



The American Legion – Patchogue Post 269
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Patchogue Post 269
Corner of Baker Street & South Ocean Avenue (631) 475-3822

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Commanders Corner

Comrades

A few months ago we started the idea of sending out the minutes to the Membership meetings via email. In the responses that we have received, the members who are not able to attend the meetings have said that this is a very positive step and are very glad to be able to keep up to date. Not only is it a benefit during the actual meeting since it saves time for more discussions, it gives everyone not attending the opportunity to read what is going on every month. So if you are not getting the minutes, please send an email to alpost269@aol.com so we have your email and can send you all of our information.

During the next couple of months, we are going to try a new and innovative idea for the Membership meetings. We know that many cannot attend the meetings, either because they do not live close enough or have illnesses that prevent it. In order to address that issue, we will be conducting an experiment with live Video Conferencing during our meeting. This will allow members to be at home and still listen, watch, and participate in the meetings. All that is required on the members' side is a computer with speakers. If you are interested in attending the meetings from your home, please send an email to alpost269@aol.com so we can get the set up information to you. This is a free service and there is no cost to either the Post or anyone at home. We will also look at possibly recording the meetings and making it available for viewing after the meeting.

We are in the middle of the annual Membership renewal this month. You will be getting renewal notices from National. The sooner we can finish the membership push the better off we will be. We had a very good year last term and we continued to grow in members. This is the second year in a row that we have ended the membership drive with an increase of members. That's a great sign that the Post is active and involved. If you know other veterans who are eligible, let them know about us and encourage them to come down and join.

The Flag Retirement Ceremony that was originally scheduled for June was canceled due to the weather. We tried to set it up for October but had to change plans. We pushed the date back into November, but the Membership is worried about the winter weather that comes in November. We will plan to have the Flag Retirement in June of next year.

We are continuing to be active with other organizations such as Missing in America Project, Joseph Dwyer Veteran Peer Support group, Student Veterans of America, Patriot Guard Riders, and others. As I have said many times, and firmly believe, our best results will be achieved when we work together with other organizations and form solid partnerships where it makes sense.

I have been having a lot of conversations and discussions for new ideas of how to increase our out-reach to Veterans and the community. I think it is very important to improve and enhance our standing in the community, and with all Veterans.

The two M1902 Field Guns have returned from the restoration effort and they look really great! We will be providing the funds raised to the Village in December, so if you are thinking of donating, please do so now. In conversations with the Mayor, it was decided to move some of the funds committed to the cannon project over to the GAR statue project. We will still be able to give the Village over \$7,500 for the restoration.

I want to extend a big Thank You to Pat Forte. Pat managed to get an entirely new air conditioning system donated to the Post. It was installed in September and is working great! That is a great accomplishment. THANK YOU!

I encourage all of you to come join in and help. It's a great way to get some personal satisfaction and have some fun at the same time.

For God and Country
Jon Ralph – Commander

1st Vice Commander Corner

Veterans Day will soon be here and I would like to share this Veterans Day poem with all our members and readers. This poem was written by Cheryl Dyson.

Veterans Day
On Veterans Day we honor all
Who answered to a service call.
Soldiers young, and soldiers old,
Fought for freedom, brave and bold.
Some have lived, while others died,
Add all of them deserve our pride.
We're proud of all the soldiers who
Kept thinking of red, white and blue.
They fought for us and all our rights,
The fought through many days and nights.
And though we may not know each name,
We thank ALL veterans just the same.

For God and Country
Jose J. Bou
1st Vice Commander

Membership Corner

I would like to thank all who have paid their membership at this time. We are doing great with renewals. As of this writing we are at 64.88% renewed. I would like to see our Post reach 75% or 100% by January. We have been over 100% with new people for the past two years and I would like to reach this goal again. If you haven't renewed yet, please do so. You can mail your renewal to the Post or renew online at www.legion.org.

For God and Country
John Matuszak – Past Commander
Membership Officer

Historian Corner

Did you know that on:

- 1) On October 17-18, 2007 the American Legion's National Executive Committee passes Resolution 35 and adopts The American Legion Riders as a National Program of the American Legion. The first American Legion Riders Chapter was established by the American Legion Post 396 in Garden City, Michigan in 1993.
- 2) On October 22, 2009 President Obama signs the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform Act of 2009, guaranteeing "advance funding" for VA appropriations, a formula that the American Legion has strongly supported for many years. The new law sets funding for the VA one year in advance.
- 3) October 2010 – Continuing a longstanding tradition of advocating for timely and adequate medical care for veterans, the American Legion forms a PTS-TBI AD-HOC Committee to both examine current methods by the VA and the Department of Defense for treating the two conditions and investigating potential alternatives.
- 4) November 2002 – The American Legion launches the national "I AM NOT A NUMBER" campaign to identify and document the delays veterans face in obtaining medical care from the VA.

Dates to remember:

- 1) October 10 – Columbus Day
- 2) October 23, 1983 – Beirut Bombing
- 3) October 25, 1983 – Grenada Invasion
- 4) November 8 – Election Day
- 5) November 11 – Veterans Day – WW1 Armistice 1918
- 6) November 24 – Thanksgiving Day
- 7) December 7, 1941 – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 8) December 15 – GI Bill of Rights Day
- 9) December 20, 1989 – Invasion of Panama – Operation Just Cause

10) December 25 – Christmas Day

For God and Country
Jose J. Bou - Post Historian

Auxiliary Corner

Auxiliary News

Hi Everyone,
Well Summer's gone Fall is here and well Winter is right around the corner, hope everyone stays safe and warm.

The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of the Legion held their first Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser, it was a success!! I'd like to thank all of you who came and supported both the Auxiliary and the Sons.

Veterans Day is coming up and as our annual tradition we will be at the 4 Corners to Remember And Honor our Veterans. We will then go to St Joseph's College for another Ceremony.

WELCOME TO OUR 3 NEW MEMBERS - Barbara DeOlivera, Carol Ann Rios and April Thompson!!!!

I'd like to thank each of my staff members for their help and support through the year. 1st Vice Carole Bruggerman, 2nd Vice Beverly Matuszak, Secretary Peggy Dolci, Chaplain Chris Mohr, Sgt at Arms Veronica Bergin and of course My Parliamentarian Pat Bergin. We are a team, together we are ONE and we've accomplished much. THANK YOU!

HAPPY THANKSGIVING, and a MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY HANUKAH, and HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!

For God and Country
Cathy Beer - President Auxiliary Unit 269

Echoes From The Heart

In the last newsletter article that I wrote, I was concerned with what our bodies tell us and what can happen if we do not pay attention. Bottom line, three years ago, I wound up having emergency open heart surgery. I was told that this could have been avoided. "Sermon Over!"

When we recite the American Legion Preamble, I feel we have obligated ourselves to the Community, State and Nation. I found myself asking, what have I done or what have we and our Post done or intend to do to fulfill this obligation. I really do not feel good about myself or my contributions. There are a few of us that may feel satisfied, but can the majority say the same? I would like to suggest that by our next Post meeting, we could come up with some positive ideas. If you cannot attend, then email or write in any thoughts you may have to contribute.

Not too long ago, I had occasion to bring donated food and clothing to the homeless shelter in Yaphank. I delivered them and was about to leave. A Veteran who was living there invited me to sit with him on a bench outside one of the rooms. I agreed and after we started talking, I listened to his Military stories, his life after he got home and his life and situation up to today. I listened and listened without being bored. This Veteran was lonely and I guess looking for a friend. I stayed for over two hours. When I had to leave, he would not shake my hand. Instead, he gave me a hug. We departed with him saying three words "thanks a lot man". He was smiling.

For God and Country
Tom Bergin
Past Post Commander

Community Activities

We again were in the lead for the annual Independence Day Parade that was held on July 4th. The weather finally cooperated for a change

and the day was warm and clear. After the parade, we got together at the Post for some food and conversation. Thanks to all the members who turned out to make this a success and show our involvement to the community.

On July 14th and August 18th, members of the Post participated in the Veterans Recognition Ceremony during the Long Island Ducks baseball games. This ceremony is sponsored by the Long Island Ducks and Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency. The Post was provided with 20 tickets to each game. It was a lot of fun to get together and see the ball game. We are planning to continue this again next year. We would like to thank our Adjutant, Pauline King, for her work in getting this put together. And yes, hot dogs and a ball game are a great way to spend an evening.

On August 27th, we held our third annual Veterans Appreciation BBQ. We had about 50 members and guests for the event. Everyone was able to feast on hot dogs, hamburgers, chili, salads, and cake. The weather cooperated this year and it was sunny but not too hot. All the people enjoyed themselves. We opted to do this on a Sunday this year due to the fact that many organizations were holding large events on most of the Saturdays. We need to thank everyone for their contributions of food and manpower. Although it's a lot of work, it really isn't hard when we have a lot of people pitching in and distributing the work around.

On September 10th, members of the Post attended the Eagle Scout Court of Honor and presented a certificate to Richard Dougherty who is the latest Eagle Scout for Troop 40.

Recent Events

The Post continues to be very involved with the Missing in America Project. The purpose of the Missing in America Project is to locate,

identify, and inter the unclaimed remains of American Veterans. Members of the Post attended interment ceremonies on September 21st at Calverton National Cemetery.

Several members of the Post also continue to attend the NOA ceremonies at Calverton. These ceremonies are conducted on the second Wednesday of the month at 10 AM at Calverton. This is a joint ceremony between the officials at Calverton National Cemetery and the Patriot Guard Riders. The purpose of the ceremony is to read the names of all veterans interred in the last month with No One in Attendance. The idea is that no veteran should be interred alone and without family.

We are also continuing our monthly community meetings in coordination with the Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support project. This is a monthly coffee hour and is open to all veterans and their families. It is held at the Post on the third Saturday of every month between 10 and 11 AM. Come down and get acquainted and visit with your fellow veterans.

Upcoming Events

The Post will be busy again during the next three months. We have the Veterans Day Ceremony at the Four Corners in Patchogue. The ceremony will start at 10:30 and conclude at 11 AM. We hope many of our members can attend. This is an important ceremony and deserves the best attendance we can do.

On November 9th, we have been invited to the South Ocean Middle School to attend several of the Social Studies classes to talk to the students about our experiences in the military and how it has helped us in our lives and careers. It is important for the students to understand what it has meant to us to have served. This is similar to what we did last year around this time when the Sayville Middle School invited us to attend various classes. Since South Ocean Middle School is in our

community, we reached out to the Principal to see if the school would be receptive to the idea. The principal agreed that this is a good idea and would add value for the students.

We have worked with the Village of Patchogue and have finalized a location for the cannons. They are now located in front of the Post. We will have some great pictures posted soon on Facebook. It has been a long and hard effort, but it has been worth all the hard work. The dedication ceremony will take place on Memorial Day. This gives us time to get the plaques made and the ceremony planned.

On November 10th, members of the Post will be participating in the dedication and placement of new Headstones in the Union Cemetery. This is being done by the Patchogue Cemetery Restoration project.

We will also be leading the annual Patchogue Christmas Parade. That parade is usually the first weekend after Thanksgiving, but we haven't gotten the actual date or notification yet.

Although we have not decided on a date, we will have the annual Salute to Departed Comrades on a Friday evening in December. This is our yearly fireplace salute to those members who passed away during the year. It gives all of us a chance to remember and salute them.

The Village of Patchogue has planted a sapling from the 9/11 Survivor Tree in the park in front of the Post. The Survivor Tree is a pear tree that survived the World Trade Center attack. Saplings from the tree are being donated to various cities and organizations. There will be a dedication ceremony, probably on Veterans Day.

General Information

The Post sponsored Anthony Bracone as a Delegate to Boys State this year. On September 14th, he was invited to the Membership meeting and spoke about his experiences. He said that the experience was well

worth it and had nothing but positive comments about it. We will work on being able to sponsor another boy this coming year as it is a valuable program.

The Post is asking for volunteers for our Color Guard and Firing Detail. We haven't had one for many years, so it is time to again start it up. This will be a great way to get involved with the Post and would be good for the community also.

The Constitution and By-Laws Committee completed the work on a new version of this document. It has been emailed out to all those members who we have email addresses for. In the November membership meeting, we will be voting on the approval of the new set of documents. Our thanks to the committee for the hard work of bringing these up to date with the current Post operations. The proposed Constitution and By-Laws has been placed on our website in the Member Notices and Information page under the Post Activities and Events section.

We also have a Veterans Monument Identification project in progress. This project will identify and document all the monuments around Patchogue that are dedicated to our Veterans and their service. We will be publishing this once it is completed.

We have gotten two of the three sets of stair lifts installed at the Post. We have a lift going from the main hall down to the Dugout, and a second one on the first set of stairs up to the meeting room. We are just waiting on the final lift for the second set of stairs to the meeting room. These lifts allow people to access the Dugout and the meeting room without having to try to navigate the difficult steps. We must extend our thanks to Patriot Mobility for their donation of the lifts! They did a fantastic job!

We would like to ask all of you to please provide us with your email addresses if you have email. As many of you have already seen, we have started providing the minutes from the Post Membership

meetings via email in advance of the meeting. It will also provide the information about what we are doing to the members that cannot make the meeting and hopefully encourage more participation. So please just send an email to alpost269@aol.com and we can make sure we have your email on our list. An added benefit to having all of your email addresses is that it will reduce our expenses. Being able to distribute notifications and this newsletter electronically will cut down on the printing and postage expenses. As a point of interest, it costs about \$1,800 per year to print and mail the four newsletters that we produce every year. We are hoping to distribute the newsletter in electronic format and try to reduce our costs. Any money that we save can be used to help and enhance our programs and community outreach.

We receive many flyers during a month about various Veterans events. It was suggested that we put together an email containing those flyers and distribute it out to the Members. This was a good suggestion and we will be acting on it very soon.

There have been suggestions for a couple new community functions. First, we are talking with Walgreens about holding a Flu Clinic at the Post. The manager at Walgreens is interested in the idea and we are investigating it. The other suggestion has been to open the Post for a Blood Drive. Pauline King has a contact at the American Red Cross and is reaching out to them to see if this is feasible and what it would take to make it happen.

We will be inviting other businesses and local community groups to come and give presentations to our members on activities or information that would be important for our members to hear. We are hopeful that we can get a representative from AARP to come talk about their efforts and programs relating to consumer protection and combating fraud and online scams. This is something that we have all faced and encountered. We are also reaching out to the Long Island State Veterans Home to see if they will give a presentation about their programs. They may have programs and events that will be of interest and benefit to our members.

If any of you have ideas or a subject you would like to hear about, just let us know and we can try to make it happen. The more involvement we have with the community will provide a benefit to both the Post and the community.

Outside the Post is the Grand Army of the Republic statue. There is a separate project being run by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War to restore that statue. Our Post has been assisting that group and will provide any help that they need. That group is forming a new Camp named Richard J. Clark which is the name of the original GAR Camp here in Patchogue. Many of the people forming this camp are members of our Post. Given that there is a relationship with many of them, and the fact that the statue is outside our Post, we have agreed to allow their Camp to use our Post for their monthly meetings.

Post Everlasting

James Comiskey, a member of our Post for 23 years, passed away in August.

Thomas Felice, a member of the Post for 34 years, passed away on October 10th. Members of the Post performed the Post Everlasting ceremony at Robertaccio Funeral Home.

Aaron Gerverey, a member for 21 years, passed away during the summer.

Frank Spaccarotella, a member of the Post for 17 years, passed away in October.

Post Membership Meetings

Membership meetings are held at the Post on the second Monday of the month at 8 PM. The next three monthly meetings are: November 13th, December 11th, and January 8th. The Board and Officers

meetings are held at the Post on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM. Members are welcome to come and listen. Auxiliary meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month. SONS meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 8 PM.

The Dugout at the Post

The Dugout is open Fridays from 7-11 PM and Sundays 3-7 PM. Drop in and hang out for a while for some drinks, conversation, and friendship. Don't forget, it really is YOUR POST, so come in and visit with friends.

Public Relations and Social Media

Events, photos, and other information are always available on our Facebook page. You can get photos of the Post and pictures from all of our various events by looking in the Photos section of the Facebook page. Important announcements and event information are also available on our Website. Our Website has a resources page with phone numbers and links to many Veteran support groups as well as links to several crisis hotlines. We also maintain a Blog section for commentary and an Articles tab for published articles. Make sure to check the Events section of both our Facebook page and our Website so you can keep up to date with the latest information.

The URL's for our Facebook and Web sites are:

<https://www.facebook.com/American.Legion.Post.269>

<http://alpost269patchogue.wix.com/patchogue-alpost269>

<https://www.facebook.com/American.Legion.Auxiliary.Patchogue.269>

If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, call Tom Hall or Jon Ralph. Remember, this isn't my newsletter, it's YOURS!!!!, so if there is something you would like to see included, tell us.

The American Legion

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News Letter

2017

October - December



For God and Country

