



AMERICAN LEGION



American Legion Post 1995

July 8th, 2025 - Defender Newsletter

Monthly Military Quote

Only our individual faith in freedom can keep us free...Dwight Eisenhower

Military Photo of the Month



Soldiers assigned to the U.S. Army Fife and Drum Corps, 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (the Old Guard) participating in the annual Independence Day celebration at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. on July 4th, 2025. The unit provided ceremonial music as part of the event honoring the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

(Source: DIVIDS, Staff Sgt Oscar Toscano)

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Commander's Corner

New Slate of Officers Sworn in at Mott Center

As advertised in last month's article we moved our June monthly membership meeting to the Mott Center due to the Sully Government Center being used as a polling place for the Democrat primary

election. With immediate Past Commander of the 17th District, Jeff White presiding, your post's slate of officers was sworn in for the Legion year of 2025-26. We want to express our gratitude to Dave Benson for his two years of service as 1st Vice Commander and welcome Chris Torelli to that position. Jim Robison will serve as 2nd Vice with 3rd Vice Commander being held open. Randy Young begins his third year as Commander, stalwart Steve Hunter as Adjutant, Tom Joplin as Finance Officer, Mark Miller as Sergeant-at-Arms, Al Schenck as Chaplain, and Mike Reilly returning as Staff Judge Advocate. New on board is Yahmin Norwood as our new Service Officer. This combination of experience and new blood will serve your Post well this coming year.



Officer Installation – 17th District Commander Jeff White presiding



Post 1995 Officers for 2025-2026 L>R Yahmin Norwood, Chris Torrelli, Randy Young, Al Schenck, Steve Hunter, Tom Joplin, Jim Robison, and Mark Miller



Army Birthday cake and ceremonial first cut – Randy Young and Yahmin Norwood

Legion Baseball results so far

Coach Jason Moccia did not oversell the potential of our Post 1995 sponsored Arlington baseball squad to me earlier in the season. The lads are off to a very promising start. The team at the halfway point of the season has posted a record of 8 wins versus 2 losses. By now the boys from Arlington have played all the other teams in the league and they look like they have a solid chance to play for the 17th District championship come early August. Come out to the local ballfields to cheer on the boys, meet the parents, and thank the coaches.

American Legion Youth Law Enforcement Cadet Program – Department of Virginia

I had the opportunity to travel to the Virginia State Police Academy on Friday, June 21st to attend the graduation ceremony of 45 cadets from all over Virginia. It was with pride that I saw how the Legion cadre and the state police instructors molded high school kids into Law Enforcement Cadets in five action packed days. Post 1995 had the pleasure of sponsoring Cadet Jeff Otero for this program that gave all the youth attending a full overview of professional law enforcement training at the highest level. Jeff thoroughly enjoyed the program and will attend our July membership meeting to give us a report on his experience. Post 1995 hopes to continue this program next year. Come to our membership meeting on Tuesday, July 8th to hear this impressive young man tell his story.



Jeff Otero with Commander Young



Cadets marching to training

Department Convention



The American Legion Department of Virginia will hold our 107th Convention at the Hilton - Dulles Airport in Herndon this week from Thursday through Sunday, July 10th through July 13th. This will be a significant event for Post 1995 as some of our members will be recognized with some major awards. Any Legionnaire in good standing can attend and I am encouraging all our Post members to come. Friday is for committee meetings both departments standing committees and convention committees. Steve Hunter and I will be dividing up to cover as much as we can. Also, regional leadership meetings will be held and there will be a welcoming reception at 6 PM. On Saturday there is the General Session where resolutions will be discussed, committee reports submitted, and awards will be presented. I anticipate our Post will receive some statewide recognition based on the outstanding work some of our members have done over the past 12 months. The General Session resumes in the afternoon when our very own Steve Hunter will be

nominated to be the Department of Virginia Sergeant-at-Arms for this coming year. So come out to support our Post's outstanding Legionnaires. Saturday evening is the Convention dinner at 7PM. On Sunday at 9AM our Chaplain Al Schenck will help conduct the religious service. This convention will be the last one this close to home, so I encourage all of our members to take advantage of a quick trip up Route 28 to see how the statewide organization operates and gets the job done. The Convention agenda is attached with this month's newsletter.

BE the ONE

Many of our older Vets suffer from a feeling of isolation. Perhaps their spouse has died, or a valued friend has gone to the Post Everlasting. As with many older Veterans our health is not getting any better. It is hard to share our military service memories with people who were not there. Vets all have stories but may have no one they want to share them with. Look for opportunities to LISTEN when a Veteran needs to talk. Remember: dial 988 then #1 to ask for help for yourself or another Vet.

Boys State

The American Legion Department of Virginia held its 82nd Edition of Boys State on the campus of Radford University during the week of 15-21 June 2025. Interviews were held at the Sully Government Center on 22 March, conducted by members of Post 1995. The \$500 cost of attendance at Boys State is funded entirely by sponsorships, not parental fees. The eight students were funded by contributions from Centerville High School, Post 1995 funds, Post Commander Randy Young, members Dave Benson, Bob Barrs, and Mark Miller. Boys State is a practical exercise in the organization, function, and parliamentary procedure of government at the city and state levels. The students were also visited by various dignitaries of the state of Virginia, who provided insights and encouragement to the student delegates. During the week (in between frequent rainstorms), the young men participated in outdoor sports to get some exercise and blow off some steam. Since many students are also musicians, a band was formed to provide entertainment. On Friday, 20 June, representatives of a number of colleges held a College Day to recruit students to their respective institutions of higher learning.

These rising seniors participated during the week-long exercise. Of note were Sankalp Agarwal of Centerville HS, who served as a Senator and Minority Leader of the Senate. Joshua Pun, Centerville HS was also a Senator as well as Clerk of the Senate. Alessandro De Stefano, Centerville HS was selected as a Circuit Court Judge. Also participating were Kareem Aly, Centerville HS, Abhiram Gaddam, Chantilly HS, Cedric Tchommo, Chantilly HS, Surafel Demeke, Westfield HS, and Raj Nanda, Westfield HS. Attendees have been invited to recount their experience at upcoming Post meetings.

Many men of note have attended Boys State prior to their successful careers, including: President Bill Clinton, General Wesley Clark, Senator Joe Lieberman, Movie Critic Roger Ebert, Radio Personality Rush Limbaugh, Justice Samuel Alito, Rock Star

Jon Bon Jovi, Musician Bruce Springsteen, Astronaut Neil Armstrong, and News Anchor Tom Brokaw. We wish all the delegates from Post 1995 similar success!



Five (5) of the eight (8) Post 1995 sponsored students attending Boys State in 2025

Flag Day

The Post held its first ever Flag Day educational event at the Chantilly Regional Library on Saturday June 14th from 10:00-13:00. While the public attendance was not what we were hoping for, it is a start. Other large competing events such as the parade in D.C. impacted the turnout. We demonstrated how to properly fold the U.S. flag, displayed numerous historical U.S. flags, and provided their histories. The Auxiliary provided cupcakes and flag coloring pages for students. Leftover cupcakes were donated to Fire Station 38 and the Sully District Police Station.



Post/Auxiliary Units 1995 members

flag

event



Mike Reilly assisting in the proper
folding technique to two Scouts
supporting the Flag Day



Auxiliary Members at the crafts table



Auxiliary Members with "Patriot Dog"

Auxiliary Food Drive

The Auxiliary's food drive supported the Western Fairfax Christian Food Bank. A total of 220 pounds of donated items were delivered on June 25th.



Karen Hunter with the donated food/toiletries

Annual Post Reports

If you have not yet started documenting your volunteer activities for next year's annual reports, please start keeping track of all you do for fellow Veterans, community/youth organizations and/or non-profits. Your inputs DO make a difference in showing how much Veterans do for our country. Please use the spreadsheet attached to the June newsletter. Suggest keeping this on your desktop for ready assess for updating it throughout the year.

National Membership Impact Report for June 2025

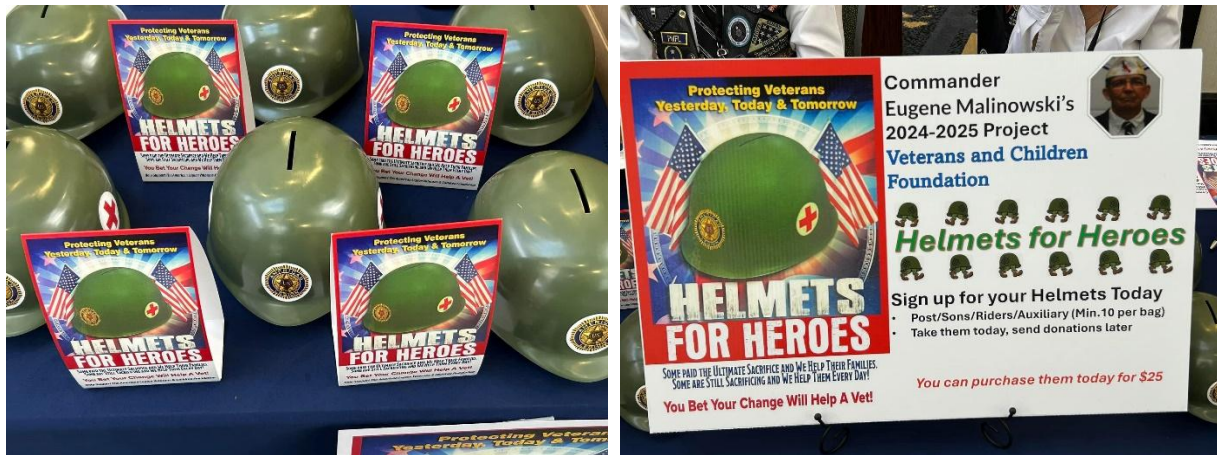
<https://www.legion.org/about/reports/membership-impact>

No military quiz question this month

Helmets for Heroes

The June meeting will be the last collection opportunity for this year's effort. For those attending the meeting please bring your spare change to help fill the helmet.

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.



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

Preventing and Treating Alcohol Use Disorder Among Veterans

Veterans have an increased risk of adverse alcohol use, and excessive drinking is a leading factor in preventable deaths among veterans. A new [RAND paper](#) explores this issue, providing an overview of veterans' alcohol use, its consequences, and recommendations for addressing the problem. The authors highlight important actions, such as focusing on prevention efforts, providing treatment for PTSD and other co-occurring mental health disorders, and improving access to alcohol use disorder medication. (Source: Rand Corporation, authors: Jordan P. Davis, Whitney S. Livingston, Rachel K. Landis, Rajeev Ramchand June 10, 2025)

Personal information: Which documents to keep and which to shred

When it comes to protecting your identity, you might think about keeping usernames to yourself, using strong passwords, and reviewing your statements. That is all great. But it is also important to think about what you do with documents or digital files that contain your financial information. So, let's look at what you should keep and lock up, and what you should shred or delete. https://www.militaryconsumer.gov/blog/protecting-your-personal-information-which-documents-keep-and-which-shred?utm_source=govdelivery Source: Military Consumer, June 10, 2025)

[Veterans Policy Research Institute](#)

“The RAND Epstein Family Veterans Policy Research Institute, housed at RAND, is dedicated to conducting innovative, interdisciplinary, **evidence-based research to improve the lives of those who have served in the U.S. military**. Through a range of partnerships, the institute prioritizes creative and policy-relevant analysis and evaluation to meet the needs of all veterans while engaging and empowering those who support them.” (Source: Rand Corporation, June 18, 2025)

Purple Heart Resource Center

To learn about how the PHRC may help you, visit this [link](#).

Membership Update

We currently are at 97.45% of our 2025 membership goal of 198 with 193.

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.

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. **For those who have taken advantage of this membership program, I will be sending your 2026 membership cards to you following the Department Convention next weekend.**

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:

“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others”...Jack Welch

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: Sorry, the Post's Facebook page is currently not working.

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 May and June are on the next pages.

A new feature for most dates will include links for more information about the event or day of recognition.

July 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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		1 <u>Battle of Gettysburg 1-3 July</u>	2	3	4 4th of July	5
6	7	8 Post Meeting	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 <u>National Hire a Veteran Day</u>	26
27 <u>Korean War Veterans Armistice Day</u>	28 <u>Buffalo Soldiers Day</u>	29	30	31		

August 2025

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