



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, NY 12204

February 2020



A Message from the Commander

I'm thinking back fondly to yesterday's membership meeting (Sunday afternoon, January 19). We had a decent turnout. Bill Gilheany was back, unchanged, after almost a year's absence. Membership renewals were up over 80 percent so far for the first time in many years. Thank you, John Sacca. Our games of chance (pull tabs, bell jar – whatever they're called) are up and running again after a long hiatus. Thank you, Mickey Ryan. And we had a new – and young – member sign up and attend his first meeting. Thank you Major Dave Erickson for recruiting Fritz Pierre.

Fritz was born in Haiti. He and his family immigrated to the US, finding their way to Albany where he ultimately attended CBA, all the while working 40-70 hours a week to help his family pay for tuition, uniforms, and books. Fritz admits his grades suffered because of this. After his junior year, he attended – get this – BOYS' STATE! Fritz is now a college graduate, is a full-time NYS National Guardsman, and is the newest member of our post. Welcome.

I began this message on Martin Luther King Day. In School 20, we had only one black classmate, Walter Parker, who lived on upper Emmett. In CBA, we had only a couple of black students, there on athletic scholarships. In a class of 596 at West Point, we had maybe six African Americans, none athletic that I remember. Needless to say, I was ignorant or oblivious to the civil rights movement of the sixties, the Freedom Riders, what happened in Selma and Birmingham, and the heroic journey of Dr. Martin Luther King and his lieutenants. Parochial Albany and then the army insulated me from all this through much of the 50's and 60's.

In 1967, I was stationed in Fort Bragg and did notice the occasional KKK recruitment billboards inevitably blown down by someone skilled in the use of demolitions. Rumor had it that it was the handiwork of some black Special Forces NCO out of Bragg, but no one was ever apprehended, at least while I was there. Nor were there many black NCOs at Bragg in SF. I was told more than once back then that SF might be a bit racist.

When Martin Luther King was assassinated in early April 1968, I was down in the Mekong Delta, the adjutant of B Team B-43 (in Cao Lanh). Unlike the JFK assassination, I don't remember specifically where I was or what I was doing. I do remember a mild sadness, but I didn't know much about the man. The Bobby Kennedy assassination that August, however, was a little like the second plane hitting the World Trade Center. "Just what the hell is going on back there?"

(Continued on page 2)

I was assigned as CO of A Team A-432 (Thoung Toi) shortly after Dr. King’s death, located on the Mekong River right below the Cambodian border: 500 South Vietnamese troops and their families, whose Major I “advised,” 26 Chinese (Nationalist) Nungs running airboats, and 12 SF (including me), most of whom were Southerners. In short order, a couple of the NCOs approached me, their new Captain, and asked permission to somehow display the Confederate flag. The request caught me off guard so I put them off. I knew nothing about that flag’s significance except using it as a front license plate when stationed briefly in Ft. Benning, Georgia, seemingly effective on my drives to and from Albany so that their state police might not bother to look at the NYS plate on the rear of my Skylark. Anyhow, my SF demolition master sergeant happened to be a black guy. (Coincidence?) When he learned of the request, he took me aside and educated me about what that flag meant to him. He was quite eloquent. The “stars and bars” never flew, over Camp A-432, on the Mekong.



**Lawrence Wiest
Commander**

Auxiliary News

Our Poppy Chairperson, Sally Legendre, has received the poppies. She will begin looking for volunteers to help distribute them in April. Distribution will be on several days in May. We really need everyone’s help with this (you don’t have to be Auxiliary) so our fund to help veterans in need can continue to grow. You can contact Sally at her email: sallytl@aol.com or by phone 518-783-0069. She does not have dates lined up, yet so information will be limited until April.

Any members that have not paid their 2020 dues should have received a reminder from National (or will any day). Your \$25.00 needs to be mailed to Jan Precopia, Membership Chairperson, 1160 New Scotland Rd., Albany, NY 12208; or, you can drop off at the Post. Be sure to mark your envelope ‘Auxiliary dues’.

**Judy Benner
President**

American Legion Oratorical Contest

The Department of New York 3rd District American Legion High School Oratorical Contest was held on Saturday, January 11. The contest was held at Sand Creek Middle School. The winners are:

- 1st Place: Racheel Elizabeth Yorke, Cobleskill/Richmondville High School, Schoharie County
- 2nd Place: Delaney Williams, Colonie Central High School, Albany County
- 3rd Place: Nevaeh Boyd, Albany High School, Albany County.

Ms. Williams will be 1st Alternate to the 3rd Zone Oratorical Contest. The contest will be held on Saturday, February 1, at Lake George High School at 10:00 a.m.

Congratulations to all the winners!

