

# THE GREENLAWN BUGLE



## Greenlawn Post 1244 Winter 2023



### VETERANS DAY 2023

Once again, on November 11, as we have for many years, Post 1244 conducted its Veterans Day Ceremony to show appreciation for all veterans and recognize their contribution to the nation.

At exactly 11:00 am our color guard proceeded to the Greenlawn Monument and presented the colors. Boy Scouts and Girl Scout groups were invited to participate.

Commander Trisha Northover and 1st Vice Commander Carlo Giordano delivered remarks to the assembled gathering of elected officials, community groups, scouts, firefighters and our fellow citizens.

A wreath was placed at the monument by Past Commander Donna Boyle on behalf of Post 1244. Wreaths were also placed at the monument by several

community groups, followed by the sounding of "Taps."

Veterans Day, was formerly Armistice Day - a day to commemorate those Americans who served and died in World War I. The Armistice ending that war was signed on November 11, 1918 at 11:00 am and all Veterans Day ceremonies should begin at that sacred hour.

Post 1244 continues that tradition and is the only ceremony in the Town of Huntington to always observe Veterans Day on the 11th of November. As is our custom, all veterans present are invited to participate and gather for the traditional group picture.



We have noticed a continued uptick in the interest level for both Boy's & Girl's State over the years as word of mouth spreads the information among the students from class to class and among their friends about the benefits of the programs.

Many scouts have been selected as delegates, and tend to spread the word to other upcoming members of their troop. We are also being contacted by students from other high schools that we don't normally work with, expressing their interest in participating in the program.

Greenlawn Post 1244 is proud to be able to continue to offer this experience to as many students as possible. Below are just some of the comments we have received from Boy's & Girl's State alumni.

- ◇ The power of that one week is unimaginable as is the impact it can have on your life
- ◇ Words cannot describe how inspirational, effective and amazing this was.
- ◇ It was one of the most incredible, rewarding experiences I have ever had.
- ◇ It is a week I will never forget, I learned so much about government, leadership and discipline, and I grew so much as a person.
- ◇ We entered the program as boys, but all left as men.
- ◇ After participating, government no longer seems like a distant beast, but rather something more down to earth and human, something we can all be part of.
- ◇ The knowledge gained and lessons learned will stay with me forever.
- ◇ The American Legion provided a great experience for leadership development.
- ◇ Throughout the week so much more happened than I thought possible, and I am so glad I pushed myself to do this.
- ◇ I felt the rush of possibility at making a change for the better in the world around me.
- ◇ I co-wrote a bill to make it mandatory for every high school student in New York State to take a class on civics prior to graduation
- ◇ It is a phenomenal program, and nothing short of attending would allow you to understand how great this program truly is.
- ◇ I would like to thank you once again for allowing me to partake in this amazing program.
- ◇ I left with a greater intention to more actively serve my community.
- ◇ I would tell anyone who has the opportunity to go that they should 100% jump at the opportunity.
- ◇ It is a once in a lifetime experience that very few get. I am very grateful that I was one of the few who had this experience.
- ◇ Thank you for giving me the knowledge and social skills to succeed in life.
- ◇ I learned something from every speaker, and am very grateful to have received the honor of attending.
- ◇ I would recommend this program to anyone interested in learning about our government and democracy in general.
- ◇ It was an experience I will remember and carry with me for the rest of my life.
- ◇ It was an experience I wouldn't forget and I am very thankful for the opportunity.

*Charlie  
Armstrong  
Chairman  
Boys State /  
Girls State*

## Operation Enduring Care

We mourn the passing of Al Statton, founder of Operation Enduring Care, after 14 years of battling the cancer which inspired him and his wife Connie to create Operation Enduring Care.

In 2016, Operation Enduring Care became a fully supported program of American Legion Post 1244.

It's primary focus is twofold. First - to provide non-perishable food, bedding, comfort and hygiene items for the veterans residing at the United Veterans Beacon House homeless residence on the grounds of the Northport VA Medical Center. Second - to supply the residents of the VA Nursing Home and Hospice with hygiene and comfort items they would otherwise have to do without. We also seek opportunities to assist any veterans in need, especially those facing homelessness, whenever possible.



