



Yorktown e-Legion

Yorktown American Legion Post #1009

Volume No. 3

Issue No.15

December / January / February 2015

Commander's Corner

Many Members will recall that last year our Post sponsored 4 young men to attend the American Legion's Boys State Program held at Morrisville College in upstate New York. Over 1,000 students attended from all over the State.

Our young men came from Lakeland High School, Panas HS and Kennedy HS in Somers NY. All Westchester County selected students boarded buses in Thornwood for the 5 hour trip. They spent a week being trained and disciplined by US Marines and then learning about NYS government. In addition to their studies, the students participated in political campaign planning, promotion and supporting their choice for Governors, State Senators, etc. Speechmaking, campaign writing, cheering, advertising, etc. An exciting time and the students reported having had one of the most memorable experiences of their lives. Some colleges offer 3 college credits for this Program and all colleges look for this program on student applications. This Program is especially important for students applying to US Military Academies.

This year, your Post had hoped to send a young lady to the Girls State Program which will be held at Brockport College in upstate NY. This was to be a first for us. Regretfully, we were "late getting out of the gate" and we missed the Girls deadline of March 1, 2016. Surprisingly, the deadline for Boys State is May 6, 2016 and we understood that the Girls followed the same time line. We are in the process of setting up procedure books for both Boys and Girls State Programs and will be ready for the 2017 Programs.

Sponsorship for the Boys Programs runs approximately \$500 per student. Last year we were aided by donations from Members Bob Gorsuch and Bob Caldwell as well as a donation from the Sila Corporation, the employer of our 3rd Vice Commander - Mark Johnson. The Post contributed \$500 last year. This year we are planning on sending 2 young men if applications are submitted and accepted by our Acceptance Committee. So far, we have received contributions from Bob Gorsuch in the amount of \$500 to sponsor one young man. I expect the Post will pay for one individual as well. If like last year

we find more than 2 qualified students, then perhaps Post Members would consider a donation to help send additional students. We have a quota of 4 students this year. If you wish to make a donation, please contact Bill Goss (Boys State/Girls State Chairman) at 914-260-4815.

Lastly, all Members should realize that their sons and grandchildren are eligible if they are NYS residents and are entering their senior high school year in September. Again, have them contact Bill Goss. Note: All 50 states, except Hawaii, run the American Legion Boys Girls State Programs each year.

Gerald M. Knapp
Commander

Breakfast with Santa...

Once again our Post worked with the Yorktown Lions Club and Yorktown Leos Club to hold a very successful Breakfast with Santa event on Sunday, December 6, 2015. We had three sold-out seatings of 100 people each in our Post for breakfast and a visit from several costumed characters. This one event after expenses netted our Post over \$1,140 for our Post's needs. This event couldn't have been a success without the team work of our Post members. Our thanks to: Joe Larsen, Tom Brady, Frank Troia, Lee Defrancesco, Rocco Salierno, Don Roberts, Gerry Knapp, John McQuillan, Pat McDonough, Ken Blish, Cas Faughnan, Roger Thompson, Al Laughlin, John Giacomini, Mike Laughlin, Bob Gorsuch, and Vincent Andreozzi. Look for it again next year too!

Post Holiday Party

Our Post's annual Holiday Party was held on Sunday, December 13th at our Post Hall with 66 people in attendance. This is where we take some time to relax before the holidays take control of all of our time. Everyone who attended enjoyed the delicious food catered by Yorktown Pizza & Pasta and relaxed talking with friends not seen in a while. Maryann Calbo brought the words to a bunch of holiday songs and 'drafted' people up to lead us all in song. Maryann and her

granddaughters, Angelina & Amanda, also went around the room with a holiday Trivial Pursuit contest amongst all the tables of guests. Everyone tried to duck having to sing but enjoyed all the entertainment all the same. Thank you Maryann, Angelina, and Amanda!

We also paused for a moment to thank some important Post members on this occasion. Post Chaplain Rev John Bourcet recently had asked to step down from his duties and Post member Tom Einwich has been doing an amazing job filling in for John at our recent events. Cmdr Knapp honored Rev Bourcet with the permanent position of 'Chaplain Emeritus' for our Post! 2nd Vice Cmdr Carl DiLiberto was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for all his work starting up the Honor Flag program and obtaining and restoring our new flag drop-box located in front of the Post. Congratulations to both on these well deserved recognitions from the Post!

