
THE MILLERTON LEGIONNAIRE

Volume 1, Issue 2

Legion Post 178 - Millerton NY 12546

November 2007

The Final Word

A word from the Post Commander

Lee Garay - Post Commander

First off, I would like to begin by hoping that everyone had a great and safe autumn with friends and family.

This past weekend the Post conducted its first annual Veterans Day Dinner, which was a huge success. Over \$2000 was brought in during the course of the evening between the Club Lounge, Dinner Tickets and Raffle ticket sales.

The event has received high accolades throughout the community with a number of post members being complimented on the event and program. Special thanks to the Son's for their hard work in preparing the chicken for the dinner, as well as in setting up and breaking down the main hall. Also recognition to the Ladies Auxiliary for all their hard work in preparing the food, serving it, and cleaning the Kitchen and main hall.

For those who were able to attend, the main hall was at maximum capacity with approximately 140 individuals attending the evenings activities. The main event of the evening
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The Adventures of Lee & Sid in Kosovo

This past July our posts very own Commander Lee Garay and Post Treasurer Sid Byron got the very unique and rare opportunity to visit the American servicemen and women serving as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in Kosovo.

The purpose of their visit to this region was to work with the slowly emerging War Veterans Association in Kosovo. This organization is made up of fighters who served in the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) in 1999. Many members of the War Veterans Association are frustrated with the slow pace that their government has been moving on veteran's issues. It has been a goal of the US Forces serving in Kosovo to bring members of the American Legion down range to assist the Kosovo War Veterans Association in developing strategies that would further their goals.



Sid Byron, 1LT Klay, and Lee Garay in Kosovo

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was the presentation of the first annual Legion Post 178 Citizen Appreciation Award's with 21 members of our community being recognized publicly for their efforts in helping our Legion Post over the years. The list of individuals recognized are as follows:

NYS Assemblyman Marc Molinaro
Town Supervisor David Sherman
Dutchess County Sheriff Butch Anderson
Bernie Silvernail
Cathy Fenn of Townscape
JoAnne Scasso of Country Gardeners
James Campbell
Pastor William Mayhew of Faith Bible Chapel
Robert Trotta & Walter Davis
Sebastein J. Amato
Dale Culver (accepted by Joe Harold)
Dave MacMillan
Bill Simmons
Al Andrews

Also recognized that evening, but were unable to attend were:

State Senator Vincent Leibell
Mayor John Scutieri
Millerton Police Chief Richie Howard
Tom Flood of Flood Sanitation
Donnie Hosier of Up Country Landscaping
Martha and Jay Reynolds of Simmons Way
Stacy Moore of Moore and Moore Printing



The main hall filled was to capacity

As part of the main event our Guest Speaker for both our Dinner and Veterans Day program was Brigadier General Guy Sands of the 353rd Civil Affairs Command out of Ft. Wadsworth NY. During the course of his remarks he noted the sacrifices that our country's servicemen and women are making in the defense of our nation. As part of his presentation he showed a brief video about the work of a Civil Affairs Detachment in Afghanistan while he was

serving there in 2004.

The evenings success would not have been possible had it not been for the hard work of a very dedicated team of Legionnaires, ladies auxillary and Sons of the American Legion getting it done, demonstrating selfless service at its best!

Veterans Park and the Village Center Project

I would like to bring to everyone's attention the matter of the Village of Millerton's "Village Center Project". As of right now, during the January meeting members of Townscape and the Sadlon's who own the Movie House, will be there to present to the Legion what the current plan is as well as to seek the Legions input on the matter.

Over the last few years we have seen greater and greater participation from the community in our Memorial Day program. This past year alone the crowd around Veterans Park was estimated at over 500 people. Those who were there will remember that the immediate area around the park and on the streets was packed! The crowd even extended on to the lawn of Simmons Way as well!

I encourage you to write to the local paper and come out to future Village Board meetings as well as the January Legion meeting in order to express your thoughts on this matter. We need to continue to tell the Village Board that they must include the Legion in any future discussion on the project. If *we* do not defend our park, no one else will.

Fundraising Activities

As we approach the fall and the start of a new meeting season, once again the Post will be conducting it annual fundraising events. Enclosed with this newsletter are two books of raffle tickets.

Our current fund raiser will be the annual Christmas raffle. Tickets can be purchased at the Legion until the day of the drawing on December 15 at our annual Christmas Party. The first place drawing will be \$800, the second place drawing will be \$300 and the third place drawing will be \$100. Tickets can be purchased for \$1 each or a book of 6 for \$5.

In closing I would like to encourage our members to participate as much as they can in meetings, events, activities and other post functions. With greater participation we will be able to increase services provided to our veterans and community. - **ML**

POST OFFICERS FOR 07-08

Post Commander: Lee Garay
1st Vice Commander: John Boice
2nd Vice Commander: Robert Jenks
3rd Vice Commander: Dick Spencer
Post Treasure: Sid Byron
Adjutant: Stan Chase
Post Service Officer: Roger Bradley
Post Chaplin: Herbert Day
Post Historian: Sean Klay
Post Membership Chairman: Al Andrews
Sgt. At Arms: Frank Kelly
Homeland Defense Officer: Al Andrews

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2007

WHAT: POST CHRISTMAS PARTY
DATE & TIME: DECEMBER 15TH 2007 AT 12:00PM

WHAT: HOLIDAY HOSPITAL VISIT – CASTLE POINT
DATE & TIME: DECEMBER 16TH 2007

WHAT: REGULAR POST MEETING
DATE & TIME: DECEMBER 27TH 2007 AT 7:00PM

JANUARY 2008

WHAT: REGULAR POST MEETING
DATE & TIME: JANUARY 24TH 2007 AT 7:00PM

FEBRUARY 2008

WHAT: REGULAR POST MEETING
DATE & TIME: FEBRUARY 28TH 2007 AT 7:00PM

MARCH 2008

WHAT: REGULAR POST MEETING
DATE & TIME: MARCH 27TH 2007 AT 7:00PM

APRIL 2008

WHAT: REGULAR POST MEETING
DATE & TIME: APRIL 24TH 2007 AT 7:00PM

One of the members of the Kosovo WVA was Ahmet Daku who told Lee and Sid that he enjoyed the opportunity to exchange ideas with the American Legion which has helped them gain an understanding of how to further develop their fledgling organization.



A tale of Contrasts - A run down school house in the Kosovo Village of Buzovic

During their two week stay in Kosovo they also met with some of the 1,500 Soldiers of US KFOR (Kosovo Force) currently serving there. They were able to see first hand how the Soldiers serving in Kosovo are maintaining a ‘Safe and Secure Environment’ in Kosovo which is vital to ensuring that Final Status negotiations take place.



American soldiers handing out school supplies Kosovo

Lee and Sid joined various units on their daily patrols in the MNTF-E (Multi-National Task Force – East) area of responsibility. During the course of these combat security patrols they saw first hand how the people in Kosovo live. What struck both of them were the stark contrasts that exist. In an interview for “The Guardian East” the official news magazine for American Soldiers serving in Kosovo, Lee Garay said “It is kind of amazing that in one part of Kosovo you see a nice restaurant, and down the road there are places falling down. It was interesting just to see the different things.” They also got to interact with the local populace. “When we first flew into Pristina (the capital of Kosovo) we stopped and played a game of soccer with some children in a field. It was amazing to see that, and kids were happy just to have a soccer ball.” For both Lee and Sid it brought home to them just how much Americans have, and how much they take for granted. - ML

HOLIDAY VA HOSPITAL VISIT TO
CASTLE POINT

On December 16th the Legion is organizing a VA Hospital / Clinic Visit to Castle Point. For those who are interested in participating in this event please contact Robert Jenks at (845) 656-6466. - ML



Happy 232nd Birthday USMC!



Our Guest Speaker Brigadier General Guy Sands of the 353rd Civil Affairs Command



20' x 10' Garrison Flag – donated by the 29th Infantry Division to Post 178

IN NEXT MONTHS ISSUE

- The Final Word
- Local Servicemen assist those in need in Kosovo

U.S. Soldiers and Post 178 aid the children of Kosovo

- By Sean Klay - Post Historian

Over the last few months the Legion has assisted in Operation Hand-Up. Operation Hand-Up was started by local family members of those currently serving with the US Army's 29th Infantry Division in Kosovo. The Legion assisted in organizing, packaging and shipping the needed clothing and school supplies to Kosovo.

Over the course of the last year, businesses, families, organizations and individuals have helped contribute to the effort. Over a 1,000 notebooks, pencils, pens, erasers, pencil sharpeners, scissors, rulers were sent to Kosovo in order to help the children start the new school year on the right foot.

In addition to the school supplies hundreds of shoes, socks, used clothes and winter coats were sent as well. Many of the schools here are in a serious state of disrepair. Many of the buildings need windows replaced, and often have just plastic sheets over them to try and keep the heat in. Heat is generally provided by a single wood stove located in one of the classrooms, which is the sole source of heat in the building. It was not unusual for Soldiers visiting these schools to see students in winter coats and gloves while doing their school work.

Over the past few months Soldiers, during the course of their patrols, have been distributing these supplies to the students. Every time they hand out supplies, the teachers and school officials express their gratitude to the Soldiers for their help. However none of this would have been possible had it not been for the assistance of the Legion, families and members of the community. To each one of you, the Soldiers serving in Kosovo say THANK YOU! - ML



US Soldiers handing out needed School Supplies to the Children in one Kosovo village