



Capital District of New York Chapter Association of the US Army

Supporting Soldiers and their Families

Vol. 6 Issue 10: February 2018 – June 2018

Spring 2018 Issue

President's Message



CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt

I want to start out my message with great news. This will be my last "President's Message" in our newsletter. At our elections at the April General Membership Meeting, SSG Will Valenza, New York Army National Guard, was elected as the new Chapter President and will take office on 1 July 2018 for the start of his two-year term. I want to thank Will for stepping forward and wish him the best of luck during his tenure. I also promised Will my full support and with that, I was elected to serve as the 1st Vice President (Membership) at the meeting so you will still be getting those annoying emails from

me asking you to either renew your dues or, if you're not a member yet, to consider joining one of the BEST Chapters in AUSA. Speaking of membership with your assistance, we continue to grow. Whether it is through your renewal or signing up new members or just talking about the Capital District of New York Chapter, your impact on the Chapter is well noticed.

I want to let you all know that it has been my honor and pleasure to have served as your Chapter President for the past six years. As I move on to my new position, I promise you my enthusiasm and dedication in making our Chapter what it is today will not wane. I will continue to help support all we do for our Soldiers, Veterans, DA Civilians, their families and our Community Partners with all my heart.

As always, if there is anything you need from me, please just reach out!

CSM Bob Van Pelt, USA, Retired
President
Capital District of New York Chapter
Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA)

JOIN/RENEW AUSA at www.ausa.org



Chapter Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/cdnyausa>



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CSM Robert Van Pelt USA Ret.
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Upcoming Events

29 June 2018
Glens Falls Dragons
Military Appreciation
Night
East Field
Glens Falls, NY

23 August 2018
General Membership
Meeting
Latham, NY

25 August 2018
Warrant Officer
100th Anniversary
Celebration
Watervliet, NY

AUSA in the Community

Stride Snowfest Welcome Dinner

On Friday, 2 March, the Chapter supported the Stride Adaptive Sports Snowfest Welcome dinner for the 6th year. 17 of our members braved the snowstorm that hit on that Friday in order to recognize those that have given so much. As we have been able to do in the past, we were able to reserve and fill 2 tables at the event.



The 2018 Snowfest attendees on the slopes.



2018 Stride Dinner Attendees

Vietnam Reconsidered at NYS Military Museum

On 10 March 2018 several of our members participated in a panel at the NYS Military Museum in Saratoga Springs entitled "Vietnam Reconsidered". Roy McDonald moderated the 2 ½ hour panel while Dave Wallingford and Ray Manley served as panel members, There were several Chapter Members in attendance. For those that are unaware, our Chapter is a member of the Friends of the NYS Military Museum.



(c.) Dave Wallingford



The audience participated by asking many questions.



(l.) Ray Manley (r.) Moderator Roy McDonald

Child and Youth Program: Hunting The Good Stuff, One Retreat at a Time

"Hunting The Good Stuff, One Retreat At A Time" was a three day, two night (18-20 Feb) event developed to focus on our Teen Council members and exuded leadership, life skill and Master Resilience Training skill and connection development. The youth worked in conjunction with Primitive Pursuits, a non-profit environmental Cornell Cooperative Extension program. Primitive Pursuit's highly trained staff members provided leadership and wilderness skills education to our youth in the Finger Lakes region. Their facility is nestled in the midst of over 2,500 acres or managed woodlands, about 20 minutes from Ithaca, NY.

While on this retreat, the participants were inundated with the following survival skill-building resources; Fire Building for warmth and water purification, Campfire cooking basics, Winter Survival Shelters 101, A lesson in tinder, choice of tool-crafting (friction kits & natural cordage) and Mammal Tracking. The youth had also requested information on how to identify when people close to them might be struggling with mental health concerns. Chaplain (LTC) Scott Ehler, NYARNG, was present to lead a discussion on when and how to better assist their friends and family and the importance of building strong, positive connections with these individuals.

