



# North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, NY 12204

June 2020



## A Message from the Commander

We pulled into the post parking lot the Sunday morning of Memorial Day weekend (05/24/20) at about 0820 hours for the first of three wreath-laying ceremonies post members would conduct that day. Most were already present with their vehicles carefully spaced throughout the lot, and all were masked or bandana'd which, by the end of May, was no longer an unsettling sight. Those who would be decorating graves at St. Agnes later were being issued cemetery maps and bundles of flags by coordinator Don Riley. At 0830, the ceremony commenced with the laying of the first of three identical wreaths at the post monument by Auxiliary President Judy Benner, Sons Acting Squadron Commander Mike Conners, and Post Commander (yours truly) Lawrence Wiest. The linen wreaths had been procured by Mike Conners, compliments of the Sons, from Rizzo's Florist in Cohoes. Let's hope these wreaths are as impervious to the elements as those Lou Rizzo made for us last year. Then Jim Slivko and Don Riley raised, then lowered to half-staff, a crisp new 5' X 8' colors gotten from Gettysburg Flag Works, while John Sacca sounded taps. I must note that the lawn was manicured and the hedges trimmed by "groundsmen" Tom Tracy and John Sacca. At about 0840 hours, all adjourned for PS 20.

We arrived at what is now North Albany Academy at 0845 hours where PS 20 graduates Mickey Ryan and Mike Conners laid wreath number two at the base of the school's memorial stone, after which Legionnaire Sacca again sounded taps, and again, as all present proffered a hand salute. Did I mention that all the miniature carnation-looking flowers on the three wreaths were a vivid red, white, and blue? After the brief ceremony concluded at about 0855 hours, all adjourned for St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands.

Wow! Upon arrival at the cemetery's office parking lot, the number of volunteers eagerly waiting to begin decorating government and veterans' stones was a sight to behold this beautiful morning. Many were not post members, but rather were folks who came directly from home (including an impressive posse who accompanied MAJ Dave Erickson) for the occasion. Again, Don Riley set out distributing maps marked with the specific sections to be covered, along with bundles of flags. But first, a few words of welcome and thanks from your commander, a third and final wreath-laying at the base of the cemetery flagpole by past commanders Mickey and Patrick Ryan, and a final taps by John Sacca and hand salute or hand over heart by all. We then got underway.

Thank you to all who were with us this memorable Memorial Day Sunday morning. A special thank you to our Auxiliary members, who turned out in force, including President Judy Benner, Chris Barry,

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Stacy Liuzzi, Gail Riley, Gretchen Riley, Sara Wiest, and junior members Danielle Benner and Georgia Benner.

Finally, thanks to all of you who participated in the Stratton VA food drive held on Thursday and Saturday mornings (May 14th and 16th) and especially, our heartfelt thank you to Auxiliary President Judy Benner and member Gretchen Riley for pulling that important project together during these pandemic times.



**Lawrence Wiest  
Commander**

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### **Auxiliary News**

I would like to thank all those that supported our food drive for the Stratton VA Food Pantry. We had a good response and collected enough food to fill both Gretchen's and my car along with a gift card for Price Chopper and \$150 in cash donations. The donations were delivered to Volunteer Services on Tuesday, May 26. The food pantry is serving more veterans and their families currently because many are not working and finding it difficult to feed their families. We will continue this program in June and hope everyone can continue to support it.

The National ALA Girls Nation is looking for female veterans to participate in a poppy program to recognize the role women play in our military. These veterans will be asked to make a paper poppy (kit provided by Girls Nation) and will be used to make a wreath that will be laid at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery in July 2021. Because of the Auxiliary centennial year, they want to recognize these brave women. If you, or someone you know, would like a poppy kit let me know ASAP so I can order the kits. If they are not in our area but want to participate, they can email Marge Christianson at [alaunit62AZ@gmail.com](mailto:alaunit62AZ@gmail.com) and request a kit be mailed directly to them. They are

hoping they will get poppies from every state to put on this wreath. (My phone # and email are on the back page of the newsletter.)

I'd also like to thank all of the Auxiliary members that helped celebrate Memorial Day at St. Agnes Cemetery placing flags on graves. Those present included Sara Wiest, Stacy Liuzzi, Gretchen Riley, Gail Riley, Danielle Benner, Georgia Benner (Jr. member) and Chris Barry. If there were any that participated at different cemeteries, thank you as well.

