



The Legion-Air

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Commander

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Editor



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April 2016

Commander's Message:

Greetings Legion family & friends. So sorry for anyone who made the trip to Tehan Post on Thursday, 3-24, because they did not get the word that we (I) moved the County meeting one week due to the Easter Triduum. We tried to contact everyone over the last several months about the County meeting date change to Thursday, 3-31, but I'm sure there's someone who never got the memo.

Thank You to Tehan Post for the excellent job on their hosting the March County meeting.

Congratulations to our 4 Posts who are now at 100% or above: ERIECO, Jesse Clipper, Depew and Tehan. Thank you for all of your efforts with membership. Keep Charging!! Let's all keep working to reverse the downward membership trend. Remember to "Just Ask".

I have completed 19 Post visitations as of the date of this writing (3-25-16) and hope to complete my visitations to all 39 Posts in Erie County by the date of our Convention (6-4-16). As they say "Thanks for the memories" and thank you all for the support you've given me and my staff. We are here to help you.

Thanks to Hamburg, Orchard Park, Lamm, Donovan, East Aurora, Grand Island, Eden, & Clarence Posts for sending your newsletters to me. I know great things are happening across Erie County and my staff & I would like to support your event, but we need to know about it.

Hill Day had a good turnout of Erie County Legionnaires and Auxiliary members. Hill Day is always a great opportunity for our Legion Family to visit with our representatives in Albany. Lots going on with veterans' issues and The American Legion is in the forefront on all of these bills. We need everyone's continued support of this annual event.

God bless our troops. Thank you for your efforts to increase the membership of our American Legion family.

Membership – VC Nelson Oldfield

We are currently at 90% of our County goal. Please make sure every effort is made to reach your Post goal, we are now in the final stretch and every member counts. Look through your missing member reports and possibly make a phone call. Every Post has a different way of working on increasing their membership, if it works please keep with it. Remember if you make your goal plus 5, there is a rebate from Department. I did have a chance a few weeks ago to see firsthand what one of our Posts was doing for membership. The Depew Post had a table set up towards the front of a Tops store trying to recruit members in their area. They had their literature out and ready to go. I spent a short time at their booth and was impressed by what they were doing. They are doing this at another Tops the next weekend. One guy went by us and said he was not eligible. I caught up with him and asked why? He told me he was not overseas. I am sure you all heard this before but yes he was referring to the VFW, long story short he is joining the Depew Post. Meeting the Public seems to work!! Many Veterans were not welcomed after Vietnam, but today our largest sector in the Legion is Vietnam Era veterans, things have changed. Many work Post 1 membership and are very successful, my own Post Donovan Jerry Kowalski has been working on this and recruited 13 new members, great but they will not count towards our membership till next year. But it builds our foundation down the road.

If your post is an open post PLEASE make sure the literature is on your tables, I would prefer small packets instead of just an application, I have passed a sample letter out at our meeting please modify it for your own Post. Each Post is unique play up your strengths.

Finally use the Uncle Sam Poster with the info on it, if you would like me to make some up for your Post I would be glad to do it. Please let me know, Thank You for your service!

Erie County Scholarship – Arthur Foreman

A lot of work is going into trying to make this program a success. The students entering into college today are our future. They need our financial support. To date there have only been six Past Erie County Commanders supporting this program amounting to two hundred and fifty dollars in donations. All we ask of our Past Erie County Commanders is a minimal donation of twenty-five dollars or whatever you can afford to donate to this program. PLEASE HELP KEEP THIS PROGRAM ALIVE!

In response to our request for support we have had only three responses other than Past Erie County Commanders. Because of this we need to get creative to keep this worthy program alive. South Buffalo Post #721 has pledged one thousand dollars to this program. As a result of this generous donation, two additional five hundred dollar scholarships will be awarded in their name to worthy candidates at the county convention. Your post could do the same for as little as a five hundred dollars or greater from your Bell Jar or Bingo proceeds. For more information give Art Forman a call at 864-1949 or County Headquarters at 852-6500 for more information.

Also I have been busy in trying to get commitments from our business community for additional scholarship funding. If you have any contacts that can be reached out to support our scholarship program, please by all means have them contact Art Forman at 864-1949 for more information.

