



101st Airborne Division Association

Minutes of Meeting of April 11, 2026
Bailey's Bar and Grille, Townsend, MA
View Our Chapter Website at www.screamingeaglesne.org

Attending: Present: President Bob Morrissey (in person), VP Tony Payne and (spouse) Donna, SAA William "Blink" Blankenburg, Treasurer Kevin Farrell, Past President Tom McGall and Elaine, George LeBlanc, Brenda Fitzgerald, Don Miller, Greg d'Arbonne, John Mastro, Robert Botschafter and his guests (spouse) Marla, (daughter) Michelle Fayad and husband Nicholas Fayad, David Josselyn, H.P. Marshall, Matt Callahan, guest Gary M Soldato from Clear Path for Veterans, and recording clerk/Zoom Administrator Cathie Clark.

The Meeting was called to order at 12:33 PM. The 17 members present were thanked for their attendance. This was a great turnout!

A prayer had been offered by Brenda prior to lunch. At this time, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

Minutes: The March Meeting Minutes had been circulated and read prior to the meeting, so a motion was made to accept them, it was seconded, and passed.

Treasurer's Report: Kevin was present, and made his report. The only expenditures were for the Zoom renewal and the Donation to T2T approved last month. A motion to accept was made, seconded, and passed.

Fund Raising: Our Lifetime Memberships prevent us from generating any serious income yearly. We asked for suggestions for fund-raising and Marla Botschafter put together a very interesting (adult beverage) prize basket for us to raffle off today. We have tickets, so if anybody wants to do a 50/50 after that, we can. We have a new supply of t-shirts that are all paid for. Nobody responded to the question of who wants some new ones, so Bob brought all of them in the back of his truck. After the meeting, sales will be allowed.

Sick Call: Bob asked Don Miller to take a trip to Kevin Richardson, who has been nonresponsive to Bob's reach-outs over several months. Ed O'Reilly is in U-Mass Worcester hospital and doesn't know when he'll get out.

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Old Business:

SENE Laptop: This was our third meeting with the new laptop. Thanks to the Botschafter and Josselyn attendees for donating speakers to the cause. However, there were NO attendees on the Zoom session so we couldn't put any of them to work. Cathie purchased two speakers as well so they will have to be tested at the May 2 meeting. Kevin reported that he had renewed our Zoom service for a year of unlimited meetings.

Cookout 2026: Our member Matt Callahan is Gary Soldato's right-hand man at the Clear Path Veterans' facility where we had our Cookout last year. Both were present and were able to confirm that we are approved to use the facility on the U.S. Army's Birthday, SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2026 at 12 noon. As we have done in the past this is a POT LUCK event! Please bring a side dish or desert as you all have done for past cookouts. The Chapter will provide eating utensils, Soft Drinks, Hamburgers, Hot Dogs and buns. Members and friends: please bring a side dish and guest. Please let Bob or I know how many people you will be bringing and what your side dish will be. YES there will be a RAFFLE, so bring a raffle prize if you wish. Note: We will not be allowed to have any open containers of or consume alcohol on the property, but we can raffle sealed containers off.

New Business:

Appreciation Time: There were plaques to be presented! The first one was to George LeBlanc, who happened to arrive in full uniform today. What it says:

First Sergeant, retired, George F. LeBlanc. For his continued outstanding service and support to the New England Chapter 101st Airborne Division Association and many other veterans organizations as well as his community.

He's always been one of the first to assist and help this Chapter and other veterans in need. He is an example of unselfish generosity. Wishing George the very best.

Airborne, all the way. From the membership of the New England Chapter 101st Airborne Division Association. Thank you.



Second plaque was to “Ranger Rob” Botschafter, Mr. L. Company, 75th Infantry Ranger, Airborne. What it says:

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Presented to Robert Botschafter for his continued outstanding service and support of the Army Chapter of the 115th Airborne Division Association and its members. “Ranger Rob”, as he is respectfully known by our Chapter members, and too many Vietnam veterans, is finally receiving after over 50 years two Purple Hearts earned in combat with the 101st Airborne Rangers during the Vietnam War.

Wishing Rob and his family the very best-- Airborne all the way. Rangers lead the way. From the 101st Airborne Division Association.

Third was John Mastro, who with no compensation, drafted and finalized our Chapter Bylaws and the Constitution. What it says:

Presented to John Mastro for his continued outstanding service and support to the New England Chapter of the 101st Airborne Division Association. John and his lovely wife, Fran, have always supported our Chapter at all 101st Airborne events and assisted our Chapter President whenever called upon, both at home and out of state.

John continues to serve the New England Chapter and all veterans. Wishing you and Fran the very best. Airborne all the way.

Presented To LTC (RET) GARY M. SOLDATO:

For his continued service and support to the New England Chapter 101st Airborne Division Association and all Military Veterans as Executive Director of the Clear Path For Veterans Facility New England.

Airborne All The Way

From The Membership of the 101st Airborne Division Assoc NE Chapter June 14 2026

Next was for the AWOL Ed O’Reilly, who is in the hospital. If you notice on the plaque for Ed O'Reilly, in the center between the two sets of wings is the Combat Medical Badge. Ed was over in Vietnam. He was 173rd, 101st combat medic under fire. No one ever thought enough to get him awarded the Combat Medical Badge. So this Chapter's going to give it to him.

Presented to Edward B. O'Reilly, from the New England Chapter 101st Airborne Division Association for his continued loyal and dedicated service in support of the 101st Airborne Division of the New England Association. Serving in Vietnam as an airborne combat medic and later supporting all military veterans in need of assistance. Ed

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O'Reilly's service to the 101st Airborne Division and the Association is to be commended for his many years of continued support and patriotic loyalty.

Wishing Ed the very best.

We're going to take it to him after the meeting.

Also honored by a Certificate of Appreciation was Brenda Fitzgerald, the woman behind the man (George LeBlanc). It reads:

The President of the 101st Airborne Division Association Women's Chapter presents to Brenda Fitzgerald this certificate in grateful appreciation and recognition of outstanding service to the 101st Airborne Division Association.

All recipients were surprised and delighted to be so recognized.

Upcoming Events:

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is Saturday, May 2, 2026 at Bailey's, at noon. Bob will not be here, so Zoom will be made available. Please RSVP if you are coming. We have received word that the Waldorf Room we generally enjoy will not be available. So PLEASE respond quickly so we can reserve adequate space and privacy elsewhere in Bailey's.

Before adjourning, we started to attend to Raffle business, but there was one more thing:

Blink stated "We're very fortunate that our president, Bob Morrissey, drives all the way up from South Carolina. And Bob is pretty modest about a lot of things. He doesn't know I'm going to say this, but I'm going to make a motion that Bob be reimbursed for his travel expenses coming up and going back home to South Carolina." The motion was seconded, and passed with applause. Bob was very surprised and gratefully accepted.

And **another one more thing**, this time from past-President Tom McGall. Tom reminded us that he and Elaine have split their property and have sold 22 acres of it including the saw mill. From the proceeds, they would like to donate "a large chunk" to the Chapter. They have retained 14 acres for their own use and are in the building process now. They regret that they will therefore not be able to attend the Hamburger Hill Reunion. Their generosity was acknowledged and Bob spoke at length about his long-time friendship with the McGalls and what outstanding people they are. Everyone was in agreement on that! The sale of the land is currently under review of the Town of Freemont and thus delayed and the amount of the donation has not been determined, but the intention is what counts. Thank-you, Tom & Elaine!

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Raffle: The first item was an intriguing looking Gift Basket created by Marla Botschafter (Ranger Rob gives her all the credit) containing snacks and adult drinks, enough to keep you going for a couple of days. Tickets (3 for \$5) sold quickly and the winner was drawn by Elaine: HP Marshall! We talked about raffling off the Dell computer speaker from Dave Josselyn but time was growing short and Bob & Blink had to rush off to visit Ed in the hospital and give him his plaque.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:07 PM.

Airborne All The Way!”

Respectfully submitted,
SAA William Blankenburg