



The Legion-Air

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Commander

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**AMERICAN
LEGION**

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February 2024

Commander's Message:

I would like to thank all those Legionnaires from Erie County who were able to dig out and attend Department of NY 105th Midwinter Conference last weekend in Albany.

While the weather limited this year's attendance, I can attest that it was a very productive conference and I would encourage all Erie County 35 Posts to send representatives to future conferences and conventions, not only to participate in the many Training Opportunities, but to get to know fellow Legionnaires and Department Leadership Team.

I am pleased to report that the Department Executive Committee expedited approval of Erie County/Brounshidle Post Limited Electronic Gaming Resolution and we are moving forward to encourage all of New York 821 American Legion Posts to pursue Grass Roots Efforts to contact and encourage each of your Assemblyman & Senators to support the legislation to pass NY Assembly Bill 4813 & Senate Bill 1959.

While in Albany, I met with representatives of Arrow International Inc. who manufacture traditional Bell Jar Games and Electronic Bell Jar gaming machines. We spoke at length and when this gaming Bill becomes law, Arrow International is willing to provide Electronic Bell Jar Machines at no up-front cost to our Posts, in exchange for a 65/35 share. (65% of proceeds go to Post, 35% to Arrow)

Arrow representative is sending me pamphlets detailing the impact that Electronic Bell Jar gaming has experienced in surrounding states and stated that we can expect to experience a 4 to 5x increase in Bell Jar revenue for a fraction of the effort managing this new revenue stream. Where traditional Bell Jar game management has been approximately 2 plus hours a week, with less handling of tickets and online reporting the Electronic Gaming management is approximately 10 Minutes a week...

Membership – VC Jerry Kowalski

At this half point of the year, our next goal is to have 85% paid membership for each Post. To date we have 18 out of 35 Posts above this goal. Members who have not renewed for the 2024 year, their membership have expired. Call your Membership Chairman and get your renewal today, and become a member in good standing again. New members are vital to every Post. They are out there keep looking.

Special Activities – VC Pat Murphy

Happy New Year, I hope all is well with everyone. Calendar sales were brisk. I would estimate we sold over 3/4s of the 1000 calendars. Some are still outstanding. Please return all unsold calendars returned so I can do a final report. I have already been mailing out winners for 2024. My contact information is 716 289 4143 or email at murphy8693@gmail.com.

Commander's Message: Continued

As previously stated, the New York State Legislature passed these Bills in 2018, only for them to be vetoed by then Governor Cuomo. As such we need all Erie County and Department Posts to lobby their State Representatives to ensure the passage of the additional Funding opportunity.

We look forward to this year's Department Convention in Niagara Falls and it is being reported that both 2025 & 2026 Department Conventions will be held in Syracuse.

May God Continue to Bless Our Troops around the World and God Bless America! In Continued Service for God & Country...

CALLING ALL SEABEES ! Planning a Seabee Birthday Dinner Saturday in March 2024. Please contact Post 205 Historian Derek Sansone at: (585) 313-9671 or killerbee05@hotmail.com by Saturday, February 24, 2024 so I can plan.

Americanism – VC Paul Wackowski

The Spanish and American War was a conflict that took place in 1898 between the United States and Spain. The war was primarily fought over Spanish colonial possession in the Caribbean and the Pacific, including Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam. Several factors led to the outbreak of the War.

Cuban War for independence: Cuba had been fighting for independence from Spain for many years, and the United States had been sympathetic to the Cuban cause due to its strategic and economic interests in the region.

Yellow Journalism: Sensationalized and often exaggerated reporting by newspapers, known as “Yellow journalism”, fueled public outrage in the United States over Spain’s harsh treatment of the Cuban people.

Sinking of the USS Main: The American battleship USS Main exploded and sank in Havana Harbor in February 1898. Although the cause of the explosion was not definitively determined, the event was used as a rallying cry for war by those in the United States who sought intervention in Cuba.

The conflict itself was relatively short, lasting just a few months, and resulted in a decisive victory for the United States. The war formally began in April 1898 and ended in August of the same year. The U.S. military achieved significant victories in Cuba, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico.

The Treaty of Paris, signed in December 1898, formally ended the war and forced Spain to cede control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States. This marked the end of the Spanish Empire’s colonial rule in the Americas and the beginning of an increased US presence as a major power in the region.

The war had far-reaching consequences for both countries. For the United States, it marked the emergence of the country as a global power and set the stage for increased involvement in international affairs. In Spain, the defeat and loss of its colonies led to a period of national introspection and soul-searching known as the “Generation 98”.

Overall, the Spanish-American War had a significant impact on the history of the United States, Spain and the regions involved in the conflict, shaping the course of events well into the 20th century.



Department Leadership Dinner

The Erie County American Legion Family will host Department American Legion Commander Timothy J. Collmer, Department Auxiliary President Karen St. Helaire, and SAL Detachment Commander Peter J. DeAngelis on Friday, February 16, 2024. The Dinner will be held at the Milton J. Brounshidle Post #205, 3354 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217. Cash Bar Cocktails will be at 5:30 PM and the Dinner at 6:30 PM. Dinner cost is \$35. Ticket deadline will be Wednesday February 7, 2024 thru the County Office or pay at the County meetings. \$1 each Boosters, plus various Ad sizes, due 2/2/24.

