

LEONARD C. BARNES POST 450

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Veterans Memorial Program

On Thursday, May 22, 2025, the Bill Cockrell Community Center at 419 Pines Road, Shreveport, LA, was filled with pride, respect, and reflection as the community came together for the annual Veterans Memorial Program. Beginning at 1000 hours, the program served as a moving tribute to the brave men and women who have served our country—and especially those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The turnout was truly inspiring, with veterans, families, local officials, and community members gathering to honor our heroes. Several distinguished veterans were recognized, each representing courage, resilience, and unwavering dedication to duty. Their stories, faces, and uniforms reminded all in attendance of the cost of freedom and the strength of those who protect it.

A special moment was dedicated to remembering our POW/MIA service members, with a solemn display symbolizing those still unaccounted for. The American Legion Post 14 and Post 450 performed a powerful and dignified POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony, which brought many to silence and reflection. The powerful imagery and silence during that portion of the program brought many to tears and served as a sobering reminder that some wounds of war remain open. Their ceremonial tribute served as a sobering reminder that some warriors have not yet returned home—and that their memory remains forever etched in our hearts.

The highlight of the event was the keynote address delivered by Twana L. Fields-Jackson, who did an excellent job speaking to the heart of the occasion. With clarity, emotion, and eloquence, she captured the essence of service, sacrifice, and community. Her words stirred deep appreciation and called for continued commitment to caring for our veterans—not just on special days, but every day. In all, the Veterans Memorial Program was not just an event—it was an experience of shared gratitude, unity, and reverence.

We thank all who made this program possible and extend our deepest appreciation to our veterans. You are not forgotten. You are honored. You are loved.

Sponsored by: Veterans Celebration Committee; Bill Cockell Park Advisory Council; American Legion Post 14; Leonard C. Barnes Post 450; Pines Road Area Business Association, Inc. and Barksdale Air Force Base Honer Guard. *Wilma Draughn-Davis Newsletter Editor*



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BIRTHDAY WISHES

JULY

CULLEN MAYFEILD
RICKY STOKES
DEMIKO DUTY
JIMMY PHILLIPS
ORLISA JOHNSON
CHARLES ROGERS
TRINA WILLIAMS

AUGUST

CARL MOORE
V.W. MAYS, JR.
CLARENCE MOORE

SEPTEMBER

RONALD COTHAN



VETERANS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

I'm excited to share news of a powerful new statewide initiative to support Louisiana's military veterans and their families. The Louisiana Center for Health Innovation at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs, is leading a groundbreaking needs assessment survey to uncover the real challenges veterans face and ensure they get the support they deserve.

We need your help to spread the word to every veteran in Louisiana. This survey dives deep into critical areas like mental health, housing, employment, health care access and family support. By listening to veterans' voices, we'll pinpoint gaps in resources and services, paving the way for

targeted solutions and stronger, more resilient veteran communities across our state. You may access the survey at https://louisiana.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4JhZaLTx0bMfKtg.

Please share this opportunity far and wide—every response will shape the future of veteran support in Louisiana. Together, we can make a lasting difference.

With deepest gratitude,
CHARLTON J. MEGINLEY
Secretary, Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs

LAUGH LINE

An elderly American gentleman of 97 arrived in Paris by plane. At the French customs desk, the man took a few minutes to locate his passport in his carry-on bag. "You have been to France before, monsieur?" the customs officer asked, sarcastically. He admitted he had been to France previously. "Then you should know enough to have your passport ready."

The American said, "The last time I was here, I didn't have to show it." "Impossible. Americans always have to show your passports on arrival in France!" The American senior gave the Frenchman a long hard look. Then he quietly explained.

"Well, when I came ashore at Omaha Beach on D-Day in 1944 to help liberate this country, I couldn't find any Frenchmen to show it to."

SAFETY PLAN APP

A Safety Plan can help Veterans facing a crisis. Having a plan can make a big difference in how your day goes. As someone who's been through some tough times, I can say that having a Safety Plan really helps when you're facing a crisis. It doesn't need to be anything fancy—just something simple like, "Get up, take a shower, eat something." That kind of routine can really give your day some structure and keep you moving forward.

For Veterans who struggle with suicidal thoughts, a safety plan can be a lifesaver. The VA actually developed an app with input from Veterans and healthcare professionals that walks you through building your own personal plan. You can do it with your provider, and it's always available right on your phone when you need it.

