introduced prospective member Bruce Newell and his wife Theresa.

We observed the “Missing Man Table,” with our president providing the tribute.

We collected 217 wrapped gifts for the veterans at the Lebanon VA Medical Center. They were delivered the next day and were very much appreciated.

**Budget message from our new president**

At the chapter’s board of directors meeting held on November 18th, the board approved the following budget to support the operations of your chapter next year. This budget is similar to those in the recent past and is well within our financial means. While the chapter has committed to host the Pennsylvania Council of Chapters (PACOC) 2016 convention in September, funding from our national and state organizations will cover all associated costs.

<u>Expense Category</u>	<u>2016 (\$)</u>
Admin Support	700
ROTC Award	550
Meeting Expense	350
Member Memorials	200
Newsletter	1,500
PACOC Dues	125
HS Scholarship	1,575
Total	5,000

**Say hello to our new members**

LtCol Robert E. Eveleigh  
USAF-Ret. 717-766-7296  
816 Spring Rock Court  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055  
Spouse: Doris  
Joined: December 10, 2015  
Sponsor: Bob Wilcox

CW2 Steven P. Francis  
USA-Ret. 717-209-1298  
15 West High Street  
Maytown, PA 17550  
Spouse: Karen  
Joined: November 28, 2015  
Sponsor: Dennis Benchoff

LtCol David H. Hartmann  
USAF-Ret. 1-405-514-8498  
200 Centennial Court  
Lititz, PA 17543-7101  
Spouse: Carol  
Joined: December 4, 2015  
Sponsor: John Burke

LTC Gerald A. (Gerry) Richardson  
USA-Ret. 717-984-2742  
540 Romarin Place  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
Spouse: Barbara  
Joined: November 16, 2015  
Sponsor: Dennis Benchoff

**From our president’s desk:**

First of all, I hope you had a wonderful Christmas time and wish you a very Happy New Year.

I have served as your Vice-President for the last two years and honored to have been selected to continue our mission as the chapter’s president. The past two years have shown me the hard work that our executive board and committee officers put forth to bring our meetings to fruition. I want to thank all the officers in the board and committee members who worked so hard for the past two years and hope that we can continue our relationship to further the goals of this organization. I specially want to thank LTG Benchoff who selected me as his vice and kept me under his wing. Although, he will become the past-president, he is by no means far from the front lines. LTG Benchoff will be the chairman for the planning of our hosting of the PACOC convention in Lancaster. I hope that everyone continues to support this coming challenge.

As of today, the organization has not raised their dues for the last 17 years, and we have unfortunately lost many of our comrades, which means it is most important that dues get paid in a timely manner, by the end of January, to continue our programs like the scholarship, ROTC award, printing and mailing of the newsletter, and paying for our speaker, scholarship award family and the ROTC award meals. We continue to provide the dues date on the newsletter, but I would ask you to make this your priority in the first month of the New Year.

Also, I would ask you to consider being a member of National MOAA. It might seem that it is another dues to pay, but it is much more than that. It is a number added to all those already part of the power that promotes our military legislative actions like retirement and health benefits that seem to be on the chopping block when our Nation is dealing with the budget. So, please think about becoming a member and lend a number for our future military men and women, whose livelihood is at stake.

As stated by LTG Benchhoff at the Christmas meal, the board is looking into converting this organization to a Charitable Organization 501(c)3 under the IRS code. This would allow members to deduct any donations made to the Scholarship program. You will hear further notice on this action, as we are required to amend the by-laws to show our charitable actions.

Again, it is my privilege to serve you and work with all of you to further the organization's goals.

Tony Cerase

### Our members made news

**Rick Armellino** wrote LNP to note that one political party in Manheim Township had created a political action committee named for members of a competing political party. He saw that as a way to get members of one party to unknowingly lend support to the wrong party.

**Ryan Aument**, state senator, co-wrote an article for LNP that tells of the way "hundreds of millions of dollars have been saved" by the state's Office of Inspector General. He notes that it exists only by executive order. His legislation "would create this important post by law" and would make it easier "to find waste, fraud, and abuse."

