

THE AMERICAN LEGION

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ARTHUR E. BOUTON POST 770

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CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER

Fri	Dec 4	4:30 PM	Winter Festival Smorgasbord Seniors Dinner
		5:00 – 7:30 PM	Festival Dinner Continues – Public Invited
		6:00 – 8:30 PM	Winter Festival Continues on Main Street
Sat	Dec 5	4:00 – 7:00 PM	Winter Festival at the Fairgrounds
Sat & Sun	5th & 6th		Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Shur-Save – Check time Sheet at the Post
Mon	Dec 7	FLAG	Pearl Harbor Day 1941 – Flag Half Staff until Sunset
		7:00 PM	Tompkins County American Legion Meeting at Post 800 – Groton
		7:00 PM	Squadron 770 Sons of the American Legion Meeting
		7:00 PM	Snow Club Meeting
Tues	Dec 8		War Declared on Japan (1941)
Weds	Dec 9	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees Meeting
Thurs	Dec 10	6:30 PM	Boy Scout Leaders Meeting
Fri	Dec 11		Germany & Italy Declare War on USA (1941)
		5:30 – 8:00 PM	Steak & Fish Fry Dinner – Public Invited – Don Smith’s Crew
Sat	Dec 12		Chanukah
		9:00 AM	HOG’S Christmas Party Setup
		6:00 PM	HOG’S Christmas Dinner
Sun	Dec 13	1:00 – 4:00 PM	Kids Christmas Party – Public Invited – Sign up by Dec 5th
Mon	Dec 14	Noon	Hi-Way Department Prime Rib Dinner
		7:30 PM	Post 770 American Legion Meeting
Tues	Dec 15	7:00 PM	Auxiliary Christmas Party – Bring a \$10 Gift to Exchange
Weds	Dec 16	Noon	Senior Citizens Christmas Luncheon
Mon	Dec 21		Winter Begins
		7:00 PM	Snow Club Meeting
Weds	Dec 23	7:00 PM	Board of Trustees Meeting
Thurs	Dec 24	4:00 – 6:00 PM	Christmas Eve Open House
Fri	Dec 25		Christmas Day – Post Closed
Sun	Dec 27	7:30 – 11:00 AM	Breakfast – Public Invited
		2:00 – 4:00 PM	Retirement Reception for Doug Austic, Town of Ulysses Supervisor
Mon	Dec 28	7:30 PM	Post 770 American Legion Meeting
Tues	Dec 29	6:30 PM	Cub Scout Pack Meeting in Banquet Room
Thurs	Dec 31	5:30 – 8:00 PM	Steak & Fish Fry Dinner – Public Invited - Combination Crew
		9:00 PM – 1:00 AM	New Years Eve Party featuring music on the Juke Box in the lounge
Fri	Jan 1		Happy New Year – Football Bowl Games on the TV all day

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Winterfest Smorgasorg Dinner: will kick off the Winter Carnival on Friday, December 4th beginning at 4:30 for Seniors and at 5:00 open to all.

Kids Christmas Party: will be held on Sunday Dec 13th from 1:00 – 4:00 PM. Plenty of refreshments are in store when Santa arrives with his bag of toys and goodies. All little boys and girls between the ages of new born and ten are invited to come. Please bring mom and dad, grandma and grampa. The more the merrier. We need you to sign up and tell us the

ages, sex, and how many children you are bringing before Saturday Dec 5th, so that Santa can fill his sack with presents for all the kids who attend.

Christmas Eve Open House: It has long been a tradition to wish our comrades a Merry Christmas at the Post on Christmas Eve. We will have an open house from 4:00 – 6:00 PM. Won't you join us for a bit of comradery before Christmas?

New Years Eve Party: We are looking forward to bringing the New Year in a little differently than last year. Our great fish & steak dinner will be followed by music on the juke box and dancing in the lounge. Sounds like a gala evening. You won't want to miss bringing in 2010 with all of your Legion friends.

