



# Yorktown e-Legion

Yorktown American Legion Post #1009

Issue #82

April 2025 to July 2025

## Liborio DeFrancesco Award...

On June 13, 2025, at our last Post meeting of the year our Post paused to present our Liborio DeFrancesco Award. This award recognizes individuals or organizations that go the extra mile in honoring our country's veterans.

Every Post #1009 member sees all the emails we send out requesting members to respond to our local funeral homes for our 'Rendering Honors Ceremony' to honor veterans with a final salute from their fellow veterans. Our email call for help goes out to all and thank goodness some always answer these calls. We have from 4 to 16 Legionnaires and Sons members come each time to honor veterans with this solemn 5-minute ceremony at the funeral home. Almost all American Legion Posts have stopped performing this service due to membership and leadership declines. Our Post? Thankfully, we have never been found ourselves in the position to have to decline a request from the family or funeral home to honor a veteran. We performed this ceremony 34 times in the past 12 months. 149 veterans were honored by our Post in this way in the past 5 years.

At our June meeting we invited the owners and staff of the Clarke-Giordano Funeral Home in Yorktown and The Yorktown Funeral Home in Shrub Oak to recognize these two establishments with this award. Both funeral homes notify our Post when families of veterans come to them for services. Their efforts to honor these veterans lead them to call and coordinate with us so we can perform our ceremony. We thanked them for their dedication to offering families our services. 149 families know all about The American Legion from our visible presence and this ceremony for their loved one.

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## Memorial Day Week Recap...

Once again, our Yorktown Post maintained a busy schedule for the Memorial Day week, starting with a visit to Yorktown High School's band classes on Wed 5/21. Legion members visit this class to explain why Memorial Day is so important to veterans and the country. Why? All school sports

club students have a 3-day weekend for Monday, but the band has to 'work' and march in the Parade. This visit helps them to understand this.

Friday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> was a rainy one, but our Post members still came out to Amawalk Cemetery to install fresh new US flags on over 600 veteran's graves for Memorial Day. Thank you to Carl DiLiberto, Linda DeFeo-Cascioli, Rocco Salierno, Steve Rice, John Scavarda, John McQuillan, Paul Martin, Anthony Guiliano, Tom Brady, and Pat & Keri McDonough for this work.



On Saturday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, John McQuillan utilized local Scouts to continue getting over 960 veteran's graves across Yorktown decorated with flags. At the same time our Post set-up tables at local supermarkets - Uncle Guiseppe's, Yorktown ACME, and DeCicco's, to hand out the traditional red poppies and collect donations for our Post programs. Thank you to SAL and Post members - Carl DiLiberto, Bill Richey, John Gunn, Paul Martin III, Anthony Guiliano, Don Heagle, Rocco Salierno, Vincent Pipolo, Don Roberts, Pat McDonough, Linda DeFeo-Cascioli, Terry Deveau, John Witt, and Steve Rice. At 1 PM our new Auxiliary Unit members continued the Poppy Fundraiser at Uncle Guiseppe's and at Yorktown ACME market, plus out front of the Post on Memorial Day. Thanks to - Cathy DiLiberto, Connie Witt, Mary Heagle, Teresa DeChristopher, Adele Sadak, Geraldine Pipolo, Lorraine Simone, and Peggy Salierno.

On Memorial Day our Post organized the ceremonies at Veteran Memorials Circle behind Town Hall with Cmdr. DiLiberto as the emcee. This year in addition to the traditional laying of wreaths at the memorials. The Town rededicated a new Korean War monument which completed the

updating to a separate Vietnam War and Korean War monument from the old one monument for both wars. Following this everyone fell out to line up for the Memorial Day Parade. Our marching unit had 16 Legionnaires, 12 Sons members, and 5 members of the Auxiliary in it. Quite the 'family' picture!

The final event on Memorial Day is our Commemorative Brick Dedication Ceremony at our Post. This year's ceremony dedicated 5 new bricks into our plaza where 574 veterans are now honored. Our Post made two \$600 donations from the sale of these bricks to two veteran-related charities - 'United for the Troops' and 'My Brother Vinny' organizations bringing our total donations from this unique program to \$32,035. Honoring veterans and helping veterans at the same time!

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## Flag Retirement Ceremony...

On Saturday, June 14, 2025, members of Yorktown Post #1009, VFW Post #8328, the Yorktown Fire Department and local Scouts came together to perform our Flag Retirement Ceremony at the YFD Carnival Grounds. We normally have 1,200 to 1,800 worn & torn US flags to retire in this ceremony, but this year the main Westchester Post Office facility contacted us because they had flags to dispose of but no American Legion Posts were returning their calls about this. How many flags? 12 bags full containing almost 1,00 flags of all sizes. Our Post retired over 2,700 flags that morning in a moving and reverent ceremony.



