



NATIONAL SOJOURNERS, INC

Harrisburg Chapter #76 — York Camp, Heroes of '76



Issue #39 March 2024

President's Message

Harrisburg Chapter No. 76 News
CW5 Darwin Gaston, President

Our guest speaker for the month of March will be Col. Charles Bechtel, U.S. Army (Retired). National Vietnam War Veterans Day is celebrated on March 29th in the US and was recently made a recognized annual holiday in 2017. March 29th is the day that the last of the troops were withdrawn in 1973. We will recognize all Vietnam Veterans at our meeting in March. I want to thank all our Vietnam War Veterans for their service and sacrifice. Please continue to support all our former and current armed forces members at home and abroad.

I want to thank Brother David Hawkins for stepping up and volunteering to publish our monthly Harrisburg Chapter No. 76 National Sojourners, Inc. - York Camp, Heroes of '76 newsletter. Remember St. Patrick's Day on Sunday, March 17th when everyone is Irish in some way or another. One last thing, don't forget we are collecting toiletry items again in March for the Masonic Village.

Web Site links for you;

National Sojourners - <https://nationalsojourners.org/>

Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania – <http://www.pagrاندlodge.org>

Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge – <http://www.freedomsfoundation.org>

Military Order of World Wars – <http://www.moww.org>

Scheduled Guest Speakers

14 March 24 - Col Charles Bechtel, Ret USA, Former Director of Logistics, PA Army National Guard, Infantry Platoon Leader in Vietnam (1968)

11 Apr 24 - The Three Youth Essay Contest Winners

9 May 24 - Commander Steve Funck, Ret USN

13 Jun 24 - Bro. Glenn Kurzenknabe, PP, Installation of 2024-2025 Chapter Officers

HEROES' Bivouacs

28 Mar 24 - Bivouac/Encampment and Hero Initiation 6:00pm

25 Apr 24 - Bivouac/Encampment and Hero Initiation 6:00pm

23 May 24 - Bivouac/Encampment and Hero Initiation 6:00pm

2024 Essay Contest

At the April 11 Sojourners meeting, we will host the three winners of the 2024 Essay Contest and their parents. They will present their essays to the group and receive their awards. The three winning essays from Chapter 76, have been submitted to national for further judging at a national level. The theme for the contest was "State Three Causes of the American Revolution". I can assure you that you will be impressed with the efforts put forth by our entrants. Please plan to join us that evening. You will not be disappointed! Hint: all three winners are from the same high school!

Glenn R. Kurzenknabe, PP
Essay Contest Chairman

New Members initiated at our February 2024 meeting



Welcome Brothers

Paul R. Paulsen, Sr. and Timothy A. French!

Harrisburg Chapter #76 MEMBERSHIP

As of February 29, 2024

Primary Members-In-Perpetuity	241
Annual Active Members	38
Honorary Members-In-Perpetuity	34
Annual Honorary Members	4
Multiple Members-In-Perpetuity	28
Total Chapter Membership	345

York Camp Heroes of '76 165

The Chapter also has 195 Inactive Members-In-Perpetuity who laid down their working tools.

Toast to the Flag by Brother Jon Vickery





Education & Training **by Brother Secretary Tom Gordon**

The Diverse History of National Sojourners membership
-In early 1918, only Master Masons who were U.S. Army Commissioned Officers were accepted into our organization.

-December 1918, U. S. Navy Commissioned Officers and Navy Chief Warrant Officers were accepted into our organization, but not Army Warrant Officers.

-June 1919, Commissioned Officers of the U.S. Marine Corps and U. S. Coast Guard were added.

-January 1922, the Commissioned Corps of the U. S. Public Health Service was added.

-1948, U.S. Air Force Commissioned Officers were added.

-June 1950, U.S. Army Warrant Officers were added.

-June 2001, Senior Non-Commissioned Officers of all services were added.

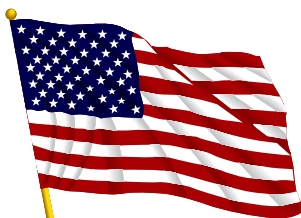
-June 2016, all ranks of military personnel were added.

-2021, members of the U. S. Space Force were added.

Since the inception of National Sojourners, membership has been predominately current and former military personnel; however, a category of honorary membership dates back to 1922 and is limited to United States citizens, who are Master Masons, and who are ineligible to become Active Members, but who have rendered conspicuous and meritorious service to the Nation and/or Freemasonry.

The criteria for Honorary membership is addressed in the National Constitution and Bylaws, so any consideration for Honorary membership must be discussed with the Chapter Secretary before a membership application is prepared.

(Chronological information provided by National Sojourners Historian Brother Ed Nolte)



Scottish Rite Spring Reunion **of the Valley of Harrisburg**

If you have a desire to continue your Masonic journey, you need to consider joining the Scottish Rite. That opportunity will be available at the Spring Reunion of the Valley of Harrisburg.

It will be held on May 17 and 18, 2024 (Friday evening - arrive at 4:00 PM for dinner and registration) There is a full day on Saturday and the Valley closes by 5:00 PM. All degrees are conferred in a "class setting", if that concerns you. Friday dinner and Saturday lunch will be served.

You will see nine meaningful and inspiring degrees and become a 32nd Degree Mason! The cost is \$290. Make checks payable to the "Valley of Harrisburg". **I need your petition and check by May 10, latest!**

You can ask another member to sign it, or I will take care of getting it signed. Call or e-mail with questions or to request a petition.

