



The Legion-Air

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Commander's Message:

Happy summer to everyone.

We just enjoyed the Erie County Fair. I want to thank Ted Balbierz, Joe Orzechowski, Jim Bojanowski, Sue Quirk, Howard Patton, Pat Murphy, and Paul Wackowski for putting together our E.C.A.L. display and donating time at the booth. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated more than you know. On Veteran's Day at the Fair, Father Michael Johnson held a Mass at Noon. We then moved to the track infield, for the Flag and Rose Ceremony, MC'd by Jim Bojanowski. This event takes a lot of coordination to get all the units on the same page. Jim did another outstanding job. The E.C. Fair staff, provided cold water and 2 tents set up for Veteran's, and audience during the ceremony for some HOT weather relief. I was disappointed not to see more Legion Veteran's at both events. What has happened in the past is done. Old history, it's time to move forward from the past. Let's go to the Fair, every year.

In July, I went to the Dept. Convention in Syracuse. What is done at Dept. level is a collection of everything that happens in the State. The reports tell you the status of each Post. It is vitally important to get your Consolidated Post Report, Officer's Certification form, and Post Data Report, into our County Adjutant Jim Bojanowski. A healthy Post is a healthy Legion.

I will be going to A.L. National Convention next week, with our E.C. Staff. I am interested in learning how National works. I will be reporting to you next month.

I hope to attend the Seneca Nation's Fall Festival, at Iroquois Post #1587 in September. I have been there in the past. It is well worth the drive to see the Seneca Nation at their finest.

A special event is coming to Cheektowaga October 2 to 6. The Vietnam Moving Wall and Goldstar Mother's Tribute. The wall is open 24

Membership – VC Howard Patton III

This month I would like to concentrate on areas to help increase our membership.

1. Increase Brand Awareness

- When out and about, i.e., the supermarket, mall, gas station, be sure to wear your legion cap, or Veteran cap. If and when you see a Veteran with a hat, shirt, or license plate engage them and tell them about the American Legion and invite them to join.

2. Create Effective Membership Teams within your Post

- Everyone can be a part of the team. You need people who are go-getters to work on membership year-round. The team should be organized with clear, obtainable membership goals and a plan of action to achieve them that has a developed set of action plans that are repeatable. This can be made fun through incentives as well.

3. Remember the free tactics

- **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.

Commander's Message: Continued

hours a day and we will need some volunteers to staff our membership table.

I would like to reach out to all Posts to schedule a visit. I will come out to your Post meeting; I do have several on a list. Contact me at jckowalski@roadrunner.com.

Oktoberfest – Ted Balbierz

The Erie County American Legion Family will be hosting 2025 Oktoberfest; to benefit Variety Club 2026 Telethon on Sunday October 19, from Noon to 5 pm at the George F Lamm Post 622 Grove, 962 Wherle Dr, Williamsville, NY, 14221.

Thank you to everyone who supported last year's event We presented \$7,000 at the 2025 Telethon. Our two-year total is \$13,000. Years ago, many Posts presented checks at the Telethon at various satellite locations. Children even emptied their piggy banks into Fishbowls for this very worthy cause.

As Children and Youth is one of the Pillars of our American Legion Family, this year, we would like to encourage each Legion Family; Post, Unit, Squadron and Riders to make a minimum donation of \$500 to support Children & Youth. (Creditable for each Consolidated Post Report). Please bring or send all donations payable to: Erie County American Legion, memo: Variety Club Oktoberfest to: Erie County American Legion, 65 Niagara Square Rm 609, Buffalo, NY, 14202. By the numbers, if just the 35 Posts of Erie County each donate \$500 that would be a combined donation of \$17,500 not including all Units, Squadrons, Riders and proceeds from the event.

Erie County American Legion Auxiliary will be soliciting donations from all Legion Family organizations to support a Basket Raffle & Bake Sale during this event. Please reach out to Past Erie County Auxiliary Presidents Rosemary O'Connell at roeroe629@aol.com for Basket donations or Anne Baglio at ambaglio@verizon.net for Bake Sale donations for the event.

Event Posters will be available at September County meeting or by contacting me at tedb06@verizon.net or 716-534-6288 and this year tickets will be available at the door.

We are looking forward to everyone joining us in supporting Western New York's Children and Youth. Together we can make a difference. Your consideration; support are greatly appreciated...

Yours in the Legion,
Ted, Rosemary, and Anne



Americanism – VC Pat Murphy

September is a month that is packed with days of remembrance. The first day is Patriots' Day the 11th of September also known as National Day of Service this is in honor of those killed on September 11, 2001. This was made a law to honor all those killed on that date in the terrorist attacks.

POW/MIA recognition day is always the 3rd Friday in September. This is to honor all those commitments and sacrifices that were made for our nation and recognize all those missing in action, you are not forgotten. Even with the advances in forensic, we are still recovering the remains of unidentified service people from past wars and conflicts.

Constitution day and citizenship day are combined on the date of September 17th to be observed for the constitution and the citizens of our country because we the people have made laws we live by and need to educate the young on why and how these laws were made

Gold Star Mother day is the last Sunday of the month I will only add that this is an honor no one wants. But we must honor the sacrifices of families to this country. To have given a son or daughter or a member of their family, for this country, is above and beyond, the call to duty. The banner with a blue star indicates a member in the armed forces, the number of stars represents the number of family members in the service. A Gold star represents a service member who was killed while on active duty the number of stars indicates the number of service members killed.

