

# THE GREENLAWN BUGLE

American Legion Greenlawn Post 1244

Fall 2025



## Boys and Girls State Night

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And more...

Our August Post meeting has become an annual event that everyone looks forward to. This is the meeting where we have the students who have just completed the Boys & Girls State program come to our Post to tell us about their experience. This year's programs included students from Harborfields, Walt Whitman, Huntington, Commack, and Chaminade high schools. The feedback is always very positive and enlightening.

Some of the comments were:

It wasn't just a program – it was an experience that pushed us, inspired us, and gave all attendees a set of memories, lessons, and friendships we'll all carry for life."

"The most memorable experience was meeting and creating strong bonds with fellow citizens that I will have for the rest of my life."

"Thank you for giving me this unforgettable opportunity."

"I learned valuable lessons that I will take with me on my journey through life."

"Thank you again for this amazing experience and this opportunity to grow."

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We also heard some inspiring words from past Boys' State alumnus, retired NY State Supreme Court Justice Jerry Asher, class of 1958; our Post Treasurer Vince Antolin, class of 1984; and U.S. Congressman Nick LaLota, class of 1994.

Local elected officials were also in attendance. They presented each student with a proclamation and certificate recognizing their achievement.

NY State Assemblyman Steve Stern presented us with a \$10,000 grant to aid us with the 2026 programs.

Soon, the future of our nation will be in these young people's hands!

# Operation Enduring Care

It is hard to believe that summer is over and we are moving into fall.

This time of year we get busy with veteran related events such as poppy sales, the annual car show and our Veterans day ceremonies in Greenlawn.

Without the help of our Post none of this is possible. The same can be said for Operation Enduring Care.



**John Carr and Commander Giordano accepting Long Island Marathon Grant.**

Without the Post's support we could not continue as we have.

This year, to date, we have donated to a variety of veteran-related organizations and made multiple supply runs to the Beacon House Veterans Residence at Northport VA with food and other supplies.

We are grateful to have received a generous grant earmarked for Operation Enduring Care from the proceeds of the 2024 Suffolk County Marathon.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at next month's annual Benefit Car Show on November 9th.

Please see announcement below we well as the flyer enclosed with this newsletter.

***John Carr***

Chairman, Operation Enduring Care  
Chaplain, American Legion Post 1244  
(516) 935-42688  
Lightning45@gmail.com

## Operation Enduring Care Fundraiser 4th Annual "Drive with Supplies" Benefit Car Show

We are excited to announce a major fundraiser for Operation Enduring Care: the 4th Annual "Drive with Supplies" Benefit Car Show, hosted by the Centurion Cruisers Car Club. This event has grown to become a cornerstone in our fundraising efforts, bringing together community members and car enthusiasts in support of a great cause.

### Event Details

Date: Sunday, November 9, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Location: Walt Whitman High School



### Volunteer Information

Members who are interested in volunteering at the event are encouraged to contact me at 516-935-4268. Your support and participation are greatly appreciated and will contribute to the success of our fundraiser.

### Support Operation Enduring Care

We sincerely hope that all Post 1244 members will consider attending the car show to show your support for Operation Enduring Care. Your presence will help make this event a memorable and impactful day for our cause. Donations of mens & women's personal Hygiene products, and new bedding and bath items as well as cash donations and gift cards will be greatly appreciated. Please see the enclosed flyer for more information.

# "You Earned It"

## Veterans Commissary Access

Many veterans now may have commissary shopping privileges in the U.S. This became effective 1 January 2020 as part of the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act of 2018, included in the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019.

**Follow these easy steps to verify Commissary eligibility before you shop:**

### 1. Examine your Veteran Health Identification Card



(VHIC), it must show either:

- Service connected
- Medal of Honor
- Purple Heart recipient status
- Former prisoner of war (POW)

**NOTE:** Ensure that the expiration date is current

Eligible Veterans who do not have a VHIC, as well as eligible caregivers, will still need to provide a copy of their VA-issued caregiver patronage letter, VA-issued service-connected disability letter, or VA Health Eligibility Center Form H623A to show eligibility at the commissary.

**2. Update if Necessary:** If any condition is not met, contact **VA Healthcare at 877-222-8387** to request an updated card or visit your nearest VA Medical Center enrollment department.

**3. Check Local Requirements:** Verify entry

requirements with your local installation.