In 2022 Al and Connie Statton were honored by the Huntington Board for their work on behalf of veterans.

The work of Operation Enduring Care will continue. John Carr, our Post 1244 Chaplain has been appointed Chairman of Operation Enduring Care. (See John's bio on page 9). John will be working closely with Connie Statton and our team of post volunteers to insure that we serve our veterans without interruption.

**Donations to Operation Enduring Care can be sent to:**

**American Legion Greenlawn Post 1244  
PO Box 238  
Greenlawn, NY 11740**

**Memo Line: "Operation Enduring Care"**



**SFC Albert A. Statton III US Army (Retired)**

Al

He lived his life,  
Not for himself  
But for others,  
A life of service,  
For the betterment,  
Of his brothers and sisters,  
A warrior who looked after,  
His less well-off buddies,  
A man of action, a doer of good  
deeds,  
Relentless in his pursuit of justice,  
For those whose voices,  
Needed to be heard,  
In short, his life was an example,  
Of grace, dignity, and hope

*Mary Flatley*

## Post Service Officer - You Earned It!



The American Legion is a great organization that provides advocacy for veterans as well as numerous other resources. For example, as the Service Officer for Post 1244, I was reminded by other Post members that the deadline to file an Intent-to-File form (VA

Form 21-0966) for the PACT Act of 2022 was nearing the deadline. As the American Legion Post 1244 Service Officer, I brought this to the attention of our Post members at our Post meeting and assisted many of them with submitting their Intent-to-File forms to the VA. This was an important move because it set the protective filing date and allowed the VA to backdate their claim for an entire year. The veterans that I assisted with this task will have a year to submit their claims and, if approved, will receive a year of backpay, which is substantial! Veterans can get assistance with their claims from the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency (631-853-8387) or by visiting the DAV in-person, located at the Northport VA in Building 9. The DAV operates Tuesday-Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm.

What is the PACT out and why is it so important?

The PACT Act is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to toxins such as; Camp Lejeune water contamination, Vietnam herbicides and exposure to burn pit toxins while assigned to a Burn Pit Unit. This law helps generations of Veterans - and their survivors - with the care and

benefits they've earned and deserve. The PACT Act provides the following: 1) Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for veterans who have been exposed to toxins during their time in the service; and, 2) Allows the veteran to file for VA compensation for any injuries that are causing ongoing disabilities. Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era and other duty assignments (such as Camp LeJeune) are all potentially eligible for these benefits. Although there is no deadline to file a claim under the PACT Act, veterans and survivors who applied (or submitted their intent-to-file form VA 21-0966) for PACT Act benefits by Monday, August 14, 2023, if approved, will have their benefits backdated to August 10, 2022, the date that President Biden signed the PACT Act into law.

As the Service Officer of Post 1244, I bring to the attention of the Legion members any news-worthy items that benefit veterans. I have also assisted with obtaining resources for veterans in financial crisis.

I am just one of many officers that serve Post 1244. The American Legion has been working to assist veterans for many years and respects all past military sacrifices to ensure that they are never forgotten by the new generations. The American Legion's motto is "Veterans Strengthening America."

Wishing all Legion members the joy of the holidays and plans for a great New Year to come!

*Michelle Martin*

**Service Officer**

American Legion Post 1244

Tel. # 631-361-1216

## American Legion High School Oratorical Contest

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop a deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. The program presents participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Post 1244 has sponsored students in the American Legion Oratorical contest for many years and has had many successful contestants.

This year's oratorical contestants Anna Brown at left, and Maureen Kennedy, at right both from Pius V. School in Melville were the only two contestants from Suffolk County. Both girls are going to compete in the 10th District contest in Islip on January 6th.





## Spotlight on the Community

# Suffolk County Legislator Stephanie Bontempi, District 18

**You are a naturalized citizen. Before you came to the United States what was your life like in Sweden? What brought you here to the United States?**



I grew up in Sweden to a Swedish father and a French mother. A typical childhood, my life centered around school, sports, friends, and family. Life was great. When it came time for college, I felt the need to immerse myself more into my French heritage and therefore decided to pursue college in

France. The college I attended in Paris, France, offered its students the opportunity to transfer to the U.S. during senior year and to graduate from there. Always curious about the world, and adventurous, I jumped on the occasion and ended up at the University of Hartford in Connecticut.

What happened next? I fell in love with an American man and the rest is history! Thirty plus years and I am still here - although remarried...

**What were your jobs prior to becoming a Suffolk County Legislator?**

Prior to running for office for the first time in 2021, I was a teacher. My career as an educator began at a Montessori school, followed by a few years in public school, and culminating with fourteen years in private education. I taught technology and second, third, fourth, and fifth grade. Not only did I enjoy every minute of it, but the experiences and skills I gained while teaching proved very valuable in my role as a legislator. Interpersonal and executive functioning skills, just to name a few, are transferable to just about any profession.

**What made you want to focus on Veterans issues? What work do you do on behalf of Veterans on the Veterans Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature?**

When I grew up in Sweden, there was no professional Swedish army. The country relied upon a conscription-army where upon their eighteenth birthday, all Swedish males were called to do one to two years of mandatory

army training. My father, who was a physician, went back for regular refresher training and my brother did two years of army training in the frigid, most northern part of Sweden. I recall looking at them both, in their army fatigues, admiring what they were doing for our country. My father and brother were training for battle in the eventuality that we ever had to go to war. My brother would protect us and ward off the enemy, and my father would take care of the wounded. Luckily, Sweden didn't go to war and to this day, the country has been able to avoid any armed conflicts. However, that is not the case here in the U.S. Our Veterans have fought in wars. Our Veterans have been physically and emotionally injured while fighting for the rest of us. They DESERVE and NEED our respect and help. As part of the Veterans Committee, I have joined with my colleagues in providing funding for various Veterans programs and initiatives. In addition, together with a few of my colleagues in government, we have hosted a yearly Veterans breakfast. Furthermore, I have sponsored three pieces of legislation related to Veterans; one that encourages residents and businesses to expand upon Veterans Day and make it a full week, another that encourages recognition of the many Veteran family-caretakers; family members who care for Veterans, and a third one that amended legislation to make it possible for veterans to secure veterans mortgages. Lastly, with my colleagues in the Legislature, I have participated in the yearly Suffolk County Veterans Marathon, which raised over \$200,000 in 2023 for various Veterans organizations.

**What are your goals as a Legislator for the 18th district?**

My goals are always about the needs, wants, and well-being of the constituents. Whether it be public safety, affordable housing, economic development, protection of our fragile environment, I will continue to listen to those for whom I serve and work on all of the aforementioned. It is a privilege and an honor to be the voice of the people of the 18th district and I look forward to continued hard work and great results in 2024!

*By Mary Flatley*

## Scenes From Our Holiday Party 2023

Over a hundred veterans, spouses, friends and elected officials gathered at Huntington Post 360 on December 14 to celebrate the holidays. Members of both Greenlawn Post 1244 and Huntington Post 360 collaborated to make this a memorable event. The highlight of the evening was the Chinese Auction. The variety of donated prizes kept everyone guessing and wanting more. Past Commander Donna Boyle's energetic and humorous awarding of the prizes to the auction winners added to the excitement and raised the spirit of everyone in attendance. A substantial amount was raised for the worthy veterans charity Angels For Warriors.



**Our friends at Huntington Matters donated 220 item/packages of personal hygiene to the Operation Enduring Care program, in memory of its founder Al Statton who passed away in November from a decades long battle with cancer.**



## A Final Salute

Albert A. Statton III. November 5, 2023

Kenneth L. Carlson. December 12, 2023

Martin P. Walsh. December 18, 2023



Their sense of duty continues to preserve our past,  
safeguards our present and sustains our future.

## Flag Respect and Etiquette



Scouts were taught respect for our flag on October 16 by Charlie Armstrong. Shown here at Birchwood Elementary School with Troop 66 and their Scout leader Beverly.