The app can be located at: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/safety-plan>



Downloads: Android-Google Play iOS-App Store
US Department of Veterans Affairs Safety Plan

The app is easy to use and takes you through six clear steps:

- 1) Recognizing your warning signs.
- 2) Finding ways to cope on your own.
- 3) Identifying things or people that can distract you.
- 4) Listing friends or family you can reach out to.
- 5) Knowing which professionals you can call.
- 6) Figuring out how to stay safe

One of the features I appreciated is the sun icon. When you tap it, you get messages of hope from other Veterans who've been in similar situations. It's a reminder that you're not alone, no matter how dark things feel.

I know firsthand how hard it is to think straight in a crisis. Having a plan already in place makes a real difference. And while the app is helpful on its own, I strongly recommend working through it with a mental health provider if you can. It's a tool, not a replacement for professional support.

New Network Director for VISN 16



Fernando O. Rivera, FACHE
Interim Network Director for the Veterans
Integrated Service Network (VISN) 16

Veterans in VSIN 16 overwhelmingly trust them to deliver their health care services. More than 90% of their patients say they are happy with the ease and effectiveness of their interactions. The network operates more than 60 sites of care offering a wide range of health care services in outpatient clinics.

Mr. Rivera has dedicated his career to improving Veterans’ health care and well-being. He has a passion for understanding and delivering first-class service to patients and employees alike. Mr. Rivera is a celebrated Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) leader with over 30 years of experience in championing cutting edge solutions that transform the VA health care system.

He is looking forward to working in coordination with patients to continue his duty to care for American’s Veterans.



Leonard C. Barnes Post 450 Commemorates 12 Years of Service

The Leonard C. Barnes American Legion Post 450 proudly hosted its 12th Annual Anniversary Dinner on Saturday, 28 June 2025 at Piccadilly Cafeteria, located at 1133 St. Vincent Avenue in Shreveport, Louisiana. The event began promptly at 1130 hours, with members, families, and guests gathering to celebrate another year of service, strength, and unity.

The atmosphere was filled with joy and warmth as attendees enjoyed a delicious meal and the rare opportunity to fellowship outside of regular meetings. The camaraderie was unmistakable, with members reconnecting and welcoming new faces, all while introducing their families and sharing stories that reflected the heart of Post 450.

The dining space was elegantly decorated thanks to the thoughtful efforts of the Post Adjutant and 2nd Vice Commander, creating a festive and dignified environment befitting the occasion. From table settings to patriotic touches, the attention to detail was truly appreciated by all who attended.

It was a wonderful turnout, a testament to the commitment and community spirit that defines the Leonard C. Barnes Post. As conversations flowed and memories were made, it became clear that this gathering was not just a celebration of the past year—it was a recommitment to the mission and values that continue to guide the Post forward.

Post 450 extends its sincere thanks to everyone who participated, helped organize, and made the 12th Anniversary Dinner a resounding success. We look forward to the continued growth of our Post family and to many more years of shared service and fellowship.

“This dinner isn’t just about looking back—it’s about looking ahead. Post 450 continues to grow stronger because of each one of you, your service, and your support. Let’s keep building together.” — Wilma Draughn– Davis, Adjutant

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

01 JULY 2025

- ◆ Be the ONE Day
- ◆ Child Well-being Foundation Grant Application Opens
- ◆ Columbia Protocol Suicide Prevention Training (1430-1600 hours)

04 JULY 2025

- ◆ Independence Day

15 JULY 2025

- ◆ Legion Baseball Scholarship Application Due to National Headquarters
- ◆ O’Connor Americanism Trophy Department Narrative Due to National Headquarters
- ◆ Child Welfare Foundation Grant Applications Due to National Headquarters

18 JULY 2025

- ◆ Boys Nation begins in Washington, D.C.

24 JULY 2025

- ◆ Junior Shooting Sports Championship begins 3-Position Junior Air Rifle in Hillsdale, Mich.

27 JULY 2025

- ◆ Korean War Ends (1953)

01 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ Be the ONE Day
- ◆ Samsung American Legion Scholarship Applications Due to National Headquarters

02 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ Invasion of Kuwait/ Operation Desert Shield (1990)

04 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ Coast Guard Birthday

06 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ Belgrano Trophy Department Narratives Due to National Headquarters
- ◆ Legion Baseball Tournaments

07 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ Purple Heart Day

08 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis, Indiana

14 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ V-J Day (1945)
- ◆ American Legion 98th Baseball World Series in Shelby, N.C.

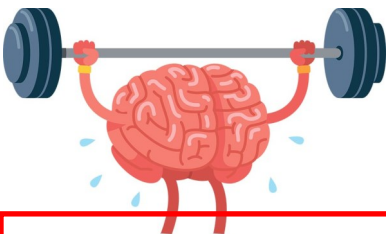
17 AUGUST 2025

- ◆ American Legion Legacy Run

VETERAN COFFEE SOCIAL

STAYING FIT

A man stands on one side of a river, his dog on the other. The man calls his dog, who immediately crosses the river without getting wet and without using a bridge or a boat. How did the dog do it?