Eligible disabled veterans and their caregivers should go to their installation visitor center to enroll for recurring access. There, they must perform the following actions to gain installation access:

- *Present an acceptable credential (VHIC, REAL ID or VA-issued credentials as referenced above) to establish identity*
- *Submit to an on-the-spot criminal record and terrorism check*

*Go through an electronic verification process to confirm on-installation benefits eligibility. If the reason for the base visit is for health care, and the DOD installation doesn't have a commissary, exchange, or authorized MWR service, then the visitor must provide proof of their appointment.*

Once visitors enroll their VHIC or REAL ID for recurring access, they will be able to go directly to the installation gate and present the same credentials to gain access for future visits. Enrollment is typically valid for one to three years, or one year after the last installation visit. If a patron's VHIC or REAL ID expires, they must reenroll with their new cards.

For more information on policies and procedures for obtaining a VA Health Identification Card (VHIC) visit your local VA Medical Center Enrollment desk, or contact your Post 1244 Service Officer Scott McCord at 631-853-8314

The closest nearest commissary for most of our members is located at:

Mitchel Field  
Bldg# 84 West Road  
Garden City, NY 11530-6795



## Our Beginnings

Each of you has the privilege, and awesome responsibility for carrying on the legacy of our American Legion Greenlawn Post 1244. Although the American Legion parent organization was formed by an act of Congress in 1919, our Post charter was not approved until 1943.

We've been serving the needs of our Veterans and our community ever since.

Over the years, we've had many dedicated, mission-focused commanders. The earliest of which were Otto Fretz, installed on 22 May 1942 (prior to receiving our official charter) and George Washington Richardson, who was elected Commander at our Post meeting on 9 October 1942, (and was serving as our Commander at the time we received our Post Charter on 15 March 1943.) Commander Richardson passed away in 1970. He is interred in Long Island National Cemetery. I had the honor of visiting his grave as a cemetery volunteer and your Post Chaplain in 2019.



Grave of Post Commander George Washington Richardson

An interesting tidbit....According to an article in the "Long Islander" newspaper, a very early Post meeting was held on 14 August 1942 at the "Greenlawn Gun Club until the Legion Clubhouse was completed." According to a follow-up article, "A Post meeting was held at our new clubhouse on 9 October. George Washington Richardson was elected Commander."

In this article, I've provided you with a mere snippet of our beginnings. I hope to provide you with more in future writings. As they say, you have to eat the elephant one bite at a time....

Our Post has a long and storied pedigree. As such, it is up to each of us, not just our usual Post doers, to help carry the awesome load that we as a venerable service organization choose to bear. I ask that we each contribute, in our own way, to accomplishing our tasks at hand, and by doing so, pay homage to those who got us here...

Respectfully Submitted

*Charlie Tritta*

Post 1244 Historian

## Post 1244 Book Drive

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.

## Our End of Summer Cookout- “Grill and Chill”







## Spotlight on the Community

### Kenneth Lavoie, Senior Safety Officer Town of Huntington



**Q.** What Branch of the Armed Forces did you serve in, and what was your MOS?

**A.** I joined the Marine Corps in September 1980 and graduated from boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina, in January of the following year. Following that, I spent over a year in

schools at Naval Air Station Millington, outside of Memphis, Tennessee. I served at the El Toro Air Station in Santa Ana, California, as an Aviation Electronics. MOS 6321 and an Aviation Ordnance Technician, MOS 6541, working on the McDonald Douglas F/A-18A.

**Q.** How long have you been employed by the Town, and what positions have you held?

**A.** Since joining the Town of Huntington, I have spent more than seven years as the Sr. Safety Officer writing Safety policies, writing and providing safety training, and creating a Safety Manual. I have also provided OSHA training and home safety to all of the Town employees on OSHA topics.

**Q.** How has being a Veteran helped you with your different jobs?

**A.** Being a Marine Corps. Veteran, you learn discipline and perseverance. Nothing happens overnight; that being stated, you learn to adapt, improvise, and overcome the obstacles that you encounter.

**Q.** What did you do before you became employed by the Town of Huntington?

**A.** Before I became employed at the Town of Huntington, I had spent a wonderful career as the Regional Agency Safety and Health Representative for the NYS DOT in New York City and on Long Island for the previous 19 years.

*By Mary Flatley*



### A Final Salute

Milan Rigel  
July 11, 2025

United States Army

John Sonser  
Septmber 28, 2025

United States Army



Their sense of duty continues to preserve our past, safeguard our present, and sustain our future.