Most importantly as well is getting the word out. Applications are available on the County web site, contacting the county office, Art Forman or downloading the information from the internet at: <http://www.eriecountyal.org/pdf%20files/Erie%20County%20Scholarship%202016.pdf>

Only you can help to make the Erie County Scholarship Program a success. All that is being asked is to please help to continue support of our future generations.

Gold Star Mothers Mass – John Kasmer

Will be held on Saturday May 28 at Queen of Martyrs R.C. Church, 180 George Urban Blvd. Cheektowaga 14225 at the 4:00 PM Mass. Assembly at 3:30 PM in front of the church.



Special Activities – VC Joe Orzechowski

At February's County Meeting it was suggested that Erie County might join with the 8th District to co-sponsor the District Golf Tournament on June 17, 2016. After making some telephone calls and exchanging a few emails, I felt that there was just not enough time to take care of all the details involved in such an undertaking. Therefore, I've decided that our best bet for a County fundraiser would be to sell Delta Sonic Car Wash tickets.

The way this works is that Erie County buys Super Kiss Car Wash tickets from Delta Sonic for \$6 each. We, in turn sell the tickets for \$12 each (the price suggested by Delta Sonic) and make a profit of \$6 per ticket sold. The buyer can redeem the ticket at any local Delta Sonic for a Super Kiss wash valued at over \$15 (\$13.99 plus tax) which is a savings of over \$3 per wash. Everybody wins: Delta Sonic gets to write off a charitable contribution to the American Legion, we make money on every ticket sold, and the buyer gets \$3 off a car wash.

Now it doesn't take a mathematical wizard to figure out that we will make a profit of \$600 for every 100 tickets sold. So, if we sell a car wash ticket to everyone who bought a lottery calendar this past year (780), the County will make over \$4500 to help support our projects and programs. That would be a very nice addition to our Special Activities Fund. I will provide more details at the County meeting on March 31 at the Tehan Post.

Saturday August 13

Hamburg Post 527 is holding their 5th Annual Golf tournament at Holland Hills Country Club. Shotgun start Noon, hole in one contest for a 2016 car sponsored by West-Herr of Hamburg. Lunch at the start, with a chicken & Rib dinner at the finish. Prizes and 50/50. Open to all. Cost \$80. Proceeds to benefit the VA Hospital and Homeless Female Veterans Transitional Housing Project. For information call Jim Koester 570-1349 or Dan Murphy 648-0792.

Americanism – VC Suzanne Quirk

Easter was celebrated very early this year and I hope those who observe Easter had a happy and holy Easter Sunday. We are lucky to live in a country where the right to freedom of religion is protected. Another right, the freedom of expression in the democratic process was expressed by myself and a group of Legionnaires from Erie County as we participated in Hill Day in Albany 2/29 & 3/1. The team that I was on visited the offices of Assembly person Wozniak, Assemblyman Schimminger, Senator Ranzenhofer, and Senator Gallivan. We were well received in all cases.

Historically, April was a month when many significant wars began and many veterans made the ultimate sacrifice to defend their country. On April 6, 1917, the U.S. entered WWI. On April 12, 1861, the Civil War began. On April 25, 1898, the Spanish – American War began.

On a lighter note, The American Legion Auxiliary birthday was on April 19, 1919. This has been an indispensable member of the American Legion Family working to support veterans.

I would like to highlight two Erie County Legionnaires that were recognized for their work as editors on the front page of “The Voice” published by the New York American Legion Press Association. James Bojanowski was named the 1st Place Winner for a county publication, The Legion-Air and Paul Steward, was named as 1st Place Winner for a Post publication, The Reveille. Congratulations to both for their hard work promoting Legion activities.

In parting, please remember to bring pictures and/or announcements pertaining to post activities to the county meeting to share on the Legion Activity Board.

Boys State – Pierre Harper

Please attend our information/ application completion lunch on April 3rd at the Niagara Frontier Post. Lunch will begin at 11 AM. All prospective delegates and alternates will come and complete their online application. We will be providing the computers and printers needed to properly submit the application. Applicants will only need to bring a completed physical form and a signed commitment certification form.

