



North Albany Post 1610

American Legion

35 North First Street, Albany, New York 12204

May 3, 2010

Dear Legion Family Member and Friends,

North Albany Post 1610 would like to welcome the members of Ambrose J. Scully Post 1019. The next regular meeting will be held on **May 17th at 7:00 PM**. The June executive board meeting will be held on Monday, June 7th, at 7:00 PM and the June regular meeting will be held on June 21st, also at 7:00 PM.

VETERAN ACTIVITIES

MEMORIAL SERVICE

As is our custom, at 6:00pm (this is a time change from prior newsletter) on May 17th, prior to our regular meeting. The North Albany Post 1610 Memorial Service, led by Chaplain Archie Cellini, will be conducted. Please join us as we remember all those past members who have gone before us.

DECORATION OF GRAVES

Sunday May 30th is the date for decoration of the graves of all those who are deceased and served their country. Please join us as we give these veterans their just due. The Commander will lead the contingent from the Post rooms at 8:30am, stopping for the laying of the wreath at the monument in front of North Albany Academy at 8:45am and then mustering at St. Agnes Cemetery at 9:00am. After a brief ceremony at the entrance to the cemetery all will go to their assigned areas and place the flags on the graves of our veterans.

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Albany's annual Memorial Day parade will step off on Monday, May 31st at 9:00am. The parade will begin at the corner of Partridge St. and Central Ave. Please join us marching or at the very least, turn out on the parade route welcoming us as we pass by.

HONOR-A-VET

June's Honor-A-Vet ceremony will be held Monday, June 7th at 8:30am at Joseph E. Zaloga Post 1520.

SPECIAL THANKS

A special thanks from Post 1610 goes out to Elizabeth Garhartt for the donation of the flag presented to her in honor of her late husband Leigh Garhardt.

SPRING CLEANUP

We need some volunteers for our spring cleanup, call 465-4800 or email nap1610@yahoo.com, with your name and phone number Attn: Cleanup

UPCOMING EVENTS

North Albany Reunion – Saturday, August 14th, contact Tim Ryan (461-3411) or Dick Sherry (785-9243) for tickets and information.

2011 NOMINEES

Commander – Joe Ferraiolo, 1st Vice-Commander – Charles Johnson or William Parker, Jr., 2nd Vice-Commander – Richard Battibulli, 3rd Vice-Commander – Roy VanAmburgh, Finance Officer – James Egan, Adjutant – **OPEN**, Chaplain – **OPEN**, Sergeants at Arms – Pat Dolan & Bill Gilheany, Historian – Charles Kelly, Bar Chairman – **OPEN**.

Hill praises High Court for cross ruling

The American Legion - April 28, 2010

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled 5-4 that a Latin cross honoring World War I veterans in southwestern California does not need to be removed or concealed from public view. The American Legion has long supported efforts to preserve the 1934-erected monument at its current location on Sunrise Rock. The American Civil Liberties Union has led efforts to remove it, contending it violates separation between church and state.

"To remove the Mojave Cross, or to conceal it inside a plywood box as it has been for several months, is a violation of free expression in itself," American Legion National Commander Clarence Hill said. "The court ruled correctly in this case. If it had gone the other way, a number of other veterans memorials and monuments around the country would be faced with similar restrictions. It's a slippery slope, and the Supreme Court acknowledged that. Removal of a religious symbol from a veterans memorial could conceivably be followed by removal of religious symbols from all government-owned or public spaces even, perhaps, veterans cemeteries.

"The American Legion has filed friend-of-the-court briefs on behalf of our nation's veterans as the Mojave Cross case has moved through the legal system. The Legion will continue to fight for the values and freedoms veterans - like those of World War I, which the Mojave Cross honors - gave their lives for."

The Court closely mirrored The American Legion's amicus brief in ruling that "a Latin cross is not merely a reaffirmation of Christian beliefs. It is a symbol often used to honor and respect those whose heroic acts, noble contributions, and patient striving help secure an honored place in history for this Nation and its people. Here, one Latin cross in the desert evokes far more than religion. It evokes thousands of small crosses in foreign fields marking the graves of Americans who fell in battles, battles whose tragedies are compounded if the fallen are forgotten."

The cross will remain concealed behind a plywood box for the time being pending a second look at the case at the U.S. District Court level. The High Court remanded the case to the U.S. District Court to give it a chance to see if any other legal alternatives exist. However, the High Court reminded the District Court that: "Respect for a coordinate branch of Government forbids striking down an Act of Congress except upon a clear showing of unconstitutionality."

The cross on Sunrise Rock had been tended to for a half-century by World War I Army medic John Riley Bembrey. He diligently kept it maintained in memory of his fallen comrades. Before he passed away in 1984, Bembrey handed that responsibility over to Henry Sandoz, an area resident who has fought to keep the cross visible to the public.

The ACLU led legal efforts to have the monument removed or concealed. A transfer of land ownership from federal ground to property owned by the Veterans of Foreign Wars did not end the dispute, and federal courts placed an injunction on the land transfer until the the Supreme Court could rule.