## American Legion Riders



The American Legion Riders Post 1244 had a busy month, packed with activities that showed their dedication to veterans and the community. They mixed fun, remembrance, and fundraising to strengthen their bonds and honor those who served.

• **ALR Post 1036 Poker Run:** The Riders hit the road for a Poker Run, stopping at three other American Legion Posts on Long Island to collect playing cards. It was all about friendly competition and raising money for local veteran causes. The event was a great mix of giving back and having a good time. Brian Gerkin was a gracious host representing Post 1244.

• **9/11 Ceremony Huntington:** A well-attended and heartfelt ceremony at Huntington Town Hall to remember those lost on 9/11. The names of those from the town of Huntington were read aloud, and there were roses presented to show respect and remembrance. Following the ceremony we were treated to a wonderful lunch at Alberts Mandarin.

• **9/11 Memorial Ride:** A group of Riders, including our very own Joe Spinelli Ret. FDNY firefighter, took on a challenging ride to key 9/11 sites like Ground Zero, Shanksville, and the Pentagon. Then back to Ground Zero. They spent nearly 18 hours and covered 822 miles,

paying tribute with prayers and reflection. One fun moment during the ride was when they ran into someone from Harbor Fields High School who recognized the Greenlawn patch on their vest. It was a small world moment that brought a smile to everyone's face. What a beautiful site it must have been coming over the Verrazano Bridge to see those two shining lights in the sky.

• **SAR Flag Ceremony:** A group of walkers, led by Purple Heart recipient and Suffolk County Legislator Lt. Col. Chad Lennon, trekked 66 miles – from Orient Point to Hauppauge – in honor of Veterans lost to suicide and those still fighting mental health battles every day. The Riders met up with Lt. Col. Lennon and escorted him and the other walkers the last 2.5 miles to the Armed Forces Plaza at the court buildings. A ceremony was held and the SAR flag was raised on its own flagpole, alongside the American Flag, the POW-MIA Flag, and the flags of the U.S. Armed Services.

This month's events exemplify the spirit and dedication of the American Legion Riders. Through their service, fellowship, and community engagement, the Riders continue to make a meaningful impact and inspire others to join in their mission.

*Bruce Blanco, President*

American Legion Riders, Greenlawn Post 1244



Legislator Chad Lennon (C-Rocky Point) arrives at Armed Forces Plaza with the SAR Flag



Post 1244 Riders escorting the walkers to Armed Forces Plaza at the H. Lee Dennison Building in Hauppauge

### Hope

Maybe I have a poem in me  
tonight  
Maybe I do not  
Perhaps the words will flow  
With ease from my cluttered mind  
Or will I struggle to capture my  
thoughts  
In a coherent manner and put them  
down to words  
I can share with those I want  
to inspire and encourage

I hope to have a poem  
in me tonight

So I can infuse my world with  
verses to shatter  
Misconceptions and biases people hold  
tightly to themselves



*Mary Flatley*

## Huntington 911 Remembrance Ceremony

On September 7, Supervisor Ed Smyth and the Town of Huntington hosted a 9/11 commemorative service at



Veterans Advisory Board member and Past Commander Bob Santo places a rose in memory of the 911 victims.

Town Hall to honor and remember the 43 Huntington residents killed in the September 11, 2001, terror attacks.

Families of the victims, residents, veterans and local officials were in attendance.

The ceremony included the singing

of The National Anthem by Coast Guard Auxiliary member Louis Dileo, and an invocation by Monsignor Steven Camp of St. Patrick's Church.

As the names of each of the 43 victims were read by members of the Town Board, a bell was sounded, and an individual rose was placed in their memory by members of the Huntington Veterans Advisory Board.

Color guards from each of Huntington's veterans' organizations, including Post 1244 and our Legion Riders lined the boardroom walls.

The ceremony concluded with the sounding of "Taps" by Louis Dileo and a bagpipe performance of "Amazing Grace" by Brad Davidson from the Northport Pipe & Drum Band



## Post 1244 In The Community

### Honoring Eddie at 102: A Birthday Ride to Remember



At 102 years old, Ed Peyser still stands tall in the hearts of everyone who knows his story. A proud World War II veteran and a symbol of the Greatest Generation, Eddie has lived through a century of change — but his love for country, family, and

community has never wavered.

As a Legion Rider from Greenlawn Post 1244, I've had the privilege to ride for many veterans — but this one was different. This time, we weren't riding in mourning or remembrance. We were riding in celebration. We rode for Eddie — to honor his service, his life, and his incredible milestone: 102 years young.

With flags flying and engines roaring, the Riders pulled up to Eddie's home, greeted by neighbors, friends, and family all gathered to celebrate this remarkable man. It wasn't just a birthday party — it was a tribute. A tribute to a man who served our nation in its time of greatest need, and who continues to inspire those

around him with quiet strength and a sharp sense of humor.

When I shook Eddie's hand, I felt the weight of history. Not in a somber way — but in the proud, humbling way you feel when you're in the presence of someone who's truly lived a life of service. Eddie's eyes lit up when he saw the bikes lined up outside, and I'll never forget the smile on his face as we saluted him. That moment reminded me why we do what we do as Riders.

We don't ride for glory. We ride for honor. We ride to say thank you when words aren't enough. And on that day, for Eddie's 102nd, we rode with pride.

Happy birthday, Eddie. From all of us at Greenlawn Post 1244 — thank you for your service, and thank you for showing us what a life of meaning looks like. It was our honor to ride for you.

With respect and in the wind,

*Stephen Scinta*

Post 1244 1st Vice Commander and American Legion Greenlawn Post 1244 Rider



### American Legion Post 1244 Supporting Huntington's Unity Fun Day

Since 2010, this event has been held to encourage unity and highlight diversity within Huntington. As usual, our color guard led the parade down Oakwood Road to the Henry L. Stimson Middle School.



Many classic and collectible cars were displayed by our friends, the members of The Centurion Cruisers Car Club. Included was our own Charlie Armstrong's classic 56 Ford Fairlane Crown Victoria seen at right.



## Vice Commander's Corner



My fellow Legionnaires!

As fall approaches, we are reminded of the importance of fellowship, service, and remembrance. The American Legion has always stood as a pillar of strength in our

community, honoring the sacrifices of veterans while supporting those still serving, their families, and our neighborhoods.

This season brings many opportunities for us to fulfill our mission. From upcoming flag-raising ceremonies and veterans' events to community outreach and youth programs, each activity we take part in strengthens the bond between our Post and the people we serve. Let us continue to show our neighbors that the American Legion is not just about remembering the past—it is about building a stronger future.

### **Membership is the lifeblood of our organization.**

Without it, we cannot continue our programs, support our veterans, or remain a strong voice in our community and our nation. Every member adds to our strength—whether they are active in Post events, volunteering their

time, or simply standing proudly with us as part of our ranks. Each one matters.

I encourage every Legionnaire to reach out to fellow veterans, family members, and neighbors. Share with them the value of belonging to the American Legion—not just as a tradition, but as a way to give back, to find camaraderie, and to ensure that veterans always have a place where their service is honored. Together, we can grow our Post, strengthen our programs, and ensure that the Legion's mission continues for generations to come.

Thank you, Legionnaires, for your dedication, your service, and your brotherhood. Let's keep moving forward—together, stronger than ever.

**For God and Country**

*Stephen Scinta*

**Stephen Scinta**

**Vice Commander Greenlawn Post**

**1244**

**Welcome to the newest member of Post 1244**

**Brian Prochaska**



It's time to renew your American Legion membership for another year.

You — we — can make a difference. Your membership provides vital support to local veterans services, legislative lobbying efforts, and outreach in our local community.

The renewal process begins in July for the upcoming membership year. Renewal notices are sent out in July, October, January, March and May

Renewals allow us to keep our services functioning, no matter how circumstances change. New members help us expand our outreach and allow us to serve more people who need our help. Secure, convenient online membership renewal can be completed online at [www.legion.org/renew](http://www.legion.org/renew).

All honorably discharged veterans who have served since Dec. 7, 1941, are now eligible to join The American Legion and can do so safely and easily. **Renew online at [www.legion.org/renew](http://www.legion.org/renew)**

## Commander's Call



Greetings  
Legionnaires,

I was thinking of what to write in this article and I kept coming back to one thought, And that is who we are and why we do the things we do.

As for me I need to be around Veterans. Other than my own family I am most comfortable around those who understand what it means to have served. The camaraderie when we meet have a meal and good conversation. Although we served in different branches different times and many different experiences, We all started by raising our right hand and Swearing an oath to God and wearing the uniform of this Great Nation.

Now unfortunately our numbers are dwindling and that is disheartening. We must all try to encourage veterans we meet to come see what we are about and hopefully join us .

But not only that we all should make every effort to get together as much as possible. We don't want to become an "Out of Sight Out of Mind Post" we want to be an "In Sight in Your Mind and Together Post."

For God and Country

*Carlo Giordano*

Post Commander  
631-487-4776  
msgtlegion@gmail.com

### Why Your Membership Matters

The American Legion stands as a beacon of inclusivity and camaraderie, offering a welcoming embrace to veterans and their families from all walks of life. Serving as more than just a gathering place, it fosters a sense of belonging and understanding within the veteran community, transcending differences, and uniting individuals under a shared bond of service. Legionnaires and their family members can also be eligible for a myriad of financial grants during times of financial hardship, natural disasters, or even for educational scholarships.



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[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.



If you have an E Mail account and are not receiving Our weekly **Veterans News** from us, we invite you to let us add you to our list. We will let you know of Post 1244 news of interest, and activities and events you may wish to take part in. Just send an email with your first and last name and email address to:

**[Post 1244@verizon.net](mailto:Post1244@verizon.net)**

We'll do the rest!

## 2025 Flag Drop Box Schedule American Legion - Greenlawn Post 1244

### Public Libraries

**January 2 - February 3.** Half Hollow Hills, Dix Hills

**February 3 - March 3.** Half Hollow Hills, Melville

**March 3 - 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 2.** Huntington - Main Branch

**Sept 2 - Oct 1.** Harborfields

**Elwood . Oct 1 - Nov 3**

**Commack - Nov 3 - Dec 1**

**Cold Spring Harbor -Dec 1 - 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

*The Greenlawn Bugle: Editor, Publisher Bob Santo*

*Contributing Writers: Charlie Armstrong, Bruce Blanco, John Carr, Mary Flatley, Carlo Giordano, Bob Santo, Steve Scinta, Charlie Tritto.*

*Photos by: Charlie Armstrong, Bruce Blanco, Charlie Restivo, Steve Scinta, Charlie Tritto*

*Copy Editor: Madelaine Santo    Advertising Manager: Walter Rabe*

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★ *Thank you* ★

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& THEIR FAMILIES



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[Tmari@Huntingtonny.gov](mailto:Tmari@Huntingtonny.gov)



*Thank you for your  
service to our great  
nation and for the  
sacrifices you and your  
family make to protect  
our freedom.*

Councilwoman Brooke A.  
Lupinacci  
Town of Huntington  
631-351-3174  
[BLupinacci@huntingtonny.gov](mailto:BLupinacci@huntingtonny.gov)



### Andre Sorrentino Superintendent of Highways Town of Huntington



Huntington Highway Department  
30 Rofay Drive  
Huntington NY 11743  
Cell: 516-356-7272  
Email:

Thank you to all our Veterans  
for Serving our Country and Community



### Andrew P. Raia Town Clerk and Registrar Town of Huntington

100 Main Street, Huntington  
631-351-3206  
[araia@huntingtonny.gov](mailto:araia@huntingtonny.gov)

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

### The Greenlawn Civic Association

P.O. Box 332 - Greenlawn - Long Island - New York - 11740

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We thank them for their dedicated service  
and sacrifice for our Country.**





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631-271-8025

sterns@nyassembly.gov



**Keith Brown**  
Member of Assembly  
12<sup>th</sup> District  
Suffolk County



6080 Jericho Tpke.  
Commack, NY 11725  
631-261-4151  
Fax 631-261-2992

brownk@nyassembly.gov



**Suffolk County Legislator  
Stephanie Bontempi**  
18<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



224 Wall Street, Suite 303  
Huntington, NY 11743  
631-854-4500

*Thank you for your service!*

Stephanie.Bontempi@suffolkcountyny.gov



**Rebecca Sanin**  
SUFFOLK COUNTY  
LEGISLATOR  
16<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



6080 Jericho Turnpike, Suite 307  
Commack, New York, 11725  
Phone: (631) 854-5100

**We are grateful for your service.**

Rebecca.Sanin@suffolkcountyny.gov

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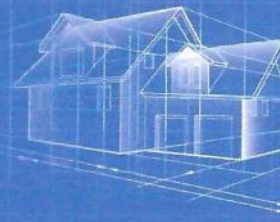
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