



The American Legion – Patchogue Post 269
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Patchogue Post 269
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Commanders Corner

Comrades

This is my first message as Commander. It is an honor and privilege to be allowed to serve as Commander, and I want to thank all of you for selecting me to this position. I must also thank John Matuszak for all of his help and guidance in teaching me about this position. I promise I will do the absolute best that I can.

As I look forward for the year, I plan to continue on several projects that we have started up in the last year. We will again be having a Veterans Appreciation BBQ in August. This year I hope to expand it to include more veterans from the local area. We have been working with the Dwyer Peer Support Project and are looking to expand that relationship in order to serve more veterans and families. And as you have seen in past newsletters, we have been establishing a good working arrangement with the Student Veterans of America group at St. Joseph's College. I look forward to making that relationship stronger and even more active as we go forward.

You will also see us reaching out to other colleges and other veterans organizations and support groups in order to join together on different projects. By working together with other organizations, we will have the ability to provide more help and assistance to all of the veterans, their families, and our community.

Last year we had a very successful membership year and are actually increasing in size. This year I hope to continue our focus on getting and retaining members. Membership and involvement are crucial to our ability to continue our current projects and starting new ones.

We will also be continuing and improving our Public Relations abilities so that veterans and the community know that we are here and know what we are doing. The more information about our activities

and events that we get out to the public, the more support, help, and recognition we will get from our community.

And finally, we will be looking for ways to continue improving our building. It is important to all of us to have a good place to get together and enjoy our comradeship.

One person can not accomplish all of these things. It takes a team to make all of this work. So I am asking all of you to help and support our Post as we move forward.

For God and Country
Jon Ralph
Commander – Patchogue Post 269

1st Vice Commander Corner

A reminder to all American Legion Patchogue Post 269 members that in July our National Headquarters will begin to mail out membership dues renewal notices to all current members. Membership dues are now \$43. Please send dues payments directly to the Post, Attention: Membership Officer John Matuszak. So remember to pay your dues on time in order to keep your membership active.

At this time, I am requesting that all members please update your home address, phone number, and E-Mail address if it has changed in the past year. This information is needed in case the Post needs to contact you. Thank you.

For God and Country
Jose J. Bou
1st Vice Commander

Historian Corner

Picture of American legion Patchogue Post 269 members who really got our Post started enjoying a day out at Davis Park in 1922



Did you know that on:

July 9, 1954 The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation was formed. Today more than \$12 million has been awarded to youth organizations and projects designed to help America's children.

July 17, 1925 The American Legion created the American Legion Baseball Program. Today more than 50 percent of Major League Baseball Players are graduates of the program. 82,000 youth play on the Legion sponsored teams each year.

August 24, 1969 The American Legion's National Executive Committee established the National Emergency Fund as a result of the effects of Hurricane Camille.

August 30, 2013 National Commander James E. Koutz announced that the American Legion Family raised more than \$1.1 million for Operation Comfort Warriors during the 2012-2013 fund raising year. It easily surpassed his original goal of \$500,000.

September 1932 The Sons of the American Legion is officially recognized during the 1932 National Convention in Portland Oregon.

September 1, 1966 The American Legion voices great concern over the fate of prisoners of war in Viet Nam. Today, the Legion urges a full accounting of all POW's and troops Missing In Action. The Legion has also formed a special group from among the nation's major veterans organizations to continue pressing for further resolution of this issue.

Dates to remember:

July 4, 1776 – Independence Day

July 27, 1953 – End of the Korean War

August 7 – Purple Heart Day

August 14, 1945 – VJ Day

September 2, 1945 – Japan signs surrender

September 11 – Patriots Day

September 16 – Citizenship Day/POW-MIA Recognition Day

For God and Country

Jose J. Bou

Post Historian

Auxiliary Corner

Auxiliary News

A Happy Summer To All! Our new year has begun, I'd like to thank

Pat Bergin for doing a fantastic job for the last two years as our President. We accomplished so many things together. I'm once again both proud and honored to be your new President. I'm looking forward to working together with our members. I believe team work is the road to success. Talking about team work, I'd like to welcome our three NEW members;
Christina Mohr, Crystal Emmer and Doreen Turpin.

It's new ideas that lead to new achievements. We have a new Commander, Jon Ralph. Welcome Jon to your new position, together we are "one".

In July I'll be attending the Department Convention along with Pat Bergin. I'll keep you posted on that.

We have the Joesph Dwyer's PTSD Peer to peer meetings now being held in our Post. This year our Auxiliary held a Pasta Dinner and a Basket Jamboree. All were successful. Prayers for Peggy Dolci she is recovering from foot surgery, Nicole Murch had hand surgery and Sharon Murch. To ALL members have a safe and great summer.