**Jerry Beck** was the keynote speaker at the Veterans Expo and Job Fair on November 13. He spoke movingly of the qualities military veterans have that equip them so particularly well to be model employees in civilian life. As a general officer and outstanding speaker, he is often asked to speak to civilian audiences. But those in attendance at the Expo had another chance to see how well he handled himself in

discussing what clearly was such an important subject for him.

**Ed Bonekemper** wrote LNP to comment on the proposed integration of county library functions into other county offices. The proposal is expected to save \$600,000 with not less than half that to go to support the 14 county libraries. Ed wrote to urge that all of the saving be passed on "to our invaluable but grossly under-funded libraries."

**Grover DeVault** was featured in a front-page story in LNP that told of his WWII experiences as an Army chaplain and his civilian career as a minister. The account went from his being wounded in Vietnam to ministering to the police who were called to the shooting of the 10 elementary school children in Nickel Mines. It included his having been awarded The Chapel of the Four Chaplains' Legion of Honor Bronze Medallion in Gettysburg on September 25.

**Josh Parsons** was the subject of a major article in LNP with a headline that invited readers to "Meet future commissioner Josh Parsons." The article explained that Josh was unopposed on the Nov. 3 ballot, then offered "5 things to know about the prospective county official."

**Joe Pitts**, U.S. Rep., was the subject of a front-page story in LNP that reported his being named to "a new congressional panel that will investigate the grisly practices of big abortion providers." He is one of eight members of the Select Investigative Panel chosen to seek the "full truth" about the sale of fetal tissue by Planned Parenthood.

Joe was reported in LNP to have introduced legislation in the Congress that would make more money available to crime victims. The source of the money would be the billions of dollars in the fund that holds the dollars accrued from criminals' fees and penalties over many years.

Joe then made front-page headlines in LNP by announcing that he will not run for another term in the House, where he has represented most of Lancaster County since 1997. He said, "With great appreciation for the support of all those who have contacted me to urge me to run for re-election, I have decided, after prayerful consideration, not to seek re-election to the U.S.

Congress in 2016.” We salute Joe on his decision and are proud of our Chapter member for having served his country in Congress as well as he had earlier served in combat, as he flew 116 missions over Vietnam as an Electronic Warfare officer in B-52s during three tours of duty.

Joe was then a subject of an LNP editorial that recapped many of his accomplishments during his lengthy career in Congress.

He was one of four people asked by LNP how we should respond to Islamic State group’s atrocities. He said, “For almost two years Islamic State has been conducting a demonic campaign of rape and murder, including children.” He added that he had joined with 47 House Democrats to make a veto-proof majority of the House “to make the refugee resettlement process safer by requiring comprehensive background checks of refugees from Iraq or Syria before they can be admitted into the United States, and certification from the FBI and Department of Homeland Security that they do not pose a threat.”

Joe wrote a wonderful article for LNP on things we can feel thankful for in the face of all the dire things that face us. He noted, for example, that “from 1990 to 2010, the share of the world living in serious poverty was cut in half, as almost 1 billion people have escaped poverty.” Also, that life expectancy in the U.S. “has increased by 50% since 1900.”

He wrote an article for LNP telling of the ways the U.S. House is working to combat terrorism.

**Paul Ripple**, a noted, retired eye surgeon, wrote an “I know a story” piece for LNP about a patient he once had. The man, recovering from a retinal detachment procedure, “had to lay flat in bed with sand bags (on each side of the head to keep it still) for about a week.” Yet, “the nurses always found an empty liquor bottle in his bed every morning.” How he managed that was some yarn.

He later wrote The Scribbler in LNP to ask if the land on which Franklin and Marshall College sits is the highest land in Lancaster City. Also, whether it had once been called Hangman’s Hill because a gallows was on the

site. The Scribbler said yes to everything except the name, which was Gallows Hill.

And still later, he wrote LNP to explain the advantages of hunting with snow on the ground.

**Peter Ross** was the subject of a near-full page picture/story in LNP that told of his 30 years of dentistry and the outstanding dental work he has done in treating children. The article also noted his recently having been installed as president of the Pennsylvania Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.

