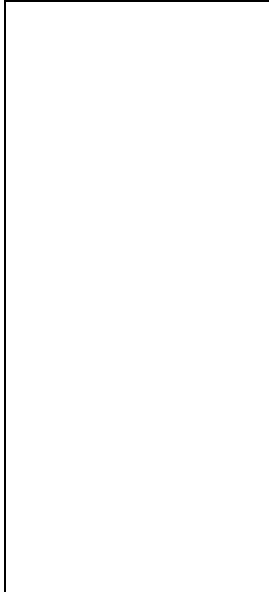
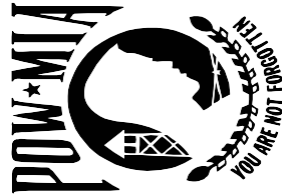


### FOR GOD AND COUNTRY



Woodhaven Post 118  
The American Legion  
89-02 91 Street  
WOODHAVEN NY 11421



Quarterly Newsletter by and for the Members of Woodhaven Post and Unit 118 of The American Legion



89-02 91<sup>st</sup> Street  
Woodhaven, NY, 11421  
(718)846-66-116

<b>Commander</b> John Lawless	<b>Vice Commanders</b> Paul Rudolph Hector Johnson	<b>Adjutant</b> David Valentin	<b>Service Officer</b> John Kavanagh
<b>Sergeant-at Arms:</b> Julio Gonzalez		<b>Editors:</b> David Valentin Denis Donovan	
<b>American Legion Auxiliary</b>			
<b>President</b> Loretta Phillips	<b>Vice President</b> Donna Marie Caltabiano	<b>Treasurer</b> Mary Farley	
<b>Sergeant-at-Arms:</b> Jennifer Farley		<b>Secretary:</b> Irene Valentin	

### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

Hopefully we have seen the last of winter for awhile. I want to thank the Ladies Auxiliary for putting together a great St. Patrick's Day luncheon on March 9th, 2014.

Due to a brutal winter, the Ladies did not have much time to plan, but they pulled it off.

Starting in April, 2014, we will open our doors to the Woodhaven Block Association to conduct Woodhaven Town Hall meetings. There will be six meetings in all: April 24th, 7PM, May 17<sup>th</sup> 1PM, June 21st, 10AM, Sept 8th, 7PM, Oct 18th, 12PM and Nov 15th, 12PM. The meetings are open to all and many of these meetings will be attended by our local elected representatives. This relationship advances are agenda of being a positive force in the Woodhaven Community.

Our first shipment has gone out to a new **adopted Platoon presently stationed in Afghanistan**. Our unit is a US Army Headquarters Platoon. The first email I received once the unit was set up in country requested coffee mugs. It seems they were going through the paper cups by the gross. We ordered the plastic mugs with the American Legion logo and were able to have them shipped directly to the unit overseas. With the assistance of the Woodhaven Block Association, we will be gathering further shipments of requested items for transport to our Platoon.

Our next community public event is the **Memorial Day service on May 26th**. We will be setting up our Memorial Garden with the help of the **Franklin K Lane HS Jr ROTC** the week before. We will also be hosting the students of **PS 60** at a special Memorial Day ceremony that Friday May 23rd, 2014.

Under the leadership of Post Adjutant David Valentin and the Ladies Auxiliary will be sending representatives to Boys State and Girls State this year. If anyone reading this is interested in getting involved in any of these endeavors, come down to a meeting. They are held on the first and third Monday of the month.

**John lawless, Commander**

## Americanism and Our Flag

For over 10 years, I have been teaching the children at **St. Thomas the Apostle School**, in Woodhaven, about our American Flag. Every **Flag Day, June 14**, we have a wonderful ceremony where the children sing songs, take the Pledge of Allegiance, recite poems and stories about our flag, and everyone goes home with a small American Flag. Every year, The American Legion Woodhaven Post and **Unit #118** have helped me with the costs, and most importantly, with their attendance at this truly inspiring ceremony. We are a very diverse community here in Woodhaven, but our children at St. Thomas are being taught that no matter where they or their parents come from, they are now Americans! I teach them love of our country, and especially love of our Flag. Can you imagine how wonderful it was to have a small child, new to our nation, tell me "**Mrs. Farley**, I can see you love the flag so much... I will too".

Please come to the next Flag Day ceremony to be inspired and motivated to continue our great American Legion projects! **Past Queens County Commander David Valentin** and his wife, **Irene** came to last year's ceremony and they can tell you how wonderful it makes you feel to see our children's love for our country and our Flag. Since everyone knows me as the "Flag" lady at St. Thomas, our new principal, **Mr. Joseph Carpenter** asked me at the beginning of the school year if I could obtain a flag to fly over our building on 87<sup>th</sup> Street. It was a coincidence that at the wonderful Woodhaven Residents Association annual dinner- where our Post and Unit were honored this year, I met our **Congresswoman, Nydia Velazquez**. When I told her about the need for a flag for our school, she graciously offered to obtain an American Flag for us- one that would be flown over the Capitol Building in Washington DC. That's was wonderful!

After months of conversations with the Congresswoman and her staff, and even with a government shut down, we were able not only to get an American Flag for our school, but a very special one - an American Flag that was flown over the United States Capitol in Washington. Now St. Thomas the Apostle will proudly fly that Flag over our school building!

Well, on Friday, January 31, 2014 at 10:00AM, we had the great honor to host **Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez** at St. Thomas. We began our ceremony with the **Pledge of Allegiance**, led by the Pre-K class. Imagine that, 4year-olds loudly proclaiming their love of our Flag. Then our 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders sang the National Anthem. There were tears on all our faces after that- small children knowing, and singing all the words to our beloved National Anthem- how inspiring!

I know the Congresswoman was inspired herself, because she did not use her prepared script when it came time for her to talk to the children. She looked up from her notes and spoke from her heart. She spoke about how important it is to honor the men and women who served and still serve in our military forces- we must never forget them and their families. She thanked The American Legion for their work in the Woodhaven community. She said we must honor America, a country that does not care where you came from, and offers everyone a chance at success. Even the daughter of a Puerto Rican farmer can one day become a Representative of the United States Congress. That is the story of our Country. The children were so quiet and when the Congresswoman finished, they yelled, clapped and cheered and surrounded her like a rock-star! We were presented the Flag and it will be flying glorious over our neighborhood school real soon! I want to thank all of our **American Legion Family** in Woodhaven for helping to teach our children to

love our American Flag. I will let you know when we will have our next Flag Day ceremony, so you can come and be honored and inspired. For God and Country.

**Mary Farley, 10<sup>th</sup> District President, NY**

C

## Children and Youth Programs

Since 1919, **The American Legion** has always been a strong supporter of children and youth, which seeks to improve the well-being of all children. So, **April** is also recognized as **Children & Youth Month**. This is time where we can focus on local programs that reach out to the children in our community.

**"Knowledge is Power"** and **The Woodhaven American Legion Family** will again take an active part and contribute to the **Queens County Committee's Children & Youth Annual Book Drive** Program, providing new reading books for the young children who visit the Jamaica Branch of the **Queens Public Library**. While there is no way of knowing what issues will face our youth tomorrow, our survival may depend on the quality of care, education and training that we, as parents and citizens provide for the young people of today. **Help us, in continuing this great program.**

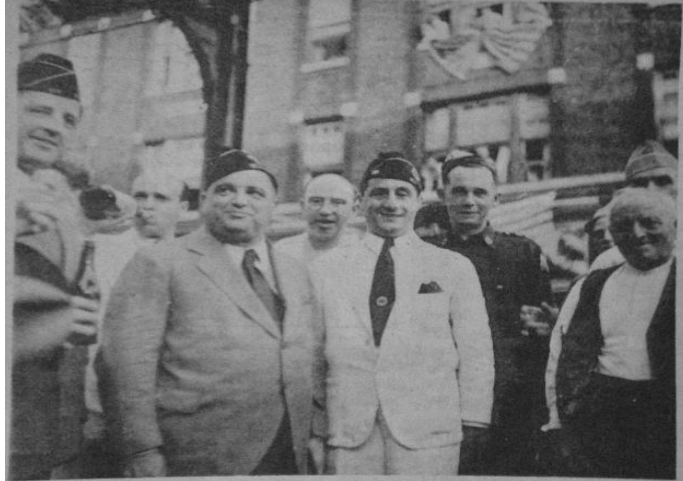
**David Valentin, Post Adjutant**

VISIT and "LIKE" us on our facebook page:  
**Woodhaven Post 118, The American Legion, Queens County, N.Y.**

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## Blast From the Past !

