



# Yorktown e-Legion

Yorktown American Legion Post #1009

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## Post Summer BBQ

On Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 53 members of our Post family joined us to enjoy our catered Summer BBQ. For a few hours everyone forgot the heat in our air-conditioned Hall (Note...you don't actually have to be outside for it to be a BBQ!) and caught up with each other and what we've been up to. Our new Post Commander, John Giacomini introduced himself and updated everyone on the incredibly busy week we were just finishing up consisting of 6 events in 8 days - the Honor Flag, a Rendering Honors to a Passed Post Legionnaire, the County meeting, the Dog Tag ceremony(see below), a cemetery clean-up, and this BBQ!

Our Post continues to proceed with a busy schedule of events and programs but we still pause with events like this BBQ to relax and socialize. To help all our members enjoy the BBQ and not have some miss it because they were cooking we once again enjoyed catering by Theresa Capizola. Theresa did a great job putting on a spread of hot dogs, hamburgers, cold salads, soda, beer, and of course our legendary dessert buffet to finish up with. We are able to deliver all this for only \$7 per person! If you missed it this year... keep an eye out for this again next August and come get to know your fellow members.

## WWII Dog Tags Returned by Yorktown Rotary

Our Post has a great record of working with several organizations in Yorktown; Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, Yorktown Lions, Yorktown Leos, and the Yorktown Fire Department. When we were approached by the Yorktown Rotary Club to assist in the return of a WWII soldier's dog tags to his next-of-kin we said yes, of course. Cmdr Giacomini was contacted by Geri Schwalb, the past president of the Yorktown Rotary Club, and that's all he needed to hear to assure our assistance in this wonderful event.

The soldier, Tech 4 Michael Goldstop, was one of 12 on board a brand new B-24 Liberator, 'The Texas Terror' that was being delivered to Australia on December 18, 1942. The aircraft was caught in a storm and crashed into the

mountainside of an island just off the mainland of Australia with all on board lost. The crash site was so high up the mountain that it was undiscovered for over a year. Aborigines looking for tin first stumbled across it. The remains of those killed in the crash were returned after the war and buried in the National Cemetery in Nebraska. In the 60+ years since the crash debris has come down the mountain during storms and been recovered including 7 sets of dog tags. Tech 4 Goldstop's was one of those found in the late 1990's but when the US State Dept was contacted about them - they declined to assist in their return, leaving them stuck in Australia.

The Rotary Club is an international organization as we learned through this event. The Australian Rotary Club tracked Michael's next-of-kin to Yorktown, NY and then contacted the Yorktown Rotary Club for their help in returning these personal effects to the family. The Yorktown Club agreed and thought that veterans should be the ones to hand these personal effects back to the family and asked our Yorktown Post to participate in the ceremony. On Wednesday, August 10, 2016 in a ceremony at Town Hall the Yorktown Rotary Club and the American Legion delivered these long lost dog tags to David Goldstein, the nephew of Michael Goldstop and hopefully gave his family closure on their loss.

Thank you to the Yorktown Rotary Club and to Cmdr John Giacomini, Ken Blish PPC, Al Laughlin, PPC, John McQuillan, Tom Einwich, Lee DeFrancesco, John Gunn, Carl DiLiberto, and Pat McDonough for making this ceremony happen and giving it the respect it was due. Well done!



## Leave No Veteran Unremembered...

Our Post was contacted by Mr Robert 'Bob' Burke of Yorktown back in July asking for help in his efforts to organize a group to reclaim an abandoned cemetery on Croton Avenue in Cortlandt Manor. The cemetery, known as the 'Groveville Methodist Church Cemetery' or the 'Dixie Cemetery', has sat abandoned since the 1930's with close to a dozen Civil War era veterans interred and forgotten there. Mr. Burke was mobilizing citizens to clear out the 80 years of overgrowth and neglect to make this a place of rest and respect and wanted our help.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, Al Laughlin PPC, Cmdr John Giacomini, Tom Brady, Rocco Salierno, Don Roberts and his wife, Joan, and son, Donald Jr., and Pat McDonough joined a dozen others in the heat clearing brush and cutting up fallen and unfallen trees to begin clearing the grounds. After just a few hours the change was apparent to cars going by on Croton Avenue that stopped to see. We found ourselves wandering about during breaks discovering and reading the headstones learning about these early veterans.

Bob's plan is to try to meet once a month to chip away at the neglect and overgrowth and also to add some improvements to make it easier for others to find and visit the cemetery. He has made a Facebook page 'Leave No Veteran Unremembered' to keep in contact with those who wish to help with the clean-up work or donate to help with improvements. Donations for this project are being accepted by our Post to purchase mulch for a path, a bench, and any other improvements needed. Our Post has been asked for donations of money for projects before but this project mostly needs volunteers to donate a few hours once a month in 'sweat equity' to complete the renovation of this historic cemetery. Any help from our membership and their friends would be wonderfully appreciated.