New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance

Back in the 1950's, '60's, and '70's our Post probably held New Year's Eve parties for our members to come together and have an enjoyable evening closing out the year. Times have changed and we haven't had one in about 20 years but this New Year's Eve our Post teamed up with the Yorktown Lions Club to host one at our Post Hall.

65 people attended and had a wonderful time at this first-time event where a DJ with dancing, catered food, and beer, wine, and soda were all included in the modest \$65 per person cover charge. This was the perfect year to start this event as the town started a ball-drop at midnight right up the block from our Post at Veterans Road and Commerce St which had almost 3,000 people attend! There were even fireworks to see over the Yorktown Fire department carnival grounds. Look for this event again next New Year's Eve and come enjoy it with us. A huge thanks to Maria Marks for all her creative genius and organizing skills in putting this beautiful event together! Great job Maria!!

Four Chaplains Ceremony

On Sunday, February 7th, our Post continued it's tradition of conducting a ceremony to recognize and honor four US Army chaplains who died when their US transport ship was

torpedoed and sunk in the North Atlantic in World War II. These four men of different faiths - one Protestant, one Jewish, one Methodist, and one Catholic were in their bunks that fateful night of February 3rd, 1943 when a German u-boat torpedoed the USS Dorchester and sank it in just 20 minutes. In those 20 minutes these chaplains calmed their shipmates and handed out life vests. When they ran out of life vests, they gave up their own to save four more men knowing full well their actions sealed their fates. Survivors of the sinking that night related seeing these four men of faith with their arms interlocked on the ship's deck calming and praying with those still onboard as their ship slipped beneath the waves.

We were honored to have Rev Dan O'Brien of Calvary Bible Church, Fr Robert Quarato of St Elizabeth Seton Church, Cantor Jamie Tortorello-Allen of Temple Beth Am, and Mother Claire Woodley of St Mary's Episcopal Church take part in the ceremony to represent each of the chaplains and light a candle for them. Also in attendance were Yorktown Supv Michael Grace, Town Councilmen Tom Diana and Vishnu Patel, Yorktown Justices Salvatore Lagonia and Gary Raniolo. We were also joined by representatives from the Korean War Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, and Howard Heyel, Past American Legion District Commander.

Our Post is one of the few who still hold a ceremony to honor their sacrifice and to tell this forgotten story. This year we had a multi-media presentation with our 'new' used digital projector displaying the details of the story and the faces of the chaplains on the new screen mounted in our Post Hall which everyone enjoyed. Make a point to join us next year for this moving service.

Post Everlasting Ceremony

Our Post conducted a Post Everlasting Ceremony immediately following this year's Four Chaplains Ceremony. This ceremony is a final salute to those Legionnaires of our Post who left us for their final Post in the past year. We honored James Guerra, Dominic Esposito, Arthur Becofsky Sr, Patrick Culhane, and Frank Mastro with this ceremony. Once again we opened this ceremony to anyone present who wished to remember a beloved veteran they had lost in the past year. We were honored to add to our salute: Joseph DeFrancesco, Roland 'Buzz' Ready, Armedu Searino, and Mervin 'Bud' Connors. As each name was called by Cmdr Knapp a family member or Post member brought up the honoree's

membership card and placed it into the helmet up front. After a short invocation by Chaplain Tom Einwich the cards were burned and Taps was played. This is a moving way to say good-bye to our friends and fellow Post members and their families are deeply touched by it.

Looking for Few Good Legionnaires...

Our Post will hold its annual elections in May for Post Officers and Executive Committee members for the coming 2016-2017 year. Cmdr Knapp is stepping down after serving three one-year terms as Post Commander and rightfully so... none of these positions should be held for longer than that. We need Post members to step up and run for positions on the Executive Committee, for Financial Officer, and 1st and 3rd Vice Commander positions. What qualifications are needed?.. A willingness to work with others to keep our Post on track performing service in our community and for veterans-in-need around us. Any previous knowledge needed?.. No, we're working together to do this, old-timers and new guys, experienced and inexperienced, traditions and new ideas. It has been working for our Post the past 10 years and we'd like to see it continue so step forward and take a position, our Post will be better because of it.

Welcome Aboard!

