



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, NY 12204
518-465-4800 - nap1610@yahoo.com

July/August 2021

A Message from the Commander



First things first: It now officially being really summer (I'm writing this message three days after the summer solstice, the longest "day" of the year – it's all downhill from here). Be advised that the next newsletter will be September's issue. In addition, there will be NO membership meeting in August.

At the June 15 membership meeting, yours truly was again elected commander, Jim Slivko was elected first vice commander and bar chair, recent transfer Jacqueline "Jackie" Jones was elected second vice commander and appointed house chair. John Sacca and Chuck Lossi were again appointed adjutant and chaplain, respectively; John Mullen was elected historian, and Mickey and his brother William "Spider" Ryan were again elected sergeants at arms. There were still no takers for the vacant fiscal officer position, which allows us to continue to spend money like drunken sailors.

Things at the post are returning to a slow normal. The Albany police supervisors monthly meetings resumed Friday, June 18 and the election primaries were held on Tuesday, June 22 without incident or hardly any voters from all appearances. Jim Slivko greeted the dawn and opened the post doors at 5:30 a.m. for the election officials.

Dan Akins has assumed Tom Tracy's duties as post groundsman; Patrick Ellis stands in for Mickey Ryan as Tuesday barkeep, with Rick Myers standing in for Mickey behind the bar on Sundays.

Last June 16, a few days after Flag Day, the team of Slivko, Ellis, and Rory Higgenberger, visiting commander of the South Buffalo American Legion Post, completed the hot, dirty three-plus hour task of burning thousands of "retired" American flags (using John Town's burn barrel). Thank you, gentlemen. You may remember Rory is working on a project at the Watervliet Arsenal, and we've been having the pleasure of his company for several weeks.

Speaking of flag burners, Albany High's JROTC director Major Dave Erickson told me this story, and I'll pass it on to you. Last May Dave was conducting a class with some of the JROTC's seniors, approximately half being immigrants, and the subject being: a citizen's rights and responsibilities. At a point, the subject of "respect for the flag" came up and Dave asked, "And what about those flag burners?" to animate the discussion and see what kind of response he would get. "They should be shot," shouted one cadet. "Maybe not that, but they should be put in jail," suggested a second voice, which the rest of the class enthusiastically appeared to agree with.

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Then, the quietest class member, EhBlu Say, spoke. She said, "My family is from Burma (now Myanmar). There is only one party there. We had no rights. We had no freedom. We could not live there. We had to flee...to America. The American flag represents freedom."



EhBlu Say

"What about our history of slavery? What about our internment of Japanese Americans during World War II?" Erickson interrupted. "People did that to other people," EhBlu responded. "The American flag is the symbol of an ideal. Nothing should happen to the protesters who burn the American flag." EhBlu Say got the final word in senior class that day.



Lawrence Wiest
Commander



Chaplain's News

Deceased: Donna G. Breslin, Auxiliary - May 6, 2021

Sick Call:

- Mike Connors - Legion
- Mickey Ryan - Legion
- Prayers needed for Tom Curran - Legion (husband of Dorothy Curran, Auxiliary). Also needed for Marc Delisle (son of Joann Delisle, Auxiliary).
- Gail Riley - Auxiliary, is home recovering from recent knee surgery and is wished a speedy recovery.

Auxiliary News

The Poppy distribution was held in May and was successful even with the small number of members that offered to help. Price Chopper came thru for us and allowed our presence at the Loudonville and Watervliet stores.

Placing flags at St. Agnes Cemetery brought several Auxiliary members out to help. Got a little wet, but we were prepared for it. It was a very worthwhile project.

Our elections were held at our June meeting and myself, Jan Precopia, Dorothy Curran and Sheila Savage will continue as President, VP, Treasurer and Secretary respectively. We will now have co-Chaplains: Peg Hovish and Kathy Schmitz-Morfe.

I hope everyone will start thinking about sending their dues in for the upcoming 2021-22 year. Jan Precopia is still membership chair and dues have remained the same as last year: \$25 for seniors and \$8 for juniors (under 18 yrs. old). Please start thinking about whom you might know that could join us in helping veterans and military and their families. Send dues to Jan at 1160 New Scotland Rd., Albany, NY 12208.

See everyone again in September!

**For God and Country,
Judy Benner
President**

If you know of anyone who is sick or has passed, please contact our Chaplains Charles Lossi at 518-438-6336 or Peggy Hovish (518-785-3485 or phovish@nycap.rr.com) or Kathy Schmitz-Morfe (518-495-2955 or ksmorfe@gmail.com). Or, newsletter editor Gretchen Riley (ghodges220@yahoo.com or 518-526-8753).



Sunday, May 30, 2021: Laying of wreath at St. Agnes Cemetery. L to R: Judy Benner, Auxiliary President; Tom Tracy, Legionnaire; and Patricia Erickson, daughter of Major Dave Erickson, up from Aberdeen, MD for the occasion.



Memorial Day at the Post, Monday May 31, 2021, readers of the post's deceased members' names (all twenty-four pages of them). Front row, from left: Kathy Schmitz-Morfe, Sheila Savage, Jan Precopia, Judy Benner; second row, from left: Tom Tracy, Lawrence Wiest, Chuck Lossi, John Sacca. Photo by John Town.



May 4, 2021 - Auxiliary's Memorial Day Remembrance ceremony.

L to R: Gretchen Riley, Sally Legendre, Peg Hovish, Dorothy Curran, Judy Benner and Gail Riley.



June 8, 2021 - Plaque given to Tom Tracy at his Hail and Farewell.



June 8, 2021 - Tom Tracy at his Hail and Farewell at the Post holding the plaque given to him .

Christopher House

An article in the Monday, June 21 edition of the Times Union talked about a residence for female veterans in need opening in South Troy. The residence will provide housing, education, job placement and health management. The executive director of Capital District Women Veterans is retired Col. Christine Rem. The Capital District Women Veterans (CDWV) is a 501(c3) charitable not for profit organization that provides support services and case management, is opening the house. The **Christopher House**, named after her deceased husband, Christopher Rem, has been a goal of this couple since before they retired from the Army. They still need donations (list can be found at www.CDWV.org).



Identifying the members of the Post's color guard in Albany's 1975 Memorial Day parade, compliments of Tom Tracy. From left: Bernie Murphy, Harold Anglin, Ed Carroll, Ray Smith, and Tex Wilson.



Sunday, May 30, 2021 - Two members of the Henry Johnson Battalion JROTC at Albany High School place flags on veterans graves at St. Agnes Cemetery.

General Post Phone No.: (518) 465-4800

Fax: (518) 320-0586

Post Bar/General Information: (518) 465-1402

Email: nap1610@yahoo.com

Post website:

<http://northalbanypost1610.com>

Post Commander:

Lawrence Wiest (518) 434-6438

Sons Acting Squadron Commander:

Michael F. Conners, II

Auxiliary President:

Judy Benner (518) 817-1240

judybenner13@gmail.com

Newsletter editor:

Gretchen Riley (518) 526-8753

ghodges220@yahoo.com