



DECEMBER 2025 ★ 631.765.2276

★ ★ COMMANDER'S REPORT ★ ★

You can't win if you are not in. So come on down to the Legion on any Friday night to socialize and maybe win a prize.

As we close out another year together, I want to extend my warmest wishes to all the members of Post 803 and our entire local community. May you enjoy a joyous, Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year. Thank you for your continued support, dedication, and service. May the coming year bring peace, hope, and blessings to you and your families.

For God and Country
David E. DeFriest,
Commander,
American Legion Post 803
www.post803.com
gtgpost803@gmail.com



CHRISTMAS POTLUCK DINNER

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12TH
6:30 P.M.**

Bring a Main Dish, Casserole, Salad,
Appetizer or Dessert and
Celebrate The Holidays with Your
American Legion Family

SNACKS WITH SANTA



MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025 • 4 - 6 PM

AT THE SOUTHOLD AMERICAN LEGION

51655 MAIN ROAD, SOUTHOLD

HOSTED BY AMERICAN
LEGION AUXILIARY
SOUTHOLD POST 803

FREE AND OPEN TO ALL.

SNACKS.
STORY TIME.
CRAFTS
& SANTA !!



★★ MEMBERSHIP ★★



Post Status: We currently have (134/185 = 72.4%) paid up members for the 2026 membership year. Come on all of you big strong men send in your dues money again. It's almost the end of the year, pay your dues and have a beer. We have two transfers and two new members who have joined Post 803. Welcome to John Canavan, Tom Richter, Andrew Nadeau and Shawn Fitzgerald. We welcome you one and all. Enjoy the Holidays.

Veterans, come join us we could use the help.

Members are welcome: To contact the Post, use P.O. Box 591, Attn. Membership
Legion Auxiliary Attn: Donna St Pierre • Sons of Legion Attn: Gary Iorio

Post 803 Legionnaire Membership Requirements: To join Post 803, for Legionnaires you need to submit an American Legion Membership application, a copy of your DD-214 or discharge, and \$57 for annual dues. All membership correspondence should be sent to Post 803, Attn. Membership, and P.O. Box 591, Southold, NY 11971. Thanks for supporting Post 803.

Bob Cochran, *Membership Chairman*, 631.765.5828

VETERANS BENEFITS "CORNER"

THE WEIRD, BUT TRUE STORY BEHIND THE VIETNAM 'TOILET BOMB' DROP

Wars are full of strange stories, and some of them are unexpected and oddly hilarious. Like that time when the U.S. Navy dropped a literal toilet bomb over North Vietnam.



**GET THE STORY HERE... SCAN QR
CODE OR TYPE IN LINK BELOW**



https://veteranlife.com/military-history/vietnam-toilet-bomb?utm_source=Military+Audience&utm_campaign=25da6644d6EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_04_20_08_47_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_be000a36a3-25da6644d6-279765101

David Chiaro – keyarrow@hotmail.com

A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE IN THE HURTGEN FOREST BRIDGING ENEMIES TO SAVE LIVES



The Hurtgen Forest, known for its brutal World War II battles, holds a remarkable story of compassion and courage that outshines the grim realities of war. On Christmas Eve, amidst the chaos, Elizabeth and her 12-year-old son, Fritz, risked their safety to save American soldiers, an act of kindness remembered as a Christmas miracle.

Nestled deep in the dense Hurtgen Forest, Elizabeth and Fritz lived humbly in a small cabin. Despite harsh winters and growing wartime tensions, the approaching Christmas offered a glimmer of hope and warmth amidst uncertainty.

On a brutally cold Christmas Eve, Elizabeth was tending to her chores when she heard a knock. She opened the door to find two American soldiers carrying a gravely wounded third.

Despite the potential danger these men represented, she welcomed them into her cabin, her heart racing at what could happen next.

As Elizabeth tended to the soldiers' wounds, there was another knock. Three lost German soldiers, desperate for shelter from the cold, stood at her door. Despite her fear, Elizabeth's instincts prevailed. She stepped outside, closing the door to shield the Americans from view.

In the freezing air, Elizabeth boldly offered the German soldiers' shelter if they left their weapons outside. They agreed. She then asked the Americans to do the same for safety, and they complied. This negotiation highlighted Elizabeth's quick thinking and desire for peace.

Once the Germans entered, tension filled the room. Yet hope lingered in the air. Elizabeth prepared a comforting meal of chicken and potatoes, a rare treat amidst wartime scarcity. As they shared dinner, one of the German soldiers with medical training assisted in caring for the injured American. That evening, the lines that divided them blurred, and gradually, humanity shone through the cloud of conflict.

After dinner, the six soldiers stepped outside to admire the starry sky, enjoying a brief respite from the chaos of war. When they returned indoors, they huddled together for warmth, sharing stories and laughter. It was a unique moment of fellowship, where enemies briefly became companions, if only for one night. The cabin, which often felt isolated, had become a sanctuary of shared humanity.

As dawn broke over the snowy expanse, the time to part ways had arrived. One German soldier, sensing the imminent danger for the Americans, provided them with a map and compass. He warned them of potential threats along their route, effectively changing their chances of survival. This unexpected kindness illustrated how compassion can exist even during conflict.

Elizabeth's bravery did more than save lives; it created a moment of shared humanity that challenged the boundaries of war. Her selfless actions remain a poignant reminder that kindness can exist even in the darkest circumstances. The story of that Christmas Eve in the Hurtgen Forest highlights the power of compassion in the face of adversity.

In a divided world, Elizabeth's brave decision to shelter enemies is a beacon of kindness, showing that even in darkness, compassion can bridge divides and foster understanding. This Christmas, let us remember the Hurtgen Forest miracle and embody its spirit of compassion throughout the coming year!

John Christina,
Historian



1972: OPERATION LINEBACKER II IN NORTH VIETNAM

President Richard Nixon ordered the bombings to begin on Dec. 18 after North Vietnamese delegates walked out on peace talks. Nicknamed the "11 Days of Christmas," the operation consisted of 11 successive days of raids by B-52 Stratofortress bombers flown in from Andersen Air Force Base on Guam. The only day that both sides got a reprieve was Christmas, when troops were given a 36-hour break to celebrate.



★ ★ SONS OF THE LEGION ★ ★



December is once again upon us, so first may I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Once again, I encourage all our SAL members, new and old to join us for any of the Legion events.

December 12 at 6:30 will be a potluck dinner at the legion, the bar will be open so bring your favorite dish or just pick up a pizza and join us for a Christmas toast!

I leave you with a quote from President Roosevelt.

"Yesterday, December 7, 1941- a date which will live in infamy - the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan."

Never forget our servicemen who never returned.
Gary Iorio, SAL Commander



We extend our Warmest Birthday Wishes to all our Fellow Legionnaires Celebrating in December!

Martin J Hughes	12/5
Dianne M Wamsley	12/5
Kevin Macdonald	12/7
Joseph F Best	12/7
William J Sheehan	12/9
Sydney Sanders	12/10
Michael Owen	12/13
Salvatore Conti	12/14
Corey J Best	12/19
Carlisle E Cochran Jr	12/19
Henry S Kozen	12/22
Joseph M Stadler	12/23
Paul M Basile	12/29
Daniel S Melhado	12/31

If you are not listed please add your Birthday when you send in your membership dues.

★★ LEGION AUXILIARY POST 803 ★★

December is here! Mark your calendar for the Auxiliary "Snacks with Santa" Event on Monday, December 8th from 4-6PM. Bring your little ones to see Santa, Mrs. Claus and Elf Bob. Snacks, crafts, and a story are all part of the fun!

We will be decorating the Legion Hall for the holidays on Friday, December 5th. Come down, lend a hand, and play the Queen of Hearts raffle. The Banner Program pick-up will also be taking place that night, starting at 6PM.

The Annual Legion Potluck Holiday Christmas Party will be on Friday, December 12th. Bring a dish and take part in this wonderful get-together.