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## Yorktown Grange Fair Flag-raising Ceremony

Our Post will continue our long tradition of opening the Yorktown Grange Fair with a flag-raising ceremony on Friday, September 9th, 2016 at 4:15 PM. Our Post has been invited to do this ceremony for over twenty years and without fail we have conducted it to open the Fair for the

weekend. **Please note the time has changed from past years!!!** The Fair doesn't open during the day on the first day so the ceremony is now held at 4:15 PM. All available members are requested to be at the fairgrounds on Moseman Ave at 4 PM. Tell the people working at the parking entrance that you are just performing the flag-raising ceremony and they will not charge you to enter. The ceremony only takes 5 minutes if you can spare the time.

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## Field Home Fall Festival

Our Post will have a table at the Field Home Fall Festival up on Catherine St off Rt-202 on **September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 from 10 AM to 4 PM** to advertise our Post and its programs. This is usually a wonderful Fall day with vendors from all over town represented and our members answering questions and selling raffle tickets. We need at least 4 volunteers for the entire day but if we break it up into two, three hour shifts it could be easier. If you can do 10 AM to 1 PM, or 1 PM to 4 PM please let Pat McDonough know.

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## County Legion Meeting

The Westchester County American Legion doesn't have a home building so they hold their meetings at various Posts across the County each month. On Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> our Post hosted their monthly meeting in our Hall. The County Legion is the next level above a local Post in the American Legion and this is one way to see what is going on at that level across the County. They are like every all-volunteer organization, coping with dwindling participation by Post memberships and also trying to economically get information out to the over 3,300 Legionnaires in the County. They stopped printing their quarterly newsletter because of the prohibitive costs of printing and postage. They are in the process of trying to adopt and publish an e-Newsletter similar to what our Post has to reduce their costs and get info out. They are also making a Google group website which Legionnaires across the County can sign on and see activities and events they may want to take part in. Your admission to this site is your e-mail address which they must have to allow you to sign-in. Understandably our Post Adjutant has spent 8 years compiling 88 of our Post's 118 members e-mails for our communications - and we are reluctant to just give them this information right out. If any

member wishes their e-mail to be given for this new program to try it out please let Pat McDonough know and he will forward it on.

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## Commemorative Brick Dedication Ceremony

When all activities on Memorial Day were cancelled due to the weather - our Post couldn't dedicate the Veterans Commemorative Bricks that had been installed in our Park during the past year. We have installed over 60 engraved bricks in that time period and the veterans and families who ordered these bricks have been patiently looking forward to their dedication ceremony.

On Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM our Post will hold the rescheduled Veterans Commemorative Brick Dedication Ceremony in front of our Post. We will dedicate the new bricks that have been added to our Park and once again donate the proceeds from this engraved brick program to veterans-related charities. This year our Post will donate \$5,700 to four local veterans-related charities bringing the total donated from this program to \$18,200 in four years! \$2,000 will go to Paula Miritello at 'My Brother Vinny' who helps veterans released from Montrose get set up in apartments with a fresh start. They provide the furniture and furnishings to make an empty apartment into a home for them. They have done this for 340 veterans so far! \$2,000 will go to the Montrose VA Food Pantry and the veterans who rely on it to survive. Under an agreement with the Food Bank of Westchester our Post's donation is increased 4 to 1 for every dollar we donate. That means our \$2,000 will become \$8,000 in buying power when we present the check to them! \$1,000 is going to James Rathschmidt's 'United for the Troops' which is an organization everyone has seen around town for years. They send 'Care Packages' to our military members serving away from home and it has been adopted by just about every school and business across town. They send personal care items, snacks, and notes from school kids, a touch of home for those deployed overseas. All the items are donated of course but every package costs about \$15 to send overseas by mail. Our donation is to help them get those gifts to where they need to be! The last \$700 has already been delivered to the Montrose VA Clothing store. They asked for \$700 in underwear and t-shirts for their gift bags for the patients. Gerry Knapp PPC and John Gunn bought the supplies at Kohl's when they were on sale. They

then took the Kohl's dollars they received back the following day and bought more stuff. After the sale and second visit shopping the clothing value was more like \$1,200 than \$700. Great job shopping Gerry and John!!

Normally, we have a huge crowd attending this Brick Dedication because it follows the Memorial Day Parade with crowds everywhere. We ask ALL POST MEMBERS to make the maximum effort to attend this rescheduled ceremony to ensure these brick donors feel the care and respect we have for their loved ones brick in our Park. Bring a friend and tell everyone you know to attend this ½ hour ceremony honoring these veterans and their service to our country. We will serve light refreshments following the ceremony. If the weather is uncooperative that day the ceremony will be held indoors in our Post Hall.

Please come and show your support for this program.