## American Legion Riders



This month, Post 1244 lost Al Statton. please take a few minutes and say a prayer for Al and his family. Al has done so much for so many people, always with a smile on his face.

He will be remembered always.

November is when the Riders do our Turkey Ride. This year we were blessed with nice weather. Who would think nice motorcycle riding weather in the middle of November?

We started our morning at 9:00 am with motorcycles, 2 SUV's and an Army truck. Throughout the day, visiting many homes, the smiles on faces could not be described. We felt like Santa on Christmas

morning, just a lot louder, no beards, not as jolly, but most of us do have big belly's. We rode and we rode, being lead by Eric on his 3 wheeled chariot (which was a fright ) 'til the sun began to fall and we rose with a clatter (does anyone really know what clatter means?) And said Happy Holidays to ALL and to All a goodnight.

*Bruce Blanco, Director  
American Legion Riders  
Greenlawn Chapter 1244*



A note of thanks for our Turkey Run received by our American Legion Riders:

“Dear Brothers,

Though I feel unworthy, your demonstration of the True Meaning of Christmas (delivering the Thanksgiving fixings to someone you have never met) makes me proud to be a member.

You have brightened my Christmas season. I will try to live up to your showing me the truth of Brotherhood in God.”

Richard Francis



## Chaplain John Carr



My name is John Carr and I am the Chaplain of American Legion Post 1244.

I am an Army veteran serving from late 1972 to 1974. I was one of the last drafted from my area through the Hempstead draft board before the all volunteer Army was instituted.

As did many, I did my basic at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Due to the pull out in late 1972 and early 1973, I was stuck waiting for orders (a big hurry up and wait).

I was finally assigned to my AIT training at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri where I trained as a utility worker (jack of all trades in construction). I was then assigned to the 249th engineer battalion in Karlsruhe Germany.

Most of my time was spent at job sites all around Germany for whatever the Army needed. I got to see a fair amount of Germany and Austria and some of Paris while on leave time.

I joined the post about 5 years ago and have enjoyed my time here. Recently due to the sad passing of Al Stanton I have started with Operation Enduring Care to help Connie Statton continue this good work for our veterans. Thanks to all who have volunteered their time to this worthy cause.

Since my retirement from NCR where I serviced automatic teller machines for about 30 years, I have settled into life with my wife and grandkids . I have taken up model building from kits as a pasttime (although I don't remember it as being so expensive and hard to see 60 years ago).

I want to thank all the members of Post 1244 for their acceptance and friendship in my time there. A wish for a wonderful Holiday Season to all and a Blessed New Year.

### John Carr, Chaplain

(516) 935-4268

P38Lightning45@gmail.com

## Boy Scout Troop 12 Celebrates 100th Anniversary



Charlie Armstrong and Bob Santo presented a 48 star flag to Huntington Boy Scout Troop 12 on October 25 to mark their 100th year in existence.

The anniversary was marked by a big gathering of scouts, and their parents at the Halesite Fire Department. The always entertaining Leer Leary,

Scoutmaster, emceed the event.

The troop is chartered by the Halesite Fire Department. The program includes weekly troop meetings, monthly camping trips, day outings, merit badge opportunities and community service projects. In addition, they attend summer camp for 7 days the first week of August at Camp Yawgoog, in Rhode Island.

Charlie and Bob used the opportunity to promote our Boys and Girls State program as well as our Flag Collection Program and partnership with the 11 public libraries in the Town of Huntington.



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## Al Statton Annual Toy Drive

Post 1244 members and others stepped up this year to make this year's Toy Drive one of the best ever. This year's drive was dedicated to the late Al Statton for his dedication to assisting homeless veterans as well as those residing at the Northport VA Medical Center.

Donations contributed by our many members as well as toys collected by the Cold Spring Harbor Library through the efforts of Diane Scinta made up a good portion of the toys.



PC Dennis Madden, Crystal and daughter

We received a special donation of toys this year from Crystal Gajewski Borella of **Ski's Open Heart Foundation**. Crystal's dad, Mark Gajewski was a post member for just a few years before his death.

He was the inspiration for our Toy Drive which was launched 12 years ago in his honor. We delivered our toys to Rogerlyn Velez CEO of **Angels for Warriors** on December 14, along with gift cards from Walmart to benefit veterans and their families throughout the year as well as a large donation generated by our Chinese Auction at our Holiday Party.

Below are some of the organizations benefitting from our toy drive.



Photo and Marco the Dog by Leanne Gelish

L-R: PC Dennis Madden, Rogerlyn Velez, PC Bob Santo

Angels for Warriors assists and guides Nassau and Suffolk County Veterans, active duty military, and their families through essential resources, with an emphasis on pro-bono and low-bono legal representation.



Northport VA Medical Center Services for the Underserved



Long Island Cares



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## Vice Commander's Message



Legionnaires:  
Did you know  
that Post 1244  
has a cavalry?  
Well, it's true!  
They are better  
known as the  
American  
Legion Riders.  
They are a

modern-day cavalry that saddles up and rides to help veterans in need.

One evening, just before Thanksgiving, I was relaxing at home when suddenly I heard the roar of several motorcycles. I expected them to pass, but they stopped. I looked out the window and to my surprise, it was the Legion Riders.

We greeted each other with hearty handshakes. They told me they just completed their annual Turkey Run mission. Also on their agenda was to make a stop at my home to show thanks for including them in my Veterans Day speech. I was blown away by their gesture of appreciation and thanked them for it.

The Legion Riders are a great group, who perform many missions which are truly meaningful for both themselves and the receivers of those deeds.

My family and I will never forget the day the cavalry rode up to our home.



**L-R: Vic Ramondetta, Steve Scinta, Steve Macagnone Carlo Giordano, Bruce Blanco, Craig Lanigan. Photo by ALR Bil Bartasek**

*Carlo Giordano*  
1st Vice Commander  
631-487-4776  
msgtlegion@gmail.com

## Welcome New Members of Post 1244

Vincent Antolin  
Douglas Blair  
Thomas Bollander  
Steven Macagnone

## Greenlawn Bugle Ideas Welcome



Do you have an idea for our newsletter?

Please contact Bob Santo at:  
[post1244@verizon.net](mailto:post1244@verizon.net)  
or 516-458-7881

To subscribe to our weekly email: "Veterans News" Contact Bob at the email above. Keep up with what is going on at your post.

## Book Drive for Northport VA

We are looking for donations of appropriate books to fill the bookshelves in the waiting rooms at the Northport VA Medical Center.

Hardback books or paperbacks in good condition are preferred. No magazines.

We can also use puzzles/board games and DVD's.

Contact Sean Delle 631-208-7004.

Members please bring your books to our next monthly meeting, or call Sean to arrange a pickup if you cannot attend.

## 2024 Flag Drop Box Schedule American Legion - Greenlawn Post 1244

January 2 - February 1. Half Hollow Hills, Dix Hills

February 1 - March 1. Half Hollow Hills, Melville

March 1 - April 1. Northport

April 1 - May 1. East Northport

May 1 - July 1. South Huntington

July 1 - Aug 1. Huntington - Huntington Station Branch

Aug 1 - Sept 3. Huntington

Sept 3 - Oct 1. Harborfields

Elwood . Oct 1 - Nov 1

Commack - Nov 1 - Dec 2

Cold Spring Harbor -Dec 2 - Jan 2

- Any flags dropped off at the libraries when the Flag Drop Box is not present will be sent to the South Huntington Public Library for Collection.
- The Northport American Legion Post 694 also has a drop box year round at 7 Woodside Avenue, Northport.

# THE GREENLAWN BUGLE

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Veterans  
and their families for  
serving our country.*



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and sacrifice for our Country.**

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Member of American Legion Riders  
Post 1244



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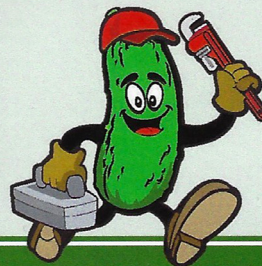
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