## Honor Flag Ceremony...

On Saturday, April 26th, 2025 our Post raised the burial flag of Chet Edgar Hall, a WWI Navy veteran upon the flagpole in the beautiful plaza across from our Post in a moving ceremony. This ceremony involves raising the flag while a salute is rendered and the installation of a certificate in the case attached to the flagpole

informing passersby the name and information of the veteran being honored with their flag flying above. A few weeks later our Post members returned with two veteran families to lower and fold Chet's flag as a bugler played 'Taps'. We then started the ceremony again to honor Post Legionnaire Anthony Grasso, a US Army, Korean War veteran.

Anyone wishing to honor a veteran in this way can contact our Post Adjutant Pat McDonough (#914-953-6807) to schedule to fly their burila flag on an available date on our schedule. Honoring veterans... its what we do.

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## Post / Sons / Auxiliary Elections

All three organizations in our Post - Legion, Sons, and Auxiliary conducted Officer elections during their May meetings. Our Post re-elected all Officers and Committee trustees to another year. The position of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr., which had been empty for the last part of the year, was filled after the election by a fresh face, Vincent Pipolo, one of our Hall Managers. Congratulations to Cmdr Carl DiLiberto, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr. Vincent Pipolo, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Cmdr. Robbi Galbraith, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Cmdr John McQuillan, Financial Officer Lawrencece Armstrong and Trustees - Rocco Salierno, Steve Rice, Patrick McDonough, and John Witt.

Our Sons Squadron re-elected all 6 Officers of the Squadron but the Commander and Adjutant switched roles for this year. Congratulations to Cmdr. Jay Gussak, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr. Matt Essell, Adjutant James Calbo, Financial Officer Craig Armstrong, Sgt-at-Arms Rob DeBalzo, and Chaplain Paul Martin III.

Auxiliary Unit #1009 held their elections as well and congratulations go out to - President Robbi Galbraith, Vice Pres. Connie Witt, Treasurer Teresa DeChristopher, Secretary Susan King, Sgt-at-Arms Patricia Bentivegna, and Chaplain Connie Witt.

Congratulations and Good Luck to all elected leaders in our Post family and let's have a great year!

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## Membership Report

Every year our Yorktown Post undertakes the serious mission of meeting, or exceeding, our previous year's membership total. In other words, we don't want to have the number of Legionnaires in our Post to go down in numbers. Stay the same size or grow larger by a few members, that's what

a healthy and happy Post should be able to do. We lose a few members each year to states with warmer winters and lose some to age and illness. We just need to keep talking up membership with veterans we meet during our events. Our 'goal' for 2025 was 112 members and we finished the year with 111... not bad, 99%, but we'll try to do better starting now for our 2026 membership year. Our Sons Squadron had a goal of 26 and finished with 22 of the 26 renewed. Our new Auxiliary Unit had a goal of 15 members for the year, and they surpassed their goal with 19 members at year's end. Congratulations Auxiliary!

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## Post Summer BBQ

On Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM we will hold our annual Post Family Summer BBQ at the Post. This event is FREE to all Post Legionnaires, Sons and Auxiliary members and your families. It is simple faire with hamburgers, hot dogs, and salads. This is a time to sit down and catch up with fellow Post Family members before we all get too busy with Post programs in September to be able to relax. We do need RSVP's by Thursday, 8/14 to Adjutant Pat McDonough (#914-953-6807) so that we can prepare enough food for everyone to enjoy. We do ask everyone to bring a small dessert for the dessert table. That table is always a thing to enjoy at these events.

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## Post License Plates & Coins

Our talented Sons Squadron member, Paul Martin III was key to our Sons designing and purchasing Yorktown Post Challenge Coins and a Post Family vehicle license plate. The challenge coin is a beautiful metal keepsake with the Pinesbridge monument displayed on it. It is sale for \$10 to everyone who wants one, but Yorktown Post Sons, Legionnaires, and Auxiliary members can get them for only \$5 each.

The Yorktown Family license plates are only \$10 each and you can proudly tout you are a Yorktown Legion member by displaying one on your car. We have quite a few members who travel the country and our Sons Squadron has agreed to 'loan' yo a Post plate when you are leaving to travel - if you'll stop at other Posts in your travels and 'trade' your plate for one of their plates. Kind of like getting a team baseball cap from other MLB parks as souvenirs. The plates you swap for will then be displayed in our Post bar for all to see - members and visitors. In three years, we have one row of plates across the length of the bar with 19 license

plates from as far away as Fairbanks, Alaska; Key West, Florida; Ludlow, Vermont; Newport Beach, California; as well as Theills, NY; PA, MD, NJ, AZ, NC, SC, MS, TX, and Omaha, Nebraska. Stop by and pick up a lovely souvenir from our Post to show others in your travels. It's a fun diversion that gets you to stop in and see other American Legion Posts across the country!

