



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, NY 12204
Office: 518.465.4800/Bar: 518.465.1402
Website: nap1610@yahoo.com

December 2022 / January 2023

A Message from the Commander



When I arrived to open the post for the Sons on Sunday, November 6 at 7:30 a.m., I found Jeff Hunt already there, up on a stepladder in kitchen number two, staring balefully at the row of ancient aluminum 60-cup coffee urns stored overhead and wondering which of them worked. I suggested we try the newer looking chrome-plated one. Then Mark Scully and Don McMahon arrived. And then Mike Conners showed, suited up for the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Sacred Heart, and pitched in. When asked what women would be there to help with the setup and prep Mike responded sheepishly, "There won't be any." After some considerable dismay, the griddle was wheeled in from the pavilion (and the Saran wrap peeled off its surface), as was the huge warmer, which got a thorough cleaning. Then Mike left for Mass. Then I left for Mass, leaving the three Sons to work their magic.

At Sacred Heart Church that morning, 9:00 a.m. Mass goers were greeted at the foot of the front steps and the entranceway by Albany High JROTC cadets, who would post the colors before Mass began and retire them at its conclusion, as has been the tradition for several years now on the occasion of the annual "veterans mass" honoring those post members we've lost during the past year, they being Thomas Curran, Ralph Deso, John Egan, and Patrick Ryan. The turnout was decent; the color guard was superb.

Upon returning to the post after Mass, we were greeted by the Sons' Ryan Scully at the door who took our \$5.00 and allowed us entry into a surprisingly crowded Scully Hall (coincidence?) where a splendid breakfast of scrambled eggs, bacon, French toast, pancakes, home fries, juice, and, of course, coffee was being served. I procured a couple Bloody Marys from bartender Shirl Hall, who opened up early for the occasion. You will find more details on that morning's events in Mike Conners' column in this newsletter. On behalf of the members, I thank Mike and our Sons and volunteers for this tribute and the repas following.

One couldn't ask for a nicer parade morning than the one we had this Veterans Day. It was absolutely balmy. November 11 is always an iffy day for a parade weatherwise. The worst one I remember was – correct me if I'm wrong – in 1991 when Brigadier General Sam Phillips was grand marshal and we trudged through Washington Park with the 369th Harlem Hellfighters veterans organization, up from NYC, in the wet snow and sleet – ankle deep in slush – to dedicate the SGT Henry Johnson memorial at the southeast corner of the park. Brutal!

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Nonetheless, two high school bands cancelled at the eleventh hour this year – Schalmont and Mohonasen – for fear of rain. There was no rain until late in the afternoon. Mohonasen's longtime band director of days gone by – Dave Bournasian – would have soldiered on through a little shower scare without flinching.

A highlight of this year's parade had to be the sizable contingent in the tenth division from our Ukrainian community, which turned up with azure blue and sunflower yellow flags streaming and with many of the women dressed in traditional Ukrainian outfits.

The annual Gold Star Families luncheon hosted by Zaloga after the parade was nearly a full house. Due to a snafu, those at the North Albany 1610 table were moved to two adjoining tables, thus sharing space with other attendees, Auxiliary members and a cadet at one table, post officers and a cadet at the other. Most survived the inconvenience.

At the November membership meeting, it was decided that there will be NO MORE FIRST FRIDAY FISH FRIES due to declining sales. We may give it another go next Lenten season.

Also, Shir's Friday Happy Hours and Sunday's pro football afternoons have met with little success so far. Mickey Ryan advises us, however, that the teams are set for the Friday evening dart league and the season is proceeding apace.

At the meeting, House Chair Jackie Jones announced that the post is distributing the makings of approximately twenty-five Thanksgiving dinners – including the turkeys – to families in need, half being distributed in conjunction with the Albany Boys and Girls Clubs.

Be advised this is the December 2022/January 2023 newsletter. There will be NO January newsletter.

Pray for the people of Ukraine that they survive the war and the winter.

Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Happy New Year

Lawrence Wiest, Commander

Sons News

Veterans Memorial Mass and Breakfast was held at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church and the Post. This year's members honored were Patrick Ryan, Ralph Deso, Thomas Curran and John "Jackie" Egan. The Albany High School JROTC cadets from the Henry Johnson Battalion did a great job as did Father Russ.

Special thanks to member Tim Mulligan food broker; Eddie Shea of 2Shea catering; and an anonymous Sons member for the donated food. Great job by Sons Jeff Hunt, Mark Scully and Don McMahon in preparing the meal and Auxiliary members Carol McAuliffe and Lynn Salisbury in serving. Ryan Scully helped at the door and Don Riley with set up and take down.

\$230 was raised for the Post from tickets and donations. Larry Wiest served his signature Bloody Marys later on.



Sunday morning November 6 in the post kitchen: from left, Don McMahon, Jeff Hunt, post commander Larry Wiest (observing), and Mark Scully prepare to pull together the annual veterans memorial mass breakfast. Well done, Sons. (Picture by Mike Conners.)



Members of the Albany High JROTC color guard consult with Father Russ after the memorial mass at Sacred Heart Church. (Picture by Mike Conners.)



Color guard members, from left, Emily Wilson (Albany), Jaheim Gittens (Guyana) and Taliyah Miller (England) pause to pose with Mike Conners upon arriving at the post for breakfast. (Picture by Ryan Scully.)



Friday, 11 November 2022 @ 11:45 hours: Grand Marshal and Vietnam vet John LaFalce enthusiastically greets the crowds at this year's Veterans Day parade in Albany as his aide-de-camp (and spouse) Lyn chauffeurs him to the reviewing stand on the steps of the old State Ed Building. Not even a blemish on the LoParco convertible. Well done, Lyn. (Picture by Gene LoParco.)

Chaplain's News

Sick call:

- Wayne Riley, Legion
- Don Perry, Legion
- Carole Egan, Auxiliary
- Jennifer Hale, Auxiliary

December & January Announcements

- Auxiliary Meeting: Tuesday, December 6, 7 p.m. Holiday party and covered dish.
- Legion Membership Meeting: Wednesday, December 21, 7 p.m. (tentative)
- Auxiliary Meeting: Tuesday, January 3, 2023, 7 p.m.
- Legion Membership Meeting: Wednesday, January 18, 2023, 7 p.m.

Auxiliary News

The Auxiliary has several projects in the works for the holiday season. Four members participated in the Veterans Day Parade and enjoyed the Gold Star Luncheon at Zaloga Post at the invitation of Commander Larry Wiest.

We just wrapped up the shopping for a female veteran's 6-year-old daughter from the Christopher House in South Troy. Thank you Gretchen Riley and everyone else that donated gifts for her.

Fleece material has been purchased for the blankets we will be making for veterans that will be going into hospice for care. Date will be announced when we plan to make them.

At our December meeting, we have invited the Colonie junior that we sponsored for Empire Girls State in July so she can tell us about her experience. IF you would like to attend, just let us know. We also do a covered dish dinner at that meeting to celebrate Christmas. Albany County Auxiliary officers have also been invited to attend. In lieu of a grab bag gift, bring a toy for the Toys for Tots box.

Dues are due now. If you have not paid yet, please send to Jan Precopia, 1160 New Scotland Rd., Albany, NY 12208. \$25 for senior members and \$8 for juniors (under 18 years old).

Everyone be safe over the holiday season, if we don't get to see you in December.

Judy Benner, President

Christmas at Sea Project Update

From Jan Precopia:

"Due to extreme security at the Port, Joe and I were not able to take the shoe boxes down to the Mariners office! Two of Santa's elves picked them up this morning to deliver for us and here are some of the pictures of our donations and the Port Office! I believe there will be many happy mariners on Christmas morning at sea!

Any of the other boxes brought to the post I will pick up next week and take to the Church for them to deliver!

Thank you to another great project and support as usual North Albany Auxiliary 1610!"



Post Officers

Post Commander:

Lawrence Wiest (518) 434-6438

Sons Acting Squadron Commander:

Michael F. Conners II

Auxiliary President:

Judy Benner (518) 817-1240

Newsletter editor:

Gretchen Riley (518) 526-8753