The river is frozen
Staying Fit Answers

On Thursday, May 30, 2025, from 0900 to 1100 hours, veterans gathered at Rhino Coffee Downtown for a morning of comradeship, support, and meaningful conversation. The relaxed setting offered the perfect backdrop as local veterans came together to share stories, exchange valuable information, and connect with others who understand the unique journey of military service—all while enjoying their favorite coffee.

The gathering was organized by VOICES (Veteran Outreach into the Community to Expand Social Support), an initiative dedicated to building strong networks of social support among veterans. By bringing veterans together in a familiar setting, VOICES emphasizes that the most important support often comes from a familiar face and a warm cup of coffee. These events help veterans know they are not alone and can rely on each other for encouragement and understanding.

For more information on future gatherings or to get involved, please contact Corey T. Moore at (318) 458-2549. We encourage veterans to stay connected and support one another through these regular community events.



INSPIRATIONAL

“Patriotism is easy to understand in America. It means looking out for yourself by looking out for your country.” – Calvin Coolidge

ANNIVERSARY PICTURES



"One Big Beautiful Bill"

Legislative Update: H.R. 1 – “One Big Beautiful Bill” & Nonprofit Impact

The Senate is preparing to debate H.R. 1, a sweeping tax and spending bill that could significantly impact nonprofits across Louisiana. While the bill includes a new charitable deduction for non-itemizers (up to \$2,000 under the Senate version), it also limits deductions for higher-income donors and imposes new “giving floors” that may discourage donations.

Key concerns for Louisiana nonprofits:

- * **Foundation Tax Hike Blocked (Good News):** The Senate removed the House’s proposed steep tax increase on foundation assets—protecting local grantmaking capacity.
- * **New Donor Rules (Mixed News):** The Senate bill keeps a 0.5% minimum for itemized deductions and a 1% floor on corporate giving—potentially reducing large gifts.
- * **Grant Cuts (Concerning):** The bill slashes funding for Medicaid, SNAP, and federal grants for clean energy, education, and social services—programs heavily used by Louisiana communities.
- * **Advocacy Ongoing:** Nonprofit leaders are urging Louisiana Senators Cassidy and Kennedy to support changes that protect charitable giving and community programs.

Nonprofit stakeholders should closely monitor the Senate floor debate on H.R.1 (vote-a-rama) and engage with their senators. Louisiana charities are encouraged to contact Senators Cassidy and Kennedy, voicing concerns over giving incentives and grant cuts. Joining national advocacy efforts (e.g. signing coalitions’ letterscouncilofnonprofits.org or contacting Congress through NCN’s email tool) can amplify impact.

Locally, the Louisiana Alliance and Pelican Institute continue to provide updates. If the final bill retains harmful provisions, nonprofits should be prepared to continue advocacy or adjust their fundraising strategies (for example, educating donors on any new deduction floors). In summary, H.R.1’s fate will shape the resources available to Louisiana’s nonprofits. Stakeholders must stay informed of amendments and act quickly during the Senate debate to protect funding, tax incentives, and vital programs for Louisiana communities.

TITLE II--COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

- (Sec. 20001) This section provides additional funding for FY2025 to the Department of Defense (DOD) for
- the Marine Corps Barracks 2030 initiative,
- the Defense Health Program,
- supplemental payments of Basic Allowance for Housing to military personnel, and
- tuition assistance and child care assistance for members of the Armed Forces.

The section also provides statutory authority to extend from 14 to 21 days eligibility for Temporary Lodging Expense (TLE) for certain servicemembers undergoing a permanent change of station. Additionally, the section temporarily increases authorized investment amounts and provides additional authorization for the acquisition or construction of certain military housing through private contracts.

What You Can Do:

Stay informed. Reach out to your senators. Support advocacy efforts led by the Louisiana Alliance for Nonprofits, National Council of Nonprofits, and others working to protect the resources we depend on to serve our communities. Nonprofit Champion | June 2, 2025 | National Council of Nonprofits <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/nonprofit-champion-june-2-2025>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

continues

22 AUGUST 2025

- ♦ American Legion 106th National Convention in Tampa, Fla,

01 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ Be the ONE Day

11 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ Patriot Day

16 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ American Legion Day

17-23 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ Constitution Week

18 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ Air Force Birthday

19 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ POW/MIA Recognition Day

26-28 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ Combined Americanism Conference in Indianapolis

28 SEPTEMBER 2025

- ♦ Gold Star Mother's Day