This weekend retreat was denoted to be a success from the perspective of the staff / volunteers and the teens in attendance. The teens truly enjoy these connection building opportunities and the in-kind donation received from AUSA is a great catalyst in making this possible! AUSA donated \$200.00 for the teens retreat.



Learning survivor skills.



The Teen Camper Group



Campers had some bonding time too!

Memorial Day Flag Project

For the fourth year in a row, the Chapter organized the effort to pay tribute to our Veterans and Family Members interred at the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery with the placement of 11,343 American Flags on all the gravesites and columbariums at the cemetery for the Memorial Day weekend. Before placement of the flags, over 400 volunteers gathered at the main flagpole for a short ceremony and to hear Congressman Paul Tonko and NYS Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner speak on the importance of remembering those who ensured our freedoms. Kevin Ressler and Elise Fredette served as the project leads and organized a great group of organizations and individual volunteers to not only place the flags but also gather them up 3 days later. A special thank you goes out to Scott Lamb, Saratoga Cemetery Director, and his crew for all they do in supporting this event.



A volunteer Family joins a Veteran in placing an American Flag.

Bo and Teddy, the children of Stephanie and Ron Spanton, help place American Flags and pay tribute to our Veterans.



Bob Van Pelt, Elise Fredette and Kevin Ressler (the photographer) get the 12,000 American Flags ready for the project.



On Saturday, 26 May 2018, Volunteers gathered for the opening ceremony.

Supporting the Soldier

The JROTC Governors' Cup

On Saturday, 10 February, Amsterdam High School hosted the Governor's Cup, a local JROTC competition for Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) units within the Capital Region. The 4 units that participated were the Amsterdam H.S. MCJROTC, Schenectady H.S. AFJROTC, Christian Brothers Academy JROTC and Albany H.S. JROTC. Those participating cadets were administered a physical fitness test, a written academic test and a number of ceremonial drills. SgtMaj Rod Wilday, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired, organized the first ever event in the region so that parents of the cadets were able to see their sons and daughters in competition. Although all the units did well and won numerous awards, the Amsterdam Team was the overall winner of the competition. Our Chapter donated \$300.00 to help sponsor trophies and awards for two of the categories to include the actual Governors Cup awarded to Amsterdam H.S.



(l.) SgtMaj(R) Rod Wilday and (r.) CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt present the Governors' Cup to (c.) Cadet Juan Fuentes of the Amsterdam H.S. MCJROTC.



Members of the Albany H.S. competition team pose with the NY Army National Guard Recruiters and CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt.

Rochester JROTC Military Ball

On Saturday, 10 March, the Charlotte High School Leadership Academy for Young Men and the Rochester Early College International High School held their 22nd Annual Joint JROTC Military Ball in The Harro East Ballroom in Rochester, NY. CSM(R) Louis Wilson, a Chapter member, and a former NY Army National Guard State Command Sergeant Major, was the events guest speaker. During the ceremonies, CSM(R) Wilson presented the AUSA Junior ROTC medal and certificate to one cadet from each of the programs. Our Chapter donated \$200.00 to the event to help offset the cost for the cadets.



(l.) CSM(R) Louis Wilson presents (r.) Cadet Sergeant Major Taveon Prince, Charlotte High School Leadership Academy for Young Men the AUSA JROTC Medal and Certificate.



(l.) CSM(R) Louis Wilson presents (r.) Cadet Battalion Commander LTC Shamard Houser, Rochester Early College International High School the AUSA JROTC Medal and Certificate.



The ceremonial cake.

Yellow Ribbon Day

On Tuesday, 10 April 2018, Yellow Ribbon Day was celebrated at the Halfmoon Town Hall. For the 3rd year our Chapter participated by setting up an AUSA information table with give-a-ways for all the attendees. Remarks were delivered by members of several branches of the military along with the yearly ceremonies to honor our Service Members and Veterans. A highlight was the presentation from the keynote speaker, LTC(R) Paul Fanning, a Chapter member.



