American Legion Post 1995

August 11th, 2025

DEFENDER NEWSLETTER

Monthly Military Quote

"Never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake." Napolean Bonaparte

Military Photo of the Month



Brookgreen Gardens/Myrtle Beach South Carolina



Vietnam Woman's Memorial

The photo was taken at Brookgreen Gardens (https://www.brookgreen.org) south of Myrtle Beach. It is a bronze sculpture called the "Pledge Allegiance". It depicts children raising the U.S. flag, saluting and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. The sculpturer, Glenna Goodacre, also created the sculpture at the Vietnam Woman's Memorial on the Mall in Washington. Brookgreen is a beautiful place to visit if in the Myrtle Beach area, expect to spend the entire day there with good walking shoes.

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Commander's Corner

17th District Organization Meeting – On Sunday, July 19th, the Stormin' 17th District got its act together at Post 180 in Vienna. District officers were sworn in, including your Post Commander as Vice Commander for a third term. Drafts of the District calendar and committee assignments were circulated for coordination. Incoming District Commander Henry Dorton laid out his goals for the Legion Year of 2026-27. He wants us to achieve 100% turn in of Consolidated Post Reports (CPRs), surpass our recruiting and retention targets, and share information better so Posts can support each other's activities and initiatives. This has already begun.

District Vice Commanders Meeting – Following the organization meeting, Commander Dorton convened the Vice Commanders at Post 176 on July 30th. We finalized the Stormin'17th District calendar resolving a schedule conflict with a national meeting in October. The calendar will be published later in the newsletter. Each Vice Commander was assigned four advisory posts. In favor of an outside view of each post, I was reassigned from our post and Vice Commander Kevin Gaddis (Post 176) will be invited to meet with us in the fall.

Virginia Primary Election – On Tuesday, August 4th I voted in the Virginia primary election. I always vote in the primaries because your vote then counts six times your vote in the general election. Maybe it will be more this year! After I fill in my ballot and slide it into the counting machine, I always check one detail. At the top of the screen, once it shows my vote was counted, it tallies how many ballots were read by that machine. That day at around 1 PM my machine had tallied 35 votes! Only 35! I was mildly surprised. Turnout in the primaries in non-presidential years is always low, but this was an all-time low. As I thanked the poll worker for his service to the community, I asked him if things were slow. He said, "Very slow." The Legion is never partisan, but we always encourage turnout. Veterans are a minority group, but we can have serious influence if we always vote. Be ready for November 3rd and make our voices heard.

American Legion National Convention – The 107th National Convention will be held in Louisville Kentucky, "home of fast women and beautiful horses" as the politician once said. Our Post will be represented by Randy Young, Delegate, Steve Hunter, Alternate, and Chris Torelli, at-large party animal. I will be attending for the first time in four years as a member of the national Americanism Committee. Next month I will report back to you on what was resolved and who our National Commander will be. You can follow along by going online to "Legion.org. "

America 250 and Virginia 250 – This will be a repeat topic in my column every month as we continue our years long remembrance of the Glorious Revolution. I recently read an article in Imprimis, a monthly pamphlet from Hillsdale College, who sponsors our Oratorical Contest national championships. The topic was "How to think about the American Revolution" by Christopher Flannery. My goal is to encourage you all to think about it in your own way. Find a topic about those days and study what interests you. I could be a hero like Washington or Franklin, or a battle like when Washington crossed the Delaware to

attack the Hessians at Trenton. Virginia has so much to offer that you can tour locally. Just do not be passive, be an active modern-day patriot learning about the "why" of the struggle. It will inspire you. Learn more about how to get involved at **america250.org**.

Fairfax 250

Fairfax County is sponsoring numerous events throughout the county as part of the America 250 celebration. Some are 1-day only events and some are recurring. Check out the Fairfax 250 events calendar (Fairfax County, Virginia America 250th Events and Attractions) for upcoming events that may interest you.

Virginia 250

There are many events across the Commonwealth as part of the America 250 celebration. Check for upcoming events of the Virginia 250 event calendar (Events - Virginia American Revolution 250 Commemoration - VA250).

America 250

America 250 events may be searched for by month and state at Calendar - America250.

BE the ONE – Larry Bishop a Legionnaire from New Jersey had recently attended Be the One training. He got a call from a veteran and realized the man was in distress. Larry pulled out the Columbia Lighthouse questionnaire and started asking the questions. When the caller admitted he was thinking of taking his life Larry went over to the man's house and learned he was truly in crisis. He got the man some help and that Vet is doing better now. So, LISTEN when a Veterans needs to talk. Remember: dial 988 then #1 to ask for help for yourself or another veteran.

Coast Guard Birthday – August 4th at the Centreville Exchange

The local Coast Guard Exchange held a special birthday celebration on August 4th . The day long event featured special give-aways, free Mission BBQ sandwiches, a USO van, a representatives from the VA's VETcenter, Defense Health Agency (DHA), and Coast Guard's Ombusman NCR office. The Post Adjutant attended to show the Legion flag,

promote our youth programs, and to recruit new members. While we did not get any confirmed new members, we do have some interested in joining.



Karen and Steve Hunter in front of the CGX

Get Out the Vote

The next general election is scheduled for the 3rd of November . On the ballot will be U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, some local offices, and three proposed Virginia constitutional amendments. In-person early voting runs from 18 September through 31 October. For additional information check the Fairfax County Office of Elections website at Office of Elections | Elections.

National Membership Impact Report for July 2026
https://www.legion.org/about/reports/membership-impact

News You Can Use

Additional Travel Assistance for Veterans and Wounded Veterans

For veterans and wounded warriors who might need additional assistance while traveling, the TSA Cares program provides personalized support through the screening process.

The program is designed to help travelers with disabilities, injuries, medical conditions, or other circumstances requiring additional support. If interested, contact the TSA at least 72 hours prior to travel by visiting TSA Cares. (Source: Thanks to Post 176 – Springfield)

The National Resource Directory (NRD)

The NRD connects service members, veterans, family members, and caregivers to vetted resources that support their recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration or transition.
NationalResourceDirectory.gov

What Are Veterans' Job Prospects After They Serve?

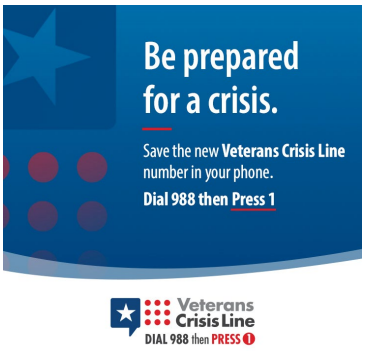
Learn more with data from the Census Bureau and DoW with the information is for you or another. https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2025/01/veterans-employment-outcomes.html?utm_campaign=20250115aco&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery (Source Census Bureau, 14 January 2025)

Rand Epstein Family Veterans Policy Research Institute
https://www.rand.org/education-and-labor/centers/veterans-policy-research.html

The Veterans Connect Program

The Veterans Connect program recruits veteran volunteer drivers to provide transportation to elderly Veterans in Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties. Volunteer drivers, Veterans, and military supporters alike, use their own vehicles to offer "*more than just a ride*" to nearby veterans in need. The program works closely with NV Rides and many local service organizations who receive ride requests from local Veterans. Far too many Veterans in Northern Virginia need help with rides to access healthcare, food banks/grocery stores, and other important appointments. With the help of volunteer rivers, we can combat this growing transportation crisis and help those veterans most in need.

learn more, please contact: **Luke Frazza** - Program Outreach Manager **lfrazza@datatrans.org** or **703-819-3459.**



Learn more here: https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help-now/military-crisis-line/

Military History

America's Forgotten Doughboys: The 332nd Infantry Destroyed an Empire
https://www.military.com/daily-news/investigations-and-features/2026/01/06/americas-forgotten-doughboys-332nd-infantry-destroyed-empire-and-helped-win-wwi-italy.html?ESRC=army_260120.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=army&utm_campaign=20260120

National Museum of the U.S. Army

Check out the National Museum of the U.S. Army (National Museum of the United States Army)

Details on upcoming events and registration is available on the Museum events page (National Museum of the United States Army)

Some upcoming events of interest:

19 August, 12:00pm – 12:45pm: History Talk, "Tails of Valor: Animals in the U.S. Army"; in person at the museum and Virtual/Zoom; registration required.

20 August, 10:00am – 2:00pm: Call to Connect, **VA Claims Day**, counselors from the Virginia Department of Veterans Services are available to advise veterans on current federal, state and local veterans' programs, entitlements and referral services; in person at the museum; registration is required.

20 August, 7:00pm – 8:00pm: Book Talk, "The Airborne Mafia: Paratroopers Who Shaped America's Cold War Army; Virtual/Zoom; registration required.

1 September, 7:00pm – 8:00pm: Battle Brief: "The Rise and Fall of Horatio Gates", Virtual/Zoom; registration required.

Membership Update

Department membership reports for 2027 have not yet started as we await our membership goals set by National for each post. However, Mylegion shows that we have 108 members who are either Paid Up For Life (PUFL) or have renewed. As of now it is about evenly divided between the two. Our membership goal last year was 196 members, and we ended up with 206. The goal for 2027 will increase, but I am unsure at this time whether the increase will be based on last year's goal or our final number.

I thank all those who have renewed for 2027 already. New cards have been mailed to all renewals as of 8 August 2026. If you have not renewed, you may renew by sending back the renewal letter National sent out or going online at Renew (mylegion.org) to renew. It is your choice, but doing so online is quick, simple, and saves you the cost of a stamp and you get your new membership card a bit faster. Should you have any questions about your membership, please call or email the post's adjutant/membership chairperson.

Multi-Year Memberships Are Now Available - The Legion's three-year renewal option is becoming more popular. The benefit of renewing it for three years and paying in advance is that you avoid any dues increases over the next three years and getting renewal notifications. While there is no discount for the multi-year membership, you are locked in at the current dues amount, even if the fee increases during this time. For details on this

new option visit this Legion website: https://www.legion.org/membership/260621/american-legion-multiyear-membership-here .

PUFL Memberships - PLFL members pay a one-time fee for a lifetime American Legion membership. You never have to pay yearly dues and future increases, which will come over the years. For those considering getting a Paid Up For Life membership, an added incentive would be a $100 discount, but you must call National and request availability of it. The kicker, however, is that you must pay all of it with a credit card or check in a single payment. This option is not available with their payment plan. If interested in a PULF membership, call 1-800-433-3318.

Final Thought:

"What's right about America is that although we have a mess of problems, we have great capacity – intellect and resources – to do something about them." Henry Ford, ~ 1922-1924

Free Flags - The Post has a considerable number of lightly used U.S. flags of assorted sizes from 3''x 5" to 5'x 9'-5" available to any Post member who needs to replace their house flag. All you need to do is let the Adjutant know what size you need and attend the next meeting after your request. These flags were turned in for retirement by community members for our annual flag retirement ceremony this past November and previous years, however due to their good condition they are not yet ready for retirement. The Post's collection (not giveaways) also includes some unique flags such as 45- and 48-star flags (possible museum donations), and copies of the Grand Union, Bennington, and Betsy Ross flags.

Comments/Submissions to the Editor - Comments about this newsletter relative to its contents and/or presentation style are always welcomed. We also encourage submissions from Post members relative to anything related to the American Legion and/or what we as Legionnaires are doing to serve our communities. If you have missed previous issues of the Post's newsletters, let me know and I can forward any month want.

Editor's Note: Some of the links to articles are here due to the editor's opinion of their importance to veterans relative to News You Can Use, of interest to veterans, and/or to inform membership of the post's activities/meetings/events. The following is always at the bottom of each newsletter.

Department of Virginia Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaLegion/

Post 1995's Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/pg/LegionPost1995/posts/

1995 Centreville webpage Post: https://americanlegionpost1995.org

17th District X (aka Twitter) Account: https://twitter.com/va17thdistrict

Facebook: 17th District's Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/VALegion17/), is synchronized to its Twitter page and posts to the 17th District Facebook page are tweeted to the 17th District's Twitter page.

Comments/Submissions to the Editor - Comments about this newsletter relative to its contents and/or presentation style are always welcomed. We also encourage submissions from Post members relative to anything related to the American Legion and/or what we as Legionnaires are doing to serve our communities. If you are not active, now would be a good time to learn more about what your Post is doing and how you and we could do more. If you have missed previous issues of the Post's newsletters, let me know and I can forward any month wanted.

Post 1995 - Centreville, VA baseball hats are now available.

Purchase your distinctive Post 1995 hat in either blue or black for only $25.00. This is a savings of $4.99 off the catalog price before shipping. Some members have bought both colors! Hats will be available at our monthly meetings until they are all gone.



Newsletter Contributors: Randy Young, Jim Robison, and Patty Caggiano.

Post Calendars for August and September are on the next pages.

Calendars - To view the **National Legion calendar**, visit this website:
https://www.legion.org/information-center/calendar

August 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4 Coast Guard Birthday	5	6	7 Purple Heart Day	8
9	10	11 Post Meeting	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28 National	29 Convention
31 National	31 Convention					

Link Source: https://veteran.com/military-calendar-holidays-events-observances/

Historical Dates in August:

4 August, Coast Guard Birthday (1790), marks the founding of the Revenue Cutter Service, the precursor to the modern Coast Guard

7 August: National Purple Heart Day, honors service members killed or wounded in combat

10 August: U.S. Department of Defense Birthday, (1947), marks the establishment of the Department of Defense by the National Security Act of 1947

14 August: National Navajo Code Talker Day, honors the bravery and ingenuity of Navajo Marines who developed an unbreakable code using the Navajo language during WWII

16 August: National Airborne Day, (1940), commemorates the first official Army parachute jump

29 August: Marine Forces Reserve Birthday, (1916), marks the establishment of the Marine Corps Reserve

September 2026

This is national Suicide prevention month: https://veteran.com/suicide-prevention-month/

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 American Legion National	2 ----------	3 ----------	4 Convention	5
6	7 Labor Day	8 Post Meeting	9	10	11 Patriot Day	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 Air Force Birthday / National POW/MIA Day	9
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Link Source: https://veteran.com/military-calendar-holidays-events-observances/

Auxiliary News

Department of Virginia Auxiliary Outstanding Virginian of the Year



Auxiliary Unit 1995 nominated Sal Speziale, owner of Caio Osteria restaurant in Centreville (13 years), for the Auxiliary's Department "Outstanding Virginian" award for 2026 and won. He earned the award for his long service to the community, particularly supporting first responders, and his military service as an Air Force officer. Sal serves part-time as a Fairfax County Auxiliary Police Officer, speaks three languages, is a US Air Force Academy graduate, qualified in 19 jets/models, and served as Aide-de-Camp to 1, 2, 3, and 4-star generals. It is not an over-statement to say his military accomplishments alone are lengthy and distinguished.

The award was presented to Sal at the Department's Convention in July. His nomination was drafted and submitted by Patty Caggiano, with a letter of recommendation from Chris Torelli, and an endorsement from Mike Reilly.

CIAO Osteria Motto: "Those who run towards danger will always have a seat at our table"