

**Veterans of the Seventh Regiment
Newsletter -
March 26, 2024**



Dear Veterans and Friends:

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE

Our Memorial Day Observance will be held on Sunday, May 26, 2024, beginning at 10:00 AM at the Armory where Veterans and Friends will assemble. Those who wish will march to the 7th Regiment/107th Infantry Regiment Memorial, Fifth Avenue and 67th Street, Manhattan, for a brief observance and wreath-laying, then will march back to the Armory for a brief program followed by a complimentary luncheon.

VETERAN'S CALENDAR

Virtual Board of Management Meeting, Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 5:00PM

Virtual Board of Management Meeting, Tuesday, May 14, 2024, 5:00PM

Memorial Day Observance, Sunday, May 26, 2024, 10:00AM, Park Avenue Armory

Semi-Annual Membership Meeting, Tuesday, June 25, 2024, 6:00PM, Company D Room, 2nd Floor, Armory

Lafayette Bicentennial Events, August 16-18, 2024, Details to be announced.

Virtual Board of Management Meeting, Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 5:00PM

**Breaking of the Hindenburg Line Dinner, Saturday, October 26, 2024, 6:00PM
Cocktails, 7:00PM Dinner, Board of Officers Room, Armory**

Veterans Day Observance, Monday November 11, 2024, 10:00AM, Veteran's Room, Armory

Notifications of schedule changes will be on our website: www.theseventhregiment.org

Breaking of the Hindenburg Line Dinner 2023

A gathering of approximately 75 veterans and friends observed the Breaking of the Hindenburg Line in the Board of Officers Room of the Park Avenue Armory on October 28, 2023. Enclosed is a copy of the program for your interest.

The Invocation given by your President was as follows: "Heavenly Father, we come to you with thankful hearts for all the blessings you have given our country.

Our hearts are also filled with thankfulness for those who serve in our armed forces. Their love of our country and for our people is inspiring. We are reminded that our soldiers fight

many personal battles, and we ask that you intervene in their lives and help each one individually.

As we gather to commemorate the 105th anniversary of the great and terrible struggle that was the breaking of the Hindenburg Line, we reflect on the sacrifice of our regimental forbears in the war whose enduring legacy shaped the social, military and political fabric of our nation to this day.

Please bless our veterans and their families, stretching back through the history of our nation as they do, and know the gratitude we feel for the foundation they have given us, particularly the Medal of Honor recipients from the battle of the Hindenburg Line, Alan L. Eggers, John C. Latham, Thomas E. O'Shea and Michael A. Valente. We feel privileged to know more about them and their bravery and the works of all who toiled in the Great War.

Bless the food and the drink and those who have prepared and served it. Bless the conversation and laughter. May each of us abide in your grace. Amen.”

Introductions of certain Honored Guests, with the caveat that EVERY ONE IN ATTENDANCE was an honored guest, whether they were introduced or not, included:

Mr. Chris Eggers, son of Medal of Honor recipient Alan L. Eggers, awarded for his actions during the Breaking of the Hindenburg Line, a direct link to why we are here tonight.

Mr. Ralph Madalena, grandson of Medal of Honor Recipient Michael A. Valente, awarded for his actions during the Breaking of the Hindenburg Line, another direct link to why we are here tonight.

COL(R) Randall T. Eng, the Veterans' First Vice President and former Presiding Justice of the Appellate Div, Second Dept. and his wife Dr. Pauline Leong

Hon. And Mrs. John Collins, retired admin judge Criminal Term Bronx County

LTC(R) Robert Rodriguez, former Assistant Secretary of the Army for Personnel

Guest Speaker Elihu Rose, Chairman Emeritus of the Park Avenue Armory

Guest Speaker, Susan Joy Minker, Co-Chair, New York City Weekend #1, The American Friends of Lafayette, Bicentennial of the Farewell Tour

Guest Speaker Elizabeth (Betsy) Tebow, Professor Emeritus, Art History, Northern Virginia Community College

Mark A. Hermann is native New Yorker, Marc is a lifelong enthusiast, researcher, and collector of historical material, some of which he has brought here. Marc has a subspecialty in the 107th Infantry, the “Old 7th” during World War I.

The remarks made by your President were as follows:

“I have spoken in past years about the Hindenburg Line being called WWI's “greatest feat of engineering.” The Germans considered it impregnable.

The St. Quentin Canal sector of the Hindenburg Line was regarded as the most strongly defended section and the operation to break the Hindenburg Line at that place was considered an audacious suicide mission.

The British, American, French, and Australian forces, including our own 107th Infantry, broke the Hindenburg Line in a fierce 2-day battle. During the following 3 days, 22,000 German prisoners would be captured, 21 of them had already been captured during the battle by Michael A. Valente, according to his Medal of Honor citation. And three wounded were rescued, defended, and saved during the battle by Sgt. Alan Eggers, Sgt. John Latham, and Cpl. Thomas O'Shea, who were awarded Medals of Honor for their concerted actions.

