



# NEW YORK NAVAL MILITIA

## NEWSLETTER – FALL 2024





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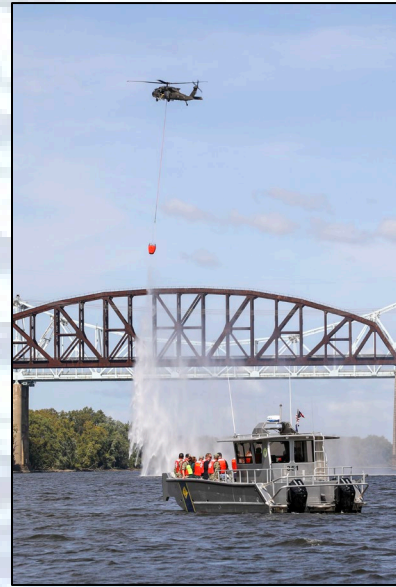
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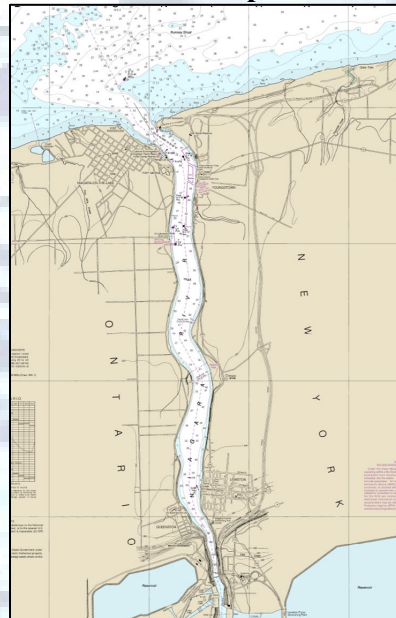
## Military and Naval Affairs

#### Front Cover photo:



With LC-351 in the foreground, a NYANRG UH-60 uses a bambi bucket to drop water over the Hudson River at Schodack, during Exercise Empire Challenge '24

#### Back Cover photo:



Lower Niagara River nautical chart. The proposed area for Exercise Western Horizon/Empire Challenge '25.

## Commander's Corner:



**Rear Admiral (LH)  
Michael Perry, NYNM**

### **From the Commander:**

Happy holidays shipmates! Overall, 2024 has been a very good year, during which we supported several different missions located throughout NYS with more than 450 members at once, reenergized our Regional Commands, launched our Drone Program, expanded Military Emergency Boat Service (MEBS) involvement in Joint Task Force Empire Shield and integration with the State Partnership Program of the NY National Guard to include Sweden as well as Brazil, and have consistently maintained over 3,200 members.

Regarding other good news, The Adjutant General recently granted Force Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL) MNM Niemitalo an additional year of service beyond his mandatory retirement date in December of 2024 to focus upon improving MEBS training and readiness. The extraordinary and rarely granted extension reflects appreciation for MNM Niemitalo volunteering to organize and lead a Financial Reconciliation Team that has helped the State of NY justify recovering over a quarter billion dollars in Operation COVID 19 related costs from the Federal Government over the past several years. In addition, MGySgt Rignola relieved MNM Niemitalo as Force SEL as previously planned before the extension was granted during the November NYNM Leadership Meeting to help MNM Niemitalo further focus upon MEBS support. Thus, many thanks and well done to MNM Niemitalo for his stellar service as our Force SEL during one of the busiest and most productive periods of our over 133-year history and congratulations to MGySgt Rignola.

Regarding recent not so good news, we need to spread the word throughout the force that the NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA), which authorizes our orders, has adopted a strict "one and done" policy regarding General Order One (GO1) and State Active Duty (SAD) Policy violations. Meaning a single substantiated violation for almost any reason typically results in the offending member being involuntarily released from SAD, if applicable, as well as immediately discharged from the NYNM.

Thus, the most important message to all is, "Read and heed GO1 even more carefully since its requirements for proper behavior and prohibitions against improper behavior are clearly stated and substantiated violations are relatively indefensible." Truly one and done with near zero chance of recovery.

However, SAD policy is relatively scattered, obscure, and easier to overlook or forget. Thus, please encourage and help our members to triple check the required completion, routing, accuracy, and approval of important paperwork such as leave, absence, and travel and housing requests, as well as mediate any misunderstandings regarding SAD Policy as quickly as possible at the lowest possible level before the member is discharged from the NYNM.

For example, proper and timely submission of Pre and Post Medical Screening Forms (PPMSF) is SAD Policy and a particularly sensitive area of concern. Proper submission of the forms is a pre and post requisite



for NYNM members receiving workman's compensation coverage from DMNA while completing SAD of any type or duration. As a result, PPMSF submission is carefully tracked by DMNA, errors and omissions are quickly noted, and failing to comply threatens the viability of the entire NYNM program. Thus, anyone receiving paid or unpaid (cost or no-cost) NYNM orders must submit a PPMSF via the same NYNM MEBS LOG JOTFORM application that they used to request their orders at the very beginning and end of their orders. Otherwise, repeatedly failing to submit timely PPMFs will result in increasingly severe consequences up to and including possible discharge from the NYNM by DMNA.

Fortunately, submitting PPMSFs is much quicker and easier than the in-person and equally mandatory mustering at a specific location that we all have or have had to do while completing our federal periods of annual training and drills. Just log into JOTFORM via a cell phone or Internet application from almost anywhere and seamlessly complete and submit the forms online within about a minute. They are best done while changing into or out of uniform on the first and final day of your orders to help remember to make timely submissions. In addition, detachment OICs and shipmates can and should remind arriving or detaching members to complete the forms, meaning there is little or no excuse for not properly completing the forms.

Finally, note that members who believe they have been unfairly discharged from the NYNM by DMNA for a GO1 or SAD Policy violation or have compelling mitigating circumstances to offer must submit a written appeal to NYNM Headquarters within 30 days of their discharge. Successful appeals of substantiated violations are extremely rare. However, at a minimum, appeals will become part of the member's NYNM record and demonstrate remorse for their inappropriate actions or inactions.

In summary, best wishes for a safe and joyful holiday season and prosperous new year! One thing we can all be thankful for is GySgt Eckhard recently rescuing a large collection of NYNM dinnerware dating back to the early 1900's from being lost forever to some random and unrelated collector off eBay. Instead, they were used again for the first time in approximately 100 years by all NYNM attendees during the 2024 Military Ball. I applaud GySgt Eckhardt's generosity in locating, personally purchasing, and sharing these



priceless heirlooms of our past and encourage even more NYNM members to attend next year's Ball and share breaking bread off the dinnerware in remembrance of our over 133-year history.

## Chief of Staff News

CAPT MaryEtta Nolan

First, I want to remember our fallen Marine Sgt Cassidy James Rochon who decided to end his life on November 8, 2024, at the young age of 25. Our condolences to his family, shipmates, fellow Marines and



friends. To all our NYNM family, if you are feeling overwhelmed, please reach out and talk to someone you feel comfortable with or use the free services in New York and throughout the country. **Dialing 988** for the **24/7 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** will connect you to a trained crisis counselor. Call, Text or Chat if you, or someone you know, may need crisis support. It is private and confidential. Don't suffer alone!

The past few months have been a busy one for the New York Naval Militia from the highly successful Empire Challenge '24 to well deserved promotions, Josephthal awards, MEBS demonstrations, the Militia Ball and ending with the leadership meeting.

October was a time for ceremonies, asylum hotel visits and State Partnership Program (SPP) boat demonstrations. RDML Michael Perry and I drove to New York City and met up with **CAPT Marghella**, **MGySgt Rignola**, and **GySgt Tjornhom** at Fort Hamilton for the Promotion Ceremony of **BMCM Wayne Hosmer**.

The following day we traveled to the Coast Guard Station in



Staten Island, embarking on PB440 and joined by PB300 and PB400, destination the Statue of Liberty, for the promotion ceremony of **EM1 Glenn Malik** and the presentation of the Josephthal Award to **CWO2 Christopher Ward**.



Next stop, the Asylum Command Post at the Armory in

Harlem, where the Admiral promoted **Sgt Amaury Rivas**, **ABH2 Leidy Paniagua-Benitez**, **BU1 Mikhail Gordon**, **GySgt Daniel Grunin** and **SSgt Luis Giralde**. Congratulations to all our well deserved members, continue to excel and remain active in the Naval Militia.

The Asylum Mission is coming to an end so be prepared to return to your prior job, school or next adventure. We thank everyone who served and volunteered to be on the waiting list. For the senior leadership, please recognize the outstanding members by initiating awards up the chain of command.





At the leadership meeting, we were excited seeing many new faces that are willing to increase their activity with the NYNM in leadership roles. We welcome **CDR Steve Neuhaus, CDR John Curran, CPT Recordo Demetrius, LCDR Flipp Khosh, BMC William Garcia and PO2 David Prescott.**

**Master Chief Glenn Niemitalo** is stepping down from a five-year tour as Command Master Chief to concentrate on MEBS. Although he turns the magical age of 68 in December, he received a special extension for one year from the TAG. We thank him for everything he did, does and plans to do for MEBS and the NYNM.

Stepping into the Command Senior Enlisted Leader role is well known to everyone in HQ and SOUTHCOM, **MGySgt Salvatore Rignola, USMC.** The new title is **Force Master Gunnery Sergeant.** Many Asylum Mission members have met him during our visits to NYC as SOUTHCOM SEL.



SOUTHCOM is undergoing leadership changes. Sadly, **CAPT Pete Marghella** had to step down for personal reasons. During his time as Regional Commander, he was extremely active and effective, and we appreciate all he has accomplished.

We are pleased to announce that **CDR John P. Curran** has accepted the position of **SOUTHCOM Regional Commander.** A 25-year Navy Reserve Veteran, his experience as a Navy Reserve Commanding Officer is exactly what we need! His resume will be on the NYNM website soon. He will be choosing a Deputy Commander in the near future. We are also pleased to announce our new **SOUTHCOM Regional Senior Enlisted Leader** is **Master Chief, Wayne Hosmer** who is currently on the Asylum Mission at the Fort Hamilton Command Post. **BMCM Hosmer** will work closely with our Force **MGySgt Rignola** to ensure a seamless turnover.



