



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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## Commanders Corner

Comrades

This last quarter has been a very busy time for the Post. Unlike past years, the first three months did not have the expected slowdown of activity.

We have completed our Fundraiser! It was a huge amount of work by a lot of us, but it came off great. I want to express my thanks to everyone who worked so hard to pull this event off. It is a tribute to our Post that this was so well received and enjoyed. I have gotten lots of very favorable comments not only from members but from friends and general community!

We are continuing to be active with other organizations such as Missing in America Project, Joseph Dwyer Veteran Peer Support group, Student Veterans of America, Patriot Guard Riders, and others. As I have said many times, and firmly believe, our best results will be achieved when we work together with other organizations and form solid partnerships where it makes sense.

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.

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 97% and we need 5 more members to renew to reach our target goal.

I am proud to announce that after several years we are making significant progress on restoring the two Field Guns located outside the Post. With a lot of research done by both the Post and the Village, we now have a firm hand on the history of these two cannons. We also have firm commitments and contracts to restore both of these historical artifacts. Although it will cost a lot and take a lot of effort, the results will be worth it!

Our Post continues to make progress in getting community exposure and support. We are also getting more attention and recognition for many of our ideas and projects. This is a strong sign of the progress all of us are making to strengthen our Post.

We have started the nomination process for the Officer term of 2017-2018. Anyone wishing to run for a position, please attend our next regular Membership meeting so that you can be nominated. It's a great way to be involved with the Post. On a personal note, I am proud to be able to run for a second term as Commander of this great Post.

The next several months will also be very busy. I encourage all of you to come join in and help. It's a great way to get some personal satisfaction and have some fun at the same time.

For God and Country  
Jon Ralph  
Commander

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

With Flag Day approaching I would like to share with our readers this poem about our Flag.

Old Glory  
Sing for Old Glory a jubilant song,  
Lift up Old Glory and bear it along,  
Carry Old Glory with bravery strong,  
Live and die for Old Glory.

Fair is Old Glory on land and on sea,  
Free is Old Glory, exultantly free,  
Glad is Old Glory forever to be,  
Live and die for Old glory.

Now for Old Glory a desperate fray,  
Now is Old Glory's pre-eminent day,  
Now for Old Glory to battle and pray,  
Live and die for Old Glory.

Never in vain is Old Glory unfurled,  
Deep in the conflict Old Glory is hurled,  
Fight for Old Glory and fight for the world,  
Live and die for Old Glory.

Also, it is still not too late to renew your American Legion Patchogue Post 269 membership for 2017. Membership dues are \$43. Please send dues payment directly to the Post, Attention: Membership Officer John Matuszak in order to keep your membership active.

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 are at 97% of our membership goal. We will be doing a final mailing to those who have not renewed for 2017 in order to remind them of why they should continue to be a member of the Legion. 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**

Memorial Day started as an event to honor Union Soldiers who had died during the Civil War. It was inspired by the way people in the Southern states honored their dead. After World War I, it was extended to include all men and women who died in any war or military action. Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day. The current name for this day did not come into use until after World War II. Decoration Day and then Memorial Day used to be held on May 30, regardless of day of the week on which it fell. In 1968, the Uniform Holiday Bill was passed as part of a move to use federal holidays to create three-day weekends. This meant that from 1971

the Memorial Day holiday has been officially observed on the last Monday in May. However, it took a longer period for all American states to recognize the new date.

Flag Day – On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress replaced the British symbols of the Grand Union flag with a new design featuring 13 white stars in a circle on a field of blue and 13 red and white stripes; one for each state. Although it is not certain, this flag may have been made by the Philadelphia seamstress Betsy Ross, who was an official flag maker for the Pennsylvania Navy. The number of stars increased as the new states entered the Union, but the number of stripes stopped at 15 and was later returned to 13. In June 1886 Bernard Cigrand made the first public proposal for the annual observance of the birth of the flag when he wrote an article titled “The Fourteenth of June” in the old Chicago Argus newspaper. Cigrand’s efforts to ensure national observance of Flag Day finally came when President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation calling for a nationwide observance of the event on June 14, 1916. However, Flag Day did not become official until August 1949 when President Harry Truman signed the legislation and proclaimed June 14 as Flag Day. In 1966, Congress also requested that the President issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as National Flag Week. The President is requested to issue each year a proclamation to: call on government officials in the USA to display the flag of the United States on All government buildings on Flag Day; and to observe Flag Day as the anniversary of the adoption on June 14, 1777, by the Continental Congress of the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States.

Dates to remember:

- April 6, 2017 – U.S. Entry in WW I in 1917.
- April 10, 2017 – American Legion Auxiliary’s 98<sup>th</sup> Birthday.
- April 18, 2017 – Patriots Day.
- May 8, 2017 – V.E.Day 1945.
- May 20, 2017 – Armed Forces Day.
- May 29, 2017 – Memorial Day.
- June 6, 2017 – D Day 1944.
- June 14, 2017 – Flag Day.
- June 25, 2017 – Korean War begins 1950.

For God and Country  
Jose J. Bou - Post Historian

## Auxiliary Corner

### Auxiliary News

Happy Spring to all of our members. I hope everyone had a safe and healthy winter. Our Auxiliary has kept busy as always helping our Veterans and our community and children. We've grown a bit too!!! Welcome to Liz Marge, Doreen Turpin, and Marilyn Ramos. Liz Marge was our Empire Girl Stater, we are proud of her accomplishments and happy to have her on board with us. As usual we participated in Patchogue's Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade and had fun doing so. We are sending not ONE but TWO girls away to Empire Girls State this year, we were very lucky. We are preparing to have a Tupperware Fundraiser in a month or two and looking forward to seeing many new products and ideas. Our Post held their fundraiser in the VFW which was well attended. The food and prizes were great. Our Auxiliary donated a basket and our member Kristen Suriano donated another. Thank you Kristen.

I'm honored to announce that our Member Christine Mohr, our Legislative Chairwoman will be getting an award from Senator Croci on April 10th for all her hard work. She's a true team member. Thanks Chris!

May is around the corner, which brings us to our Annual Memorial Day Ceremony and Parade. I'm sure we will have a great attendance. Our members will be out getting donations from our poppies. GOD BLESS ALL WHO SERVED! In July our Convention will be held in Syracuse. I will keep you posted in our next newsletter about new rules(if any) and of course I'll ask Jon Ralph if he'd post some pictures of us.

Well until the next time, I wish all of you a great Spring. Stay healthy and safe. God bless all of you.

For God and Country  
Cathy Beer  
President - Auxiliary Unit 269

## Echoes From The Heart

Those who ignore history are most likely to repeat it. How true will this statement be as it relates to our beloved Nation. After tracing our history, I

have found that we have been involved with over thirty two conflicts since the Revolution. These "conflicts" are Wars, Police Actions, undeclared Wars, and United Nations interventions.

I realize I may have missed mentioning a few, but the point I would like to bring out is... will we continue to ignore our history or will we, as a nation, learn from it?

God did bless America; the question is how long will "he" continue to do so. In all our court rooms and on our money is the statement "In God We Trust". America is the most powerful military power ever. With all this power, will we no longer trust?

We seem to be breaking the covenant made by our founding fathers. If we continue to do so, will we as a Nation survive the next World War or will the fate of Rome, Greece, Egypt, and many more be ours as well. It has been proven, ignore History and History may just ignore you.

For God and Country  
Tom Bergin  
Past Post Commander

## Community Activities

On January 23-24 we went through a storm that was forecast to cause significant power outages and flooding. We took steps to notify the Village officials that the Post was open as an Emergency Warming area and would have coffee, tea, and water available to anyone who needed a place to sit and get warm. The storm was much less severe than expected so our services were not required. We are currently investigating how to be an official part of the Patchogue Village Emergency team.

Members of the Post attended the Back to God – Four Chaplains Remembrance Ceremony on February 19<sup>th</sup>. This year the event was held at the Long Island State Veterans Home in Stony Brook. The ceremony is coordinated by Tom Bergin. It was extremely well attended this year. The Legion Riders had a Flag Line, and The Sharps, a chorus group from St. Joseph's College, did the songs. By having the event at the Veterans Home, many of those Veterans were able to attend and join in. It makes it that much more meaningful to be able to be with the Veterans who are not able to get

out as we can. Hopefully it can be arranged to hold this ceremony at the Veterans Home again.

Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup> was a very busy day. Not only did we have our fundraiser ( see the Recent Events for that ) but we also had the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. The weather forecast a few days before had predicted snow, but luckily we avoided that and had a decent day. The wind had died down and it was cool but not frigid. Our Post was well represented and we want to thank everyone for joining in. We had about 10 of us marching in addition to everyone who rode in the cars.

For this Parade, we again had three vehicles carrying our members. This is the third or fourth parade in a row where we have needed three vehicles. We mention this because we are now getting more people involved. We will be trying to get a third set of the magnetic signs for the car doors now that we really have a need for them.

For the past several years various members of the Post have talked about fixing the two cannons in the park. Now we are happy to report that significant progress has been made. We have been meeting and talking with Mayor Paul Pontieri and Brian Egan. It has been discovered that these two cannons are actually Village property. In research done by the Village it has been discovered that these two actually arrived in the Veterans Memorial Park in March of 1922. Both the Village and our Post believe that it is very important to restore these two historical artifacts. On March 13<sup>th</sup> Commander Ralph spoke at the Village Board Meeting about these weapons and their meaning. The Village approved a resolution to sign a contract with Cannons Online to do the restoration at a cost of \$29,000. The Village will give \$14,500 and the Legion will try to raise the other \$14,500. The resolution was unanimously approved. There is a link on our Website to an eight-minute video taken during the Village Board of Trustees meeting.

In order to raise the money, we have already taken several steps. The first was to set up a PayPal Business Account. This means that we will be able to accept credit card donations not only for the restoration, but also as just regular donations. Once the business account was set up, we set up a PayPal Giving Fund and became a "Certified Charity" on PayPal which means that we will pay lower processing fees for all PayPal transactions. Then we started a "GoFundMe" campaign. Several of us have seen that GoFundMe campaigns have worked for many other people and felt this was appropriate

for us. We are putting together a document of the history of the cannons and will be approaching Legislator Robert Calarco along with other public officials to see if funding is available. We are also talking with the Chamber of Commerce about helping us raise the needed funds. You can find a lot of information on our Website including a document containing excerpts from Village Board Meetings in 1921 and 1922.

Please consider donating to our Restoration fund in order to finish our work on this important project. As Commander Ralph stated at the Board of Trustees Meeting, the Post will be 100 years old on August 15<sup>th</sup> of 2019 and we don't want the Mayor or the Commander standing in front of dilapidated cannons. We want all of us looking sharp and proud!

On March 30<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM St. Joseph's College held their Military Graduate Recognition Ceremony in the McGann Conference Room at the College. This is an important ceremony for the Veterans who are graduating from the college and preparing to start the next phase of their careers and life. Several members of the Post attended to support our fellow Veterans on their great accomplishment.

## **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 February 2<sup>nd</sup> and February 23<sup>rd</sup> at Calverton National Cemetery. After the last one, Commander Ralph wrote a "Letter to the Editor" about the feelings of satisfaction that come after these ceremonies. That letter was published in the Long Island Advance and is available in the Blog on our website.

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. We will not be having a meeting in April since that Saturday ( April 15<sup>th</sup> ) is Passover. We will resume the meetings in May.

On March 19<sup>th</sup>, we held our Fundraiser. It was a big success. We had about 90 people which is a great turnout for this event. We have received a lot of compliments about the food. We want to thank Richard Poelker and his son for all of their hard work planning and cooking the food. We also had a lot of great baskets to auction off and we want to thank everyone who helped make the baskets. It was a lot of hard work planning and putting this together, but it was worth the effort and all the people who attended enjoyed it. We want to extend a big Thank You to all of those who worked hard and helped out making this fundraiser a success. It is a credit to the Post that this was such a success. One item we wish to point out is that the majority of the people who attended were just friends or from the community at large. It was exciting to see the community supporting our efforts. It was a large challenge given that we had to do most of the setup early on Sunday since we also had to make time to attend the St. Patrick's Day Parade and then come back to the VFW to finish setting up. The VFW was a great help!

### **Upcoming Events**

The Post will be busy these next three months. As a quick overview, we have Memorial Day, Flag Day, and Officer Installation.

On Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup> the Patchogue-Medford Booster Club will hold a Veterans Recognition Day at the High School immediately before the baseball game between Pat-Med and Brentwood. We will be meeting at 2 PM in front of the High School. We will be introduced as a Unit, so we will have our Post Banner. All members are welcome to come join in this festivity.

On Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup> Bill Schlosser we be going on the Honor Flight to Washington D.C. The Post is sponsoring Bill for this. The flight leaves Islip at 8:10 AM, so if any members can be there between 6:30 and 8:00 to honor Bill and all the others on the Honor Flight before they leave it would be appreciated. They will be returning to Islip about 10:30 PM that evening.

We plan on being at the airport around 9:30 PM for the welcome home. Again, let's see if we can get several of the members to be there to greet all of these Veterans!

On Saturday May 27<sup>th</sup> the Post will be joining with the VFW Post 2913 and AmVets Post 111 to do the "Flags In" ritual at the local cemeteries. We will be placing an American Flag at the grave markers of all Veterans buried there. This is a tradition started many years ago in Arlington National Cemetery and now is a tradition that is carried on locally. We will start about 9 AM at Cedar Grove Cemetery. It will only take about three hours, so come join in as we walk the cemeteries.

On Monday May 29<sup>th</sup> we will be holding the annual Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony. The lineup for the Parade will be on Rt 112 between 10-10:30 AM and the Parade starts at 11 AM. The Ceremony will be held about 11:45 in front of the Post. We hope that a lot of our members can attend both the Parade and the Ceremony. Let's make sure the community sees us!

On Saturday June 17<sup>th</sup> we will be holding the Officer Installation meeting and dinner at the Post starting about 5:30 in the afternoon. Come join us as we install the Officers of the Post for the 2017-2018 term and then enjoy a great supper. All members are welcome to come and celebrate with the new Officers!

We have not yet selected a date but we will be holding a Flag Retirement Ceremony again this year. We will work with both AmVets Post 111 and VFW Post 2913 to select a date and host this ceremony. Watch our Facebook page and our Website for more information as we get closer to this event.

We will be reaching out to Blue Ridge Condo Homeowners Association to see if they would like us to do a Flag Day ceremony as we did last year. Doing these types of ceremonies are not only good publicity, but are a lot of fun to do. Hopefully they will want us to be there again this year.

Although we do not have dates yet, we will again be giving awards to deserving students at the local schools. This is always done at the end of the school year in early June. We also have the Air Force Junior ROTC awards dinner in early May.

Pauline, our Adjutant, will be trying to organize a group of us to go to one of the Long Island Ducks' baseball game this summer. It sounds like it can be a lot of fun, so if you are interested please let us know. It would be a great way to spend an afternoon or evening.

### **General Information**

The Post will be sponsoring Anthony Bracone as a Delegate to Boys State this year. All of his paperwork has been completed and submitted. The Executive Board interviewed Anthony and are excited to be able to sponsor him. Once he returns from Boys State, we will invite him to attend a meeting and talk about his experience at this great program.

The Post is continuing to make progress on the Color Guard and Firing Detail. Since we have not had a Firing Detail in several years, the paperwork for the rifles was out of date. We have completed all the forms and paperwork to bring us back into full compliance with the US Army requirements. We have made arraignments with a local shooting range so that we can test fire the rifles. Obviously we only use blank ammunition, but given that there is a church and two schools very close to the Post, we chose not to try to do any test firing here at the Post. Once the weather gets warmer we will be doing the testing and getting members together to practice for the Color Guard.

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.

In many conversations with some of our members, it became apparent that we should be more involved with the business community. So we have taken the required steps to become a member of the Greater Patchogue Chamber of Commerce. We feel this will make us even more visible to the community that we are here to support.

J-Signs, the local company chosen to do the new Emblem, has already taken the old one down. We will do the cleaning and painting that needs to be done on the balcony before the new emblem is installed. The new emblem will be ready in the first two weeks of May so it will be back up before Memorial Day.

The nomination process for Post officers for the 2017-2018 year started 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.

It is important that as many members as possible attend the May 8<sup>th</sup> Membership meeting at the Post at 8 PM. We will be electing the Officers for the 2017-2018 term. Your participation in selecting the Officers to lead the Post is an important function of membership.

We have had some discussions with the Village Attorney and members of the Son's of Union Veterans about the state of the Grand Army of the Republic ( GAR ) statue that sits in the Park right outside the Post. There is concern that it also needs to be restored/fixed. We will provide any assistance we can in that effort, but our plate is already fairly full with the current projects. There will be more information coming about this effort over the next couple of months.

There are some discussions going on with the Executive Director of the National American Legion Press Association concerning the Post's approach to Public Relations and Social Media. We have shared a couple documents with the National organization and they have expressed significant interest in showcasing what we are doing. Hopefully there will be more news coming in the future on this.

And finally, our Past Commander John Matuszak is running for Suffolk County Commander. John did a fantastic job for our Post and we are proud to sponsor him in this effort!! The position of County Commander is an elected position. The election will be done at the County Convention in Southold on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Votes are allocated to the posts according to size, so our Post will have five delegates. We will be represented by our Commander Jon Ralph, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Jose Bou, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Richard Poelker, Adjutant Pauline King, and Service Officer George Egan. All members are welcome to attend this convention.

### **Post Everlasting**

Charles Baack, a member of our Post for 28 years, passed away last year. Unfortunately, we did not get any notice about it so were unable to perform the Post Everlasting ceremony.

Joseph Floccari, a member of our Post for 20 years, passed away in June of last year. He lived in Ft. Meyers Florida, which is why we didn't know about it.

### **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: April 10<sup>th</sup>, May 8<sup>th</sup>, and June 12<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**

**Post Office Box 457**

**Patchogue, New York, 11772-0457**



## **News Letter**

**2017  
April - June**



**For God and Country**

