American Legion Post 1995

September 6th, 2026

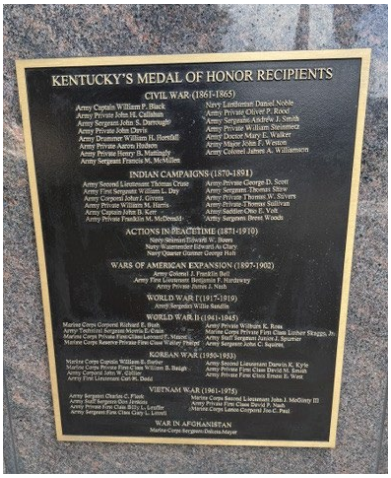
DEFENDER NEWSLETTER

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." Doulgas MacArthur, in a speech to the Texas Legislature on June, 13, 1951)

Military Photo of the Month



Kentucky's Medal of Honor Memorial in downtown Louisville

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Commander's Corner

Post Social Gathering at Mission BBQ – Under the leadership of incoming 1st Vice Commander Greg Hinton, we held our quarterly social event on Saturday, August 15th at Mission Barbeque in Chantilly. They took good care of us there and as you can see from the photo; all Legionnaires had a good time telling stories and sampling great BBQ. Since we have no post home and therefore no social quarters, we hold these events quarterly in local watering holes that are Veteran friendly. In the future we will announce the gathering in advance so more members of Post 1995 and Legionnaires from other Posts nearby can join us.



From L to R: Steve Hunter, Jim Robison, Mark Miller, Chris Torelli, Joe Burke and Mike Reilly

American Legion National Convention – The 107th National Convention was held in Louisville, Kentucky, "home of fast women and beautiful horses" as the politician once said. Oh, also bourbon. Our Post was represented by Randy Young, Delegate, Steve Hunter, Alternate, and Chris Torelli, at-large party animal. I attended for the first time in four years as a member of the national Americanism Committee. I am very pleased to report back to you that the Department of Virginia once again, and for the 4th time in five years won the national Americanism trophy. Post 1995 had something significant to contribute to Virginia's achievement with our Steve Hunter edited 32-page Americanism report. We both attended the Virginia Caucus and were addressed by surrogates for our leading candidate and now National Commander, Jay Bowen of Colorado. We also received a representative from our trailing (next year) candidate, Matthew Shuman from Arizona. If you want to see how the Legion operates on the national level, next year will be a great time to attend the 108th National Convention in Kansas City, MO, home of great mid-western BBQ. On the Auxiliary side, Karen Hunter and Patti Torelli attended and shouldered executive responsibilities for the Auxiliary on the national stage.

More information from the National Convention will be included in future newsletters.



National Commander Jay Bowen (2026-2027) from the Department of Colorado


National Americanism Chairman Mark Avis, Past Department Commanders
Scott Maddrea, and Les Clevenger holding the 2025-2026 American Legion Americanism Trophy.

America 250 and Virginia 250 – Prior to 1776 it was necessary for the separate colonies to see the need for unity in their response to British tyranny if they were to achieve independence in North America. One way they did that a decade before independence was through Committees of Correspondence. Later on, a pamphleteer wrote a document that was the most read publication in the colonies after only the Bible. Thomas Paine got the colonists to start thinking of themselves as more than Virginians or Pennsylvanians. Because of Paine's pamphlet, Common Sense, they started thinking of themselves as Americans. Suggest reading it to get a sense of the early struggle for independence. Learn more about how to get involved at **america250.org**.

BE the ONE – During the general session of our national convention one of the most impactful speakers was Medal of Honor recipient Col. (Ret.) Donald Ballard. He spoke

about the value of the Legion's national Be the One campaign. However, Col. Ballard felt the title was too passive. He said it should read "Being the One" so it would reflect current action now underway. In that light, I am pleased to note that Post 24 (Alexandria) is taking the lead in organizing national resources and instructors to visit the 17th District this fall to deliver face-to-face training both for individuals and facilitators. Watch this space for more information next month. So, REACH out when a Veteran is struggling. Remember: dial 988 then #1 to ask for help for yourself or another Veteran.

Be The One Facilitator Training

Post 24 (Alexandria) member Wendy Drive reaching out for" Be The One Facilitator Training". She has requested the Be The One facilitator trainer for either November 21/22 or December 5/6. Columbia University is checking on the availability of their trainers. She is requesting each Post in the 17th District to start gauging interest from their membership to attend this Be The One facilitator training. Once confirmed, she will provide more details on times and locations. If you are interested in attending the training, please let the Adjutant (1995) know, so I can add your name to the interest list.

American Legion Baseball World Series

The 2026 American Legion World Series was held in Shelby, North Carolina from August 13 -18. Teams from the eight (8) Regional tournaments competed for the coveted title of American Legion World Series champion. The series hosts were Posts 82 and 155, which merged in 2019 to become Cleveland County. The 2026 champion was Region 6, Post 500 from Lincoln, Nebraska. Virginia was represented again in the World Series by last year's champion Post 280(Chesepeake).



Post Chaplain Al Schenck (center) attended some of the games; Shelby is his hometown.

Willing Warriors - Warrior Retreat Center

Al Schenck attended an open house at the Willing Warriors Retreat Center in Haymarket along with ALIA (Agape Love in Action) organization for its support to the center. To learn more about the center click on this link: https://www.willingwarriors.org/warrior-retreat Veterans and wounded warriors and their families can spend a week at the center.



Chaplain Al Schenck (second to right of ALIA sign) attended an open house at the Haymarket Warrior Retreat Center

GET OUT THE VOTE: (Jim Robison)

November 3rd is Election Day. On the ballot are U.S. Senate and House of Representatives races, local offices and issues, and three (3) Virginia State Constitutional amendments.

Early in-person voting starts on September 18th and runs through October 31st.

Fairfax County early voting centers opening on September 18th are Fairfax County Government Center, Fairfax; Mt. Vernon Government Center, Alexandria; North County Government Center, Reston.

Thirteen (13) additional early voting centers open on October 22nd. They include Burke Center Library, Centreville Regional Library, Herndon Fortnightly Library, Sully Government Center.

Check your county Board of Elections website for the most complete information.

Fairfax County: Office of Elections | Elections

Prince William County: Office of Elections

Loudoun County: Elections & Voter Registration | Loudoun County, VA - Official Website

Legislative News:

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

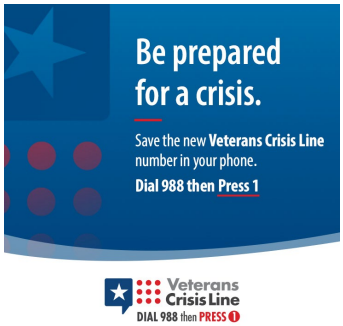
Auxiliary Grassroots Action Center: https://www.legion-aux.org/grassroots-action-center

Annual Post Reports

Requesting all Post members keep a running tally document recording 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 has won the Department's Americanism Report award for category III (this refers to post membership strength) four years in a roll and helped to propel the Department in winning its fourth National award in five years. For that we owe a thank you to John Schenk, the Department's Americanism Chair. Winning the award is not just about the award itself, but the effort and commitment to EARN the award which is the focus of our yearly call for your contributions whether in time and/or money that is the real story. Let's continue this "tradition" by reporting what we do as Legionnaires for other veterans and our communities. I will request your volunteer hours and charitable contributions next April (2027) covering the period from May1 2026 to 31 April 2027.

To assist you in keeping a record of what you do during the coming year I have also added an updated spreadsheet. Keeping this on your desktop allows you to quickly access it for updating as you go throughout the year.

National Membership Impact Report for August 2025
https://www.legion.org/about/reports/membership-impact



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

News You Can Use:

Digital Virginia Drives License

https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/licenses-ids/mobile-id

If you have a valid Virginia driver's license or state-issued identification card, then Virginia Mobile ID just makes carrying your ID more convenient, more secure and much less stressful.

Virginia Mobile ID is a digital option of a state-issued driver's license or identification card. It's free to obtain and can be set up with your smartphone. Your Virginia Mobile ID is a companion to your physical ID, and you'll still need to carry a physical ID with you. In many cases, it can stay in your wallet, and your phone can do the work of verifying your identity.

If you are an iPhone user, you may also want to start using their Digital ID feature will allows you to security store your IDs in a digital format…specifically a password and drivers license. See this Apple link on how to do that: https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2025/11/apple-introduces-digital-id-a-new-way-to-create-and-present-an-id-in-apple-wallet/

Fairfax County Community Police Academy

Live in Fairfax County and want to learn more about its police department?…then consider registering for its Community Police Academy.



Participants Will Learn About:

- Police training (including weapons and driving)
- Crime Scene Investigation
- Use of Force
- Traffic Stops

Internal Affairs
Police helicopter and its capabilities
SWAT
And much more…

Classes are held on nine consecutive Thursday nights, from 6:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The final class, which includes graduation activities, is held on a Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Classes rotate to various police department facilities around Fairfax County. Due to the popularity of the program, all participants are required to attend at least eight out of ten classes to successfully graduate.

Information related to FCPD's Community Police Academy: https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/community-police-academy

Application Form: https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/sites/police/files/documents/applications/communityPoliceAcademy_2026.pdf

Fairfax County Police Department is accepting applications for the upcoming Community Police Academy. These classes will run September 10th through November 14th. There are plenty of spots still available.

As a graduate of this academy, I highly recommend the program to learn more about FCPD and your community.

Sign over a portion of your VA benefits? Nope, that's a scam

Whether you served for four, ten, or twenty years, Veterans pension and disability benefits might be an important — often essential — part of your life after the military. That's why scammers call, email, or message to "help" you apply for them. But what they're really after is your money. These "advisors" make promises they can't keep and charge filing fees for services that are always free through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Spot scams during the VA benefits claims process to avoid them. **LINK** (Source: FTC, BCP Staff, February 26, 2025)

Veterans and caregivers: Recognize VA benefits overpayment scams

Got a letter in the mail from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) saying you owe money due to overpayment of your benefits? You might be wondering: Was I really overpaid? How much do I need to pay back? To get real answers to questions like

these, always start by logging into your VA.gov account. **LINK** (Source: FTC, BCP Staff, July 8, 2025)

DFAS (Army Finance Accounting Service) (Gene Griffe)

Calling customer service for help can be a chore! To make it easier to get straight to the heart of the matter, we've added a new option for confirming your identity when you call DFAS.

Customers who opt in can now use a verification one-time PIN sent to the mobile phone number registered in myPay to securely and quickly complete verification.

The next time you log into myPay, you will be prompted to review your verification methods and opt in.

If you have questions about this communication, you may contact a customer service representative by calling 1-888-332-7411.

Business and government impersonators go after older adults' life savings

Scammers posing as government agencies or well-known businesses are increasingly going after retirees' life savings. They weave a web of lies about some bogus crisis. Then they trick older adults into giving them tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars. (Source: Military Consumer, July 8, 2025, BCP Staff. **LINK**

How to spot a postcard scam targeting veterans

Veterans across the country have reported getting postcards in the mail saying they (or their spouse) might qualify for extra monthly veterans' benefits. But the "Veterans Savings Program" mentioned in the mailer doesn't actually exist. It's just a scammer phishing for personal or financial information. Here's how this scam works so you can avoid it. (Source: https://consumer.ftc.gov/consumer-alerts/2026/08/how-spot-postcard-scam-targeting-veterans?utm_source=govdelivery Federal Trade Commission, BCP Staff, August 24, 2026)

Centreville Immigration Forum & Centreville Labor Resource Center:

Centreville Immigration Forum (CIF) serves a flourishing immigrant community that wants to improve their skills, build a community for their families, and navigate systems and services such as healthcare, education, and know your rights training for labor and immigration. We follow the principles of social and racial justice that informs our approach and distinguishes us most from other organizations supporting similar communities Our community organizing model and membership structure that prioritizes active members in the shaping of our strategies and organizational priorities. Through annual dues, members

have access to all our services, but they also have a voice and a vote at monthly worker assemblies and annually for the directiva (member leadership committee) nominations and elections. We regularly elicit feedback for all programming to continuously improve, keeping programming grounded in the needs of the community. Our strategic plan is conducted in collaboration with the membership through general assemblies and leaders and informed by data collected from our membership. As an organization serving marginalized populations, CIF has been making significant progress in sophisticating our leadership development and member support offerings with a special focus on racial, gender and health equity. Women specifically benefit from programming and are active participants through program participation, volunteering, assembly meetings, and directiva (a CIF leadership body), or as members of the Board of Directors. We also engage in rapid response to support our broader community with more complex needs as they arise.

We provide through our labor resource center an alternative to street side hiring. This supports job placements, as well as modeling safe working agreements to avoid crimes such as wage theft that often occurs with informal work arrangements. Our labor center also provides skill building through English Language learning, trades and soft skills to provide opportunities for professional development. The best thing you can do is provide a job for a community member, dignified work is a mutually beneficial relationship between those in our community.

Contact@thecifva.org, 703-543-6272, or visit our website: www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org

Membership Update

All Paid Up For Life (PUFL) members should have received your 2027 membership cards in the mail from National. If you have not got yours, please let the Post Adjutant know. All members may also go online to your "MyLegion.org" account and print a copy of your membership card. Additionally, you can update your contact information should your address, email and/or phone numbers change. Don't have your personal account?

We currently are at 64.49% of our 2027 membership goal of 214 members with 138 members.

I thank all those who have renewed for 2027 already as we are off to a good start. 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) to renew. It is your choice, but doing so online is quick, simple, and saves you the cost of a stamp, plus 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 - As some are aware, 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

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:

If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships – the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together, in the same world, at peace…Franklin D. Roosevelt

Military History:

History of the U.S. Coast Guard: 236 Years of Service at Sea

Though the Coast Guard's birthday was last month (August 4th), this link provides a brief history of its beginning and evolution over time to the present. The article was written by a member of American Legion Post 24 (Alexandria). She (Donna Reuss) is a regular guest contributor on veteran/military topics. https://thezebra.org/2026/08/03/history-of-the-u-s-coast-guard-236-years-of-service-at-sea/

Eugene "Red" McDaniel, Vietnam POW and Living Legend of Alexandria, Dies at 94
Read his story in the Alexandria newspaper: https://thezebra.org/2026/08/14/eugene-red-mcdaniel-vietnam-pow-and-living-legend-of-alexandria-dies-at-94/]

U.S. Air Force Birthday 18 September 1947 - Airman's Creed

I am an American Airman. I am a warrior.

I have answered my nation's call.

I am an American Airman.

My mission is to fly, fight, and win.

I am faithful to a proud heritage,

A tradition of honor, and a legacy of valor.

I am an American Airman,

Guardian of freedom and justice,

My nation's sword and shield,

Its sentry and avenger.

I defend my country with my life.

I am an American Airman:

Wingman, leader, warrior.

I will never leave an Airman behind,

I will never falter, And I will not fail.

Significant Dates in September: (Jim Robison)

1 September 1862: The Battle of Chantilly (or Ox Hill) took place in Fairfax County, Virginia

1 September 1939: Nazi Germany invades Poland

2 September 1945: Japan signs surrender documents officially ending World War II

3 September 1939: Britain and France declare war on Nazi Germany

11 September: Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance; 25th Anniversary of the terrorist attacks in New York City, the Pentagon, and Shanksville PA

16 September: American Legion Day commemorates the U.S. Congress granting the American Legion its official charter on 16 September 1919

17 September: Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

18 September 1947: The Department of Defense officially begins operation.

18 September 1947: U.S. Air Force is officially established

18 September 1947: The Central Intelligence Agency is officially established

18 September; National POW/MIA Recognition Day

27 September: National Gold Star Mothers and Family Day

AMERICA 250

Key September 1776 events.

9 September: The Second Continental Congress officially changed the name of the country from the United Colonies to the United States of America.

11 September: The Staten Island Peace Conference took place between American delegates and British Admiral Richard Howe but failed because the Americans refused to revoke the Declaration of Independence.

12 September: Nathan Hale set off on a reconnaissance mission behind British lines on Long Island, New York.

16 September: American troops under General Washington won their first successful engagement of the war at the Battle of Harlem Heights in upper Manhattan.

20-21 September: The Great Fire of New York destroyed nearly a quarter of New York City just days after the British took control of the city.

21 September: Nathan Hale was arrested by the British as a rebel spy and hanged the following morning.

Fairfax County Commemorates America 250. Check out upcoming events occurring in Fairfax County as the county celebrates America 250. Fairfax County, Virginia America 250th Events and Attractions

Virginia 250 events are listed by region and date. There are numerous events in Fairfax, Falls Church, Alexandria, and Loudoun County. Events - Virginia American Revolution 250 Commemoration - VA250

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE U.S. ARMY

Check out the September activities at the National Museum of the U.S. Army National Museum of the United States Army

A new special exhibit, ***Steel and Stone, Engineering The Response To 9/11*** is now open. This exhibit highlights the role that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers played in the nation's response and recovery following the terrorist attacks on 9/11. The exhibit is located on the 3rd floor. The "Pentagon Flag" will be on display in the Museum lobby.

September 9th, 12:00pm – 12:45pm: History Talk, The Question of "What If?": The U.S. Army During the Cold War; virtual/Zoom; registration required

September 11th-13th, 9:00am – 5:00pm: Remembering September 11, 2001; special activities throughout the weekend

September 16th , 12:00pm 0 12:30pm: History Talk, The Question of “What If?”: The U.S. Army During the Cold War; in person and virtual/Zoom; registration required

September 17th, 10:00am – 2:00pm; Call To Connect: VA Claims Day, registration required

September 17th , 7:00pm – 8:00pm: Book Talk: “Winning The Ten Crucial Days: The Keys to Victory In George Washington’s Legendary Winter Campaign”; virtual/Zoom; registration required

Check the Events page on the Museum website for additional events, details, and registration.

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

September 2026

Suicide Prevention Month

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Labor Day	2 **V-J Day**	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 **Post Meeting**	10	11 **Purple Heart Day** **Patriots Day**	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 **Air Force Birthday**	19 **POW/MIA Day**	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27

28	29 VFW Day	30				

October 2026

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

Link Source: Veteran.com

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.

Unit 1995 Auxiliary News—September

Membership:

We are currently accepting membership and renewal dues for 2027.

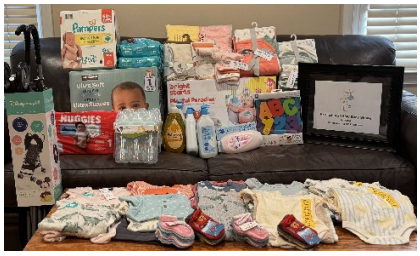
Renewal notices are mailed from National to members in mid-September. Our "senior" dues remain at $45.00. Upon receipt of dues, cards will be distributed. We accept checks made out to ALA Unit 1995 or cash. Thank you in advance for your support of our Unit!

Transferees must provide address, e-mail, phone number, copy of current Unit membership card, AND membership eligibility document (DD214) to be verified.

New members must provide all the above, except for current membership card.

Martinsburg VAMC Baby Shower:

A big THANK YOU to all who participated in the August Martinsburg VAMC Baby Shower! Donated items were taken to Vienna Unit 180 for transport to Martinsburg.



September Project:



We will be collecting "Birthday Bags" for Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) Food Bank at our meeting.

The bags contain cake mix, frosting, candles, party plates & napkins. You may also add a banner and/or a small toy/activity book.

Keep track of your donations for reporting.

Unit 1995 Cookbook:

Please bring recipes to the September meeting for publication in our 2026 Bake Sale Cookbook.

Unit 1995 Bake Sale:

Please be prepared to discuss any goodies you would like to make/donate for our December Bake Sale.

Give 10 to Education:

This was also discussed at our August meeting. It was also discussed at National Convention in Louisville, KY by our "new" National President, Coral May Grout. The "Give 10 to Education" program was initiated by the American Legion Auxiliary in 2007. 2027 marks 20 years for the program! It is a program that can be supported throughout the year.

The "Give 10 to Education" program collects donations of school supplies in multiples of 10. "Think" 10 pencils, 10 notebooks, 10 rulers, 10 glue sticks — you get the idea. OR "Give 20" for the anniversary year!

Some Unit 1995 members are participating in this. You may bring supplies to the meeting OR donate directly to a school near you!

Please keep track of what you donated for reporting purposes.



National American Legion Auxiliary Convention:

The 105th National ALA Convention for 2025-2026 was held from August 31-September 2 in Louisville, KY. Both Patty Caggiano and Karen Hunter attended. If interested, you may view the meetings at https://www.legion-aux.org/Convention-Livestream

Our 2026-2027 National Officers are:

President-Coral May Grout (MA)

Vice President-Dr. Lisa Chaplain (VA)

Chaplain-Debra "Jeanne" Haas (KS)

Historian-Jane McKnight (KY)

National President, Coral May Grout's comments:

"A Beacon for Veterans" is National President, Coral May Grout's theme.

Her focus will lean heavily toward Education this year since she is an educator of 51 years.

"Wreaths Across America" is another area of importance for the year.

ALA sponsorship of "Honor Flight" will also be continued. Mail Call—write cards for attendees.

Quarterly Newsletters for Unit Presidents has been huge success and will continue. Make sure they have your correct email address. Share these newsletters with members.