



The American Legion – Patchogue Post 269  
 Post Office Box 457  
 Patchogue, New York 11772-0457

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**Patchogue Post 269**  
**Corner of Baker Street & South Ocean Avenue (631) 475-3822**

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Cmdr Jonathon Ralph	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Jose Bou	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Richard Poelker
Tres. Craig Munn		Adjutant Pauline V. King

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## **Commanders Corner**

Comrades

This last quarter has been a very busy time for the Post. This year, we attended many events for the Veterans Day holiday. Not only did we have our ceremony at the Four Corners, we attended an event at Sayville Middle School, and did a Color Guard at Blue Ridge Condo's. We also attended events at St. Joseph's College.

The most important task that we have facing us is a fund raiser. In order to continue doing all the events and out-reach that we need to do, we cannot rely on hall rentals only. On Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup>, we will be having a supper from 3 PM to 7 PM at the VFW Post 2913 here in Patchogue. We will be having cordon bleu, baked potatoes, vegetables, salad, and cake along with beer, wine, soda, and coffee. We will also have a Chinese auction and raffles. The cost for the dinner is \$20. Anyone who wants to help with this, or can make a basket or two for the auction would be greatly appreciated. The more members involved, the better it will be for all of us.

We are continuing our out-reach with the Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support project. This is an important community out-reach and it doesn't cost the Post much money to do. We are also continuing our work with the Missing In America Project as well as the NOA ( No One in Attendance ) monthly ceremony. The NOA ceremony is done by Calverton and the Patriot Guard Riders. We participated in five Missing in America interment ceremonies over the last three months. Also we are continuing our out-reach with the Student Veterans of America.

I have been having a lot of conversations and discussions for new ideas of how to increase our out-reach to Veterans and the community. I think it is very important to improve and enhance our standing in the community, and with all Veterans.

Now that we have a Color Guard started, we will be taking the next steps of practicing and making it better. We will also be working on getting a firing detail put together. We are also looking for ways to get more members to participate in the various activities and events. We will continue to post all the information on Facebook and our web site, and we have a new bulletin board in the Dugout so we can post the flyers and information that comes in. Many times we get information about events that will occur before the next membership meeting, so we encourage everyone to drop down to the Dugout and check the new board for event information. The Dugout is a great place just to get together and talk on a Friday evening or Sunday afternoon, so come down and join in.

We are doing very well on membership, but if you haven't yet paid your 2017 dues, I really would like to ask you to renew as soon as you can. Your support is vital to this Post and the work we are doing. It would be a great benefit to get to the 100% paid point where we don't have to worry about it! Right now we are at 80%.

As we start the new year, remember that we will be starting the officer nomination process in March for the 2017-2018 year. If you are interested in being an officer in the Post, let George Egan or myself know. The more involved, the better!

For God and Country  
Jon Ralph  
Commander – Patchogue Post 269

## **1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander Corner**

A reminder to all American Legion Patchogue Post 269 members that you will be receiving renewal notices from our National Headquarters if you have not yet paid your 2017 dues. 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  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander

### **Membership Corner**

I would like to thank everyone who has paid their 2017 membership dues. We still have 41 members who haven't paid yet. Right now we are at 80% renewal. At the state level, we are at 86% of our membership goal. I would like to urge all of you who have not yet renewed to please do so. It really is important to the Post that we get all the members renewed.

Again, I would like to say thank you to those who have paid.

For God and Country  
John Matuszak – Past Commander  
Membership Officer

### **Historian Corner**

Did you know:

\* April 1, 1975 – The American Legion sponsored Freedom Bell goes aboard the Freedom Train during its tour of the country in celebration of the U.S. Bicentennial. Six years later the Bell is dedicated at its permanent home in Columbus Plaza, opposite Union Station in Washington D.C.

\*May 1, 1972 – The American Legion implements a Halloween Safety

Program for Children. The Program remains the only national program of its kind.

\*June 23, 1935 – The first American Legion Boys State convenes in Springfield, Illinois to help youths gain an understanding of the structure and operation of the Federal Government. The first Boys Nation, bringing together youth leadership from all the Boys State Programs convenes in 1946. Today more than 19,500 young men participates in Boys State and 98 participates in Boys Nation.

