



AMERICAN LEGION SUMMERS-WHITEHEAD POST 14 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



The General



VOLUME 8 NUMBER 1

JANUARY 2026

“For God and Country”



POST 14 OFFICERS

Post Commander, Chaplain.....Chris Dooley

Post Vice Commander.....Ray Mitchell

Post Adjutant.....Alan Syler

423-488-5445, asyler@epbfi.com

6860 Village Lake Cir, Chattanooga, TN 37412-4095

Post Finance.....JHM Accountants

Post Service Officer.....Chuck Alsobrook

Membership Chair.....Vickie Putnam

Judge Advocate.....James Fields

Master-at-Arms.....Carl Poston

A NEW HOME, A HISTORIC CHAPTER: AMERICAN LEGION POST 14 OPENS ITS DOORS TO THE COMMUNITY

Ray Mitchell

On a partly sunny Saturday afternoon, September 27, the American Legion Post 14 welcomed veterans and the community to its brand-new facility at 1200 Mountain Creek Road, Suite 320 in Chattanooga. The open house, held from 1 to 4 p.m., wasn't just a celebration of a building—it was a celebration of service, camaraderie, and community. The afternoon began with a moving presentation of the Colors by the Red Bank High School JROTC Honor Guard. As the flag rose, Cindy Dooley, wife of Post Commander Chris Dooley, filled the hall with her stirring rendition of the National Anthem. Commander Dooley then took the stage, offering a heartfelt welcome to all in attendance. He expressed pride in the new facility, which he announced would be available at no cost to groups needing a meeting space—an extension of the Post's commitment to service both inside and outside the veteran community.

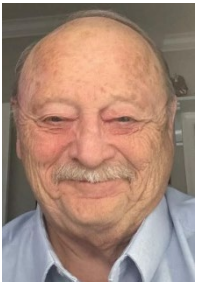
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THE GENERAL EDITOR



We hope our membership and veterans will renew/join Post 14. Our post is involved in several community service projects. Additionally, our scholarship will soon be available.

We are involved with two of the county's JROTC programs, Red Bank and Central. Several Post 14 members are mentors in the Hamilton County Veteran Treatment Court. We're always seeking veteran mentors for this program. You can contact me at the phone number or email below to find more information about the opportunity to serve your fellow veterans..

Alan Syler 

423-488-5445
asyler@epbfi.com



POST 14

NOW HAS A WEBSITE

You can scan the QR code below to go to our website.



amlegion14.us

We will maintain our site current to ensure you are kept up to date at post meetings and events.

POST 14 CHARTER REPLACED

Shortly before our fellow legionnaire, Carl Levi, passed away, I questioned him about our post charter. He indicated it was burned in the 1977 fire.

Since we now have a post home, I thought it fitting that the post has our charter displayed.

I contacted the Legion Department of Tennessee and National regarding a replacement.

The replacement was presented to the post by the state adjutant, Dean Tuttle, at the State Convention in June.



L-R: Alan Syler, Post 14 Adjutant; Dean Tuttle, Department of Tennessee Adjutant

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Fellow Legionnaires:
If your contact information has changed, please contact us.
You can update your info via email, text message, or voicemail.

Alan Syler

423-488-5445
asyler@epbfi.com



POST 14 SCHOLARSHIP

The Post 14 Medal of Honor Memorial Scholarship has been distributed to the high schools, Chattanooga State, and UTC. College students will receive \$1,000 per semester for the four years of their undergrad program. Since master's vary in duration of the program. Those eligible are children or grandchildren of veterans, active-duty, Reserves, and Guard. The scholarship will also be available for technical and trade school. Ask your Adjutant for the criteria and application today, it must be submitted no later than 1 December.



Fellow Legionnaires:

Post 14 is enrolled in the American Legion flag program through Flag and Emblem Sales. Emblem Sales created an opportunity for posts to earn money for their programs and activities by purchasing U.S. flags in their catalog and online. Posts participating in the Flag Rewards program receive a 10-cent credit for each dollar spent on American flag purchases by the post or community members. The credit is good for future purchases of any Emblem Sales catalog item.

The program aims to make the Legion the primary source for communities to purchase American flags. It also aims to increase Legion members' visibility in their local neighborhoods and communities, contact with local businesses and civic leaders, and increase membership

recruiting opportunities through contact with patriotic neighbors.

If you would like me to place an order for you, I'll gladly do so. If you do not have a computer and would like an Emblem Sales catalog, let me know, and I'll order one or more for you.

Alan Syler
6860 Village Lake Cir
Chattanooga, TN 37412-4095
asyler@epbfi.com
423-488-5445 cell



POST COMMANDER



Post 14 desires to be a benefit to veterans and the community. This year we have been working hard to achieve this. Here is a look at some of the things we have done and what we are planning to do.

On 12 September 2025, Post 14 handled the memorial service for Brigadier General Carl Levi who was a pillar in the community and a leader in many veteran organizations. He was Post 14 commander for 28 years. On 27 September, we hosted our open house at our new post spaces. Over 50 people came out. If you were not there you missed something. Please try to come to our monthly meetings. On 18 October, we built fifty beds for disadvantaged youth with the nonprofit organization "Sleep in Heavenly Peace." On 24 October, members of the executive board conducted a flag ceremony at Signal Mountain Senior Living. The residents were very thankful, and the veterans who attended were honored. On Veterans Day, our commander spoke at the Dunlap Veterans Day ceremony. Dunlap has a robust veteran community, and the commander's comments were well received.



Now, we could use you to help with the coming events.

On 6 December, Post 14, we will host a Freedom Sings concert. Original songs co-written with veterans will be sung.

Likewise, on 6 December, Project Gallantly Forward will have their annual Ugly Sweater Christmas party in the spaces right across the lawn from Post 14. Come out and hear some good music and have some fun.

On 13 December 1600, we will host an Army-Navy Football party. Come out for low country boil by Jim Fields. Entrance is canned goods for the Red Bank food pantry. In January 2026, we will help produce and package food for needy families. Standby for more details regarding that event. We packaged over 100,000 meals last year, and it was a great success.

