



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, NY 12204

January 2020



A Message from the Commander

Happy New Year, readers. May 2020 be a good year for all of us.

On Saturday morning, last December 14, the Albany County Legion's 84th annual oratorical competition was held at Lisha Kill Middle School in Colonie. All contestants were required to give an eight-to-ten minute oration from memory on some aspect of the Constitution or one of its amendments.

Two of the contestants were members of Major Dave Erickson's JROTC program at Albany High. Cadet Private Kerwin Blake, a sophomore, spoke on the timely subject of impeachment and noted from the start that relatively little is said on this subject in the Constitution, something the newer members of Congress have been finding out in recent months.

Cadet Second Lieutenant Nevaeh Boyd, a junior, a platoon leader and captain of the leadership team, spoke on the Second Amendment. Ratified in 1781 with the other nine amendments in the Bill of Rights, it codifies every state's right to maintain a militia and every citizen's right to bear arms. How unfettered this citizens' right is remains a subject of debate to this day, in large part due to the obtuse manner in which this amendment was written.

Nevaeh Boyd won the competition and she moves on to compete in the district oratorical competition this January 11. By the way, she and her family live right up the street from the Post on Jennings Lane.



Kerwin Blake and Nevaeh Boyd with coach Larry Wiest following the American Legion Oratorical Competition.

Congratulations to our own John Sacca, the county oratorical chair for the Legion, who did a difficult and thankless job quite well in putting this competition together. Teachers and school administrators show little interest today in this important extracurricular activity. Speaking well in public – what a valuable skill to have in life.

As an aside, my brother Mike, a Vietnam vet and Legionnaire out of Baltimore, competed in the Department of New York Legion Oratorical Finals held in Kingston in 1963. He came in second to a fellow named – ready? Donald Trump – not the impeached one. Who knew the nation could accommodate two Donald Trumps. Mike still has the newspaper clippings to prove all this.



**Lawrence Wiest
Commander**

Auxiliary News

All of the Auxiliary projects thru December have ended and they were all successful thanks to faithful workers and support by our Post Family.

Our Stratton VA Food Pantry collected 55 food items that I delivered to the hospital last week. Many toys were collected for needy children in the Toys For Tots box at the Post.

Jan Precopia and I went to Guilderland High School to present Americanism Essay Contest winner, Trinity Kenney, her certificate and a \$25 gift from our Unit. Trinity was also presented with an Angel American flag pin. Winners of this yearly contest sponsored by the Auxiliary also receive \$50. A \$50 donation in the student's name is made to the 'Children of Warriors National Scholarship Fund'. We also presented a basket with snacks, teas and lottery tickets to the teachers in the English Department that participated in the contest. This was our 7th year working with Guilderland High School on this contest thanks to our Auxiliary member, Danielle Benner, who is an English teacher at the school. Seventh year and 6th year with a winner. WOW! The high school was also presented with an 'American Legion Auxiliary Department of New York Certificate of appreciation' for their continued assistance which contributed to the advancement of our programs and activities!

'Cocoa and Cookies with Santa' was a great time for all. Thanks to Kim Rice for coordinating the games and decorations. Thanks to Jan Precopia for the cookies to decorate and to all of our members that came to help, provided prizes and other refreshments (Kathy, Anna, Stacy, Sheila, Peg Norton, Dorothy and myself). Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Auxiliary member Peg Hovish and husband Leon) and Honkers the Clown, Auxiliary member, Chris Barry). I hope I did not forget anyone, but forgive me if I did. Know you are greatly appreciated. Our photographer, Rich Barry, will be giving us pictures for posting on the Post website soon.

I hope everyone got their chances for our Lottery Ticket Tree Raffle. The winner was drawn at Adult Post Party on December 15. Gail Riley, a new Auxiliary member, was the winner.

Mid-Winter Conference is being held on January 24-25 at the Wolf Road Marriott. There

will be information about many auxiliary programs and committees given both days. Cost to attend is \$40, which includes lunch on Saturday with National President, Nicole Clapp. Our Dept of NY officers will be there celebrating our 100th Birthday. Contact any officer if you are interested.

