



Yorktown e-Legion

Yorktown American Legion Post #1009

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Breakfast with the Easter Bunny

On Sunday, April 1st our Post and the Yorktown Lions Club teamed up to run a 'Breakfast with the Easter Bunny' in our Post Hall. We originally planned on having 3 seatings of 90 minutes each, like our popular 'Santa' breakfast had, but 4 days before the breakfast we only had 37 people with reservations. At that time we decided to cancel two of the seatings and just proceed with the 10 AM session and hoped to break-even with our expenses. Apparently everyone waited until the last minute to try to make their reservations and in the last two days we went to our maximum of 115 reservations and turned away over 30 more. We had to scramble to buy more food to have sufficient for all the late responders.

Dora the Explorer, Elmo, and the Easter Bunny made their appearances as costumed characters and all the kids loved it. Blueberry and plain pancakes with sausages and bacon were skillfully prepared by our Lions Club chefs to everyone's enjoyment.

Joint events like these allow the Lions Club and our Post to pool our resources which makes running these events a whole lot easier for each organization. Thank you to Al Laughlin, Joe Larsen, John McQuillan, Bill Lewis and Pat McDonough for setting up the Hall the day before the breakfast. Thanks to Pat & Al Laughlin, Sue & Ken Blish, John McQuillan, Pat McDonough and Gerry Knapp for serving during the breakfast and to Bill Lewis, Bob Gorsuch, Joe Larsen, Fred and Barbara Wooding for their help cleaning up afterwards. Please think about helping out next time or just come down and enjoy a nice breakfast while still helping your Post. See you next time!

Post Survey Results

Every month our Post Commander and Executive Committee meet and discuss how to keep our Post afloat financially while trying to add or just continue the programs that we run.

A lot of ideas are discussed and they all need to pass our three pronged test. #1 - Can we afford this program? #2 - Who is going to run the program? #3 - Does the membership want or support the program? To learn what the membership wants we put together a short 'Post Survey' and e-mailed it to our 70 e-mail using members and handed paper copies out to some of our non-email using members. Why not mail it to all members? Remember prong #1 - affordability. We e-mailed and handed out 75 surveys with a cost of \$8 in printing costs. To mail out the survey to the remaining 50 members would have cost \$50 for printing, postage, and envelopes with the hope of getting a response back.

38 of the 75 surveys were returned for a 51% sampling which is phenomenal! The answers gave us some real insight into the membership's wishes. 84% of our members believe the Post is proceeding in the right direction. The consensus on having more parties, BBQ's, and brunch-type events was 78%(yes) to 5%(no) with 16% not sure. 95% agreed that the joint events we've had with the Lions Club were a good thing for the Post. We've talked about organizing some social events we can participate in as a Post group with our families. 72% voted for the Westchester Dinner Theatre; 56% went for the free Yorktown Concerts; 50% voted for a West Point football game and 47% thought a Hudson Valley Renegades minor league baseball game would be the way to go. We will check these venues out and report back with more info. 71% thought we should run a Post blood drive as one way of giving back to our community and we will check that option out as well. We learned that 87% of our members found out about Post events through our e-mails, 47% through our Post website, and 19% get it from the paper version of our newsletter picked up from the Post bar, Town Hall, and the Hart Library.

16 people added comments for us to consider as well, all positive and in line with what the Executive Committee has been looking at.

We thank everyone for helping us by taking the survey. The info we received validated what we have been doing and

reassured us that we are all looking towards the same goals for our Post.

Our Post's Spring Brunch Changes...

Our Post's Spring Brunch is set for Sunday, May 6th at 1 PM in the Post Hall. Each year this Spring Brunch allows our members to get together for an enjoyable meal, some good company and conversation. This year we decided that we would change our usual routine for the Brunch. Everyone sees the ranks of our 'Greatest Generation' growing smaller in recent years and we want to recognize them now. We have invited our Post's World War II Legionnaires, with two guests each, to join us as our honored guests for the Brunch. It is our intent to recognize the dutiful service of these veterans during the afternoon's festivities.

In order to make this new Spring Brunch a success we hope our membership will accept the changes we will institute to accomplish this mission. The price for the Brunch has been increased to \$10 per person. We know things are hard for everyone but the Brunch's price hasn't gone up in 6 years and we've barely broke even with our costs on the best of years. We will also require **advance reservations and payment** for the Brunch by April 22nd. Why? We have invited 28 WWI vets and two guests each. If all 86 decide to attend that will be only 34 seats left in our Hall for our members use! Your reservation guarantees your seat. We need the accurate and early headcount for the food, menu and seating arrangements. Come and help our Post recognize the service of our World War II Legionnaires.

All RSVP's go to Adjutant Pat McDonough at 914-953-6807 or post1009@nylegion1009.org by April 22nd. There will be **NO WALK-IN'S** or **PAY AT THE DOOR ADMISSIONS** for this Brunch!

Decoration Day

Each Memorial Day weekend our Post's Financial Officer, John McQuillan mobilizes local Scouts to decorate Yorktown's veterans' graves with American Flags. This year John's researching added 13 previously overlooked graves to his master list with two of them deserving special recognition. John uncovered 2 Civil War veterans graves located in the Shrub

Oak Methodist Church cemetery who were killed in 1862 at the 2nd Battle of Bull Run. This year is the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Bull Run and in special recognition of this anniversary John has organized a memorial service at the church cemetery to remember their sacrifice. Re-enactors from New York's 5th Regiment, Boys and Girls Scouts, and local school students have been invited to the ceremony which will take place at 11 AM on Saturday, May 26th in the cemetery opposite the Shrub Oak Methodist Church at 1176 E. Main St in Shrub Oak. If anyone can spare a half hour to attend the ceremony it would be appreciated since the majority of our members will be engaged in our Poppy-Fundraiser at the supermarkets in Yorktown at the same time.

If anyone wishes to help or participate in the grave decoration operations can talk with John. The Amawalk Cemetery is decorated on Friday afternoon 5/25 during after-school and then the Yorktown Presbyterian and Shrub Oak Methodist cemeteries are done on the Saturday morning of 5/26. It is our job to remind our Yorktown community of the sacrifices our fellow veterans have made for their country.

Memorial Day Parade...

The Memorial Day Parade is all set for Monday, May 28th. We form-up at Town Hall at 10:40 AM for two short ceremonies this year. The first is the traditional laying of wreaths at the memorials in front of Town Hall around the flagpole. This year there will be a second ceremony as well to dedicate a plaque in the garden adjacent to our Town Hall in honor of U.S. Army SPC David Fahey Jr. David was raised in Yorktown and served in Afghanistan where he died in an IED explosion in 2011.

The parade starts at Town Hall and proceeds to the DeVito Memorial Gazebo for the ceremonies there. Last year our Post had a great turnout with 17 Legionnaires in the parade. Let's do even better this year! Please try to join us as we honor those who never returned from America's conflicts. For our newer members, it's a great way to get acquainted with the Post.

Special Occasion or Event?

Our Hall is Available for Rent

Convenient Location with Reasonable Rates

In Memoriam...

Our Post has a ceremony that we can perform at the wake of any deceased veteran, whether a Legionnaire or not, if the family or funeral home requests it. We *want* to honor our fallen comrades for their faithful service to our country. Recently, 12 of our Post members came together to 'Render Honors' to our fallen Legionnaire, John S. Brown, at the Clarke Funeral Home on Thursday, April 19th. The Brown family really appreciated the touching ceremony for their loved one.

Sadly, most of us don't tell our families what the American Legion does to honor a veteran who has passed. As a result many families don't notify the Post when their loved one passes on. We learned about three Post members who had passed while planning the Spring Brunch but the Post had never been informed. We lost Francis P. Kelly, a 24-year Legionnaire, Joseph W. Karasinski, a 22-year Legionnaire, and Willard H. Travis who had an astonishing 56 years with the American Legion! These Legionnaires went to their final posting without a final farewell from the Post. We hope you will keep their families in your prayers.

Flag Retirement Ceremony

It has been several years since our Post has conducted a flag retirement ceremony. Each week several flags are dropped off at our Post Hall by members of the community who wish their flags to be retired with honor and respect. Today, there are about 400 unserviceable flags stored in our basement awaiting an honorable retirement ceremony. In recent years we have gone and enlisted local Boy Scout troops to assist us in retiring some of these flags.

On Saturday, June 16th at 3:30 PM our Post and the Yorktown Fire Department will conduct a joint U.S. Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Fire Department's Carnival grounds off Veterans Road. The ceremony will be held in conjunction with Flag Day which is during that week. We plan to invite all of Yorktown's Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to take part in this respectful ceremony with us. We will collect all worn and unserviceable US flags at the Post up to the day before the ceremony which will allow for folding and preparing the flags for burning.

This Flag Retirement Ceremony will be open to the public and we hope to make it once

again an annual tradition to educate everyone on the proper display and care of our nation's flag. Look for more details as we finalize the planning for this event.

Poppy Fundraiser...

On Saturday, May 26th from 9 AM to 1 PM our Legionnaires will handout red poppies, collect cash donations, and remind people of the real reason for Memorial Day. Since many residents have asked to buy the flags off of our table displays in recent years, we have decided to sell US flags at our tables also this year to help raise funds to defray our Memorial Day expenses. These expenses include the 5 gross (720) of US flags we provide to decorate the graves of veterans in Yorktown and the wreaths of flowers for the memorials in our Post's memorial park.

Our Legionnaires set-up in front of the A&P Supermarkets in Shrub Oak and the Triangle Center, and if we have enough volunteers we go to the Turco's Market as well. If you can commit to all or part of the time at one of these locations let Pat McDonough know at the May 10th meeting.

The Post's Memorial Day 50/50 raffle tickets have been mailed out. Please take part in this and support your Post. The last two years the prize has been over \$350! Remember, you have to be in it to win it! Anyone needing more tickets can pick them up at the Post bar or contact Pat McDonough.

American Legion Training

How can members learn more about the history, organization, and programs of the American Legion? Recently the National HQ updated the old 5 booklet Legion Extension Institute course and put it online as a modern course with videos and quizzes. The course is only \$4.95 and upon successful completion of the 2 hour course a completion certificate and cap pin is sent out to you from the National HQ.

There are so many different programs the Legion sponsors that our small Post doesn't take part in because of lack of membership participation. The history portion alone will instill pride in you about the American Legion when you see that the VA, the original GI Bill, the Agent Orange legislation, and the Post 9/11 Education Bill only came into being because the

American Legion mobilized its 2.6 million member strength and publicity machine on the government in Washington.

For those not comfortable taking the course online our Post Adjutant has the original booklets and tests for members to complete at home and mail in the final exam to get the completion certificate.

More Social Meetings?

Many years ago our monthly Post meetings had pasta or cold cuts for members to enjoy before the start of the meetings. This buffet became too expensive to maintain and came to an end several years ago. Today, our members arrive; take part in the meeting, and then head home after the final gavel.

2nd Vice Cmdr Gerry Knapp, Bob Gorsuch and Pat McDonough thought that if we had coffee and a small snack, i.e. cookies or donuts, following the meeting that members would stay for a few minutes and chat and get to know each other better. This social time was started after our March and April meetings with fair success. We're also trying those little stick-on name tags for our meetings so you can see the names of each member as you say 'Hi'. These are two ways we are trying to improve our social side of our Post.

Yorktown American Legion Post #1009
235 Veterans Road
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

Post #1009 Upcoming Events

Tue May 1 Exec. Committee Mtg 7:00 PM
Sun May 6 Spring Brunch - WWII Honorees will be recognized. Price \$10 per person. RSVP by 4/22 with payment.

Thu May 10 Post General Meeting 7:30 PM

Sat May 26 Poppy Fundraiser at A&P Supermarkets & Turco's and Anniversary Service at Shrub Oak Methodist Cemetery.

Sun May 27 Veterans' Appreciation Day at Rye Playland 11 AM to 4 PM

Mon May 28 Memorial Day Parade Form-up at 10:40 AM at Town Hall

Tue Jun 5 Exec. Committee Mtg 7:00 PM

Thu Jun 14 Post General Meeting 7:30 PM

Sat Jun 16 Flag Retirement Ceremony Yorktown FD carnival grounds at 3:30 PM

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