The NYNM UAS Drone Program is up and running, or should I say flying. It will work closely with MEBS but will be a separate department under the leadership of **Major Michael Golden**, Officer-in-Charge, **BMC William Garcia**, Senior Enlisted Leader, and **SSgt Christopher Vega** as Training Officer.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season.

# Force Master Gunnery Sergeant

By MGySgt Sal Rignola

First I like to thank the Admiral and his Staff for selecting me and having confidence in me to be the next SEA. I joined the New York Naval Militia in 1981 and started being actively involved in 2010 as the SEA of Southern Command. Over the last 14 years I witness the change of the NYNM from a type of club to a professional Naval Service as part of the New York State Defense Force. The NYNM is the most active Naval Militia in the United States and we have more boats than many nations. We are an all volunteer force (modern minute men) who stand fast and are ready to serve our state. I am very proud of our Naval Militia, while visiting sites in NYC for the past two years during the Asylum Seeker Mission and seeing our service members doing a great job and so many of our senior enlisted in key leadership positions.

Over the last few years the Covid and Asylum Seeker missions were a great recruitment tool but they will be ending in 2025. We must continue to visit reserve centers for recruitment and to inform the leadership of the centers about the NYNM.

As I stated before I am very proud of the senior enlisted and all of our service members in the NYNM. I expect the senior enlisted to lead by example, to be professionals able to accomplish any mission assigned to them and to look out for the welfare of our junior members. Safety should always be a top priority during any mission or training. We must keep our members informed and have better communication between all of us. We must always seek self-improvement and insure that our commands are transparent, fair and all service members have an opportunity for training any positions that become available.

If we all work together and to our best to maintain the highest standards we will ensure that the New York Naval Militia will be able to be successful in any mission we are assigned to do. As the Force Master Gunnery Sergeant I will do my best to serve and lead all our enlisted members of the NYNM and to up hold the great traditions of the Sea Services.

## Director's Comments

By CAPT (ret) David Hawley

I want to wish everyone a very Happy and Joyous Holiday Season! Wishing someone Happy Holidays is not just a "politically correct" thing... did you know that there are more than 15 religious and commemorative Holidays in the month of December?

As the New Year begins there are a few notable personal events with constant bearing and decreasing range: the 2025 Promotion Cycle is quickly approaching and the nominations for the 2025 Josephthal Award.

**The 2025 Promotion Cycle:** The best guidance is our NYNM INST 1410.1F Promotion Policy. Once you are sure you meet the time in grade requirements read the Promotion Policy to be sure you can put together the best Individual Promotion Package before the Promotion Board. The Board will meet in June 2025 and all Individual Packages must be complete to my office no later than May 31st. The best guide for Individual Packages is the "Board Promotion Checklist" in the back of the Promotion Policy:

1. Recommendation for Promotion: **This recommendation comes from your Regional Commander.**



2. Narrative Justification: This is your chance to speak to the Board. It is a letter from you to the Board President explaining your qualifications for promotion. Limit this to one page and 12 font. Information overload is worse than too little.
3. Minimum time in grade: When did you earn your last rank? How long have you been in the Naval Militia?
4. Recent Photo: Within the past year a full color photo of you in uniform, full length and uncovered.
5. Current Fitness or Evaluation report: This report is by your reporting Senior (for most Naval Militia members this is your Regional Commander)
6. Minimum of 5 years of FEDERAL evaluations or fitness reports and all of your Naval Militia Fitness or Eval reports. The New York Naval Militia does not have "Annual Evaluations" so your reporting Senior can provide multiple year reports.
7. Current medical on file: verify your annual is up to date.
8. Individual Training Record: This is your opportunity to explain what you have done with the NYNM (one page only). **Do not send certificates of completions.**
9. Billet description: If you are applying for promotion that also involves increased duties and responsibilities – describe these.
10. All DD214's: If you have activated since the time you joined the NYNM perhaps we do not have all your DD214's – call the office or send an email to see if we have all of your DD214's.
- 11. DO NOT SEND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FROM RETIREES, CIVILIAN EMPLOYERS, ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, FAMILY MEMBERS, NON-MILITARY, OR OTHERS THAT HAVE NO BEARING ON THE NAVAL MILITIA.**

It is your responsibility to ensure your promotion package is complete. The most frustrating part of attending a Promotion Board is to find a good candidate has not completed their application package. For those enlisted members applying to be promoted to E7 and above: additional recommendations by current Naval Militia E7's and above add to the weight of your application.

#### **The Josephthal Award:**

In 1929 Rear Admiral Louis Josephthal passed away and in his will created the Josephthal Award to recognize an outstanding Naval Militia Individual and an outstanding Unit each year. All Naval Militia members and Units are eligible to be awarded the award. Units of the Reserve Forces of the US Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard are eligible if at least one member of the Unit belongs to the NYNM. Recognition is based on an individual or unit that has performed in a manner that reflects mission accomplishment of the NYNM or Federal service. The time period for the award nominations is April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025.