Dues will be overdue by the time this newsletter is mailed. Check to make sure your membership card is for 2020. If you need to still pay, send to Janice Precopia at 1160 New Scotland Rd., Albany, NY 12208 or drop off at the Post marked 'Auxiliary'.

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New York!

Judith Benner, President



Jan Precopia (on left) and Judy Benner (far right) present teachers of Guilderland High School with a gift basket as a special thank you during November's American Legion Education week.



Americanism Essay Contest Winner Trinity Kenney with Judy Benner, Auxiliary President, and Jan Precopia, Auxiliary Member, being presented with an award certificate and check from the Unit.



Chaplain's News

Deceased:

Elizabeth L. "Betty" Rutnik, Legion –
November 17, 2018

Betty was a Navy veteran of the Korean Conflict. She was a member of the Scully Post. After the Scully Post closed, Betty was a member of North Albany Post 1610 and a lifetime member of the American Legion.

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!

American Legion Oratorical Contest

I am pleased to announce that Cadet Nevaeh Boyd earned first place in the Albany County American Legion Oratorical Contest held this past Saturday, 14 December. Contestants must speak on the constitution. Nevaeh's topic was the Second Amendment. The first place winner receives the Dorothy Mills Scholarship prize of \$1000.

The scholarship is presented in memory of Dorothy Mills, a World War II veteran and Past Commander of the Capital Cities Sheiberling American Legion Post. Two of Mrs. Mills sons, Bob and John, were present at the contest. Both are Albany High Graduates, and were honored to present the award in their mother's name. Bob is retired Air Force Colonel with over 27 years of active service. Nevaeh now moves on to the District Contest on Saturday, 11 January. The other Albany High contestant was Kerwin Blake who placed third and was awarded \$150. Colonel (retired) Mills presented all contestants with an American Legion 100th Anniversary Coin.

The judges for the contest were:

- Booker T. Brown, BS, MBA, JD. Mr. Brown is a Personnel Administrator with NYS DMV and works with numerous civic organizations.
- Nick Lanier, BA. Mr. Lanier is Assistant Director of Veteran Recruitment & Enrollment at the College of Saint Rose.
- Professor Kelly Smith, M.S.Ed. Professor Smith is retired from the Lansingburgh School District as an administrator and is currently an associate professor in the Esteves School of Education, The Sage Colleges.

A big shout out goes to Mr. Larry Wiest who spent the past several weeks coaching Nevaeh several times a week, to include Sundays. He would arrive at school at 3:00 p.m. and work with her until 5:00 p.m. Larry is a 1965 Graduate of West Point, a Vietnam Veteran, and retired Assistant District Attorney for Albany County. He is another example of a Vietnam Veteran giving to our program.

This is a national Program sponsored by the American Legion and is open to all high school students.

Major (Retired) David Erickson
Albany High School JROTC



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.

Albany County Visitation Dinner

The Albany County Visitation Dinner will be held on Wednesday, January 22, at the Zaloga Post. It is a pork dinner. Deadline for tickets is January 10. If interested, contact Judy Benner (judybenner13@gmail.com or 518-817-1240).

Upcoming Events — Save the Date

Monday, January 20: Bingo at Stratton VA Medical Center, 9th floor, 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 22: Albany County Visitation Dinner, Zaloga Post, Ticket deadline: January 10

Friday, January 24 - Saturday, January 25: Auxiliary Mid-Winter Conference, Wolf Road Marriott

January Meeting Dates:

9th Ward/Post 1610 monthly meeting: Sunday, January 19, at 12:30 p.m.

Legion: Sunday, January 19, at 12:30 p.m. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

S.A.L: TBD

Auxiliary: Tuesday, January 7, at 7:00 p.m.

Community Meeting: Tuesday, January 7, at 6 p.m. (for Legion, SONS, Auxiliary and Limericks).

Limericks: Thursdays, January 9, 16, 23 and 30, 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

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