Finally, we have finalized the application and information sheet for our two post scholarships honoring our Medal of Honor recipients. These are fine scholarships offering \$1000 per semester until graduation from college or a trade school. They are for graduate students too. Get the word out. Please come to our meetings and be a part of a motivated group of veterans helping fellow veterans and the local community. Help us ensure America continues to be the land of the free and the home of the brave.

For God and Country

Chris Dodey

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



I like to hunt and fish. When I sit in my deer stand, I think about life's problems and pray. It settles me and helps me appreciate God, His mercies, and His wonderful creation.

In *1 Peter 4:19*, Peter says believers are to "commit the keeping of their souls to [H]im

in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." The word "committed here is a banking term that means the deposit for safe keeping. When I was in Afghanistan, I was stationed in the mountains along the Pakistani border. I mentored a Brigadier General of the Afghan 203rd Corps and had legal offices and jails in seven provinces to monitor. I also did several missions with young troops thirty years my junior. My life was in their hands -- I committed myself to their care. They never let me down.

Isn't it odd that we can commit ourselves to other men in dangerous situations, but fail to give ourselves to the Creator of the Universe? Giving ourselves to God means we are giving back to God something He has created. And as Creator, God knows what it best for us.

How about you? Are you committed to God? Or are you more interested in yourselves, or advancement, or personal glory? During this holiday season, we should stop and pray to thank the Lord for His creation and His salvation. He knows what we really need.



Chris Dodey



MEETING MINUTES

October, November

October:

Vice Commander Ray Mitchell opened the Post 14 meeting.

Scott Hardin led us in the opening prayer.

Alan Syler led us in the Pledge of Allegiance, with all reciting.

All observed a moment of silence.

Ray read the American Legion Opening Ceremony.



Ray recognized a visitor.

The Adjutant read the minutes of the last meeting, held on 2 September 2025. The minutes were approved without exception.

Membership numbers reported: 66 paid for the 2026-2027 period.

Correspondence: None

The Adjutant was remiss in preparing a financial report.

Ray discussed our recent open house. He and others expressed their opinions on the event's success. Several noted the turnout could have been better, especially among our membership. We were disappointed the VA showed up in force, but the veterans didn't.

All agreed the food provided by Chefs 4 Vets USA and VA support was excellent.

Ray discussed the Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed build scheduled for Saturday, 18 October. He expressed the need for us to get the word out to as many organizations as possible. He also pointed out parking spots in the area.

Ray reminded everyone about the Navy Ball on 18 October at 1730 hours.

Ray discussed the Meals for Hope packaging opportunity scheduled for 17 January 2026. Alan stated that the post will make a \$5,000 donation to purchase food. Alan also informed all that Jim Fields is in the process of securing additional funding and workers.

Ray discussed funding for a playground that Post 203 in Dayton is spearheading in Spring City. Since Chris has received no additional information regarding the playground, the executive board has taken no action.

Ray stated that Freedom Sings would like to use the post on 6 December for one of their events. He continued that their songwriters want five veterans to work with and write their song. On Friday, 5 December, the veterans will meet with the songwriters to write their lyrics. He asked if any of us would be interested. No one expressed an interest in being one of the five.

Syler indicated no other uses of the post are scheduled for that date.

Ray and Scott discussed the week's activities associated with the Medal of Honor's National Convention. Both stressed the success of putting

Chattanooga on the map. They continued to state how well the week and gala were, and the MoH recipients they met, while driving them to events. Ray discussed the initiative sponsored by Hope for the Inner City: The Turkey for Two drive. Ray continued explaining that this drive aims to provide Thanksgiving dinner to 275 families.

Ray reported that the executive board will donate \$2,500 to purchase Thanksgiving meals.

Syler stated the Medal of Honor Memorial Scholarship packages were delivered to all the high schools in Hamilton County, to Chattanooga State, and to the undergraduate and master's programs at UTC.

Shelia Billings presented a flyer about the upcoming Gallantry Forward Fishing with a Veteran Tournament to be held on 1 November. She noted the tournament organizers need funds to purchase prizes.

Ray made a motion to donate \$100, Scott Hardin seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous. Syler is going online to donate.

Sheila also stated the post should support Girls State. She continued that it is an auxiliary function, but since Post 14 does not have one, the post should provide funds. Syler stated that the post funded one girl this year, and he plans to ask for a second girl in 2026. Syler went on to state that Vickie Putnam will solicit donations from various groups to fund Girls State.

Sheila Billings also informed us that she is now a certificated American Legion Veteran Service Officer. She also reminded everyone of her functions at the recently held National Convention. She also stated that her expenses were substantial, and she should be reimbursed by means of a fundraiser. Syler pointed out that when Commander Dooley travels to a meeting in Indianapolis and the National Convention, he pays his expenses. Syler continued that when he attends the Department Convention, he also pays his expenses. Syler stated we will discuss it at the next executive board meeting. Ray asked the members if there were any other subjects they would like to discuss.

Ray read the American Legion Closing Ceremony. Syler stated that the next post-meeting will be on 4 November at 1830 hours.

Ray closed the meeting, and it was adjourned.



November:

Commander Dooley opened the Post 14 meeting.
Chaplain Dooley led us in the opening prayer.
Commander led us in the Pledge of Allegiance, with all reciting.
All observed a moment of silence.
Commander Dooley read the American Legion Opening Ceremony.
The Adjutant read the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 October 2025.
Sheila Billings pointed out a clarification of the information provided at the 7 October meeting. Also, Jim Fields added, we had voted to donate \$5,000 to Meals for Hope.
Jim Fields made a motion to accept the minutes, Scott Hardin seconded, and the vote was unanimous.
Membership numbers reported: 73 paid for the 2026-2027 period.
Correspondence: Thank you letter from Medal of Honor Heritage Center for the post donation in the name of Ray Adkins.
Commander Dooley discussed the Army-Navy game gathering at the post on 13 December. Jim Fields will prepare a low country boil for the food.
Alan Syler indicated he would send an email to members, and mail cards to the members without email, with an RSVP date of 5 December.
A discussion continued about veterans in need of food donations. We will ask those attending to bring canned items to the event.
Jim Fields discussed the post involvement in the Hope for the Intercity, Meals for Hope event scheduled for 17 January. The post will make a \$5,000 donation as well as work at the meal packaging.
Vickie Putnam asked when we plan to do the next bed build, since we built 50 of the 100, we donated to build. Commander Dooley indicated the best time would be in the spring. Jim Fields suggested we do this one at Sleep in Heavenly Peace warehouse.

Jim Fields discussed a dental clinic scheduled for 6 November. This event is by appointment, and he provided the phone number, 423-698-3178.
Jim also notified the attends of an upcoming Lions Vision Clinic to be held at the Hope for the Intercity on 4 April 2026.
Alan Syler asked if the Lions still collect old glasses. Jim indicated they do.
Billie Hewitt questioned the status of the post's 814 Lindsay Street property. The commander there is no movement to purchase the property, but the post receives a lease check from PPD each month.
Commander Dooley reported on the status of the veteran's park to be built on the north shore. He stated the design as not be finalized, so fund raising is on hold until it is. Several members had questions and comments.
Shiela Billings discussed she is serving in several positions in the legion, and she is also a VSO.
She also reported she had recently received a call regarding a veteran in need from Knoxville.
She questioned about the status of her resolution to provide funds to assist veterans, 2025-001. Commander Dooley stated it is still under consideration, but the Department doesn't have the funds for such a program.
Commander Dooley asked the members if there were any other subjects they would like to discuss.
Commander Dooley read the American Legion Closing Ceremony.
Syler stated that the next post meeting will be on 6 January 2026 at 1830 hours.
Commander Dooley closed the meeting, and we were adjourned.



“When you become a leader you give up the right to think about yourself.”

Gerald Brooks





MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Please ensure we have your current email address and/or phone number so we can provide you with the latest information. Contact info is asyler@epbfi.com or 423-488-5445 (leave voicemail).

13 Dec	ARMY-NAVY Game & "Christmas Dinner"
25 Dec	<i>Merry Christmas</i>
1 Jan	<i>Happy New Year</i>
6 Jan	Post 14 meeting
17 Jan	Meals of Hope event
3 Feb	Post 14 meeting
16 Feb	<i>Presidents Day</i>
3 Mar	Post 14 meeting

You can also visit our website, amlegion14.us for updates. Should you have questions, contact your Adjutant at 423-488-5445 or asyler@epbfi.com.

POST 14 MEMBER TO POST EVERLASTING

Benny Ray Adkins, a dedicated military veteran and respected community leader, passed away peacefully on October 9, 2025, at the age of 82. A lifelong servant of his country and his community, Ray leaves behind a legacy of leadership, compassion, and faith that stretched from Chattanooga to Washington, Germany, and Bosnia. A proud graduate of Central High School, Class of 1961, Ray went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He served his nation with honor for 36 years in the United States Army and Army Reserve, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.



After his military career, Ray continued his lifelong commitment to service through his work and volunteer leadership across Tennessee. He retired from the Hamilton County Courts after 13 years and from Sunshine

Biscuit Company after 29 years of dedicated service.

Ray's many honors reflected his deep devotion to veterans and community. Among them, he was named Veteran of the Year (2017), received the Hometown Patriot Award (2018), and was honored with the Ray Adkins Interchange designation by the Tennessee General Assembly in 2021.

MEALS FOR THE INNER CITY MEALS OF HOPE

If you noted on the calendar above, Post 14 will support through our financial support and our work to assembly Meals of Hope for those less fortunate in our community.

The next event will take place at Hope for the Inter City, 1800 Roanoke Ave, Chattanooga on 17 January 2026. Start time will be at 0830 hours but come anytime in the morning to help.

AMERICAN LEGION MEMBERSHIP

Fellow Legionnaires:



The American Legion does not operate on a calendar year format. Its fiscal year (FY) runs from 1 July to 30 June. This is why you receive your renewal notice immediately following the start of an FY.

If possible, please renew your membership when you receive the renewal notice. This will make bookkeeping much more efficient. We hope this request will not be a hardship for anyone.

We value your Legion membership.

The last page is a Legion membership application. We hope everyone will recruit a new member.



POST 14 MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

If you know a veteran looking for camaraderie and pride of supporting our community, youth, and other veterans, Post 14 is for you. Contact Vickie Putnam at 423-762-0346 or vickie_chatt@yahoo.com. Alan Syler, Adjutant, 423-488-5445 or asyler@epbf.com.

Please pass our newsletter on to any veterans you know; we would like to use it as a recruiting tool.

We would like to see our members at our monthly meetings, the dates of which are listed in the *Calendar of Events*.



The fundraising to place a wreath on every grave in the Chattanooga National Cemetery is underway.

You can go to the website:

<https://www.chattareaveterans.com/wac>, or you can complete an order form* and mail the form and your check to:

WREATHS ACROSS CHATTANOOGA
426 MARKET STREET
CHATTANOOGA, TN 37402

* I have the forms on hand if you need one.

- ★ Post 14 made our annual donation to this worthy cause. Individually, several of us will make donations.



HAMILTON COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES

The mission of the Veterans Services Office is to assist Veterans and their dependents in filing applications for:

- Service-Connected Disability Compensation
- Improved Pension Program with Housebound/Aid and Attendance
- Health Benefits Enrollment
- Burial Benefits, Flags, Headstones, Markers, and Military Honors
- Order Replacement Copies of Discharge Papers, Military Records, and Service Medical Records
- GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Dependents Educational Assistance
- VA Insurance Programs
- File Notice of Disagreements and Appeals for Denied Claims

Hamilton County's VSOs are accredited representatives of three nationally recognized veterans' organizations, including:

- Tennessee Dept. of Veterans Service



- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- The American Legion

ADDRESS & CONTACT INFORMATION:

**455 N. Highland Park Ave., room 204
Chattanooga, TN 37404**

**Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday,
8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.**

Phone number: 423-209-7884

FAX number: 423-209-7887

VA RESOURCES

- For any questions or requests, 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411) is always the right number.
- Veterans Crisis Line: **988 and press 1**, Chat, or Text 838255
- Vet Centers: 1-877-927-8387
- Homeless Veteran Resources: 1-877-424-3838 or Chat
- Ask VA
- Schedule a 1-on-1 Appointment with a VA Benefits Expert
- Find a VA facility near you

For non-urgent questions, you can reach VA using the VA Health & Benefits App or *MyHealthVet* secure messaging to schedule an appointment, refill prescriptions, and access your medical records.



If you are a member of or know a civic group willing to contribute to our Boys State fund, please inform the Boys State Chairman, Alan Syler, at 423-488-5445 or

asyler@epbfi.com.

You can mail checks to Alan Syler, 6860 Village Lake Cir, Chattanooga, TN 37412-4095.

In 2025, Post 14 sponsored four boys to attend Boys State and one girl to Girls State.

If we desire peace, one of the most powerful institutions of

our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times, ready for war.

George Washington

VETERAN TREATMENT COURT HAMILTON COUNTY MENTORS 4 VETS

The Hamilton County Veteran Treatment Court is running at full speed and growing.

The Hamilton County Mentors 4 Vets requires additional veterans to mentor our veteran's experiencing adversity in the court system. Our mentees range in age from the 20s to the 90s.

Most of our mentees have needs only a fellow veteran can understand. We attempt to pair mentors with mentees from the same branch of service and sex. To accomplish this, we need more mentors to cover all branches.

We require veterans from all branches of service.

If you would like to become a mentor, please contact:

Chris Dooley, Colonel, USAF JAG, retired

702-701-2858, ruffian19@gmail.com

Alan Syler, MT1(SS), USN veteran

423-488-5445, asyler@epbfi.com

NO VETERAN LEFT BEHIND

VETERAN TREATMENT COURT VETERANS

Veterans participating in the court are progressing through the phases of their program. Those with misdemeanor offenses, Judge Starnes, are in a 12-month (4 phases) program, but those with felonies, Judge Patterson, are in an 18-month (5 phases) program.



Currently there are four veterans in the 12-month program, and three in the 18-month program.

On 4 December the first veteran in the VTC will graduate from her 12-month program. Our mentors are an integral to the veteran's success. Six of our mentors are Post 14 members. We take pride in these veterans stepping up to assist their fellow veterans in their time of need.

We received a grant from MOAA, which allows us to provide a gift card when the veteran completes a phase, and to provide assistance when they have financial challenges.



Judge Patterson presents veteran, John Boughner, with his certificate for his completion of phase 1.



L-R: Judge Patterson presents veteran, Jerry White, with his certificate for

**completion of phase 1.
and his mentor, Ray Mitchell
Jerry recently joined Post 14**

SOUTHEAST TENNESSEE VETERANS' COALITION

**You can find valuable resources at the
website URL listed below:**

<https://www.setnvets.org>



Strategy is, at some level, the ability to predict what's going to happen, but it's also about understanding the context in which it is being formulated. And then you have to be open-minded to the fact that you're not going to get it right at the very beginning.

Martin Dempsey



Courtesy of Broadside Cartoons





“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

John Quincy Adams



“A man has integrity if his interest in the good of the service is at all times greater than his personal pride, and when he holds himself to the same line of duty when unobserved as he would follow if his superiors were present.”

General S.L.A. Marshall



MORE WORK AT THE POST

More work was required to prepare the post to be our home.

Chris Dooley, Ray Mitchell, Scott Hardin, Vickie Putnam, and Alan Syler comprised the team.

Tasks include finishing the stage, which involves laying carpet squares and molding. Also, we had numerous items to hang on the walls.



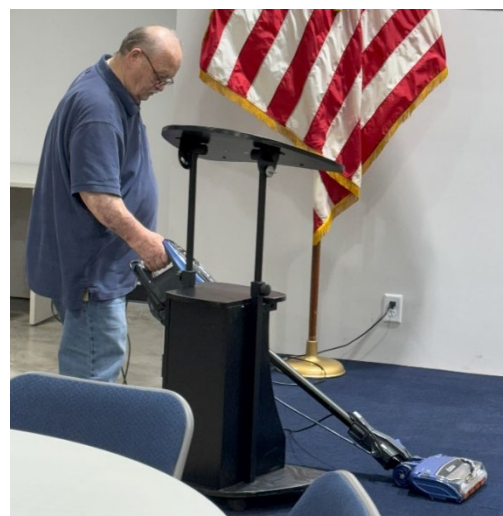
L-R: Ray Mitchell, Scott Hardin



L-R: Alan Syler, Ray Mitchell, Chris Dooley



Pictures and citations of Post 14's three Medal of Honor recipients, the picture to the right is of the Grand Marshals of the 1946 Chattanooga Armed Forces parade: Alvin York, Paul Huff, Charles Coiolidge, and Raymond Cooley.



It appears they found something Alan could do.



Everyone worked diligently to accomplish all we planned for the day, and their effort is greatly appreciated.



A NEW HOME, *continued*:

The soundtrack of the afternoon came courtesy of *Freedom Sings USA*, a national nonprofit that transforms veterans' personal stories into powerful songs. Singer-songwriters Josh Wheeler and Brandon Renna brought those stories to life, filling the room with music that was both deeply personal and widely relatable. The open house wasn't just about showcasing the new space—it doubled as an outreach fair, connecting veterans with organizations dedicated to their well-being. The Veterans Administration provided representatives from Total Whole Health, Women's Health, the Vet Center, and Veteran Home Health Care. Other participants included Project Gallantly Forward, which offers retreats for veterans and families; Wreaths Across Chattanooga, which honors fallen heroes during the holidays; Hearth Hospice, supporting families through end-of-life care; ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve), fostering supportive workplaces for reservists; and the Hamilton County Veteran Service Officer, who offered one-on-one assistance with VA claims. As the afternoon drew to a close, Chris Dooley reflected on the significance of the day. "It is an honor to have a facility where we can host such a great event," he said. "I am proud of what Post 14 has accomplished, and I look forward to the positive impact we can continue to have for veterans and our community." For Post 14, the open house wasn't just an unveiling of a new facility. It was the beginning of a new future — one where service, fellowship, and community engagement remain at the heart of everything we do.



**Opening ceremony in our post meeting room
Red Bank JROTC Honor Guard was outstanding**



**Attendees took advantage of the VA's
representatives.**



**One of the founders of Chefs 4 Vets USA looked
over the food. The food was outstanding.**



Freedom Sings performers: Josh Wheeler and Brandon Renna



FLAG AND EMBLEM SALES NATIONAL CONVENTION REPORT

Our fellow Legionnaire, Chuck Alsobrook, serves on the Flag and Emblem Sales National Committee. His report from the National Convention includes some interesting information regarding sales data.

BREAKING RECORDS IN Q2 FLAG REVENUE Individual sales: 2024 2025 \$3,490,830 \$2,777,392 YEAR TO YEAR FINANCIAL ANALYSIS 2023

Orders	Shipped Orders	Average Order
\$16.10 Million	107,021	\$147.48

2024

Orders	Shipped Orders	Average Order Value
\$16 million	706,992	\$151.14

2025 MID YEAR FINANCIAL RESULTS

Orders:
2024 \$11.8 million vs 2025 \$12.1 million
Total Orders:
2024 76,764 vs 2025 72,704
Average Order:
2024 \$154.07 vs 2025 \$166.05

Spring Meeting Sales by Year

2025	\$35,024.55
2024	\$39,527.77
2023	\$35,634.59
2022	\$29,688.53

\$161.05 AVERAGE PER ORDER

Data has been edited, if you'd like the full report contact Chuck or me.

May LY:480k TY:456K -5%	June LY:270K TY:320k +18%	July LY:178k TY:220k +23%
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72K AVERAGE IN ORDERS

\$12.1 MILLION IN SALES



POST 14 BUILDS BEDS

In our posts effort to support our community and youth, we decided to build beds for children in need. On Saturday, 18 October Post 14 along with several other organizations, one of which was Post 293 of Signal Mountain built children beds for *Sleep In Heavenly Peace*, which has chapters all around America dedicated to ensure children don't sleep on the floor. The build took place at the Walden fire station.



The *Sleep in Heavenly Peace* organization provides all of the tools and jigs for the bed construction.

Post 14 purchased the materials. The build was carried out with military precision. Post 14 members present to build beds were Chris Dooley, Ray Mictchell, Scott Hardin, Jim Fields, Vickie Putnam, and Alan Syler. Each of us worked at several of the stations in the construction process. We were able to build 50 beds in just under two hours, which was astounding. A good time was had by all and a lunch and snacks were provided. The Signal Mountain Lions were a big part of the build and support. Unfortunately, I do not have pictures showing our members, but the added pictures show the arrangement of the stations and individuals.



All wood was sanded prior to assembly.

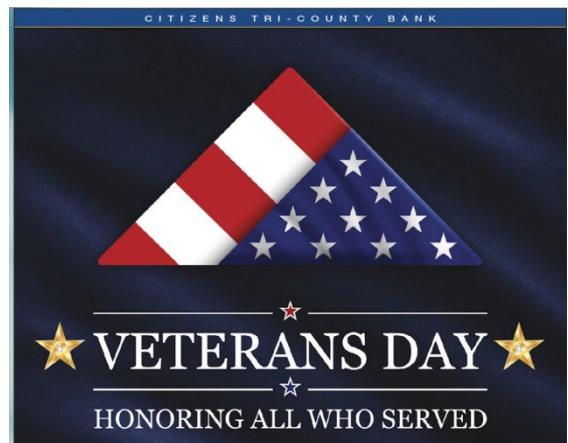


Two of the assembly stations, note the jigs to ensure all elements of the frame are uniform.



The staining station was unique. Instead of spraying or brushing the stain, the sections and slats were dipped.

I don't think any of us wanted to do the staining.



POST COMMANDER SPEAKS AT SEQUATCHIE COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

Our Post 14 Commander Chris Dooley was invited to speak at the Sequatchie County Veterans Day event.

Chris is an outstanding speaker, without doubt, he stressed the need for service to our country and being a part of something larger than themselves.



**Chris was introduced by
Post 190 Commander William Barker.**



**Chris makes an important point
during his speech.**

He discussed those the demonstrate various kinds of bravery, such as Medal of Honor recipient Larry Taylor, and individuals with whom he served in the Air Force. Those who exhibit bravery can be those who do the right thing even if it's not the most anticipated outcome.

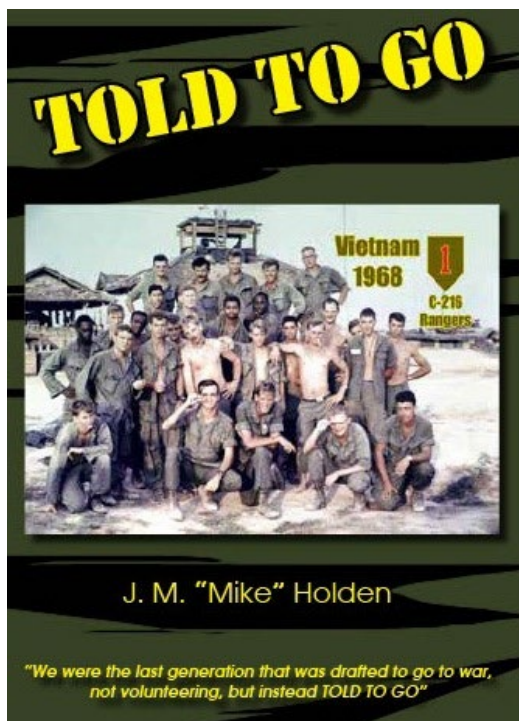
CHATTANOOGA'S VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

In Chattanooga, we had our ceremony at the Chattanooga National Guard Armory. We were pleased the ceremony was indoors, since it was quite cool and windy. This was the first time, to my knowledge, the National Guard was the host organization. Major Katie Lawrence was outstanding as the representative of the National Guard. The Speaker was BG Christopher Patterson. As always, the Gold Star wives were recognized with a yellow rose presented by VVA203. VVA203 also supplied the Honor Guard and 21-gun salute. David Cox and Andy Addison played echo Taps. They are members of a group called Bugles Across America, who ensure Taps is played at all veteran related events.





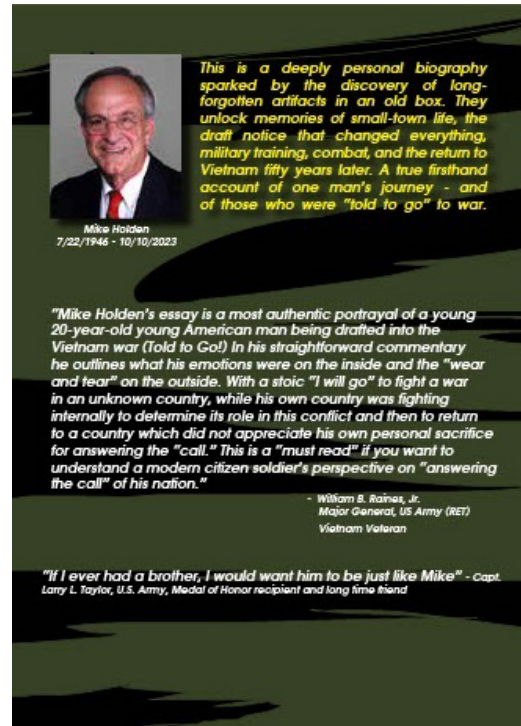
"Told To Go" Book Recently Released



Contact: Michael Kyle Holden 423-903-8190
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Author: J. Michael "Mike" Holden (Intro by son Michael Kyle Holden)
ISBN: 9798298903981 Format: Paperback, 256 pages Price: \$19.9
Pub Date: October 22, 2025
Military Memoir • Vietnam War • Biography "We were the last generation that was drafted to go to war, not volunteering, but instead "TOLD TO GO"

Amazon Extended Distribution Keywords:
Vietnam combat, Tet Offensive, 1st Infantry Division, Rangers, Drafted Soldier on Amazon at https://www.amazon.com/s?k=told+to+go&crd=2CPS0MDPKP22J&sprefix=told+to+go%2Caps%2C123&ref=nb_sb_noss_2



FRAUD
Watch your six!

It is an unfortunate fact of life that veterans are a target-rich environment for those who make a living committing fraud. A number of us are vulnerable to scams, and if it seems too good to be true, it probably is. If you ever have questions regarding any aspect of your service or VA benefits, feel free to contact our Post VSO Chuck Alsobrook, accredited VSO Chris Dooley, or Alan Syler. We hope the information provided below will help you navigate the maze of craziness these days.



VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

Types of Fraud

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) encourages Veterans and their beneficiaries to know the warning signs of the various types of fraud and the best practices to avoid falling victim to a scam.

- Direct Deposit/Payment Redirection: A bad actor obtains Personal Identifiable Information (PII) and uses that information to unlawfully access and gain control of Veterans' and beneficiaries' accounts.
- Identity Theft: A scammer gains access to valuable, sensitive information, such as credit card numbers, for their own personal use or to resell on the dark web.
- Phishing: A common online scam where an imposter creates a fake online persona to deceive Veterans and their beneficiaries to provide PII.
- Email: A common type of scam in which a fraudster sends a fake email, often promoting a contest or reward, to trick a user into clicking on a malware link or obtain sensitive PII.
- Phone: A scammer pretends to be someone you trust and will try to get your money or your personal information to commit identity theft.
- Spoofing: A caller disguises the information shown on caller ID, giving them the ability to disguise or "spoof" the name and/or number to appear as though they are calling as a certain person from a specific location.
- Wired: A type of fraud that involves the use of some form of telecommunications or the internet.
- Forgery: The action of forging or producing a copy of a document, signature, banknote, or work of art.

VA Overpayment Scams

In 2025, VA received reports of a new scam involving bogus overpayment notifications targeting Veterans and beneficiaries who receive VA benefit payments. Scammers

impersonate VA employees and send fraudulent text messages, emails, or phone calls telling Veterans they owe VA money because of a debt due to an overpayment of VA benefits.

How to Recognize and Avoid VA Benefit Overpayment Scams

- Verify via VA.gov: If you receive a letter or communication about a VA benefits overpayment, log into your official VA.gov account immediately to verify if you truly owe money.
- Only use official VA channels: If you find you do owe VA money, resolve the debt directly using VA.gov or by calling VA's Debt Management Center (DMC) at 1-800-827-0648.
- Never share login information: VA will never ask for your VA login credentials or password.
- Be cautious of unsolicited contact: Be wary of emails or texts demanding personal details or directing you to external websites that are not part of VA.gov.
- Don't pay upfront fees: If someone demands an upfront payment to help with your VA debt or claims, it's a scam. VA offers free help with managing debt and claims. You can find a VA accredited representative to assist you.
- Avoid clicking on unknown or suspicious messages: Be cautious if you receive an email or text asking for your personal information. Scammers often create fake links or attachments to trick you into downloading malware or malicious code to steal your data. Always review the sender's information carefully and avoid clicking on links or attachments from unknown sources.
- Use trusted payment methods: Requests for payments via wire transfers, bitcoin, prepaid debit cards, money transfers, or gift cards are signs of a scam. VA does not use these payment methods.



- Be wary of social media requests: Be cautious when accepting online friend requests or responding to messages from individuals you don't know. Review your friends and followers regularly and remove any connections you don't recognize or trust.
- Never share sensitive information: Secure personally identifying information and financial information. Never share sensitive information, such as social security numbers, bank account details, or credit card information, when responding to unsolicited requests.

How to Determine if You Have Legitimate Overpayment

- If you have a debt, VA notifies you by letter directing you to VA's DMC for options to pay the debt or to set up a payment plan. Visit the *VA Debt Management* website to verify payment options and other information about VA debts.
- You can verify a debt by logging into your official VA.gov account.
- If you receive a letter or other communication demanding immediate payment or lacking clear details, treat it as suspicious and verify its authenticity with VA at 1-800-827-1000 or contact the DMC at 1-800-827-0648.

How to Report VA Overpayment Scams

- Contact VA: If you have been the target of a scam or suspect fraudulent activity, contact VA immediately at 1-800-827-1000.
- File a complaint: You can also report fraud to the Federal Trade Commission.

If you suspect you have experienced fraud related to non-VA benefits, you can find resources to file a report to the appropriate agency by visiting vsafe.gov or calling 1-833-389-SAFE.

Payment Redirect

Payment redirection occurs when a bad actor obtains your Personal Identifiable Information (PII) and uses that information

to unlawfully access and gain control of your accounts. Once compromised, the bad actor redirects your VA benefits payments to new accounts or to prepaid debit cards, both of which they control. Your PII is vulnerable to phishing attempts and an array of email scams.

How do scammers target Veterans?

Bad actors are leveraging publicly available information from internet sources, social media, dark web, etc., to gather PII. With enough demographic information, these bad actors can call the VA's National Contact Center and change Veterans' bank accounts to redirect their payments. With stolen passwords and credentials, they can also access Veterans' information through eBenefits or VA.gov.

What steps are being taken to protect Veterans?

VA is taking proactive measures to monitor Veteran's benefits payments to protect and prevent fraudulent activity. When VA benefits fraud is reported or suspected, VA investigates the incident and initiates actions to protect the Veteran's benefits, report those responsible for the alleged fraud and – when applicable, make the Veteran whole as quickly as possible.

Are there resources available?

If a Veteran is missing a VA benefits payment, identifies a discrepancy in payments, or finds suspicious activity with their direct deposit account, contact the VA immediately at 1-800-827-1000.

Claims Predators

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) defines claims predators as bad actors that try to unlawfully charge Veterans to "help" process their initial claims with VA. These predatory companies and individuals offer initial claim and reviews and appeals assistance services. Claims predators often entice Veterans and their family members by promising expedited claims processing times or higher disability ratings in exchange for unlawful fees. Aggressive communication via emails, phone calls, and/or text messages is



used in an effort to get Veterans or their family members to sign legally binding contracts that are not to their advantage.

What are the signs of a Claims Predator?

The following actions may indicate a company, or individual is a claims predator:

- **Charging High Fees:** Predatory companies may charge absurd fees or require you to pay a portion or multiple of your VA benefit award. You should never pay anyone a fee to file an initial claim for benefits.
- **Making Dishonest Promises:** Do not trust anyone who claims they can help accelerate the claims process and obtain a 100% disability rating.
- **Pressure to Sign:** Never sign a contract agreeing to pay an individual/company in exchange for help with your initial VA claim.

Where can I verify a representative's accreditation before agreeing to representation and services?

To protect yourself from fraudulent claims, you can verify a VA accredited representative's credentials before filing a claim or providing personal information by using the *VA Accreditation Search Tool*.

Who can help me with my benefits?

VA is here to help you file a claim for benefits, but if you choose to work with an outside representative, here are some options:

- VA Accredited Attorney
- VA Accredited Claims Agent
- VA Accredited VSO Representative

Only VA Accredited attorneys and claims agents may charge a fee to:

- Consult or advise VA claimants seeking review of or to appeal their claims
- Collect evidence for a supplemental claim or an appeal
- Prepare and file a supplemental claim
- Submit requests for higher-level review
- Submit an appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

To learn more about VA accredited attorneys, claims agents, and VSO representatives and how they can help you, please visit the *VA Accredited Representative website*.

Malware: One of the top cyber schemes used by bad actors to infect computers. They may even hold your computer "hostage" with malware until you agree to pay a ransom - this type of malware is also known as "ransomware."

Protect Yourself from Fraud

VA is committed to raising public awareness about predatory entities, and we are educating Veterans, their families, and partners about the dishonest behavior, activities and strategies utilized by these entities. As one of many steps towards increasing awareness about predatory companies, VA would like to highlight the following fraud prevention guidance.

Best Practices

- Apply directly to VA or with an accredited representative. Veterans may submit their application(s) for VA benefits securely online via VA.gov or in person at any regional office.
- If a Veteran is missing a VA benefits payment, identifies a discrepancy in payments, or finds suspicious activity with your direct deposit account, contact the VA immediately at 1-800-827-1000.
- If you are interested in working with an accredited Veteran Service Organization, agent, or attorney, you can validate their credentials utilizing VA's OGC Accreditation Search Tool.
- If an entity is projecting misinformation or has questionable business practices regarding VA entitlements, Veterans/Veteran Advocates may file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission.

Do's AND Don'ts

- Do be cautious of companies advertising Veterans can only obtain VA benefits with their help. These



companies may not be recognized by VA and may be trying to charge illegal fees.

- Do be cautious of aggressive companies who may try to pressure you to sign their contract. Typically, they see frequent communications or insist “you must act now or lose your chance for benefits.”
- Do review all documents thoroughly. Veterans should never sign a blank form for someone else to complete later. They should always review the completed form before signing and retain a copy of the completed form for their records.
- Do update your technology often: Update your computer’s operating system, your internet browser, and the software on your mobile devices. Updates generally include the latest security patches. Be sure to also use antivirus and antispyware software to remove malicious programs from your computer.
- Do be mindful of the numbers you use: Don’t use any part of your Social Security number (or any other numeric sensitive information, such as your dates of military service or birthdays) as a password, user ID, or personal identification number (PIN). Use strong passwords that have eight or more characters, including letters, numbers, and symbols.
- Do be careful where you click: Look for security-enabled website addresses that start with “https”. The extra “s” indicates security. These sites take extra measures to help secure your information. If you suspect a link might give you a virus or steal personal data, don’t click on it. Only purchase or download apps from authorized stores.
- Do not sign a contract agreeing to pay an unauthorized company a fee to help with VA claims. There are accredited Veterans Service Organizations, agents,

and attorneys that can help Veterans who need assistance.

- Do not sign a blank form for someone else to complete later. Veterans should always review the completed form before signing and retain a copy of the completed form for their records.
- Do not be fooled by companies advertising, they have special relationships with medical professionals and can guarantee the Veteran a benefits award. If these companies are defrauding the Federal government, Veterans can be held responsible for paying those benefits back.
- Do not provide your social security number, medical records or other personally identifiable information to anyone offering claims assistance before confirming their credentials using VA’s Office of General Counsel Accreditation tool.
- Do not sign forms that are not VA generated or are a third-party authorization for someone to provide “behind-the-scenes” claims assistance.
- Don’t share personal information online: The more you post about yourself on social networking sites, the easier it may be for someone to use that information to access your VA accounts, steal your identity, and more. Maximizing your privacy settings on social networking sites can also help protect your personal information.

Are there resources available?

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

- If a Veteran is missing a VA benefits payment, identifies a discrepancy in payments, or finds suspicious activity with your direct deposit account, contact the VA immediately at 1-800-827-1000.
- Advise all Veterans to file for free online through VA’s website or in person at a VA Regional Office.

Office of General Counsel (OGC):



- If you are interested in working with an accredited Veteran Service Organization, agent, or attorney, you can validate their credentials utilizing VA's OGC Accreditation Search Tool.
- Recommend accredited representatives assist with filing claims as they are vetted in VA law and policy and available at no cost.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC):

Notify the FTC if an entity is projecting misinformation or has questionable business practices regarding VA entitlements. Veterans/Veteran Advocates may file a complaint with the FTC.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB):

CFPB is dedicated to making sure everyone is treated fairly by banks, lenders and other financial institutions. To submit a complaint about a financial product or service Submit a complaint | Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (consumerfinance.gov)

VA's Identity Theft:

If a Veteran has concerns about their VA services being impacted by identity theft. In that case, they can call the toll-free VA Veteran Identity Theft Helpline: 1-855-578-5492 or visit the following sites: VA Identity Theft Prevention or VA Privacy.

MILITARY HAS A NEW RIFLE

The military was in need for a replacement for the M4 (5.56x45mm) rifle.

The M7 rifle, previously designated as XM7 and originally as XM5, is the U.S. Army's adopted variant of the SIG MCX-SPEAR chambered in 6.8x51mm Common Cartridge (.277mm Fury), designed by SIG Sauer for the Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) program in 2022 to replace the M4 carbine.

The M7 features a gas-operated system, a free-floating reinforced M-LOK

handguard for direct accessory attachment to slotted hole mounting points, and uses a SR-25 pattern magazine. It began fielding in March 2024.



M7 U.S. Army 6.8mm rifle

Mass: 8.38 lbs, 9.84 with suppressor

Length: 36 inches with suppressor
33.5 inches 10.5in barrel with suppressor

Barrel Length: 10.5-inches, 13-inches

The "6.8 Common Cartridge" after Army acceptance in response to concerns that improvements in body armor would diminish the effectiveness of calibers.

In January 2019, the United States Army began the Next Generation Squad Weapon Program to find replacements for the M4 carbine and M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. In September 2019, SIG Sauer submitted its designs. The SIG Sauer MCX-SPEAR (the rifle's commercial designation) is chambered in .277 Fury (later designated the "6.8 Common Cartridge" after Army acceptance) in response to concerns that improvements in body armor would diminish the effectiveness of calibers such as the 5.56x45mm NATO (for the M4A1 and M249 SAW) and 7.62x51mm NATO (for the M240).



THE AMERICAN LEGION – MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____
First Initial Last Phone

Address _____
Street City State ZIP

Membership ID# former member _____
Email Post # Date

Please check appropriate eligibility dates and branch of service below:

☐ Gulf War/War on Terrorism (8/2/90 until cessation of hostilities)
☐ Panama (12/20/89-1/31/90)
☐ Lebanon/Grenada (8/24/82-7/31/84)
☐ Vietnam (2/28/61-5/7/75)
☐ Korea (6/25/50-1/31/55)
☐ WWII (12/7/41-12/31/46)

☐ U.S. Army
☐ U.S. Navy
☐ U.S. Air Force
☐ U.S. Marines
☐ U.S. Coast Guard
☐ Merchant Marines (12/7/41-12/31/46 - only eligibility)

I certify that I served at least one day of active military duty during the dates marked above and was honorably discharged or am still serving honorably.

Signed by applicant _____ Name of recruiter _____

If you are a new member, send this completed application with annual dues to The American Legion, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206 (check www.legion.org/join for dues amount), or take it to a local post. To locate a post near you, click on "Find a Post" at www.legion.org.

DUES RECEIPT
(please print)

Date _____

Received from _____

\$ 40.00 for 20 _____ dues

Recruiter's name _____

Recruiter's signature _____

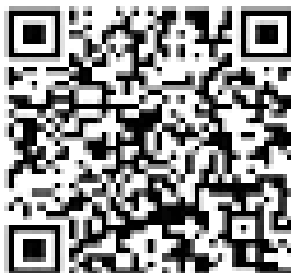
Recruiter's phone # _____



WE NEED YOU!

We hope our newsletter you see all the good works that Post 14 has accomplished and projects in our future.

Please, renew your American Legion membership in the today.



**RENEW QUICKLY
USING THE QR CODE.**

★ **SAVE A STAMP**

★ **SAVE TIME**



➤ *Pass this newsletter to any veteran you know, who is not a legion member. We at Post 14 see the opportunities to assist our veterans, youth, and community, which are pillars of the Legion.*