Nominations shall be made by any commander, commanding officer, or officer-in-charge of a NYNM unit or Federal Unit that has at least one NYNM member. Nominations should be made on standard military letter format with enough documentation to support the nomination.

This award has a monetary value: \$500 for an individual and \$1500 for a Unit.



# NORTHCOM NEWS

By CAPT MaryEtta Nolan

On behalf of NORTHCOM Regional Commander, CDR Steve Neuhaus, I met with the new Navy Reserve Center, Schenectady Commanding Officer, CDR Adam Samsel and the Executive Officer LCDR Carmella Caprario. Informing them about NYNM and the benefits to their sailors have made them extremely excited about the NYNM and plan to visit DMNA to meet RDML Perry, Director Hawley and CAPT McKnight.

## TRAINING

By LCDR Filipp Khosh, ACoS N7

Greetings from N7. Quick overview of the current, upcoming, and suggested training events.

As you are aware, one of the primary functions of the New York Naval Militia (NYNM) is to be prepared to provide personnel to assist the state in managing emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters. In fulfilling this role, we support the mission of the agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Therefore, it is essential for us to be proficient in their terminology and operational procedures. One effective way to achieve this is by completing various emergency management courses and becoming familiar with the Incident Command System, as well as New York State-specific incident response protocols and methods.

As per the latest decisions made during the November 22, 2024 Leadership Meeting, ICS 100 remains the only mandatory course for all who wish to join the NY Naval Militia. All personnel are highly encouraged to advance their Emergency Management knowledge by taking additional ICS courses, primarily ICS-200. Multitude of Emergency Management training is available on the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) website: <https://training.fema.gov/emicourses/>

If you have previously completed a course with the EMI, you can request the certificate of completion or the entire transcript through the following link: <https://training.fema.gov/student/sssp.aspx> All certificates can be uploaded through the NYNM OPS Portal (via computer or phone app) PDF Document Upload option. For the ease of tracking and cataloguing, the suggested filename format should be Course\_Number.Last\_Name. For example, if LCDR Khosh would like to upload the certificate of completion of the IS 100 course, the filename should be 100.Khosh. If uploading the entire EMI Transcript, the filename should be EMI.Transcript.Khosh.

**NOTE:** Courses are available in various formats – Online Individual Study (IS), Virtual (Live instruction), and Resident (Live Attendance).

Majority of courses, such as 100, 200, 700, and 800 can be taken on the EMI Student Portal as Individual Study (just navigate to the portal <https://training.fema.gov/is/> and type the course number in the Search Field).

More advanced courses (highly recommended to the Senior Enlisted and Junior and Senior Officers) mostly are offered in the Resident (live attendance) format and can be found on the DHSES Training Calendar website <https://www.dhses.ny.gov/dhses-training-calendar?q=/dhses-training-calendar%3Fq%3D/dhses-training-calendar%3Fq%3D/dhses-training-calendar%3Fq%3D/dhses-training-calendar>

A large variety of courses is offered by the following entities: OEM, OFPC, SPTC, and OIEC.

Currently the following Training Events are scheduled:

New York Responds Incident Management System Training (NYR), Oriskany, 12/3/2024  
NYR for County Personnel (Virtual) 12/6/2024  
ICS-300, Pomona, NY, 1/7/2024 – Unspecified, Length – 24 hrs.  
ICS-400, Rochester, NY 12/3/2024 – 12/4/2024  
ICS-400, Jamaica, Queens. 12/12/2024 – 12/13/2024  
L-146 HSEEP, 2/25/2024 – 2/26/2024, Albany  
L-146 HSEEP, 5/6/2024 – 5/7/2024, Lake George, NY  
L-139 Exercise Design and Development, 3/24/2024 – 3/27/2024, New Hyde Park  
L-050 Exercise Control and Simulation, 3/24/2024 – 3/27/2024, New Hyde Park  
UAS Part 107 Prep Course, 1/22/2025 – 1/23/2025, Bronx County (**Drone Course**)  
UAS Part 107 Prep Course, 1/29/2025 – 1/30/2025, SPTC (**Drone Course**)

To register for the course, one must create a profile with the DHSES (ACADIS Learning Management System): <https://lmsportal-dhSES.ny.gov/AcadisViewer/Login.aspx>

Most of the courses listed above have prerequisites such as IS 100, 200, 700, and 800, so, completing them online through the EMI portal is highly recommended.

### **N7 Training**

Additionally, N7 can provide training on the Incident Command System (ICS) and the Incident Response Planning Cycle (commonly referred to as Planning P) to individuals interested in advancing their knowledge of incident response procedures. This training is available upon request, and N7 is asking regional commanders and leadership to disseminate this information down the chain of command. Leaders are encouraged to identify personnel interested in attending the training and determine the preferred date(s) for scheduling. The training event will have a maximum duration of eight hours and will include a detailed overview of the Incident Command System (ICS) and the Planning P process. This will be followed by a practical exercise, conducted in a seminar or workshop format, to demonstrate the application of these concepts in managing an incident.