Losses of life from the World War I were traumatic. For the first time in modern history, death in combat reversed the normal succession of generations, and not on a limited scale. It did so for an entire generation: Great Britain and Ireland had 1,350,000 soldiers and civilian casualties.

France lost more: 1,927,000 soldiers and civilian casualties. In the 1914-1918 war years, on average, nearly 900 French men were killed every day.

I would like to read the two medal of honor citations for our four Medal of Honor recipients:

“Becoming separated from their platoon by a smoke barrage, Sgt. Alan L. Eggers, Sgt. John C. Latham and Cpl. Thomas E. O'Shea took cover in a shell hole well within the enemy's lines. Upon hearing a call for help from an American tank, which had become disabled 30 yards from them, the three soldiers left their shelter and started towards the tank, under heavy fire from German machine guns and trench mortars. In crossing the fire-swept area Cpl. O'Shea was mortally wounded, but his companions, undeterred, proceeded to the tank, rescued a wounded officer, and assisted two wounded soldiers to cover in a sap of a nearby trench. Sgt. Eggers and Sgt. Latham then returned to the tank in the face of the violent fire, dismounted a Hotchkiss gun, and took it back to where the wounded men were, keeping off the enemy all day by effective use of the gun and later bringing it, with the wounded men, back to our lines under cover of darkness.”

Mr. Chris Eggers, the son of Sgt. Alan L. Eggers, is with us tonight.

The Medal of Honor citation for Michael A. Valente states: “For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy during the operations against the Hindenburg line, east of Ronsoy, France, 29 September 1918. Finding the advance of his organization held up by a withering enemy machine-gun fire, Pvt. Valente volunteered to go forward. With utter disregard of his own personal danger, accompanied by another soldier, Pvt. Valente rushed forward through an intense machine-gun fire directly upon the enemy nest, killing two and capturing five of the enemy and silencing the gun. Discovering another machine-gun nest close by which was pouring a deadly fire on the American forces, preventing their advance, Pvt. Valente and his companion charged upon this strong point, killing the gunner and putting this machine gun out of action. Without hesitation they jumped into the enemy's trench, killed two and captured 16 German soldiers. Pvt. Valente was later wounded and sent to the rear.”

Mr. Ralph Madalena, the grandson of Pvt. Michael A. Valente, is with us tonight with his party of 14 people. He brought his grandfather's Medal of Honor for us to see. Michael A. Valente was the first Italian American to be awarded a Medal of Honor.

We must remind ourselves that to be recommended for a Medal of Honor or any other award, there must be WITNESSES. Given the heavy losses to the regiment, one can only imagine how many acts of uncommon valor went unrecorded, with no survivors to report them. These four men gambled their lives to try and lessen the loss of even more of their comrades.

Sixty-seven men of this Regiment earned their Country's second highest award for valor — The Distinguished Service Cross. The regiment also received 96 Foreign Government Decorations, 700 Divisional Citations, 301 Officers commissioned from their ranks, and 1500 battlefield commissions.

We are here tonight to pay a debt of remembrance to all who fought for liberty, particularly those of our own regiment who fought in the Battle of the Hindenburg Line. Thank you for attending.”

Introduction of Elihu Rose: “Mr. Elihu Rose is Chairman Emeritus of our regimental home: the Park Avenue Armory. He has had a long career in development of multi-family housing in New York and also a long career in philanthropy in New York. Mr. Rose is literally a pillar of our society. He is a military historian, an Associate Adjunct Professor at New York University, and a recipient of a Superior Public Service Medal from the U.S. Navy and an Outstanding

Civilian Service Medal from the U.S. Army. As a long-standing member of the Army War College Foundation, Mr. Rose was asked to address them last night, right here, about the history of the Park Avenue Armory, and he has graciously agreed to address us on the same topic.”

[Mr. Rose spoke movingly of the importance of keeping a military presence in the Park Avenue Armory and of his long time colleague, Wade Thompson (now deceased) who shared that goal and who donated lavishly for the restoration of the Armory.]

Introduction of Susan Joy Minker: “Susan Joy Minker is the Co-Chair of the New York City American Friends of Lafayette Committee commemorating the Bicentennial of Lafayette's Farewell Tour of America 1824/1825 which takes place in 100 cities and towns, in 24 states over 13 months which will kick off in Manhattan August 16, 2024. The Seventh Regiment were the first in this nation to call themselves National Guards in honor of the Marquis de Lafayette, who founded the French Guards Nationale. Subsequently all united states militia were called the National Guard.”

[Ms. Minker spoke of how moved she was to be in the Armory and to be able to enjoy the obvious regard that the 7th Regiment had for her forebear, the Marquis de Lafayette, as well as the plans of the American Friends of Lafayette Committee to hold events in Manhattan during this bicentennial year of the visit of “The Nation’s Guest”, General Lafayette, in 1824-25.]

