



District 17 Communicator

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SEPTEMBER 2022

Commander's Corner

Over the next year I will include topics in the Commander's Corner that I think are important to the American Legion family. I will put forth new ideas to improve the 17th District, promote inter-Post visits, and share stories that support our fundamental mission of service to the community, state, and nation. I encourage comments, suggestions, and your ideas to meet these goals. This month I want to highlight several news articles, events and why the DD-14 is important to Posts.

American Legion's 103rd National Convention

See this [link](#) to videos posted during the American Legion's 103rd National Convention currently being held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Many of the videos associated with this link are about the Sons of the American Legion (SAL). If you know of a family member of a Veteran that might be interested in joining the SAL, please pass along this link to them to get a sampling of what the SAL does for our communities and Veterans. See this [link](#) for eligibility. The 17th District has eight SAL Squadrons: Posts 85, 130, 139, 162, 176, 177, 180 and 1976. Contact information for each is in the district's directory. If you don't not have a hardcopy, email me and I will send you a digital copy. By promoting and recruiting to the SAL we are strengthening our overall Legion family objectives and mission.

This link will take you to more events/news stories of the convention:

<https://www.legion.org/convention>

Commander of Veterans Organization Faked Being in the Military and Why the American Legion asks to see a copy of your DD-214

The American Legion does not require proof of military service. Anyone can sign up online and become a member who are then assigned to the Department Post in their state of residency.

However, Posts should review new members DD-214 and transfers into their Posts. Sure, the DD214 can be a faked, but as the article points out that it then becomes a criminal issue. Some Posts maintain copies of members DD-214s in Post safes which can be useful for always have a copy available quickly, for example if a Legionnaire moves to Post Everlasting and the family cannot find a copy for VA benefits.

https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/08/19/commander-of-veterans-organization-faked-being-military-feds-say.html?ESRC=eb_220822.nl

But I Can't Find My DD-214?

If you cannot find your DD-214, Post 117 in Phoenix Arizona has an article posted and a link to the National Archives for you to request a copy. The article explains who can access certain portions of a Veteran's personnel military records

<https://pattillmanpost117.org/resources/how-to-get-your-dd214>

Here is another source:

Military Records and Identification: <https://www.usa.gov/military-records>

So why is this important?

IRS and Veteran's Organizations:

To maintain your Post's tax-exempt status here is the rules/regulations that need to be adhered to and includes membership.

This link is the IRS regulation that covers tax exempt status of Veteran organizations to include the American Legion. It is possible for the IRS to want to see proof of your member's eligibility to join your Post.

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/other-non-profits/veterans-organizations#:~:text=The%20Internal%20Revenue%20Code%20section%20501%20%28c%29%20includes,benefit%20veterans%20of%20the%20United%20States%20Armed%20Forces>

Puller Veterans Care Center at Vint Hill Farms

Northern Virginia is finally getting a new Veterans Care Center (VCC) after breaking ground nearly five years ago. The new Puller Veterans Care Center is located on the former Vint Hill Farms Station in Fauquier County. The site is a former Army and National Security Agency facility which played a critical role in intercepting enemy communications during WWII, to include a message that provided critical operational intelligence to the D-Day invasion of Normandy.

The new VCC care center will deliver care to Virginia Veterans in a home-like setting. The 128-bed facility will feature all private rooms organized into households and neighborhoods that surround a central community room. The Center is currently hiring, exception resident applications for a Spring opening.

See this Virginia Department of Veterans Services link for more information on this and other VCC's in Virginia.

<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/veterans-care-centers/puller-veterans-care-center>

Tank Farm Open House – 24-25 September

If you have never been to the Americans in Wartime annual open house and are interested in seeing lots of operational military vehicles, then your next opportunity is on the 24-25th of September at their “Tank Farm” (13906 Aden Road, Nokesville, VA 20181).

This the Americans in Wartime Website. [Open House 2022 | Americans in Wartime Experience](#) (Suggest not clicking on the website's directions link as a malware warning popped up for me twice).

