



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

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October 2022

A Message from the Commander



OK, so I promised you a “rose garden” of pro football this season at the post bar, and that didn’t materialize quite as hoped. The Friday happy hour saw only Dan Akins and John Town in attendance, after which bartender Shirl took ill, so there was no Sunday or Monday night football. (Bills at LA I believe.) As for Thursday night football let me just say: Mea Culpa. Those games are only shown with the very expensive PRIME VIDEO app, which the post does not get and which the post has no intention of paying for. (They consider us a business). The next Thursday Shirl opened up, and Johns Sacca and Town, Jackie Jones, and I watched the Mets. John Town theorizes that given the average age of our post members, they might not be predisposed to go to the post in the evening, have a beer, and watch a game.

We discussed this at last night’s (09/21) well-attended membership meeting and are now gravitating towards Friday (happy hour) and Sunday afternoons, and hopefully Thursday and Saturday afternoons. Have patience with us.

In June’s newsletter, I wrote briefly about the origins of the Albany New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial located in Lafayette Park just northeast of the NYS Capitol. I promised to write about a couple memorable meetings we had, one of these with then Mayor Tom Whalen and one with then Albany County Executive Jim Coyne.

After the memorial project started moving forward in earnest (1987), the mayor started fretting about the quickly rising projected cost of the whole endeavor. He summoned me to City Hall to address the situation and I appeared with Memorial Committee secretary Bob Roche, a legendary Albany lawyer who also made frequent trips to Northern Ireland to represent young men arrested by the British army. When we arrived, seated on the couch in the mayor’s office was Harry Maikels, public works commissioner, there on other business. The mayor spoke. And spoke. And continued to drone on.

At a point, Bob Roche stood up and as Mayor Whalen continued, Roche quietly toured the office, studying the pictures and other artifacts adorning the office walls. The mayor continued his monolog undisturbed until Roche approached the mayor’s desk and began staring at a huge, ornate bronze ashtray holding a heavy glass insert. The mayor stopped, looked at Roche and announced, “The mayor of Dublin

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presented that to me when I was there a couple months ago,” obviously pleased with his treasure. “Magnificent,” Roche responded. “There’s an inscription on it, but I don’t know what it says. It’s written in Gaelic,” the mayor said. After a pause the mayor asked, “Do you know Gaelic?” To which Roche responded, “A bit, yes.” “Well, what does it say?” the mayor urged. Bob Roche ever so carefully picked up the ashtray, securing the glass insert with his thumbs. Slowly he turned it and read, “Often wrong,” he paused, turned it more, then continued, “but never in doubt.” Roche slowly placed the ashtray back on the desk and returned to his seat on the couch.

Ultimately, the city kicked in \$50K (. . . “and not a nickel more,” grouched the mayor). Our next stop, even before the fundraising campaign formally stepped off with the high-profile appearance of General William Westmoreland (who proved remarkably popular with the public despite the unpopularity of the Vietnam War), was getting an appointment to see Albany County Executive Jim Coyne and convince him that Albany County should play a major (financial) role in this venture. After all, the city, acting as the county seat, had agreed to the memorial’s design including the names of all KIAs and MIAs in that war from Albany County. At that time, we had a list of 62 names.

The meeting took place on a cold winter morning at 112 State. The first thing I noticed when we (Pollicino, LaFalce, and me) filed into Coyne’s office was that all the furniture was made of bamboo: desk, chairs, credenza, everything. Jimmy (remember I’ve known him since little league) returned to his desk, put his feet up on it and returned to his breakfast. Despite the season and the weather, he wore docksiders and no socks, a fashion affectation left over from the Kennedy years. While finishing “breakfast,” a jelly doughnut and an Orange Crush, Jimmy asked, “So you’re here about the memorial; whadjah get from the city?” “Fifty thousand,” I responded. “Well, we can match that.” And that was it. Other than a few pleasantries, the meeting was over.

Pray for Ukraine.



**Lawrence Wiest
Commander**



Chaplain’s News

Sick call:

- Wayne Riley, Legion
- Patrick Ryan, Legion
- Don Perry, Legion
- Carole Egan, Auxiliary

Prayers are asked for Marc DeLisle, Auxiliary member JoAnn DeLisle’s son. Prayers are also asked for Andrew Liuzzi, husband of Auxiliary member Stacy Liuzzi.