Introduction of Elizabeth Tebow: “Elizabeth (Betsy)Tebow is Professor Emeritus in Art History at Northern Virginia Community College. During her 40+ year teaching career, she also co-authored and produced “Art America,” a video course and textbook on American art; served as Arts Advisor to Vice President Walter Mondale and Joan Mondale; was a Smithsonian Fellow; and published essays on art in journals and books.”

[Ms. Tebow spoke and showed images on the themes of General Lafayette and the times in the late 1700’s and early 1800’s when General Lafayette was such a darling of the newly formed United States.]

Those in attendance were thanked for their participation, the “Wearing of the Gray” was sung, and dinner was served.

Veterans of the Seventh Regiment Veterans Day Observance 2023

A gathering of approximately 65 observed Veterans Day at the Armory on November 11, 2023. For those who made the march to the Memorial on Fifth Avenue and 67th Street, the remarks by your President were as follows:

“We are the Seventh Regiment, the first unit to be called National Guards in our nation; so named in honor of the Marquis de Lafayette, who had named his French counterparts the Garde Nationale. The Seventh Regiment was the only military unit trusted to occupy Washington, DC during the Civil War. The first Medal of Honor recipient, COL Bernard Irwin, was a member of the Seventh Regiment. Seven former members of the Seventh Regiment were awarded Medals of Honor for actions during the Civil War.

We are here to honor all of the men and women who have served in the U.S. military. This monument was erected by the Seventh Regiment, renamed the 107th Infantry Regiment, in memory of those members lost in World War I. Four members of this regiment were awarded the

Medal of Honor for the Breaking of the Hindenburg Line on September 29th and 30th, 1918, and an astounding 67 Distinguished Service Crosses, the second highest award for valor, were awarded to members of the Seventh Regiment/107th Infantry Regiment for actions during the battle. The losses of this Regiment were the heaviest of any regiment in the American Expeditionary Forces for the time engaged.

We are the 53rd Digital Liaison Detachment of today who carry the Seventh's regimental lineage.

We are the American Legion.

We are the New York Army National Guard, past and present.

Also joining us are Mr. Alain Dupuis and other representatives of the Federation of French War Veterans.

Please remember those who serve and those who have served, not just today, but every day. Please remember their commitment to our country and make your own commitment to stand up for them: they need your support. Now we will have the Presentation of Wreaths, an Invocation, and Taps."

Invocation: "Almighty Father, creator of mankind and author of peace, as we are ever mindful of the cost paid for the liberty we possess, we ask you to bless the members of our armed forces and our veterans. Give them courage, hope and strength. May they ever experience your firm support, gentle love and compassionate healing. Be their power and protector, leading them from darkness to light. To you be all glory, honor and praise, now and forever. Amen."

Introductions and Invocation in the Armory: "Welcome Active Military, Veterans, Guests, Families, and Friends to the Veterans Day Observance of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment! We are missing a few regular attendees today because they were called to march in the BIG Veterans Day Parade further downtown. We will miss them and hope to see them next year.

I would like to introduce some distinguished guests we have here today:

COL(R) Randall T. Eng, retired New York State Appellate Division Presiding Justice; and
Commander, Kimlau American Legion Post # 1291

BG(R) George Yanthis, former State Judge Advocate, NYARNG

LTC(R) Will Bodt, President, Seventh Regiment Fund

COL Louis DiLeo, Commander, 11th NY Regiment of the US Volunteers

Alain Dupuis, Federation of French War Veterans, French Legion of Honor Recipient and his colleagues

Family and friends of MAJ Daniel Baek, NYARNG. Major Baek himself is marching in the BIG PARADE with the Harlem Hellfighters today.

From The Veterans Corps of Artillery of the State of New York, MAJ Hess and 2LT Hefler are providing the music, and the Color Guard are CPT Epstein, SSG Tavera, SGT Garcia, SGT Correa, and PVT Chesleigh.

1SGT (R) Santos Diaz and colleagues from the 145th Maintenance Company in the Bronx

Invocation in the Armory: "*Just Lord, today we honor our veterans, worthy men and women who gave their best when they were called upon to serve and protect their country.*

We pray that you will bless them for their unselfish service in the continual struggle to preserve our freedoms, our safety, and our country's heritage, for all of us.

Bless them abundantly for the hardships they faced, for the sacrifices they made for their many different contributions to America's victories over tyranny and oppression.

We respect them, we thank them, we honor them, we are proud of them. We pray that you will watch over these special people and bless them with peace and happiness. Amen."

The Veterans Day Observance remarks of your President were as follows:

"Today is a day of celebration and recognition. But in some ways, it is a solemn one. Originally observed as Armistice Day, the 11th day of the 11th month marked the anniversary of the end of World War I and honored its fallen. As our country and much of the world mourned, there remained a desperate glimmer of hope that the Great War could indeed be "the war to end all wars."

Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a Congressional resolution. It became a national holiday 12 years later by similar Congressional action. If the idealistic hope had been realized that World War I was "the War to end all wars," November 11 might still be called Armistice Day. But only a few years after the holiday was proclaimed, war broke out in Europe. Sixteen and one-half million Americans took part. Four hundred seven thousand of them died in service, more than 292,000 of them died in battle.

Armistice Day Changed To Honor All Veterans officially in 1954, when Congress passed a bill that President Eisenhower signed proclaiming November 11 as Veterans Day, a day to commemorate all veterans of all wars and eras—past, present and future; living and dead. While the hope of a world without war faded and we continued to mourn our fallen, November 11 became a day of celebration and gratitude. Then came the Korean War, Vietnam and the Gulf War. It was only two years ago that we ended America's longest war—the war in Afghanistan.

While our feelings of celebration and gratitude are sincere, it is important to remember that veterans are defending us 365 days a year. The heroism that has been demonstrated time and again by veterans from the American Revolution to the Global War on Terrorism is sometimes unnoticed by many who enjoy the security that their sacrifice has provided. Not all veterans have seen combat, but all have at one time made the solemn promise to sacrifice their lives for this country if called upon. Without the formidable strength that veterans have demonstrated in war, Americans would never enjoy their daily freedoms.

At the present time some of us are wondering: How are we doing at preserving our freedoms and maintaining military strength? Some are also wondering why do we need military strength?

Ten years ago, when testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee, then-CENTCOM Commander Gen. James Mattis made a memorable plea for the State Department's budget: "If you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition ultimately."

In this oft-quoted statement, Mattis offered an arresting argument for the importance of the State Department and diplomacy in preventing armed conflict and security threats to the United States. Yet the opposite also is true: to strengthen the State Department, along with U.S. diplomatic and economic influence, we need a large defense budget.

A common misconception in many policy debates is that military force and diplomacy stand in opposition, at polar ends of the statecraft spectrum. A powerful military can strengthen diplomacy and make peaceful settlements more likely, precisely because the possibility of force looms in the diplomatic background.

Historical record bears witness to this. American military power has played an indispensable role in the creation and sustenance of international political and economic order. For most of this time, our military strength helped accomplish much of this without firing a hostile shot. Here are ten reasons why U.S. military strength remains essential:

1. U.S. military strength preserves the open lanes of global commerce and finance for the American economy. In this sense, the Seventh Fleet has done as much for the economic renaissance of the Asia-Pacific region as the World Trade Organization (WTO). Maintaining an open maritime system and trading lanes also helps prevent conflict ruinous to economic growth. In President Theodore Roosevelt's memorable observation, the U.S. Navy is "an infinitely more potent factor for peace than all the peace societies of every kind and sort."
2. U.S. military strength induces fence-sitters to lean our way.
3. U.S. military strength helps secure and preserve peace treaties. America's burgeoning ties to Israel and Egypt eventually led to President Jimmy Carter's negotiation of the Camp David accords and the landmark Egypt-Israel peace treaty. Part of the cement that solidified Camp David came from the U.S. guarantee of large arms packages to both countries, which continue to this day, and were possible only because of the appeal to Egypt and Israel of the superior quality of American weapons systems.
4. U.S. military strength spurs our allies to spend more on their own defense
5. U.S. military strength strengthens our economic negotiating posture with allies. In the 1985 "Plaza Accord," the Reagan administration successfully negotiated favorable changes in international monetary policy with Japan and America's other G-7 allies that devalued the dollar and relieved U.S. trade deficits. The strong U.S. military and defense commitments to these allies contributed to their willingness to make otherwise difficult concessions on currency policy.
6. U.S. military strength bolsters our negotiating posture with adversaries. Reagan's controversial deployment of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in Western Europe in the 1980's brought tremendous pressure on the Soviet system and induced Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to make significant concessions that he previously resisted.
7. U.S. military strength makes us more attractive to potential allies and partners. The peaceful end of the Cold War prompted several Warsaw Pact nations in Central and Eastern Europe to want to join with their former adversaries in NATO. They wanted to join the winning side.
8. U.S. military strength provides new channels for diplomatic leverage and intelligence collection. An advanced military encourages nations to desire training from U.S. forces and the acquisition of U.S. materiel. These security assistance programs, in turn, provide the United States further channels of influence through American technical experts embedded within foreign militaries for training, equipping and maintaining weapons systems; diplomatic leverage comes from foreign governments relying on American weapons systems; and the information and intelligence-gathering that such relationships facilitate.

9. U.S. military strength helps promote and strengthen democracy and human rights. U.S. security assistance programs have helped support democratic transitions, and improved respect for human rights in numerous nations.
10. U.S. military strength improves humanitarian relief operations and enhances U.S. public diplomacy. The Navy's leadership in the immediate aftermath of the December 2004 tsunami that devastated Southeast Asia saved thousands of lives in Indonesia and provided a demonstrable boost in public attitudes towards the United States in this majority-Muslim country. This, in turn, improved America's diplomatic posture and standing in a crucial region for the fight against militant jihadism.

