



## *The Legion-Air*

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Commander

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### **Commander's Message:**

We had a very good Guest Speaker last night at our County meeting, speaking about the Benefits of the Spouse and Children, when a Purple Heart Veteran receives monthly compensation. The benefits are extremely low and do not take in account their actual expenses it takes to support a spouse and dependents. Please help support this issue contact Russell Ward at 716-587-1120 or [russbuis@aol.com](mailto:russbuis@aol.com)

The Legion College is coming up on June 2, 3 & 4 at SUNY Morrisville. Commander Stiegler from the Donovan Post quickly pointed out that this is the same time frame as our County Convention. So for many, they may not be able to attend. The College moved the previous dates up by two weeks this year.

Membership looks healthy, one of our Large Posts with a membership goal of 506 members is at 92% of that goal. Great job to West Seneca Post #735. Clarence Post 838, & North Collins Post 1640 also look good at 96%. If you ever want to know your numbers they can be found on the County website. Vice Commander Sue gets them posted promptly after being received.

Please do not forget about Hill Day in Albany. It looks like we have a fairly good size group going. This is a chance to speak with our elected officials about veteran Issues. I hope to see you there.

Lastly you will find in this newsletter a list of posts that serve meals or host events. When was the last time you attended one of the Pancake breakfasts, fish fry's or a meat raffle? It makes good sense to support these Veterans. It also makes you feel good that you were there to support them.

### **Membership – VC Suzanne Quirk**

Erie County was well represented at the Mid-Winter Conference conducted in Albany from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2017. Our membership numbers were praiseworthy. The data reported from Department as of 1/18/17 was used at the conference. Based on that Erie County is at 84.43% of goal. The target goal for 17JAN was 80% and we surpassed that. The target goal for 6FEB is 85% and we're within 1% of that. I believe we should be able to achieve the February target goal too. My congratulations and deep thanks go out to all of the membership chairpersons for their hard work and dedication. Our efforts also helped Department to achieve membership recruitment of 83.17% of goal. So overall, the atmosphere at the membership meetings was upbeat. Our work is not finished yet, so please carry on with the same perseverance you've demonstrated so far.

The Department Commander will be visiting the 8<sup>th</sup> District at the end of January and the beginning of February. He will visit Erie County on 3FEB. John Sampson, our Department Commander is awarding a pin for those who have signed up one or more new members for the 2017 membership year. Our current data shows that Erie County has recruited 156 new members so far. The form to request these pins is in the "Department Membership Program & Awards Manual" that can be downloaded. I also have copies of these forms. It's very easy to complete, and provides a way to recognize those who were able to recruit just one new member. I'm recommending that any Legionnaire who has recruited new members and is attending the Department Commander's visitation dinner to bring a completed form to receive a pin. The form can also be sent to Department to report those who have earned pins to be presented at a later time. Again, thank you to everyone who takes the phrase "Membership is everyone's responsibility" seriously.

The Buffalo VA Western New York Healthcare System and the American Legion Auxiliary will be hosting the **National Veterans Creative Arts Festival** from October 23 – October 29, 2017.

The Festival began in 1981 in Waco Texas, VA Medical Center as VETS ARTS. Over the years the program has grown and in 1989 became the **NVCAF**. It was designed to spotlight the five creative arts therapies of art, music, dance, drama, and creative writing.

The NVCAF continues to evolve each year as it showcases the artistic achievements of Veterans from across the country. Each Festival features an art exhibit showing the first place artwork from 51 categories. On the last day, Sunday, Oct. 29, a live stage show, with orchestral accompaniment is performed by Veterans. Art workshops and a writing seminar are offered during the Festival week for participants and staff, educating them in a variety of artistic modalities by utilizing the talents of local community artists. There is no competition at the Festival itself, as it is a showcase for previously judged medal winners, held locally at the various VA Hospitals in January or February, the winner advances on to National competition.

In 2016, 3,251 Veterans from 126 VA medical facilities entered the competitions. Of those, approximately 140 medal-winning Veterans were invited to the 2016 NVCAF in Jackson, Mississippi, hosted by the G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center.

In October 2017, the venue will be at the Adams Mark Hotel in Buffalo NY and the live stage show on Sunday, October 29, will be held at UB Center for the Arts in Amherst, NY. The American Legion Auxiliary's responsibility for the 8 day period is planning, supplying, and hosting the hospitality suite. As the Dept. of NY American Legion Auxiliary is the host we are responsible for getting volunteers and donations for the suite such as water bottles, juices (regular and sugar free), granola bars, snacks, fruits, veggies, etc. Letters will go out to local business' asking for donations for such items.

I am very excited about this festival coming to Buffalo, NY. With donations from Auxiliary Units, Legion Posts, Sons of the Legion and Legion Riders this will help with the cost and make this Festival a great success. All monetary donations (including Poppy Money) can be mailed to American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of NY, 112 State St. #1310, Albany, NY 12207 and please mark checks "National Creative Arts 2017".



### **Special Activities – VC Anthony Solina**

I hope everyone is having a nice start to the New Year. I still have some Delta Sonic car wash tickets available. The cost is 10 dollars of which four dollars goes back to the American Legion for a car wash that normally runs over 15 dollars. They do not expire and you receive a free car wash that's good within five days of the original wash. If anyone would like any I can mail them or personally deliver them to you; you may contact me via call/text at (716) 949-3341 or e-mail: [fattony8705@yahoo.com](mailto:fattony8705@yahoo.com) With some of these warm breaks we are having, they are an easy way to clean the salt off your vehicle.