For God and Country
Cathy Beer
President - Auxiliary Unit 269

Echoes From The Heart

What would the world be like if there was no United States? While trying to write this article, I had a very difficult time keeping my mind on the subject or topic. So many thoughts and memories of wars kept slipping into my head. However, I focused on Memorial Day which

was just a few weeks ago and the coming of Independence Day in two weeks. I remembered a speech I had made last year to a multi ethnic group of Veterans. "You should have pride in your ethnic background, but more than that you should feel blessed for being an American". It was then I thought, what would this world be like if there was no United States of America? Would the men I just spoke to even exist?

In Europe, would the entire continent now speak German? If it were not for our aid and materials sent to Russia, would Russia exist? Would all of Asia speak Japanese? The Axis Powers and Japanese Empire grossly underestimated the determination and resources of the United States. I cannot fully imagine what the alternate history of this planet would have been like without the United States of America.

God did Bless America and we can only pray that God will continue to do so!

For God and Country,
Tom Bergin – Past Commander
Executive Board Member

Community Activities

We have been working with the Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project. We have arranged a monthly coffee hour at the Post on the third Saturday of every month to get together and talk and plan. It will take time to see benefits from this, but it is an important step in the process. Recently, we received correspondence and a book from Robert Serocki about his experiences in Desert Storm and dealing with PTSD. All three of his books are available at the Post for anyone wishing to read them. We are continuing to look for ways to help and

assist not only in this project but in other projects as well.

On May 27th and May 28th, our Post joined with VFW Post 2913 and Amvets Post 111 to place a flag at the headstone of all veterans buried in the local cemeteries. The “Flags In” tradition started in 1949 at Arlington National Cemetery to recognize and honor the service of our Veterans. There are three cemeteries that we go to – Cedar Grove Cemetery, Lakeview Cemetery, and The Four Sisters/Waverly Street Cemetery.

The weather forced us to change some of the plans for the Memorial Day ceremony. Due to the forecasted rain, we had to cancel the parade. We worked closely with the Village and the Parks and Recreation Department to move the ceremony inside the Post. It turned out to be an excellent ceremony with short speeches from George Barrett (Commander VFW Post 2913), John Matuszak (Commander American Legion Post 269), and Mike Amodio (Commander Amvets Post 111). Mayor Paul Pontieri gave an excellent speech, and Steven Meek read a poem that he then presented to all of the Veterans organizations. TAPS was played and the Flag was returned to full staff. It was great to see so many people even with the weather, and the main Hall was packed.



After that ceremony, everyone moved outside for the dedication of the Harry T. Hanson Veterans Memorial Park. The dedication was done by Commander John Matuszak and Mayor Paul Pontieri. We concluded the day with a BBQ at the Post. It turned out to be a very good event even with the cancelling of the parade.

On June 18, we held a Flag Retirement Ceremony to dispose of the old and unserviceable flags. The ceremony was done at Shorefront Park. We must thank the Village for all of their help in setting up and making this event happen.



On June 14th, we assisted the Medford Post in doing a Flag Ceremony at Blue Ridge Condo Complex. The homeowner’s association had contacted us, and we then passed it over to Medford since it is in their area. The Medford Post then came back and asked us if we could assist them since they did not have a lot of members able to be there. We were able to get 5 of our members and two of our Auxiliary to join with 3 members from Medford. There were about 50-75 people from the complex that attended the ceremony. There seemed to be a fair number of veterans, so we will be reaching out to the homeowners association to get information about the Legion available to them. We even met and talked with one man who is a veteran of WWII. All of

the people that attended were very appreciative of our efforts to help them.

And since this is the time for the end of the school year, we again did the School Awards at our local schools. We do these awards every year at South Ocean Middle School, Saxon Ave Middle School, Bay Ave Elementary, River Ave Elementary, and Medford Elementary.

On June 10th, the Auxiliary attended the Flag Ceremony at the Elks Lodge in Patchogue. During the ceremony, they were presented a donation to provide assistance to Women Veterans. Congratulations to the Auxiliary for all of their hard work.

Recent Events

During this last year, Tom Bergin and George Egan from our Post have been working on raising funds to help obtain a new van for the DAV along with the Elks lodge in Southampton. At the Southampton Elks ceremonies, the van was presented to the DAV. We want to extend a "Job Well Done" and Thank You to both Tom and George.



The Auxiliary unit had another successful Pasta dinner fundraiser. They were able to fill the Hall and all the people attending were very

enthusiastic about how it turned out. The Auxiliary was able to again raise money to further their efforts.