Debbie Van Pelt tends to the AUSA information table.



LTC(R) Paul Fanning delivers his keynote address.

La Salle Institute JROTC



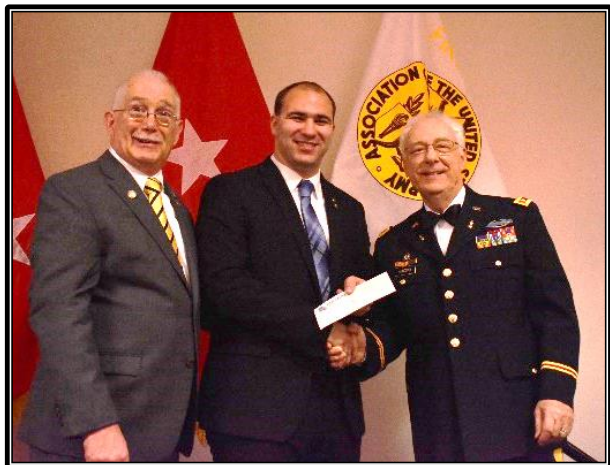
LTC(R) Nick Laiacona awards the AUSA JROTC Outstanding Leadership Award Medal and Certificate to Cadet LTC James Gallagher.

LTC(R) Nick Laiacona represented the Chapter at both the La Salle Institute Baccalaureate Mass on 18 May where he presented our Chapter JROTC Scholarship Award and on 22 May at the Promotion and Commissioning Ceremony where he presented the AUSA JROTC Outstanding Leadership Award Medal and Certificate on behalf of GEN(R) Carter Ham. Nick is an alumnus of La Salle Institute and it is important to note that La Salle Institute is a Community Partner of our Chapter. Congratulations to both students!

LTC(R) Nick Laiacona presents the Capital District of NY Chapter AUSA JROTC Scholarship Award to Cadet LTC Matthew Van Wormer.



AUSA First Region Spring Meeting



The Chapter donated \$300.00 to La Salle Institute to help offset the cost of repair for damage to their band equipment ruined from water damage.

(l.) CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt, (c.) Mr. Kyle E. Chamberlin, Director of Bands at La Salle Institute, (r.) LTC(R) Nick Laiacona.



County Executive (MSG) Dan McCoy received a U.S. House of Representatives proclamation. In the photo left to right, COL(R) Dennis Dougherty, President, AUSA First Region, MG Raymond Shields, CG, NYARNG, Congressman Paul Tonko, MSG Dan McCoy and CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt, Chapter President.

Our Chapter was selected to host the 2018 AUSA First Region Spring Meeting which was held on 3-6 May 2018 at the Hilton Albany Hotel in downtown Albany. AUSA First Region is comprised of 22 Chapters across the 6 New England States, plus New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware which includes almost 13,000 members. At the meeting 18 of the 22 chapters were represented. Business meetings were held on both Friday and Saturday mornings. Also included was a buffet social hosted at the Albany offices of our Community Partner, Aeon Nexus, on Friday evening, a tour of the NYS Capital Building on Saturday afternoon and the annual Mary G. Roebling Distinguished Service Award Banquet on Saturday evening. At the banquet, the Region recognized County Executive (MSG) Dan McCoy with their Distinguished Service Award. In addition, SGM(R) Andy DePalo was presented the James M. McDonald Award and SGT(R) Kevin Ressler received the Arthur R. McMillan award for their dedicated service to the Chapter and AUSA. At the dinner members of the La Salle Institute band played music during the dinner reception and members of the SGT Henry Johnson JROTC Battalion, Albany High School served as the Color Guard for the evening.