Of Note. The Gold Star Mothers was created in 1928 Grace Darling Seibold who was a founding member with 24 other Gold Star mothers. Who had lost sons in WW 1, met in Washington D.C... One of the most well-known Gold Star mothers is, Aletta Sullivan. She had 5 sons who were all killed after the ship they were on, the USS Juneau, was torpedoed during the battle of Guadalcanal. In their honor the USS Sullivan was commissioned and is now at Buffalo Naval Park.

Special Activities – VC Paul Wackowski

The 2026 calendars are available for distribution. They make excellent gifts for any occasion and great Christmas stocking stuffers. Contact me at; [716] 262 - 5245 or at empirestate716@yahoo.com for pickup arrangements.



Law & Order – VC Pat Murphy

Our first responders, Police officers, Firefighters, EMT's, are in constant danger as they perform their responsibilities. We have heroes living in our communities, none of the first responders thought this is the day I die or face death and traumatic injuries. Please find your local heroes and submit them for our law-and-order award. Just being nominated is an honor and recognition for them.

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.

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>

Write a letter to the Governor Hochul urging her to sign this legislation.

Erie County Fair Veterans Day

Sunday 8/10/25 – Jim Bojanowski

The day was very successful with free admission and a \$10 voucher for all Veterans, Auxiliary, and SAL members. Erie County Chaplain Rev.

Michael Johnson celebrated a Mass at Noon. The Veterans Memorial Service was held at 1:30 PM in the track infield. Guest speaker was Brigadier General Anthony F. Caruana, US Army Retired. MC with PDVC Jim Bojanowski as MC. LCDR Lauren Schmiegel, USN, Commanding Officer of the Buffalo Military Entrance Processing Station conducted a Ceremonial Swear-in for 23 new recruits from all branches of service from across WNY. A US Flag Retirement Ceremony was held each evening at 6:30 PM which was presented to a local Veteran.

Regular County Meetings at 7 PM

The next Regular Meeting of the Erie County Committee will be held on Thursday 9/25 at the Matthew Glab Post #1477 located at 1965 Abbott Rd., Lackawanna, NY 14218. The Post will be serving a Roast Beef dinner for \$10 per person, starting at 6 PM.

Thanks go out to the 21 Posts that were in attendance for the August County Meeting at Alfred J. Jurek Post #1672. Posts in attendance were; 63, 64, 205, 362, 430, 431, 527, 607, 622, 799, 838, 900, 1041, 1320, 1477, 1528, 1586, 1626, 1659, 1672, & 1928. Hopefully we can see representatives from all the 35 Posts in Erie County on 9/25.

Future County Meetings;

October 30, Iroquois #1587

November 20, Gabriel A. Rodriguez #1928

December 18, Francis J. Donovan #1626

January 29, Open, need a Post Host, no dinner is scheduled due to potential weather issues. Previously scheduled Post had a conflict with the date.

Thursday 10/2 to Monday 10/6

The Mount Calvary Heritage Foundation will honor our nation's heroes with two memorial veteran walls - The Moving Wall and the Gold Stars Tribute Wall at Pine Lawn Cemetery in Cheektowaga, NY. This event will be a powerful and moving tribute to Vietnam, Gulf, Iraq, and Afghanistan war troops killed in action. We are anticipating hosting over 50,000 throughout the duration of the event. The Erie County American Legion will need volunteers to staff a table at there. Contact Howard Patton or Jerry Kowalski.



**SUBMISSIONS
For the October
"The Legion-Air"
Due September 26
thelegionair@gmail.com**



The Department of New York Boys State Award was presented to 2025 Governor David Brophy of Clarence High School at the 8/14 Erie County Meeting by PDVC Jim Bojanowski and Boys State County Chair Bernie Romanowski. David is pictured with his proud parents and was sponsored by Clarence Post 838. David overviewed his experiences at NY Boys State and at Boys Nation, as one of two New York representatives. Picture by Sue Quirk.



PCC Paul Wackowski presents an Erie County \$500 Education Award to Reese Beiter of Iroquois High School at the 8/14 meeting. Picture by Sue Quirk.



Pictured at the Erie County American Legion Booth at the Fair are (L to R) Tom Deinzer, Howard Patton III, Joe Porempski, and Rev. Eugene Pierce. Thanks to all who helped set up the booth and staff it during the week.



At Hugh Gilbert Strickland American Legion Post 138 located on Tampa Bay at the 2025 National American Legion Convention, pictured (L to R) Jim Bojanowski, Joe Porempski, Jerry Kowalski, Paul Wackowski, and Ted Balbierz. Also attending the National Tampa Convention were Chuck Herschlag, Timothy Van Patten, and John Siefert. Next year's National Convention will be held in Louisville Kentucky.

Sunday September 14, 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 \$10, children under 12 \$4, children < 5 free.

October 18 & 19, USAF Band & Singing Sergeants' Free Concerts in Buffalo Area. 10/18 @ 3 pm / N. Tonawanda High School Auditorium, 10/19 @ 3 pm / Kleinhans Music Hall.
<https://www.music.af.mil/USAFBand/Events/National-Tours/Concert-Band>

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.

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 9/26 for the October 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>