The Auxiliary Holiday Craft Fair was a great success. Thanks go to Denise and her committee for all their hard work. Thank you to Margie, Donna, and Charlotte for their delicious food, and to Joan Cear for running the kitchen. Thank you, Linda, for donating the Thanksgiving raffle basket, and for all our ladies who sold the raffle tickets. Thanks to Dave, Greg, and all who helped with set up. Thanks also to the vendors for donating raffle prizes, and to Charlie Manwaring for the hot dog holders! And as always, thank you to the community for once again supporting us!

Veterans Day brought a solemn ceremony at the Legion, followed by a delicious breakfast buffet sponsored by the Rotary. Afterward the Auxiliary distributed 118 "thank you" meals of frozen turkey and ham with fixings to our veterans. Joan Cear coordinated this event with Justin Berbig of the LI Cares Veterans Program. Many thanks to LI Cares and their staff, and also to the NJROTC cadets who braved the cold to help us distribute the meals.

In the spirit of Christmas the Auxiliary again donated to the VA's Hero Hunger Help Project and Secret Soldier Santa. Linda Ruland and Joan Cear delivered the gift cards for us. We also participated in Wreaths Across America and encourage everyone to get involved in these worthwhile programs.

In the cold month of January we have changed our meeting time to Saturday, January 10th, at 10:00AM. Best Wishes to all for a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays, with peace and good health in the coming year!

Joan Cochran, President



★★ LOWE'S VETERANS DONATION ★★

The American Legion Post 803 recently received a generous donation of vital building materials and labor from the **Lowe's in Riverhead and its committed employees**. This support was instrumental in making the necessary fence replacement to include our new dumpster enclosure project.

Lowe's gives all veterans **10% discount on purchases** and provides a special parking area just for veterans. On **Memorial Day** each year all **Lowe's** stores across the nation, set up a memorial to honor the past & present veterans. These contributions highlight **the America we all Love!**

Many thanks to all who contributed to this effort! Thank You Mr. John Oswald for making this happen! Thank You **LOWE'S**

"2026" We celebrate our Nations 250th Anniversary. Happy Birthday America!



★ WHAT'S HAPPENING ★

WE NEED TO STRATEGIZE FOR "2026".

Starting in January we need to discuss the 4th of July event and **Post-Modern Upgrades**.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA:

A fulfilling experience for our Post members to participate in. It will be held on **Saturday, December 13th at Calverton Cemetery**. Let's honor the memories of our fallen comrades as a Post. **Please sign up by contacting John.**
Cell phone # 516.924.3635.

4th of JULY "2026" marks the 250th Anniversary of our Nation! We are truly fortunate to witness this historic event. It's also a great opportunity to secure sponsors for the upgrade and the maintenance our Post needs. We are working together with our Town on the planning. The event's theme will be, **"HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA!"** A committee is needed!
Please call John. Cell phone # 516.924.3635

Reminder! Our Christmas Pot-Luck Dinner is on **Friday, December 12th at 6.30pm.**

If the Post offered a **"Card NIGHT"** once or twice per month would you attend? Please respond to Ctt3@optonline.net Yes or No It could be Spades, Hearts, Poker, Pinnacle or ????



Getting into the SPIRIT at Halloween Bingo!



American Legion Post 803

51655 Main Road, Southold, NY 11971

**WE START SELLING
SHEETS AT 6 PM
GAMES BEGIN AT 7 PM,
ENDING BY 9:15-9:30 PM**

*Cash prizes for Thursday Night BINGO
will be determined by sales and
attendance, which we are
anticipating will be considerably
higher than Tuesday afternoon bingo.*

**ALL WELCOME
CASH ONLY**

Players can bring in food and drink,
but no alcohol. Legion bar is closed.
For questions, call Earl at 516.901.3228.