The Alliance Defense Fund, which has joined with the Legion and Liberty Institute in support of the cross, praised the Legion for its role in the decision.

"This is a great victory, and a testimony to the commitment and influence of The American Legion," said Joe Infranco, senior legal counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund. "I honestly believe the interest generated by your involvement grabbed the Court's attention and contributed in a significant way to this victory."

COMBAT TROOPS NOW GET EXTRA TIME OFF

By William H. McMichael - ArmyTimes

Service members deployed for 270 days or more in Iraq or Afghanistan now qualify for 15 days of "administrative absence" on top of their regular annual leave, under a new non-chargeable rest and recuperation policy announced by the Pentagon on Monday, March 22nd, 2010.

"This designation provides an additional benefit specifically for those service members deployed to the most arduous combat areas," Sam Retherford, the Pentagon's director of officer and enlisted personnel management, said in a statement. "Administrative absence days, in conjunction with

government-funded transportation for R&R, allow service members to save and use their annual leave for reintegration with their families and communities when they return home.”

The benefits for Iraq and Afghanistan are effective Tuesday, March 23, the Pentagon said.

Granting of the days is contingent upon mission requirements and authorized only for those service members who take part in the Non-Chargeable Rest and Recuperation program.

The no-charge administrative leave program is being limited to those in the “most arduous” areas, Retherford said.

Combatant commanders can ask the Pentagon to designate additional locations for the NCR&R if the area/location:

- Is a place where U.S. forces have been engaged in combat operations against a hostile force within the last six months and where actual combat operations are expected to continue.
- Meets R&R leave program criteria.
- Is in a combat zone designated by presidential executive order.
- Is in an area where service members are exposed to the most arduous conditions (for example, locations for which Hardship Duty Pay is authorized).

POST INFORMATION

FLAG DAY, FLAG BURN

Flag burn is scheduled for June 14th 6:00pm

FROM THE AUXILIARY

We are distributing poppies in May. If you can help for even an hour, please let Carole Egan know. You can reach her at 438-3626 for more information.

We still have **several members with outstanding dues**. If you are still owing, please send to Debbi Heritage, 1 Birch Tree Rd, Albany, NY 12205. Dues are still \$16.00; juniors are just \$5.00.

Thanks to all that participated in the ‘They Marched For Us, Let’s Walk for Them’ Walkathon on April 17th. It’s not too late to make a donation. All donations will go to VA hospitals, nursing homes and the Fisher House. Make checks payable to Dept of NY SAL and mail to Judy Benner, 13 Broderick St, Albany, NY 12205. Any questions; call 869-8668.

25 WEEK CLUB

Winners for April’s 25 week club drawings are;

April 5th – Deb Dobert April 12th – Pat Miller April 19th – John McAuliffe April 26th – Jim Miller

POST CUSTODIAN NEEDED

Anyone interested call 465-4800 and leave a message, letting them know what position it is about.

MEMBERSHIP

Please keep your mailing address up to date! I have been getting a lot of Return to Sender letters and postcards back at the post. Ways to keep it up to date, US Postal Service, email (nap1610@yahoo.com), or phone (465-4800). We try to make it easy for everyone.

We are looking for **NEW MEMBERS**, please send us anybody that you know that may be interested and qualified. We have 288 paid members to date, our goal is 319. We are trying to get 100% this year. All members should remember that 2010 dues are now \$30.00 for a regular membership or \$27.00 if you are age 62 and retired. Retirees should disregard the national dues notice indicating \$30.00 and pay only the \$27.00 rate. Those notices for 2010 dues were in the mail. We do appreciate those that send their dues in promptly. **Active duty personnel** should email nap1610@yahoo.com so we can now that if you are active or not, when verified your card will be sent out within a couple of weeks.

Members confined to home due to a long-term illness or nursing, assisted living residences should contact the Post at 465-4800 or email nap1610@yahoo.com to indicate their present status.

POST EVERLASTING

For God and Country,

Mike Swezey, Commander

Mike Swezey, Commander	783-9409H, 462-8304O, 330-3938C	mike_swezey@ml.com
Charles Johnson, 1 st Vice Cmdr	465-4800	
Joe Ferraiolo, 2 nd Vice Cmdr	209-2762C	
Roy Van Amburgh, 3 rd Vice Cmdr	465-4800	
William Parker Jr., Adjutant	533-8140C	nap1610@yahoo.com
William Parker Jr., Membership	533-8140C	nap1610@yahoo.com
Matthew Quackenbush, Service Officer	465-4800	mquacken@verizon.net
Harry Harbour, S.A.L. Commander		harry.harbour@albanycounty.com
Judy Benner, Auxiliary President	869-8668	jbenner1@nycap.rr.com
Rentals	465-4800 (Answering Machine)	
Post Bar & Information	465-1402	nap1610@yahoo.com
Post Fax	518-320-0589	
Post Web Page	http://www.northalbanypost1610.org/	
Chuck Kelly, OIC Color Guard	465-4800	