We would like to extend a warm Welcome Aboard to Post #1009's newest members; William Goss, Enzo Iannozzi, Michael Marx, Lawrence Armstrong, and Samuel Sadak. We hope that you will come down and get to know your fellow Post members and enjoy the family atmosphere we have worked hard to maintain in our Post. We invite you to take an active part in running your Post. You will get to know your fellow Legionnaires a lot better being an active member of our Post. Welcome!

Commemorative Brick Program

We are in the 4th year of the brick program and we have all achieved a great deal. Right now we are in the home stretch as we approach the Memorial Day Brick Dedication. This is the time of

year when we make the final push to get as many new applications as possible before our April 15th deadline.

Once again I ask each member to bring in a new application either for a loved one, living or deceased, friend or yourself if you have not done so. We have surpassed 400 bricks, but would like to make it 500. Some members have done much to achieve this goal, but we know that there are more veterans out there waiting to be honored with a commemorative brick. If you have any questions please contact me.

John Gunn
Chairman

Donations to Our Post

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

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

Jon Perkins	\$ 50	07/30/15
Robert Whalen	\$100	09/05/15
Robert Caldwell	\$113	12/15/15
Carol Lachterman	\$ 50	12/19/15
John Gould	\$100	12/19/15
Robert/Marcia Gorsuch	\$100	12/19/15
Robert/Marcia Gorsuch (Boys State)	\$500	1/28/16
Robert/Marcia Gorsuch (Girl State)	\$500	1/28/16
Joseph Larsen	\$100	2/06/16
Mr&Mrs Perrault	\$ 50	3/02/16

Benefits for Veterans

To get the exempt vehicle registration (\$0.00) from New York State DMV for those with a service-connected rating of 30% or more: DO NOT GO TO THE LOCAL DMV OFFICE! Only mail-in renewals will work. If you are using a dealer for a new or used car, and they are not aware of the process, they need to call Albany for instructions. If you do pay for a registration there is a form (MG-215) to send in and get a refund. See below text for instructions.

1. Fill out DMV form MV-1G for renewals and MV-1E for a new registration.
2. Add a copy of your DD-214

3. Add a copy of a VA Ratings letter that you get from release of information office at the VA hospital. You can print one out from 'MyHealth' Vet website, provided you have signed up.
4. Mail in with your new/renewal registration and NO CHECK!

To get a NYS Handicapped, Disabled Vet License Plate:

1. Fill out New York State DMV form MV-412
2. Get a VA doctor to sign the form
3. Send a copy of your Rating letter which can be printed out from the Release of Information Dept at the VA hospital.
4. Add a copy of your DD-214
5. Mail to the address listed on the bottom of the form.

To get a Disabled Vet EZ-Pass for free NYS Thruway only (Need \$0 exempts registration)

1. Go to www.veterans.ny.gov/state-benefits
2. Scroll down to the EZ-Pass section
3. Fill out form#TA-W5175 and print out 2 copies
4. Mail a copy along with the \$0.00 exempt registration.



A full house for our Post Holiday party.



A ceremony at ME Strang School with Sen Murphy

Post #1009 Upcoming Events

- Thu Mar 10 Post General Mtg 7:30 PM**
- Form Election Committee
- Sun Mar 13 Breakfast with Easter Bunny**
at 8 am, 10 am, & 12 noon.
Reservations required!
- Tue Apr 5 Executive Comm Mtg 7:00 PM**
- Thu Apr 14 Post General Mtg 7:30 PM**
- Officer Nominations from Floor
- Sun May 1 Spring Brunch at Post**
- Tue May 3 Executive Comm Mtg 7:00 PM**
- Thu May 12 Post General Mtg 7:30 PM**
- Election of Post Officers
- TBA May Yorktown HS Visit**
- Fri/Sat 27/28 Decorate Yorktown Cemetery**
graves w/flags
- Sat May 28 Poppy Fund-raiser at ACME**
Supermarkets & Turcos's from
9 AM to 1 PM
- Mon May 30 Memorial Day Parade sponsored**
by VFW; Form-up at 10:45 AM
at Town Hall
- Mon May 30 Veterans Commemorative Park**
dedication following the parade

Yorktown Post #1009

235 Veterans Road, Yorktown Hts, NY 10598
(914) 962-2843 www.nylegion1009.org



Post members unpacking our 125 new Post chairs.