Sincerely and Fraternally,
Bro. Glenn R. Kurzenknabe, PP
Phone: 717-774-1728
E-mail: k3swz46@gmail.com



This month in military history

27 March 1945: Gen. Carl Spaatz sends Eighth Air Force against Berlin to destroy the Luftwaffe. Spaatz realizes the enemy would defend Berlin, so he sends bombers over the city with P-51 Mustang escorts. General Galland of the Luftwaffe later said, "Whenever our fighters appeared, the Americans hurled themselves at them. Nowhere were we safe from them."



During World War II, Eighth Air Force earned a reputation as a great warfighting organization. Originally, the U.S. Army Air Forces activated the Eighth at Savannah, Georgia, on 28 January 1942 with three major subordinate units: the VIII Bomber Command (BC), the VIII Fighter Command (FC), and the VIII Ground Air Services Command (GASC).



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Harrisburg Chapter 76 Living Past York Camp Commanders



These Masonic Brothers shared their Military and Masonic experiences and leadership skills during their tenure as York Camp Commanders. Today, there are 10 living Past Commanders of our York Camp of Heroes of '76 spanning the last 33 years.

- 1991-1992 CW5 Donald R. Byers
- 1992-1993 CPT R. Edward Baumgardner
- 1996-1998 CW5 Darryl R. Hamm
- 1998-1999 COL Jerry V. Lambert
- 2005-2009 MSgt Perry W. Byers
- 2009-2010 Lt Col Laurence R. Rutt
- 2010-2016 MSgt Vaughn L. Schwalm
- 2016-2021 LTC Michael M. Wertz
- 2021-2023 SP5 Bryan L. Hill
- 2023-2024 SGT Benjamin F. Hoenich

Your Brother Sojourners salute you and thank you for your service to our Nation, our Sojourners Chapter, and the York Camp of Heroes of 76 !

Scenes from our February Meeting



Guest Speaker

Colonel Charles M. Bechtel

Colonel Charles M. Bechtel was commissioned an Infantry officer upon graduation from Officer Candidate School Class 37-67. His first duty assignment was as a Commander, C Company, 1st Battalion, 41st Mechanized Infantry, 2nd Armored Division at Fort Hood, Texas. His subsequent duty assignments include: Infantry platoon leader in the 1st Cavalry Division, Republic of Vietnam; Special Processing Detachment Commander and Staff Officer, 1st Army Headquarters, Fort Meade, Maryland; Commander, General Support Maintenance Company; Commander, Combat Engineer Battalion; Commander, 213th Area Support Group Pennsylvania National Guard, General Staff Positions, State Headquarters Pennsylvania National Guard; Superintendent of the Combined Support Maintenance Shop, Fort Indiantown Gap; Director of Maintenance.

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February Guest Speaker;

Major General Mark McCormack, USA

Commander 28th Infantry Division



For Change of address, email address or telephone number
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 Palmyra PA 17078-8918 EMAIL: tgordon1951@comcast.net

Chapter contact information
 National website: <https://nationalsojourners.org>
 Facebook: "National Sojourners Harrisburg Chapter #76"

"When we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen." *George Washington*



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Procedures for New Memberships Initiation Dates and Membership Dues/Fees

Applications with Dues/Fees, for New memberships into the Harrisburg Chapter #76 must be received by the Chapter Secretary before the monthly meeting the month prior to the month's meeting in which the candidate is to be Initiated into the National Sojourners.

Candidates seeking membership will be Initiated as New members at the Chapter meetings on April 11th and June 13th. Therefore, Applications with Dues/Fees of Candidates must be received by the Chapter Secretary prior to the monthly meetings of March 14th or May 9th.

The applications for membership will be voted upon by the Chapter members present at the March and May meetings. Candidates will not be Initiated as Members at the same meeting in which their Applications are received.

New Member's dues for the calendar year 2024 are \$68.00 for those Candidates being Initiated in the April 11th or June 13th meeting. Membership-In-Perpetuity in \$733.00.

Candidates for membership will again be Initiated at the November 14th meeting, so any applications after June need to be given to the Chapter Secretary before the monthly meeting of October 10th. Dues at that time will include the 2025 annual dues, so the application will then require a payment of \$92.00.

Master Masons that wish to experience our Chapter's meetings and Programs are welcome to attend our meetings, as a guest.

If you have any questions concerning National Sojourners membership, please contact Chapter Secretary Tom Gordon at (717) 534-2478.



Distinguished Sojourners

Colonel Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin was initiated and passed in Oak Park Lodge #864 in Montgomery, AL in February and April 1955. He was raised at Lawrence N. Greenleaf Lodge #169 in Denver, CO in February 1956. He took his York Rite Degrees and Orders in Waco, TX in May 1967. He is a member of Clear

Lake Lodge #1417 in Seabrook, TX and Montclair Lodge #144 in NJ. He is also a 33° Scottish Rite Mason in the Valley of Houston S.J., a Knight Templar, a Shriner, and a National Sojourner. Brother Aldrin was initiated as a National Sojourner at the Annual National Convention in Cocoa Beach in June 1969 just before his July 1969 moon landing. Of note, Brother Aldrin flew the Scottish Rite, S.J. Supreme Council's flag on the moon. That flag is now on display in

the Masonic Museum of the Supreme Council Scottish Rite Temple in Washington, D.C. In addition, Brother Aldrin carried with him a Special Deputation from the Grand Master of Texas constituting and appointing him as Special Deputy of the Grand Master, granting unto him full power in the premises to represent the Grand Master as such and authorize him to claim Masonic Territorial Jurisdiction for The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Texas on The Moon, and directed that he make due return of his acts.



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