*Tuesday afternoon bingo is still on-going
and remains the same.*

★ ★ CHAPLAIN'S REPORT ★ ★

REST IN PEACE Our dear friend and comrade, John Joseph Van Bourgondien, a US Air Force veteran, Passed on November 2nd at the age of 96. John was a long time member of our Post who was always on deck when we needed him. An outstanding man and a true gentleman whose great smile and good cheer will always be remembered. He was a member of our wake service detail for many years and I was always moved by his kindness. John was a true American hero who will be dearly missed. May his soul rest in peace. The American Legion Wake Service was held on November 9th at the Defriest Grattan Funeral home. Special thanks to our Post Commander, Dave DeFriest, for his heartfelt eulogy and our men for an excellent turnout.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK - "O God, we lift up all those who are facing illness today. We ask that you bring healing comfort and peace to their bodies. Calm their fears and let them feel the healing power of Your love." Amen.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." - Matthew 5:9

Jeff Chagnon - Post Chaplain 631.456.3258



*Have you ever used a business that
placed an ad in our Reporter?
Please make sure to tell them
that you saw their ad in the
Southold American Legion Post's
Reporter publication!*

HACCP Compliant
Est. 1928

Barbara Grigonis
MARKET MANAGER



LIVE • FRESH • FROZEN - Long Island's Quality Seafood Source
Main Road • Cutchogue New York 11935 • **631-734-7770** • Fax 631-734-7462
BraunSeafood.com

Emily F. Franchina, Esq.
efranchina@elderlawflg.com

FRANCHINA
LAW GROUP, LLC

ELDER LAW • WILLS • TRUSTS • ESTATES • MEDICAID

631.765.8787
55000 Main Road, West Wing, Southold NY 11971

EAST END HOME CARE, INC.

Licensed & Insured
HHA, PCA and Skilled Nursing

Holly Vescovi
Director

P.O. Box 694
Southold, NY 11971
ph: 631-876-5295
fax: 631-876-5296
eehc@optimum.net



**LONG ISLAND
POOL CARE**

Bill Altintoprak

50000 Main Road ■ Southold, NY 11971

631.765.8285

Li.Poolcare@gmail.com



LUBE SHOP

SOUTHOLD AUTOMOTIVE CORP.

DBA AUTO REPAIR OF SOUTHOLD

NEW CAR WARRANTIES MAINTAINED HERE

Foreign & Domestic Car & Light Truck Service

N.Y. State Inspection Sta.

Donald Tonyes

David Smith

54360 Main Road, Southold, New York 11971

(631) 765-5156
NIGHT (631) 774-0417
FAX (631) 765-3615

Cindy Succoso

Real Estate Salesperson

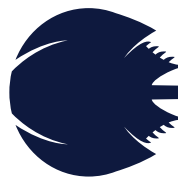
 **DouglasElliman**

516-635-6065

Proud Member of The Rotary Club of Southold



Please Support Our Advertisers as They Support Our Post



The Ink Spot

northforkprinting.com

631.765.3625



175 Boisseau Avenue | P.O. Box 665
Southold, New York 11971

theinkspot@northforkprinting.com



**FULL-SERVICE
MARINA**

Family owned and inspiring boaters since 1946



poemarine.com | 631-765-2445  **YAMAHA**



34890 COUNTY RD. 48
PECONIC, NEW YORK 11958

- Tree Removal
- Stump Removal & Grinding
- Land Clearing
- New Plantings
- Property & Lawn Maintenance
- Pesticide Control

631.734.6279



**Jessie & Scott Bennett
Beacon Light Foundation**



Alice and Harold Culver are dedicating this ad for Honor Flight.
For more information on Honor Flight please visit their
website or call Virginia Bennett at 631-702-2423.



WE BRING THE SHINE TO YOU

CERAMIC COATING | PAINT PROTECTION FILM | WINDOW TINT
VINYL WRAP | FULL DETAIL

(631) 734-8899
Info@northforkdetailing.com

22355 County Rd 48 Unit 23
Cutchogue, NY 11935

Paulette Ofrias

Southold Pharmacy

"More than a Drug Store"

631-765-3434 • Fax: 631-765-4395
53895 Main Street • PO Box 1177
Southold, NY 11971
www.southoldpharmacy.com



HEATING + COOLING

Serving the East End for over 35 years



(631) 298-5527

North Fork | South Fork | Shelter Island
www.kolbmechanical.com

Please Support Our Advertisers as They Support Our Post

Proud To Support The Southold American Legion



NorthForkBuilder.com

Proud to Support Our Friends
At The Southold American Legion

97 YEARS **MULLEN MOTORS**

DODGE RAM Jeep CHRYSLER

Earning Your Trust Every Day Since 1927



631.765.1061

Feather Hill Village • 53345 Main Road
PO Box 337 • Southold, NY 11971
www.satnickjewelers.com



RegenBenzMacKenzie
Regen, Benz & MacKenzie, C.P.A.'S, P.C.
Certified Public Accountants

240 BECKWITH AVENUE • SOUTHOLD, NEW YORK 11971
PHONE 631.765.1118 • FAX 631.765.1755

www.rbmcpas.com



**Suffolk
Security
Systems**

Paul J Romanelli
President

(631) 765-5262

paul@suffolksecurity.com

50300 Main Road
PO Box 1355
Southold NY 11971

"Security is Our Middle Name"



**DeFriest-Grattan
Funeral Homes**

Joseph S. Grattan Joseph S. Grattan, Jr.
(631) 765-3850

Heating Oil ★ Kerosene ★ On & Off Road Diesel ★ Gasoline

Proud To Support The Southold American Legion



Bob Ghosio, Owner

JarzombekEnergy.com

Electrical Construction
Generator Sales and service
Solar and Battery Power Systems



PECONIC POWER SYSTEMS

GENERAC
PWRCELL

Phone: (631)734-5026
Website: PeconicPowerSys.com
Email: PeconicPowerSys@gmail.com





THOMAS X. HOEG D.D.S.
JAMES E. HOEG D.D.S.

5700 Route 48
Mattituck, N.Y. 11952

631-298-4667

Holly Vescovi
PRESIDENT

Heather Newman
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

**AT HOME SERVICES FOR
INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.**

*Companions • 24hr Live-Ins • F.T. & P.T.
Assistance with all Daily Living Activities
Helping hands just a call away.*



SOUTHOLD
(631) 765-CARE (2273) • (631) 477-3095

FAX: 631.876.5296

email: athomeservices@optonline.net
www.athomeeldercare.com
LICENSED • BONDED • FULLY INSURED

Planting
Tree Cabling
Tree Removal
Pruning /Trimming
Stump Grinding/Removal
Deep Root Feeding
Emergency Services
Tree Relocation
Land Clearing



Ian Zuhoski
OWNER

mottstree@gmail.com
27400 CR 48 Peconic NY
631.734.5569 fax 631.734.8633



Tom Williams
General Manager

Riverhead Motors
1419-23 Old Country Road
Riverhead, NY 11901

Direct 631.574.6702
Fax 631.727.2279
twilliams@riverheadmotors.com

HONORING SERVICE WITH EVERY MILE

69 YEARS & 3 GENERATIONS OF LUCAS'
Serving Those Who Served

Call or stop by today &
experience the Lucas Ford
difference—built on trust,
care & respect.



LUCAS



lucasford.com
631.765.9200

Adolescent, Children & Adult Counseling Services
EMDR THERAPIST



MaryAnn Fleischman, MSW, LCSW-R
PO Box 278
Cutchogue, New York 11935-0278
(631) 987-0360 Fax (631) 734-7430

EAST END NEPHROLOGY, P.C.
SHARMINI JAYAMAHA, M.D.