In 1984, Secretary of State George Shultz delivered a speech titled "Power and Diplomacy" declaring, "The hard reality is that diplomacy not backed by strength is ineffectual. This is why, for example, the United States has succeeded many times in its mediation when many other well-intentioned mediators have failed. Leverage, as well as goodwill, is required." How are we doing? Is the United States Military strong or weak? [The Heritage Foundation](#) in its "2023 Index of U.S. Military Strength," which is a snapshot of current U.S. military strength. The report is principally for lawmakers and their staff. It is also for the American taxpayer.

The Index analyzes U.S. military strength within the framework of two major-regional conflicts (MRCs). The question is can the U.S. military successfully fight two major wars in two separate theaters at the same time? This two Major Regional Conflict assessment has its roots in the Second World War, when the U.S. fought in both the European and Pacific Theaters simultaneously.

The global operating environment is "favorable" to the U.S., according to the index due to our freedom of movement. America also has many strong allies in Europe and the Pacific. Since we can move to most parts of the world without being contested, the operating environment is given a favorable rating.

The report looks at four nation-state threats and also several terrorist groups. The nation-states include Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. The Index breaks down both the intent and capability of each nation state. For example, with a country like Russia, the Index sees their ability to use nuclear weapons combined with their aggression as posing a major threat to America. While they have not performed well on the battlefield in Ukraine, they still have large material resources and a strong weapons inventory. Thus, they cannot be discounted as a possible threat.

Regarding the People's Republic of China, over the past 20 years, China has shifted their inward focus outward. They are in the process of tripling their ballistic missile capabilities. The Chinese Navy has gone from 210 to 360 ships with plans to get to 400. Their aircraft is being upgraded from fourth to fifth generation. For the U.S. military to oppose China, we have to move thousands of miles from our shores. Overall, China has demonstrated aggression, willingness to prepare for war, and is currently the "most profound threat to [American] military power."

China assumes that most US military activities in the Indo-Pacific region are hostile to China.

According to the US Dept of Defense: between the fall of 2021 and fall of 2023, the United States has documented over 180 instances of Chinese coercive and risky air intercepts against U.S. aircraft in the region — more in the past two years than in the previous decade. China's military has focused on the rapid development of its nuclear, space and cyberspace capabilities. Dept. of Defense officials estimate that the Chinese had more than 500 operational nuclear warheads as of May 2023, and it was on track to exceed some previous projections. Compared to the China's nuclear modernization efforts a decade ago, current efforts dwarf previous attempts in both scale and complexity, causing the Dept of Defense to assess that China will likely reach 1,000 operational nuclear warheads by 2030.

As to **our** branches of service, the Army is aging faster than it is modernizing. In order to be prepared for two Major Regional Conflicts, the Index asserts that the Army needs 50 brigade combat teams. It currently has 30. Additionally, only about 25 of the teams demonstrate sufficient readiness. In terms of brigade combat teams, the Army is 50% of where it needs to be. This means that it could engage in one Major Regional Conflict, but not two.

At the end of the Cold War, the U.S. Navy had around 580 ships. Today, that number is just under 300, and it is expected to shrink to 280. Furthermore, the Navy continues to maintain its heavy operational tempo. The ships and manpower have declined, but everything else has remained the same. This is a problem for the Navy. Training standards have dropped. Recruiting standards are dropping. The infrastructure to build new ships is not there. The infrastructure to repair old ships is equally bad. The Index rates the Navy as “weak.”

Please keep these ideas in mind when you consider U.S. foreign policy and defense capability.

Our country had 28 official Armistice Days, followed by 69 Veterans Days. I am grateful to be here with you on this 69th Veteran’s Day to honor all the veterans who came before us, those who stood alongside us and those who will come after us. To those veterans here today, thank you. Your service and sacrifice represent the best of us and the best of America. We salute you and appreciate the great costs that often come with serving.

Let’s acknowledge those families who have helped shoulder the weight of war and the burdens of sacrifice. To the mothers, fathers, spouses and children of our military men and women—thank you. Veterans Day is a time when we remind our fellow Americans to stop and say thank you to those who served. Those simple words are important, but they are just the beginning.

This Veterans Day, let’s celebrate what we can accomplish when we come together. Let’s recognize that service doesn’t end in the military and that “thank you” is just the beginning of gratitude. You being here today tells me you’re willing to go further.

Thank you for taking the time to honor our veterans today. God bless you all, bless our veterans and bless the United States of America.” A copy of the program is included herewith.

