



## *The Legion-Air*

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December 2015

**Commander's Message:** Greetings Legion family & friends. Thank you to the Jurek Post Legion family for the fine job on the dinner & hospitality for our November County meeting. Thank you to the members of the Erie County Committee, for the beautiful framed plaque presented to me at the November County meeting in recognition of my being elected Erie County Commander for 2015-2016. I have displayed it proudly in my home and will cherish it always. We don't work for recognitions like these, but any Thank You goes a long way toward encouraging your members. Remember to thank your workers/volunteers regularly for the fine jobs they do for your Post. It is my honor to serve you as your County Commander.

Thank you to all who attended the Gold Star Mothers' Mass & the reception at Lamm Post on Nov 7th, and especially to Lamm Auxiliary President, Sally Dean and her crew for the great variety of hors d'oeuvres. Nicely done! Please keep your focus on membership. I'm asking every member to recruit a new member or sign up a lapsed member prior to our next County meeting. Your enthusiasm is infectious! Working together, we can reverse the downward membership trend of the last several years. Thanks to Hamburg, Orchard Park, Lamm & Donovan Posts for sending your newsletters. Lots going on in our Erie County Posts! Please keep Saturday, Dec 19th open for my Erie County Christmas Party at the George F. Lamm Post Lounge (from 1 to 5 pm). We'll have lots of food and an open bar. Bring a dish to pass if you like, but it's more important that you are there to enjoy the camaraderie of our Erie County American Legion family. From my family to yours: we wish you all of the Blessings of this beautiful Christmas Season, and Peace and Prosperity in the coming New Year. Remember to keep our troops in your daily prayers. Thank you for all you do for our American Legion family. Keep charging!

### **Membership – VC Nelson Oldfield**

Presently our membership is at 5,040, with a goal of 7,228. Our Membership reports are on the County site. Jake puts a lot of effort in keeping them up to date.

I would ask that you submit your cards to Albany as quickly as possible and do not sit on them, as we get close to the date for the new dues amount this could eliminate the member paying the higher price and if the member cannot get them to the Post they can be paid on line.

It also may be the time to consider paid up for life, this offer is still on the table and may be pulled off at any time. So with the new dues around the corner, it might be worth doing it now. You also have the money incentive with reaching your previous year's membership your goal plus 5 new members for an additional \$1 per member rebate. This could be a nice payback to your Post for a job well done.

I am a little disappointed that we have not signed up one transfer Veteran from Florida, keep in mind my bounty!!!!!!

I attended the Cheektowaga Town Board meeting- Unanimous endorsement for Women's Veterans Homeless shelter. As this project moves on step closer to reality and I can only wish that PCC Ray Caso was around to see it move ahead! Thanks Ray!!

Finally I did spend some time at Cleveland Hills Veterans Father & son breakfast, CDR Steigler attended along with several staff members of Donovan. I am extremely pleased that this project continues to recognize our Veterans, at a school I graduated from many years ago!

## Americanism – VC Suzanne Quirk

December commemorates several important milestones of WWII. They include: Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1941; Battle of the Bulge, December 16, 1944; and the Official End of WWII, December 31, 1945. So I would like to send special thanks to all of our WWII Veterans and their families for all of the sacrifices made by them during that great war.

This is also a month that includes several major religious observances. As a religious veteran I would like to extend heartfelt wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy Hanukkah and a Happy Kwanzaa to those who practice those faiths and paths. These represent religious rights we can enjoy as a result of all veterans' service. In light of the recent violence that has occurred in Paris, Syria, and Egypt there is an even more urgent need at this time for prayers and actions to promote peace and acceptance.

Finally here is another reminder to bring flyers about future events or pictures of past activities, like those brought by Clarence Post to the last meeting, to the next meeting for posting on the Legion Activity Board.

## Indivisible: The Story of Our Flag

The American Legion's 116-page bookazine dedicated to telling the story of Old Glory is now available for individual or bulk orders.

"Indivisible: The Story of Our Flag" - part of the Legion's 100th Anniversary celebration - is designed like a magazine but is produced with a heavy, durable stock. The bookazine describes the history of the American flag as shown through images, voices, lyrics, milestones and meanings, as well as the Legion's history of advocacy for respect, etiquette and reverence for the flag and its meaning to all. The publication is available for \$9.95 on at Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, Book World, Hastings and Sam's Club, as well as PXs and commissaries. Orders can be placed at The American Legion Emblem Sales website.

"Indivisible" presents a 100th Anniversary fundraising opportunity for posts, which can buy bookazines in bulk and resell them to members or the public. Bulk orders of 25 or more books cuts the price to \$7.95 each. You are encouraged to buy the bookazine in bulk and distribute to schools or libraries, or use as a fundraiser, all while sharing the story of the bookazine and the organization's role in the history of the American flag.



## Special Activities – VC Joe Orzechowski

As of this writing there are 773 calendars distributed to 18 Posts around Erie County. Of those, 336 have already been sold. If we can sell the remaining 437 calendars that are already out there, we would exceed last year's sales by over 50 calendars. And in that case, based on some statistics and assuming a fair lottery drawing, there would be a 98% chance that we'd make a profit of at least \$9500.

By the time you read this, there will be less than a month left to sell those remaining calendars, so I ask everyone to please do your best to continue selling. Remember that the money we make is used to support the County's many worthwhile programs and functions. A calendar makes a perfect stocking stuffer and it's a great gift for that person on your Christmas list that is so tough to buy for. I'd like to extend special thanks to the Posts that have sold 25 or more calendars thus far: East Aurora (27), Hamburg (77), South Buffalo (31), Donovan (32) and A. J. Jurek (38).

Please turn in any stubs and money to me as soon as possible. The calendar stubs must be in my possession before December 31 in order to be eligible for prizes. Please feel free to call me at 839-9109 or email me at bjozechowski @ verizon.net if you need calendars, want to buy calendars or have stubs to turn in. I will pick up and deliver.

Finally, a very Merry Christmas from Bev and me to everyone in the Erie County Legion Family and to all your families as well.



**SUBMISSIONS**  
**For the January**  
**"The Legion-Air"**  
**due December 18**  
[thelegionair@gmail.com](mailto:thelegionair@gmail.com)

## Oratorical Competition - George Barton

The 2015 – 2016 Erie County American Legion Annual Oratorical Contest will be held at The David McKeever Post # 64, 1770 South Park Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14220 on Sunday, December 6, at 12:00 PM. Qualified Erie County contestants are asked to please arrive by 11:15 AM. In case of bad weather, the snow date will be Sunday, December 13, at the same place and time. The Erie County winner will receive a \$200 check and their home school will receive a \$100 check. The runner up will receive \$50. The winner and runner-up will advance to the 8th District Oratorical contest which will be held on Sunday, January 10, 2016 at 12:00 PM at the Milton J. Brounshidle Post # 205 located at 3354 Delaware Avenue, Kenmore, NY 14217, with a snow date scheduled for Sunday, January 17, 2016 at the same place and time. Winners will then advance to the state level for further competitions.

I have received some interest in the contest, but as of today, I have not received any applications. Please refer to <http://www.ny.legion.org/orator.htm> for contest rules and the contest application. The Erie County contest is required to follow these same rules. The contest will focus on the U.S. Constitution, to create interest in and respect for the basic principles of our form of government. The prepared oration must not be less than 8 minutes, nor more than 10 minutes in length.

To enter the competition, completed entry forms must be submitted **no later than Friday, November 27, 2015. Late entries will be disqualified.** Be sure the registration forms are filled out properly and the proper certifications are signed as appropriate. I will complete the section on the High School registration form marked "For County Chairman Only."

## Erie County Office Hours

Staffed by Tim Van Patten every Mon., Wed., & Fri. from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, excluding holidays.

## Erie County Website – [eriecountyal.org](http://eriecountyal.org).

Log on to our site to get up to date information on membership and current events in Erie County. All recent editions of the Legion-Air are also available online. Contact Tim Van Patten to be able to log on the members page for additional information.



## Thursday County Meeting Dates

Executive Dinner Meeting: 6:30 PM

### **December 17, F.J. Donovan Post #1626**

3210 Genesee St., Cheektowaga 14225  
Menu: Ham, Roast Beef, scalloped potatoes, mixed vegetables, chef salad

### **January 14, Newcomb-Long Post #928**

### **February, Troop I Post #665**

### **Sunday December 6**

#### **8<sup>th</sup> District Meeting - Orleans Co.**

Jewell Buckman Post #529

Holley, NY 14470

12:00 PM - Membership Meeting

1:00 PM – General Meeting

### **Erie County Commander's Christmas Party Saturday December 19**

join Commander Wayne Sorrentino at the George F. Lamm Post #622 from 1 – 5 PM to bring in the holidays.

### **January 22 – 24 Albany, NY**

#### **Department Mid-Winter Conference**

### **Visitation to Erie County February 12**

#### **Department Commander James Yermas**

#### **Department President Janet Mahoney**

#### **SAL Detachment Commander**

#### **Joe Santacroce**

Luncheon will be held at AJ Jurek Post

#1762, 655 New Rd. Swormville, 114051 at

11:30 AM. Cost \$6.

Dinner will be held at George F. Lamm Post

#622, 962 Wherle Dr. Williamsville, 14221.

Cocktails at 5:30 PM, dinner at 6:30 PM.

Cost is \$30.

Purchase tickets through Erie County American Legion Office, 609 City Hall, Buffalo, 14202 by Friday February 5. No tickets sold at the door.



**Monday December 7**

American Legion Post #735, Annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony, at Noon, Guest speaker: Senator Patrick Gallivan, Refreshments and chili to follow, Public welcome, 35 Legion Parkway, West Seneca

**Sunday December 13**

ALL YOU AN EAT Pancake Breakfast at A. J. Jurek Post #1672, 655 New Rd. Swormville, 14051. From 8 AM to 12:30 PM. Fresh, hot, buttermilk pancakes, "Egglands Best" eggs, link & patty sausage, juice & coffee or tea. Adults \$7, children under 12 \$3, children under 5 free.

**Hamburg Post #527**

Spaghetti dinners served every Thursday from 4:30 to 7 PM. Full order \$8 (2 meatballs), half order \$6. Includes salad. 1 Memorial Dr. Hamburg, 14051

**South Buffalo Post #721**

Monday night dinners at the Post from 5 to 7 PM. 1<sup>st</sup> Monday Spaghetti, 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday Beef 136 Cazenovia St, Buffalo, 14210

**Donovan Post #1626,**

3210 Genesee St., Friday Fish Fries 4 – 8 PM Please try us out!! John Stiegler Cmdr.

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to [thelegionair@gmail.com](mailto:thelegionair@gmail.com) by December 18 for the January edition.  
PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor

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*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*