**Richard Smith** was lauded in the Sunday News for having written one of the most memorable sports stories in memory. The honor came for a 2001 article he had written for the Sunday news headlined “A special field” that told of how Stump Field had been developed, the extraordinary events that took place there, and the number of future big-leaguers who played there, including three of whom made it all the way to the Baseball Hall of Fame: “Nellie” Fox, George Kell, and Stan Koveleski.

**Craig Stedman**, District Attorney, was quoted in a front-page story in LNP as saying that he and the mayor “want longer prison terms for convicted felons caught with guns.” Craig said, “They’re intent on committing violent acts. They’ve committed a serious felony offense before, and they’ve decided to intentionally break the law yet again by carrying a firearm.”

Mayor Gray told council that Craig supports the idea of police body cameras but is recommending that all county police departments hold off on a camera program because of concerns about how to implement the program.

**Bob Wilcox** was honored by Senior News at a Veterans Expo on November 13 for 16 years of having written nearly 200 monthly articles for that publication, each featuring the military story of a different veteran. Almost all of them, from the man assigned to try to kill General Eisenhower after WWII to the man who found Mussolini’s Alfa Romeo automobile in Rome and drove it to our motor Pool (The car later was auctioned off for more than a million dollars) were local people living in Lancaster County. They included, of course, many who were members of our own Military Officers Chapter. It was announced that the publisher of

Senior news will publish a book with 50 favorites among Bob's articles.

### **Our quilt raffle went over big**

The raffle on December 6 to increase our scholarship funds was a great success. We collected \$595. A hearty thanks goes to all the members who participated in this cause, and Kim Loar and Dina Cerase for working on the raffled items. There were two additional items raffled besides the quilt: a tote bag and 4 mug mats. The quilt was won by Judy Losa. The tote bag was won by Dolores Gareis. And the 4 mug mats were won by Helen Castle. Congratulations to the three families.

### **Board will meet in new location in 2016**

In 2016 our Board will continue to meet in the Lancaster General Hospital Campus on Harrisburg Pike. But it will meet in Conference Room #3 on the first floor of Building 2112. Meetings will be at 2 p.m. Wednesdays on:

February 17  
April 13  
June 8  
August 10  
September 7  
November 16

As always, chapter members are welcome to attend our Board meetings.

### **Chick-fil-A features "Missing Man Table"**

For some years, a "Missing Man Table" has been a feature of our December meeting. Dennis Benchoff has set the table and narrated the tribute honoring our missing comrades in arms.

The Internet recently ran a story about a Chick-fil-A store in Georgia that provided the same table and written tribute as a Veterans Day display, noting that the story of that solemn, patriotic act "went viral" on Facebook.

It's a compliment to us that, while so many others are able to read about it, this identical tribute has been an actual feature of our annual Christmas meetings.

### **It's all in the family**

Joseph Besecker, son of **Joe and Lynn Besecker**, was quoted in LNP in an article that said that horse racing at Pennsylvania's six horse racing tracks "could be faced with a shutdown if the industry doesn't help cover a \$9 million shortfall for drug testing." Besecker was quoted as saying, "All this noise already has an impact." He owns 40 thoroughbred racehorses that compete at tracks throughout the U.S.

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

**Ada Ruth Bentman**, wife of J.J. Bentman. She died December 9 at Moravian Manor. Ada and J.J. had celebrated their 71st wedding anniversary on November 22. She was a homemaker who spent time with a plethora of community activities in addition to Neighborhood Services, Planned Parenthood, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster General Hospital, and the Community Action Program. In addition to her husband, she is survived by two daughters and two grandchildren. Ada had been part of our chapter since November 1997.