On June 4th, we held the Officer Installation Ceremony to thank all of the officers that served during the year and to install the new Officers for this coming term. Both Supervisor Ed Romaine of Brookhaven Town and Mayor Paul Pontieri attended, as well as representatives of other elected officials. This year marks a transition for the Post as many of the Officers are new to their positions. We want to extend our support to all of the members who have stepped up to new positions and responsibilities.



On behalf of all the members of the Post, Commander Matuszak was presented with a special plaque as a thank you for his five years in

command. Job Well Done!

Jose Bou was presented with the “Legionnaire of the Year” award for his service and efforts as Historian and running the 100 Club. We want to give Jose a very big Thank You.

And finally, the Post was presented with a plaque for attaining the 100% Membership. We started the year with 187 members and we have been able to increase our membership to 197. This shows that our Post is actually growing and being more involved.

The Team Depot Volunteers again helped out in beautifying the Post prior to Memorial Day. They did a great job and we want to extend a very big Thank You to them for all of their hard work. The Post really looks good.

We are continuing to work with Missing In America Project to honor abandoned Veterans and provide a dignified interment. On June 2nd 1st Vice Jon Ralph and 2nd Vice Tom Bergin attended the interment for two veterans at Calverton National Cemetery. Members of the Post are also starting to attend the “No One in Attendance” ceremony held monthly at Calverton in conjunction with the Patriot Guard Riders. Information about Missing In America Project events and the NOA ceremony are posted both on Facebook and our website, so check them for the latest activities.

Upcoming Events

It is time for the annual July 4th Parade. This year it will be held on Monday July 4th. We will meet at the Post around 9 AM. Lineup for the parade is at 9:30 on West Avenue and the parade starts at 10:30. We hope that many of our members can attend. We will have a BBQ at the Post following the parade.

We will be having a Veterans Appreciation BBQ in August. Last year it was a big success and we are planning to make it even better this

year. Watch our web site and Facebook for all of the information.

General Information

We are continuing to work with Harvest Power for the installation of solar electric panels on the roof of the Post. Harvest Power is doing their engineering work and planning for the installation.

The Suffolk County Marathon is scheduled for October 30th. Last year it started and ended at Heckscher State Park. This year it is scheduled to start and end here in Patchogue. We are contacting the organizers to see how we can help and be involved with this event. With any luck, maybe the Post can be the actual starting/ending point for this.

We have been getting more exposure in the local paper “Long Island Advance”. They published an article about the change in command of the Post as well as an article about the Memorial Day Parade. We also sent in two Letters to the Editor, one for Memorial Day and one for Flag Day. You can see all of them posted on our Facebook page and our web site.

The new membership year starts on July 1st. Your membership is vital to allowing all of us, yourself included, to continue to provide help and assistance to Veterans, their families, and the Community. So please don't let your membership expire, renew today! And if you forgot to last year, its not too late to get caught up.

If you have ideas for community events, ways to help our fellow veterans, fund raisers, or ideas for increasing our membership, please let us know. All ideas are greatly welcomed.

Post Membership Meetings

Membership meetings are held at the Post on the second Monday of the month at 8 PM. The next three monthly meetings are: July 11th,

August 8th, and September 12th. The Board and Officers meetings are held at the Post on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM. Members are welcome to come and listen. Auxiliary meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month.

The Dugout at the Post

The Dugout is open Fridays from 7-11 PM and Sundays 3-7 PM. Drop in and hang out for a while for some drinks, conversation, and friendship. Don't forget, it really is YOUR POST, so come in and visit with friends.

Public Relations and Social Media

We are continuing to post events, information, photos, and other information online to our Facebook page. We are also posting important announcements and events on our Web Site. You can get photos of the Post and pictures from all of our various events by looking in the Photos section of the Facebook page. Photos for the new officers have been published on the web site, and we have a resources page with phone numbers and links to many Veteran support groups as well as links to several crisis hotlines. We also added a Blog section to the site so that we have a place for commentary.

The URL's for our Facebook and Web sites are:
<https://www.facebook.com/American.Legion.Post.269>
<http://alpost269patchogue.wix.com/patchogue-alpost269>
<https://www.facebook.com/American.Legion.Auxiliary.Patchogue.269>

The newsletter, Facebook page, and web site are produced and maintained by Tom Hall and Jon Ralph. If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, call Tom or Jon. Remember, this isn't my newsletter, it's YOURS!!!!, so if there is something you would like to see included, tell us.

The American Legion

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News Letter

2016
July - September



For God and Country

