



The Legion-Air

Jerry Kowalski
Commander

Jim Bojanowski
Adjutant/Editor



thelegionair@gmail.com
(716) 852-6500

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Commander's Message:

Here we are in the middle of summer already. Since the Erie County Convention June 7th. I went to Glab Post for the Boy's State Orientation and Breakfast. I talked to several of the boys. I am encouraged by what I heard from this year's group. We are going to be well represented.

June 21st, I attended 8th District Convention at the Sikora Post #1322 in North Tonawanda. Joe Rich was stepping down as Commander. Steve Cybart became the new Commander.

On a sad note, the Hamburg Post lost their Commander John Grotke. The funeral home was overflowing with people. It's a testament to how much he was loved by the Post #527 family.

On July 16th I was invited to give a speech for the new Veterans Kiosk at the Welcome Center on the NYS Thruway on Grand Island. The Kiosk explains to visitors of all the programs that NYS Veteran's Organizations do for Veterans.

We have a full calendar of events coming... Our first event coming up is the Erie County Fair. The E.C.A.L. will have a display booth set up in the Historical Building. This year's theme is "Red, White, & Blue". We are looking for volunteers to staff the booth. If interested contact VC Howard Patton III. Veteran's Day is Aug. 10th. The parking is free and you can enter the Fair by showing your Legion ID card. You will also receive a \$10 voucher for food on that day. The day will start at noon with Father Michael Johnson, conducting a Catholic Mass. Followed by E.C. Adjutant Jim Bojanowski, as MC for the Flag & Rose Ceremony, in the racetrack infield by the Flag pole. Please come and join us.

October 2 - 6 at the Pine Lawn Cemetery. The Vietnam Moving Wall and Goldstar Tribute Wall will be on display in Cheektowaga. The display is open 24 hrs. E.C. will have a Membership table there, and we are looking for volunteers to man the table.

Membership – VC Howard Patton III

Getting fellow veterans engaged with the American Legion often comes down to connection, relevance, and personal impact. Here are some creative, relationship-centered ways to spark that interest:

1. Tell the *Why* Through Stories

- **Video Spotlights:** Interview local members about why they joined, what they've gained, and post clips on social media or at community events.

2. Connect Through Shared Missions

- **Community Service Projects:** Organize visible, hands-on projects (like helping a fellow vet fix their home, packing care kits, mentoring local youth) and invite non-members to join. When people *do* the mission together, they often want to be a part of it long-term.
- **Buddy Check Events:** Turn outreach into connection. Host quarterly "Buddy Check BBQs" where vets are invited just to reconnect, check in on each other, and feel part of something without a hard pitch.

3. Offer Relevant Workshops and Resources

- **Veteran Life Series:** Offer a monthly class on VA benefits, job transitions, entrepreneurship, or PTSD coping tools—free and open to all vets. Then show how the Legion supports them beyond the class.
- **Check Post 1:** Veterans could be persuaded to transfer to your post
- **Social Media:** To tap into the younger Veterans, social media is a great tool, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc. Get creative and see what works.

Americanism – VC Pat Murphy

The founders of the American Legion developed the four pillars of the Legion; Veteran Affairs, National Security, Children and Youth, and Americanism. They believed they had a duty to spread these ideas to the country and its citizens. Love of country and its values, simple stated is “Americanism”. Educating citizens about Americanism is vital for a strong nation. We must be on constant guard to protect our country and our values. Americans tend to forget and not worry, assuming SOMEONE will take care of it, and that is usually the American fighting man and women, not the politicians.

The U.S. flag, our justice system, how we have set up our freedoms, and democracy. Are defined by our constitution. The American Legion has always fought to make citizens aware of the dangers of other ideologies. We must constantly educate the youth, of the forces that would take their rights and freedoms from them. We must show them that, The United States of America, is the greatest nation and strive to be first, and better at everything this nation does. Again, Thank You for your service.

Boys State - Bernie Romanowski

Many thanks to all the Post who supported the Boys State Program this year. It was a very successful year when you consider a young man from Erie County got elected to be Governor. Congratulations to David Brophy sponsored by Clarnc Post 838. David will be invited to our August meeting, since he was at Boys Nation during our July Meeting. The American Legion posted numerous pictures of Boys Nation and Girls Nation on Facebook.

The 40 & 8 Organization funded a candidate, but they were not previously recognized. My sincere apologies to them. Ron and Debbie Diebold went with me to Amherst high school to interview boys. The boys filled out an application online, but sometimes they have no idea who is sponsoring them.

