



The Legion-Air

Paul Wackowski
Commander

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July 2024

Commander's Message:

First, let me say, "Thank You" to the delegates and alternates, and each one of you, for having trust in me, as your newly elected Erie County Commander. I am honored and humbled to work alongside each one of you. And this would not have possible without the mentoring of Richard [Dick} Allein. Richard – "Thank You"!

I am asking every County Post and its members to promote and conduct the four basic pillars of the American Legion – Veterans- Defense – Americanism – Children and Youth.

The American Legion is one of the largest veteran's organizations in the country, with thousands of local posts across the country. It is with this in mind that I ask everyone to work together in supporting our wide range of activities, events and programs, including advocating for veteran's rights and benefits, supporting youth programs, promoting Americanism and patriotism, and providing community service.

To be an advocate on behalf of all veterans and their families by lobbying for improvements in health care, education, and employment opportunities for veterans., help with VA benefit claims, temporary financial help, and support of homeless veterans.

I ask that you promote the American values and citizenship through Boys and Girls State, which provides Junior high school students with an opportunity to gain experience about government and civic responsibilities, and leadership.

We do play an important role in supporting and advocating for veterans and their families.

Let's have a great and successful Legion year together.

"Thank You"!

Commander's Message: Continued

Just a couple of notes: As this is the July 2024 publication, of notation it also begins a new legion year, which means we start a new membership year. I'm hoping that we can get more county posts to achieve 100% membership goals. Maintain our current programs, and activities.

As a reminder, any county post that hasn't turned in their CPR's [Consolidated Post Report], to turn them in ASAP along with your Newley elected Post Officers Report to the County.

Best wishes for a successful Boys State Program to all the Candidates and the entire Boys State Staff. Boys State Timing: Friday June 28 to Wednesday July 3, 2024.

The American Legion, Veterans serving Veterans.



2024 – 2025 Erie County Commander Paul Wackowski receives his new American Legion Cap from Adjutant Jim Bojanowski.

Picture by Sue Quirk.



(L to R) Kathleen Garvey, John Betz, and Ted Balbierz Legionnaire of the Year presentation.

Picture by Sue Quirk.

Congratulations to John A. Betz of Depew Post #1528 being awarded 2024 Erie County Legionnaire of the Year. Legionnaire Betz has been a resolute member of Depew American Legion Post #1528 for thirty-four years. He is a behind-the-scenes force that keeps the Post functioning well. Legionnaire Betz assists in the planning of all Post activities and fundraisers and actively participates in these endeavors.

Legionnaire Betz is devoted to accomplishing the American Legion's mission to enhance the well-being of America's veterans, their families, our military, and our communities by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park

Is looking for volunteers for their Ambassador Program. Individuals that have a passion for the Park and serving our community. Ambassadors will fill the role of "host/hostess" on the Park grounds from the Vietnam Memorial to the Cobblestone. The Ambassador's role is to ensure that all visitors to the Buffalo Naval Park feel welcome, answer general questions, and encourage guests to visit the museum and ships. Familiarity or previous association with the Naval Park is not required.

Call Kim Reynolds at 716-208-4450.

Ambassadors will help guests navigate through the Park serving as a general resource for our public by providing basic information about the Park operations, ships, monuments, upcoming events and programs.

Their annual fundraiser will be held Thursday 8/22/24 at the Park from 5:30 – 8:30 PM. Tickets purchased at BUFFALONAVALPARK.ORG



Americanism – VC Jerry Kowalski

I am honored that you have elected me to serve as an Erie County Vice Commander. I am looking forward to working with Cmdr. Paul Wackowski and the rest of the Erie County staff. Americanism is something everyone can celebrate from Memorial Day, honoring of those who gave their life, to the birth of the American Flag, and to the celebration of the birth of a great nation on July 4th. On this day there will be parades, picnics and the fireworks. But let's not forget the true reason we celebrate. Always remember " this is one Nation under God " .

Membership – VC Pat Murphy

2025 Cards are in. If you have not acquired yours yet, call Pat at 716 280 4143 to make arrangements. Or, attend the July 25 Erie County Meeting to pick up the cards.

Special Activities – VC Howard Patton III

Handoff of all materials is currently in progress.

2025 MEMBERSHIP DUES PAYMENT

This year as you transmit your per capita tax it will be for \$39.50 whether you pay it via MyLegion software to National, or by paper to Department. The \$39.50 includes this year's \$5 National increase. Erie County Finance Officer Joe Porempski will be sending out letters to all Posts indicating the Erie County per capita process of \$2 per member soon. Each Erie County Post will make a payment of \$2 per member based on their final 2024 membership directly to the Erie County Committee. This process mirrors the long-standing 8th District payment process, where the WNY Counties pay \$0.29 of their collected per capita each year based on the previous year's membership. This process means no additional payments will need to be made for PUFL or new members throughout the year. Please contact the Office if you have any questions.