The yearly calendars are still available as we have some left. They are a \$25 donation with a range of 000-999 for the numbers. If anyone would like any or have any to turn in contact me as stated above. I will accept calendars for as long as it is 2017. With it still being early, anyone wishing to buy calendar(s) still have over 330 chances to win!

The 2017 Erie County/8<sup>th</sup> District golf tournament will be coming up this year. The date is set for Friday June 16, which is the day before the 8<sup>th</sup> District Convention. We will be having a shotgun start at noon at Concord Crest golf course with steak roast and open bar to all golfers and awards following at Tehan Post 1449. Letters will be going out to all 8<sup>th</sup> District posts soon. Thank you and have a nice day.

### **NVCAF Continued**

Thank you for your support and please mark your calendars for the Live Stage Show Performance on Sunday, Oct. 29 at UB Center for the Arts. This show is amazing and you won't want to miss it!

Any questions please contact me either by email [ambaglio@verizon.net](mailto:ambaglio@verizon.net) or phone 716-432-1354. Thank you again.

Anne M. Baglio,  
Local NVCAF Chairman

## Boys State News Tom O'Connell

Program will be June 25 to July 1. Bus will leave Post 1041 at 8 AM, each boy will receive a bag lunch and drink for the ride. Applications are now on the Department website. Call me if you need help at 867-5730



## Oratorical Wayne Sorrentino

Erie County has again NOT been successful with signing up even one student for this great contest. For next year, I hope the Posts work with their local schools to recruit contestants for next year and submit their name to the County. We all have a part to play in the success of this contest.

## Newell-Faulkner Post 880 Honor/Color Guard

presented the Colors at the swearing in ceremony of The Honorable Chris Jacobs held at The Buffalo History Museum on January 7th, 2017. Chris Jacobs was recently elected as the 60th District New York State Senator.



Erie County made a donation to the leading candidate for Department Commander at the Mid-Winter Conference. Pictured left to right, John Siefert, Tim van Patten, Kathleen Garvey, Jim Bojanowski, Candidate Rena Nessler, Nelson Oldfield, and Tony Solina. Picture by Sue Quirk.



## Thursday County Meeting Dates

Executive Dinner Meeting: 6:30 PM

Regular meeting starts approximately at 8 PM

Thanks go out to the 24 Posts who attended in January. Please join us in February.

## February 23, Newcomb-Long Post #928

7353 Erie Rd., Derby, NY 14047

Menu: Pork Chops, Potato, Vegetables, salad, dessert, etc.

## March 30, Concord Post #431

## April 27, East Aurora Post #362

## Sunday February 12

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

Stephen Sikora Post #1322

950 Payne Ave.

N. Tonawanda, NY 14120

12:00 PM - Membership Meeting

1:00 PM – General Meeting

## March 6 & 7 Albany Hill Day

Call the Office to be included in our visitation group to lobby for Veteran's benefits with our State representatives. Housing will be at the Desmond Hotel. The Department website will have additional detailed information.

## Erie County Office Hours

Staffed by Jim Bojanowski every Mon., Wed., & Fri. 7:30 am to 12:30 pm, excluding holidays.

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



**SUBMISSIONS**  
For the March  
"The Legion-Air"  
Due February 24  
[thelegionair@gmail.com](mailto:thelegionair@gmail.com)



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
The Erie County Committee  
609 City Hall  
65 Niagara Square  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
PHONE: (716) 852-6500  
FAX: (716) 852-4664  
e-mail: [veteran14202@verizon.net](mailto:veteran14202@verizon.net)



### **Sunday February 5**

Super Bowl Party at George F. Lamm Post at 962 Wehrle Dr., Cheektowaga, NY 14221. \$10

### **Saturday February 11**

Annual meat raffle at Orchard Park Post #567 located at 3740 N. Buffalo, Rd., 14127.

### **Sunday February 12**

Donovan Post Pancake Breakfast 8 am-Noon, All you can eat pancakes, sausage ,scrambled eggs, juice, coffee, \$8.00 over 12, 4-11 \$4.00, under 4 free. Bring Your Valentine! Located 3210 Genesee St., Cheektowaga, NY 14225.

### **Sunday February 19**

ALL YOU CAN 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 \$8, children under 12 \$4, under 5 free.

### **Monday February 20**

Niagara Frontier Post #1041 will host a breakfast and bus trip to Seneca Niagara Casino. Breakfast at Post at 10 AM Bus leaves Post at 11 AM. We return to the Post by 6 PM. Call Tom at Post 875-9276.

### **Sunday March 12**

40 & 8 Voiture 476 presents trip to Presque Isle Casino. Buffet breakfast at 9 AM, Bus leaves Niagara Frontier Post at 10 AM. Contact Tom O'Connell at 867-5730 for more info. Cost \$30, returns by 6:30 PM.

### **Newell Faulkner Post #880**

Wednesday's 50 cent wings, dine in only.  
Thursday nights is steak night.  
Friday night's fish fries and specials.

**FJ Donovan Post #1626**, Fish Fry's are back, Friday's 4-8 PM, Szaras Catering.

**Hamburg Post #527**, weekly Thursday Spaghetti dinners from 4:30 to 7 PM. Full order \$8, half order \$6. 2 Memorial Dr. off Evans St.

**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 Roast Beef. 136 Cazenovia St, Buffalo, 14210.

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to [thelegionair@gmail.com](mailto:thelegionair@gmail.com) by 2/24 for the March edition. PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor