



## District 17 Communicator

Volume 5 – Issue 7

JANUARY 2024

### Commander's Corner – Commander Shirley Buchanan

Legionnaires,

HAPPY NEW YEAR, “for auld lang syne.”

Fellow legionnaires, let's look forward to the new year with optimism, motivation and gratitude for our good health and well-being and so much to be thankful for. Let's set goals for the new year with hope and optimism.

It is important to recognize that the 17<sup>th</sup> is the largest District in the state and we want to show that we can lead the Department in membership. We have asked each member to make it a goal to recruit at least one or more members in the new year.

Let us make new memories with new members in the new year. Also, Buddy Checks are a good way to keep up with members and to remind them of our recruitment goals.

Sincere Best Wishes for a Safe and Joyful New Year.

### Adjutant's Corner

Happy New Year to All

District 17 has moved up to 5<sup>th</sup> place in the Department!!!

Congratulations again to Post 1775 for make 100%!!!!

Next Department Membership Award is the Yorktown Award for posts reaching 80% of their goal by January 10.

24	88.14%
44	92.11%
85	76.38%
123	98.70%
130	68.94%
139	94.36%
162	80.00%
176	90.32%
177	88.15%
180	88.61%
184	85.80%
194	75.51%
270	71.36%
1775	102.70%

1976 87.04%  
 1995 94.44%  
 SUM: 86.68%

Let's keep moving forward. We can do this is each post do's their part.

Jim Glassman  
 District Adjutant/Membership  
 Chairman

### **District Legislation – Bill Aramony**

January 17, 2024. Wednesday Day on the hill is when The American Legion, and other veteran organizations, show Virginia Delegates and State Senators our support for veterans and legion values. The Department Commander and other white hats are coming. 8 AM Briefing at Legion headquarters. 1708 Commonwealth Avenue Richmond, VA 23230. 804-353-6606. Then we are bussed to the General Assembly Building, 9th and Grace Streets, Richmond. OR you can choose to drive to the General Assembly (same 9th street address) at 10 AM and meet us in Room 800.

1 PM 1300 Bus back to Headquarters. Or join multiple post Commanders and members who are coming down the night before.

### **Chaplain's Corner**

Happy New Year to the American Legion Family. As you start 2024 mark your calendars now:

**District 17 will have our Four Chaplains Memorial Service on Sunday, February 4, 2023 at 10:30am.** The memorial service will be at Post 177 Fairfax. This will be the 81st anniversary of the loss of the four chaplains. Post 177 will provide food after the event.

Volunteers are needed! Please contact Paul McComb ([pmccomb98@gmail.com](mailto:pmccomb98@gmail.com)) to help volunteer with planning and during the event!



May you enjoy an abundance of blessings in 2024! Paul McComb, [pmccomb98@gmail.com](mailto:pmccomb98@gmail.com), District 17 Chaplain

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

**Alexandria Post 24 – Commander Mike Mixon**

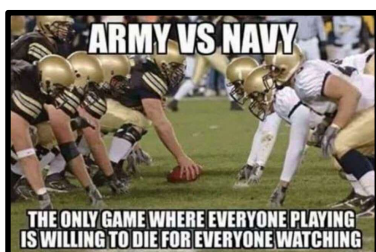
**DECEMBER—What Happened?**

**Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.**  
 With a moment of silence, Post 24 commemorated Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day on December 7<sup>th</sup>—a day which lives in infamy!

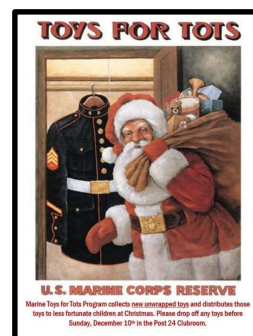


### **Army-Navy Football Watch Party.**

Convened in the Clubroom on December 9<sup>th</sup>; and Chili Cookoff champions that day included Patty Clark (1<sup>st</sup> place), Brookesene Ambos (2<sup>nd</sup> place), and Chad Umbach (3<sup>rd</sup> place).



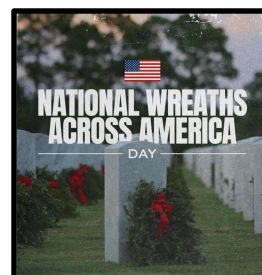
**Toys for Tots.** One of our energetic Marines—Chad Umbach—organized and administered this year's 'Toys for Tots' campaign; I thank Chad and the generosity of Post 24 members for making this year's campaign successful.



**U.S. Space Force Birthday.** The USSF celebrated its 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary on December 20<sup>th</sup>, and Post 24 celebrated a week early with a cake cutting in the Clubroom on December 13<sup>th</sup>.



### **Wreaths Across America.**



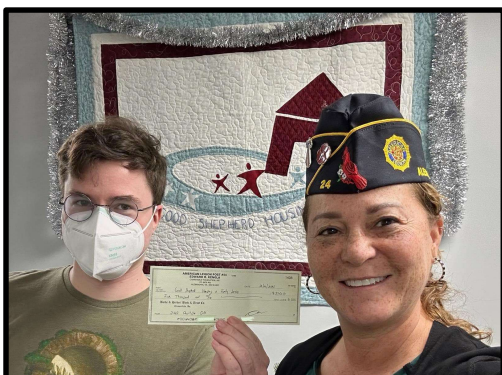
Post 24 set an ambitious goal for members to sponsor/donate 150 wreaths in support of Wreaths Across America (WAA) at the Alexandria National Cemetery. In the end, Post 24 members and friends sponsored/donated a whopping 378 wreaths. Thank you all for your generosity. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, several Post 24 members showed up at the Alexandria National Cemetery to help unload the WAA delivery

truck; and on December 16<sup>th</sup>, many Post 24 members and other community supporters showed up to place wreaths at over 4,200 gravesites.