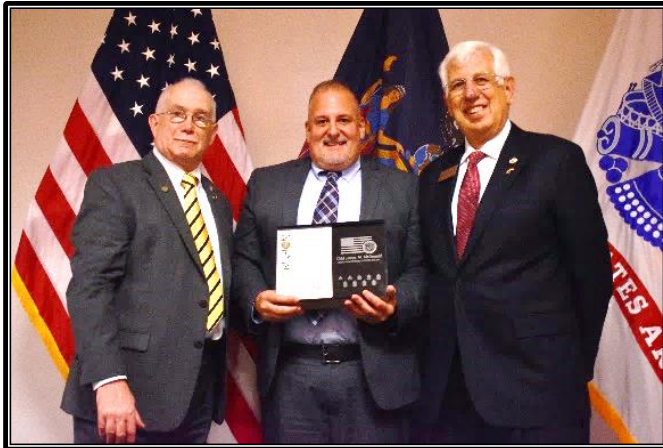
AUSA First Region Spring Meeting Continued...



CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt presents Chapter Challenge Coins to the members of the Albany H.S. JROTC Color Guard.



County Executive (MSG) Dan McCoy received the Mary G. Roebling Trophy. In the photo left to right, CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt, Chapter President, MSG Dan McCoy, COL(R) Dennis Dougherty, President, AUSA First Region



SGM(R) Andy DePalo receives the James A. McDonald Award. In the photo left to right, CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt, Chapter President, SGM(R) Andy DePalo, COL(R) Dennis Dougherty, President, AUSA First Region.



SGT(R) Kevin Ressler received the Arthur R. McMillan Award. In the photo left to right, CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt, Chapter President, SGT(R) Kevin Ressler, COL(R) Dennis Dougherty, President, AUSA First Region.

NYARNG Senior Enlisted Leadership Conference

On 27-28 April, CSM Dave Piwowarski, NYARNG CSM, held the Annual Senior NCO Leadership Conference at the State HQ in Latham. Our Chapter President, CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt, updated the 105 attendees on AUSA matters and sought their assistance in furthering the goals of AUSA. The Chapter also supported the gathering with a donation of \$300.00 to offset the cost for the conference.

AUSA First Region Salutes



In the photo left to right: CSM(R) Bob Van Pelt, COL Dave Gagnon (Regimental Commander), CSM Tom Ciampolillo (Regimental CSM), SFC Joseph Prewitt, SFC Daryl Eldred, SSG Amanda Eldred, Mr. Art Loran (1st Region VP-Soldier Affairs), SSG Morgan Seeley, SFC David Cunningham, MSG Scott Kyle, SFC Sean Markham, COL(R) Dennis Dougherty.

AUSA First Region has a program to recognize the outstanding efforts of the various Military Units within the First Region footprint. Since the First Region Spring Meeting was in New York this past May, it was decided to select the 1-106th Regiment (RTI) as this years' unit to be recognized. At the First Region business meeting on Saturday, 5 May 2018, several members of the unit, to include the Regimental Commander and Command Sergeant Major, attend the meeting and were "saluted" by all those present and were given plaques to recognize their selection.

Chapter Donates to the Museum of the U.S. Army

The construction of the Museum of the U.S. Army, located on Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, is well underway. Although it is located on Federal land, the museum is being built with private funds and to date, our Chapter and our members through the Chapter, have donated \$2,380.00 of our \$2,500.00 pledge. If you would like to donate to this great endeavor, please contact Bob Van Pelt at bvpcsm@aol.com. Any amount at all is greatly appreciated!

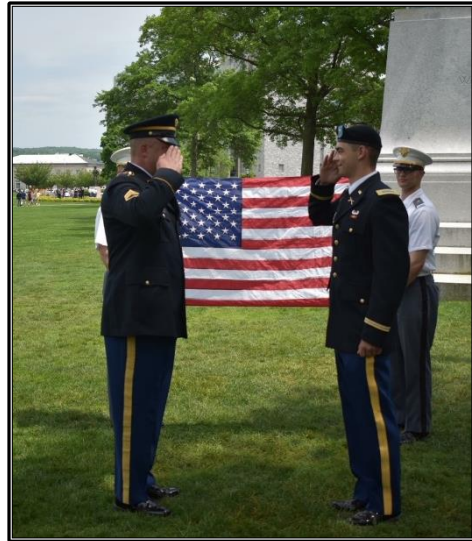
Who's News!