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

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### **Veterans Crisis Hotline**

Veterans, if you or someone you know, is in crisis, there is help. Call the **Veterans Crisis Hotline: 800-273-8255**. You are not alone.

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### **Chaplain's News**

#### **Deceased:**

Charles F. "Bus" Kieley, Legion – May 9, 2020

John Joseph Fitzgerald, Legion and Limericks – May 16, 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](mailto:jodee4444@hotmail.com). Or, newsletter editor Gretchen Riley via [ghodges220@yahoo.com](mailto:ghodges220@yahoo.com) or at 518-526-8753.

Legion members and families, if you are aware of a Post member who may have gone into assisted living, a nursing home, or is perhaps living now with a family member, please let the Post know. We would like to be sure that their dues are kept up. Sometimes, someone else may be handling their affairs and payment of membership dues may slip through the cracks. Also, the information helps keep our records updated. If there is perhaps a reason behind membership dues not being kept up, let us know. We can help.

**Sunday, May 24, 2020: Laying of wreaths and decoration of graves at St. Agnes Cemetery**



**24 May 2020, 0835 hours:** Post members Jim Slivko and Don Riley (obscured) raise then lower the colors to half-staff all the while taps is sounded after the wreath-laying.



**24 May 2020, 0850 hours:** Sons Acting Squadron Commander Mike Conners (left) and Past Commander Mickey Ryan, both PS 20 grads, lay a second wreath in front of the monument at North Albany Academy.



**24 May 2020, 0915 hours:** Past Commanders Mickey Ryan (left) and Patrick Ryan lay a third and final wreath at St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands prior to graves decoration.



**24 May 2020, approx. 1030 hours:** Post member Jim Slivko getting the job done decorating graves at the southeast section of St. Agnes Cemetery.

## Stratton VA Food Pantry

The food drive held in May was a big success. We will be holding another food drive for the pantry at the Stratton VA. The dates are Wednesday, June 17, and Tuesday, June 23, right before and right after Father's Day. What a way to honor all the fathers in our lives, be they dads, husbands, sons, nephews, uncles, etc., who have served or may be continuing to serve.

Items most needed at this time are cereal, peanut butter, jelly, pasta and pasta sauces, and granola bars as well as any other food items. If items can be in plastic jars rather than glass, it would be most helpful. 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. Volunteer Services says donations of paper products (plates, napkins, paper towels) may also be donated. No cleaning products though.

Your donation can be dropped off at the Post parking lot on either Wednesday, June 17, or Tuesday, June 23, from 10 a.m. to noon both days. If you have items and cannot get them to the drop-off location, call either Judy (518-869-8668) or Gretchen (518-526-8753). We will arrange to pick up from your home. Pickup and drop-off can be completely contactless.

**Thank you for support!**

**All meetings for June are canceled due to coronavirus pandemic**

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

### Post

Commander: Lawrence Wiest (518) 434-6438  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander: Open  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander: Open  
Adjutant: John Sacca (518) 486-0528  
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

President: Judy Benner (518) 817-1240 [judybenner13@gmail.com](mailto:judybenner13@gmail.com)  
Vice President: Jan Precopia (518) 489-1406 [janprecopia@nycap.rr.com](mailto:janprecopia@nycap.rr.com)  
Secretary: Sheila Savage (518) 221-3729 [sheilasavage1618@gmail.com](mailto:sheilasavage1618@gmail.com)  
Treasurer: Dorothy Curran (518) 786-1284 [tomdor2000@yahoo.com](mailto:tomdor2000@yahoo.com)  
Chaplain: JoAnn DeLisle (518) 426-8463 [jodee4444@hotmail.com](mailto:jodee4444@hotmail.com)

### Editor for the Newsletter

Gretchen Riley (518) 526-8753 [ghodges220@yahoo.com](mailto:ghodges220@yahoo.com)

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

Anecdote from Adjutant John Sacca as relayed to Post Commander Larry Wiest:

“I was approached at the cemetery (Sunday, May 24, 2020) by a volunteer who wanted to contribute to the purchase of flags. He gave me a folded bill, but refused to give his name. I didn't think anything of it until I got home. The bill was a hundred dollar note. This restores one's faith in human nature.”