



The Legion-Air

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Commander

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**AMERICAN
LEGION**

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May/June 2024

Commander's Message:

My term as your Erie County Commander is rapidly coming to a close, with our Erie County American Legion Convention scheduled Saturday June 1 at the Matthew Glab Post. All Posts should be planning to attend and should be tabulating last Legion years Consolidated Post Reports (CPR) which need to be completed and submitted to County by May 17 for the County awards. Hopefully you submitted a Post Data Report if you raised your dues to cover the National \$5 increase for 2025. .

The April 22 Department Membership Report shows Erie County at 92.3%. I congratulate the 10 Erie County Posts who are at or above 100%; Gabriel Rodriguez Post 1928- 144%, Depew Post 1528- 108%, Thomas Tehan Post 1449- 107% , Iroquois Post 1587- 107%, David McKeever Post 64-106%, Jesse Clipper Post 430-106%, North Collins Post 1640-102%, Grand Island Post 1346-101%, Sardinia Post 1131-100% & 4 Star Post 1659-100%.

With the County at 92%, I encourage the remaining 25 Posts to make a full court press in the coming weeks to surpass 100%. Please do what you can to achieve this year's goal! Please keep up all your efforts and use MY Legion to expedite reporting.

So far, I have visited 21 of 35 Erie County Posts. I Thank each of you for your hospitality and for affording me the opportunity to visit and meet your Legion Family Members.

On Saturday April 20th, I along with Adjutant Bojanowski, Past Jr County Commander Pask & County Vice Commanders Wackowski and Kowalski attended the 3rd Annual Gabriel A. Rodriguez Post fundraiser dinner at Acqua Restaurant. Congratulations to Rodriguez Legion family for another successful event, with a good time had by all!

Membership – VC Jerry Kowalski

Our Legion year is coming to a close and it has gone by fast. Erie County stands at 91.94% of our 100% goal. Great job!

To date we have 10 Posts that have gone over the 100% mark, and they will be awarded for their hard work. We have 4 Posts that are above 95%. There are 3 Posts that did an outstanding job bringing in new members; Post 362 with 25, Post 1928 with 21 and Post 205 with 16.

Congratulations for the extra effort. I am looking forward to giving awards to the Post that have worked hard to achieve this award.

Members, we are now into the 21st Century and the computer is a staple of life. Officer's let's get our transactions on line, on MyLegion. it is more accurate, efficient, and saves so much time. I am here to help anyone who may need help with it. Just call 716-681-7169.

Memorial Day Grave Decoration/Services

We will be decorating graves at the Forest Lawn Field of Valor Section on Monday 5/27 at 8 AM and holding our Annual Memorial Day Services at 9 AM at Forest Lawn Cemetery to honor our fallen heroes.

Nelson Oldfield and Team will be at the Forest Lawn Garage to pass out requested flags to the Posts for their grave's decoration on Saturday 5/11 from 9 AM to Noon. Volunteers needed to help pass out the flags.

Memorial Day Mass Saturday May 25

County Chaplain Father Michael Johnson will celebrate Mass at 5:30 PM at St. Mary's of the Lake located at 4737 Lakeshore Rd., Hamburg, NY 14075. A reception will be held after the Mass at Newcomb-Long Post #928 located at 7353 Erie Rd. Derby, NY 14047 host by Newcomb-Long American Legion Family.



Commander's Message: Continued

Let us all remember Past Erie County and West Seneca Post 735 Commander Ron Puckett who recently passed away. I Thank all those Legion Family members who participated in Ron's Wake Service. Ron lived for his Family and was a true Leader... Our continued Thoughts and Prayers of support for Carol and the entire family.

Please continue your efforts to lobby your NY State Assemblyman & Senators to support legislation to pass Electronic Bell Jar Gaming reform for Non for Profits of NY Assembly Bill 4813 & Senate Bill 1959. We can all make this great opportunity a reality... Passage of this new law should lead to 3 to 5 times increase in Bell Jar revenues to be used for much needed capital improvements. Also, we are requesting your support of NY Senate Bill S2028A which established a real property Tax Exemptions for Veterans with 100% Service-Connected Disability Please continue to "Be the One" ask Veterans how they are doing? Listen when a Veteran needs to talk and Reach Out when a Veteran is Struggling... BETHEONE.ORG

May God Continue to Bless Our Troops around the World and God Bless America! In Continued Service for God & Country...

Special Activities – VC Pat Murphy

I am happy to report calendar sales have been brisk ,and almost all have been returned or sold as of this date. I thank all who sold calendars and to those who purchased them. The top five Posts for selling calendars are;

- 1 Concord Post 0431, over 140 calendars.
- 2 Francis J. Donovan Post 1626, over 110.
- 3 Hamburg Post 527, over 100.
- 4 Frank L. Gierlach Post 1320, over 80.
- 5 David McKeever Post 64, over 70.

Thank you again for all your work and effort , to all the other Posts this is a team effort and as a team we are winning .

On a special note, Richard Allein's family of the David McKeever Post 64 has donated the winnings of a Calendar he purchased back to the County. There were two winners totaling \$50. Thank you to the family for that generous gift, Richard is in our thoughts and prayers.

Americanism – VC Paul Wackowski

Memorial Day, observed annually on the last Monday of May, is a day of remembrance and reflection. It serves as a solemn occasion to honor and pay tribute to the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the U.S. Military.

Originally known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day traces its roots back in the aftermath of the Civil War when communities across the nation began to decorate the graves of fallen soldiers with flowers, a tradition that continues to this day.

In 1971, Memorial Day was officially declared a federal holiday, providing Americans with a dedicated time to remember and honor the nations fallen heroes.

On Memorial Day, ceremonies, parades, and memorial services are held throughout the country, bringing together communities to commemorate the sacrifice of those who have given their lives in service to our country. It's a day for family, friends and fellow citizens to come together to express gratitude and selflessness of the fallen.

Beyond the barbecues and long weekends, Memorial Day serves as a poignant reminder of the high cost of freedom and the debt of gratitude owed to those who have made it possible. It's a time to reflect on the profound impact of war and the importance of cherishing the freedoms and liberties that we enjoy as Americans.

As we honor the memory of those who have died in defense of our nation. It is also a time to support and uplift the families of the fallen, recognizing the enduing grief and sacrifice that they bear. Through our collective remembrances and gratitude we ensure that the legacy of our fallen heroes lives on and that their sacrifices are never forgotten.

In essence, Memorial Day is a day of reverence, reflection, and gratitude – a time to pause and remember the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of those who have given their lives in service to our country. It's a solemn reminder that freedom is not free and a solemn commitment to honor the memory of the fallen by upholding the ideals and values for which they so bravely fought.

Boys State – Felton Davis

Kudos to all Posts for your work in recruiting candidates for this year's 2024 NY Boys State program. Some of you were successful and just as many were unsuccessful in these new times following Covid and related changes in family and community values and norms.

We received a total of 19 candidates for the 2024 Boys State program which is held in SUNY Morrisville. The following Post sponsorship numbers are;

Post 64 - 4, Post 205 - 2, Post 527 - 5, Post 567 - 1, Post 622 - 1, Post 880 - 1, Post 1528 - 1, Post 1640 - 2, Post 1780 - 1, Post 1928 - 1.

All candidates and their parent/guardian are invited to a light breakfast and program to explain what to expect and procedures and suggestions they should be aware of so they can make their plans of what to do and pack and transportation arrangements. This meeting is set for Saturday, June 8, 2024 starting at 8:00 AM and is a mandatory meeting for each candidate and their parent/guardian.

Education Awards

Donations to the Erie County or PNC Michael Kogutek Scholarships are now being accepted. If your Post does not have a local program, please consider donating to these programs to help our youth education in our community.



Niagara Frontier Post #1041 member David Rivera presents the Korean Congressional Gold Medal to the family of Pedro Juan Chamarro. David is a nephew of Mr. Chamarro. Picture by Sue Quirk.



Regular County Meetings at 7 PM

The next Regular Meeting of the Erie County Committee will be held on Thursday 5/16 at West Seneca Post #735 located at 35 Legion Pkwy., West Seneca 14224. **NOTE: Location change and earlier date due to the County Convention timing.** No food that evening.

Thanks go out to the 23 Posts that attended the April County Meeting, 63, 64, 205, 362, 430, 527, 607, 622, 721, 799, 838, 880, 900, 1131, 1320, 1477, 1528, 1586, 1587, 1626, 1640, 1672, & 1928. Hopefully we can see representatives from all the 35 Posts in Erie County at the 5/16 meeting in West Seneca.

Future County Meetings;

Please turn in requests for hosting next year.

Erie County Convention – Saturday 6/1 at Matthew Glab Post #1477. Ads are Boosters are due to the Post by 5/10. glabpost@aol.com Memorial Service 9 AM Convention Start 10 AM Registration from 8 AM to 11:30 PM PCC will be collecting dues and providing information on their August 17 Picnic.

8th District Convention – Saturday 6/15 at the Francis J. Donovan Post #1626. Ads and Boosters are due by 5/18.

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

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



SUBMISSIONS
For the July
"The Legion-Air"
Due June 21
thelegionair@gmail.com

THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY





Jesse Clipper Post PC Rev. Eugene Pierce installs the new officers of Gabriel A. Rodriguez Post #1928 led by Post 1928 Commander John Sanabria (2nd on the left) at their fundraising dinner on Saturday 4/20/24.

Picture by Jim Bojanowski



At the Gabriel A. Rodriguez Post #1928 Dinner were: (L to R) Adjutant Jim Bojanowski, Past Commander Fred Pask, Commander Ted Balbierz, 1928 Commander John Sanabria, Vice Commander Paul Wackowski, and Vice Commander Jerry Kowalski.

Sunday May 12, 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.

Thursday May 16, WNY Armed Forces Luncheon at Niagara Falls Air Base. Purchase tickets online through their website for the opening ceremony and luncheon.

Saturday May 18, Iroquois Post 1587 Bike Blessing, 10 AM registration, 11 Blessing, Noon Bike Run.

Sunday May 19, Gierlach Post 1320 Spaghetti Dinner Noon to 5 PM. Eat in or Take Out. \$13.20 in advance, \$15 at the door. Contact Fred Drzewiecki at 716 894v3837.

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, 1956 Abbott Road, Lackawanna, NY 14218, serving Wed, and Friday 2-8 PM, Fish Fry's, Seafood, Burgers & weekly specials, Wednesday 75 cent wings and \$3 Tacos.

Francis J. Donovan Post #1626, 3210 Genesee St., Cheektowaga, Fish Fry Friday's and other entries. Dinners 4 - 8pm with a live Band from 8-11pm. Dine in or take out available. Call 716-896-3346.

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by 6/21 for the July 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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