



American Legion Post 1995

June 10th, 2025 - Defender Newsletter

Monthly Military Quote

"We don't rise to the level of our expectations, we fall to the level of our training."
(Archilochus, a Greek poet, and soldier from the 7th century BCE)

Military Photo of the Month

60 Historic Photos from American Military History Stacker.com

<https://stacker.com/stories/military/60-historic-photos-american-military-history>

Please scroll to the bottom of this newsletter to see how you can help support the Auxiliary's one food drive for the year.

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Commander's Corner

Changes to the June Membership Meeting – Because in every election year we get kicked out of the Sully Government Center in June, there will be several changes for the June meeting only. This membership meeting will include the swearing in of officers who will serve the Post for the 2025-2026 Legion year. The changes are:

Place: The Mott Center at 12111 Braddock Road, just east of where the Fairfax County Parkway crosses over. We will meet in multi-purpose room #2.

Time: 6:30. We have access at 6:15 for set up. We must vacate the room at 8:45 PM.

Agenda: After the opening ceremony we will suspend our regular order of business for swearing in of officers by past District Commander Jeff White.

Refreshments: we will enjoy cake and punch in honor of the 250th Birthday of the US Army.

17th District Convention – On June 1st, the “Strategic” 17th held their annual convention and officer elections. Dave Benson, our First Vice Commander ably represented Post 1995 and handled the 50 – 50 raffle very effectively. Guillermo Guillen of Post 180 was elected as the next District Commander and Henry Dorton to be the Senior Vice Commander. Vice Commanders reelected were Marty Phifer and Randy Young. John Wallace of Post 180 was elected as a new Vice Commander. A resolution amending the By Laws to limit the dues the District could charge the posts by membership was limited to ten cents per member, and only when declared necessary by the Executive Committee, was passed. The 17th District organization meeting is scheduled for Sunday, July 17th.

Female Veterans Social Hour – This past Tuesday, June 3rd we enjoyed meeting five female Veterans at the Winery at Bull Run. It was a beautiful day and a beautiful setting to get to know more about our female members. Attending were Carol McAdoo, Lone Ichikawa, Anita Bonner, Lissa Mathews, and prospective member Kelly Tomseth. We enjoyed antipasto trays, a few glasses of local wines, and several oven baked pizzas made to order at the winery. Post leadership polled the lady Vets on how to encourage more participation, and we will act on several suggestions they made. All lady Vets are encouraged to participate in all of our come one - come all social hours. Vice Commander Chris Torelli will be planning our next event for the August – September period.

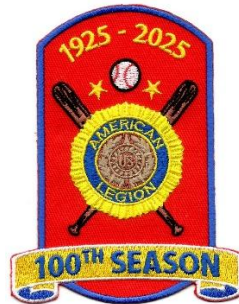


Post Veterans attending our first Women Veterans Social

Flag Day Education Event – Under the leadership of our Adjutant, Steve Hunter, Post 1995 will conduct a flag education event for the public at Chantilly Regional Library from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturday, June 14th. Steve will provide more information in the newsletter. I mention it because this is a great opportunity to donate a couple of hours to teach our youth how to honor the flag and we will appear before the public in a role for which the Legion is famous for...flag education. You do not need to register, do not need to have a Legion hat or shirt, just bring a willing spirit. Come when you can, leave when you must. I promise you will feel better about yourself afterwards.

Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Academy – Post 1995's candidate, Jeff Otero of Herndon High School, has received his instructions and completed all the forms required by the Department for final processing to attend. As already mentioned, Jeff is enrolled in the Fairfax County Police Public Safety Cadet Program. Jeff is excited to attend and get the most out of this fast-paced hands-on learning experience. He is busy assembling the clothing and gear he will need. The course will begin on Sunday, June 15th and I plan to attend the graduation on the following Friday, June 20th at the Virginia State Police Academy in North Chesterfield.

Legion Baseball Has Begun – Post 1995's Arlington team is off to a faster start than last year with a 2 - 1 record. The opening day saw a win over Alexandria Post 24's team then a close loss to Vienna, 6 -8. Vienna Post 180 was last year's 17th District champion. Then came a walk off win over Fairfax Post 177. Coach Moccia reports that we have a good mix of talented players with many playing collegiately from Division III up to Division I. Come out to the local ballfields to cheer on the boys, meet the parents, and thank the coaches. Here is a link to the American Legion Baseball – 17th District's website where you can find a game schedule and information: <https://legiond17baseball.org/>



BE the ONE – We recently completed many observances of Memorial Day. Sadly, we sometimes are compelled to also think about Veterans who took their own lives long after the battle. Our struggle to de-stigmatize feelings of depression and mental health continues in the face of the reality that suicide still stalks our ranks. As we think about the fallen on every Memorial Day let us rededicate ourselves to prevent any more losses after the fight. All kinds of information and instruction can be found at **betheone.org** Look for opportunities to ASK the Veterans in your life how they are doing. Remember: dial 988 then #1 to ask for help for yourself or another Vet.

Post 1995 Officers for 2025-2026

POSITION	NAME	POSITION	NAME
COMMANDER	Randy Young	3 RD VICE COMMANDER	Jim Robison
ADJUTANT	Steve Hunter	FINANCE OFFICER	Tom Joplin
1 ST VICE COMMANDER	David Benson	SERVICE OFFICER	Yamin Norwood
2 ND VICE COMMANDER	Chris Torelli	JUDGE ADVOCATE	Mike Reilly

Tragedy assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

Over Memorial Day weekend, 22-26 May, Post 1995 and Unit 1995 Auxiliary supported the Tragedy Assistance Program Survivors Good Grief Camp in Arlington VA.

Patty Caggiano (12 years) and Karen Hunter of the Auxiliary and Steve Hunter (2nd year for both) of Post 1995 volunteered in the retail store for a myriad of projects. Chris Torelli of Post 1995 mentored three teens in his group for the 5th year participating in various enrichment and bonding activities. In total TAPS took over three hotels, supported over 500 children between the ages of 6 and 16 and placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers on May 26th.



Chris with his cohort



Post/Unit 1995 TAPS volunteers

Legislative News:

Legion support for the GI Bill Parity Act

This week, we are asking Legionnaires to contact Congress to request support for the *GI Bill Parity Act*! Currently, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers only earn credit toward their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits when they mobilize and deploy for federal missions. National Guard and Reserve servicemembers activated under state orders do not accrue eligibility for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. This legislation aims to count every day spent on weekend drills, annual training, attending military school, participating in an exercise, or responding to a disaster toward GI Bill eligibility. *The American Legion supports this legislation, and we appreciate all the emails you have sent so far. **Go to the [Action Center](#) to quickly email a** letter of support to your members of Congress.*

The Legion wants to hear of your interactions with elected officials.

Have you had a recent meeting or phone call with your member of Congress? Report your contact today! Click [here](#) to register your Congressional contact and demonstrate the power of The American Legion advocacy in action.

Interested in what the Legion is advocating for in Congress on ***The Veteran's Role in Supporting the Military?*** Check out [our information paper](#) in the [Legislative Toolkit](#). This is a great starting point for a conversation with your elected officials!

As part of our ongoing Grassroots efforts, the Legislative Division staff is available to provide **Grassroots Training** tailored to the hosting Department's needs. If you are interested in hosting a Grassroots training event, please contact grassroots@legion.org or ejohnson@legion.org.

You can find relevant legislation and the Legion's stance in the [key legislation section of VoterVoice!](#) (Source: Grassroots weekly newsletter, May 30, 2025)

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 behalf: <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)

Department of Virginia Convention July 9-13 / Hilton Washington Dulles Hotel

The Department's annual convention is where the new Department and District officers are installed for the year 2025-2026. The convention is located just a short drive-up Route 28 to the hotel. If you have never been to one, please consider attending at least on Saturday when most of the action occurs.

Here's the link to registering and signing up for some of the extra events:

<https://valegion.org/tools-and-media/upcoming-events/>

The American Legion's 106th National Convention

The American Legion's 106th National Convention is from August 22-28 in Tampa Bay, Florida. To stay up to date on information, schedules, and more, go to the information page [here](#).

Annual Post Reports

All our annual reports have been submitted to the 17th District and Department of Virginia for 2024-2025. The reports (Americanism, Children and Youth, and Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation) are attached for your review and to serve as an example of the types of volunteer activities, donations, etc. that the Legion would like to capture from all of its members to compile its reporting to Congress and highlight to our membership the good work we do for our communities, fellow Veterans, and our country.

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 assess it for updating as you go throughout the year.

National Membership Impact Report for May 2025

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

Military Quiz Question of the Month

Approximately what percentage of total Army strength is comprised of National Guard members?

Please send your best guess to David Benson at warren.d.benson@gmail.com. The first correct response received by Monday, June 16th will receive a challenge coin.

Flag Day (June 14th) Community Flay Education:

The purpose of this event is to help educate the public and especially young elementary-aged students about our flag. I will bring all the stuff will need to include flags, coloring sheets, handouts, candy, and our new "Patriot Dog." I need you to bring your flag knowledge to share. Attached to this email is the flier or press release that will be posted Monday, June 9th on several social media sites. This is our first time doing this, so it may well be a learning experience for us all. Hope to see you there next Saturday.

News You Can Use:

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Replica, The Wall That Heals, is in Alexandria, June 12 -15

The exhibit will be located on the grounds of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial and will be open 24 hours a day, free to the public.

<https://thezebra.org/2025/05/27/vietnam-veterans-memorial-replica-the-wall-that-heals-coming-to-alexandria-june-12-15/> (Source: Alexandria Zebra, May 30, 2025)

The 2025 Veterans Benefits Guide is now available!



Have you applied for VA care, benefits, and services? Unsure what else you may be eligible for? Do not miss out on what you have earned—check out this handy reference guide to learn more. The handbook contains a comprehensive listing of VA programs, including phone numbers and websites for easy reference. [Download today. https://news.va.gov/137659/spread-the-word-the-2025-veterans-benefits-guide-is-now-available/](https://news.va.gov/137659/spread-the-word-the-2025-veterans-benefits-guide-is-now-available/)

Legion urges reduction of overdevelopment of VA claims, improvements in timeliness, and Accuracy <https://www.legion.org/information-center/news/veterans-benefits/2025/april/legion-urges-reduction-of-overdevelopment-of-va-claims-improvements-in-timeliness-accuracy> (Source: The American Legion, April 9, 2025)

Virginia Dept. of Veterans Services



E-News Veteran Benefits Education Benefits Transition and Employment Services
Virginia Women Veterans Military Spouse Support Veteran and Family Support Virginia
Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) Veteran Care
Center Cemeteries Virginia War Memorial
[View all topics for Virginia Department of Veterans Services](#)

To sign up for Virginia Department of Veterans Services news alerts, you can access the list of topics you are interested in here through Fairfax County's website:
topic<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VAFAIRFAXCOUNTY/subscriber/new>

If you are interested in other Fairfax County resources and links click on this link for a listing for county updates on numerous topics :
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/maillinglist>

The Legion wants to hear how you save a Veteran at risk of suicide.

Have you participated in the Legion's suicide prevention training with Columbia University or other suicide training and put the training into action to help a veteran?

19,000 – the number of American Legion family members and others who have been trained to detect and prevent veteran suicide using the Columbia Protocol or QPR (question, persuade, refer) methods since February 2024. Those trained have the resources and knowledge to support The American Legion's [Be the One mission](#) of saving the life of a veteran at risk of suicide, and destigmatizing the need to ask for help.

If you have taken the Columbia Protocol or QPR training, or even VA S.A.V.E., and have applied it to save a veteran, let us know. We want to hear your story of how you used this training as intended to intervene when a veteran was in crisis. Please email crichardson@legion.org or you can share on [Legiontown.org](https://legiontown.org) under Be the One. If you have not taken the Columbia Protocol training, [register for an upcoming free class](#). It only takes 90 minutes to learn the tools to intervene when a veteran needs your help.

The American Legion has partnered with Columbia University to host the free training classes. For the training, Columbia University uses the Columbia Protocol, also known as the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale, which supports suicide risk assessment through a series of six simple, plain-language questions that anyone can ask.

Veterans in the U.S. - Statistics & Facts

<https://www.statista.com/topics/1279/veterans/#editorsPicks>

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 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.

Helmets 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.



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

Membership Update

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

I sent personal letters to 29 Post 1995 members who have not renewed for the past two years on April 21st. I received no responses. Membership is critical to our Post and our National organization to continue to advocate for Veterans and make a meaningful impact within our local communities, which we (Post 1995) do in the Centreville-Clifton-Chantilly area.

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.

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:

The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have. - *Vince Lombardi*

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 May and June are on the next pages.

June 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6 D-Day Anniversary	7
8	9	10 Post Meeting	11	12	13	14 Flag Day/Army Birthday
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 National PTSD Awareness Day	28
29						

July 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Battle of Gettysburg 1-3 July	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 National Hire a Veteran Day	26
27 Korean War Veterans Armistice Day	28	29	30	31		

Military History:

The History Channel's 'The American Soldier' Documents the Evolution of the US Army

https://www.military.com/off-duty/television/2024/11/07/history-channels-american-soldier-documents-evolution-of-us-army.html?ESRC=eb_241108.nl&utm_medium=email&utm_source=eb&utm_campaign=20241108 (Source: Military.com, November 7, 2024)

Vietnam War Stories

<https://www.dcnewsnow.com/vietnam/#/questions/5444585>

(Stars and Stripes, 5 June 2025)

Auxiliary News – No news this month

Ladies of ALA,

We will not have a meeting in July due to the Department Convention. We will meet in August.

Due to local elections happening at the Sully District Government Center our monthly meeting for June has moved. We will be meeting at the Preserve apartments behind Sedona Taphouse. We will still need to park at the Government Center and walk across the street. We will meet outside the building and Ann will let us in. I believe Ann has a parking spot for Fran?

Please bring your food and pantry items to the meeting as well. We will be collecting our summer food drive (in leu of the Winter Reverse advent calendar food drive) items at this meeting. You can leave them in your car, and we will collect them after the meeting.

The following is just a reminder of what was in the May newsletter.



Summer Food Drive

The Auxiliary/Post 1995 Food Drive this year will take place from the May meeting to the June meeting. Shelves at the Western Fairfax Ministry Food Bank have limited supplies during the busy summer months when students are out of school. This food drive replaces the December Reverse Advent Calendar food drive we have done in the past where each day an item was donated for 25 days. Please consider making an equally generous donation during this Food Drive to help those community members in need. It is helpful to keep track of the in-kind dollar donation amount **and** report it with your yearly report in 2026. Bring your donation to the June Meeting or plan to drop off at the Hunter house before then by calling 703-314-6294.

Current Food Needs are:

Food & Beverages

Flour	Sugar (1 or 2 lb. bags)	Vegetable Oil
Kidney Beans	Garbanzo Beans	Diced Tomatoes
Tomato Sauce	Tomato Paste	Hot Cereal

Cereal (low sugar preferred)
Pasta Sauce (no glass containers please)
Canned Fruit (Peaches, Pears, & Pineapple)
Family Sized Snacks (Pretzels, crackers, nuts, seeds, etc.)
Hot Beverages (ground coffee, tea bags, etc.)

NOTE: Toiletry items cannot be purchased by Food Bank Clients with SNAP

Body Wash	Toothpaste	Hair Shampoo	Hair Conditioner	Baby
Wipes	Feminine Hygiene Products (Pads Preferred)			