Dart League



The North Albany Post 1610 darts on Friday nights will start on October 7, 2022 at 7 p.m. Anyone who would like to shoot, please call the Post 518-465-1402. Leave your name and phone number or show up Friday night at 6:30 p.m. More info as we move forward. Dart boards will be moved to the game room.

Auxiliary News

Thanks to all that donated to our fall Give 10 for Education project. We were able to fill all of the teachers' wish lists plus a little more. Everyone is always so generous with our projects. Thanks again.

We are looking into doing fleece throws this year. Hospice has contacted us asking for patriotic ones to give to the many veterans they provide services for. If you are interested in helping, let one of us know. I will let everyone know when we schedule the date. You can also knit, crochet or help with fleece ones once we get the material.

A new program is being formed at the National Cemetery called 'The Saratoga Ladies'. It will be women interested in paying final respects/tribute to our fallen veterans by providing their presence, respect and honor in standing by as a silent witness giving condolences to family and friends at services. If you might be interested in helping, contact Dom at the VA hospital at 518-626-5507.

The Auxiliary Fall Conference will be held at the Greenville Post on October 15 starting with registration at 9:00 a.m. Cost is \$15, which will also include coffee and donuts and a soup and sandwich lunch. If you would like to attend, I need to know by October 3.

Anyone want RADA knives or cookbooks for yourself or as a gift? Let me know. We will be sending in an order soon. You can see their catalog online at radacutlery.com.

Thanks again for everyone's support.

Judy Benner, President



Christmas at Sea

At the September Auxiliary meeting, there was discussion that the Maritime Ministry is looking for "Christmas at Sea" gifts.

The idea is to get shoe boxes, regular ones or plastic ones (Dollar Tree has plastic ones). Many of the items wanted are: toothbrushes, toothpaste, combs, deodorant, shaving cream, aftershave, disposable razors, Dollar Tree ear buds, AA and AAA batteries, hats, warm gloves, puzzle and word search books, small games or handheld ones, pens, pencils, note cards, playing cards, DVDs (gently used DVDs are also acceptable), a small bottle of maple syrup. No candy or perishable items, please. Anything else you can think of for sailors who are 3-7 months on the ocean will be great.

Fill the shoe box with any items you want and include a Christmas or greeting card, signed with only your first name. Wrap the box in Christmas paper. The Ministry will give the boxes to the Captain of the ships to assure these seamen have a nice surprise on Christmas morning.

Deadline is November 30. The filled, wrapped shoe boxes can be dropped off at the Post. If you are unable to drop off a shoe box, arrangements can be made to pick it up.

Wanted

Auxiliary is looking for red, white and blue knitting worsted to make blankets for Veterans! Contact Judy Benner (518-869-8668).

Pasta Dinner
Donation & new toy drop off
to benefit
Cruisin' for Tots fundraiser

\$12 per plate

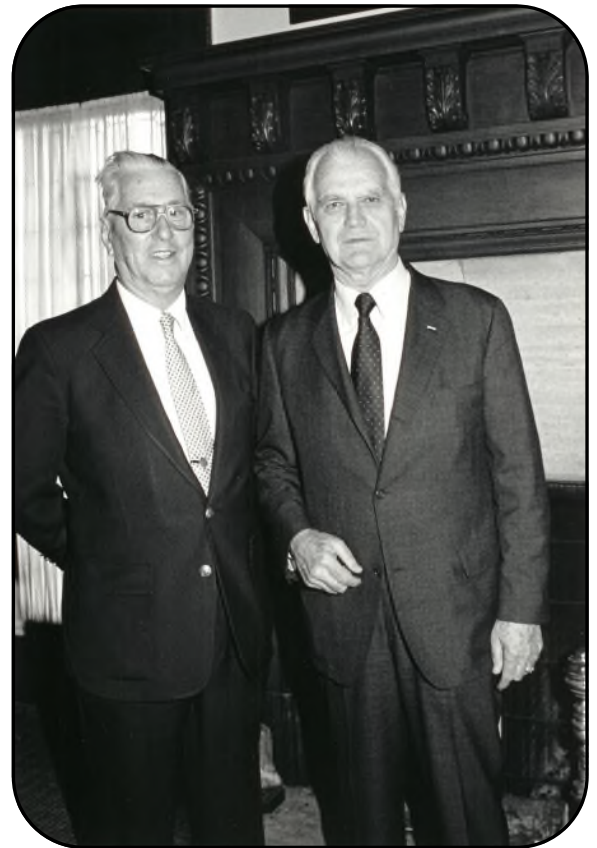
Friday, October 14th, 2022
4pm - 8pm
At N. Albany American Legion Post #1610
35 North First St.
Albany, NY 12204

