



The Legion-Air

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March 2015

Commander's Message:

February turned out to be the second coldest month on record. It was snowing on February 1st and the 8th District Commander Robert Barrett was snowed in and had to cancel the meeting.

I attended five of the six Department Commander's Visitation Dinners in Genesee, Wyoming, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua and Erie Counties. Niagara County was missed because of illness. There are two more Visitation Dinners and Hill Day in March.

At the Visitation Dinners Department Commander Frank J. Peters stressed membership, saying it's good to get new members, but we need to retain the members who have not renewed. He mentioned that supporting the NEF (National Emergency Fund) is his objective for the year. Commander Peters also honored all who served, including WWI Veterans who started the American Legion but didn't have the GI Bill to come home to. The GI Bill was enacted by Congress in 1944 for all Veterans of WWII and beyond.

During the Visitation at Lamm Post #622, Erie County Commander Paul J. Steward presented Department Commander Frank J. Peters with a check for the NEF from the Erie County American Legion.

I hope to see you at the A.J. Jurek Post #1672 for the County meeting on March 26th, 2015.

Membership – VC Wayne Sorrentino

From Department's 2-10-15 Membership Report: Congrats to our top Posts: East Aurora at 103.55%, Sardinia Post at 102.63% and Grand Island Post at 101.08% for a total of 17 members over 100%. Thank you for all you do each day for membership and keep up the great work.

Congrats also to Newcomb-Long and Donovan Post for being over 95% of goal. Erie County is now at 81.78% of goal. Our next target is 90% by 3-9-15 with the next two cutoff dates of 2-23-15 and 4-13-15. All Posts: be sure to send in a

"CERTIFICATION FORM POST 0001 AND DMS TRANSFER LISTING" form, which shows all of your transfers from Post 0001 for 2014-2015. It's best to fill out this form and mail to Department to be sure all of your transfers are counted toward awards at Convention. The form can be found at the head table during the next several County meetings and on Page 22 of the Department's Membership Program & Awards Manual 2014-2015. Fill out the FRANK J. PETERS

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S PIN "I Got One!" form (available at the next several County meetings and on page 20 of the 2015 Awards Manual) for each of your new members and send this form in to Department for Commander Frank's pin (no limit on number of pins requested). National Commander Mike Helm will award his National Commander pin to any American Legion Family member who obtains three new members or renews five members into The American Legion. To maintain the integrity of the National Commander's pin incentive program, only one pin will be awarded per individual. Thank you for all you do each day for

Membership. Our new member total for Erie County is now at 230 with a self-imposed goal of 300. Every member recruit a new (or re-instated) member to help reverse the downward trend of membership over the last many years. Let's keep The American Legion strong into the future for our Legion family and all veterans.

Special Activities – VC Nelson Oldfield

It has been an Interesting month in the Legion. On Saturday 2/14, like many, I attended the Lamm Post Dinner for the Department Commander, Department President & the Detachment Commander. While I was sitting in the Audience the Detachment Commander Chuck Depo came up to the Podium to speak. He spoke about the Legion College, its value, and the fact that his group leader was in the room, and yes, he pointed to me. It was nice to be recognized, but my point here is that we need to send more members to the College. The Benefits are enormous for both the student and the Post, and will make us better to perform. In a time when people are moving up quicker then we have in the past we need to provide them with training. Please consider sending potential officers, directors etc. to the College. If you have questions we have many who have been to the College, we have strength in knowledge.

I spoke with Peter Hurd and the Past Commanders Club will also be setting up a class for new Commanders a short time after elections. I see great value in this, plus the fact that there are many knowledgeable members in the PCC. I am sure as the time gets closer that Peter will supply us with more information. I have offered the Donovan Post as a classroom setting or he can have it anywhere else he plans to have it.

These cornerstones are going to make us healthier if we use these tools. Please consider it and talk it over with your board or members. Use the legion resources and let's be sure we are around in the future.

Lastly, one of the late PCC Ray Caso's dreams was taking care of Homeless Women Veterans. On Saturday February 14th during the soup and sandwich lunch, a presentation was given to us on the Villa Maria Project in Cheektowaga, one of the **many things Ray can be proud of**, is his involvement. As a Post Commander in Cheektowaga I whole heartily want to endorse this project.

Thanks for your Service and taking care of Veterans.



Americanism – VC Joe Orzechowski

In a resolution passed at the 1960 National Convention the American Legion declared February to be Americanism Month, the month when we should renew our efforts to "foster and perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism". I'm embarrassed to admit that I was not aware of February's significance in the Legion. (My thanks go to Vice Commander Wayne Sorrentino for giving me the heads up.)

During Department Commander Frank Peters' recent visit to Erie County, he mentioned the importance of each Post completing and submitting their Consolidated Post Report (CPR). As he pointed out, if only half the Posts send in a CPR, then he only has half the story when trying to inform legislators about all the good work done by the American Legion. This data shortfall also impacts the National Commander's presentations to Congress.

