



North Albany Post 1610 American Legion

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A Message from the Commander

As I set pen to paper this Labor Day Thursday afternoon on what promises to be a glorious (weatherwise) end of summer holiday, I'll report that it's been a quiet couple of months for veterans activities but a busy one for community events.

You'll remember Adjutant John Sacca and I put three Albany High JROTC cadets on the Boys State bus for SUNY Morrisville on a Sunday morning last June 25, and MAJ Dave Erickson retrieved them on Friday evening June 30. I expect a couple of the cadets will be with us at our Wednesday, September 20 membership meeting at 7:00 p.m. to report in what and how they did. Members of the 369th Veterans Association will also be present. Thank you, American Gold Star Mothers Albany Chapter 11 and Voorheesville American Legion Post 1493, for each underwriting the cost of sending one of our cadets to Boys State. Our membership meetings this semester are the third Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Our post kicked off the fall school semester by hosting the first annual SGT Henry Johnson Back to School Giveaway on a beautiful Sunday afternoon August 27 in the post parking lot, which was closed to vehicles for the occasion. Dead center was a most impressive "rock climbing" tower for the kids brought in, set up, and operated by deputies of the Albany County Sheriff's Department. Wow! Thank you, Sheriff Craig Apple.

Among several Albany City School District volunteers was John Clements, who brought in his own equipment and grilled well over 100 hot dogs and 150 burgers. Our guests of honor were members of the 369th Veterans Association, who introduced themselves to those attending and spoke to us of WWI hero SGT Henry Johnson, their accomplishments in preserving his memory, and in whose honor this event was named. More details about this block-buster event can be found in 1st Vice CDR and House Chair Jackie Jones' column in this newsletter. She and the Auxiliary's Shirl Hall were the post's prime movers of this event. Thank you both.

Early Tuesday evening last August 1, the post partnered with the City of Albany's "National Night Out," one of hundreds of urban social gatherings held on the same date and at the same time (staggered by time zones) nationwide to promote community spirit. Ours was held in the gravel parking lot and playground across the street from the post. Our Auxiliary's Lormenzo Jones grilled the burgers and hot dogs (on his own magnificent monster grill), all served up by Jackie and Shirl along with ice cream provided by Stewarts. Nicely done.

Stand by Ukraine.



Lawrence Wiest
Commander



Message from the House Chair

This has been an exciting summer. On August 1, Post 1610 collaborated with the City of Albany and held National Night Out Against Violence. In attendance were Congressman Paul Tonko, NYS Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado, Albany County Executive Dan McCoy, Sheriff Craig Apple, County Legislator Wanda Willingham, and Councilman Kelly Kimbrough.

We grilled hotdogs and hamburgers and, with St. Catherine's Family Opportunity Center, offered face paintings and games and held a Three-on-Three Basketball Tournament. The Albany Boys and Girls Club brought The Lyricism Music Mobile, which was great fun for all.

On August 27, we launched our first Annual Henry Johnson Back to School Giveaway. This event was born out of a suggestion from Past Commander Bill Gilheany. Many community sponsors and volunteers made this a successful event. Our local leaders who lent their support were Albany County Executive Daniel McCoy and Albany County Legislator Wanda Willingham.

The Albany County Sheriff's Department provided the Rock-Climbing Wall, hamburgers, hotdogs, and the bookbags, which were then filled with generous supplies of crayons, notebooks, pencils, pens, calculators, folders, rulers, erasers, glue, and much more. All the supplies were donated by the Military Family Foundation.

On hand we also provided free haircuts by local Master Barbers, Tammi McLaughlin and Mr. Jonathan, and our face painter was Gail Grant. Members of the 369th Veterans Association provided a historical presentation on the heroism of SGT Henry Johnson. Volunteers included Shirl Hall (Auxiliary), Jane Bronson, and her husband Jim.

The Albany Community Land Trust, the 369th Veterans Association, Blessed Hope Worship Center, Menz.amp; J Surf and Turf, The Limericks, and Julian McKay made generous donations. Other contributors and volunteers included Eley Enterprises, "YRR," Bimbo's Bakery, Trinity Alliance, and Albany City School District employees Torrie Chapple, Cathy Edmondson, John Clements, James Davis Jr., Latisha Miller, Nora Marbley, Laura Turpin, Donya Coles, and Lilly Harvey. Without these individuals and sponsors this day would not have been a success.

We were able to give away 150 bookbags with all the required back-to-school materials for all grades and served over 150 hamburgers, hot dogs, and corn on the cob. Finally, we were able to send people home with bags filled with a variety of fresh produce and pastries.