It seems every year there will be one young man who signs up for the program and then changes his mind. It is strongly suggested that you stress the financial obligation to the parents. The deadline for refunds is usually 30 May. If they do not show up on Departure Day the parents can be held liable. They sign a notarized document. One Post ran into this problem and handled it very well.



Erie County Fair Veterans Day Sunday 8/10/25 – Jim Bojanowski

- Free admission and a \$10 voucher for all Veterans, Auxiliary, and SAL members.
- Fair opens at 11 AM.
- Mass at Noon at the Family Entertainment Complex by Erie County Chaplain Rev. Michael Johnson.
- Veterans Memorial Service at 1:30 PM in the track infield. Guest speaker is Brigadier General Anthony F. Caruana, US Army Retired. MC will be PDVC Jim Bojanowski.
- LCDR Lauren Schmiegel, USN, Commanding Officer of the Buffalo Military Entrance Processing Station will be conducting a Ceremonial Swear-in for all branches of service, Individuals participating are from all parts of WNY.
- US Flag Retirement Ceremony each evening at 6:30 PM presented to a local Veteran.

Commander's Message: Continued

Oktoberfest is next and PCC Ted Balbierz is our event Chair. So, more information will follow. Last year we donated \$7,000 to Variety Club Telethon, let's work to beat that total.

To those Post that can't attend our monthly meetings, I will be happy to come to your Post monthly meeting. Give me a date & time, and I will be there. We can discuss Post Operations, Legion Reports, membership and anything else your members need information on or help with.

The summer is short, and has been hot. Spend time with your family. Let's have some fun, and be ready for a new year with much success to all.

Special Activities – VC Paul Wackowski

Along with a new Legion year also comes a new calendar year. It's been an excellent year and I am hoping to duplicate or exceed sales for the upcoming year. Currently in the process of designing the new calendars.



Commander Jerry Kowalski presents the Department 1st Place Jr. Shooter Awards to Orchard Park Post #567 Coach Leif Johnson and 2nd VC George Boller.

Compliance – Ted Balbierz

The Electronic Bell-Jar (aka: E-Tabs) Resolution that was passed by Erie County, has been added to the 2025 Department Legislative Agenda. The bill has passed both the New York State Assembly and Senate and is currently on Governor Hochul desk. This bill was vetoed in 2018 by then Governor Cuomo.

If signed into law, Posts may be eligible for up to 5 E-Tab Machines with 2 Games loaded on each and may be acquired thru legacy Bell-Jar suppliers on consignment from the Bell-Jar manufacturer for a 65/35 split favoring the Post.

E-Tabs machines can be used with existing paper Bell-Jar games. See the link for info.

<https://equipment.arrowinternational.com/electronic-pull-tabs>

Scouting – Felton Davis

I am looking for ways to improve the applications for the Eagle Scout Awards and Scholarships. I know many Posts sponsor Scouting in their community. Let's give these Eagle Scouts the recognition they deserve. At the higher levels of our organization, The National American Legion Eagle Scout received a \$10,000 scholarship this year. There are also unit recognitions for supporting Scouting. Now is the time for promoting these scholarships and unit awards. For more information and your suggestions to help improve the program and the number of submissions, please contact me at: "felton1@aol.com".



Regular County Meetings at 7 PM

The next Regular Meeting of the Erie County Committee will be held on Thursday 8/14 at Alfred J. Jurek Post #1672 located at New and Smith Rds., E Amherst, NY 14051. The Post will be serving an Italian Sausage, Potato Salad, Corn, and Dessert for \$10 per person, starting at 6 PM. NOTE: The meeting is moved up in the month due to attendance of Officers at the Tampa National Convention.

Thanks go out to the 25 Posts that were in attendance for the July County Meeting at Lamm Post #622. Posts in attendance were; 63, 64, 205, 362, 430, 431, 527, 567, 607, 622, 799, 838, 900, 1041, 1131, 1346, 1477, 1528, 1586, 1587, 1626, 1640, 1659, 1672, & 1928. Hopefully we can see representatives from all the 35 Posts in Erie County on 8/14.

Future County Meetings;

September 25, Matthew Glab #1477

October 30, Iroquois #1587

November 20, Gabriel A. Rodriguez #1928

National Convention – Tampa, FL August 22 – 28

Law & Order – VC Pat Murphy

As of this month there are 35 fires being fought and 64 under suppression across the country according to the National Fire Service. We see on the news only a small percentage of the fires that the fire services across the country fight on a yearly basis.

Please check with your friends and neighbors to see if you have an unsung hero in your community. They don't go looking for the spotlight all too often they shy away from it. It is up to you to promote your town and the community you live in.