So, to those Posts who are not in the habit of submitting a CPR each year, I ask you to please try to do so this year. Don't worry about how many items you can check off on the form. As it says in the instructions: "If the post only has one program, then that should be the one reported." Every little bit adds to the overall picture of the Legion's impact on our communities. One-third of the CPR is dedicated to Americanism items.

I urge the Americanism chairperson at each Post to take a look at the form (available from the Department web site or from our County office) and choose just one activity for your Post to undertake. You'll have one (or one more) item to add to your CPR submission and you will have added to the body of good works performed by your fellow Legionnaires.

Museum – PCC Peter Hurd

At the last meeting of The Veterans Museum of Erie County, the following people were elected to the Board of Directors; Brenda Serena VFW, Nelson Oldfield, Art Forman, Greg Voye, Ken, Barnes, Owen Reger. Peter Hurd was elected Chairman of the Board and Pauline Fletcher Secretary. All positions on the Board are not filled. Coming onto the Board is Mark Schroeder, Comptroller for the City of Buffalo and Veteran Advocate.

We urge all Legion Members to join and support the Veterans Museum. Membership applications will be available at City Hall, County meetings, or by calling Pete Hurd @ 332-7061 work, or cell at 481 7215. The next meeting will be held at the 40/8 club house on Rein Rd., Cheektowaga on, Wednesday March 11 at 7:00 pm. All are welcome.



Pictured above are County Commander Paul Steward, Department Commander Frank Peters, Past Department Commander Tim Van Patten, and Department President Diane Gerber.

Erie County Website – can be found at eriecountyal.org. If anyone has additional information for entry into the website, contact Jake Schu thru his email at jschu@depewlegion.org. Or, you can use the emails for the County Office, or the County newsletter



Thursday County Meeting Dates

Executive Dinner Meeting: 6:30 pm

March 26, A.J. Jurek Post # 1672

New & Smith Rds., East Amherst, NY 14051
Menu: Corned Beef & Cabbage, potatoes, dessert, coffee, tea and milk.

April 23, East Aurora Post # 362

May 21, Orchard Park Post # 567

Sunday April 12

8th District Meeting - Chautauqua Co.

John W. Dill Post # 434
110 W. Main St., Brocton, NY 14716
12:00 PM - Membership Meeting
1:00 PM – General Meeting

Saturday April 18

Testimonial dinner for Sons National Vice Commander Greg “Doc” Gibbs at Hamburg Post # 527. Social time 6 pm, 6:30 pm dinner, tickets are \$35. Checks payable to “Committee to Elect Greg Gibbs” by March 15. Mail to “Doc” at 286 Highland Ave., Hamburg, NY 14075.

Saturday April 25

Erie County Commander Paul Steward and Erie County President Linda Miskell testimonial dinner at Hamburg Post # 527, 2 Memorial Drive, Hamburg NY. Cocktails and Hors d’oeuvres at 6:00 PM, Dinner at 7:00 PM. The cost will be \$25 per person. Contact the Erie County Office or VC Nelson Oldfield.



**SUBMISSIONS
For the April
“The Legion-Air”
DUE**

March 27
thelegionair@gmail.com



THE AMERICAN LEGION
 The Erie County Committee
 609 City Hall
 65 Niagara Square
 Buffalo, NY 14202
 PHONE: (716) 852-6500
 FAX: (716) 852-4664
 e-mail: veteran14202@verizon.net



Sunday March 15

ALL YOU CAN EAT Pancake Breakfast at A. J. Jurek Post #1672, 8 am to 12:30 pm. Fresh, hot, buttermilk pancakes, "Egglands Best" eggs, link & patty sausage, juice & coffee or tea. Adults \$7, children under 12 \$3, children under 5 free.

Friday March 20

The Thomas Tehan Post #1449 will host a meat raffle to raise money for their building fund. Admission is \$5, raffle starts at 7 pm.

Sunday March 22

Hamburg Post 527 will hold their annual ALL YOU CAN EAT pancake breakfast from 8am till 12pm. Includes sausage, juice, coffee or tea for \$6. Benefit the Boys State and Scholarship programs.

Saturday March 28

Newell Faulkner Post # 880 band night with Rockin Robin, 8 PM. to 12 Mid. No Cover Food & Beverages available.

Sunday April 19

Past Commander's Club Pancake breakfast at Donovan Post # 1626 from 8 am to 1 pm.

East Aurora Post # 362 is serving its annual Lenten fish fry dinner every Friday until Easter, from 4 to 7:00 PM. Fish is served either broiled or beer battered, and comes with your choice of French fries, American or German potato salad, you also get coleslaw, macaroni salad, and bread. You can eat in or call ahead for take-out. Prices are \$11 for adults, \$9 for seniors, and \$7 for children.

Francis Donovan Post # 1626 Fish Fry every Friday at Francis Donovan Post, except Holidays, from 4 – 8 pm. There are also none fish menu items. Take outs are available, post phone 896-3346

Erie County Office Hours

Staffed by Tim Van Patten every Monday, Wednesday, & Friday from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, excluding holidays.

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by Friday March 27 for the April edition.
 PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor