



THE AMERICAN LEGION FIRST

UTICA POST 229 CALL!

ANTHONY PALLADINO, COMMANDER

FEBRUARY 2011

JACK LAPAGLIA, MEMBERSHIP

POST MEETINGS ARE FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:30 P.M. (OPTIONAL DINNER AT 6:15)

WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS!

Christopher Sylvester
James Beavers
Patrick Capraro
Brian LaZore

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FEBRUARY

- 1 Bingo, 6:30 pm
- 2 Bloodmobile, noon-5
- 3 Post Meeting, 7:30 pm
Post Dinner, 6:15 pm
- 8 Bingo, 6:30 pm
- 12 Dinner Dance, 5:30-12
- 14 Vietnam Vets of Am., 1
- 15 Bingo, 6:30 pm
- 16 Bloodmobile, noon-5
- 17 Executive Board, 7 pm
- 19 DAV, noon
- 22 Bingo, 6:30 pm

MARCH

- 1 Bingo, 6:30 pm
- 2 Bloodmobile, 12-5 pm
- 3 Post Meeting, 7:30 pm
Post Dinner, 6:15 pm

VICE CMDR INSPECTS CADETS

Christopher Urban, a retired Navy commander who is first vice commander of Utica Post 229, spent Dec. 15 inspecting all 91 cadets in the Navy JROTC at Notre Dame Junior/Senior High School, Utica.

And he was impressed at how many times Utica Post 229 was mentioned during the inspection briefing.

SEE PAGE 3



75 KIDS MEET SANTA AT UTICA POST



Hannah Kulik was one of 75 youngsters who got the chance to chat with Santa Claus at the Children's Christmas Party on Dec. 18. SEE PAGE 5

POST GIVES FOOD TO VETS CENTER

Utica Post collected about 1,000 pounds of food in November and December for the food pantry at the Central NY Veterans Outreach Center in Utica, Adjutant Jim George reports. Clothing, utensils and cutlery also were donated. Jim packed up the donations and delivered eight or more large boxes every two weeks.

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT SPAGHETTI FEB. 9

The post will host an all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9. Menu includes salad, bread, spaghetti & meatballs, and dessert. The pasta is all-you-care-to-eat. Cost is \$7 for adults; \$4 for children 12 and under. Extra meatballs are \$1.

VALENTINE DINNER DANCE IS FEB. 12

Give you sweetheart a special Valentine this year by treating him or her to a scrumptious turkey buffet and an evening of romantic dancing.

It all starts at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 12, with open bar and hors d'oeuvres. Buffet starts at 7. Dancing is 8 to midnight, with music by Sonny Farrar.

The cost is \$18 per person. For reservations, contact event chair Rose Coniglio at 735-9091.





YOU'RE A VALUED MEMBER AND YOU HAVEN'T RENEWED?

The commander jumped all over me when I said we have not received your 2011 renewal and... because you are a valued member of Utica Post 229, they wouldn't believe me.

So PLEASE renew your 2011 dues now, so they'll stop jumping all over me everytime I walk into the Post Rooms.

YOU MAY drop off or send your \$35 annual dues to:

Utica Post 229
Attn: Jack LaPaglia
409 Herkimer Road
Utica, NY 13502

Questions? Leave me a message at 793-9377 or email me at jack.lapaglia@uticapost229.org.

For God and Country.



JACK'S MEMBERSHIP REPORT FOR JAN.

Quota:	649
Paid to date:	651
% of quota:	100+%
Goal:	700



COMMANDER'S CALL

ANTHONY PALLADINO

We're aiming high in our 2011 member campaign, thanks to the membership team chaired by Jack LaPaglia. Even though we surpassed our assigned quota of 649 members in late December, Jack and his team are ramping up their effort to reach out to potential new members and members who have not yet renewed.

I think it's important that we all get behind this effort. We could easily top 700 Legionnaires if all of us got a little involved and invited a fellow veteran to join Utica Post 229.

We're already a strong and very active post. We advocate for veterans, we mentor and back youth endeavors, we support our servicemen and women, and we do a lot of good for our community.

Join in our pride and vision. Help us grow even stronger.

THERE'S ANOTHER group I cannot say enough about, and that's Auxiliary Unit 229. If Eve, in the Bible story, is Adam's rib, the members of the auxiliary are more appropriately the backbone of Utica Post activities. There isn't a post event that they are not involved in, either in a supporting or coordinating role, and that's in addition to their auxiliary activities. To top it off, the auxiliary purchased a \$2,900 commercial refrigerator for the post. On behalf of all our members, I extend a heart-felt *THANK-YOU* to President Theresa Jensen, and auxiliary officers and members.

YOU'LL NOTICE a new feature in this issue, *Tip of the Hat*, which recognizes members who give selflessly of themselves. Jim McGuire is our first Tip of the Hat honoree. Thank you, Jim, for all you do for the post!

A REMINDER that February is not just about Valentine's Day and the vigor of love, but also about celebrating two of our greatest presidents – founding father George Washington and great emancipator Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln's birthday is Feb. 12, and observed on Friday, Feb. 11 in some states, including New York. Presidents' Day, originally known as Washington's Birthday, falls on the third Monday of February. This year Presidents' Day is February 21.

As the first federal holiday to honor an American citizen, it was initially celebrated on Washington's actual birthday, Feb. 22. In 1971, the federal holiday was shifted to the third Monday in February by the Uniform Monday Holiday Act.

Until next time... *for God and country.*

Pasta and More Pasta Benefit Baseball Team, NJROTC

Pasta dinners have been scheduled for the second and third Wednesdays in March – March 9 and 23. They will run from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., featuring all-you-can-eat pasta, plus a serving of salad, meatballs, and dessert. The cost is \$7 for adults and \$4 for children 12 and under. Extra meatballs are \$1.

The post's Legion Baseball Team will serve and benefit from the March 9th dinner, and the Notre Dame High School Navy Jr. ROTC cadets will serve and benefit from the March 23rd dinner.



American Red Cross

It's not like we're asking for blood -- oh, wait, we are. You can donate on the first and third Wednesday of the month (Feb. 2 and 18), noon to 5, at the post.

"As the Red Cross says," notes Blood Chair Jim Haggerty, "the need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood."



TIP OF THE HAT...



Jim McGuire

...to Jim McGuire for going out of his way to help out at the post.

Recently he helped clear space for the new refrigerator, put up shelving, and prepped the post for a fire inspection. Whenever something needs fixing or cleaning, he's often there.

Jim also is a regular volunteer for the weekly bingo and serves on the color guard team. A Legion member for the last 11 years, he served in the Navy during the Vietnam era.

BRIEFING SHOWS APPRECIATION FOR POST 229 VICE COMMANDER INSPECTS CADETS

Christopher Urban, a retired Navy commander who is first vice commander of Utica Post 229, spent Dec. 15 inspecting all 91 Navy Jr. ROTC cadets at Notre Dame High School, Utica.

The Observer-Dispatch captured the event in an article and photograph, showing Urban stopping in front of one cadet, sophomore Jonathan Heuser, and asking:

"Who's the secretary of state?"

As the cadet replied, "Hillary Clinton, sir," Urban nodded approvingly and moved on.

Inspected by a naval officer annually, the cadets "have been more prepared this year than other years," said retired Marine Master Sgt. Howard Keyes, who instructs the students. "I couldn't ask more of them."

The program, he said, instills life skills, such as discipline

and teamwork. "It's a citizenship leadership class."

At both the December



Chris Urban

executive board and January membership meetings, Urban said the cadets "did an amazing job" and that he was impressed at how many times Utica Post 229 was mentioned during the inspection briefing. The event was attended by parents, students and faculty.

"They appreciate the relationship with us and obviously wanted everyone to know that," he said. "The money they get from us allows them to do things they otherwise would not be able to."

There are "great kids there" who have a "focus on service," he added. They had already doubled the number of community service hours from the previous year, and the school year was only half over.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A committee will be selected at the February 3rd general meeting to nominate candidates for post officer positions.

Elections will take place Thursday, May 5, with installation of officers following on May 7.

NEWS BY EMAIL

Are there any members would like to receive FIRST CALL by email, instead of a printed copy in the mail? It would arrive as a PDF document that can be read or printed from your computer.

The post is looking into whether this might reduce mailing costs. To receive your digital copy of FIRST CALL, send an email to firstcall@uticapost229.org.

DINNER MEETING

The monthly meeting dinners are open to members of the post, auxiliary unit and Sons of the American Legion squadron at a cost of \$7 per person. To bring a (one) guest that is not a member, the cost is \$10, and for everyone, reservations are required one week in advance (unless you are on the permanent reservation list).

Dinners start at 6:15 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month.

BINGO CALLERS

Bingo volunteers are needed Tuesday nights.

"We especially need bingo callers," noted Bingo Chair Jim George. Contact Jim at 749-3058.



A VALENTINE PRAYER

I said a Valentine prayer for you and asked the Lord above to fill your heart and bless your soul with the precious gift of love

I asked Him for sincere love the kind that's meant to stay just like the generous love you give to those you touch each day

I prayed for love from family and from every cherished friend then I asked the Lord to give you His love that knows no end

Love is patient,
love is kind
It bears all things
believes all things

Hopes all things
Endures all things
Love never fails
Corinthians 13; 4,7,8

REST IN PEACE

Benny Price
Walter Fisher

MEETING DATES

Executive Board

Feb. 17 April 21
March 17 May 19

General Meeting 1st Thurs

Feb. 3 April 7
March 3 May 6

NEWS FROM DEC. EXECUTIVE BOARD, JAN. MEMBER MEETINGS

THE TWO SANTAS

Chris Urban and Vincent Zaleski were exchanging quips about donning Santa suits and playing jolly old St. Nick for a number of groups every year.

"It's hot in the suit," Zaleski said, noting that he sweats so much he has to literally wring out his clothes when he's done.

"It's brutal," Urban agreed. They both always bring a change of clothes.

But the fun and joy of speaking with children keep them going.

"One girl said she wanted a horse," Zaleski recalled.

"A hobby horse?" he asked.

"No, a real one."

"Where would you put it?"

"In the garage. I'll tell my daddy to take the car out."

Zaleski said another girl wanted a snake for Christmas.

"Her mother was there with a camera, shaking her head 'no' at me."

Urban said one of his best gigs as Santa was when he was stationed at Naval Air Station Sigonella in Sicily, where he flew in on a helicopter, waving from the open door to excited families waiting in a hangar.

NAT'L CMDR'S VISIT

Treasurer Jim Haggerty announced that National Commander Jimmie Foster would be in Watertown April 13 as part of his visit to the New York Department. The board approved paying for post officers who wanted to attend the dinner.



Santa Chris Urban, left, and Santa Vincent Zaleski.



JUNIOR SHOOTING

Chief Warrant Officer Don Beyer, an NJROTC instructor at Proctor High, was introduced at the January meeting as the new chairman of the junior shooting program. With cadets from Proctor and Notre Dame High already using the post range three days a week, he wants to see the facility even busier with post teams.

NURSING SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship Chair Vincent Zaleski and Chaplain Paul Wojcik noted that the student that Post 229 nominated for the 40 & 8 nursing scholarship won. Miranda Constantine will receive \$1,000 a year for the next two years. Her grandfather, Robert, is a former post commander.

NEW REFRIGERATOR

Auxiliary Unit 229 purchased a \$2,900 commercial grade refrigerator for the post. The Executive Board expressed its appreciation not only for the donation, but also for everything the women of the Auxiliary do for veterans and for the post.

PARTY FOR VETS

Service Officer Dave Wilson noted that the Christmas party for the 22 nursing home veterans at the Pines was a success, with eight or nine post members, including Santa Chris, showing up to bring cheer to the vets.

THANKSGIVING DONATIONS

The post donated 20 turkeys to two agencies that feed the hungry this past Thanksgiving – First Presbyterian Church and Thea Bowman House.

A total of \$500 was budgeted for the donations, and about \$420 was actually spent.

After some discussion, the board voted to increase the budgeted Thanksgiving donation to \$600 in 2011 and give \$200 each to those two agencies, plus the Rescue Mission of Utica. Service Officer Dave Wilson had made a plea to include the Rescue Mission because it helps veterans experiencing hard times.

The board also approved spending the \$80 balance from the 2010 allocation on Christmas food for the Rescue Mission.

WOJCIK ENDORSED

Members unanimously voted at the Jan. 6th general membership meeting to endorse Post Chaplain Paul Wojcik's candidacy for 5th District chaplain.

THANKYOU TO ND CADETS

I'd like to publicly thank the NJROTC cadets from Notre Dame for coming over to my house and loading 12 boxes in my car for me so I could go to the Post Office and ship them to our adopted platoon in Afghanistan.

The boxes were quite heavy and I couldn't have done it without their help. Unfortunately, the two young ladies and young man left before I could get their names.

-- Pat Dodge

SANTA VISITS KIDS, YOUNG-AT-HEART AT UTICA POST 229

With Santa and his elves giving gifts to 75 children, Utica Post 229 was packed with some 200 guests for the annual Children's Christmas Party on Saturday, Dec. 18.

The children were treated to lunch, snacks, balloon hats and sculptures created by Ziyara Shrine clowns Chuckles and Ko-Ku, and a chance to personally chat with the red-suited Mr. Claus himself.

"Have you been good?" Santa asked each boy and girl. "Do you eat your vegetables and go to bed when you're told?"

Some were vigorous in answering, others were shy, but they answered "yes," and then told Santa what they wanted for Christmas. They could hardly wait for their turn, except for one 2-year-old who burst into tears as soon as he was placed in Santa's lap.

After Santa visited with all the children, a few of the older folk kept him from returning to his sleigh by lining up for a turn on his lap. These young-at-heart fans whispered in his ear and posed for photos. Three women even leaped on his lap together. It could not be determined whether Santa thought any of



Christopher Senus, and Ricky & Katie Sahm (below) show off their spiral headgear.



them were naughty or nice.

The party was sponsored by both the Post and the Auxiliary, with a number of volunteers from both helping



Clown Ko-Ku fashions a balloon hat.



Zacchary Eddy took one look at the red suit and beard, and thought, get me out of here.

out with setting up, cooking and serving, distributing gifts, and cleaning up.

"I would like to thank Berger King and Byrne Dairy

for their donations; also, the ladies Auxiliary and everyone who helped make the party a success," noted chair Jim Haggerty.

GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR WWII VETERANS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Greatest Generation Fund is available to help area World War II veterans who have special needs.

Anyone interested in applying for a grant must do so through a tax exempt organization, such as the American Legion. The fund, which is managed by the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, Inc., was established by the Oneida County WWII Memorial Trip Inc., which raised money to send elderly veterans to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Money

left over from paying for the trips was used to set up the fund, which currently has assets of nearly \$29,000.

Examples of special needs would be such things as a wheelchair ramp or other renovations to a home to accommodate a disability, noted Post 229's Paul Wojcik, who chairs the Oneida County Veterans Council, which set up WWII Memorial Trip Inc. to organize the trips.

To find out more, leave a message for Wojcik at the post at 315-793-9377 or via info@uticapost229.org.

NOTES FROM THE COMMUNITY

THANKS FOR USE OF POST FOR EVENT

Thank you for letting us use your venue on Sunday, Jan. 2. We held a benefit for the organization, "To Write Love On Her Arms." The organization helps find relief for teenagers who suffer from depression that leads to self-destruction and violence. All together, we raised \$1,825.

I would also like to thank Jim George and Joanne Powers for their help and support.

We hope that we can use the venue again and that you will welcome us back, soon.

*Monica Lewis,
Gina Saporito
and Todd J. Lewis*

THANKS FOR HELPING NEEDY CHILDREN

Thank you for your participation at our annual Christmas party for the needy children (hosted at Utica Post 229)...

It would have been dif-

icult to put this all together without you.

Santa Claus HO HO'ed his way into about 300 children. They had such a good time. The bicycle winners were on "cloud nine."

The food was delicious (as usual).

It was well worth the effort putting this all together. But, like I said, we could not have done this without your help and generosity.

*-- Hank Brown
Hank Brown Show's Annual
Children's Christmas Benefit*

THANKS FROM VETS OUTREACH CENTER

On behalf of the Utica Center for Development – Central NY Veterans Outreach Center, I would like to personally thank you for your generous donation... You have made it possible for us to support the increasing demand for services from all our military, past, present, future, and their families. (The post collected food for the center's food pantry, plus clothing and other items.)

*-- Vincent Scalise,
executive director*

ROME VA CLINIC

Main Number	334-7100
Behavioral Health	334-7110
Suicide Hotline	800-273-8255
24-hour TelCare	888-838-7890
Rx Refills	425-6505
DAV Transport	334-7100 ext 573
Syracuse VA	800-792-4334

BINGO REPORT

Date	Income	Prizes	Expenses	3%	Profit
12/7/10	\$2300.00	\$19605.00	890.00	0	-550.00
12/14/10	2522.00	2000.00	0.00	15.66	506.34
12/21/10	2967.00	2084.00	0.00	26.49	856.51
12/28/10	2778.00	2070.00	50.00	19.74	638.26

BINGO WORKERS

- Albert Alteri.
- Jim George.
- Tom O'Toole.
- Stu Bailey.
- Jim Haggerty.
- Tony Palladino.
- Phil Capraro.
- Frank Jakubowski.
- Dan/Virginia Pieloch.
- Frank Cassella.
- Al Kohler.
- Ben Price.
- Mike Cavanaugh.
- Jack LaPaglia.
- Scott Sebastian
- Chuck Dailey.
- Rich Maloon.
- Chris Urban.
- Wayne Dapre.
- Dave Manore.
- Paul Wojcik.
- Pat Dodge.
- Jim McGuire.
- Vin Zaleski.
- Tony Famolaro
- Evelyn Muench.

DONATIONS: Utica Unit \$75.00.

EXPENSES: New chairs \$1058.42, Gas & Elec. \$1300.36.



Members offered appreciative applause to cadets from Notre Dame High School's Naval Jr. ROTC program after they posted the colors for the opening of the January general membership meeting.



THERESA JENSEN, PRESIDENT

AUXILIARY

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Deborah W. Reich
Francine A. Sansone
Janice I. Panese

68% of Goal

By ROSE A. CONIGLIO

As of early January, we have 166 paid members (including six new members), which means we're 68 percent toward our goal. Our membership quota for 2011 is 244.

Please get your 2011 dues in as soon as possible. If you are behind on 2010 dues, you need to pay those before I can accept your 2011 dues.

PLEASE send dues to:

Rose A. Coniglio
607 Jay St., Apt. C2
Utica, NY 13501

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THERESA JENSEN



Valentines Day will be here soon. Let's remember a veteran with a card, candy or a kiss!

Our January meeting was held jointly with our Legionnaires. We enjoyed being together and hearing their reports. Thanks to Commander Anthony Palladino.

The Children's Christmas Party was a great success hosted by our Legion. The Shriner Clowns and Santa were on hand. There were many Elves around, also. Our Auxiliary members did a wonderful job helping with the gift-wrapping and serving the food at the party. THANK YOU. A special Thanks to Eleanor King and Rosaria Haggerty for the many hours they spent shopping. A big THANK YOU goes to Burger King for food coupons and juice, and Byrne's Dairy for the ice cream.

Our February meeting is an important one. A nominating committee will be elected to select a slate of officers for 2011-2012. If you are interested in serving on this committee, or running for office, please attend.

In closing, please remember a veteran. A card to a veteran in a hospital or nursing home or to those overseas will truly brighten his or her day.



GAIL GRECO

A Cross in My Pocket

I carry a Cross in my pocket
A simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian
No matter where I may be.
This little Cross is not magic
Nor is it a good luck charm
It isn't meant to protect me
From every physical harm.

It's not for identification
For all the world to see
It simply is an understanding
Between my Savior and me.
When I put my hand in my pocket
To bring out a coin or key
The Cross is there to remind me
Of the price he paid for me.

It reminds me too, to be thankful
For the blessings day by day
And to strive to serve Him better
In all that I do and say.

It's also a daily reminder
Of the peace and comfort I share
With all who know my Master
And give themselves to His care.

So I carry a Cross in my pocket
Reminding me, no one but me
That Jesus Christ is Lord of my life
If only I let Him be.
~ Verna Thomas ~

GET WELL
Gerri Gregory
Rosetta LaPaglia



A number of Auxiliary members helped make the Children's Christmas Party a success -- such as Nancy Nudo and Peggy Kohler, who took a moment to smile for the camera while serving goodies, and Mamie Capraro, who stole some lap time with Santa after the children had their turn.

JR. AUXILIARY

The Junior Auxiliary is for daughters, granddaughters and girl relatives of veterans. Girls, ages 5 to teen, are invited. Any member of the post or auxiliary who would like to register a daughter or granddaughter should contact Mary Stronach at 796-9284.

**Utica Post #229
The American Legion
409 Herkimer Rd.
Utica, NY 13502**

First Call is a monthly publication of
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members and local communities.
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Since its founding in Paris in 1919, The American Legion has been an advocate for America's veterans, a friend of the U.S. military, a sponsor of community-based programs for young people and a spokesman for patriotic values.

TROOPS EXCITED OVER GIFTS

Pat Dodge, the post's military liaison, received this email from the adopted platoon in Afghanistan on Dec. 18, 2010. Pat signs her messages to the platoon as "MaMa D."

Dear Ma,

I got your 12 boxes today and you should have seen the entire platoon!

I placed all the boxes in our little patio we have here and had a line going. We are soooooo appreciative of EVERYTHING you sent. Thanks from the bottom of our hearts and it was awesome to see the soldiers get something and say thanks.

I told them all it was from you and they kept asking who is so kind to send us nice stuff like you did. EVERYONE

says thanks and God Bless. You will get a card on snail mail signed by all of us. Please thank everyone involved in sending us all the goodies and that we appreciate everyone!

Thank you for adopting us and for doing what you do. You don't have to, but you sacrifice your time for us and we appreciate it... I know it sounds insignificant but these soldiers appreciate everything. I will keep you posted on how we are doing... Be safe out there. We all will try to do the same here.

With much love and appreciation,
-- Sgt. Isabel Tio and the CJ6 Platoon

THANK YOU FOR HELPING TROOPS

By PAT DODGE

Thank you to Mr. And Mrs. Dan Pielock and Mr. and Mrs. William Urban, Jr. for their most generous donations to our troops' fund. This helped immensely to defray postage on shipping the supplies to our adopted troops. It also meant I could buy more cookies, special snack pretzels and several containers of cappuccino mixes that young people of today thrive on. Our Post has been extremely forthcoming with funds and I would like to thank all the people who contribute to this cause.