**SUBMISSIONS
For the September
"The Legion-Air"
Due August 25
thelegionair@gmail.com**



Father Mike Johnson with Spencer Rhyans of the Lake Shore Volunteer Fire Company who received the Department American Legion Law and Order Award for EMT of the Year at the Syracuse Convention.
Picture by Sue Quirk.



This past year, Jesse Clipper Post 430 reached 112 % of its membership goal, thanks to the invaluable assistance of our members. On the left, is Elder Garey Burt Sr., who transferred from Ohio to our Post. On the right, recruiter Chaplain Deacon Michael Davis of Friendship Baptist Church, who's dedication and effort have been instrumental in our recruitment efforts. Elder Burt retired as Deputy Warden in the Ohio Department of Corrections. Deacon Davis retired from the US Air Force. He is a member of The Love Alive Fellowship.



Carol Schaller was presented with the Women of Distinction award by NYS Assemblyman Bill Conrad at the Milton J. Brounsidle Post 205 on June 30, 2025. Carol is volunteer for veteran's services, a past President Auxiliary Unit 205. She has coordinated multiple veteran services nights, welcomed benefits advisors as guest speakers and presenters, and is an avid fundraiser for veterans causes. Schaller is also a former President of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Auxiliary, Chapter 187, where she would arrange for visits to the Buffalo VAMC and deliver gifts to hospitalized veterans. She is a volunteer with WNY Heroes, Inc. For a decade now, she has been working in support of the organization's mission and annual charity gala. Schaller lives in the Town of Tonawanda with her husband, Vietnam War veteran Jim Schaller.



Delegates from Erie County joined others to visit 6 Posts during the Syracuse Department Convention. In attendance were; Chuck Herschlag, Timothy Van Patten, John & Cindie Siefert, Kathleen Garvey, Sue Quirk, Joe Porempski, Jerry Kowalski, Paul Wackowski, & Jim Bojanowski.

Saturday August 2, Sardinia Post #1131 Annual Steak Roast Dinner Fundraiser from 4-6 PM at Sardinia Veterans Park, 13169 Genesee Rd., Sardinia. \$30 per person. Tickets available at Erie County Meetings or contact PPC Jim Wiedemann at 716-374-3335.

Sunday August 23, Frank L. Gierlach Post #1320, 50 Gates Ave., will have a Hot Dog Roast from 9 AM to 1 PM during the Sloan Village Yard Sale. Also holding a basket raffle.

Orchard Park Post #567, 5784 Ellis Rd., Orchard Park, Dinners at the Post are from 4 – 6:30 PM (or until sold out). Monday: Beef on Weck, Tuesday: Tacos: Tacos, choice of beef or chicken, Hard shell or Soft. Wednesday: Chiavetta's Chicken & Ribs BBQ 2 – 6 PM, Thursday: Pasta Night! Comes with Salad, 2 meatballs and garlic bread. Friday: From the Grill. Every 2nd Friday Cruise Nights 5 – 8 PM. Friday 8/1 – Music on the Lawn 6- 9 PM with Swift Kick.

South Buffalo Post #721, 136 Cazenovia St., Buffalo, NY - Summer Cook Outs are back! Weather permitting – Every Monday Thru August 25 - we will be serving hot dogs, hamburgers, cheeseburgers & grilled chicken breast from 5–7 PM. Post # is 716-825-9557.

Newell Faulkner Post #880, 2912 Legion Drive, Eden, NY 14057. Normal Hours: Tues., Wed., & Thurs. 3 to 9 PM, Fri. 11 am to 9 PM & Sat. 11:30 am to 9 PM. DINE - IN OR TAKE OUT, Tuesday Taco Night, Wednesday 10 for \$8.50 Wings special, dine in only, Thursday Steak Night, Friday Fish Fry & Specials, Saturday Pizza & Wings and Sandwiches. www.post880.com

Matthew Glab Post #1477, 1965 Abbott Road, Lackawanna, NY 14218, serving Wed and Friday 2-8 PM, Fish Fry's, Seafood, Burgers and weekly specials, Wednesday 75 cent wings, Taco's \$4.

Francis J. Donovan Post #1626, 3210 Genesee Street, Cheektowaga. Fish Frys and more every Friday from 4 - 8 PM. Live music entertainment every Friday from 7 - 10 PM. Come visit us at the Foxhole Bar!

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by 8/25 for the September edition. PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor

Erie County Website – eriecountyal.org

Phone: (716) 852 - 6500 Veteran14202@verizon.net Office Hours, M,W,F – 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM
DNY website - <https://nylegion.net> National American Legion website - <https://www.legion.org>