American Legion Post 1995

DEFENDER NEWSLETTER

November 10h, 2026

Monthly Military Quote

"The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things."
Ronald Reagan, President and former Captain in the Army Reserves

Military Photo of the Month



National Reconnaissance Office Color Guard leading the Centreville Day American Legion Parade

Happy Marine Corps birthday to all **MARINES!** – November 10th

Newsletter Index

- Commander's Corner - Pages 2-5
- Legislative News – Pages 6-7
- News You Can Use – Pages 8-10
- Post Information/Media – Pages 11-12
- Post Calendars Nov/Dec – Pages 13-14
- Centreville Day – Pages 5-6
- Annual Reports – Pages 7-8
- Membership Update – Page 11
- Military History – Tootsie Rolls **- P**age 12
- Auxiliary News – Pages 14-16

Commander's Corner

17th District Fall Conference – The Stormin' 17th District held their Fall Conference at Fairfax Post 177 on Saturday, October 17th. The date was a last-minute change from the usual Sunday schedule and unfortunately, it coincided with Centreville Day. As a district Vice Commander I submitted my activity report in writing, and as Scouting Chairman I gave an overview of the activities of the Cub Packs and Troops sponsored by posts in our district. As Steve Hunter was helping to run Centreville Day activities at the same time, I gave his Americanism report in his (excused) absence. The District conferences and convention are come one, come all events open to any Legionnaire in good standing. As the most populous district in Virginia by far, listening to all the good things we do for Veterans and our communities is impressive. All Post 1995 Legionnaires are invited to attend.

Flag Retirement Ceremony – Once again on the first Saturday of November Post 1995 lead this large effort to provide a dignified retirement of about ~1,000 worn-out American flags at Fire Station 38. Our Sergeant-at-Arms, Mark Miller led the ceremony that rendered to the flames flags worn out in patriotic service in our larger community. Helping Post 1995 were the cadets from the FC Police Academy, and the firefighters of Station 38 in west Centreville served as our hosts. FCPD color guard members collected most of the flags from county police station/government centers throughout the year. The majority of the flags will be retired at the ReWorld waste to energy plant with plants from other posts within the 17th District in the near future.

This is one of Post 1995's most significant community outreach activities and one we can all be proud of. The Magic Hand Orchestra provided the National Anthem or other patriotic music.

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 or know of a school/church/etc. that needs one. 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 and past years. However, due to their good to excellent 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 among others.



Group photo of Legionnaires, fire station captain, and police cadets and a FEW of the collected and folded U.S. flags



SAA Mark Miller



Magic Hand Orchestra/YALE Foundation

Post Oratorical Contest – Post 1995 will hold its fourth Oratorical Contest on Saturday, December 12th at the Sully Government Center, from 2 to 5 PM. The speakers deliver an 8-to-10-minute oration about the US Constitution and a shorter speech on one of four assigned topics. We are expanding the contest with two high school orators from Paul VI Catholic High School and Centreville High School participating. While just a Post level competition it still requires at least seven Legionnaires to fill all the roles of escort, timer, MC, greeter, escort, tabulator, and judges. This is an easy lift for those of you who want to help the Post and don't want to attend a boring meeting. A sign-up roster will be available at the November membership meeting, or you can please contact me, Randy Young, via my email at rsyoung47@gmail.com or call me at 703-244-0785 if you are interested in interacting with these impressive high school students. You will be glad you did.



Jim Robison, Randy Young, Steve Hunter, Aadhya Edunuri, Jeff White, Mark Miller and Greg Hinton (2025)

BE the ONE – Under the leadership of Alexandria Post 24's 1st Vice Commander, Wendy Driver, the Stormin' 17th District is hosting Be the One Facilitator training next month. Trainers from the Columbia Lighthouse Project will conduct two 8-hour sessions on December 5th and 6th. A flyer with more details will be found later in this newsletter. I strongly encourage members from our Post to register on the Signup Genius to enroll. Each class will accommodate 30 participants and seats are filling up fast. This training is of the highest quality the Legion has to offer. Please consider enrolling in this unique opportunity to learn about this complex subject. And, LISTEN when a Veteran needs to talk. Remember: dial 988 then #1 to ask for help for yourself or another Veteran.

AMERICAN LEGION
BE THE ONE
BETHEONE.ORG



How do I register: Use the enclosed Signup Genius Link. All information will be passed to the email attached to your registration. https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C044DADA723A7F9C70-66831508-betheone

Centreville Day 2026

Centreville Day was held in Centreville's Historic District and is the largest community event in the area each year. Over 6,000 people attended the daylong event (10:00-16:00). This year's theme celebrated America's 250th anniversary. The likeness of George Washington attended greeting guests throughout the day and arriving with the parade. Post 1995 coordinated the Centreville Day American Legion which included 19 units. Cash awards were presented to two groups demonstrating the most patriotic spirit and enthusiasm. This year's winners were Cub Scout Pack 1859 and the Centreville Dance Academy with more than 100 dancers. The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) color guard served at the lead parade unit.

Centreville's Historic District is a county park with several historic buildings covering eras from before the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and early 20th century, all of which were open to the public. Entertainment included two stages with music/dance and a dog pageant. Hands on activities and a Trick-or-Treat trail kept children busy, while food, craft,

and service vendors, county government offices, churches, and other organizations provided adults many opportunities for attendees to enjoy a great day and learn a bit more about Centreville's history.

The Post provided an information/recruiting booth. One member served on the event's planning committee and coordinated the parade and safety expo. While the weather was cool and cloudy in the morning, the day ended with sunshine and warmer temperatures.



Scout Troop 1859 won the most "Patriotic" parade unit


Centreville Dance Academy won most "Enthusisatic" parade unit



"George Washington" with Steve Hunter and Jasper Boomer

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.

LEGISLATIVE Your support, the support of many, has been outstanding. Support the Take Care of America's Veterans Act. Sign up for The American

Legion Voters Voice. Use the QR code below. You also can sign up or vote at https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home.

The Virginia day on the hill is to be determined (TBD), likely it will be third week of January 2027 (the week beginning 19 January)

Washington, D.C. Day on the Hill and the Commander's testimony TBA. The National Commander's legislative testimony typically occurs during the conference (often the first or second day, such as March 1 or 2 in recent years), I did not find the specific date and time for the 2027 National Commander's testimony posted. One of you may know. https://www.legion.org/get-involved/meetings/washington-conference.

Every 24 hours you can vote. Vote early. Vote often. The bill (H.R. 9237/S. 4744) consists of 60 bipartisan, bicameral bills that The American Legion (TAL) prioritizes, such as the Major Richard Star. TAL states that the bill does NOT take away benefits from veterans. Veterans who are currently rated for tinnitus and sleep apnea keep their ratings as they are.

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

Grassroots Weekly Newsletter

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

Get a link to the American Legion Legislative Handbook here.

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 won the Department's Americanism Report four 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 (2027) covering the period from May 1, 2026, to 31 April 2027.

National Membership Impact Report for October 2026
https://www.legion.org/about/reports/membership-impact

News You Can Use:

How many U.S. service members have died in the U.S. military and how?

This article was published on May 13, 2026, documents total service member deaths and wounded for most conflicts since 1775. It also provides links for military benefits to families after a veteran passes to Post Everlasting. If you wish to explore more related data, you can find more articles at the bottom of the link page.

https://usafacts.org/articles/how-have-military-deaths-changed-over-time/?utm_content=section1_button&utm_source=USAFacts_Klaviyo&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=5_26_26_Flagship_Military%20deaths%20and%20jobs&_kx=7d8gEgqrbB1Ti-uX9X_mWhwSE1zWdL5ULBrXdzirYJw.SH8aQb

TRICARE Newsroom: https://newsroom.tricare.mil/
https://newsroom.tricare.mil/News/TRICARE-News/Article/3756012/national-guard-and-reserve-members-explore-plan-options-with-this-tricare-handb

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: FTC, BCP Staff, Military Consumer, 24, August 2026) https://www.militaryconsumer.gov/blog/how-spot-postcard-scam-targeting-veterans?utm_source=govdelivery

Coast Guard Exchange November 11 - Veterans Day Appreciation

The CGE is continuing its tradition of giving away limited-edition GC Veterans Appreciation Coins as a small way of saying thank you for your service. If you haven't received one in previous years, let 2026 be your first! Our newest 2026 Veterans Appreciation Coin will be available on November 11, while supplies last. We will also have special giveaways and a huge, allocated merchandise drop for Veterans Day!

Shopping Eligibility: In-store purchases are available to authorized Coast Guard Exchange patrons, including eligible veterans. Some veterans may qualify for online exchange

shopping only. We encourage members to verify their in-store shopping eligibility before visiting. Promotional offers and merchandise may be subject to additional restrictions. We would appreciate it if you share this invitation with your members, so they don't miss these opportunities.

Thank you for your continued service to our veteran community. We look forward to welcoming you to CGX Centreville!
Coast Guard Exchange Centreville, 6335 Multiplex Drive, Centreville, VA 20121





Meal Deals on Veterans Day

A few quick tips before you head out:

- Bring proof of service. Military ID, VA Veteran ID, a driver's license with veteran designation, or a DD-214 usually does the trick.
- Participation and hours vary by location, so a quick call ahead can save you a trip.
- If you score a free meal, tip your server based on the full value. They'll appreciate it!

Popular Free Meal & Entrée Deals

- **Mission BBQ** – Free sandwich
- **Applebee's:** Full-size entrée free from a select Veterans Day menu (including items like a 6 oz. Top Sirloin, Classic Cheeseburger, or Chicken Tenders Platter), plus a $5 coupon for a future visit (dine-in only).
- **Bob Evans:** Free meal from a special homestyle menu featuring 11 different favorites.
- **Chili's:** Free entrée from a limited Veterans Day menu at participating locations (dine-in only).

- **Golden Corral:** Hosting their annual Military Appreciation Night with a free buffet and beverage from 4:00 p.m. to close.
- **Olive Garden:** Complimentary entrée from a special menu (such as chicken parmigiana or fettuccine alfredo), complete with unlimited soup, salad, and breadsticks.
- **Red Robin:** Free Red's Big Tavern Burger accompanied by bottomless fries.
- **Shake Shack:** Free Single ShackBurger (up to $9.99 value).
- **Texas Roadhouse** will continue its annual Veterans Day tradition of treating veterans and active U.S. military to enjoy a free meal. On Wednesday, Nov. 11, every Texas Roadhouse location will distribute meal vouchers, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Proof of service is required and includes military or VA card or discharge papers.
- Vouchers can be redeemed through May 31, 2027, for one of 10 entrees, including a 6-ounce sirloin and two made-from-scratch sides plus a choice of any Coca-Cola product, sweet tea/iced tea or coffee.

Breakfast & Morning Deals

- Denny's: Free Original Grand Slam breakfast from 5:00 a.m. until noon at participating spots.
- IHOP: Free Red, White, and Blueberry Pancakes from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Fast Food, Quick Bites & Coffee

- Chipotle: Free chips and choice of guac, queso blanco, or salsa with any purchase of $5 or more.
- Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakburgers: Receive a card on November 11 for a free combo meal, which remains valid through November 25.
- Starbucks: Free 12-ounce hot or iced brewed coffee (extended to military spouses as well at participating stores).
- Chick-fil-A – free Entree (Air and Space, Fair Lakes, and 4201 Chantilly Shopping Center (near Walmart/Ikea) locations)

Membership Update

We currently are at 70.56% of our 20267membership goal of 214 members with 151 countable members.

The latest batch of renewal reminder letters will be mailed from National between the 7th and 13th of November. The renewal cutoff date for this mailing was October 14, 2026. So, if you have not yet renewed for 2027, now would be a great time to do so. I thank all those who have renewed already. If you have not renewed, you may do so by mailing one of the renewal letters or preferably going online at Renew (mylegion.org). 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 - 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:

Help others and give something back. I guarantee you will discover that while public service improves the lives and the world around you, its greatest reward is the enrichment and new meaning it will bring your own life. Arnold Schwarzenegger

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.

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Military History:

The Untold Truth of Tootsie Rolls including how they helped soldiers/Marines in WWII and the Korean War https://www.mashed.com/252208/the-untold-truth-of-tootsie-rolls/

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

Post Calendars for February and March 2026 are on the next pages.

November 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Post Flag Retirement
8	9	10 Post Meeting Marine Corps Birthday	11 Veterans Day	12	13	14 Legion Recruiting at CGX
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Thanksgiving Day	27	28
29	30					

Link Source: https://veteran.com/military-calendar-holidays-events-observances/

December 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8 Post Meeting/ Holiday Dinner	9	10	11	12
13 Wreath Across America Day	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Christmas	26
27	28	29	30	31 News Years Eve		

Link Source: https://veteran.com/military-calendar-holidays-events-observances/

Auxiliary News

2027 Auxiliary dues are being accepted.

Our Auxiliary delivered 5,973 Holiday cards to Mission BBQ for delivery to active duty, deployed soldiers. Additionally, 270
Holiday Cards were delivered to Gold Star Mothers, Inc for delivery.
To Veterans in Hospice care over the holidays.

The Auxiliary is ramping up for our 3rd annual Bake Sale at Patriot High School on Saturday December 5.

We are working on mid-year Reports which are due to Department on the 1st of December 2026.

We are looking forward to the Legion Family Holiday gathering on December 8th.

Ronald McDonald House 5K Run

The 17th District's October newsletter included photos and article on the Department of Virginia Auxiliary's check presentation ($5,000) at a local Ronald McDonald house. The Ronald McDonald 5K Run/Walk fundraiser was held at National Harbor on October 4th. As the Auxiliary's Department Children and Youth Chair last year, she was invited to participate in this year's event. While we did not "win" the walking portion of the event, it was a great opportunity to show the Legion/Auxiliary support to this worthwhile cause supporting children and families.



Karen Hunter, (Unit 1995) at Ronald McDonald House 5K Run/Walk



Karen and Steve Hunter



Please consider supporting the Post 1995 Wreaths Across America project, detail to follow in a few day.

Also please consider supporting Sully District Police Toys for Tots. Boxes are located in the station lobby.