\*Since 1938 the American Legion National High School Oratorical Program, “A Constitutional Speech Contest“, has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nations laws, the ability to think and speak clearly and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. Many politicians and news anchors have been participants of this program.

Dates to remember:

Jan 16, 2017- Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Jan 27, 1973- Viet Nam Cease Fire.

Jan 30, 1968- Start of Tet Offensive.

Feb 1, 2017- National Freedom Day.

Feb 12, 2017- Lincoln's Birthday.

Feb 20, 2017- Presidents Day.

Fen 22, 2017- Washington's Birthday.

Feb 23, 1945- Iwo Jima Flag raised'

Feb 24, 1991- Operation Desert Storm.

Mar 12, 2017- Daylight Saving Time begins.

Mar 15 -17, 2017 American Legion Birthday.

Mar 17, 2017- St. Patrick's Day.

Mar 19, 2003- Start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

For God and Country  
Jose J. Bou  
Post Historian

## Auxiliary Corner

### Auxiliary News

Happy New Year to our Auxiliary members near and far. May your New Year be filled with blessings, health, and joy.

For Thanksgiving we gave monetary donations to food pantries such as St Francis, The Lighthouse Mission, the Grace Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church of Our Savior in Patchogue.

We shopped, wrapped and delivered packages to the homeless women veterans in the Beacon House. This was made possible through a generous donation by the Elks Lodge of Patchogue. We purchased pajamas, slippers, robes, laundry bags, socks etc. We also purchased a woman a coat who desperately needed it. Thank You Post members for donating monies which enabled us to purchase toys for the severely disabled children in ANGELA'S house. It is our annual tradition to bring joy to children less fortunate than ourselves. Thank you Santa Bob Bruggerman and to our First Vice President Carole Bruggerman for delivering the toys, and to our Elf Pat Bergin, Bob B and Carole B for helping with the shopping and wrapping.

Our Annual Champagne toast took place in our Post by our fireplace in remembrance of our departed Post and Auxiliary members.

Thank you to our Auxiliary members who decorated our Christmas trees. My thanks to our Sec Vice Beverly Matuszak for all her baking and help that she gives our unit during the year.

We had a fantastic turnout for our Christmas parade.

Some members got together for our Annual Christmas dinner. We had a great time and missed those members who couldn't be there.

Mid- Winter Conference is from January 20-21st. Registration is Due by January 10<sup>th</sup>.

PLEASE MAIL OUT YOUR 2017 MEMBERSHIP DUES ASAP.

For God and Country  
Cathy Beer  
President - Auxiliary Unit 269

## Community Activities

Our Post was asked to provide the opening Color Guard for the Special Olympics Adaptive games held at St Joseph's College on October 16<sup>th</sup>. We had not had a Color Guard for a few years, so we decided it was time to get it going again. For a first time, we did very well. The only mishap was when one of the slings on the rifles broke. The rifles have been in storage for quite a while, so all of the slings are old and tearing. We have put new slings on several of the rifles. During the next couple of months, we will be doing a full cleaning, inspection, and test firing of the rifles. And of course we will have practice drills.

Members of the Post were invited to attend the St. Joseph's College – Parade of Hero's. This event is conducted during the Lacrosse Jamboree/Veterans Celebration and was held on November 6<sup>th</sup>. This is the second year that we have been invited to attend. We had a very good turnout from the Post. The girls participating in the Lacrosse Jamboree formed a tunnel for all the veterans to pass thru. All of the veterans were introduced. Afterwards, St. Joseph's provided a great meal. For those interested in seeing some of it, there is a video posted on our Facebook page. There are also several photos that were taken during the event. We wish to thank St. Joseph's College for this excellent ceremony.

On November 9<sup>th</sup>, Emanuel Lutheran Church and School held a service for the local veterans. Several of the children in the school gave their thoughts and feelings on veterans and the meaning of sacrifice. There were many people from the community that attended. After the service, we were treated to a luncheon.

The Post was also asked to attend a Veterans Recognition Day at the Sayville Middle School. Several of our members, along with members of the VFW in Sayville, members of the U.S. Coast Guard, and a recruiter from the U.S. Marine Corps attended. During the school assembly, kids from the school band and choir sang several songs. The school put together a video that featured the song from each branch of the Armed Forces. As each of the branches song was played, the veterans from that branch stood. At the completion, each veteran and active duty member was recognized. What made this very interesting and special came after the school assembly. At various times of the day, veterans broke up into smaller groups and visited several classes. Each time we had 20-30 minutes and talked with the kids about our times in service, and what it meant to us to serve. Since we were in groups of 4-5, we were able to give the kids several different views and experiences which prompted them to ask a lot of questions. This is something that we will be doing more of in the future.

November 11<sup>th</sup> fell on a Friday this year, and we held the annual Veterans Day Ceremony at the Four Corners in Patchogue.



We had a very good attendance from members of the Post. It was

encouraging to see all of the local citizens of Patchogue attending and supporting us. It seems that each year the crowd grows a little bit larger. George Barret – Commander VFW Post 2913, John Piorkowski – Commander Amvets Post 111, and Jon Ralph – Commander American Legion Post 269 all gave short speeches. Councilman Neil Foley, Legislator Rob Calarco, Senator Tom Croci, and Mayor Paul Pontieri all spoke about the meaning and importance of Veterans Day. There was an excellent article written by Nicole Allegrezza published in the Long Island Advance. You can read the article by going to our Website and looking under the Articles tab.

Members of the Post also attended the Veterans Day Ceremony at St. Joseph's College that afternoon. There were speeches by Congressman Lee Zeldin, Kyle Watts – President of the Student Veterans of America, and several members of the college faculty. All veterans were recognized and received a special challenge coin. The college and the SVA should be commended for the excellent ceremony. We are honored to be invited to attend and join in this yearly event.

The final event for the Veterans Day ceremonies was held on Saturday November 12<sup>th</sup> at the Blue Ridge Condo complex. The home owner's association invited us to participate in their Veterans Day Ceremony and Supper.

During our original conversations with them, it became very apparent that this would be a great opportunity to make use of our Color Guard. We had done a Flag Day ceremony earlier this year at the complex, so this gave us the chance to continue to be involved. We contacted the Medford Post of the American Legion, and they agreed to join with us for this event. We formed a Color Guard line and presented the Colors. This was followed by the National Anthem, a short speech by Commander Jon Ralph, and concluded with the singing of God Bless America. Members of the Auxiliary helped out with the presentation. All the people at the event were extremely pleased with our performance. There was an excellent meal and dancing after we finished our duties.





As November closed, it was again time for the annual Patchogue Christmas Parade. The Christmas Parade is the largest parade in Patchogue. There were enough members from the Post and Auxiliary that not only did we have a Flag Line, but we had about six or eight of us marching behind the Flags, we had our large American Legion Post banner in front, and we still needed three vehicles to carry those members who were not able to walk the entire route. This was a great turnout from the Post and hopefully showed the community that the Post is thriving!

December 7<sup>th</sup> marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. On Sunday December 4<sup>th</sup>, members of the Post attended a Service of Remembrance at the Congregational Church in Patchogue. We were joined by members of VFW Post 2913. This event included a video put together by the church of scenes in Patchogue from the 30's and 40's. We were very pleased to attend and want to thank the

Congregational Church for putting this together. As most veterans of WWII are no longer with us, events like this become even more important so that the younger people have a chance to remember the cost that has been paid in keeping our nation free and strong.

And finally, we closed out our events with our annual Salute to Departed Comrades. About 20 of us gathered in front of the fireplace in the Main Hall. John Matuszak, George Egan, Carole Bruggemann, and Jon Ralph all gave short speeches. The ceremony concluded with our champagne toast to all of our Departed members. It was very fitting that the casket flag from one of the Missing in America Project interments now resides on the mantle above the fireplace.

### Recent Events

The Post continues to be very involved with the Missing in America Project. The purpose of the Missing in America Project is to locate, identify, and inter the unclaimed remains of American Veterans. Members of the Post attended interment ceremonies on October 6, October 13, October 21, November 17, and December 15. At the interment ceremony on October 21, Commander Jon Ralph was asked to receive the casket flag. He accepted the Flag on behalf of American Legion Post 269. In thinking about it, Jon realized that the most appropriate place for this flag was on the mantle at the Post. For most families, the casket flag is kept as a memory of their departed loved one. Given that Michael Wallace had no family to claim his remains, it seems to be fitting that this flag be kept on the fireplace mantle at the Post so that he is surrounded by his fellow brothers and sisters who have served.

Several members of the Post also continue to attend the NOA ceremonies at Calverton. These ceremonies are conducted on the second Wednesday of the month at 10 AM at Calverton. This is a joint ceremony between the officials at Calverton National Cemetery and the Patriot Guard Riders. The purpose of the ceremony is to read the names of all veterans interred in the last month with No One in

Attendance. The idea is that no veteran should be interred alone and without family.

We are also continuing our monthly community meetings in coordination with the Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer Support project. This is a monthly coffee hour and is open to all veterans and their families. It is held at the Post on the third Saturday of every month between 10 and 11 AM. Come down and get acquainted and visit with your fellow veterans.

Members of the Post are also volunteering in the Wreaths Across America project. This project is nationwide and attempts to place Christmas wreaths at the headstones in the National Cemeteries.

### **Post Everlasting**

Members of the Post performed the Post Everlasting ceremony on December 11<sup>th</sup> for Joseph Doran. He had been a member of the Post for 31 years. He passed away on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Upcoming Events**

January will be a slow time for the members. Given that we will be dealing with winter and snow, that's probably a good thing. The Four Chaplains Ceremony will be held on Sunday February 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM at the Long Island State Veterans Home. Check our Facebook and Website for exact details as the date gets nearer. In March we will be marching in the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade in Patchogue. Check our Website and Facebook for information as we get closer to the date.

### **General Information**

We have had several articles about our Post and members written in the Long Island Advance. For those of you who have not read them, there are links on our Website under the Articles tab. And in the Blog on the Website you can find all of the Letters to the Editor that have been published in the Advance.

We are working on getting Bill Schlosser on the Honor Flight to Washington D.C. in May to tour the WWII monuments. There is a link on our Website to an interview of Bill in the Long Island Advance. The paperwork for Bill has already been delivered to the coordinator. If his daughter is not able to go as guardian, several members have stepped forward and said they would be able to go.

We are working on a project to get the cannons repaired. Actually, these are M1902 Field Guns or M1902 3" Field Guns. We are doing a lot of research and making a lot of phone calls to determine what can be done. There are not many of these left, so it is taking a lot of work just to track down information. We are already working with the Village concerning the funding required to restore these.

The emblem on the front of the building has gotten to the point of no repair. We have been working with a local sign company and they are making a new emblem that will be installed the first week of May.

As most of us know, although we own the building, we do not own the land. The land is actually owned by the Village of Patchogue. We just completed renewing our lease for the property. We now have a new ten-year lease with an automatic ten-year renewal. The cost remained the same at \$1 per year.

The nomination process for Post officers for the 2017-2018 year will start at the March membership meeting. If anyone is interested in an officer position, let George Egan or any of the current officers know. It is a great way to get involved with the Post.

And finally, our Past Commander John Matuszak has decided to run for the position of Suffolk County Commander. We have submitted a letter to the County nominating John for this position. Tom Bergin is the County Chaplain and we will be submitting a letter for him also. If John is elected, he has asked our current Commander Jon Ralph to also accept the position of County Adjutant in addition to his duties as Post Commander. The Adjutant at the county is an appointed position, so Jon will be able to run for a second term as Post Commander,

## 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: January 9<sup>th</sup>, February 13<sup>th</sup>, and March 13<sup>th</sup>. 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

Events, photos, and other information are always available on our Facebook page. 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. Important announcements and event information are also available on our Website. Our Website has a resources page with phone numbers and links to many Veteran support groups as well as links to several crisis hotlines. We also maintain a Blog section for commentary and an Articles tab for published articles.

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>

If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, call Tom Hall or Jon Ralph. 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*

## **Patchogue Post 269**

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## **News Letter**

**2017**  
**January - March**



For God and Country

