



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, NY 12204

May 2020



A Message from the Commander

As the draught Yuengling, Coors Lite, Guinness, and Fort Orange IPA turns bad in the pipes down at your post, my thoughts turn to you my dear post family members, hoping this message finds you in relatively good spirits, all things considered, and you and yours are not unduly impacted by the virus and economic downturn.

Mayor Sheehan has advised us that Albany's Memorial Day parade, and ceremony in Lafayette Park afterward, originally scheduled for May 25, have been canceled.

The Post, your post, remains closed until further notice. That being the case, the Memorial Day service, which includes the reading of the names of all deceased Post members, traditionally held inside the Post in Scully Hall, has been postponed to a future date.

The formal wreath-laying ceremonies that are traditionally held at the monuments in front of the Post and North Albany Academy (PS 20) at 8:30 a.m. and 8:45 a.m., respectively, the Sunday morning before Memorial Day (this year May 24) are canceled. Consideration is being given to quiet, informal wreath layings being held if wreaths can be gotten.

Graves decoration at St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands, also commences the Sunday morning before each Memorial Day (May 24 this year) at 9:00 a.m., beginning with a wreath-laying ceremony at the base of the flag pole by the cemetery office parking lot. Flags are then distributed and the graves decoration process begins.

These past several years we've had the good fortune to have cadets from Albany High School's SGT Henry Johnson Battalion JROTC join us. Each year they make short work of this effort. This year, because of the virus the high school is closed and will most likely remain so 'til semester's end. They will not be with us. Our first inclination is to cancel graves decoration this year. Some, however, insist it still can and should be done while still scrupulously abiding by social distancing requirements – which can be done in a cemetery. Of course, a lot can change in a month. Decision is pending. Stay tuned. Any thoughts? You can call the Post at 518-465-4800.

Albany's 2018 Veterans Day parade, held on the 100th anniversary of the signing of the armistice ending WWI, had two grand marshals. Both were WWII vets. Both were Legionnaires (Zaloga Post). Both were over one hundred years old. Verla Wagoner died five months after that parade at age 101. Now we note that Constantino "Coz" DiGiulio died this past April 13 at age 103. We were honored to have them both as our Grand Marshals on that milestone Veterans Day prior to their passing.



**Lawrence Wiest
Commander**

Auxiliary News

Auxiliary does not have much going on at this time. We are trying to stay flexible with our projects so we can start up pretty quickly when it is safe for everyone. At this point, poppy distribution is postponed (or canceled) for this year. This is bad news because this is where our funds come from when veterans need our assistance. We are sending some gift cards to the VA for the food pantry from last year's funds.

Right now, we have been told that both National and State Conventions are canceled for this year. Empire Girls State has been canceled at SUNY Brockport, but they are trying to put something together for the girls (possibly virtually). However, we do not have an update at this time.

Membership Chairman, Jan Precopia, reports that there are still a few members that have not paid their 2020 dues at this point. She is concerned they will lose their continuous years of service (or have to pay two years dues next year to catch up). Please check your membership card and make sure it says 2020.

I did send out a reminder to vendors that were at our Craft/Vendor Fair last year to see how many want their space saved for this year. I did hear from a few, but of course, everyone is still wondering if we will be able to go forward with one this October. We are all wondering the same thing, but know we must at least have preliminary work started now just in case.

The Veteran Walkathon is still collecting donations even though we did not hold a physical walk. Your donations can be sent to me at 13 Broderick St, Albany, NY 12205. Checks need to be made out to 'NYS SAL'.

Hope all are safe and healthy and checking on your family and neighbors to make sure they are as well. Looking forward to when we can all be together again.

**Service, Not Self,
Judy Benner
President**

Auxiliary President Judy Benner received a recent email with the following update from the Albany Stratton VA Medical Center:

(Thursday, April 16, 2020)

VA Employees Deploy to Help Other VAs

“Over the last few weeks, several VA Western New York Healthcare System staff have deployed to New York City to assist VA Medical Centers hardest hit in New York and New Jersey in the fight against COVID 19.” [Read the full story.](#)



**THANK YOU TO ALL THE FRONTLINE
HEROES!!!!**

Auxiliary Emergency Fund

Members helping members – that's the American Legion Auxiliary's mission of Service Not Self in action. Hard times can fall upon us at any moment. That's when the American Legion Auxiliary is committed to help. The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have endured a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis.

To learn how to apply for an AEF grant, up to \$2,400, visit the ALA website: <https://www.alaforveterans.org/Programs/Auxiliary-Emergency-Fund/>.

The American Legion also has a national emergency fund. The fund provides up to \$3,000 for qualified Legion Family members and up to \$10,000 for posts. For more information, visit: <https://www.legion.org/emergency/about>.

Chaplain's News

Deceased:

Kevin J. Allen, Legionnaire – Nov. 18, 2019.

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 via ghodges220@yahoo.com or at 518-526-8753.



Retiring American Flags

With Memorial Day and Flag Day soon upon us, just want to remind everyone the North Albany Post collects flags all year to burn in a ceremony held on Flag Day. A retired flag receptacle can be found outside the entrance to the Post where tattered, worn out, or damaged flags can be left for the next Flag Day ceremony.



Veterans Day Parade November 12, 2018

2018 Grand Marshals



Monday, 12 November 2018 (no parades on Sunday): Grand Marshals Verla Wagoner and Constantino "Coz" DiGiulio review their Veterans Day Parade in Albany while Albany High School JROTC cadets Prince Ndihamo (left) and Edward Reiss (right) stand behind them portraying WWI Medal of Honor recipients SGT Henry Johnson and PVT Parker Dunn, respectively. Picture taken by Vietnam vet Gene LoParco.



North Albany American Legion Post 1610 Color Guard

Passing the Alfred E. Smith Building in Albany's 2018 Veterans Day Parade, the North Albany American Legion Post color guard prepares to "pass in review" for the final time. Color guard members are from left to right: Ray Smith, Jr., Ed Carroll, Ray Smith III, and Joe Ferraiolo. Behind the color guard is the Fort Crailo Yankee Doodle Band. Picture taken by Gene LoParco.

Stratton VA Food Pantry

We are trying to put together a food drive for the pantry at the Stratton VA. We have received an email from Volunteer Services saying that there has been an increase in usage of their food pantry. They are hoping groups can put together a larger delivery (rather than several small ones).

Deliveries cannot be made directly to the hospital, but someone can meet at the Myrtle Ave. loading dock to make the pickup.

Items most needed at this time are cereal, peanut butter, jelly, pasta sauces, and granola bars. If items can be in plastics jars rather than glass, it would be helpful. Of course, any items will be accepted. If food items are not an option, donations of gift cards (no larger than \$25 denominations) or monetary donations made out to Stratton VA with fund #GPF-1304 noted in the memo line of your check would also be helpful.

Your donation can be dropped off at the Post parking lot on either Thursday, May 14 or Saturday, May 16, from 10 a.m. to noon both days. However, please call Judy at 518-869-8668 or Gretchen at 518-526-8753 to set up a time for your drop-off. If you have food items and cannot get them to the drop-off location, call either of us and we will arrange to pick up from your home.

All meetings for May are canceled due to coronavirus pandemic

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Post

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2nd Vice Commander: Open
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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. Conners, II

Auxiliary

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Staying Connected

During this COVID-19 pandemic with social distancing and sheltering in place, staying connected is more important than ever. Reach out to family members, friends and neighbors to see how they're doing or if they need anything. Use social media to help stay connected. Try having a Zoom meeting. When outside, chat with others from a safe distance.

Keep positive thoughts going!