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## Montrose VA Food Pantry Collection

Once again our Yorktown Post will team up to collect food items for the local veterans who rely on the Montrose VA Food Pantry to survive. We will set-up tables in front of the ACME Supermarkets in Shrub Oak and the Triangle Center in Yorktown from 9 AM to 1 PM on Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> for our 8<sup>th</sup> annual collection. This event requires numerous volunteers so please help us help our fellow veterans. We need at least four members at each location to allow for unforeseen emergencies and comfort breaks. Please let Pat McDonough (914-953-6807) know which location you can help at for this worthwhile event.

To our new Post members and our not-too-active members... this is the perfect way to get past any fears of not knowing anyone in the Post. For four hours we're talking with our fellow Legionnaires getting to know each other while collecting these valuable donations. Come join us that day and feel the enjoyment of doing good for your fellow veterans.

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## Welcome Aboard!

We would like to extend a warm Welcome Aboard to Post #1009's newest member, Gerald Hillis. Jerry has jumped right in at our Post's Friday Happy Hours where he recently serenaded everyone with his guitar playing! Welcome aboard!

# Sad Farewell

We regret to inform everyone of the passing of one of our Post's Legionnaires in August - Vincent Faughnan. Vincent was a WWII veteran and the cousin of fellow Post member Cas Faughnan. Our Post was fortunate to be notified of Vincent's passing early enough to get a group of members together to perform a final 'Rendering of Honors' for Vincent at the funeral home. Our thoughts and prayers are with Vincent's family at this time.

## Donations to Our Post

We will now list all donations in our newsletter as a way of saying 'Thanks'. Our Post is an IRS authorized 501 C19 tax exempt organization and all donations are tax deductible

Each year our Post receives donations of various amounts from community members, organizations, and even our own Post members.

**We gratefully acknowledge the below donations to our Post and its continuing work.**

Robert Gorsuch (Boys State)	\$500	01/28/16
Robert Gorsuch (Girls State)	\$500	01/28/16
Patricia & Joseph Larsen	\$100	02/06/16
Loriann & Lawrence Perrault	\$ 50	03/01/16
Bill Goss	\$ 72	03/12/16
Carmel HS FBLA Club	\$1,000	03/12/16
Pamela Guerra	\$ 50	03/16/16
Joseph & Donata DiBart	\$ 50	04/13/16
Angela M. DiBart	\$100	04/16/16
Judith & Michael Maida	\$ 25	04/16/16
Dawn & Robert Pilato	\$ 25	04/16/16
Enzo Iannozzi	\$ 23	05/13/16
Al Laughlin	\$346	05/31/16
Marco DiBernardo	\$ 50	06/09/16
Daphne Daddino	\$ 46	07/19/16
Robert Burke	\$350	07/26/16

## Membership Reminder

Each year our Post is judged on our membership numbers by those units above our Post-level(County/State, National). Obviously, if the size of our membership goes down every year... that is the sign of a problem. Post Membership Chairman Carl DiLiberto has been doing a great job in getting dues in and your cards mailed out right away. We all have busy lives and sometimes the Post receives dues from members twice by accident. Carl keeps great records and sends the 2<sup>nd</sup> payment back with a letter

explaining the situation. Obviously, it would be easier for our Post if everyone paid their dues before January 1<sup>st</sup> when your present card expires, but we know that probably won't happen. What we ask is that you try not to wait until April or May to renew. When we submit our Post's annual report on May 1<sup>st</sup> and you haven't renewed by then you aren't counted as a Legion member by our Post for the year. That means when the National Commander speaks to Congress and says that he speaks for 2.8 million veterans - he isn't counting you either. Please renew early and be counted as a valued veteran.

## New Olympic Sport?

Post member Rocco Salierno is currently recuperating from a broken wrist and hip after falling from his roof. We wish him a quick and full recovery. Reportedly, his neighbors called 9-1-1 first and then held up their scorecards. In case you didn't see them Rocco... you got a 9.5, 9.5, 9.6, and a 9.1! That last neighbor wasn't too impressed with your 2 ½ twist coming down!

### Post #1009 Upcoming Events

**Tue Sep 6 Executive Comm Mtg 7:00 PM**

**Thu Sep 8 Post General Mtg 7:30 PM**

**Fri Sep 9 Yorktown Grange Fair flag-raising ceremony at 4 PM.**

**Sun Sep 11 Commemorative Brick Dedication at 1 PM at our Post.**

**Sat Sep 17 Cemetery clean-up work party 9 AM.**

**Sat Sep 24 Field Home Fall Festival from 10 AM to 4 PM.**

**Sat Oct 1 VA Food Pantry Collection at both ACME Supermarkets from 9 AM to 1 PM.**

**Tue Oct 4 Executive Comm Mtg 7:00 PM**

**Thu Oct 13 Post General Mtg 7:30 PM**

### **Yorktown Post #1009**

**235 Veterans Road, Yorktown Hts, NY 10598  
(914) 962-2843 [www.nylegion1009.org](http://www.nylegion1009.org)**