Board Certified
Internal Medicine & Nephrology

222 Manor Place, Suite 102
Greenport, NY 11944
Office: (631) 477-1755
Fax: (631) 477-1754

632 Roanoke Avenue
Riverhead, NY 11901
Office: (631) 208-8270
Fax: (631) 208-8271



Edward Martin
Sales Consultant

Riverhead Ford
1419 Old Country Road
Riverhead, NY 11901

Phone 631.727.2200 ext.216
Cell 631.375.5017
Fax 631.727.6132
emartin@riverheadmotors.com

★★DECEMBER & JANUARY EVENTS★★

12/02 Tues.	Tuesday Day BINGO - Doors Open at 12 noon and Games start at 12:30pm
12/04 Thu.	Night BINGO - Doors Open at 6:00pm and Games start at 7pm
12/05 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm
12/05 Fri.	Legion Holiday Decorating 6:30pm
12/05 Fri.	Southold Town Salutes Banner – Sponsors pick up their banners 6-8pm
12/08 Mon.	Snacks with Santa 4-6pm
12/09 Tues.	Tuesday Day BINGO - Doors Open at 12 noon and Games start at 12:30pm
12/09 Tue.	Executive and Business Meeting: Bar 6:00pm, Dinner 6:30pm, Meeting 7:00pm
12/11 Thu.	Night BINGO - Doors Open at 6:00pm and Games start at 7pm
12/12 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm
12/12 Fri.	Pot Luck Christmas Party 6:30pm Bring a dish to share. All welcome.
12/12 Fri.	Southold Town Salutes Banner – Sponsors pick up their banners 6-9pm
12/16 Tues.	Tuesday Day BINGO - Doors Open at 12 noon and Games start at 12:30pm
12/18 Thu.	Night BINGO - Doors Open at 6:00pm and Games start at 7pm
12/19 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm
12/25 Thu.	Christmas
12/26 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm
01/01 Thu.	New Years Day
01/06 Tues.	Tuesday Day BINGO - Doors Open at 12 noon and Games start at 12:30pm
01/08 Thu.	Night BINGO - Doors Open at 6:00pm and Games start at 7pm
01/09 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm
01/09 Fri.	Holiday Undecorating of the Legion 6:30pm
01/10 Sat.	Auxiliary Meeting 10am (Note the new time/date for January)
01/13 Tue.	Executive and Business Meeting: Bar 6:00pm, Dinner 6:30pm, Meeting 7:00pm
01/13 Tues.	Tuesday Day BINGO - Doors Open at 12 noon and Games start at 12:30pm
01/15 Thu.	Night BINGO - Doors Open at 6:00pm and Games start at 7pm
01/16 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm
01/20 Tues.	Tuesday Day BINGO - Doors Open at 12 noon and Games start at 12:30pm
01/22 Thu.	Night BINGO - Doors Open at 6:00pm and Games start at 7pm
01/23 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm
01/27 Tues.	Tuesday Day BINGO - Doors Open at 12 noon and Games start at 12:30pm
01/29 Thu.	Night BINGO - Doors Open at 6:00pm and Games start at 7pm
01/30 Fri.	Bar is Open 6:30pm and Queen of Hearts Drawing 8pm

MADE IN AMERICA

★★LEGION OFFICERS★★

Commander - Dave DeFriest
1st Vice Commander - Jeff Chagnon
2nd Vice Commander - David Wilburn
Past Commander - Charles Sanders
Adjutant - Bob Bittner
Finance Officer - Jim Cowan
1st Finance Assistant - Don Jayamaha
2nd Finance Assistant - Vacant
Sergeant at Arms - Neil Rochford
Chaplain - Jeff Chagnon
Post Historian - John Christina
Membership Chair - Bob Cochran

★★SAL OFFICERS★★

Commander - Gary Iorio
1st Vice - Rich Feely
2nd Vice - Michael Anasagasti
Adjutant - Jerry Murtha
Treasurer - Brian Hughes
Sergeant at Arms - Jonathan Bittner
Chaplain - Daniel Kaelin

★★AUXILIARY OFFICERS★★

President - Joan Cochran
1st Vice Pres - Denise Thilberg Schlacter
2nd Vice Pres - Jeanette Cooper
Treasurer - Patricia Burns
Recording Sec. - Priscilla Devine

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

Griswold Terry Glover
 Post 803
 The American Legion
 P.O. Box 591
 Southold, NY 11971



NonProfit Org
 US Postage
 PAID
 Southold, NY
 Permit No. 32