After the 2016 Boys' State session, I will be stepping down as Erie County Boys' State Chairman. If there is anyone who is interested in taking over this wonderful committee please contact me. Eriecountyboysstate@gmail.com



Thursday County Meeting Dates

Executive Dinner Meeting: 6:30 PM

April 28, East Aurora Post #362

1 Legion Dr. East Aurora, NY 14052

May 19, Lackawanna Post #63

June 4, Erie County Convention

Thomas E. Tehan Post #1449

2075 Electric Ave. Blasdell, NY 14219

Please support our Convention hosts by ordering an ad or sending in boosters in the program book by May 1. Letters have been sent out to all Posts. Make your check payable to Thomas E. Tehan Post #1449 Convention Committee. Post address above.

Sunday April 3

8th District Meeting – Cattaraugus County

Norton-Chambers Post #1434

3514 Route 16, Hinsdale, NY 14743

12:00 PM - Membership Meeting

1:00 PM – General Meeting

Sunday May 15

Erie County Commander Wayne Sorrentino Testimonial Dinner at George F. Lamm Post #622, 962 Wherle Dr., Williamsville, 14221. Open Bar Cocktails 4:30 PM, Dinner at 6 PM, Cost \$25. Ticket deadline is Friday May 6 to Suzanne Quirk, 570 Herr Rd. Angola, NY 14006. Check payable to Erie County American Legion. **NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR.** Menu: Baked Chicken, Stuffed Beef Rolls, Salad, Lazy Pierogi, Corn, Sweet & Sour Cabbage, Mashed Potatoes, Salad, Ice Cream.

Ads are \$15, Boosters \$1, deadline Friday April 22. Send to Dianna Steward, 4106 Beaubain Dr. Hamburg, NY 14075. Check payable to Erie County American Legion.

Erie County Website – eriecounyal.org.

Erie County Office Hours

Staffed by Tim Van Patten every Mon., Wed., & Fri. 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, excluding holidays.



THE AMERICAN LEGION
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Sunday April 3

Concord Post #431 SAL, 109 Zoar Valley Rd., Springville 14141, is holding a Baby Back Rib Roast dinner from Noon to 4 PM. Cost \$12.

Sunday April 17

ALL YOU AN EAT Pancake Breakfast at A. J. Jurek Post #1672, 655 New Rd. Swormville, 14051. From 8 AM to 12:30 PM. Fresh, hot, buttermilk pancakes, "Egglands Best" eggs, link & patty sausage, juice & coffee or tea. Adults \$8, children under 12 \$4, under 5 free.

Saturday April 23

South Buffalo Auxiliary Unit #721, 136 Cazenovia St., Buffalo, will be hosting a Garage Sale from 9 AM to 2 PM. Tables are \$10 each. This is a great way to get rid of the clutter in your house and make a little cash in the process. If anyone is interested in renting a table please contact Rosanne at 812-4470.

Sunday April 24

Gierlach Post #1320, 50 Gates St., Sloan, 14212, is having a spaghetti dinner Noon to 5 PM. Cost is \$8 adults, Children under 10 \$5, children 5 and under are free.

Donovan Post #1626,

3210 Genesee St., Cheektowaga, 14225
Friday Fish Fries 4 – 8 PM Please try us out!!
John Stiegler Cmdr.

Hamburg Post #527

2 Memorial Dr. Hamburg, 14075 Spaghetti Dinners served Thursdays from 4:30 to 7 PM. Full order \$8, includes Spaghetti, 2 meatballs, Salad, Bread and butter. Half order \$6. Thursday, April 28 will be the last Spaghetti Dinner of the season. Thank you for your patronage, see you in September!

South Buffalo Post #721

Monday night dinners at the Post from 5 to 7 PM. 1st Monday Spaghetti, 3rd Monday Roast Beef. 136 Cazenovia St, Buffalo, 14210.

PNC Michael J. Kogutec Scholarship

Applications have been mailed out and the scholarship is also posted on the Erie County website. Due date for returns is May 6, at the County office. Donations also accepted.

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by April 29 for the May/June edition.

PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor