



AMERICAN
LEGION



American Legion Post 1995 December 9th, 2025 - Defender Newsletter

Monthly Military Quote

In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans ware useless, but planning is indispensable...Dwight D. Eisenhower

Military Photo of the Month

Post 3's Field of Honor (512 U.S. flags) on Veterans Day 2025

This month's featured photo is actually a [video](#) of Salem, Virginia's Post 3 Field of Honor flags. The display was supported by the local Rotary Club and the city of Salem on the Post's property.

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Commander's Corner

Best Christmas Wishes — We are past Thanksgiving and well into the Christmas season. As we share time with our families, lengthening traditions for our youngsters, I am mindful of the blessings of Family. To all of you in our Legion Family, the officers of Post 1995 wish all our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2026. I hope this year was one of accomplishments, service, and fulfillment for each of you. I can tell you that your Post has expanded the service we provide to our Veterans and our Centreville, Chantilly, and Clifton community.

17th District Fall Conference – On November 16th at Post 177 in Fairfax several of us attended and participated in the Fall Conference of the Stormin' Seventeenth District. (More about that later.) Of special note was a presentation by Department Staff Judge Advocate, Mark Stein about a new legal opinion from the National Judge Advocate about the relationship between the Legion and the Sons of the Legion. The Sons are legally a program of the parent American Legion, not a co-equal organization. I will not give any

more details here since we do not have a Sons unit connected to our Post. If you are also a SAL member through another Post, let me know and I can fill you in. Write to me at rsyoung47@gmail.com. At the direction of Guillermo Guillen, our District Commander, I ran a contest to give the 17th District a “gung-ho” nickname like the “Fighting” Fourteenth District. The winner by a clear margin was “Stormin.” This was just for fun and does not require changing the By Laws or anything serious. But at Department functions in the future, we will have our own nickname. All Legionnaires are welcome to attend any District and Department function. Think about attending something at higher headquarters in the future to see how the decisions are made.

Recruiting at Coast Guard Exchange: On Pearl Harbor Day, also a Sunday this year, we set up our table to add new members to the Post and Legion roster. Results may be found in the membership section below.

Holiday Potluck Dinner – Each year in connection with our December membership meeting, with our Auxiliary Unit, we hold a potluck dinner. All Legionnaires and spouses are invited to attend and bring a dish to share. This year we will have musical entertainment! Bob Barrs has invited Dianna Cross, a vocalist with the classical musical group Sopranessence to lead us in some Christmas carols. Additionally, Mark Miller has invited the Magic Hand Orchestra, a string ensemble of high school students, to provide background music. So please come on out for food, fellowship, and holiday music at the Sully Government Center. Our membership meeting beginning at 1830 will last half hour, and then we will adjourn and join the Auxiliary for dinner at 1900. We hope to see you there.

Post Oratorical Contest – Post 1995 will hold its 3rd Oratorical Contest on Saturday, December 13th from 2 to 4 PM at the Sully Government Center. Each year we strive to improve and expand this contest. We are encouraging all our membership to come out and support the young people by putting themselves out there to talk about the Constitution. I have attended lots of these contests over the last five years all over the 17th District, and I came away impressed with how sharp these kids are every time. Please come to sit in the audience and be impressed as well. Your support will be much appreciated by us, the students, and their parents. If you have a legion parade hat, shirt, or baseball cap, wear that so the families will know how much the Post cares about this contest and our youth.

BE the ONE – At the National Convention in Tampa I continued to add to my knowledge about suicide prevention. We frequently mention talking to the Vets you know that are having a tough time. I picked up on the term “reciprocal rapport” that helps you extend and expand the conversation. Share thoughts that you have in common with a struggling Veteran. So, LISTEN when a Veteran needs to talk. Remember: dial 988 then #1 to ask for help for yourself or another Veteran.



Auxiliary Unit 1995 Bake Sale

The Auxiliary's annual bake sale at Patriot High School Christmas market in Nokesville was a huge success. The photo below shows the vast variety of baked goods from cookies to breads, special treats, and non-edible woven items. The funds generated by the Bake Sale will be used by the Auxiliary to support veterans' services and programs. The Auxiliary also created a special recipe booklet with members' favorite recipes, and they are on sale at \$20. The recruiting event at the Coast Guard Exchange also netted the Auxiliary \$135 to support veterans through Poppy donations.



Nancy Ward, Karen Hunter Patty Caggiano, Fran Robison, and Ann Burke



Here is a close-up photo of the crew...the Post Adjutant served as the “official” gift wrap specialist...unfortunately that aspect of the event did not do nearly as well as the food sales.

Legislative News:

Often, we talk about how your Legion membership is important relative to the National and State organizations’ advocacy on veterans/military behave with Congress and the Virginia State House. Here is where you can learn more about the impact the Legion has and what you can do to further support our collective effort to promote Veterans issues.

Legion website for Legislative: <https://www.legion.org/advocacy/legislative>

Grassroots Weekly Newsletter

This newsletter is sent out via email each week. A copy of December 5, 2025, is attached to this month’s Post newsletter email distro. The newsletter covers what your American Legion is doing each week advocating for veterans with Congress. You may sign up for the Legion’s family of e-newsletters. Once signed in , click “edit” to make your selections of which newsletters you want to get...grassroots being one of them. Click on this link:

<https://www.legion.org/information-center/in-the-media/e-newsletters>

Auxiliary Grassroots Action Center: <https://www.legion-aux.org/grassroots-action-center>

Annual Post Reports

Requesting all Post members keep a running tally document recording your daily volunteering in your community. We combine all input into our annual reports each Spring that are submitted to the Department of Virginia who in turn combines all submitted Post reports within Virginia to National who uses the reports in its advocacy with Congress. These help to tell the story of how American Legion members are contributing to making our country better and how we support fellow Veterans. Reports are broken out in three areas: (Americanism, Children and Youth, and Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation. A fourth report is a numbers tally from the three form/narrative reports. Post 1995 have won the Department’s Americanism Report three years in a roll. I would like to continue that effort, but we need more members to report. I will request your volunteer hours and charitable contributions next April (2026) covering the period from May1, 2025 to 31 April 2026.

National Membership Impact Report for November 2025

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

The Veterans Connect Program

Looking for a way to volunteer to help fellow veterans...then consider this organization.

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**.



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

News You Can Use:

Library Resources

I recently was frustrated to learn that Fairfax County Libraries have removed a number of digital resources due to funding cuts to include Kanopy, a streaming service. However, if you are Active duty, Reservists/National Guard, and/or Retired, you can access Army library resources online with your ID card? If this is of interest to you, go to this website to sign up for an account. With an account you will be able to access a wealth of resources that local libraries may no longer provide access to. <https://army.dodmwrlibraries.org/>

Five ways to help you cut down on unwanted calls

Whenever an officer from Post 1995 calls you, if you do not answer, we will leave a short message about why we are calling. Most often it is a Buddy Check” but more rarely to call or to verify information. Typically, we would use your email address to communicate with you for other than Buddy Check calls, however.

If you feel like you get more than your share of unwanted calls, you are not alone. To slow down these persistent calls — some of which lead straight to scams — take a few simple steps. [LINK](#) (Source: FTC, BCP Staff, August 21, 2025)

How to prepare yourself to deal with an emergency and avoid disaster-related scams

When disaster strikes, everyone in the community is impacted. That is why having a plan and knowing how to spot disaster-related scams can make a difference to anyone recovering. If you are not sure where to begin, there are free tools to help you get started on

a plan that includes fraud prevention. See this [LINK](#) for the FTC article. (Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Bureau of Consumer Protection (BCP) staff.)

Membership Update

We currently are at 91.32% of our 2026 membership goal of 196 members with 179 countable members.

I wish to welcome two Legionnaires who have transferred to Post 1995 from the Department's hold Post within the past month: Paul Sundstrom and Jeffrey Lowe. Also, our new Legionnaire members recruited at the Coast Guard Exchange on December 7th: Jackie Kennedy, Dawnette Cerda, Veronica Cruz, and Thomas Payne. We are hopeful that a few other veterans we talked to will join in the new future as well. It is always a pleasure to talk with veterans whether they are already members, join our Post or we direct them to another Post nearer their home.

I thank all those who have renewed for 2026 already. If you have not renewed, you may renew by mailing one of the renewal letters National sent you or preferably 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.

Multi-Year Memberships Are Now Available - The Legion now has a three-year renewal option. The benefit of renewing for three years and paying in advance is that you avoid any dues increase 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.



Final Thought:

It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the most responsive to change...Charles Darwin

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: Currently down

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.

Military History:

List of American Civil War battles

If you are a Civil War buff, you may already know that Wikipedia has a pretty good article with links to all the battles in the civil war, with dates, who was considered the winner, class of battle, etc., but if not, you may be interested in looking at the website.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_American_Civil_War_battles

Calendars - To view the **National Legion calendar**, visit this website:

<https://www.legion.org/information-center/calendar>

Post Calendars for December 2025 and January 2026 are on the next pages.

December 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 CGX Recruiting	8	9 Post Meeting	10	11	12	13 Post Oratorical Contest
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Christmas	26	27
28	29	30				

Link Source: Veteran.com

January 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 New Years Day	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Post Meeting	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

