



PUBLIC OCCURRENCES



Harrisburg Chapter #76 National Sojourners, Inc. – York Camp, Heroes of '76

Harrisburg, PA, Publication #37 Jan 2024

CW5 Darwin A. Gaston, President

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the 1st meeting of the New Year on Thursday, January 11th at the Scottish Rite Cathedral. Col. Doug Douds, Ret. USMC, Professor U.S. Army War College will be our speaker and we will recognize all Blue Lodge Past Masters and Worshipful Masters. We had a large turnout in December for our Ladies Night and Silent Auction. I want to thank MSGT Leslie T. Keller, Chairman for running the auction. Also, I want to thank everyone for bringing items to donate and help raise funds to sponsor students for the Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference at Valley Forge.

If at any time you have a suggestion to improve our Fraternity, please feel free to contact me or any of our Chapter Officers. May you have a Happy and Blessed New Year! Please remember all currently serving men and women of our

armed services, veterans, law enforcement and first responders.

Membership

Harrisburg Chapter 76 January 1, 2024

Membership Stats

LTC Thomas E. Gordon, Secretary

Breakdown

Annual Active Members	38
Annual Honorary Members	4
Honorary Members-In-Perpetuity	33
Multiple Members-In-Perpetuity	28
Primary Members-In-Perpetuity	241

Total Chapter Membership 344

Total Heroes of 76 Membership 162

The Chapter also has 194 Inactive Members-In-Perpetuity who laid down their working tools.

Welcome to our newest Sojourners, initiated in December 2023: Brian K. Allen, Benjamin D. Bualat, and Gerald J. Hamilton.





2023 - 2024 SCHEDULED GUEST SPEAKERS AND ACTIVITIES

Social Gathering 5:15 PM

Dinner 6:00 PM

Meeting 6:45 PM

- 11 Jan 24 Thursday *Col. Doug Douds, Ret. USMC, Professor U.S. Army War College & Recognition of Blue Lodge Past Masters and Worshipful Masters*
- 8 Feb 24 Thursday *Major General Mark McCormack, USA, Commander 28th Infantry Division & Recognition of all Past Chapter Presidents and York Camp Commanders*
- 14 Mar 24 Thursday *Col. Charles Bechtel, Ret. USA, Former Director of Logistics PA Army National Guard, and Infantry Platoon Leader in Vietnam (1968) & Recognition of Vietnam Veterans*
- 11 Apr 24 Thursday *Top Three Youth Essay Contest Winners presenting their Essays on “Causes of The American Revolutionary War”*
- 9 May 24 Thursday *Commander Steve Funck, Ret. USN & Recognition of Army Veterans*
- 13 Jun 24 Thursday *Bro. Glenn Kurzenknabe, PP, Installation of 2024-2025 Chapter Officers*



HEROES' BIVOUACS/ENCAMPMENTS 2024

- 28 Mar 24 Thursday BIVOUAC / ENCAMPMENT and Hero Initiation 6:00 PM
- 25 Apr 24 Thursday BIVOUAC / ENCAMPMENT and Hero Initiation 6:00 PM
- 23 May 24 Thursday BIVOUAC / ENCAMPMENT and Hero Initiation 6:00 PM

SGT Ben Hoenich, Commander
York Camp, Heroes of 76
Chairman, MV Veterans Committee
Location Coordinator
Wreaths Across America
Pamvet Location at MVE

This year's ceremony proved to be a memorable and patriotic event thanks to all involved. Several Heroes from York Camp supported and participated in the ceremony. Everything came together—the wreaths, committee members, Sojourners, Heroes, staff, residents and guests—to make it so successful.

There have been many positive and uplifting comments from those in attendance and those who participated. It does really take a Village and more to coordinate an event like this. Masonic Village staff support including House-keeping, Maintenance, Tad at the Farm Market, Roy at Event Planning, Liz from Activities and Pastor Deb was well appreciated. And then we have the guy with the camera, the talented Bro. Mick McCurdy for capturing the event for those present and years to come and Lady Nancy Pearson with her blessed voice.

Our guest speaker, Bro. Mike Wertz offered pointed remarks regarding the event while Bro. Bryan Hill's and Bro. George Mehaffie's roll call was clear and sharp, delivered with the right tempo and tone. Bro. Gene Meashey and



WREATHS *across* AMERICA

Bro. Mark Brumaghim added to the event with the posting of colors in colonials along with Bro. Keith Murray's leading of the Pledge. Pastor Deborah Valiton-Carnish, Director of Spiritual Care at MV added a spiritual emphasis to the event.

Bro. CPT Timothy French, CPO Mary Bozeman French, Bro. Joe Fink, Bro. Mike Rowe, Bro. Jeff James, Bro. Fred Kaylor placed the military ceremonial wreaths to start the ceremony. 75 veterans at Sell Columbarium and 60 veterans at God's Little Acre Cemetery at the Village were honored and remembered on this special day. Turnout for both of the ceremonies was impressive; did not get an official count but I believe there were over 75 participants.

All resulting in a powerful Wreaths Across America Day.

Remember—Honor—Teach

During the 94-year history of the National Sojourners Harrisburg Chapter #76 there were 94 Chapter Presidents. These Brothers representing all branches of the military and were commissioned officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted men. These Masonic Brothers shared their Military and Masonic experiences and leadership skills during their tenure as Chapter Presidents.

Today, there are 23 living Past Presidents of our Chapter spanning the last 33 years.

- 1990-1 CW5 Donald R. Byers
- 1991-2 CPT R. Edward Baumgardner
- 1995-6 CW5 Darryl R. Hamm
- 1996-7 COL Jerry V. Lambert
- 2001-2 CPT Charles A. Pass
- 2002-3 CWO4 Raymond A. Vaughan
- 2004-5 MSgt Perry W. Byers
- 2006-7 Lt Col Richard D. Byers
- 2007-8 LTC Jack W. Heinze
- 2008-9 Lt Col Laurence R. Rutt
- 2009-10 MSgt Vaughn L. Schwalm
- 2010-11 BG (PA) E. Thomas Kuhn
- 2011-12 TSgt Glenn R. Kurzenknabe
- 2012-13 SGM Norman A. Beard
- 2013-14 PO2 Robert G. Hamilton Jr.
- 2014-15 CAPT David W. Willmann
- 2015-16 LTC Michael M. Wertz
- 2016-17 LT Daniel J. Benny
- 2017-18 MCPO Russell W. Baker
- 2018-19 Col Kenneth W. Womack
- 2019-20 Lt Col Craig E. Lady
- 2020-21 SGT David L. Ball
- 2022-23 SGT Benjamin F. Hoenich

Glenn L. Kurzenknabe, PP
Essay Contest Chairman

The three winners from Chapter No. 76 for the 2024 National Sojourners Essay Contest have been selected and the winners notified.

The winning essays have been submitted to national headquarters for further judging. A detailed report will be presented to the membership at the 11 January 2024 meeting. The winners and their parents/guardians have been invited to the 11 April 2024 meeting to receive their awards and present their essays to the group. You will have to attend the meetings to get the full details and hear the essays. Hope to see you on 11 April.



Your Brothers salute you and Thank You for your service to our Nation and to our Sojourners Chapter!