Legionnaire of the Year – Kathleen Garvey

Legionnaire of the Year Resumes for Erie County Legionnaire of the Year are due April 8, 2024. The 2024 Guidelines and Information are available the Erie County American Legion Webpage: Legionnaire of the Year page (eriecountyal.org). The 2024 Guidelines are very similar to past guidelines. Submitting a Member for Legionnaire of the Year is a great way to recognize our Legionnaires. Submit the resume of your candidate to Kathleen Garvey, 5792 Main Street, Williamsville NY 14221. NO LATER THAN APRIL 8, 2024

From VC Paul Wackowski

On behalf of Post 64 American Legion Family, “Thank You!” to the Erie County American Legion Post members that took time from their busy day to say “Farewell” and honor Richard [Dick] Allein, who was called by the Supreme Commander to serve in his Army of Angels.

A big “Thank You”! to the Francis J. Donovan Post 1626 Honor Guard for providing the Military Honors.

Richard {Dick} Allein- The Rock of David McKeever Post 64 served as: Past Post Commander and Chaplain. Erie County Chaplain and was a member of the County Nominations Committee for a number of years.

Boys State – Felton Davis

1. Reminder to all Post units to submit their Post's Chair's contact information

to: felton1@aol.com as soon as possible. Posts 205, 430, 1477 and 1928 have responded so far.

2. 2024 Boys State packets for each Post are here at the meeting tonight for pickup.

3. a. Requests for Proposals (RFP) for transportation of our Boys State candidates should go out tomorrow for bids. Replies are due back by 2/8/2024 by close of business. Twelve companies are included in this RFP for bids.

b. Alternative sources are being explored and may also be sent RFPs.

4. A Virtual (Zoom) presentation for all Post participating in this year's Boys State program to explain the procedures and suggestions is planned for Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 8:00 PM. The link for the meeting will be sent to the Posts next week.

5. We are looking for additional members from our Posts to join the Boys State Committee to help in the planning and management of the Boys State Program.

Past Commanders Club – Gary Oakes

Any Past Commander that is interested in becoming a member or already a member and want info in the PCC club. Please send an email to me at Goakes_jr@hotmail.com. I will pass it on to have it put on our email list. The next PCC meeting April 10th at 7pm. Held at Donovan Post.

Oratorical – Wayne Sorrentino

Legionnaires: There were no contestants for the Erie County Oratorical Contest scheduled to be held at the MJ Brounshidle Post on Saturday, 12-9-23, starting at 1100 hours. My thanks to the MJ Brounshidle Post for allowing us to use their facilities for this annual contest and for the several Legionnaires who stepped up to assist with the host of required duties. Many communications via phone and email with our local high school POCs, who agreed to push the contest, still saw no interest in this annual American Legion activity from their student bodies. I was not able to attend the District 8 Contest so I cannot provide a report.

THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY



Regular County Meetings at 7 PM

The next Regular Meeting of the Erie County Committee will be held on Thursday 2/29 at Milton J. Brounshidle Post #205 located at 3354 Delaware Ave. Kenmore, 14217. Mexican food available.

Thanks go out to the 18 Posts that attended the December County Meeting, 63, 205, 362, 430, 527, 607, 622, 799, 838, 1041, 1320, 1477, 1528, 1586, 1587, 1626, 1672, & 1928.

Hopefully we can see representatives from all the 35 Posts in Erie County at the 2/29 meeting.

Future County Meetings;

March 28, David McKeever Post #64

April 25, East Aurora Post #362

May 16, LL Tillman Post #900

8th District Conference

2/4/2024 at the Milton J. Brounshidle Post #205 located at 3354 Delaware Ave. Kenmore, 14217 at 1 PM. Membership and Finance Meetings at Noon.

Erie County Convention – Saturday 6/1 at Matthew Glab Post #1477.

8th District Convention – Saturday 6/15 at the Francis J. Donovan Post #1626.

Department Convention – Wednesday 7/17 thru Friday 7/19/2024

Erie County Website – eriecountyal.org
Office Hours, M,W,F – 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM



SUBMISSIONS
For the March
"The Legion-Air"
Due March 1
thelegionair@gmail.com



Erie County Commander Ted Balbierz presents a donation to Keith Koster, the leading candidate for Department Commander. Also pictured (L to R) Timothy Van Patten, Jim Bojanowski, Cindy Koster, Rev. Michael Johnson, Joe Porempski, and John Siefert.

Saturday February 10, Spaghetti Dinner at the Milton J. Brounshidle Post #205 from 4 to 7 PM.

Sunday February 18, 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.

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, 1956 Abbott Road, Lackawanna, NY 14218, serving Wed, and Friday 2-8 PM, Fish Fry's, Seafood, Burgers & weekly specials, Wednesday 75 cent wings and \$3 Tacos.

Francis J. Donovan Post #1626, 3210 Genesee St., Cheektowaga. Come and joins us for our Fish Fry Friday's. Dinners from 4-8pm with a live Band from 8-11pm. Dine in or take out available. Call 716-896-3346.

Hamburg Post #527, 2 Memorial Drive. Thursday's Spaghetti Dinners now have Indoor Seating and To Go Dinners. Serving 4:30-6:30 PM. To/Go Order, call after 2:00 PM at 716-649-4667 or order at door. \$9 for Regular Size and \$11 for Large Size, with a \$.50 charge for To Go containers.

South Buffalo Post #721, **WILL NOT** be serving dinners during the month of February.

Send in your articles for the Legion-Air to thelegionair@gmail.com by 3/1 for the March 2024 edition. PCC Jim Bojanowski Editor

Department of New York website - <https://nylegion.net>

National American Legion website - <https://www.legion.org>

Erie County American Legion website - <http://www.eriecountyal.org>

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