



# North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

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## A Message from the Commander



A couple days ago my son, Mason, texted me a CNN article about a Korean War vet and Navy pilot Royce Williams, who on Friday, January 20th of this year was awarded the Navy Cross at age 97 for his heroic acts on November 18, 1952 when he was 27. On that day Williams and three other pilots took off in their 59F Panthers (the Navy's first generation of fighter jets) from aboard the USS Oriskany, one of four aircraft carriers in a task force off the coast of North Korea in the Sea of Japan. In short order the group leader suffered mechanical problems and with his wing man returned to the Oriskany. Suddenly Williams and his own wing man were confronted by seven Soviet MIG-15s (then acknowledged as the best fighter jets in the world – our F-86 Sabres not yet having been deployed) and an aerial “dogfight” ensued during which Williams himself shot down four MIGs in the half-hour encounter. The encounter was immediately classified as the Soviet Union technically was not part of the Korean War. This riveting article, which includes a detailed account of the dogfight and how Williams made it back to the Oriskany with a disabled rudder, wing control surfaces, and 263 holes in his plane can be found at: <https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/20/asia/korean-war-fighter-pilot-soviet-shootdown-intl-hnk-ml/index.html>.

Mason's text also included a second citation of another CNN article by Brad Lendon about President Richard Nixon's bombing of Hanoi over a twelve-day period during December 1972, then regarded as one of the heaviest bombardments in history. By the end of 1972 most Vietnam vets had long before completed their tours(s) in Vietnam, rotated back to the states and were trying to get on with life. So Operation Linebacker II, as it was designated by the military, or “the Christmas bombings” as that moment was referred to by everyone else, is only vaguely remembered, if at all, by us in the USA as the beginning of the end of America's involvement in that war. Those twelve days – meant to “shock and awe” North Vietnamese officials back to the Paris Peace talks and prefacing the signing of the Paris Peace Accords on January 27th 1973 and the return of 591 of our POWs (where are the rest?) in February and March – were a success, so said Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. “We delivered peace with honor.” Later, however, North Vietnam's Le Duc Tho said “200 B-52s dropping 20,000 tons of bombs on us only strengthened our resolve; we just wanted the Americans out of the war,” a war the new Socialist Republic of Vietnam won two years later. This article is spellbinding and painful (especially interviews with the B-52 airmen) and a mandatory read on the 50th anniversary of an important moment in our lives.

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The article can be found at: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/17/asia/operation-linebacker-ii-50th-anniversary-intl-hnk-ml-dst/index.html>.

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Past Commander Bill Gilheany will be honored at his 90th birthday party at the post on Saturday, February 25 from 6 ‘til 10 p.m. All members of the post family and their spouses or significant others are invited. Good food and music are promised. In lieu of gifts, please bring fresh fruits and vegetables for distribution via the AHA and the Sacred Heart food pantry to North Albany’s shut-ins and needy. It’s a desert out there! RSVP to Jane at 518-728-6606. Text or leave a message.

On March 11, after the St. Patrick’s Day parades, corned beef and cabbage dinners and corned beef/turkey sandwiches will be available at the post, dine in/take out. Prices after inflation TBD.

Other than the Friday Night Dart League and now the Thursday evening Limerick meetings, winter weekends at the post are pretty quiet despite the NFL playoffs. If you get this in time, a reminder: Superbowl LVII is on Sunday, February 12 at 6:30 p.m. A word to all from our bartender Shirl – “Go Forty-Niners!” She gets lonely.

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A fascinating column by David Ignatius appeared in the Washington Post the latter part of December last. He writes of an American technology company, Palantir, which for years has made “hard-to-check” claims for its data aggregating systems. Since last February Ukraine has used Palantir software to provide its commanders “precise intelligence about where the Russians were moving,” enabling them to “penetrate the notorious ‘fog of war.’” Palantir software draws “imagery from 306 commercial satellites that can focus to 11 feet. Soldiers access those images using handheld tablets, connected to the internet via Elon Musk’s Starlink satellite service. Battle damage assessments are fed back into the network to strengthen predictive models... creating a truly lethal ‘kill chain.’” Ignatius concludes that Palantir software is the reason “Russia probably cannot win this war.”

Prayers, and tanks, for Ukraine.

**Lawrence Wiest  
Commander**



### Chaplain’s News

#### - Post Everlasting -

Wayne Riley, December 4, 2022

Timothy P. Lancaster, December 17, 2022

#### Sick call:

- Don Perry, Legion
- Carole Egan, Auxiliary
- Jan Precopia, 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.



The Albany County Visitation Dinner, hosted by the Blanchard-Currey Post on January 18, 2023, honored NYS Dept Cdr David Riley, NYS Dept President Nancy Babis, and NYS Det Cdr Timothy Van Patten. Among those attending were, from left, Blanchard Currey's Michael Kanuk and James Loux; North Albany's John Sacca, Jackie Jones, and Cdr Larry Wiest; Blanchard-Currey's Cdr Lyle Maddock, and Adam Mainville. (Photo by Ruane Post's Tammy Roberts.)