2024 Erie County Boys State Citizens at the 6/8 Orientation Breakfast held at the Matthew Glab Post #1477 under the direction of Chair Felton Davis and Cochair Bernie Romanowski. Many thanks to all the Posts who sponsored this year's class.



Erie County Commander Ted Balbierz gives the principal address at the 2024 Memorial Day Services held at Forest Lawn Cemetery while Gold Star Mother Fran Davis reviews the Field Of Valor and the 7,100 graves that were decorated that morning. Thanks to all who assisted that morning, especially the Honor Guard of the Francis J. Donovan Post #1626 and Father Michael Johnson. Also, thanks to all who had their own local Memorial Day Services in their Community to honor our fallen Heroes.



Regular County Meetings at 7 PM

The next Regular Meeting of the Erie County Committee will be held on Thursday 7/25 at George F. Lamm Post #622 located at 962 Wehrle Dr., Williamsville, 14221 **in the rear Grove**. The Post will be serving a Picnic Dinner, Cheeseburgers, Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Salads, and Dessert for \$10 per person, starting at 6 PM.

Thanks go out to all Posts that attend the County Meetings and the County Convention. We hopefully will see representatives from all the 35 Posts in Erie County at the 7/25 Meeting in Williamsville. Please email the County Office with your suggestions on how to improve attendance if you currently are not attending.

Future County Meetings;

August 22, Alfred J. Jurek #1626

September 26, Matthew Glab #1477

October 24, Iroquois #1587

As of this writing, I still have 11/21 & 5/22 open.

Department Convention – Wednesday 7/17 thru Friday 7/19/2024 in Niagara Falls.

National Convention – Saturday 8/24 thru Thursday 8/29 in New Orleans.

Erie County Website – eriecountyal.org
Office Hours, M,W,F – 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM



SUBMISSIONS
For the August
"The Legion-Air"
Due July 26
thelegionair@gmail.com

THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY





NYNEC Timothy Van Patten installs the new 2024 – 2025 Erie County elected staff at the 6/1/2024 Erie County Convention. PCC Ted Balbierz, CC Paul Wackowski, VC Jerry Kowalski, VC Pat Murphy, VC Howard Patton III, & Finance Officer Joe Porempski. Picture by Sue Quirk.

Sunday July 14, ALL YOU CAN 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 \$10, children under 12 \$4, children > 5 free.

July 20 & 21, Veterans PowwoW to be held at the Seneca Allegany Resort & Casino, Irving, NY. For additional information go to senecapowwow.org Veterans are free. On Saturday July 20, 11 AM Veteran Welcoming and Honoring, Noon Veteran Suicide Prevention Presentation, 1 PM Grand Entry.

Sunday July 28, Francis J. Donovan Post #1626, 3210 Genesee St., Cheektowaga, NY 14225. Live Pro Wrestling starts at 4 PM. For tickets use BCW-WNY.COM

Sunday September 15, Matthew Glab Post is having a Steak and Rib Dinner from 2 to 8 PM. Tickets are \$18. \$10 tickets for Veterans. Buy early for limited sales, at the bar or call 716-825-3733.

South Buffalo Post #721, 136 Cazenovia, St., Buffalo. Summer cook outs every Monday through August 26, from 5 – 7 PM. Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Cheeseburgers, Italian Sausage (Peppers & Onions will be available) and Boneless Chicken Breast. Stop down with your friends/family and let us do the grilling for you. Any questions please call the post at 716-825-9557 - Mon, Wed or Fri from 2 - 7 PM.

Newell Faulkner Post #880, 2912 Legion Drive, Eden, NY 14057. Normal Hours: Tues., Wed., & Thurs. 3 to 9 PM, Fri. 11 am to 9 PM & Sat. 11:30 am to 9 PM. DINE - IN OR TAKE OUT, Tuesday Taco Night, Wednesday 10 for \$8.50 Wings special, dine in only, Thursday Steak Night, Friday Fish Fry & Specials, Saturday Pizza & Wings and Sandwiches. www.post880.com

Matthew Glab Post #1477, 1965 Abbott Road, Lackawanna, NY 14218, serving Wed and Friday 2-8 PM, Fish Fry's, Seafood, Burgers and weekly specials, Wednesday 75 cent wings, Taco's \$4.00

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by 7/26 for the August 2024 edition. PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor

New York website - <https://nylegion.net> National American Legion website - <https://www.legion.org>
Erie County American Legion website - <http://www.eriecountyal.org>

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