Veterans Reports: 1) Joe March is national director of public relations for The American Legion. He can be reached at 317-630-1253 or www.jmarch@legion.org. 2) **FLASH!** Please be advised that Veterans are being contacted by "Patient Care Group" representing that they are helping administer VA prescriptions and stating that the pharmacy billing procedures have changed and they are therefore requesting Veteran credit card numbers for prescription payments in advance of filling their prescriptions. **THIS IS FALSE!!** VA does not call Veterans asking to disclose personal financial information over the phone. VA has not changed its processes for dispensing prescription medicines. 3) **Army Reopens Retiree Recall Program:** Army official will allow more former soldiers a chance to return to active duty under the retiree recall program in an effort to close gaps in hard-to-fill specialties, service officials announced this week. "Due to the recent approval of a temporary increase in active component end strength." The program allows soldiers with 20 years of service to reapply in certain high-demand specialties, such as physicians, linguists, and chaplains. 4) **Buffalo's Veterans County Wins Praise in Congress:** Buffalo City Judge Robert T. Russell Jr. "Veterans Treatment Court: is helping dozens of troubled former military personnel straighten up and stay out of prison – and that's just the beginning. In other words, the program is taking psychologically wounded warriors – including many who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or drug and alcohol addiction – and setting them on a path for a better life. "Who better deserves a second chance than a veteran?" asked Jack O'Conner, the mentor coordinator for the Buffalo Veterans Treatment Court. 5) The Navy's new uniform will coexist with the Army and Air Force camouflage uniform is being phased in for sea and shore is the new unisex striking digital-blue camouflage all ranks/rates working uniform. The uniform is considered superior in comfort and wrinkle and stain resistance. ...Holly Smith is the winner of the County & 6th District "Oratorical Contest". Holly is the daughter of member Phil Smith and Gin Young Smith.

CHAPLAINS CORNER

Sick Call: **Fred Asay:** Hospitalized with a fall. Had a pacemaker put in to stabilize heart beat. Now home.

Jack Ellsworth: Fell and banged up

Taps: **Edward Terry Halloran:** Brother of member Denny Halloran, died in a car accident in October. He was a Viet Nam Veteran.

Butch Aumick: Died recently. He was a brother-in-law of members Earl Sr., Earl Jr., and Clarence Wright. The Post 770 funeral detail was to conduct graveside military honors; however the VFW took on that responsibility.

Marjorie R. Belknap: passed away at St Anthony's Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida on November 2, 2009. She was formerly a 6th grade teacher at TCS. Marge is the mother of Post 770 members, Lee Weaver and wife, Auxiliary member Sue Weaver, Larry and Sharon Weaver, and daughters Linda Weaver and Joyce Witson. A memorial gathering for family and friends was held at the American Legion Post.

John Nicholas Gregrow: passed away on November 12, 2009 after a valiant 6 year fight at his home in Apache Junction, AZ with his wife and children by his side. A veteran of the US Navy from 1968 until 1970 and retired from the Tioga County Sheriffs Department with 30 years of service. John was a member of Post 770.

POST NEWS

We enjoyed a great Prime Rib dinner put on for the Department Commander and President visitation by Tom Bennett, Cindy and Gary Reckdenwald, and Marge & Don Bennett. Al Richar was the Master of Ceremonies aided by Auxiliary President Ann Stiles Hunt. Our table including Lee and Sue Weaver and Grandson Andrew along with Fred & Irene Asay and Chloe and George Van Valen seemed to be the only members attending from our Post. Bill Parker conducted the missing person ceremony. Needless to say this was a somewhat disappointing representation of members from our own Post. ...Although we did not attend, the report received was that the NRA banquet and festivities were quite successful as usual. ...Following a great breakfast at which 105 people were served, a quick cleanup and transformation took place on Sunday, October 25th in order to be ready for the Bath VA Hospital steak dinner visitation. At exactly noon, 3 busloads of patients and staff pulled into our parking lot. As is usually the case, the 60 plus staff, aides and patients enjoyed a wonderful meal and festivities. These guys and gals are always a pleasure to have and are so very thankful for the

opportunity to make the trip from Bath. Our only disappointment was that there was not enough time to give them the usual sightseeing tour of our landmarks and famous falls. Perhaps next time we could shorten some activities to allow for a local tour of the area. It was certainly an enjoyable day. A big thank you to all that helped out in so many different ways. ...We noticed there was no PA system hooked up at the last two events we attended. I'm told that we do possess this hookup. What does that tell you? That I should hook it up? I really am a klutz when it comes to electronics. ...Tom Bennett, Al Richar, and Bill Parker attended the National Commanders Visitation dinner in Big Flats. At that meeting I understand the Department Commanders said that Tom Bennett's prime rib was the best he had eaten on his visitations around the State. I told Tom a long time ago that if he added Au Jus to his beef it would be the best around. Now you know. Great job, Tom. ...We had so many kids for trick or treating on Halloween that we were unable to come see the Post set up of a "Spook House". Furthermore, we were unaware such a thing existed. A little more notice in the future please. We did not get the message. ...We can't say that anything happened on Election Day. We did not put on a dinner or anything along those lines....Next on my list of "Post Events" the Veteran Day Parade. Although I have never missed one I didn't feel I could march this year. Apparently, neither did anyone else! Only two showed up. Sadly, we were unable to field a color guard at the parade. This is sad. We need to be better represented than that. Let's hope to have several ranks of marchers next year. ...We were able to create quite a bit of interest in the Veterans Day Celebration at DeWitt Park this year. We were able to field a firing squad consisting of Tony Chiesa, Dave Boyd, and Henry Van Ness, with Tom Bennett as a standby. Phil Colvin and George Van Valen formed the color guard. Charles Harrington was able to capture pictures of the event which we have tried to reproduce in this newsletter. I have copies available to duplicate if any one is interested. The pictures will go into the Legion scrapbook. There were a number of us attending this event on Veteran's Day. Following the celebration Applebee's Restaurant offered free lunches to all Veterans! After our Veterans Day participation, seven of us from Post 770 ate a great lunch. It seemed to conclude a great day of celebration in as much as we did not participate at the Post in any further activities. ...