The Fall is coming and we will start all over again with our Second Annual Harvest Party on October 31. I look forward to seeing great participation. Please reach out to House Chair Jackie Jones at 518-368-7128 to volunteer.

Jackie Jones
1st Vice Commander
House Chair

Limerick Corner

Save the Date! Saturday, November 4, 5:00 p.m. - Save Sacred Heart Parish Fundraiser

Details are being finalized, but please keep this date on your calendar. We need all the support we can get on this, please & thank you! Next meeting dates: September 21, 28 and October 5. Please come for voting nights and please come help us with the fundraiser planning.

The Limericks are also the Lead Division for the St. Patrick's Day Parade in 2024. We will choose Grand Marshal & host the Grand Marshal dinner. It will be an exciting time. All are welcome, please join us.

Auxiliary News

Our Auxiliary has not been sitting idly by over the summer. We are finishing up our Give 10 to Education school supply drive for Giffen Memorial School, an Albany intercity elementary school. School supplies were collected for nine teachers, in grades K-5, four of whom have 3 sections of students for a total of 60 students. Through the generosity of our members, we were able to collect most of the items on the teachers' wish lists.

We have been collecting donations for the baby shower at the VA hospital for the 10 pregnant veterans. The baby shower will be held this month. Thank you to all of the generous members for both of these events. Donations for both Giffen Memorial School and the baby shower can still be accepted, but need to be at the Post **asap**. Please contact either me, Judy, or Jan Precopia should you need donations picked up.

A third project some Auxiliary members have been doing is crocheting afghans for Community Hospice. On August 9, a third delivery of afghans and twiddlemuffs were delivered to Community Hospice. Cindy Guess, the contact person there says they have had 365 veterans go through hospice this year and 55

in August. Cindy was kind enough to give some yarn to use for future blankets, etc. As with many things, the cost of yarn is becoming very expensive for the few women crocheting the afghans to continue buying yarn. Jan is looking for donations of red, white, and blue yarn if anyone has some. Monetary donations are good too if someone doesn't know what type of yarn to buy. Call Jan Precopia with any questions (518-573-5167).

Dues for 2024 are now due and need to be sent to Jan Precopia, 1160 New Scotland Rd., Albany, NY 12208. Dues are \$35 for seniors and \$8 for juniors. Help us make 100% again this year!

The food pantry at the VA hospital is in short supply of peanut butter and jelly, pasta sauce, rice, and all types of pasta. Of course, they will accept all types of dry foods, as well as monetary donations. Contact me, Judy, at 518-817-1240 for more info.

Hope to see everyone at our Sept 12 meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Post.

**A very proud ALA President,
Judy Benner**



Sunday afternoon, August 27 at the post: Members of the 369th Veterans Association present at the Back to School Giveaway, from left, Desert Storm vet Ron Wilson, Albany District President, Vietnam vets Clarence Lomax, Willie Thomas, National President Jim Dandles, Albany District Sergeant at Arms Larry Turner, and Desert Storm vet Deryl McCray, National Vice President.



A message from MAJ Dave Erickson after retrieving his three Albany High cadets off the bus returning from Boys State: "The photo you requested of 'The Three Amigos,' Ananta Saha, Ryan Linn, and Dominic Hung Tun (from India, Thailand, and Burma). I spoke with Ananta and Ryan, and both said the program brought to life how our political system works. Before . . . it did not always make sense. Ryan said that at first he was worried he might not fit in, but his roommate became a friend for life."



Master barber Jonathan of “Strive for Greatness Barbershop” in Troy spent the afternoon with us giving students free back-to-school haircuts. On Friday afternoon, September 1, he was at Giffen Elementary doing the same thing. And on October 31, at this year’s Harvestfest, he’ll be back with us again.



John Clements of the Albany City School District brought his own equipment and was our grillmeister at the Sunday Back to School Giveaway, grilling hundreds of burgers and hot dogs for the kids and families in attendance.



Auxiliary members (L to R): Barbara Castracani, Judy Benner (rear), Jan Precopia and Dorothy Curran (front) with some of the afghans and twiddlemuffs they and others crocheted for a third delivery to Community Hospice.

Chaplain’s News

Sick call:

- Don Perry, Legion
- Mickey Ryan, Legion
- Carole Egan, Auxiliary

Prayers are also asked for Andrew Liuzzi, husband of Auxiliary member Stacy Liuzzi.