Veterans of the Seventh Regiment New Year’s Day Reception 2024

A gathering of approximately 80 assembled in the Armory for the Veteran’s New Year’s Day Reception on January 1, 2024. The Invocation, Welcome, and Introduction of some of the Guests by your President were as follows:

“Almighty and eternal God,
Protect our soldiers as they discharge their duties.
Protect them with the shield of your strength
and keep them safe from all evil and harm.
And bless our veterans, who gave their best when they were called upon to serve and protect
their country.
On this new year, accept our thanks for all we hold dear: our health, our family and our
friends. Help us live each day in the most loving ways, Amen.”

Welcome: Ladies and gentlemen, as President of the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment it is my honor to welcome you to our regimental home, the Park Avenue Armory and the Regimental Board of Officers Room in which we now gather. The New York City Landmarks Commission has described this Armory as “the single most important collection of 19th-century interiors to survive in one building.” Our regimental colors are in the competent hands of the 53rd Digital Liaison Detachment of the New York Army National Guard, commanded by LTC Gurpreet Singh, who is on duty in his position with Homeland Security, and was only able to stop by briefly to remember our gathering.

Select Introductions:

MG(R) Stephen Seiter, Past Commander, 53rd Troop Command of the 107th Core Support Group of the NY Army National Guard

Alain Dupuis, Federation of French War Veterans, French Legion of Honor Recipient and his colleagues

Family and friends of MAJ Daniel Baek, NYARNG

From The Veterans Corps of Artillery of the State of New York, MAJ Hess and 2LT Hefler are providing the music, and the Color Guard are CPT Epstein, SSG Tavera, SGT Garcia, SGT Correa, and PVT Chesleigh.

Remarks by your President were as follows: “This room, the Board of Officers Room, is among the most valuable heritage assets in the United States, and is one of the few surviving Herter Brothers interiors in the entire country, and one of five in this building. Herter Brothers was a top cabinet-making and interior design firm in the Gilded Age. The magnificent mahogany woodwork was originally dyed with madder root, a plant substance used for red dye since ancient times. When this Armory was built, the Regiment had enormous importance in our nation, and it was felt they should have a structure entirely devoted to military use and confined exclusively to the Regiment. A periodical entitled “The Decorator and Furnisher” wrote of this room in their May 1885 issue, that is room, is “spacious, inviting, and bears the appearance of “business” in a much greater degree than any of the other rooms. This room was intended for the meetings held by the various companies of the regiment, each one being assigned a night when it could have the use of the room. This room was extensively restored and reopened in 2013. Chairman Emeritus of the Armory, Mr. Elihu Rose, attended our Hindenburg Line Dinner in this room this past October. When Mr. Rose spoke of the restoration of this room, he said “You are looking at 9 million dollars.”

When you arrived here today you passed the main stairway, which in 1885 was called “a most generous piece of work, admirably adapted in its size and general massiveness to the uses of such a structure. The frame is of iron, covered with maple.” You took your refreshments in the Field & Staff Room, designed by Pottier & Stymus, a prominent Victorian furniture and design firm, in the Renaissance Revival Style. Their factory occupied a full block at Lexington Avenue and 42nd Street.

We, the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment, have some of the papers and artifacts from the Seventh Regiment, which was incredibly prolific, not just with building the Armory! On our west coast, the University of California at Santa Barbara has 10 document boxes of Seventh Regiment items. The New York Historical Society on the other side of Central Park has 97 boxes and 445 volumes of Seventh Regiment Archives, and the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, New York has much, much more.

So here we are, in the great military temple and refuge of a regiment that sent 1,054 soldiers to the civil war, and as many again to World War I, now having our colors carried by the 53rd Digital Liaison Detachment, a group of about thirty soldiers and officers. What happened?

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the United States' all-volunteer military force. It also coincides with one of the worst recruiting years for the U.S. military since 1973. The army missed its 2022 recruiting goal by fifteen thousand soldiers, and the army, air force, and navy all expect to miss their goals in 2023. The shortage is blamed on a confluence of domestic issues: a competitive job market, lack of in-person recruiting during the pandemic, and a population of young adults who are less informed, less interested, and less qualified for military service.

There has been talk of a possible return to the draft: but we currently need innovative ideas and new forums to encourage young men and women to fill their obligations to public service, but we also need a redesigned military to ensure timely access to the manpower needed to defend the nation and to increase the equity and fairness for the cost of war across our society.

In my Veteran's Day remarks, I basically said that our Navy is overextended, our Air Force is using aged equipment, and none of our branches of military are equipped to fight on two fronts, let alone more than 2 fronts. I named 10 reasons why U.S. military strength remains essential:

1. U.S. military strength preserves the open lanes of global commerce and finance for the American economy.
2. U.S. military strength induces fence-sitters to lean our way.
3. U.S. military strength helps secure and preserve peace treaties.
4. U.S. military strength spurs our allies to spend more on their own defense
5. U.S. military strength strengthens our economic negotiating posture with allies.
6. U.S. military strength bolsters our negotiating posture with adversaries.
7. U.S. military strength makes us more attractive to potential allies and partners.
8. U.S. military strength provides new channels for diplomatic leverage and intelligence collection.
9. U.S. military strength helps promote and strengthen democracy and human rights.
10. U.S. military strength improves humanitarian relief operations and enhances U.S. public diplomacy.

