

# The Greenlawn Bugle ♦ Post 1244

♦ New York State American Legion Best Paper 2008 ♦

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## Upcoming Events

- December 7/Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony / Farmingdale 10:30 am
- December 12/HarborFields High School Veterans Appreciation Breakfast 9:00 am
- December 17/Monthly Meeting/ 3rd Wednesday this month only
- January 14/Monthly Meeting
- February 11/Monthly Meeting

Visit Our Web Site for More Details  
[www.Post1244.org](http://www.Post1244.org)

## "WELCOME HOME VETERAN"



**Thomas Ronayne, Director**

### Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency

The first thing that I would like to say to each of you is **WELCOME HOME!**

Many of us did not hear those words when we returned, and we should never have another veteran who does not hear it.

It is my honor and privilege to serve as the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency Director. An advocate for Veterans for many years it was truly the pinnacle of my career in veterans' advocacy to be appointed by County Executive Levy to what I consider to be the best job in the world.

Suffolk County has a remarkable history of military service, and one of the by-products is a large population of veterans. In fact Suf-

folk County is home to the largest number of veterans of ANY county in the State of New York.

We don't get to make these numbers up, these are the figures in the VA census (119,918 as of the 2000 census). As home to so many veterans, spouses, dependents and surviving spouses, veterans' services are an awesome responsibility and one that we take very seriously.

The nature of our services and programs available is truly vast and it is simply not possible to discuss all of them at any one time. There are however a number of services that you should be aware of.

The most important thing to remember is that unless you are Service Connected or receive a VA pension you will not be able to access services unless you are enrolled in the VA health care system. There has been much talk about the income limits or MEANS test that VA applies to new enrollees and that certain veterans are not eligible to enroll.

(Please turn to page 2)

## Our Post Wins County Membership Award for the 2nd Time!

Well fellow Legionnaires, we have made the grade once again for membership year 2008. We are #1 in Suffolk County for the second year in a row, and our Greenlawn Post continues on its winning ways!

Thank you all for your part in this latest award: members, current and new, transfers and Sons. Every member makes a difference in creating a warm and '**BROTHERLY**' environment.

Our compliments to our Vice Commander, Dennis Madden, who

works tirelessly to enhance the ranks of our Post. Excitement is already building for membership 2009—who knows, maybe we can do it again! Let's help Dennis bring in new members!

Our Post has come a long way in a few short years and we've managed to turn quite a few heads doing it.

Membership is at the heart of every organization—**Members make stuff happen!**



## Vice Commander's Call to Members

The final **BUGLE** of 2008 is now in your hands, and you can see from these colorful pages our great accomplishments and exciting events. The only piece that might be missing from all we do is —

**"YOU BROTHER!"**

I am certain that you've given thought on several occasions about coming out for a meeting or maybe an event. Perhaps you've asked yourself, do they **really** mean they'll come and get me and bring me home afterward? And the answer is a resounding **"YES, WE**

**WILL"**.

Your participation in our events; i.e., meetings, parades, trips, BBQ's, and the like, is one of the best things you could give back to your fellow veterans.

We'd love to have you at every event, but if you can, make just a couple. Believe me, whether it's just three of us, or twenty, we have a great time. If it's a little trepidation because you haven't been with us before, or for awhile, let me know and I'll come get you myself, or insure you have an event buddy. We will introduce you personally to all

our other friends!

Our **"HOLIDAY"** meeting is coming up next month— What a great time to reconnect with your service and meet some great guys!

**Call my cell (516) 523-9391 or at my home (631) 499-3569.**

You'll be right at home once you meet our members. Hope to see you!

*Dennis*



*Vice Commander Dennis Madden*

## "WELCOME HOME VETERAN" (continued from page 1)

Don't let that discourage you from enrolling. Our offices can assist you in the preparation of your applications. Let us examine the issues to determine where allowable adjustments and spend downs might occur that could improve the chances of a previously ineligible veteran being approved.

Any injury, illness, disease or exposure that occurred during your military service potentially makes you a candidate for service connection. When we came home as young men and women from our service most of us believed that the ringing in the ears or the bad knees would never impact our lives, many of us now know differently. If you have ever wondered whether something is relat-

ed to your service it is worth asking one of my staff that question. There was once a belief that if a veteran received a service or took up a bed then another more needy vet would not get his services...not true.

Please allow one of your highly trained, Accredited Veterans Service Officers, yes, your service officers - we work for you - the opportunity to review with you your records and determine what you may or may not be entitled to.

If nothing else let us help you apply for a replacement set of all medals and badges that you are authorized to wear. Every veteran is entitled to a full replacement set from the government at no cost. Let us ensure that you are receiving the appropriate Real Property Tax exemption on your home, especially if you are service

connected.

And for any non-war time veteran, who is not yet aware, Cold War Veterans now qualify for their own tax break on their homes.

Please feel free to contact us at any time and if there is a way that we

can help I promise each of you that we will.

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**We thank you for your SERVICE,**

*Tom Ronayne*

**631-853 VETS (8387)**



Julie Petrone, Agency Representative, meets with Post 1244

## C47 / Normandy / History

By Charles Armstrong



On 13Sept2008, Commander Bob Santo, prize winner Brett Auletta, and I reported to the American Airpower Museum, at Republic Airport, in Farmingdale, for an opportunity to go back in time to WWII by participating in an airborne re-enactment flight of the 06Jun1944 D-Day Normandy invasion. Bob and Brett were assigned paratrooper roles, and I served as part of the ground crew.

We reported to the airport at 0800, for a planned departure of 0900. As the weather over the Channel was usually unpredictable, it followed suit here and all the flights were delayed due to low visibility cloud cover. After a delay of over two hours, which had everyone pacing about nervously (and thoroughly enjoying the museum and personnel), the first flight was finally slotted for liftoff at 1115.

The paratroopers were at last allowed to suit-up (in period paratrooper gear), but prior to the flight were marched to the mission briefing room where they were briefed on the logistics and objectives of their mission. They were then issued an identity of a real 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Army paratrooper who made the jump in 1944.

After the briefing they were marched to the awaiting C47 for their departure. Many friends and family were there to take photographs and see them off on their mission. Finally, the plane made a wheels-up at 1125.

While on the flight, which flew over Jones Beach and the Great South Bay, the paratroopers had an opportunity to explore the planes interior and discuss history with the re-enactors that were on board. As the plane approached the beaches all the paratroopers on board hooked their parachute ripcord line to the static line **and prepared for the 'jump' behind enemy lines into 'Nazi-held France'.** It was a very enlightening sequence as at that moment all the paratroopers considered what must have been going through the minds of those brave soldiers many years ago. A memory I am sure many of our own WWII veterans remember first hand.

The plane returned to Republic Field and landed at 1210 with all personnel safely on board and reunited with their friends and family. After landing, the paratroopers learned of the fate of the person whose identity they were issued prior to the flight – **Brett's assigned paratrooper was Pfc Richard Bray, who survived D-Day, but died in action later in June; Bob's paratrooper was Pfc Burton (Pat) Christensen, who also survived D-Day, but went on to fight with the 101<sup>st</sup> in campaigns in France and Germany, and survived 'The War'.**

For a brief moment, everyone was given an opportunity to relive a heroic time **in our nation's history, if only in our minds!**

### Post Activities Bulletin Board—Are you POSTED?



## COMMANDER'S CORNER

Greenlawn Post 1244  
Suffolk County, New York  
Post Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 8:00pm  
Knights of Columbus Hall, 24 Boulevard Avenue

Phone: 631-673-8704  
Email: Post1244@Verizon.net



Bob Santo , Commander

### New and Exciting News on our Web Site

- Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern honors 'BUGLE' with Proclamation/see link below...  
<http://harborfields.net/blogArchive.asp?id=122>
- Check Post Web Site for more pictures and stories

[www.Post1244.org](http://www.Post1244.org)

'FOUNDED IN 1943 AND HONORED BY PEOPLE WHO CARE'

**I can't help but be impressed with 2008 and all that we accomplished together.** We proudly carried the colors of our country in **our parades: St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day, Greenlawn Fireman's Fair and Columbus Day.** We participated in commemorations at Town of Huntington Veterans Plaza marking Memorial Day, Veterans Day and the final dedication of the Vietnam Monument. Our members gave many hours of service at Northport VA Medical Center, **Patriot Guard Riders, Jacob's Light Foundation and Suffolk County's Stand Down for homeless Veterans.**

Post 1244 sponsored the annual Essay Contest and provided scholarship assistance to the top students in American Government at Harborfields High School and Pius V School. Our Greenlawn Bugle received the New York American Legion Press Association Best Paper and we were honored by the Councilwoman Susan Berland and Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern.

This year, we collected hundreds of worn, torn and faded American Flags from local schools with our mobile Old Glory Flag Deposit Box. On Flag Day, with the assistance of Boy Scout Troop 32, flags were disposed of, with honor, at the Greenlawn Fire Department.

Monthly meetings included presentations by Suffolk County Veterans Services Agency, New York State Office of The District Attorney and by the Community Relations Team from Veterans Affairs Medical Center at Northport.

2009 promises to be even better for members. Are you a Veteran, know one who served during wartime? **MEMBERSHIP COMES WITH BENEFITS, AND OUR ONLY INTEREST IS YOU!**

## AIR FORCE, BUT NOT A PILOT!



I tried to enlist as a pilot, and was turned down. Then in 1942, at 23 years old, I was drafted into the Air Force, in the Armored Division.

Following six months of training as an armor specialist at Lowery field, located in Denver, I crossed the ocean in a Italian troop ship. We landed in Casablanca on December 1942. After a few days of unloading bar-

## " I REMEMBER..." sharing some personal moments

rels of fuel I was sent to Tunisia on a French railroad car, which could carry forty men or eight horses. It was called a Forty and Eight. Our car had thirty men...After a few months in Tunisia I was sent to Corsica. I started keeping records of my big events in a series of notebooks. One recorded event was entered in our Air Force newsletter 'The Sortie'.

I did go on one mission over Italy . It was so scary... I decided to work on the planes on the ground. I was in Sardinia and Dijon France while the army advanced.

After the war was over and I paraded in Dijon, and then was sent to a German jet aircraft factory in Austria. It was located in the concentration camp MAUTHAUSEN, one of the largest labor camps in German Controlled Europe. I saw the atrocities and the horrors. I gathered information for the Air Force on the armament of the German Jets.

I was in nine theaters of war and received the Croix De Guerre (Cross of War) from France. I returned home in October 1945 and married my fiancé who waited for me all the years. We raised three sons and a daughter... now at 89 years I do some wood working and enjoy my life in many social events.