Our fish fry crew had a fantastic and abbreviated night. We served 150 dinners in 1 ½ hours. The attendance seemed to fall off after 7:00 PM. All seemed to go well with no major problems. ...Let me finish up with odds and ends. We were unable to participate in the Sampson Flag Dedication with our color guard and firing squad, so I do not know much about the outcome. I'm told there were 2,000 flags at the Seneca Lake display at Geneva. There is so much happening with the Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Sampson that we will be doing a special article about it in this newsletter....The

membership made monetary donation to help the Auxiliary with their funding of the kids Christmas party. New coffee pots and bartender's time clocks have been purchased by the membership. They also made a donation to the SPCA and The American Cancer Society "Relay for Life" on behalf of the County and Post for the Department and National Commanders projects. More information: Grease traps will be cleaned every three or four months to prevent overflow of the dishwasher and sinks. Tom Bennett is in charge of bulletin boards. If it's old news, remove it. Easels will be used in the entry way to display information rather than taping them on to the glass doors. Another benefit raffle has been established to help Patrick Richar with the costs associated with his dialysis. The drawing will take place New Years Eve. A note of interest: The VA does not ask for Social Security numbers.

MEMBERSHIP

The month of December signals the end of 2009 and time to concentrate on the New Year 2010. Our members total 285 plus 3 new ones or about 288. We are 79 short of our assigned quota. At our November meeting the names of delinquent members were read and an effort made to contact them. Beginning with the New Year, your newsletter mailing will be dropped along with other benefits of membership. It is a small price to pay when you look at what the organization has to offer as they fight for all of the improvements in conditions due veterans and active duty personnel. Now is the time to re-up, sign up and talk to some new recruits. We wish to welcome Leigh Duran, Chad Grove (re-upping), transfer Fredrick D. Carrigan, and Daniel Motill to our Post. It's nice to have you aboard, especially as somewhat younger members. We received a phone call from long time member David Updike. He is planning to switch his Legion membership to a very active Post in the Myrtle Beach, SC area where he now resides. He would like to continue to receive our newsletter to keep up with the home town news. It was David and his business of Mailbox, Inc. that made it possible to reach over 500 members monthly.

AUXILIARY NEWS

Membership is 120 seniors and 7 juniors with a quota of 157. Only 30 more for 100% membership. Sorry to say NO Calendars! It is illegal for us to use NYS Lottery numbers for drawings. We made donations to the Department Presidents Projects and to Operation We Care. We had 62 Bath Veterans who enjoyed their steak dinner and all of the baked goods. Thank you to all bakers. No December Auxiliary dinner. Our Xmas party will be held on December 15th at 7:00 PM. Please bring a \$10 gift for our exchange gift. Snacks will be provided by the Auxiliary. Congratulations to Brady and Kathi Roach on their first grandson born on October 20th, and to Tom & Joyce Bennett on their first great-granddaughter. Wescena Smith was in the hospital on 10/21 and is now home. The kids Xmas party is Dec 13th from 1-3:00 PM for children from newborn to 10 years.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Submitted, Marge Bennett

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION NEWS

The 2010 membership drive is going well; however, we don't have an exact number at this time. Our haunted house did well and we raised about \$75 for the kids Christmas fund. Our meatloaf dinner also did well considering the minimal advertising. At the next meeting we will consider doing a monthly dinner starting in 2010. If any SAL member would like to contribute to the SAL news, it would be greatly welcomed as I am a man of few words. The deadline is the 15th of the month. Our next meeting is Monday, December 7th at 7PM.....Brady