Further to those ideas, our military needs to adapt to the type of adversaries we may face: whether they be whole countries or a faction that has gained control of a country, or a warring faction operating independently. And we need to understand and account for opponents who are competent and experienced adversaries. Our future adversaries may control operations in a decentralized fashion, and they may employ weapons that can defeat our primary combat vehicles and put our troops at risk, and our future adversaries may be developing even better weapons than we currently have.

I will close with a quotation from George Washington's speech to Connecticut Troops before their enlistment ran out during the Siege of Boston in 1775. It applied in 1775 just as it did when I quoted it on Veteran's Day and just as it does today:
"Your exertions in the cause of freedom, guided by wisdom and animated by zeal and courage, have gained you the love and confidence of your grateful countrymen; and they look to you, who are experienced veterans, and trust that you will still be the guardians of America. More human glory and happiness may depend upon your exertions than every yet depended on any sons and daughters of men. He that is a soldier in defense of such a cause, needs not title; his post is a post of honor, and although not an emperor, yet he shall wear a crown – of glory – and blessed will be his memory!" My veterans, I salute you!"

COL Gurpreet Singh had been scheduled as a Guest Speaker, but his active duty status prevented him from addressing us. He is the current Commander of the 53rd Digital Liaison Detachment. His extensive biography is printed in your program, and includes extensive military experience, extensive military education, and extensive law enforcement education, since he is also a Detective with the New York Police Department assigned to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force."

Guest Speaker Speaker COL J. Raymond Mechmann Jr. has been a member of the Veteran Corps of Artillery of the State of New York since 2005 in various positions, and he is not the Commandant. He has received many VCA Awards and Decorations. COL Mechmann also holds the rank of COL in the New York Guard, where he is currently Assistant Chief of Staff/G6, serving in that role since 2018 with many previous positions prior to that, including response efforts to Hurricane Sandy and Hurricane Irene. As a JAG Officer, since 2001 he has participated with the New York Guard in, and supervised, over 30 Legal Service Operations, for the counseling of, and preparation of legal documents for deploying or re-deploying Army National Guard, Air National Guard, US Army Reserve, and US Marine Corps Reserve personnel. He has also supervised numerous Emergency Management and First Responder Drills for the State of New York.

Guest Speaker for 11th NY Regiment of the US Volunteers - America explained the 11th New York Regiment serves to assist all veteran's families in the rendering of Military Funeral Honors at no cost. Throughout the New York Metropolitan area and Long Island, they provide firing parties and a bugler for the sounding of Taps. They are ready to assist in flag folding and presentation when called upon.

“General Lafayette“ Event Attended by your President

“An Evening with Lafayette & Adrienne” was held at Villa Albertine, which is a part of the French Embassy housed in the Payne Whitney Mansion on Fifth Avenue. This was a fundraising event in support of Lafayette200.com, an organization dedicated to the Bicentennial of Lafayette's Farewell Tour of America in New York City. Although they are still finalizing plans, on August 15–18, 2024, events are planned in New York City such as procession up Broadway to City Hall just as Lafayette was welcomed 200 years ago. Other events will include plays, music, educational discussions, parlor games, dance lessons, period costumes and food, children's crafts and more to be held at locations throughout the city

including the Park Avenue Armory, French Consulate and French Cultural Center, Fraunces Tavern Museum and the Alexander Hamilton Customs House. The Veterans of the Seventh Regiment will be participating in some of the events, with some of them being held at the Park Avenue Armory.

An Evening with Lafayette & Adrienne featured re-enactors “General Lafayette and his wife Adrienne,” a live auction, a silent auction, audience members in period costumes, a display of dancing from the time of the early 1800’s, and speeches about the many events planned by Lafayette 200 and several other organizations. The Veterans of the Seventh Regiment took out an advertisement in the Journal for the event. Events are also being planned in the following cities, which will follow the tour of General Lafayette 200 years previously in 1824-1825:

Albany, NY	Hartford, CT	Portsmouth, NH
Alexandria, VA	Ipswich, MA	Portsmouth, VA
Annapolis, MD	Jamestown, VA	Poughkeepsie, NY
Arlington, MA	Jersey City, NJ	Princeton, NJ
Arlington, VA	Lancaster, MA	Providence, RI
Baltimore, MD	Leicester, MA	Quincy, MA
Bergen, NJ	Lexington, MA	Rahway, NJ
Beverly, MA	Lynn, MA	Richmond, VA
Bolton, MA	Manhattan, NY	Roxbury, MA
Bordentown, NJ	Marblehead, MA	Salem, MA
Boston, MA	Monticello, VA	Staatsburg, NY
Bristol, PA	Montpelier, VA	Staten Island, NY
Charlestown, MA	Mount Vernon, VA	Sturbridge, MA
Charlton, MA	New Brunswick, NJ	Trenton, NJ
Chester, PA	New Castle, DE	Troy, NY
Clermont, NY	New Haven, CT	Univ. of Virginia, VA
Concord, MA	New York, NY	Washington, D.C.
Elizabeth, NJ	Newark, NJ	West Point, NY
Fort Belvoir, VA	Newburgh, NY	Westchester, NY
Fort Monroe, VA	Newburyport, MA	Williamsburg, VA
Frederick, MD	Norfolk, VA	Wilmington, DE
Fredericksburg, VA	Norwalk, CT	Woodbridge, NJ
Goochland Cty., VA	Norwich, CT	Woodlawn, VA
Greenland, NH	Pawtucket, RI	Worcester, MA
Hampton, NH	Petersburg, VA	Yorktown, VA
Hampton Falls, NH	Philadelphia, PA	

Lafayette200.com had requested your President to write an informative piece about the relationship of General Lafayette to the Seventh Regiment. I provided them with the following:

The Marquis de Lafayette and the Seventh Regiment, New York National Guard

“The Marquis de Lafayette was born of nobility in France in 1757. His father was killed by the British in the battle of Minden in 1759, and young Lafayette inherited a castle, a fortune and the title of Marquis. As he reached adolescence, Lafayette was one of the richest men in

France. Through an arranged marriage when he was 14 and his bride was 12, Lafayette married Adrenne de Noailles, daughter of a most powerful and well-connected French family.

Lafayette wished to be a soldier and avenge the death of his father, but when he came of age, France was not at war with England. Young Lafayette was an aristocrat and liberal who was partial to Enlightenment ideas. He purchased his own ship and sailed secretly to the American Colonies to fight England. Lafayette joined the Continental Army at age nineteen in 1777 as a volunteer Major General, spending most of December 1777 and January 1778 with George Washington and his Continental Army troops at Valley Forge, then was given command of troops in battle.

Wounded during the Battle of Brandywine, Lafayette still managed to organize a successful retreat. He served with distinction in the Battle of Rhode Island. In the middle of the Revolutionary War, he returned to France to negotiate an increase in French support. After his return, in 1780, Major General Lafayette was commanding nearly 2,200 American troops and was viewed as the official representative of France in the U.S. He eventually negotiated for France to deliver substantial numbers of troops and marched his troops to Yorktown. On October 6, 1781, the allies attacked the British and by noon on October 19th, the British surrendered. It was a resounding victory, led by Washington, but impossible without Lafayette.

Given his relative youth, Lafayette became the final surviving general of the Continental Army. When Lafayette accepted President James Monroe's invitation to return as the nation's guest in 1824, his thirteen-month tour through the (then) 24 states became an outpouring of affection and gratitude for the Frenchman who helped the United States achieve independence. When he visited New York, the predecessor of the Seventh Regiment was his escort. To honor him on his day of departure home to France, July 14, 1825, the unit adopted the name "National Guard" in remembrance of the *Garde nationale* Lafayette commanded in France during the early days of the French Revolution. This was the first instance of an American militia unit taking the name National Guard, which in 1903 was extended to all United States militia units which could be called upon for federal service.

Lafayette remains the most beloved French hero of the American Revolution with dozens of towns, counties, parks, streets, and schools named in his honor."

As your President, my goal is to make the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment a relevant and vibrant organization, with a heritage ever-more meaningful in the 21st century. To those of you who read the newsletter but are unable to visit us personally, we want you to know we are thinking of you, we appreciate your correspondence, and we are glad to know you appreciate ours.

PRO PATRIA ET GLORIA

Sincerely,
BG(R) Thomas J. Principe
President, Veterans of the Seventh Regiment



Seventh Regiment Veterans Commemorative Coins are \$10.00 per coin. Proceeds of coin sales will benefit the Veterans of the Seventh Regiment. The coins are a substantial 2" in diameter with Veterans of the Seventh Regiment (and logo) on one side and 107th Infantry NYARNG (and logo) on the reverse. Please see order form below.

Commemorative Coin Order Form

Make payment to: Veterans of the Seventh Regiment
Send payment to: Thomas J. Principe
 207 Brookville Rd.
 Glen Head, NY 11545

Number of coins ordered @ \$10.00 each _____

Send to: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

The Veterans of the Seventh Regiment thank you for your coin order!

2024 Dues Notice

Make payment to: Veterans of the Seventh Regiment
Send payment to: Thomas J. Principe
 207 Brookville Rd.
 Glen Head, NY 11545

Dues Amount: \$50.00 per member

Member Name(s):

Email: _____

Address: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

The Veterans of the Seventh Regiment thank you for your dues!