### **Military Emergency Management Specialist (MEMS) Certification.**

MEMS is a certification highly sought after in the State Defense Forces Community. The certification is available in three levels: Basic, Senior, and Master. Detailed information about obtaining this certification (and badge) is available on the SGAUS website: <https://sgaus.org/mems-academy/>  
N7 holds the Master MEMS certification and is available to support members in achieving this qualification. Assistance may include guidance, review, and support with the required write-ups or other appropriate methods to help members meet the certification criteria.

### **Exercises.**

The primary upcoming exercise for the Naval Militia is the Joint Forces Full-Scale Exercise “Empire Challenge”, which will focus on demonstrating NYNM’s capabilities to visiting members of the State Partnership Program. However, this does not need to be the only training event on the calendar. Regional commanders are encouraged to consider organizing smaller-scale training events. N7 invites commanders to initiate discussions about the scope, complexity, and objectives of such exercises. N7 stands ready and fully prepared to assist with planning and executing these training activities.

### **Noteworthy reminder:**

This is an important reminder to all members. As a volunteer force, we are valued by the state specifically for our commitment to serve without compensation.

For those interested in upcoming training events, please be advised:

- Participation will only be approved under no-pay orders issued by the NYNM.
- In most cases, travel to training locations will not be reimbursed.



- For training conducted at DSHES locations, no-cost berthing accommodations may be offered by DSHES on a case-by-case basis.

**Incentive:** NYS and local employees are eligible for paid military leave from work, partaking in training vital to the NYNM is a valid reason to take advantage of such option.

**In summary:** We train at no cost, and through this, we improve our chances for selection to paid work opportunities.

Thank you for your dedication and service.



### Exercise Empire Challenge '24 After Action Report

Each year, New York Military Forces (NYMF) conduct Exercise Empire Challenge (ECX). This exercise has its basis in emergency communications but also tests our naval militia ability to mobilize and respond to a variety of contingencies.

The Naval Militia, as well as our partner components in the NYMF having been conducting joint exercises for many years. Since 2019, these exercises have been called Empire Challenge and have had a focus on emergency communications, including high frequency (HF), long-haul very high frequency (VHF), digital, and data transmissions. In partnership with the New York Guard and the National Guard, we are getting quite good at these capabilities and testing new ones each year.

In September 2024, ECX was built around a scenario of a wildland fire. The exercise was planned to coincide with the command post exercise of Joint Task Force 3, at the 109th Air Wing in Scotia/Schenectady County.

Initially, the plan was to conduct the exercise in a remote area of the Adirondacks near Lake Champlain. While we started planning early for this exercise, it fell apart quite late in the game when we found that we could not conduct the exercise within the “Blue Line” signifying the boundaries of the Adirondack Park. To keep the exercise on Lake Champlain, we investigated locations at Port Douglas, Schuyler Island, Trembleau Mountain, AuSable State Campgrounds, and Point au Roche before determining that it was too late in the game to continue to pursue these northern New York locations.

We regrouped and found receptive staff at Schodack Island State Park, on the Hudson River in Rensselaer County. While this location did not provide the remote, extensive distance from the JTF 3 CPX in Scotia, we were still able to successfully test our emergency communications capabilities.

From a communications perspective, we had the support in the MEBS command post of the MEBS N6 team augmented with communicators from the NY Guard. There were successful operations of digital HF communications for the first time. We used an airborne repeater on a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) aircraft to conduct long-haul VHF communications. As always, the dedicated team from the NYS DSHES Office of Interoperability and Emergency Communications (OIEC) were on hand to provide their expertise.

Operating the naval militia’s new unmanned aerial system, the drone team was able to demonstrate the ability to provide live video feed for the first time.

On the Hudson River, MEBS boats provided an exclusion zone for NY Army National Guard helicopters demonstrating “bambi bucket” operations. This is when the helicopters can pick over 500 gallons of water and drop it on fires to extinguish them. We also demonstrated the ability to have partner agencies

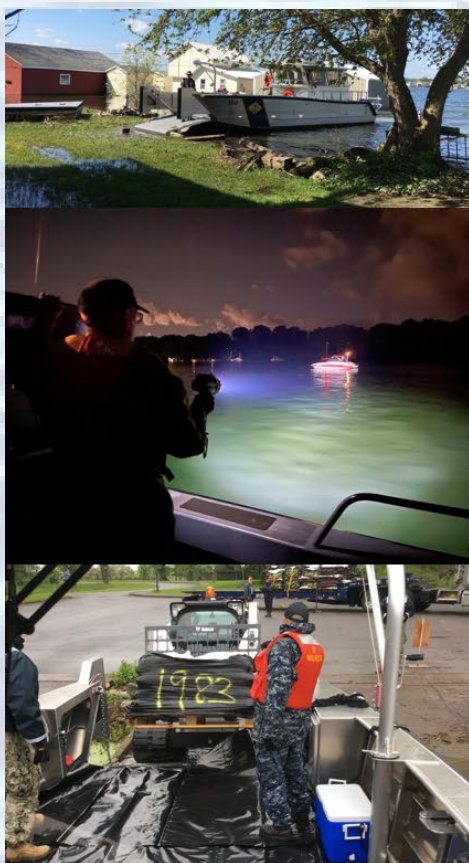
embark and disembark their gators and four-wheelers on the landing craft. Both the NYS DEC Police and the Schodack Landing Fire Company demonstrated this capability.

From the logistics arena, we tried a new means to provide meals for all the personnel who were staying in lodging. Using Door-Dash, service members were able to choose from a wide variety of meal providers in the area.

### Western Horizon/Exercise Empire Challenge '25

Planning for WH/ECX '25 has already begun. The exercise is slated to take place 4-6 June 2025, in Niagara County. Note that this is a Wednesday through Friday event.

In addition to the communications piece, we intend to operate boats on the Niagara River and Lake Ontario as part of a multi-agency exercise. The nautical chart near the back of this NEWSLETTER shows the area of operations.







# STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

RDML Perry and CAPT Hawley visited Stockholm as part of an introductory visit in September 2024.



Visit by LtCol and Mrs Bengt Nitx (ACoS M5) to NYC on 26 OCT 24.





## Military Emergency Boat Service

### News:



The big news for MEBS in this fall quarter has been the success of paid training. For the first time since 2008, we have paid members of MEBS to conduct proficiency training. Although we set out to get everyone eligible in MEBS to get paid training (to meet the minimum of two events per year), we ended up with quite different results.

The 2024 boat training season started the first week in April, with deployment of PB 280 and 281 to Buffalo. That first week also coincided with the start of the state fiscal year ( 1 APR). Training pay was not immediately available, but that did not stop participants from getting out on the boats.

It was the beginning of June before we were authorized to pay persons to train. From then until the third week in October, we exhausted all our funds for paid training. Still, even though we planned funding for every eligible member of MEBS, we still had seven members elect not to take advantage of it. As a result, our training readiness rating remains at T-2, instead of T-1. We have an expectation that all members of MEBS who are SAD eligible will participate in at least two events per year. These events could be proficiency training, an exercise, or some other authorized class.

The good news is that the paid training has had a dramatic effect on the number of qualified coxswains, with a 73% increase in number. We look forward to the paid training authorization again in 2025.

In other news, BMC Ben FLAD (right), OIC of MEBS DET 3 operationally assigned to JTF Empire Shield, earned the MEBS CRAFTMASTER device after completing an oral board and practical demonstration on Long Island Sound, 7 October 2024.





Below, BM1 Kurt Schnieder (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) and MKC Ken Stefandel (far right) are recognized by the Captain of the Port of New York, along with four members of a US Coast Guard tactical law enforcement detachment assigned to PB 440 during the United Nations General Assembly. During patrol on the afternoon of 24 September 2024, the crew and LE DET conducted a rescue of a woman drowning in the East River.



NRC Rochester Sailors embarked PB 280 and 281 during a familiarization tour on the Genesee River and Lake Ontario, on 19 OCT 24. The event organized by WESTCOM CDR, CAPT Jay Dutcher and MACM Eric Witoshynsky was a great success. RADM Robert Nowakowski, USNR, DEPCDR NAVPERS was also in attendance.







CAPT Dutcher (CDR, WESTCOM) briefing Rear Admiral Robert Nowakowski (DEP CDR, CNET), while Chief Gerard instructs Rochester Sailors at the helm

## Unmanned Aerial System News

By Maj Michael Golden, NYNM

It is an honor to be appointed the Officer in Charge of the new NYNM Unmanned Aerial System Unit (UAS Unit). There has been a team effort underway to stand up which started with successful establishment of live footage from Schodack Island State Park to Fort Hamilton during Exercise Empire Challenge 2024. Staff Sergeant Christopher Vega is the training officer and has graduated advanced UAS training with NYS Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services in preparation to start training and qualifications.

Our focus for next year will be meeting with partner agencies and preparing for simulated anti-drug smuggling operations along the United States and Canadian Border. The general purpose of having the UAS program within the New York Naval Militia is to provide aerial maritime domain awareness, and support to New York National Guard civil support operations. A few examples may include flood and snowstorm response; support to Civil Support Teams; distressed boater awareness; ice floe accumulation analysis; and critical infrastructure inspection. A UAS Unit team is made up of a minimum of two Service Members: The Visual Observer and the Remote Pilot in Command (RPIC). The Visual Observer role can technically be filled by anyone after they have received a briefing on their duties from the RPIC with their duty being to keep visual contact with the drone and alert the RPIC of any hazards. The RPIC is a Service Member who successfully passed the FAA Remote Pilot Certification and New York Naval Militia RPIC PQS.

To be eligible for consideration to join the UAS Unit, submit a copy of your FAA Part 107 Certification, Resume, and Coversheet to NYNM HQ. Your information and medical must be up to date with NYNM HQ. Preference at this will be for Service Members with no current NYNM billets and interviews will be conducted as needed from a standby roster.