Americanism - Get Out The Vote:

Record anything you do as a Legionnaire that supports Getting out the vote for local, state, or national officials as a reportable action item for your Post's annual Americanism report. Election Day is Tuesday, November 8, 2022.

Critical dates for this year's election are:

- Voter Registration Deadline: October 17
 - 11:59 PM if registering online
 - Postmarked October 17 if registering by mail
- Absentee Ballots will be mailed starting: September 23
- Last Day to Request Absentee Ballot: October 28 by 5 P.M.
- Deadline for Return of Vote-by-Mail Ballots:
 - November 8 by 7 P.M. if hand-delivered in person
 - Postmarked on or before November 8 and received by noon on November 14 if by mail
- Early In-Person Voting: begins September 23 and ends November 5

Early voting locations have not been announced yet. In pervious general elections, early voting locations included the Fairfax County Government Center and all District Government Centers.

Please remember that if you request, receive an absentee ballot, and later decide to vote in person, you must surrender the absentee ballot at your polling place to vote in-person.

Check the Fairfax County [Office of Elections | Elections \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections) for additional details and to answer all your questions.

Why Were Flags at Half-Staff in Virginia on the 22nd of August?

To find the answer visit this news report on why Governor Youngkin ordered all state and local government buildings to fly the U.S. flag at half-staff.

[httgreensprps://www.wfxrtv.com/news/regional-news/virginia-news/why-are-flags-at-half-staff-in-virginia-monday/](https://www.wfxrtv.com/news/regional-news/virginia-news/why-are-flags-at-half-staff-in-virginia-monday/) Suggest you also visit this link to the Monford Point Marine Association website. <https://montfordpointmarines.org/>

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA FOR WINNING THE NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION AMERICANISM AWARD AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION!!!

Steve Hunter
Commander

Adjutant’s Corner

We are in 4th place in the Department Membership Race this week.

This week’s Post’s rating are:

- 1. Post 123 – 66.67%
- 2. Post 24 – 65.15%
- 3. Post 184 – 61.14%
- 4. Post 176 – 58.49%
- 5. Post 85 - 57.25%
- 6. Post 1976 - 57.20%
- 7. Post 1995 – 55.81%
- 8. Post 177 - 54.93%
- 9. Post 270 – 54.20%
- 10. Post 130 – 52.02%
- 11. Post 139 – 50.28%
- 12. Post 162 - 50.00%
- 13. Post 180 - 45.27%
- 14. Post 1775 – 39.13%

Keep reaching out with calls, writing, messages to our members and remind them how import their renew means to your Post and The American Legion.

Also, keep pushing Paid Up for Life memberships. I’ve been pushing this hard for the last several years and Post 24 now has 180 PUFLs!

On Sunday, 11 September, we will have our first Adjutant’s get together at Fairfax Post 177 at noon. (If you arrive early, they have a great Sunday breakfast beginning at 0930. It is a great meal for only \$10.) This will be a chance for new Adjutants to get an understanding of what their job consists of and how important their position is to their post. I have been the Adjutant at Post 24 for 32 years and there are several other longtime Adjutants in the District who can pass along ideas to the new Adjutants.

Jim Glassman
District Adjutant/Membership Chairman

Legislation Chairman – Bill Aramony

The Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce honors a Veteran with the Lifetime Achievement Award whose service resulted in an extraordinarily positive impact on the Veteran Business Community in the National Capital Region. The Chamber's 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award went to **Glenn Yarborough**, President and Chief Executive Officer of WGY & Associates, LLC, and Virginia Department Vice-Commander.

