



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, NY 12204

December 2019



A Message from the Commander

I began this message yesterday (Wednesday, 11/13) coming up from New York on Amtrak after landing at LaGuardia. We, along with daughter Liz (an Auxiliary member) and her family, had been to a family wedding in Tampa, then drove to Orlando so that our four-year-old granddaughter, Theadora (“Teddy,” Auxiliary member) could take in – you guessed it – Disney World while we babysat her fourteen-month-old sister, Maddalena (“Maddy,” Auxiliary member) at the Dolphin Hotel and on the Boardwalk. The weather was perfect. The weather on our return to Albany, not so much.

All this being said, we were away Veterans Day weekend, missing the Albany parade on Monday the 11th, the 9:30 a.m. service at the Our Lady of Peace Memorial before the parade, and the Gold Star Families luncheon at Zaloga afterward. Parade adjutant Dave Erickson however said all went well: no wind, no snow, but he did notice empty seats at the luncheon and he did receive a complaint that during the parade someone had hoisted a Bernie Sanders sign in the line of march. Lawyer Terry Kindlon told me that both he and son Lee (Vietnam and Iraq Marine vets) were thrilled at having been appointed grand marshals of this parade. Our Albany High JROTC cadets were there in large number throughout the dining hall at the luncheon breaking bread with the vets, their spouses, Auxiliary members (we had a full table of eight), and Gold Star family members.

November 3rd, the Sunday before Veterans Day weekend, was the busy day for this Post. The annual Veterans Memorial Mass offered at Sacred Heart was much better attended this year than last, observed Auxiliary President Judy Benner. And I observed a good number of our JROTC cadets, mostly female, escorting parishioners, mostly senior citizens, up the difficult church steps with at least one not at all sure she wanted the assistance. Once inside, the JROTC color guard (most if not all female) made a spectacular appearance striding down the center aisle and posting the colors before mass commenced.

As is tradition, the Post’s Scully Hall was much better attended than the mass held around the corner, with everyone enjoying Mike Conners and his SONS and volunteers \$5.00 breakfast. The SONS and volunteers Mike rounds up for this event provide valuable service; this breakfast remains a big deal. Thank you all!

Mark your December calendars for the Sunday, December 8 children’s party with Mr. and Mrs. Santa (11:00 a.m.) and the Sunday, December 15 adult Christmas party (4:00 to 7:00 p.m.). Details are found elsewhere in this newsletter. I hope to see you at one or both of these festivities.

On behalf of all the members of the Post, I extend our most heartfelt condolences to sisters Gretchen Riley, our newsletter editor and an Auxiliary member, and Gail Riley, wife of Post member Don, on the passing of their brother, Michael Wierzbicki, on Veterans Day of this year at the way too young age of 56.



**Lawrence Wiest
Commander**

SONS Squadron

The SONS with help from our friends and American Legion Family conducted another Veterans Memorial Mass and Breakfast this past November 3rd. We thank Post Member Tim Mulligan for his generous contributions towards breakfast, Eddie Shea of 2Shea Catering, and Morgan Linen for the linens. These contributions limit our costs and allow us to serve the best breakfast deal for only \$5.00...the same price that 1610 founding members Dick Conners, Neil Gray, and Tom Prime charged for the first Memorial Mass and Breakfast.

The Henry Johnson Battalion of the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp performed wonderfully at the Mass with the presentation of the Colors and later at our Breakfast. Major Dave Erickson (also Adjutant for Veterans Day Parade) has been a major supporter of our events at the Post. Recently deceased North Albany American Legion Post 1610 stalwart Chuck Kelly, part of the Post's long time winning Color Guard would have approved of the Albany High School JROTC cadets performance and decorum for the solemn duty of posting the colors at Church. It was good to see his fellow Color Guard USMC Sergeant Smith and his bride at Mass and the Breakfast. Special thanks to the Commander for his attendance as well.

The anchors of the Kitchen Crew, Post member Jimmy Miller, Mark Scully, and Jeff Hunt were joined by a great crew including some new faces like Michael Lekkas and Randall Williams. Several people pitched in for the set up and break down including Pat and Eileen McCabe, Fran Egan, Post members Donnie Riley and Ricky Meyers and several others. Bartender, bar chairman and Bloody Mary expert Mick Ryan was again helping making this a premier Veterans honor event. Thanks for SONS leader Brian Early for the work on tickets and collections at the door.

Father Michael Flannery and Deacon Walter Ayers celebrated the Mass with Brother John and Jimmy Tran leading the choir and providing the music, including the Battle Hymn of the Republic, as the Colors were removed from Church.

Thanks to Gretchen Riley for sending out a special email to the members reminding them of the Memorial Mass and Breakfast.

Without the help and leadership of Christina Curran Drew and 14 others, this powerful remembrance of our deceased North Albany American Legion Post Veterans would not have been possible. Special thanks to Congressman Tonko, Mayor Sheehan, Assemblywoman Pat Fahey, several of our judiciary including brand new member of the SONS Squadron, Menands Village Judge Chris Flint, eligible via his dad long time member and active supporter of the Post, John Flint (deceased). Thank you Ashley Brennan for the program.

