



Cortlandt Yacht Club's Annual "Give-Back" to our Military Families

By Capt. Brian T. Young

On June 24, 2017 the Cortlandt Yacht Club of Montrose, NY and the Ossining Elks Club Lodge 1486 will host the Sixth Annual "Salute to Freedom" day. This event has become the most rewarding event on the Yacht Club's calendar as well as yet another opportunity for the Elks Club to pursue their mission and give back to those who have served our country and the families who have made the ultimate sacrifices to preserve our freedom. The honored guests will consist of wounded warriors who were invited to join us through the "Hope for the Warriors" organization, Purple Heart recipients through the Military Order of the Purple Heart, veterans from all wars since and including WWII and Gold Star Families from all the wars. Gold Star families are families that have lost a loved one in the fight for our freedom.

Last year's event was the biggest ever and included almost 115 honored guests. They were hosted by 21 volunteer boat captains and their families from the Cortlandt Yacht Club. In attendance were some incredible soldiers and sailors of all ages, including members from each of the services and some truly wonderful Gold Star Families.

The day will start as our honored guests arrive and we welcome them to our club, share a Continental Breakfast, get to know them and introduce them to their volunteer boat captains for the day. Before we leave for our flotilla cruise up the Hudson River, we will have a brief welcoming ceremony.

The flotilla will cruise north through the beautiful Hudson Highlands. We will pass close to the various waterfronts in accordance with the timetable as shown below. We encourage well-wishers to congregate on shore and in boats to offer their thanks and show their appreciation for the military and their sacrifices. A special thanks goes out to Mr. Jim Williams, a US Army veteran and the organizer of an incredible showing of patriotism and gratitude in Newburgh and Mr. Steve Kaufman of the Riverfront Marina who facilitates the activities on his docks and on the Newburgh waterfront.



On the docks in Newburgh, Mr. Williams has arranged in the past to have honor guards from both the US Marines, the US Army, and the National Guard, etc. as well as a displays of military vehicles on shore. There were many other displays of respect and gratitude along the Newburgh riverfront including a barrage of Jet-skis that came out to meet the flotilla as well as a number of yachts carrying as many as 20 or more veterans from the Newburgh area. They joined the flotilla as it passed the Riverfront Marina in Newburgh. The flotilla has also been accompanied by a US Army 2nd Aviation Detachment helicopter from Stewart Airbase, thanks again to Mr. Williams, which flew over the flotilla and displayed a series of air maneuvers to the great amusement to those on the boats.



Following the flotilla, as the boats return to the Cortlandt Yacht Club, the Ossining Elks Lodge 1486 will treat all the participants to a wonderful BBQ. It is a delicious way to end a beautiful and emotional day on the river with our new found friends and all the events that took place in honor of our military.

Thanks in advance to all in the Hudson Valley who will come out and participate in the thanking of our military heroes and our Gold Star Families for the sacrifices that they made for our freedom and thank you Jim Williams and Steve Kaufman.

"SALUTE TO FREEDOM" TIMETABLE

VERPLANCK STEAM BOAT DOCK	11:10 AM
CHINA PIER (CHARLES POINT PARK)	11:25 AM
PEEKSKILL YACHT CLUB	11:35 AM
HIGHLAND FALLS WATERFRONTS	12:10 PM
GARRISON YACHT CLUB/WATERFRONT	12:20 PM
WEST POINT	12:25 PM
COLD SPRING WATERFRONT	12:45 PM
NEWBURGH YACHT CLUB	13:20 PM
NEWBURGH WATERFRONT/RIVERFRONT MARINA	13:30 PM

Remember, Freedom isn't Free, so thank a veteran.

For additional information or answers to any questions, please contact:

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