Toxic exposure to radiation, burn pits, and other toxins caused service-connected disabilities, which disabilities now addressed are by new law, The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act of 2022. The PACT Act is law, thanks largely to the 34,700 + legionnaires messaged Congress using the Legion’s <https://voterveice.net/AmericanLegion/home> ;

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will begin processing claims in January 2023. You should file benefit claims NOW because the

effective date of benefits is when the claim is filed. You may use a Legion service officer. Information on the process and your eligibility may be found at DVS on <https://www.va.gov/reso.../the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits>

CHAPLAINS CORNER - Chaplain McComb



"There's a new, easy-to-remember way to reach the Veterans Crisis Line—**Dial 988 then Press 1**. Millions of Veterans have called when they needed crisis support. We're here if you need us.

For more information, visit VeteransCrisisLine.net. You can still call the original Veterans Crisis Line number—**1-800-273-8255 and Press 1**—to reach responders."

For God and Country,

Paul McComb
District 17 Chaplain
pmccomb98@gmail.com

What's Going on at your Post
(Thank you to the Posts that submitted their input!!!!)

Alexandria Post 24 – Commander Mixon

AUGUST

Margarita Fundraiser(s) – On Tue, Aug 2nd Legionnaire Elaine Bower convened phase 1 and on Fri, Aug 5th convened phase 2 of her special Margarita Fundraiser in the Clubroom raising over \$600 for our youth and veterans' programs. A big shoutout to Elaine!

American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Cleaning – On Sat, Aug 6th, several members—Mona Espinosa, Chris Steinhilber, Doug Guiler, Marcus Lindsay, and others—along with Legionnaires from other area Posts cleaned this special Memorial in DC. Thanks to Mona for organizing, and everyone who participated!



Blood Drive Support – On Tues, Aug 9th, and again on Tues, Aug 23rd, members supported INOVA's Blood Drive near City Hall—a big shout out to Mona Espinosa (with support from Donna Reuss) for making those events so successful as 40 pints of life-saving blood were collected.

National Purple Heart Day – Sun, Aug 7th. On this day, the Post 24 Commander and Adjutant signed Purple Heart Proclamation to recognize and honor Purple Heart recipients.



Purple Heart Recipient Receives Post 24 Proclamation – At the general membership meeting on Wed, Aug 10th, we received a short talk from James Pierce (comrade, National Park Service Ranger, and Purple Heart recipient) about his life experiences. At the end of his talk, I reminded those in attendance that Sun, Aug 7th was Purple Heart Recognition Day. As James Pierce was the only Purple Heart recipient in attendance, I read and presented to him the official Post 24 proclamation honoring Purple Heart recipients for their service and great sacrifices rendered to our Nation.



Recent Boys State Graduates Visit Post – At the General Membership meeting on Wed, Aug 10th, two graduates of this year's Boys State program, that Post 24 sponsored, visited to talk about the positive life changing experiences they had and to thank us for our support. Both were presented certificates of recognition and received great rounds of applause. A big shout out to our Boys State program chairman, Patrick Hawley, for organizing this special visit and everything he does to make our Boys State program one of the best. I also had the pleasure of presenting Patrick Hawley the Legionnaire of the Year cap pin that he had earned during the 2021-2022 Legion year. Congrats again to Patrick!



50th Anniversary of the Gadsby's Tavern complex deed transfer from Post 24 to the City of Alexandria – On Thu, Aug 11th this milestone in history was recognized. On that day, a short video of the 1972 deed transfer was posted on our Facebook page. That was a win-win arrangement back then, and it continues to be a win-win arrangement today. We are indebted to Lifetime Member Warden Foley and his Post 24 comrades from 50 years ago for making that transfer happen. Thank you, **Warden Foley!**



Support to Blinded Veterans Association

Annual Convention – From 21-27 Aug, the Blinded Veterans Association convened their annual convention in DC. Answering the call for support to these blinded veterans while they navigated arrival/departure airports and the convention hotel, several volunteers signed up to support this worthy cause. Names that I'm aware of include Jerry Krueger, Rex Hendricks, Karen Hendricks, Jerry Foley, Tom Gelson, Chrissi Gelson, Alisa Englert, Michelle Roberts, and Andrea Dollar. Jerry Krueger, who served as local volunteer coordinator for the event, commended and saluted the dynamic duo of **Karen and Rex Hendricks**. Paraphrasing his words here: These two Post 24 members spent 3-5 days each staffing the hotel volunteer desk, assisting, in very caring ways, the numerous blinded military veterans, and in some cases their spouses, and even their guide dogs. Karen not only spent several days assisting Vets as they arrived at the airport, but she also assisted later during their departures. A big shout out to all these fine volunteers, I thank them all for having such big hearts and for being part of our great Post 24 team!