Deceased Members of the North Albany American Legion Post 1610 honored this year include:

Sanford Berkman
Michael L. Catalfamo
James A. Cooper
Clarence L. DeLisle, Jr.
Joseph T. Duclos
Fiore D. Femia
Charles J. Kelly
John J. Mulderry, Jr.
William L. Prime
Eugene J. St. John
DuWayne A. St. John
John J. Schillaci
Donald H. Sommers
Robert E. Van Amburgh, Sr.

Next year's Memorial Mass and Breakfast for Deceased Members of the Post will be Sunday, November 1, 2020. Details to follow later next year.

The SONS will be holding our first ever Memorial Service for Deceased Members of the SONS Squadron on December 18, 2019 at the Post from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Pizza and wings will be provided after the service. There will be a cash bar.

Please contact us if you are interested in joining the North Albany American Legion Post 1610 SONS Squadron. Dues are \$45.00 per year and eligibility requirements are explained on the link: <https://www.legion.org/sons/join>.

For God and Country,
Michael F. Conners II

Auxiliary News

The Auxiliary has been very busy lately. We are in the final stages for “Cookies and Cocoa with Santa” on December 8. We hope you have RSVP’d for your family and friends. If you haven’t yet, please do so by December 3. You can RSVP to judybenner13@gmail.com or call Judy at (518) 869-8668.

The Holiday Gift Shop will be held on Wednesday, December 4, at the Stratton VA starting at 10 a.m. I hope some of you are planning on coming to the hospital to spend time with the hospitalized veterans that day. I am sure you will really enjoy your time that day. It is very rewarding for everyone.

Our December meeting on December 3 will also be a covered dish dinner and 100th birthday celebration for the American Legion Auxiliary. I hope you can come celebrate with us. Our County President Jo Grace will be attending our meeting along with some of her officers. It is always a fun time for all. In lieu of doing a grab bag, we would like everyone to bring a new toy for the Toys for Tots drive. We are also still collecting items for the Stratton VA Medical Center’s food pantry. Why not bring both a new toy and an item for the food pantry when you attend the December meeting?

Have you gotten your tickets yet for our fundraiser—Tree of Lottery Scratch-offs? It is in the bar and tickets are \$2 each or three for \$5.00. You could win enough to do your Christmas shopping. The winner will be drawn at the Adult Christmas Party on December 15.

Several of us braved the cold and marched in the Albany Veterans Day Parade on November 11. We had a table of eight that enjoyed the Gold Star Family Luncheon after the parade at the Zaloga Post. Thank you Commander Larry for extending the invitation to the Auxiliary for this luncheon. We all enjoyed it very much.

Lastly, if you haven’t yet paid your dues, please do so now. Dues should be paid by December 1. Dues are \$25.00 for seniors and \$8.00 for juniors. Contact Jan Precopia at janprecopia@nycap.rr.com with any questions concerning your dues.

**Judith Benner
President**



North Albany members (L to R) lead the Albany County Auxiliary in Veterans Day Parade: Stacy Liuzzi, Georgia Benner (Jr. member), and Judy Benner

Chaplain’s News

Deceased:

Michael Wierzbicki, Limericks

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.

Care Packages to Service Members

Once again, the Auxiliary will be preparing to send domestic or international care packages to active duty service members. If you have a family member (or friend) or know of a family member who would like to request their loved one receive a package, please contact Sheila Savage at sheilasavage1618@gmail.com or (518) 221-3729. Thank you.

Toys for Tots

The 2019 Toys for Tots Campaign is underway! The campaign will run to December 15. The Post is once again a drop-off site. Two drop-off boxes are at the Post. Please bring new, unwrapped toys. Let's all make this a great Christmas for the children of the Capital District. Please contact Kim Rice (518-465-1402) if you have questions about the campaign.



Upcoming Events — Save the Date

Wednesday, December 4: Holiday Gift Shop Program at Stratton VA Medical Center, 10 a.m.
Sunday, December 8: Cookies & Cocoa with Mr. and Mrs. Claus, begins at 11 a.m. RSVP by December 3
Saturday, December 14: Albany County Oratorical Contest, Lisha Kill Middle School, Albany, 10 a.m.
Sunday, December 15: Adult Christmas Party, 4-7 p.m. Bring unwrapped toy for Toys for Tots
Monday, December 16: Bingo at Stratton VA Medical Center, 9th Floor, 2:45 p.m.
Wednesday, December 18: Memorial Service for Deceased Members of the SONS Squadron, 5-7:30 p.m.

December Meeting Dates:

9th Ward/Post 1610 monthly meeting: Sunday, December 15, at 12:30 p.m.

Legion: Sunday, December 15, at 12:30 p.m. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

S.A.L: TBD

Auxiliary: Tuesday, December 3, at 7:00 p.m.

Community Meeting: Tuesday, December 3, at 6 p.m. (for Legion, SONS, Auxiliary and Limericks).

Limerick: Thursday, December 19, 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: John Sacca

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: Open

***** Reminder *****

The Post will close at 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve and will be closed on Christmas Day.

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>