Thanks to *Jennifer Farley* for finding these photo treasures



MAYOR FIORELLA LaGUARDIA in Woodhaven in June, 1934, the year he was keynote speaker in Dexter Park at the Queens County American Legion's annual convention. With him on Jamaica Ave. at 86th St. was James Pasta (white suit), founder of Queens County American Legion and its Woodhaven Post. Hatless man at extreme right was Anthony Giorgio, brother of one-time Magistrate Frank Giorgio. Identities of others in picture are not known. (Photo submitted by James Pasta)



Woodhaven Post 118 - chartered in Aug. 1920, Original Post home when located on Woodhaven Blvd. Circa, 1930s

## Lets See .... Whats Happening Soon?



### Post Calendar

Meetings are held Downstairs, at the Back of the Building, Starting at 8:00pm sharp.

Day	Date	Time	Activity/ Event
<b>APRIL</b>			
Mon	7	8:00 pm	Post and Auxiliary Meeting
Mon	21	8:00 pm	Post and Auxiliary Meeting
<b>MAY</b>			
Mon	5	8:00 pm	Post and Auxiliary Meeting
Mon	19	8:00 pm	Post and Auxiliary Meeting
Fri	23	Morning	Memorial Day Presentation to Students of PS 60
Mon	26	10:00 am	Memorial Day Post Ceremony * *
<b>JUNE</b>			
Mon	2	8:00 pm	Post and Auxiliary Meeting
Sat	7	9:00 am	Queens County Convention
Sat	14	All Day	Flag Day
Mon	16	8:00 pm	Post and Auxiliary Meeting

## Memorial Day History

The custom of honoring ancestors by cleaning cemeteries and decorating graves is an ancient and worldwide tradition, but the specific origin of Memorial Day, or Decoration Day as it was first known, are unclear. In early rural America, this duty was usually performed in late summer and was an occasion for family reunions and picnics. After the Civil War, America's need for a secular, patriotic ceremony to honor its military dead became prominent, as monuments to fallen soldiers were erected and dedicated, and ceremonies centering on the decoration of soldiers' graves were held in towns and cities throughout the nation.

After World War I, the day expanded to honor those who have died in all America wars.

No less than 25 places have been named in connection with the origin of Memorial Day, and states observed the holiday on different dates. In 1971, Memorial Day became a national holiday by an act of Congress; it is now celebrated on the **last Monday in May**.

Since it all started with the Civil War, you might want to brush up on your knowledge of this event by visiting the [Library of Congress Civil War collection website](#).

### David Valentin, Post Adjutant

#### Who's Behind the Scene at 118 ?

This Whiz Bang edition will highlight our recent Past Adjutant and Post webmaster **Denis Donovan**.

Denis enlisted in the US Air Force on SEPT 1958, as an Air Policeman. He served 1963-67 as a Special Agent, OSI during the Vietnam conflict. Later was assigned as an Emergency Actions NCO and Command Control Manager in 1980. Senior Master Sergeant **Denis Donovan** received the Vietnam Campaign ribbon with 5 Stars, two Air Force Commendation Medals and upon retirement the Meritorious Service Medal in 1983. Denis joined **The American Legion** in 2003 and was awarded - **Queens County Legionnaire of the Year** in 2012. With his wife Maggie, Denis enjoys working on new computer programs and the internet and from home, he has brought back and been the lead editor of The Whiz Bang newsletter, Post website and **facebook** page, for some time now.

**Thanks Denis, for what you do, Behind the Scene at 118.** VISIT and "LIKE" *Woodhaven Post 118, The American Legion, Queens County, N.Y*

# 118 Auxiliary Unit's Saint Patrick's Day Luncheon another Success

