



 **AMERICAN
LEGION**



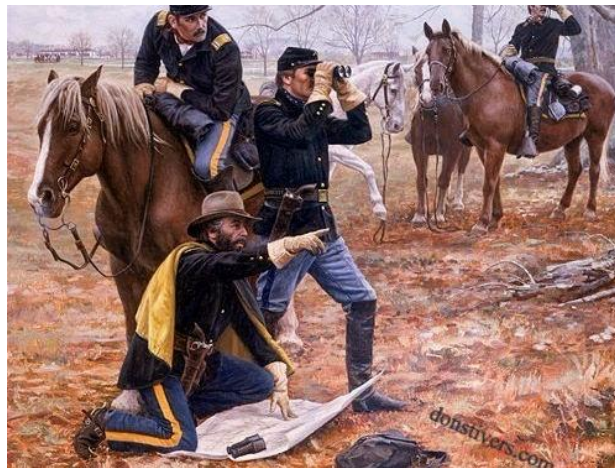
American Legion Post 1995

March 11th, 2025 - Defender Newsletter

Monthly Military Quote

"I am concerned for the security of our great Nation; not so much because of any threat from without, but because of the insidious forces working from within."...Douglas MacArthur

Military Photo of the Month



For years, the 'staff ride' was an important training experience for officers attending the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Ft. Leavenworth. After weeks studying tactics in the classroom, the students had the opportunity through the staff ride to put into practice the theories they had been learning. Don Stivers was the painter. Commander Young was a young officer attending ACGSC in 1980 when this painting was commissioned by his class.

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Commander's Corner

A Call to Action – Massive personnel reductions are planned at the Veterans Administration. Cutting between 72 to 80 thousand employees nationwide will reduce staffing levels to those before the PACT Act was passed. I believe this will hurt delivery of services and medical care to our Veterans. We need to contact our Representatives and Senators to express our deep concern about the damage this will do and to encourage them to act against these personnel reductions. This is not a partisan issue; it is a Veterans care issue, and we need our voices to be heard. I encourage all our members to call your legislators and express your opinion on this troubling issue. Stand up for our fellow Veterans.

Senator Warner's Office in Vienna – (703) 442-0670

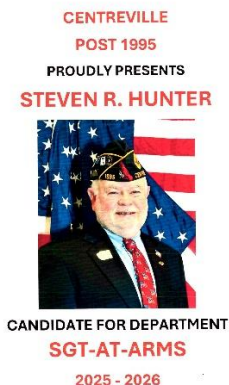
Senator Kane's Office in Manassas – (703) 361-3192

Congressman Connelly's Office – Fairfax - (703) 256-3071

I called all these offices, spoke with staffers, and registered my opinion. You can too.

February Membership Meeting Cancellation – Our normal monthly business meeting happened to fall on the day the weather forecasters were calling for 6 to 8 to 10 inches of snow on February 11th. I checked with the Post leadership and decided to cancel the meeting. Since we only have the meeting rooms at the Sully Government Center once per month, we will carry over all business to the March 11th membership meeting. We will be observing the American Legion's birthday on March 15th, so I am bringing cupcakes baked by Mrs. Young. Come to our meeting, have a cupcake.

Standing for Election – You are invited to serve in an elected officer position in Post 1995. We will hold elections at the May membership meeting and swear in the new slate of officers in June. Our Adjutant, Steve Hunter, is the leading candidate for Department Sergeant-at-Arms and will stand for that position at the Department Convention in July. Post Commander, Randy Young (me) is running again for the post of 17th District Vice Commander. The Post resolution nominating me will be read out and voted on at the March meeting.



No Host Social – Our fifth Post Social was held at Ciao Osteria in Centreville on February 27th. This event was organized by Vice Commander Chris Torelli, and we were welcomed by Sal the owner. Over a dozen Legionnaires and their ladies were in attendance and enjoyed a variety of Italian dishes and wood fired pizzas. These gatherings are very informal and everyone really enjoyed themselves. Post 1995 will hold a social event every three months so look for our next gathering in May.



Post legionnaires attending the February social at Ciaos Italian Restaurant

Department Spring Conference – The Department of Virginia hosted the spring conference in Portsmouth from 28 February to 2 March 2025. Representing Post 1995 were Commander Randy Young and Adjutant Steve Hunter. Karen Hunter represented the 17th District as Auxiliary President. These conferences are a way to update the leadership of Posts and Districts on changes to Legion programs, provide some instruction, and to share information. The Conference provides a chance to recognize units and individuals for exceptional performance. I attended sessions on Americanism, Oratorical contest, Boys State and the Northern Region Leadership and Recognition session. Steve Hunter co-hosted the hospitality suite on Saturday afternoon and was able to present himself as prospective Department Sergeant-at-Arms to Legionnaires from all over Virginia.

We Need Help with Baseball – “If you have any experience coaching or managing a ball team or having a son who plays ball at any level we want you. I will mentor you and give you guidance for this rewarding position. Please write me at rsyoung47@gmail.com. I still need someone to take this truly easy job. Planning begins in February so please raise your hand and “pitch” in.



BE the ONE – At the Spring Conference I had the opportunity to speak with our prospective Department Commander, Scott Maddrea. I asked him what his platform for the Legion year of 2025-2026 would emphasize and was pleased that he wanted to move Be the One from a program to an action plan. This matches my efforts over the last year and a half. Look for opportunities to ASK Veterans in your life how they are doing. Remember: dial 988 then #1 to ask for help for yourself or another Vet.

National Membership Impact Report for February 2025

<https://www.legion.org/about/reports/membership-impact>

30 Year Post Anniversary – Yorktown

Post 1995 will celebrate its 30th Anniversary by sponsoring a Staff Ride to the Yorktown Battlefield Friday- Sunday (May 2-4, 2025). The game plan to date is to meet Friday at the Yorktown visitors center in the afternoon, time TBA. Saturday will encompass a tour of the battlefield and museum, followed by an anniversary dinner at a tavern. Sunday will be a tour of Colonial Williamsburg and departure.

I have not booked any hotels, but there are plenty in the area that offer Military/Veteran discounts. To date I have 10 members including spouses interested. I welcome all who want to join us, the more the merrier. Coordinator: Chris Torelli, cgt548@gmail.com

Veteran Volunteer Drivers Needed

One of the groups we talked with at the SoC was this organization that helps to find drivers for Veterans needing rides to medical appointments. It seems well organized in that they have a website that lists the needs from which volunteer drivers select which they can support. All are local to your location, and none require trips to the VA medical center in DC or elsewhere out of the area. This is a great way to support other Veterans in need in our area, so please consider volunteering.

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 drivers, we can combat this growing transportation crisis and help those veterans most in need.

Thank you for your support helping to promote this program, and for sharing our critical need for volunteer drivers.

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

Annual Reports

As we prepare for reporting season, your inputs are needed that cover all the community service you perform, Legion activity, donations to charities, etc. Give us a few lines telling us what you did, and who benefited. Summarize how many Legionnaires were involved, how many hours you put in, how much money you spent, and how many miles you drove. Estimates are fine. If you served on your HOA board, donated blood, coached youth sports, helped with the marching band at your kids' high school, provided food and/or transportation to those in need, or ushered at church. If you helped make another Veteran's life better, let us know. We want to know it all.

Our combined reports are submitted to the Department of Virginia which takes reporting from Posts throughout the state to create Department reports that are sent to National. The narrative reports are divided up between Americanism, Children and Youth, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation or VA&R. Virginia has won the Americanism report 16 times in the Legion's 104-year history, that is 15.38%, not bad...it demonstrates an outsized impact Virginia Legionnaires make each and every year. A fourth report is essentially a tabulation of what each Post has done during the year and includes mostly yes/no type questions and numbers of things/events the Post did and/or money spent in support of Legion programs. I usually complete the narrative reports first then the latter, even though it is due to the Department first.

To meet the **Department's timeline for submitting reports by the middle of May** (no firm NLT date has yet been announced), I (your Adjutant) **need your individual reports NLT than the 30th of April, sooner however is better.** In addition to the previously mentioned reports, there are additional reports the Post must submit, so they all take time to consolidate and draft the reports. Submit your information in whatever form that works best for you. I just need it to be clear and have your totals tabulated to facilitate drafting the reports. A spreadsheet was attached to last month's email which may be useful in compiling your reports. If you cannot find it, let me know and I will send another copy directly to you. (Coordinator: Adjutant, Steve Hunter, gesohunter@aol.com)

2025 Washington Conference - The Legion's Agenda for Congress - Open this link to review the top level issues the Legion's legislative office advocated for on our behave:

<https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/legislative/2025/january/the-legions-agenda-for-congress>

To learn more you can also download the Legislative Agenda for the 119th Congress. Karen Hunter, a member of the Post's Auxiliary, attended as the Department of Virginia's legislative chair. She spoke directly with Senator Warner and several other legislators out of our area to advocate for the Legion's legislative priorities to include the federal workforce which include many Veterans.

The American Legion Identity verification system one of only two that Veterans can use to access VA websites and apps. Get all the details on this Legion webpage:

<https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/veterans-healthcare/2025/march/resources-available-for-veterans-needing-to-create-idme-account> (Source: The American Legion, March 4, 2025)

Suicide Prevention Resources All Veterans Need to Know:

See this link for VA resources to use to help prevent Veteran suicides.

<https://news.va.gov/137046/six-suicide-prevention-resources-veterans-know/>

Source: VA, January 6, 2025, via email distro)

Free Suicide Prevention Training

PsychArmor offers free suicide prevention courses designed specifically for military and Veteran communities: https://news.va.gov/135619/free-suicide-prevention-training-for-all/?utm_source=middle&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources&utm_id=16OCT2024

If you are a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive 24/7 confidential support. You do not have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect. To reach responders, [Dial 988 then Press 1](#), chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat, or text [838255](tel:838255).

Columbia University and the American Legion has partnered to provide online Be the One training on February 19, 2025, 2:30-4:00 pm. Click on the link to register:

<https://www.legion.org/information-center/calendar/be-the-one-training-feb-19/>

Learn more about Veteran owned businesses and demographic profile of them from this Census Bureau article. The link also has additional links to Trends in Veteran Disability Status and How to Access, Map and Compare Detailed Veteran Data. https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2024/11/veteran-owned-businesses.html?utm_campaign=20241115cnmp&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Memo Outlines Plan to Cut Around 80K VA Employees:

<https://www.fedweek.com/fedweek/memo-outlines-plan-to-cut-around-80k-v-a-employees/>

(Source: Fedweek, March 5, 2025)

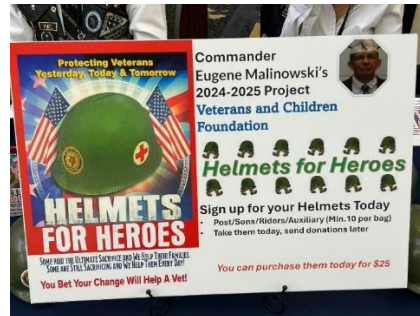
Donating Blood:

Blood Donors Are Urgently Needed Multiple traumatic incidents and other medical emergencies have left INOVA's blood inventory for Type O blood critically low. All blood types are needed, but a boost to the supply of Type O blood will help patients in need significantly. Call 1-866-BLOODSAVES (1- 866-256-6372) or visit inovablood.org to schedule an appointment.

The next local blood drive is scheduled for March 22nd at the Sully District Government Center (our meeting location). The Fairfax County Police Department is hosting this drive. See this link for more details and to make an appointment: <https://www.inovablood.org/event/sullydistrict/> This is a reportable activity under Americanism.

Helmet for Heroes

This is the Department of Virginia's Commander's project this year to raise funds for the Legion's Veterans and Children Foundation. The helmets are actually "piggy banks" for donations. This is a yearlong effort with the collected funds being donated to National at the 2025 National Convention in Tampa. A helmet will be at all Post meetings/events. If you have a location that would support this project, let me know as I have ten. A helmet will be at all Post events for your contributions.



Membership Update

We currently are at 94.95% of our 2025 membership goal of 198 with 188. Our renewal rate is over 102.22%, which is significantly higher than all but one Post in the District.

I thank all those who have renewed for 2025. If you have not renewed, you may renew by sending back one of the renewal letters National sends out or going online at [Renew \(mylegion.org\)](https://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.

The next renewal notices from National will be mailed between March 1st -7th. The cutoff day will be February 12th. This is the date National generates the renewal letters based on members who have renewed up to that date. So, if you renew after that date, you will probably get another renewal letter, which you can ignore. If you wish to verify your membership status, you may either contact me or review your profile on mylegion.org.

Multi-Year Memberships Are Now Available - The Legion now has a three-year renewal option. 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> Four out of the last six online renewals with the post have taken advantage of this new membership renewal option.

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 you are interested in a PUFL membership, call 1-800-433-3318.

News You Can Use:

The 2025 Retired Soldier Handbook has arrived!

The 2025 Retired Soldier Handbook is now available at your local Retirement Services Offices and online at: <https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Retirement/>. The purpose of the U.S. Army Retired Soldier Handbook is to provide current and updated information for Retired Soldiers and their families, about the benefits and entitlements they have earned through their years of faithful service. It is important that all Retired Soldiers maintain a working knowledge of their benefits and entitlements to take full advantage of them. In addition to the information presented here, Retired Soldiers should refer to Army Echoes, which also outlines changes in benefits and entitlements. The current and previous editions of Army Echoes dating back to 1998 are available at the link provided above.

Retired Soldier Casualty Assistance Checklist:

This Army pamphlet provides a basic checklist of things that may be needed when a retired soldier passes to assist family members in reporting his/her death and making their final arrangements.

https://soldierforlife.army.mil/Documents/static/Post/Retired_Soldier_Casualty_Assistance_Checklist.pdf (Note: This checklist was made by the Army, but any Veteran may find this useful.)

Tax season 2025: where to find help

Tax season is here and people have questions. Where to file? How to file? Can I file online? For free? For those answers, always start with the official IRS website at [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov). (Source: Military Consumer, BCP Staff, February 12, 2025) https://www.militaryconsumer.gov/blog/tax-season-2025-where-find-help?utm_source=govdelivery

Community Police Academy:

Want to learn more about local law enforcement? The Community Police Academy offers a behind-the-scenes look at the Fairfax County Police Department, including training, policies, and specialized units.

Apply now for the Spring 2025 session!

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/ServicesAH/CommunityPoliceAcademy>

Follow their social media or click the link above for details and submit your application.

Register your camera with [Connect Fairfax County](#) to help FCPD solve crimes, locate missing people, and support investigations.

Jury Duty Scams

If you have been summoned for jury duty, you know there are serious consequences for missing it — like fines, court appointments, or even jail time. Scammers know this too, and they are calling and emailing to scare you into thinking you have missed jury duty and need to pay. It is a scam. Learn how the scam works so you can avoid it.

https://www.militaryconsumer.gov/blog/call-or-email-saying-you-missed-jury-duty-and-need-pay-its-scam?utm_source=govdelivery (Source: Military Consumer, BCP Staff, March 7, 2025, email)

Final Thought:

“Never worry about failure. It’s gonna happen. But that’s OK: Go ahead, take chances ... and you might just find that what feels like failure isn’t failure at all, it’s what inspires you to dream even bigger.”...Kermit the Frog

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/>

Website: The American Legion – Centreville, Virginia Post 1995

<http://centrevillevapost1995.org/contact/> (Webmaster needed)

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.

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

Post Calendars for March and April are on the next pages!

March 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 District Spring Conference Post 176	10	11 Post Meeting	12	13	14	15 American Legion Birthday
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 Boys State Interviews
23	24	25 Congressional Medal of Honor Day	26	27	28	29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day
30	31					

April 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Post Meeting	9	10	11	12
13	14 Air Force Reserve Birthday	15	16	17	18	19
20 Easter	21	22 Earth Day	23 Army Reserve Birthday	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

<https://veteran.com/military-calendar-holidays-events-observances/>

Auxiliary News – No news this month