Graduation - 2LT Mitchell Valenza

On Saturday, 26 May 2018, Cadet Mitchell Valenza became 2LT Valenza as he graduated from the United States Military Academy. Mitch will be branched Infantry and will be reporting for training and further assignment to Fort Benning, Georgia. All Valenza family members are members of the CD-NY Chapter – AUSA.



The Valenza Family (Left to Right) SSG Will, CPT Julie, 2LT Mitch, CDT Camille and SPC Andrew.



(l.) SSG Valenza delivers the First Salute to his son, (r.) 2LT Mitchell Valenza and received the traditional silver dollar in return.

Graduation – Patricia Erickson

Congratulations to Patricia Erickson who graduated from George Washington School of Public Health in epidemiology and had her undergraduate degree from Siena College. She will start a new job at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in July with the Army Public Health Center. Patricia is the daughter of MAJ(R) Dave Erickson and his wife, Elfi.



(l.) Elfi (c.) Patricia (r.) Dave

Congratulations: Birth Announcement

A new addition to our AUSA Family. Chapter members CW4 Mark & Sandra Robinson were blessed on 27 April with their new daughter, Moira Grace, who weighed in at 10lbs 9oz and 21 1/2". Moira Grace is the granddaughter of CSM(R) Bob & Debbie Van Pelt and the niece of CW3 Mandy and SGM Ron Spanton.



CW4 Mark & Sandra Robinson
with little baby girl Moira Grace!



Hope
Everyone has
a safe, and
enjoyable
Summer!!

Your Editor,

Keri
Attanasio

Community Partners

New Community Partners



High Peak Physical Therapy

13 Baywood Drive

Queensbury NY 12804

(518) 761-0850

<http://www.highpeakpt.com>

www.facebook.com/High-Peak-Physical-Therapy-1030760976956051/

High Peak Physical Therapy is evolving and stepping into the next generation of comprehensive, evidence based physical therapy with Jeff Merrigan PT DPT. Jeff and his staff are eager and prepared to provide the community with specific therapeutic care. Care is created for each individual, geared to get you back to doing what you love. High Peak Physical Therapy is looking to set the bar higher for physical therapy and personalized care with the most progressive one on one treatments. These treatments help you build a bond and relationship with a single therapist, avoiding the frustration of seeing a different therapist each visit. High Peak Physical Therapy prides itself on not only delivering a premium physical therapy experience, but also providing education regarding each diagnosis and condition in a simple to understand patient first language. This allows each individual to be a part of their rehabilitation and to understand why they are doing what they are doing.

Community Partner Membership

Aeon Nexus

138 State Street
Albany, NY

www.aeonnexus.com

Boston Piezo-Optics, Inc.

24 River Street
Upton, MA

www.bostonpiezooptics.com/

Excelsior College

7 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY

www.excelsior.edu

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4 Tesseneer Drive
Highland Heights, KY

www.generalcable.com/

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High Peaks Physical Therapy

13 Baywood Drive
Queensbury, NY

www.highpeakpt.com

Herzog Law Firm P.C.

47 W. Harrison Street
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<http://www.herzoglawfirm.com/>

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653 Plank Road, Suite 2
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www.mahoneynotify-plus.com

Martins Point Health Care

28 Corporate Drive
Clifton Park, NY

www.martinspoint.org/

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www.mohawkfabric.com

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47 West Harrison Street
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573 Columbia Turnpike
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www.theneedhamgroup.com

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453 Dixon Road, Bldg. 1, Suite 3
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www.schutzefamilydentistry.com

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