## EDUCATION BENEFITS

Spring 2025 RIRP is now open! Please submit your packages in a timely manner to ensure they are processed in time. DO NOT WAIT! Some important deadlines to remember: your DMNA 96-1 and your RIRP Acknowledgment form are due December 13th. Your complete package with every other document needed is due February 13th. Please send all information to the RIRP email to ensure it is received [ng.ny.nyarnng.mbx.nynavalmilitia-rirp@army.mil](mailto:ng.ny.nyarnng.mbx.nynavalmilitia-rirp@army.mil)

## READINESS OFFICER

We still have service members on the Asylum Seeker Resource Support mission; however, the OP temp is changing and there has been a reduction in force. Our office is still maintaining a list of volunteers. There is always the possibility the mission requirements will change, or a new mission will pop up.

Please help me keep our readiness up by notifying me of any change to your pay grade, unit, address or contact information. We do not have access to any federal system. If you are a member who is separated or retired from your federal component, you are now required to submit an annual medical on our forms 88 & 93 to remain a member and be eligible for State Active Duty orders. Keep your contact information and medical up to date or you will subject to discharge. Service members who have been discharged must reapply. All forms and instructions, including medical forms, can be found on our website under forms and instructions.

Send updates to [ng.ny.nyarnng.mbx.nynavalmilitia@army.mil](mailto:ng.ny.nyarnng.mbx.nynavalmilitia@army.mil) or use the document upload portal link on the Contact Us tab of our website: <http://dmna.ny.gov/nynm/?id=contact>  
<https://www.jotform.com/app/221514574126148>

Thank you all!  
BMCS(EXW) Elizebeth Spain

## NUGGETS

“I’m not a lawyer, but...”

By c/s “Nugget”

### An Ode to the Chiefs

This week, I will have been in a naval uniform for 42 years. In all that time, only the two years after retiring from the USN have I not been on some sort of full-time active duty. So, I speak with some experience. As a naval officer, I have learned a lot and developed a deep appreciation for the senior enlisted community of the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard. *(As a Navy guy, I am collectively referring to the E7-E9 ranks of Chief, Senior Chief, Master Chief, Gunnery Sergeant, Master Sergeant, and Sergeant Major, so please bear with me.)*

As a U.S. Navy officer and subsequently as a N.Y. Naval Militia officer, I think I have been reasonably successful. In large part, I credit the Chiefs who I have served with and who advised me to do the right things.

As a young ensign four decades ago, I reported to USS FIRST SHIP as a division officer. Fresh from "Baby-SWOS" there was not much that I was good at other than giving the "Ensign Salute". However, there were Sailors like Senior Chief Hunter, Chief Atkinson, and so many more who helped me along the trail to success. I could not have gotten anywhere if it weren't for the Chiefs.



By the time I was assigned to USS FOURTH SHIP as Chief Engineer and as the senior department head, I was well-versed in what the Chiefs could magically get done. At the time, the ship was not very happy, and eventually the Skipper fired the Executive Officer, immediately thrusting me into that role. What was one of the first things I did as the new XO? Even before I assembled the ship's officers, I got myself invited into the Chiefs Mess where I made the case to the senior enlisted team to rebuild the ship and her company. It worked, and we had a highly motivated crew and a great command climate after that.

In my last tour in the Navy awaiting retirement, I ran a small reserve center upstate. The officer I relieved was a true jerk and had effectively beaten down the full-time staff, and particularly the leading Chief. When I took over, I implored the Chief to fill his role as the leader of the troops. He quickly stepped out of the shadows and assumed the mantle of leadership that he rightly deserved. He was remarkably effective when he was allowed to be.

The point of all this is that I can directly tie my success to the efforts of the Chiefs that I have worked with. This certainly continues to this day with the Chiefs of the Naval Militia. While I am not privy to the inner workings of the Chiefs Mess, I can certainly recognize that when the brothers and sisters of the Chiefs' community come together, they can get an awful lot of stuff done.

I recognize that in our organization there are certain members who don't consider Naval Militia Chiefs to be "real" Chiefs. I get that we are not making Navy Chiefs, Coast Guard Chiefs, or Marine Corps Gunny Sergeants. However, we are in the Naval Militia and anyone that we promote to that rank IS one in my eyes. The fact is making Chief in the Navy has a lot of factors that influence selection including how open a particular rating is. The most deserving might not make it due to over-manning, while in under-manned ratings nearly everyone gets selected to Chief. In my time in Navy Recruiting, I even witnessed a Fire Control Tech make Chief based solely on the number of recruits he brought into the Navy. At least for those I have endorsed for selection to Chief in the Naval Militia, they have all been deserving and their selection has been based on their individual performance and expectations of future performance.

When the Naval Militia selects a candidate for promotion to Chief or Gunnery Sergeant, I think there should be two things going through that member's mind. One is to hold a strong sense of accomplishment and pride in what they have achieved. The second should be a sense of trepidation, or "what have I got myself into?" That is because now as a Chief, the expectations of your performance are so much higher. You must speak your mind when it is the right thing to do. You must seize the initiative. You must effectively train your subordinates as well as your junior officers. You must work your magic.