Dinner to include:
Spaghetti & Meatballs
or Baked Ziti
Tossed Salad
Bread & Butter

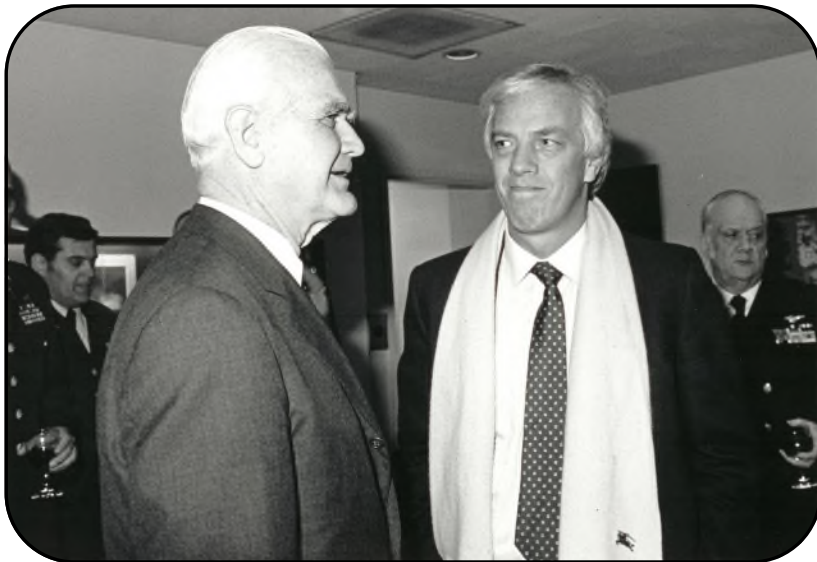
Please RSVP to help us ensure we have enough food for everyone.
Contact: Andrew Luzzi at 518-365-9301 or email alluzzi77@gmail.com and
provide your name, phone number and order amount.



Late winter 1987 at the Fort Orange Club: Albany Mayor Tom Whalen, flanked by Albany NY Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee member John LaFalce and President Lawrence Wiest, far left and right respectively, introduces General William Westmoreland. General Westmoreland, formerly commander of US forces in Vietnam during much of that war, traveled to Albany for the kick-off of fundraising efforts for the memorial that now stands in Lafayette Park. By the way, John LaFalce will be this year's Veterans Day grand marshal. (Photo by Tim Raab.)



General Westmoreland with WWII vet, post member, and North Albany's Assemblyman Dick Conners at the Fort Orange kick-off luncheon. (Photo by Tim Raab.)



Late winter, 1987, at the Key Bank headquarters, lower State Street, Albany: Albany County Executive Jim Coyne chats with General Westmoreland at a reception honoring the general hosted by bank president Victor Riley. (Photo by Tim Raab.)

October Announcements

- Auxiliary Meeting: Tuesday, October 4
- Toys for Tots Fundraiser: Pasta Dinner, Friday, October 14
- Legion Membership Meeting: Wednesday, October 19
- Friday Night Darts: Friday, October 7
- First Friday Fish Fry: Friday, November 4

**"FIRST FRIDAY"
FISH FRY**

**FRI., NOV. 4
4 P.M. - 7 P.M.**

**NORTH ALBANY AMERICAN LEGION POST 1610
35 NORTH FIRST ST. | ALBANY | 12204**

**COST: \$15.00 - FISH FRY, FRENCH FRIES, COLESLAW
SIT DOWN OR TAKE OUT
PRE-ORDER FOR TAKE OUT
CALL HOUSE CHAIR JACKIE JONES, 518-368-7128
WALK-INS WELCOME
WHEN FISH IS GONE, WE'RE DONE.**