## Auxiliary News

Hi everyone,

Hope everyone enjoyed their holidays. I want to thank everyone that participated in our Maritime at Sea project. We ended up with 34 gift boxes and other misc. items delivered to the Port of Albany by Jan and Joe Precopia. Many sailors were probably very surprised on Christmas morning with a gift from us. Thank you Jan and Joe.

Dorothy, Gretchen and I attended the Mid-Winter Auxiliary Conference at the Marriott last weekend and were able to bring back some interesting ideas. Come to our February 7 meeting at the Post to hear about them.

Lourdes, the 6-year-old little girl we adopted for Christmas enjoyed the gifts we were able to provide her. Thank you to those that also gave us things for her. Gretchen and George Riley thank you for wrapping and delivering them to the Christopher House in South Troy and for letting my husband Larry and me to help and meet her.

The food pantry at the Stratton VA is running short of peanut butter, jelly, cereal and individual size snack bags. We can take them over if anyone wants to donate items. Just drop off at the post and specify 'Auxiliary' and VA food pantry collection items.

I met with the women's health care coordinator at Stratton asking what we could do for our female vets, and she told me personal items for Valentine' Day, i.e. toiletries, candies (or boxed chocolates), flowers, Dunkin gift cards \$5, slippers (new).

Also, there at 12 pregnant vets that she will be doing a joint baby shower for and will accept donations of knit/crocheted blankets and matching sweater sets (gender neutral colors) or baby sip cups, bibs, socks, receiving blankets, crib sheets, pacifiers, disposable diapers (size newborn, 1 or 2), wipes, lotions, powder, bottles, washcloths and baby towels, just to mention a few. Keep in mind, all must be new. If you have any questions, give me a call. Again, just let me know when we can get together or you can bring

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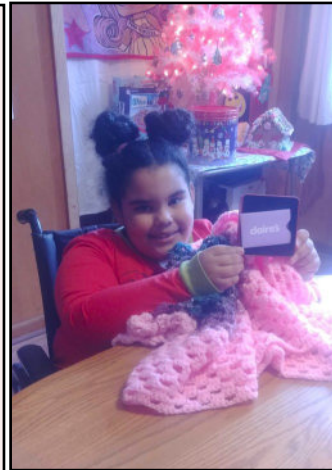
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to the post.

**SAVE THE DATE!** Saturday, April 29, for the 17th Veteran Walk-a-Thon. It will be at Cook Park, Colonie. You will be able to buy 'Boots' to hang in the bar room shortly. All proceeds will go toward homeless vet programs through the VA and the Honor Flight Hub Network in NYS. Please consider participating/donating to this great event.

I am sure many of you have seen the news and updates over the past couple of months about the PACT Act. These health benefits are available to veterans, their families, caregivers and survivors. The govt has expanded the veterans eligible and by just showing your DD214 stating that you were in an eligible location at a specific time and have developed a qualifying disability the VA presumes they are service related. There is much more info at [va.gov/pact](http://va.gov/pact) or by calling 1800-MYVA411. This is NOT just for Viet Nam veterans. It can be veterans in any wars since that time (Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.) Please make the call and get these benefits you are entitled to.

**Judy Benner, President**



Auxiliary "adoptee" Lourdes enjoys Christmas at Christopher House.



### 2023 Limerick Schedule

From Marshal Kathleen Maguire Rourke

**North Albany Limerick Meetings** are held every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the North Albany Post now through March 9. The wrap-up meeting will be held Thursday, March 16 at 6:30 p.m. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend!

**Limerick Breakfast – Sunday, February 19** will be at North Albany Post following 9:00 a.m. Mass at Sacred Heart Church. During Mass we are given the opportunity to remember our departed Limericks. Our remembrance Mass has become an annual event kicking off our parade season. Breakfast Chairperson Debbie Ryan-McMahon invites you to join in a great meal at an excellent price with perfect company! Tickets are \$10.00.

**North Albany Limerick Dinner Dance – Saturday, March 4** at the North Albany Post. Cocktails at 5 p.m., dinner at 6:00 p.m. Cost of dinner (TBD) includes beer, wine, and soda. Music by DJ Bo Weidman from 7:00 p.m. to midnight. Contact Dinner Chair Babe Scully for more information.

**Parade Day – Saturday, March 11** begins with Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church, 607 Central Avenue, at 9:00 am. Limericks step off at 11:30 a.m. from the North Albany Post and 2 p.m. at Quail and Central in Albany.

**Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinners**, corned beef/turkey (yes, turkey!) sandwiches from 4:00 on, dine in/take out. Price TBD. Provided by the post.