# HISTORY BUFF

## WHITESTONE

*Guest submitted by Nick McKnight*

The residential neighborhood of Whitestone rests in the northern part of New York City's Queens Borough. Situated next to the East River, it is home to the Whitestone Bridge, which connects Queens with the Bronx. The area was also home to the estate of Francis Lewis, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. The estate was raided and burned by the British during the Revolutionary War, ending with Lewis' wife being captured. She was held in conditions that led to her death in 1778 after being released. Once formerly known as Clintonville after former New York governor, DeWitt Clinton, the Whitestone area would be the site of a number of mansions built by wealthy New Yorkers. It was also the location of a hot spring discovered in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century on 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Old Whitestone Avenue. Rapid development followed in 1920 as train service from the Long Island Rail Road on the Whitestone Branch expanded into the neighborhood. The Whitestone Branch came to an end during the Great Depression when the line



was abandoned in 1932. Part of the Whitestone Branch would be used to help construct the Belt Parkway by Robert Moses. This neighborhood would boast the residences of famed figures, like Charlie Chaplin, Harry Houdini and Walt

Whitman (and likely several other alliteratively named people, I'm sure). To this day, Whitestone also houses an armory formerly used by the New York Naval Militia, situated at 150-74 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The frame building that would become the armory was constructed in 1913 and served as a yacht clubhouse before it was purchased in 1921 by New York City. The newly acquired armory would be used to house the 6<sup>th</sup> Separate Division, which had been mustered and mobilized in 1917 as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Regarding its standing within the United States Naval Reserve, the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion would find itself lowering under Lieutenant Commander M. Mackenzie from 1929 to 1931. Once command was replaced by Lieutenant S. Scott, the battalion's standing increased, eventually placing 1<sup>st</sup> in 1933. That same year, the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion received funds for construction of a new armory that was intended to be completed by next year but would not be ready until 1937.

In 1940, the vessel, Y.P. 8, which was first laid down in 1925, would be assigned to the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion. The ship would spend World War II patrolling the New York harbor before eventually being sold in 1947. Another vessel of note would be the USS Albert T. Harris, a John C. Butler-class destroyer escort first laid down in 1944. During World War II, the Albert T. Harris would serve in the Pacific on convoy escort duties and provide cover and support for amphibious operations, most notably during the liberation of the Philippines. She would eventually be reactivated during the Korean War and later be sent to Whitestone to be commissioned on October 2, 1961 in response to the Berlin Crisis. She would also serve as part of the blockade during the Cuban Missile Crisis the following year. From then on, the ship was decommissioned on November 8, 1962 and reassigned to Whitestone for NRT duty as part of Reserve Escort Squadron 2. The vessel engaged in training exercises on the East Coast until being sunk as target practice off the Virginia Capes on April 9, 1969.

The units serving at Whitestone would prove to be particularly accomplished. During the 1950s, Division 3-77 would consistently win the Josephthal trophy, as well as the Forrestal trophy in 1959, 1960 and 1966. They would also obtain the Commandant's trophy in 1958, along with the Third Naval District plaque for best surface division. Similarly, Division 3-76 would be awarded the Forrestal trophy and the Third Naval District plaque in 1961. In 1971, Division 3-77 would participate in the cleanup of oil spills on beaches at Coney and Staten Islands. The Whitestone armory would also be the target of terror more than once, being the target of a bombing on October 30, 1970 before being subjected to another bombing on May 13, 1983. Even so, the armory still stands to this day, now serving the Army National Guard's sometime after its service with the Naval Militia ended in 1985.

## Announcements

Effective 22 NOV 24, all new applicants must have completed the FEMA Incident Command System IS-100 (or equivalent) course. If previously taken, the course completion certification may be uploaded along with the application package. If not previously taken, the online training may be accessed through this link <https://dmna.ny.gov/nynm/training/Link to IS 100.pdf>



## New York Naval Militia by the Numbers

6-Nov-24	SOUTH	NORTH	WEST	TOTAL
OFFICER	143	15	28	186
WARRANT	8	0	1	9
ENLISTED	2475	188	391	3054
<b>TOTAL</b>	2626	203	420	3249
NAVY	1103	104	243	1450
MARINE	1290	79	158	1527
COAST GUARD	103	2	6	111
STATE ACTIVE LIST (5%)	74	5	1	80
FEDERAL COMPONENT LIST (Retired)	54	14	13	81
PENDING ACTION				

# Gallery



Boatswains Mate WAYNE HOSMER (8<sup>th</sup> from left) on his promotion to Master Chief Petty Officer



BU1 STEVE PUTNEY (left) is congratulated on his MEBS Coxswain qualification by NORTHCOM Coordinator, MMC Robert Hill; at Alexandria Bay.

BM2 Christina Bobrowsky (below) working on qualifications on Long Island Sound.







MNCM Glen Niemitalo is presented with recognition for his service as Force Master Chief, by RDML Perry on 22NOV24.

RDML Perry presents CAPT Nolan her command pin for her service as Commander, NORTHCOM.





# Empire Challenge '24 Images:













## SHIP'S STORE INFORMATION

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