



The Legion-Air

Jerry Kowalski
Commander

Jim Bojanowski
Adjutant/Editor

AMERICAN
LEGION

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July 2025

Commander's Message:

I want to thank you for the confidence and support you have given me these past years. I want to thank the McKeever Post members, for their hard work in organizing the Erie County Convention. It was a job well done. To Past Commander Paul Wackowski, your guidance this past year has helped me in preparing to take on the position of Erie County Commander. I will work to the best of my ability every day.

During my term as Commander, I would like to stress the importance of Membership. As we age, we are more dependent on younger members to keep the spirit of the Legion moving forward.

This year I would like every Post to come to the Erie County meetings. If you can't come to these meetings, I would like to come to your Post meetings. At these meetings I can explain the Consolidated Post Reports (CPR's) and their importance to the Legion. Also, I can help or guide your membership chairman with any questions they may have.

I look forward to representing all our members of the American Legion throughout Erie County. Our next big event is the Erie County Fair; August 10 is Veteran's Day. Let's all meet at the Fair and celebrate our Day. Enjoy the summer, it will go by fast. See you at the Fair.



Newly elected County Commander Jerry Kowalski receives his new cap from Adjutant Jim Bojanowski. Picture by Sue Quirk.

Membership – VC Howard Patton III

The 2026 American Legion membership cards have been received. They will be available for individual Post pick up Monday June 30 at the Francis J. Donovan Post #1626 from 2 to 6: 00 PM. The Bartender Gladis will help you out. Location 3210 Genesee St., Cheektowaga, NY 14225. You will need to sign for them as you pick up the cards.

Americanism – VC Pat Murphy

Americanism is a collection of common Icons or symbols, that we as a nation Identify as American. These symbols include the U.S. Flag, the Great Seal of America, the bald eagle, also such quotes as, In God We Trust, This We Will Defend, songs like, The Star-Spangled Banner, My Country Tis of Thee, pledges, The Pledge of Allegiance. All to give us a sense of one nation united. We look to culture icons to show us we are a united country, baseball, football, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, mom and apple pie. We are a country of assimilation; new minority groups enter and are assimilated. For our Sy-Fi fans we are the BORG. Our current cultural norms are, church, apple pie, flying the U.S. flag, all showing we are one with the group the nation. Theodore Roosevelt stated, "Americanism is a question of spirit, conviction, purpose, not creed or birthplace".

A good modern example is after 911, we were one as a country not north or south not east coast west coast not democrat or republican we were united to protect this country as Americans. Trivia FACT - During the winter at Valley Forge 1777-1778, Washington's troops were starving., the Oneida Indians walked hundreds of miles from their camps in now upstate New York to valley forge carrying corn and food supplies for the starving troops.

Let us all celebrate the USA on July 4th!

Thank you to all Veterans for your service.

Special Activities – VC Paul Wackowski

Greetings! Legionnaires

First and foremost, "Thank You" to all County Post Delegates and Alternates, The Erie County Nominations Committee for the opportunity to serve as County Vice Commander for the Legion Year 2025 - 2026. Also, "Thank You" County Commander Jerry Kowalski for my appointment as Chairman of "Special Activities".

Boys State - Bernie Romanowski

Departure for Morrisville is scheduled for Saturday 28 June 2025 from Brounshidle Post 205, 3354 Delaware Ave, Kenmore NY 14217. Boys should report by 7:30 AM. Box lunches will be provided. The first meal at Morrisville will be dinner later that day.

Orchard Park Post #567, 5784 Ellis Rd., Orchard Park, Dinners at the Post are from 4 – 6:30 PM (or until sold out). Monday: Beef on Weck, Tuesday: Tacos: Tacos, choice of beef or chicken, Hard shell or Soft. Wednesday: Chiavetta's Chicken BBQ – 2PM, Thursday: Pasta Night! Comes with Salad, 2 meatballs and garlic bread. Friday: From the Grill.

South Buffalo Post #721, 136 Cazenovia St., Buffalo, NY - Summer Cook Outs are back! Weather permitting – Every Monday Thru August 25 - we will be serving hot dogs, hamburgers, cheeseburgers & grilled chicken breast from 5–7 PM. Post # is 716-825-9557.

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.

Francis J. Donovan Post #1626, 3210 Genesee Street, Cheektowaga. Fish Frys and more every Friday from 4 - 8 PM. Live music entertainment every Friday from 7 - 10 PM. Come visit us at the Foxhole Bar!



The 106th Annual Erie County American Legion Convention was held Saturday 6/7/2025 at the David McKeever Post #64, Buffalo, NY.

Congratulations go out to our newly elected Erie County American Legion Officers for 2025 - 2026. Commander Jerry Kowalski from Francis J. Donovan Post #1626, Cheektowaga, NY Vice Commander Pat Murphy from Frank H. Brink Post #607, Holland, NY Vice Commander Howard Patton III from Jesse Clipper Post #430, Buffalo, NY Vice Commander Paul Wackowski from David McKeever Post #64, Buffalo, NY Finance Officer Joseph Porempski from Francis J. Donovan Post #1626, Cheektowaga, NY

The Erie County Legionnaire of the Year was awarded to Ted Balbierz of the Milton J. Brounshidle Post #205 for his outstanding contributions to The American Legion and the community.

Law & Order Awards were presented to;
- Firefighter Kenneth Pagels, Akron, NY
- EMT Spencer Rajuan Rhyans, Buffalo, NY

Essay Awards were presented to;
- Violet Drullard, St. Stephens School, Grand Island, NY \$500.
- Kyla Verse, St. Amelia School, Tonawanda, NY \$250.

Ten \$500 Scholarship Education Awards were presented to students entering college from across Erie County.

Many Thanks go out to the 21 Posts who attended the convention; 63, 64, 205, 362, 430, 431, 527, 607, 622, 721, 799, 838, 900, 1041, 1131, 1320, 1477 1528, 1586, 1626, & 1672.

Please send your feedback to the County on how to increase attendance at our annual conventions. We would like to see representation from all 35 Posts.

Jim Bojanowski
Erie County Adjutant



Regular County Meetings at 7 PM

The next Regular Meeting of the Erie County Committee will be held on Thursday 7/24 at George F. Lamm Post #622 located at 962 Wherle Dr., Williamsville, NY 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 the 20 Posts that were in attendance for the May County Meeting at Concord Post #431. Posts in attendance were; 63, 64, 205, 362, 430, 431, 527, 622, 799, 838, 900, 1131, 1320, 1477, 1586, 1626, 1640, 1659, 1672, & 1928. Hopefully we can see representatives from all the 35 Posts in Erie County on 7/24.

Future County Meetings;

August 14, Alfred J. Jurek #1626
September 25, Matthew Glab #1477
October 30, To Be Determined

Erie County Fair Veterans Day Sunday 8/10/25

107th Department Convention Syracuse, NY July 17 – 19, 2025.

National Convention – Tampa, FL August 22 – 28



SUBMISSIONS
For the August
"The Legion-Air"
Due July 25
thelegionair@gmail.com



Erie County Legionnaire of the Year Ted Balbierz receives his new cap from LOY Chair Kathleen Garvey as PCC Paul Wackowski observes. Picture by Sue Quirk.



Erie County & 8th District Chaplain, Fr. Mike Johnson, and Tom Johnston, Commander of Depew Post 1528, present the Erie County American Legion Law and Order Award for EMT of the Year to Spencer Rhyans of the Lake Shore Volunteer Fire Company. Depew Post 1528 nominated Spencer for the award and is proud that he has also been selected as the honoree for the Law & Order Award for EMT of the Year for the 8th District and Department of New York!



On June 18, 2025, during the formal regular monthly meeting of the Jesse Clipper Post # 430, the 1st Vice Commander Cheryl Coleman Thomas received the Post’s “Legionnaire of the Year Award.” Presented by Past Commander Rev. Eugene Pierce. She was selected to receive this award by Post Commander Dr. Kanasha Blue for her outstanding leadership. Elder Pastor Howard Patton, the County Vice Commander, installed the new officers, including Commander Cheryl Coleman Thomas. The members and guests were treated to a sumptuous and delicious full-course dinner by the Bennett-Wells Post # 1780 Auxiliary.



At the 8th District Convention held on Saturday June 21, the Past National American Legion Commander Michael J. Kogutek Scholarship of \$1,500 each was presented to Abigail Glyshaw of Roylton High School, Middleport, Niagara County and to Riley Smith Mallon of Dunkirk High School, Chautauqua County. (L to R) Chair Jim Bojanowski, Abigail, Riley, 8th District Commander Joe Rich, & Judge Joe Porempski. Judge Martin Moot was unable to attend. Abigail is President of her School Orchestra, as Principal Viola, and Quartet, and is in the All-County Orchestra, NYS All State Orchestra and Greater Buffalo Orchestra. She has been the Captain of her school’s Swim, Field Hockey, Tennis teams. She will attend SUNY Potsdam to continue her pursuit of being a Music Teacher. Riley is the Valedictorian of his Class, participates in Track and Field, Swim, Unified Bocce, and Unified Basketball. Riley is a founding member of Dunkirk Unified Sports. He attended a STEM program in London, England, and studied French in Paris, France. He attended 2024 New York Boys State and is an Eagle Scout. He will attend the Rochester Institute of Technology to pursue a Mechanical Engineering Degree. Both recipients have parents who served in the US Armed Forces. Picture by Sue Quirk.



NYNEC Timothy Van Patten installs the new 2025 – 2026 Erie County elected staff at the 6/7/2025 Erie County Convention. (L to R) Finance Officer Joe Porempski, PCC & VC Paul Wackowski, VC Howard Patton III, VC Pat Murphy, & CC Jerry Kowalski, Picture by Sue Quirk.



**Memorial Day 2025
At Forest Lawn Cemetery.
(L to R) Joe Orzechowski,
Voiture 476, CC Paul
Wackowski, ECDVSO Felice
Krycia, County Executive
Mark Poloncarz,
Congressman Tim
Kennedy, PDVC Jim
Bojanowski, PDVC John
Siefert, PDVC Joe
Porempski, Blue Star
Mother Annie Gross, VP
Colleen Kowalski, VC Jerry
Kowalski, & SAL Russell
Bertini. Picture by Sue Quirk.**

Saturday July 19, PCC summer picnic at Stiglmeier Park, on Losson Rd., Cheektowaga in Shelter #2. \$10 per family. Reservation deadline will be July 1. Call Gary Oakes Jr. or Gary Kruger.

Sunday July 20, ALL YOU CAN EAT Pancake Breakfast at A. J. Jurek Post #1672, 655 New Rd. Swormville, 14051. From 8 AM to 12:00 PM. Fresh, hot, buttermilk pancakes, "Egglands Best" eggs, link & patty sausage, juice & coffee or tea. Adults \$10, children under 12 \$4, children < 5 free.

Saturday August 2, Sardinia Post #1131 Annual Steak Roast Dinner Fundraiser from 4-6 PM at Sardinia Veterans Park, 13169 Genesee Rd., Sardinia. \$30 per person. Tickets available at Erie County Meetings or contact PPC Jim Wiedemann at 716-374-3335.

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by 7/25 for the August edition. PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor

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DNY website - <https://nylegion.net> National American Legion website - <https://www.legion.org>**