Karen Hendricks guiding blinded Veteran at airport



Rex Hendricks guiding blinded Veteran On to bus transport

SEPTEMBER

American Veterans Disabled for Life

Memorial Cleaning – On Sat, Sep 3rd we will be looking for volunteers to help clean this special Memorial in D.C. in the early morning. Simply show up on Sat, Sep 3rd at 7:15 a.m. at 214 2nd St. SE in DC. Hope to see you there.

Patriot Day Weekend Service Project

– On Fri, Sep 9th we will be working side-by-side with other VSOs to help clean Veterans' tombstones at Alexandria National Cemetery. This will be a service project in support of Patriot Day weekend. To lend a hand that day (Fri, Sep 9th), you must pre-register online at a link you can find on the Post 24 Facebook page.

Solemn Remembrance of 9/11

– Will be conducted during our general membership meeting on Wed, Sep 14th.

Half-Way to Saint Patrick's Day Fundraiser

Party – On Sat, Sep 17th there will be a fun fundraiser event in the Post 24 Clubroom. A big shout out to our Clubroom Manager, Scott Allen, for spearheading that event; and more information can be found on the Post 24 Facebook page. Please come out and support; you will not be disappointed.



Falls Church Post 130 – Commander Bob Simpson

SUNDAY - 1:00PM TO 9:00PM

MONDAY - THURSDAY - 2:00PM TO 10:00PM

FRIDAY & SATURDAY - 2:00PM TO 12:00AM

Annual 1st Friday of the Month 8 ball Tournament starts at 7:00pm house rules.

Registration Fee \$10:00

Good luck to all.

9/11 Ceremony at 11 am at National Memorial Cemetery. The main speaker is State Senator Chap Petersen serving the new 37th District. Post 130 will provide the color guard and rifle squad. The ceremony will honor all First Responders and all persons who perished at the Twin Towers, Shanksville, and the Pentagon. The ceremony is cosponsored by the National Memorial Cemetery Management.

All Legionnaires are invited to attend.

The **DMV hours** for September are

September 6-9

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Closed for lunch from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM

September 12-16

9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Closed for lunch from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM

Contact us to receive by email the monthly DMV Connect Legion dates.

Location

Falls Church Post 130

400 N Oak Street

Falls Church, VA 22046

Springfield Post 176 – Commander Kevin Gaddis

On Sunday, August 28th the Post held its annual Fish Fry, another Post and community event that had over 200 attendees.

The Post 176 Sons of the American Legion Squadron will have their 7th Annual Pig Roast on Saturday, September 17th at 11:00 a.m. This is a community event and will be open to the Public. Tickets at the door for \$20.

The Special Forces Association Chapter XI – National Capital Region will hold their 6th Annual Octoberfest at Post 176 on Saturday, October 1, 2022.

Under Randy Wheeler' leadership, Post 176 created a mission statement and goals for the newly formed Youth Outreach Committee. The

mission Statement is: Build upon the American Legion legacy and strengthen the future through youth education and growth. The Goals are: 1) Educate and grow young people within the community to promote service and American Legion values. 2) To set the foundations of Americanism, responsible citizenship, and help the Underserved. 3) Honor the service of all veterans by setting the base of volunteerism as early as possible. The committee consists of a School Teacher (Hannah Rocke), retired County Law Enforcement Officer (Dan Murphy), an amateur athlete (Travis Greathouse), former scout leader (Gary Fitts) and community leader (Royes Gernandt). We would like to find one additional member (someone with a tie-in with the local business community).

Randy is continuing to coordinate efforts for the three Scout troops Post 176 is sponsoring. We developed potential projects for an Eagle Scout project for Troop 1344 out of Burke. Post 176 volunteered two little league coaches for the Central Springfield Little League. We have reached out to Orange Hunt Elementary and established contacts and approval for 176 Veterans interaction with the children. We are in the active planning phase for an Oratorical Contest at Post 176 sometime in December and working to have a Halloween Safety Event at Post 176.

Wayne M. Kidwell Post 184 – Commander Womak

Post 184 enjoyed a quiet month focused on our Monthly Meeting where our Boys State attendees gave their insights, thoughts, and stories of their time at Boys State. Post 184 is also planning a visit to a local Senior Facility in September. We call it “Donuts with Veterans” where we bring the donuts and coffee and enjoy some camaraderie with them. Our next meeting in September will focus on our next major event – The Town of Herndon’s Veteran’s Day Ceremony.

McLean Post 270 – Commander Wilson

I hope that the summer break was a good one for you and your families. Our Executive Committee has been hard at work on programs for this year that will engage you. You can expect to continue to enjoy the programs that we have sponsored in the past and look for some new offerings!

This month we observe with reverence, Patriots Day, September 11th. The fateful day when many Americans sacrificed so much. Sunday the 11th would be a great day to take a drive past the pentagon and if able stop at the outdoor memorial at the Pentagon or Arlington Cemetery. Let us “Never Forget”.

Good news- the parking lot use for construction is complete as promised on time! On Tuesday, September 6th there will be a Ribbon -cutting for the Crossroads Building. The contractors have done a great job installing the shed and our Adjutant has managed that project to perfection and created an opportunity for the scouts to get involved.

The new shed is in use storing flags from the Boy Scouts. Great work Don!

Let’s not forget that Membership renewal is crucial to our Post. We need to know that you are with us!

So much energy goes into tracking members down each year to renew. Let’s start a new trend and get this off your to do list and then we can focus on meaningful programing for YOU, our members!!

Speaking of members, our own, Glenn Yarborough, will receive the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce for services to help Veterans!! Congratulations Glenn!!

This month our speaker on the 13th will be Mark Bertacci, Public Affairs officer from the Coast Guard Auxillary (CGAUX) to highlight the essential mission the CGAUX serves to the Coast Guard. It is a very enlightening

presentation. We do have at least 5 veterans of the CG and this is one small way to honor them. Mark Bertacci is a member of Flotilla 53-02 in Sector Maryland that I am a member of. I do hope that you come out to hear his presentation.

Looking ahead, in October we will have presentations from our Youth Programs. Please show your support to the outstanding impact that Post 270 has in the community.

With renewed enthusiasm we embrace the mission of the Legion and our role as Veterans strengthening America.

Legion Auxiliary – President Karen Donais

Happy New Year! Well, at least ALA New Year! Our District has left the port. I already received my first monthly report! Way to go Unit 85!

September 11th, Patriot Day, September 16th, American Legion Day, and September 17th, POW/MIA Day are all special dates for the American Legion. Coordinate with your AL Post to commemorate at least one of these dates. Please let me know what you did. Better yet, invite me to come share in your service.

The Department Fall Conference is in Williamsburg, Oct. 21-23. Make sure to have at least one member of your unit attend. I look forward to seeing you there!

Our District Commander has requested all Posts notify him of any special events you have organized. We will add it to the Special Events Calendar. We can support each other best when we inform each other of our events. Please email info, flyers, etc. to Commander Steve Hunter at geoshunter@aol.com

One of my goals this year is to have participation from each unit. We have gotten off to a good start by having almost every unit represented as District committee chairs. We will hear from each chairperson at our District Fall Conference, held at Fairfax Post 177,

1:00PM Oct. 30th. It is vital we have at least one member from each unit attend!

May you have smooth sailing as you begin your New Year. I am looking forward to this journey together!