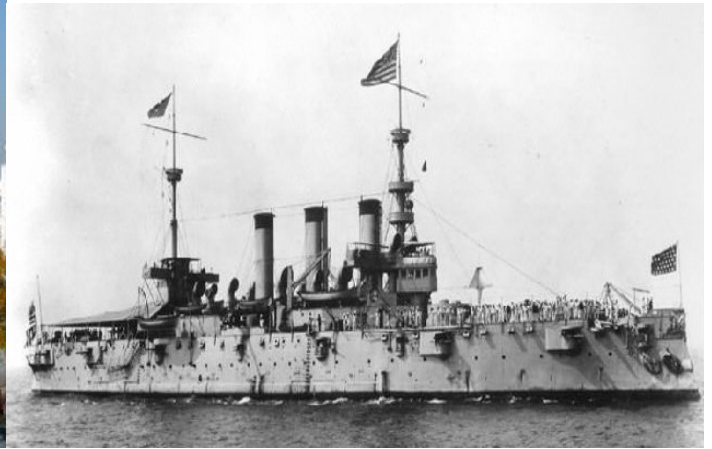
SAMPSON VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY

Demolition of six aging structures at the 162 acre site of the proposed Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery in the town of Romulus have been let all were 1940-era buildings. A new gatehouse will serve as a public information center, and the old firehouse location is to be a chapel with stained glassed windows honoring each branch of the military. The overall phase – one cast falls just shy of \$4 million with money coming from the State. The first internment will take place around the middle of next year. There is a drive to find public monies to help with cemetery developments. The Post 770 membership has made a d donation of \$1,000 toward the implementation of the Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Donations are being received the Sampson Veterans Memorial Cemetery Association, PO Box 243, Seneca Falls, NY 13148 or call 315-539-1845. For additional information log on to www.sampsonveteranscemetery.com. The State Department was to have built a prison there, but opted instead for a Route 96 & 414 site north of the Village of Ovid. The site is just south of Sampson State Park. Veterans and members of their immediate family will qualify for burial.

HEY, NEW YORK, MEET THE NEW YORK

Ship built with Trade Center Steel: by Deepti Hajela of the Associated Press

The new Navy assault ship USS New York, built with World Trade Center steel, arrived in its namesake city Monday with a rifle volley salute near the site of the 2001 terrorist attack. First responders, families of September 11th victims and the public gathered Monday at a waterfront viewing area, where they could see the crew standing at attention along the deck of the battleship gray vessel. The big ship paused. Then the shots were fired, with a cracking sound, in three bursts. The bow of the \$1 billion ship, built in Louisiana, contains about 75 tons of steel from the fallen towers. "It's a transformation, from something really twisted and ugly," said Rosaleen Tallon, who lost her firefighter brother, Sean, on 9/11. "I'm proud that our military is using that steel." At a short ceremony later at Pier 88 near the site of the aircraft carrier, the USS Intrepid, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the USS New York couldn't have a more fitting name, representing freedom, courage, and resilience. "This ship is actually a physical representation of that spirit with steel from the World Trade Center built into its bow so every friend that sets foot on it and every foe that dares challenge it will feel its power and know that it is literally made from the heart and soul of the city that has sacrificed so much," the mayor said.



Also pictured is the former New York built in 1898. In 1942, the ship was scuttled in Subic Bay to prevent its capture by the approaching Imperial Japanese forces. The wreck is situated between Alavar Pier and the northern end of the runway. The former *New York* lies on its port side in approximately 87 feet of water. The wreck is now a diving attraction.



DID YOU KNOW?

These are some of the topics addressed to the National American Legion Press Association by National Commander Clarence E. Hill at the Convention held in St. Louis the past summer. Just a couple of examples of ongoing issues:

- 1.) **The health care debate is today's hot topic**, and a final bill hasn't been drafted yet. We need to stay alert to endure the VA and TRICARE are not affected by a national program.
- 2.) **The ACLU continues its attacks on veterans monuments** dedicated to our fallen comrades.
- 3.) **A bill to allow the VA to collect from Medicare, HR 3365 – the Medicare Reimbursement Act of 2009, has finally been introduced**, and we need to be vocal in our support, and in getting co-sponsors.
- 4.) **And when the health care debate has run its course, the illegal immigrations issue will take its place.**

Military Christmas Poem Written by a Marine

All Is Secure

Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, in a one-bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney with presents to give, and to see just who in this home did live.
I looked all about; a strange sight I did see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand, on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sober thought came through my mind.
For this house was different, it was dark and dreary; I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly
The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone, curled up on the floor in this one-bedroom home.
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder, not how I pictured a United States soldier.
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?
I realized the families whom I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.
Soon round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year, because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.
I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone, on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.
The very thought brought a tear to my eye; I dropped to my knees and started to cry.
The soldier awakened, and I heard a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my country, my Corps."
The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep; I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still, and we both shivered from the cold night's chill.
I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark, night, this guardian of honor so willing to fight.
Then the soldier rolled over, and with a voice soft and pure, whispered, "Carry on Santa. All is secure."
One look at my watch, and I knew he was right. "Merry Christmas my friend!" And to all a good night.