

Hubert M Smith

FEB2025

AMERICAN LEGION POST 77



Photo Credit: Greg Bias

2025 Mid Winter Conference - February 13 - 15, 2025

Hilton Raleigh North Hills

3415 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh, NC 27609

1-800-445-8667

Room rates are \$117, cut-off date for this rate is January 15, 2025.

When making reservations, be sure to tell them you are with the American Legion.

**American Legion
Post 77**

Canteen

Hendersonville, NC

OPEN DAILY

legion77.org



Canteen

Edition: 77008-4

February 1- Blue Ridge Big Band 8-11pm
February 5, 12, 19, 26- Bingo Upstairs
February 7, 14, 21, 28- Karaoke
February 8- Republican Buffet | Korean War
February 9- Super Bowl Party 6pm
Veteran Lunch @ 12pm | Shaggers Upstairs
February 15- Black Water Station 8-11pm
February 20- Free Veterans Breakfast Buffet
February 22- Saints & Sinners 8-11pm
February 25, 27- Flag Retirement



Join us for our super bowl party in the canteen February 9th starting at 6pm! This is a potluck event. Sign up in the canteen to bring a dish!

February Meetings

February 6- Auxiliary
February 8- Korean War Veterans 1pm
February 11- Executive Board
February 13- General Membership 7pm
February 17- Marine Corps League
February 22- 40 & 8 3pm



Flag Retirement Detail

Volunteers Needed

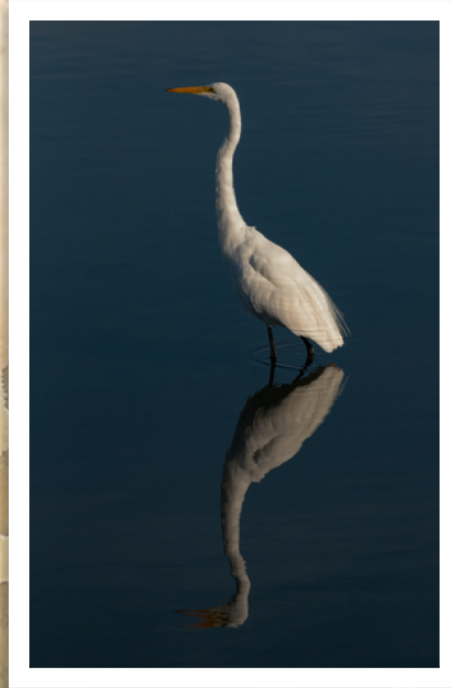
Volunteers are needed and welcome to join Bob Scruggs in the American flag retirement. The event will take place February 25th and 27th at Forest Lawn. The ceremony will begin at 9am. Contact the Post or Bob Scruggs for more information or to volunteer.

legion77.org

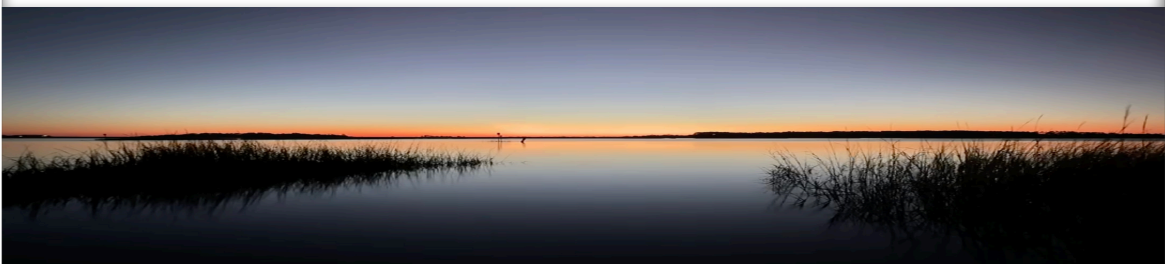
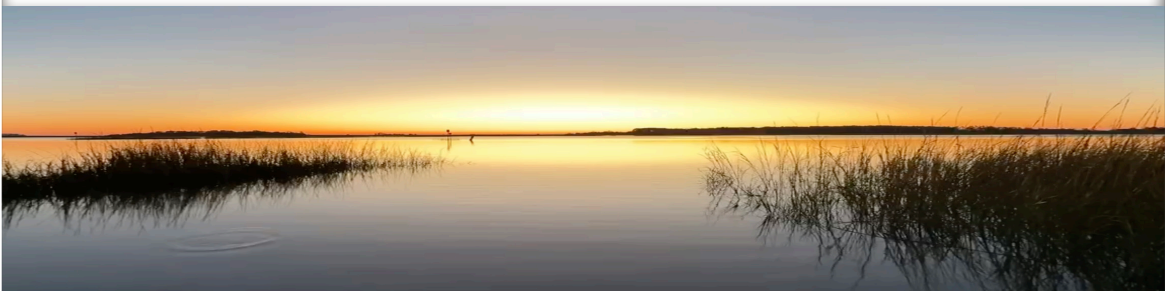
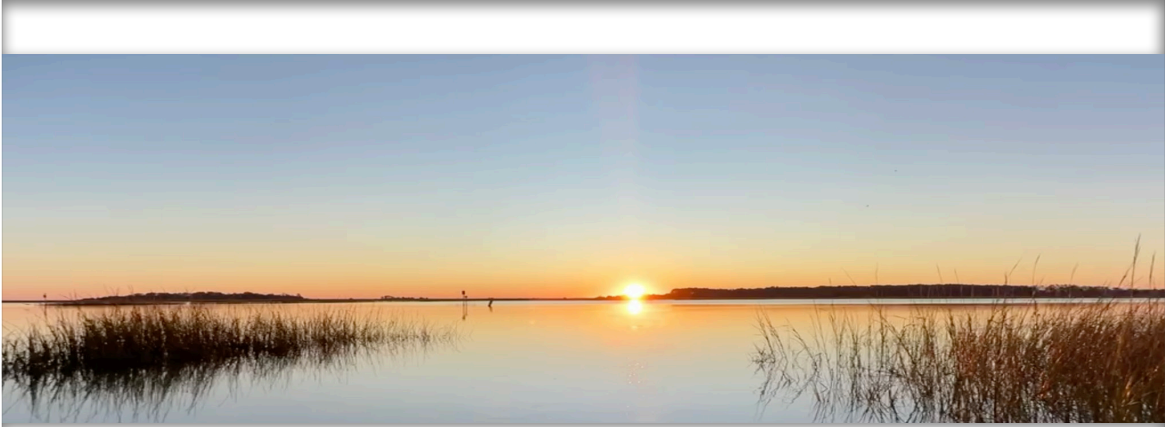
Hiking Photography



Photos: Greg Bias



GOOOOOD MORNNNNING AMERICA!!!!



The American Legion Programs: Strengthening Communities and Supporting Veterans

The American Legion, founded in 1919, has long been a pillar of support for veterans, their families, and communities across the United States. Its mission extends beyond advocacy for veterans' rights, encompassing a range of programs that promote youth development, community service, and national pride. Here's a closer look at some of The American Legion's most impactful initiatives.

Youth Programs: Building the Leaders of Tomorrow

One of The American Legion's core focuses is fostering leadership and patriotism in young Americans. Through various programs, the organization provides educational opportunities, leadership training, and a sense of civic responsibility.

- Boys State and Girls State

These flagship programs offer high school students hands-on experiences in government operations. Participants learn about the legislative process by forming mock governments, running for office, and debating policies. Alumni of these programs often credit their experience as a stepping stone to careers in public service, law, and leadership.

- Notable Alumni: President Bill Clinton, Michael Jordan, Robert Griffin III

- The American Legion Oratorical Contest

Aimed at promoting a deeper understanding of the U.S. Constitution, this contest challenges high school students to deliver speeches on constitutional topics. Winners receive scholarships, and the program nurtures public speaking skills and civic knowledge.

- Junior Shooting Sports

Combining marksmanship with safety and discipline, this program teaches young people responsible gun use while fostering teamwork and personal responsibility.

Veteran-Focused Initiatives: Honoring Service with Support

The American Legion remains committed to improving the lives of veterans and their families through various initiatives.



Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA)

TFA provides grants to veteran families facing financial hardships.

-Service Officer Program

Accredited American Legion service officers assist veterans in navigating the often-complicated VA system, helping them secure benefits, healthcare, and other services they deserve.

- Operation Comfort Warriors

This initiative delivers comfort items to wounded servicemembers recovering in hospitals and rehabilitation centers. From greeting cards, Clothing, Snacks and beverages to entertainment options, the program addresses specific needs that aren't covered by traditional resources.

Community Service: Strengthening Bonds Nationwide

Through its local posts, The American Legion fosters a sense of community by organizing events and services that bring people together.

Legion Riders

Son's of American Legion

Honor Guard

Local Community Partner

Americanism: Promoting Patriotism and Pride in The American Way of Life

The American Legion takes pride in promoting American values and traditions. Its programs instill a sense of patriotism and honor the sacrifices of those who served the country.

- Flag Advocacy

The Legion educates the public on proper flag etiquette and encourages schools and communities to display the American flag with respect.

- Memorial and Veterans Day Events**

Local posts organize ceremonies to honor those who served, ensuring their sacrifices are never forgotten.

Educational Opportunities and Scholarships

A Legacy of Service and Dedication

The American Legion's programs embody its commitment to fostering a better future for veterans, youth, and communities. By addressing the needs of the present while investing in the leaders of tomorrow, the organization continues to make a profound and lasting impact on American society.

For those interested in supporting or participating in these programs, joining a local American Legion post is an excellent way to contribute to this noble mission. Whether it's through mentoring youth, advocating for veterans, or promoting patriotism, every effort strengthens the fabric of our nation.

Honoring Excellence and Resilience: Black History Month in the U.S. Military

Every February, the United States honors Black History Month, a time dedicated to celebrating the achievements, sacrifices, and contributions of Black Americans throughout the nation's history. For the U.S. military, this month provides an opportunity to reflect on the profound impact of African American service members and their role in shaping the Armed Forces into what it is today.

From the Revolutionary War to present-day operations, African Americans have played a vital role in defending the nation. Heroes like the Buffalo Soldiers, the Tuskegee Airmen, and the Montford Point Marines shattered barriers and proved that courage and skill know no racial boundaries. Their service laid the groundwork for desegregation in the military, leading to President Harry S. Truman's landmark Executive Order 9981 in 1948, which mandated equality of treatment and opportunity for all service members.

This month, we honor individuals like Brigadier General Hazel Johnson-Brown, the first Black female general in the U.S. Army and Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, and General Colin Powell, the first African American Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and later Secretary of State. Their achievements remind us that the journey of progress is fueled by resilience, leadership, and vision.

The U.S. military continues to embrace diversity as a cornerstone of its strength. Black History Month serves as a reminder of the progress made and the challenges that remain. It's a call to action to ensure that every service member, regardless of race, has equal access to opportunities for growth and leadership.

Military installations worldwide will commemorate Black History Month with educational programs, guest speakers, and cultural celebrations. These events highlight the rich tapestry of Black culture and history while fostering dialogue about race, inclusion, and unity within the ranks.

As we honor the past, we also look to the future. Black History Month is a time to celebrate resilience and excellence, but it's also a moment to reaffirm the military's commitment to building a more inclusive force that values and uplifts every individual.

By remembering the sacrifices of those who came before and championing equity and opportunity, the U.S. military continues to embody the principles of justice, freedom, and unity that define the nation.

-ChatGPT

VA Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)

What We Do

The Center's activities include:

- Makes recommendations to the Secretary, the Under Secretary for Health, the Under Secretary for Benefits, and other Department officials for the establishment or improvement of programs in the Department for which Veterans who are minorities are eligible.
- Promotes the use of benefits authorized by this title by Veterans who are minorities and the conduct of outreach activities to Veterans who are minorities, in conjunction with outreach activities carried out under chapter 77 of this title [38 USCS §§ 7701 etseq].
- Disseminates information and serve as a resource center for the exchange of information regarding innovative and successful programs which improve the services available to Veterans who are minorities.
- Conducts and sponsors appropriate social and demographic research on the needs of Veterans who are minorities and the extent to which programs authorized under this title meet the needs of those Veterans, without regard to any law concerning the collection of information from the public.
- Analyzes and evaluates complaints made by or on behalf of Veterans who are minorities about the adequacy and timeliness of services provided by the Department and advise the appropriate official of the Department of the results of such analysis or evaluation.
- Consults with, and provides assistance and information to, officials responsible for administering Federal, State, local, and private programs that assist Veterans, to encourage those officials to adopt policies which promote the use of those programs by Veterans who are minorities.
- Advises the Secretary when laws or policies have the effect of discouraging the use of benefits by Veterans who are minorities.
- Publicizes the results of medical research which are of particular significance to Veterans who are minorities.
- Advises the Secretary and other appropriate officials on the effectiveness of the Department's efforts to accomplish the goals of section 492B of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 289a-2) with respect to the inclusion of minorities in clinical research and on particular health conditions affecting the health of members of minority groups which should be studied as part of the Department's medical research program and promote cooperation between the Department and other sponsors of medical research of potential benefit to Veterans who are minorities.
- Provides support and administrative services to the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans provided for under section 544 of this title.
- Performs such other duties consistent with this section as the Secretary shall prescribe.

Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)

About the Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)



The Center's Vision

The Center for Minority Veterans is the Department of Veterans Affairs model for inter-and intra-agency co-operation, to ensure all veterans receive equal service regardless of race, origin, religion, or gender. We are process improvement-oriented and both internal and external customer-centric. We assist VA in executing its mission in the most equitable, efficient and humane way possible. Dignity and an acceptable quality of life are the products we seek to deliver to ALL veterans no matter what their circumstance. We will grace our mission execution with gratitude to the men and women we now serve who in turn served our Nation so well. Meet the [Center for Minority Veterans Staff](#).

The Center's Mission

To assist Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to "keep the promise" by acting as facilitator, change agent, strategic thinker, honest broker and cheerleader to the men and women of VA in executing its MISSION. As internal consultants to the organization, we will facilitate VA's ability to deliver services to veterans worldwide by approaching our mission with a "Veteran Comes First" philosophy based on a deep respect for the men and women who dedicated themselves to the defense of our Nation. We acknowledge the diversity of our veterans and profoundly value the strength and unique character this diversity has contributed to our great Nation.

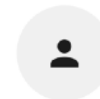
Who We Serve

The **Center for Minority Veterans (CMV)** was established by [Public Law 103-446](#), in 1994. Title 38, United States Code (USC), Section 317 reflects the current responsibilities of the CMV. The Center Director serves as principal advisor to the Secretary on the adoption and implementation of policies and programs affecting minority Veterans. CMV serves as an advocate for minority Veterans by conducting outreach activities to promote the awareness and use of VA benefits and services.

CONTACT US

Center for Minority Veterans
810 Vermont Ave. (00M)
Washington, DC 20420
(202) 461-6191
vacocmv@va.gov

Connect with a care coordinator



Damita Klaiber
Minority Veteran Care Coordinator
VA Asheville health care
Phone: [828-296-4419](tel:828-296-4419)
Email: damita.klaiber@va.gov

GIRLS STATE:





Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:

- ☐ **Water and non-perishable food for several days**
- ☐ **Extra cell phone battery or charger**
- ☐ **Battery-powered or hand crank radio that can receive NOAA Weather Radio tone alerts and extra batteries**
- ☐ **Flashlight and extra batteries**
- ☐ **First aid kit**
- ☐ **Whistle to signal for help**
- ☐ **Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place**
- ☐ **Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation**
- ☐ **Non-sparking wrench or pliers to turn off utilities**
- ☐ **Can opener (if kit contains canned food)**
- ☐ **Local maps**

FEMA's Ready Campaign

educates and empowers Americans to take some simple steps to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies, including those from natural hazards and man-made disasters. Ready asks individuals to do three key things: get an emergency supply kit, make a family emergency plan, and be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and appropriate responses. Everyone should have some basic supplies on hand in order to survive several days if an emergency occurs. This list of emergency supply kit items is only a starting point. It is important that individuals review this list and consider the unique needs of their family, including pets, for items to include. Individuals should also consider having at least two emergency supply kits, one full kit at home and smaller portable kits in their workplace, vehicle or other places they spend time.



Federal Emergency Management Agency
Washington, DC 20472



Additional Items to Consider Adding to an Emergency Supply Kit:

- ☐ **Prescription medications and glasses**
- ☐ **Infant formula and diapers**
- ☐ **Pet food, water and supplies for your pet**
- ☐ **Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a portable waterproof container**
- ☐ **Cash and change**
- ☐ **Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov**
- ☐ **Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.**
- ☐ **Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.**
- ☐ **Fire Extinguisher**
- ☐ **Matches in a waterproof container**
- ☐ **Feminine supplies, personal hygiene items and hand sanitizer**
- ☐ **Mess kits, Paper cups, plates and disposable utensils, paper towels**
- ☐ **Paper and pencil**
- ☐ **Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children**



Emergency Supply List



FEMA

www.ready.gov

The Significance of the U.S. Constitution and the Year 1793

The United States Constitution is not just a legal document; it is the foundational bedrock upon which American democracy rests. Its significance extends beyond the legal framework to influence political, social, and cultural life in America. Here, we explore the enduring relevance of the Constitution and highlight key events from 1793, a pivotal year in the early Republic.

The U.S. Constitution: A Living Document

Foundation of Governance:

- **Division of Powers:** The Constitution introduces a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government — legislative, executive, and judicial. This was designed to prevent the concentration of power, a lesson learned from British monarchy and colonial experiences.
- **Federalism:** It delineates power between the federal government and the states, allowing for a balance between national unity and local autonomy. This structure has been crucial in managing diversity across a vast nation.

Rights and Liberties:

- **Bill of Rights:** Initially, the Constitution lacked explicit protections for individual freedoms, leading to the immediate push for amendments. The first ten amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, were ratified in 1791, ensuring freedoms like speech, religion, and the press, which are central to American identity.
- **Adaptability:** Through amendments, the Constitution has shown its ability to evolve. For instance, amendments have abolished slavery, granted voting rights to minorities, and addressed modern issues like presidential term limits.

Symbol of Unity:

- The Constitution serves as a unifying document, symbolizing the nation's commitment to democratic principles. It's revered as the embodiment of American ideals of liberty, justice, and self-governance.

The Year 1793 in Context

Political Developments:

- **George Washington's Second Term:** In 1793, George Washington began his second term as President, reinforcing the stability of the new nation. His leadership was crucial in a time when the country was still defining its political identity amidst international tensions.
- **The Proclamation of Neutrality:** In response to the French Revolutionary Wars, Washington issued the Proclamation of Neutrality, declaring the United States' intention to remain neutral. This was significant as it was one of the first major foreign policy decisions under the new Constitution, setting a precedent for U.S. involvement in European conflicts.

Cultural and Economic Milestones:

- **The Fugitive Slave Act:** Passed in 1793, this act was one of the first pieces of federal legislation concerning slavery, requiring the return of escaped slaves. It highlighted the deep-seated contradictions between the ideals of freedom and the reality of slavery in the Constitution's early days.
- **Growth of Newspapers:** The year saw an increase in newspapers, particularly those with political affiliations. This was a direct exercise of the freedom of the press, fostering a public discourse vital for democracy.

Innovations and Expansions:

- **Invention of the Cotton Gin:** Eli Whitney's invention in 1793 revolutionized the cotton industry, significantly impacting the Southern economy but also entrenching slavery by increasing the demand for labor.

- **Expansion into the Northwest Territory:** Continued settlement under the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which was facilitated by the constitutional framework, led to the eventual creation of new states.

Conclusion

The U.S. Constitution has proven to be a dynamic document, capable of guiding a nation through centuries of change, with 1793 standing out as a year where the nation's constitutional principles were both tested and affirmed. From defining its stance on neutrality in global politics to facing internal contradictions on slavery, 1793 encapsulates a moment where the Constitution's framework was actively shaping American governance, economics, and society. As we reflect on these aspects, we appreciate not just the document's legal significance but its role in shaping the American ethos, challenges, and aspirations.



American Legion

Post 77

C a n t e e n

H e n d e r s o n v i l l e , N C

OPEN DAILY

**Subject to change without notice*



LEGISLATIVE POINT PAPER PROTECT THE U.S. FLAG

BACKGROUND

Appropriate care, display, and respect for the United States flag has been a mission of The American Legion for nearly its entire history. In June of 1923, the Americanism Commission called the first National Flag Conference in Washington D.C. There, representatives from The American Legion, Daughters of the American Revolution, Boy Scouts, Knights of Columbus, the American Library Association, and more than 60 other patriotic, fraternal, civic and military organizations gathered to draw together one standard set of guidelines relating to the flag from the many traditions and variations rampant in the country at that time. President Warren G. Harding even addressed the attendees. A second National Flag Conference was held in June 1924. After both conferences, The American Legion printed and distributed the results nationwide.

Congress made the U.S. Flag Code public law in 1942. Amended several times in the decades since its adoption, the U.S. Flag Code is a codification establishing advisory rules for the care, display, and respect of the American flag. However, the law does not provide any criminal or civil penalties for violating any of its provisions. Minor changes have been made, but Congress has never made comprehensive changes to the code.

The American Legion believes our flag, which predates our Constitution, says "America" more than any other symbol does. America is a tapestry of diverse people, and the flag represents the values, traditions, and aspirations that bind us together as a nation. It stands above the fray of day-to-day politics and differences of opinion. It unites us in times of national crisis.

Therefore, The American Legion urges Congress to approve changes to the U.S. Flag Code to codify multiple accepted patriotic customs and practices pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America. These changes include additional times and occasions where the flag should be displayed at half-staff, how other flags should be flown when accompanying the U.S. Flag and allowing for a flag patch to be worn on the uniforms of military personnel, first responders, and members of patriotic organizations.



LEGISLATIVE POINT PAPER MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION

BACKGROUND

Throughout their service, veterans defended our country in high-risk, high-conflict, high-stress jobs. As a result of this service, many return home with untreated trauma which manifests into mental health issues. Unfortunately, after departing service and transitioning into civilian life, veterans are also isolated from their military support system. This inadequate transition assistance, the stigma associated with seeking treatment, and inaccessible healthcare resources have consistently led to high rates of veteran suicide.

Compared to civilians, veterans are twice as likely to commit suicide, with approximately 6,000 veterans dying by suicide annually. This has been a concerning issue over the past few years as veterans struggle to deal with the ramifications caused by global conflicts and nationwide crises. As a result, veterans feel progressively hopeless, tired, isolated, and not understood, as indicated by reports of increased substance use and diagnoses of depression and anxiety further aggravating pre-existing health concerns. The American Legion takes this issue very seriously, as evidenced by its new Be the One initiative to reduce the rate of veteran suicide. Along those lines, it is imperative we destigmatize asking for mental health assistance, improve transition assistance and increase access to a variety of traditional mainstream services.

However, many veterans are not willing to subject themselves to the strain of psychotherapies. Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies are an alternative treatment that may be more comfortable for at-risk individuals. Providing diverse treatment options is critical to ensure veterans have control in recovery. Another factor to consider when addressing mental health issues and suicide prevention is Vet Centers. Vet Centers are critical resources for veterans and their families when in need of counseling and readjustment assistance.

Servicemembers in rural areas face challenges accessing Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers (VAMC's). Vet Centers, offering mobile units, make it possible for veterans to receive services near home. Other vehicles for suicide prevention include the Suicide Prevention Hotline, known as the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL), VA's mental health mobile applications, lethal means safety training for VA staff and community providers, and increased access to Suicide Prevention Coordinators at VAMC's.

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION: A LEGACY OF SERVICE AND IMPACT

Historical Roots

Founded in 1932 amidst the economic turmoil of the Great Depression, the Sons of The American Legion (SAL) emerged from the need to engage the sons of veterans in meaningful service. Initially discussed at the American Legion's third National Convention in 1922, the idea gained traction as a way to honor the sacrifices of Legionnaires by involving their descendants in community service and patriotism.

The SAL was officially established at the 14th National Convention of The American Legion in Portland, Oregon. Males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership formed this auxiliary organization. The SAL's early years were fraught with challenges, including the impact of World War II, which saw many members enlist, significantly reducing its ranks. However, the organization has since grown, adapting to its environment while maintaining its core mission.[](<https://www.post129.org/sal-history.html>)

Core Principles and Structure**

The SAL operates under the umbrella of The American Legion, with its own structure of detachments at the state level and squadrons at the local level, each linked to an American Legion post. Their mission aligns closely with that of The American Legion, focusing on four pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. This structure allows the SAL to tailor its activities to local needs while supporting national initiatives.[](<https://www.legion.org/sons/about>)

Impact Today

Veterans Support: The SAL has been pivotal in supporting veterans, both through direct assistance in VA hospitals and advocating for veterans' rights. Since 1988, they've raised over \$9 million for the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, showing their commitment to not only veterans but also the broader community. Their volunteer hours in veterans' hospitals and contributions to VA homes underscore their ongoing support for those who served.[](<https://www.legion.org/sons/about>)

Community Involvement: SAL members engage in numerous community service projects, from sponsoring youth sports teams to participating in American Legion programs like Boys State, which teaches citizenship and government operation. Their involvement in flag education and advocacy for flag protection legislation through the Citizens Flag Alliance illustrates their dedication to Americanism.[](<https://www.escondidolegion.org/legion-family/sons-of-the-american-legion/>)

Youth Education: The SAL offers unique programs like "The Ten Ideals" and the "Five-Point Program of Service" for younger members, focusing on patriotism, citizenship, and personal development. These initiatives aim to instill values of service, respect, and civic duty in the next generation, ensuring the legacy of The American Legion continues.[](<https://vasons.org/our-mission-and-history/>)

Current Challenges and Adaptations

Today, the SAL faces the challenge of maintaining relevance and membership in a changing world. The organization has adapted by leveraging technology for membership drives and communication, ensuring that its message and activities resonate with younger generations. They've also expanded their scope in community service, aligning with modern needs while preserving traditional values.

Leadership and Influence

The SAL has its own leadership structure with national officers who guide the organization's strategy and operations. Recent leaders like Joseph Navarrete have aimed to enhance the SAL's profile within the Legion Family, ensuring it remains a vibrant and impactful part of the community. Their influence is seen in the continuous growth of their membership and the broadening scope of their charitable impacts.[](<https://www.legion.org/about/american-legion-family/sons-of-the-american-legion>)

The Sons of The American Legion stand as a testament to the enduring spirit of service and patriotism passed down through generations. From their historical inception during a time of national need to their current role in supporting veterans, educating youth, and fostering community spirit, the SAL has proven to be more than just an auxiliary; it's a vital force in American civic life. As they move forward, the Sons of The American Legion continue to adapt and contribute, ensuring that the legacy of service from one generation to the next remains unbroken.

-Grok



Join Today!

AMERICAN LEGION POST 77 HONOR GUARD



HENDERSON COUNTY, NC

JOIN TODAY

The Legion Family is grateful for Henderson County continual support!

Legion Bulletin

Legion Bulletin

Positive Thinking



Daily Meditation Reminder





Cold Weather Camping: Tips and Safety Considerations

Winter camping can be an incredibly rewarding experience, but it also requires careful planning and preparation. Here are some essential tips to help you stay safe and comfortable during your cold-weather adventure:

Gear Essentials:

- **Warm Clothing:** Layering is key. Start with moisture-wicking base layers, followed by insulating mid-layers like fleece or wool, and finish with a waterproof and windproof outer layer.
- **Sleeping Bag:** Choose a sleeping bag rated for temperatures significantly colder than your expected low.
- **Sleeping Pad:** A good sleeping pad will insulate you from the cold ground. Consider a self-inflating pad for extra warmth and comfort.
- **Warm Hat and Gloves:** Keep your head and hands warm, as they lose heat quickly.
- **Hand and Foot Warmers:** These can be a lifesaver in extreme cold conditions.

Campsite Selection:

- **Shelter from the Wind:** Find a campsite that offers protection from the wind, such as a wooded area or a natural rock formation.
- **Level Ground:** A level campsite will make setting up your tent easier and help prevent heat loss.
- **Water Source:** Ensure you have access to a reliable water source, even if it's frozen. You can melt snow or ice using a stove or a heat exchanger.

Campfire Safety:

- **Permits:** Check local regulations and obtain necessary permits for campfires.
- **Fire Pit:** Build a contained fire pit using rocks or a fire ring.
- **Firewood:** Use dry, seasoned wood to maintain a hot fire.
- **Extinguish Thoroughly:** Always extinguish your campfire completely before leaving the campsite.

Staying Warm:

- **Stay Dry:** Moisture can quickly lead to hypothermia. Keep your clothing dry by layering and using waterproof outerwear.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water, even though you may not feel thirsty. Dehydration can worsen the effects of cold.
- **Eat Regularly:** Consuming high-calorie foods will help your body generate heat.
- **Stay Active:** Light exercise can help warm you up.

Emergency Preparedness:

- **First-Aid Kit:** Pack a comprehensive first-aid kit.
- **Emergency Shelter:** Have an emergency shelter, such as a bivy sack or emergency tent, in case of unexpected circumstances.
- **Communication Devices:** Bring a fully charged phone or a satellite communication device.



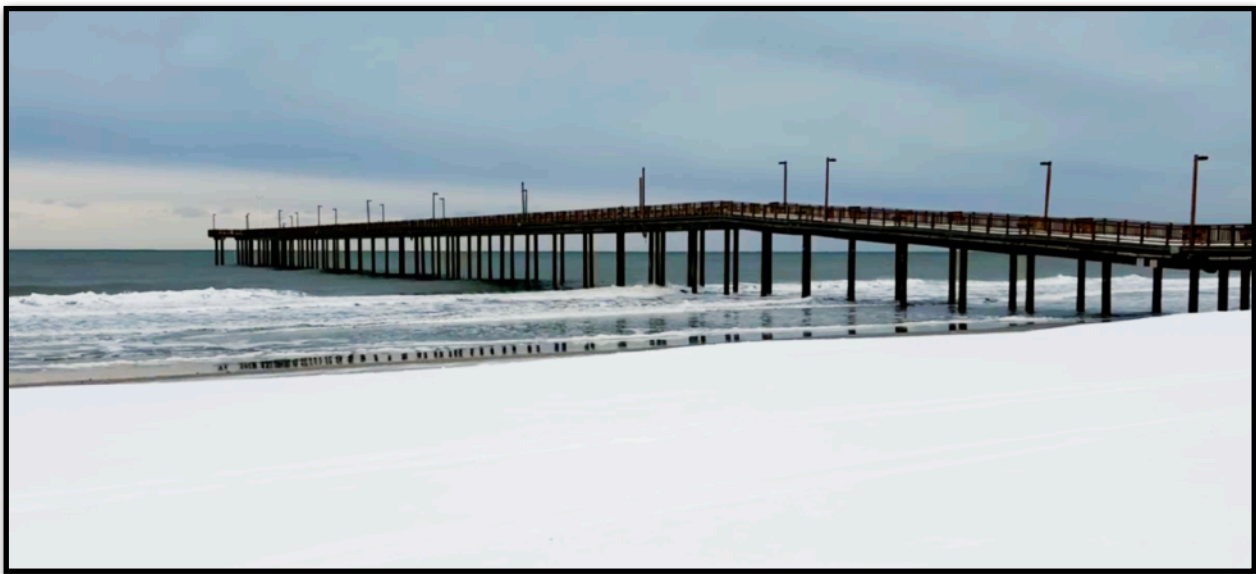
WNC DOT Snow crews help Eastern NC:

According to WLOS News13 article:

Division 13, DOT sent 15 employees and 10 snow removal equipment to plow snow and spread salt/sand to Dare County the reports say up to 5-8 inches of snow accumulated.

It was mentioned that WNC Division 13 was glad to return a favor after receiving help after Helene.

South of the area in Myrtle Beach, SC: Post 77
Traveling Photographer Greg Bias captured the rare moment snow at the beach.



MESSAGE FROM FEMA



U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
FEMA-State Joint Field Office
FEMA-4827-DR-NC
2220 US Hwy 70 SE
Hickory, North Carolina 28602

FEMA

January 19, 2025

Governor Josh Stein
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Stein:

This is in response to your January 16, 2025, request to FEMA Administrator Criswell to extend the Transitional Sheltering Assistance program's eligibility period for DR-4827-NC for an additional six months through September 30, 2025, for eligible North Carolinians. The request indicated more time is needed for the program because the homes of families affected by Hurricane Helene require long-term rebuilding and will not be safe for some time.

Pursuant to FEMA's [Recovery Policy FP 104-21-0008: Transitional Sheltering Assistance \(TSA Policy\)](#), FEMA previously approved the program for the full 180 days from the date of declaration. Under the original approval, the program under DR-4827-NC is scheduled to end with a last night of stay on March 26, 2025, and hotel check-out on March 27, 2025.

As of today's date, there are 2,763 individuals and families using the program. FEMA caseworkers continue to reach out multiple times to these families to identify on interim housing solutions. Based on your request and because of the severity of event, including winter weather affecting road closures, FEMA approves an additional 60 days to allow individuals and families more time to find alternative housing options. Based on the additional 60 days, FEMA approves the last night of stay on May 25, 2025, and hotel check-out on May 26, 2025, for TSA in NC.

This approval only pertains to the extension of the TSA program under DR-4827-NC. All other conditions of the policy apply, and all policy waivers previously granted for DR-4827-NC remain in place. This program is a short-term sheltering solution until temporary or permanent housing solutions are available.

I look forward to continuing to partner with you on North Carolina recovery.

Sincerely,

BRETT H
HOWARD

Brett Howard
Federal Coordinating Officer
Disaster Recovery Manager
FEMA-4827-DR-NC

Digitally signed by BRETT H
HOWARD
Date: 2025.01.19 17:05:52
-05'00'

WNC Strong





12 WAYS TO PREPARE



**Sign up
for Alerts
and Warnings**



Make a Plan



**Save for a
Rainy Day**



**Practice
Emergency
Drills**



**Test Family
Communication
Plan**



**Safeguard
Documents**



**Plan with
Neighbors**



**Make Your
Home
Safer**



**Know
Evacuation
Routes**



**Assemble or
Update
Supplies**



**Get Involved in
Your Community**



**Document and
Insure Property**

Hubert M. Smith

American Legion Post 77

Hendersonville, NC



Legion77.org

SONS OF THE
AMERICAN
LEGION

AMERICAN
LEGION
RIDERS

AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

August 14, 2025 - August 19, 2025

SHELBY, NORTH CAROLINA

American Legion World Series



MILLIONS OF SUCCESSSES

Since 1925, American Legion Baseball has been a key part of the journey to adulthood for millions of young men.

Some have gone on to play the sport professionally, such as Kris Bryant, Bryce Harper, Albert Pujols, Madison Bumgarner and Justin Verlander. More than 80 American Legion Baseball graduates have been inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.

Other American Legion Baseball graduates make their mark in business, politics and other fields. In short, American Legion Baseball alumni are proud contributing members of society and are often among the most successful people in their careers.

Does your team want to belong to the nation's best-organized amateur youth baseball program?

Is your team ready to play other strong competitive teams?

Is your team ready to join a winning tradition?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, contact a local American Legion post. Better yet, attend the post's next meeting with a couple of players and ask the members to help sponsor your team.



American Legion Baseball

P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206
(317) 630-1206
Fax: (317) 630-1369
baseball@legion.org

legion.org/baseball

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL



LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



SAFEGUARDING VETERANS' BENEFITS

SUMMARY

- Unaccredited predatory claims companies are not bound by VA regulations and cannot be penalized by the Office of General Counsel. Veterans are charged exorbitant fees by these "claim sharks" for services that are provided free of charge by The American Legion and other veterans service organizations.
- Retirement benefits and disability compensation are two separate benefits, provided for two different reasons, and therefore should never be conflated. Veterans with service-connected disability ratings less than 50% have their VA disability compensation deducted from their DOD retirement pay.

ISSUE #1 – Predatory Claims Companies

American veterans face exploitation by unaccredited entities charging exorbitant fees, violating U.S. Code. Predatory practices include claims firms charging up to 600% of future VA benefit increases. These entities operate outside VA oversight, leaving veterans vulnerable.

ISSUE #2 – Military Retirees Not Receiving Full Military Retirement Pay

The American Legion highlights a concern for 42,000 military retirees with combat-related injuries facing concurrent receipt disparities. The Major Richard Star Act, supported by the American Legion, aims to repeal the offset, allowing disabled veterans to receive both DoD retirement pay and disability compensation concurrently, addressing an average offset of \$1900 per month in 2022, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

CURRENT LEGISLATION

- ***H.R. 1139 / S. 740 Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding (GUARD) VA Benefits Act of 2023***
 - seeks to restore criminal penalties and/or fines on individuals for directly or indirectly soliciting, contracting for, charging, or receiving any unauthorized fee or compensation with respect to the preparation, presentation, or prosecution of any claim for VA benefits.
- ***H.R. 303 Retired Pay Restoration Act***
 - seeks to eliminate the 1:1 offset for veterans with less than a 50% disability, enabling them to receive full retirement and disability payments.
- ***H.R. 1283/S. 344 Major Richard Star Act***
 - aims to remove restrictions, allowing those medically retired with less than 20 years due to combat-related disabilities to collect full retirement pay and disability benefits concurrently.

SUPPORTING RESOLUTIONS

- Resolution No. 1: Oppose Claims Filing by Unaccredited Parties
- Resolution No. 4: The Disabled Veterans Tax
- Resolution No. 224: Support for Concurrent Receipt of Military Retirement Pay & VA Compensation

WHAT CONGRESS CAN DO

The American Legion urgently asks Congress to enact GUARD VA Benefits Act (H.R. 1139 / S. 740) and protect our veterans from unaccredited predatory claims companies who are exploiting veterans by charging exorbitant fees, violating federal laws and regulations.

Additionally, Congress must take action to allow combat-related disabled military retirees to receive full retirement pay and disability benefits concurrently by passing the Retired Pay Restoration Act (H.R. 303) and The Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 1283/S. 344)



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★ THANK YOU ★
VETERANS