



American Legion Patchogue Post 269
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Today we are here for the annual Officer Installation Ceremony. This Post was founded in August of 1919. This year we are embarking on our 103rd year of service to our fellow veterans, our community, and our youth.

The last year has been a challenge, not only for our Post, but for everyone in our community and our nation. We recognize the heroic efforts of our first responders and our health care workers who have sacrificed so much fighting the battle against COVID-19.

Last year we were not able to have our Officer Installation Ceremony. Like all other organizations and businesses, most of our programs had to be cancelled or postponed.

But we have managed to come thru all of the adversary.

This next year, we will be working with the South Ocean Middle School, Saxton Middle School, and the Air Force JROTC group at Pat-Med High School to again conduct our "Vets in the Classroom" program. This program allows the students to learn about some of our experiences in the military and how it has helped us in our lives.

We will also be working with the South Ocean Middle School and Saxton Middle School to restart our "Flag Etiquette" program where we give classes to the 7th grade students on how to display and respect our flag.

We are also looking forward to being a part of the parades and community activities as we have in the past.

Even with the pandemic, our Color Guard has been able to participate in activities such as Flag Dedication Ceremonies and outdoor ceremonies. We will continue to provide the Honor Guard Firing Detail at the Missing In America Project interments at Calverton. For those who don't know about Missing in America Project, it is an organization that identifies and arranges for the interment of veterans who passed away and no one claimed the remains. We are honored to be able to provide the Honor Guard Firing Detail at the interment ceremonies at Calverton National Cemetery.

We are finishing the renovations on our Post. With the help of the Village and Mayor Pontieri we will be replacing the steps on the Baker Street entrance to complete our renovations. It has been a long five years of improvements and renovations, but as you look around our building you can see that all the efforts have been worth it.

We have also started two new programs that I am excited to tell you about. The first is our "Flags for Families" program. We provide the local funeral homes with a 3x5 American Flag along with a label expressing our thanks for the service of the departed veteran. We ask the funeral homes to give one of



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the Flags to each family of a deceased veteran on our behalf as a symbol of respect. One of the packages is here in front of the podium.

The second program we are starting is a scholarship. A few weeks ago Pauline King, a member of our Post for over 15 years, passed away. She served for 25 years in the Army National Guard, and worked for 15 years at the VA Medical Center in Northport. I am proud to announce that American Legion Patchogue Post 269 will be sponsoring and funding the "Pauline J. King Memorial Scholarship" which will be awarding \$1,000 a year to a college student who will be pursuing a career in public service.