25 Week Club

The next round of the 25 Week Club has begun. If you are interested in participating, stop in and see Kim Rice at the bar on Thursday nights or on Sundays. If you’re not able to stop, you can contact Kim via email: kluvy14@aol.com. Even if you participated last time, you will still need to sign up for this round.

Chaplain's News

Deceased:

- Robert W. St. John Sr., Legion – December 31, 2018
- Harold Joseph Decker, Legion – January 20, 2020
- Diane Maguire, Auxiliary and Limericks – January 23, 2020

If you know of anyone who is sick or has passed, please contact our Chaplains Charles Lossi at 518-438-6336 or JoAnn DeLisle at 518-426-8463 or jodee4444@hotmail.com or newsletter editor Gretchen Riley, 518-526-8753 or ghodges220@yahoo.com.



Your Commander is in desperate need of a Membership Chair.

We are also looking for a House Chairman for the Post. If interested in either of these positions, please contact Larry Wiest, our Post Commander at 518-434-6438.

The Post is still on the hunt for bartenders. If interested, please call Bar Chair Mick Ryan at 518-522-3486. Legionnaires, Auxiliary and SONs are all eligible to bartend. On-the-job training provided!

SONs Squadron

The SONs will be holding a Memorial Service on May 7, 2020, at 5:00-7:30 p.m. to honor deceased members of the Squadron.

We will be presenting a check to the Post at the February meeting from the proceeds of the Veterans Memorial Breakfast in November.

There will be a meeting of the SONs Squadron, February 12, at 5:30 p.m., at the Post.

For God and Country,
Mike Conners
Acting Squadron Commander

Pictures from the Memorial Service for Deceased Members of the SONs Squadron held on December 18, 2019





Dart League

Are you looking for something to do on Friday nights? How about playing darts? The Dart League is looking for new members. If interested, sign up at the bar or call the bar, 518-465-1402.



Super Bowl Party

Come join the fun at the Post Super Bowl Party. Party begins at 4 p.m. with game kick-off at 6:05 p.m. This is a potluck; so bring a dish or munchie to share. For more information, contact Mickey Ryan at the bar or Kim Rice, kluvy14@aol.com.

Upcoming Events — Save the Date

- Saturday, February 1:** 3rd Zone Oratorical Contest, Lake George High School, 10:00 a.m.
- Sunday, February 2:** Super Bowl Party at the Post, starts 4:30 p.m., game kickoff at 6:05 p.m., potluck
- Monday, February 3:** Memorial Day Parade Meeting, Zaloga Post, 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, February 16:** Limericks Memorial Mass, Sacred Heart Church, 9 a.m. followed by Breakfast at the Post, \$5.00
- Monday, February 17:** Bingo at Stratton VA Medical Center, 9th Floor, 2:00 p.m.

February Meeting Dates:

- 9th Ward/Post 1610 monthly meeting: Sunday, February 16, at 12:30 p.m.
- Legion: Sunday, February 16, at 12:30 p.m. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.
- S.A.L: Wednesday, February 12, at 5:30 p.m. at the Post
- Auxiliary: Tuesday, February 4, at 7:00 p.m.
- Community Meeting: Tuesday, February 4, at 6 p.m. (for Legion, SONS, Auxiliary and Limericks).
- Limericks: Thursdays, February 6, 13, 20 and 27, at 7:00 p.m.

General Post Phone No.: (518) 465-4800 **Fax:** (518) 320-0586
Post Bar/General Information: (518) 465-1402 **Email:** nap1610@yahoo.com

Post

Commander: Lawrence Wiest
 1st Vice Commander: Open
 2nd Vice Commander: Open
 Adjutant: John Sacca
 Finance Officer: Thomas Tracy
 Judge Advocate: Lawrence Wiest
 Sergeants-at-Arms: Michael Ryan and William Ryan
 Chaplain: Charles Lossi (518) 438-6336
 Historian: Michael Ryan

Sons of the Legion

Acting Squadron Commander: Michael F. Connors, II

Auxiliary

President: Judy Benner (518) 817-1240 judybenner13@gmail.com
 Vice President: Jan Precopia (518) 489-1406 janprecopia@nycap.rr.com
 Secretary: Diane Maguire (518) 813-4765 dmaguire520@nycap.rr.com
 Treasurer: Dorothy Curran (518) 786-1284 tomdor2000@yahoo.com
 Chaplain: JoAnn DeLisle (518) 426-8463 jodee4444@hotmail.com

Editor for the Newsletter

Gretchen Riley (518) 526-8753 ghodges220@yahoo.com

Post website: <http://northalbanypost1610.com>

Note from the Editor

Would you like to know what is going on sooner rather than later? If yes, contact the editor to receive the newsletter electronically. Or, visit the Post website to read it there. Due to the logistics of putting the newsletter together, getting it printed and mailed, you may not always receive a copy in the mail before events take place.