**V. Scott Garman**, who died November 19 at the age of 93. In WWII, he enlisted in the Marine Corps and served as a navigator and radar operator in the Pacific Theater, including the Guadalcanal Campaign. He separated from the Marine Corps as a warrant officer in 1946. He earned a B.S. degree from Indiana University of PA and a Masters degree from Franklin and Marshall College. He then taught at Warwick High School and Millersville State College. He was an outstanding athlete, achieving national amateur rankings in both tennis and badminton. His wife of 59 years, Fay, died in 2014. He is survived by two sons and four grandchildren. He is warmly remembered by our chapter members for long having been an enthusiastic welcomer at our chapter meetings. Scott had been a member of our chapter since December 1996.

**Arch G. Knisely III**, who died December 17 in his sleep at his son's home in West Chester. He had served with the Army Coast Artillery during WWII before entering the U.S. Naval Academy in 1944. In 1951 and 1952, he served as gunnery officer on the carrier U.S.S. Valley

Forge. He was involved with a host of organizations that served Lancaster County and was Community Service Manager at PP&L for 36 years, retiring in 1989. He is survived by a daughter and four sons. Arch had been member of our MOAA chapter since November 2000.

**Richard Sasin**, who died November 6 at Homestead Village, where he and his late wife, Dottie, had lived for several years. Dick grew up in Philadelphia and enrolled in Drexel University in 1942. The next year, he left the university to enlist in the Army. He earned his commission at OCS in Fort Benning, GA in 1944, then shipped to combat in Europe. There he became part of the 75th Infantry Division, fighting through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. He was a unit commander at the Battle of the Bulge and later became Commander of a rifle company. When the war ended, he returned to Drexel, where he earned a B.S. in Chemical Engineering, followed by an M.A. and Ph.D from Temple University. He was a Chemistry Professor at Drexel for many years before coming to Lancaster in 1968 to become Dean of the School of Science at Millersville University. Dick belonged to many military organizations and had been an active member of our chapter since September 1995.

**In the spotlight: COL Victor Bove and how he believes ESP got him through WWII**

Victor Bove fought in the Battle of the Bulge in WWII...and strongly believes that ESP (extra-sensory perception) had a lot to do with his getting through it.

In combat, he told his squad that he sensed that he would be hit by German machine gun fire but not killed. He then proceeded to have several close brushes with death. He once was taking a pair of field glasses that his lieutenant was extending to him, when a mortar round landed squarely between them, shattering the officer's arms and legs, but leaving Vic entirely unscathed.

One of his jobs was to pair up with a buddy and search houses for Germans holed up there. On five occasions, the man with him was killed by artillery shells, while Vic got through it without a scratch. On another, he and another soldier were studying a map when a sniper snuffed out the life of the other soldier. On still another, the

troops were given a moment to rest after a long march. They all plopped down, and suddenly Vic sensed that he needed to roll quickly to his right. A German machine gunner then stitched a row of bullet holes through the ground where had had lain a moment before.

One day, his unit was told they'd have that day to rest. Vic, by then a staff sergeant, confided to his squad that this was the day that he'd be wounded by German machine gun fire but not killed. Later that day, they were ordered to resume their march, and as they approached the Remagen Bridge, they ran into a German machine gun nest. Of the 12 men in his squad, six were killed and the other six wounded. A bullet pierced Vic's leg, but he was able to use hand signals to alert the men behind him to the location of the machine gun.

Then he heard a soldier ahead of him scream that he had been blinded by a land mine and needed help. By that time, Vic could no longer walk, but he dragged himself some 200 yards to the wounded man and hauled him back to safety. For his actions that day, he was later awarded the Silver Star.

Vic was sent to Paris, where surgeons opened up his leg to prevent gangrene from setting in, then to Cherbourg to have it sewed up. When he was well enough, he was returned to his unit, which by that time was doing occupation duty. And in January of 1946, he was put aboard ship at Marseilles to return to the States.

After college and more years of medical study and surgical training that took him through Missouri, Philadelphia, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Mexico, his medical career blossomed with innumerable honors, awards, and medical and administrative posts.

In 1972, Vic joined the army reserve and served as Chief of Professional Service for the 99th Combat Support Hospital in Lancaster. For four years, he was commander of the hospital. He retired from the reserve in 1986 as a colonel.

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

of Phyllis Diller, who reported an appraisal of her a guy once made, "If you were a building, you'd be condemned.