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## Post #1009 'School Call'

Our Post has had success in getting the word out about our American Legion programs for high school students. The Boys State program is a week-long civics program in June for boys who are HS Juniors that is conducted at SUNY Morrisville, NY. Our Post has sponsored as many as 5 boys to this program 2 years ago but we received no applications for it this past summer. Empire Girls State is a week's long civics program conducted by the Auxiliary at SUNY Brockport, NY. Our Post sponsored 3 girls 3 years ago but this year no girls applied for the program through our Post.

The American Legion Oratorical Scholarship program, or Constitutional Speech Contest was revived in Westchester County 2 years ago. This competition presents winners with scholarship awards at each level of the competition. The top 3 awards at the National level are \$20,000, \$22,500, and \$25,000 - nothing to laugh about there. Our Post found and sponsored 3 of the 4 entrants 2 years ago and one went on to become NYS Champion! Last year our Post found and sponsored the only 2 competitors in the contest.

Our Post Education Chair, John Witt, has organized a 'School Call' event at our Post for students and their parents to stop by and get more information on these programs and how to apply for them. Our "School Call" will be on Sunday 12th, 2025 at 3 PM in our Post. This event is open to students and Post members to see the benefits of these wonderful programs.

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## Dates of Interest

Here are some dates of special interest for veterans and our Post members:

**Sun 8/24 5 PM Lions Free Concert with Veterans Appreciation Night** at DeVito Track & Field

**Sun 8/31 10 AM Veteran Appreciation Day at Rye Playland** - Tix must be picked up by Fri 8/29 at County Veterans Service



Agency (#914-813-5145)

**Fri 9/05 4:45 PM Yorktown Grange Fair**

**Flagraising Ceremony at Yorktown Grange Grounds.** Be a part of our long tradition of opening the Fair!

**Fri 9/12 10 AM to 2 PM Sen Harckham Annual**

**Senior Resource Fair** at Cortlandt Community Center 29 Westbrook Drive, Cortlandt, NY

## Military Tribute Banners

Everyone sees the banners on utility poles around town with the photos of veterans in their uniforms identifying them for all to see and honor. This is one program of our Sons Squadron #1009. At last count there are 83 of these banners all around Yorktown and it's hamlets. Families buy them with love in their hearts to honor their veterans. Most of our Post members, and a definitely the public, do not hear about the small tidbits and stories that those running these programs get to see every so often that make this work so worthwhile. There is a banner up by the Hart Library for Ronald R. Black, a US Naval Officer. A letter came in with a photo of Ronald standing under his banner. The letter reads: "This was last year's picture of my father's banner right down the street from my home, and I was pleased to see the banner return this year in a close location. My father is 85 and has dementia and it's getting harder to get him out of the house, but he will always make the effort to see his banner." EVERY Post Member - Legion, Sons, and Auxiliary, should feel the pride in the work our Post does in our community every day. Our Post matters.



## Post #1009 Upcoming Events

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|-----|-----|----|--|
| Sun | Aug | 17 | Post Summer BBQ at 1 PM  |
| Sun | Aug | 24 | Lions Concert Vet Appreciation Night at 5 PM at DeVito Field             |
| Tue | Sep | 2  | Executive Comm Mtg 7 PM  |
| Wed | Sep | 3  | Auxiliary Unit Mtg 6 PM  |
| Thu | Sep | 4  | SAL #1009 meeting 7:30 PM  |
| Fri | Sep | 5  | Grange Fair Flag-raising Ceremony at 4:45 PM                             |
| Thu | Sep | 11 | Post Monthly meeting - 7:30 PM   |
| Wed | Oct | 1  | Auxiliary Unit Mtg 6 PM  |
| Thu | Oct | 2  | SAL #1009 meeting 7:30 PM  |
| Tue | Oct | 7  | Executive Comm Mtg 7 PM  |
| Thu | Oct | 9  | Post Monthly meeting - 7:30 PM   |
| Sun | Oct | 12 | 'School Call' Open House at Post #1009 at 3 PM.                          |
| Tue | Nov | 4  | Executive Comm Mtg 7 PM  |
| Wed | Nov | 5  | Auxiliary Unit Mtg 6 PM  |
| Thu | Nov | 6  | SAL #1009 meeting 7:30 PM  |
| Sun | Nov | 9  | Veterans Day Parade in Shrub Oak. Lakeland HS Form-up at 1:40 PM         |
| Mon | Nov | 11 | Veterans Day Ceremony at Veterans Memorials Circle at Town Hall at 11 AM |
| Thu | Nov | 13 | Post Monthly meeting - 7:30 PM   |

## Yorktown Post #1009

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THE AMERICAN LEGION