Pictured below are First-Vice Commander Kelly Niernberger and Executive Board member Wendy Driver.



**Presentation of Kengla Charitable Foundation Charity Checks.** Lastly, during the final week of December, several members—Donna Reuss, Wendy Driver, and Chad Umbach—delivered and/or presented donation checks to local charities. Wendy Driver pictured below presenting a check to a local charity—Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services. Thank you all for showing off Post 24's great community spirit!



## **JANUARY—What's Coming?**

### **What does January have in store?**

Post 24 will convene its annual oratorical contest for motivated high school students on Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> starting at 1:30pm in the Ballroom. Our 1<sup>st</sup> place winner will advance to compete at the District 17 oratorical contest. At our general membership meeting on Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup> we will take time to acknowledge Chaplain Dick Evans' recent birthday (90+). Please join us if you can.

### **2024 George Washington Birthday Run, Walk & Roll Challenge Event-**

The *4th annual* George Washington Birthday *Run, Walk & Roll* challenge event happens during the entire month of **February 2024**. However, Sign-Ups are happening NOW! To Register, visit:

<https://runsignup.com/race/va/alexandria/GWB24RunWalkRoll>

Participants are encouraged to run, walk and/or roll at least 24 miles (in increments they choose) during the month of February in tribute to our favorite founding father—George Washington. Participation is open to *all* in The American Legion Family, as well as the public. Participants receive a Completion Certificate and a custom-designed George Washington Birthday Commemorative Coin.

**See attached flyer for details.**



## **Falls Church Post 130 – Commander Jamie Carl**

Post 130 Hours of Operation are  
Monday - Saturday Opens 12:00 noon to  
22:00 Hrs. (12 PM to 10 PM)

Sunday Opens 13:00 Hrs to 22:00  
Hrs. (1 PM to 10 PM)

EVERY FIRST FRIDAY OF THE  
MONTH POST 130 HAS 8 BALL  
POOL TOURNAMENT DOUBLE  
ELIMINATION. We play singles  
with low turnout. With high turnout,  
we have luck of the draw for partners  
So come on down show us what you  
got Pool Players.



### **JANUARY 20TH**

1PM TO 4PM

**\$20.00 TO ENTER YOUR CHILI (BRING A CROCKPOT FULL)**

**MUST ENTER BY JANUARY 17TH**

PRIZE FOR 1ST PLACE WINNER (WHICH WILL BE DETERMINED  
BY VOTES FROM THOSE WHO PAY TO EAT)

**FUNDRAISER FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION, Aux and SAL**

**NOT COOKING**



**\$10.00 PERSON (TASTE ALL ENTERS)  
AND VOTE**

AMERICAN LEGION 130 400 N OAK FALLS CHURCH VA

## **Springfield Post 176 – Commander Kevin Gaddis**

Post 176 closed out 2023 with a host  
of Legion activity to our community  
and our veterans. With the unity of  
effort from our Legion family the  
month of December and the year of  
2023 were beyond successful. A big

thank you to all our volunteers who  
make things happen at this very  
special Post. We are fortunate to have  
such great folks at the Post and a full  
Legion family consisting of the  
Auxiliary, Riders, and Sons all  
working together for the same cause.  
It makes a difference.

On Monday, December 11, 2023, Post  
176 was honored to have the privilege  
of laying a wreath at Arlington  
National Cemetery for a Public  
Wreath Ceremony at the Tomb of the  
Unknown Soldier. Representing Post  
176 and the American Legion were  
Post 176 Commander

A great job to the group of over 25  
Post 176 members comprised of  
Legionnaires, Sons, Riders, and  
Auxiliary who came out on Saturday,  
December 16, 2023, and supported  
the annual Wreaths Across American  
at the National Cemetery in  
Alexandria, VA. It was our way of  
saying thank you to all who have  
served and sacrificed for our freedom.



On Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, Post 176 held its second annual “Brunch with Santa” and had over 200 children show up between 1100 and 1:00 pm. Every child received a gift card and a toy. Not to mention there were plenty of pancakes and food for everyone. This annual event is one of the biggest events Post 176 does for the community. Thanks to Auxiliary member and House Committee member Jessica Esparza for planning this event once again. Also, thank you to Springfield VFW Post 7327 for their generous donation for the gift cards.

Post 176 held its first annual “Vinyl” Night on Saturday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Legionnaire Dana Shafie organized this event and was the DJ spinning the holiday tunes.

Post 176 supported many great charitable events during the month of December. The Post collected hundreds of toys for the Toys-for-Tots program, so much so that numerous trips had to be made over the course of the month to remove the toys from the lobby. Many thanks to all our members who contributed. Also, the sock drive for our homeless veterans was another success.

#### Upcoming Events

As a reminder, the last Thursday of every month is Trivia Night at Post 176. Legionnaire Aaron Shadow hosts this popular event.

Post 176 will hold its Oratorical Contest on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, at 7:00 pm. I want to thank Second Vice Randy Wheeler for organizing this important event. The fourth annual Casino Night will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2024. This fundraiser is open to the public and Legion family. The next blood drive is on Tuesday, February 13, 2024.

#### **Herndon Post 184 – Commander Dave Womack**

Post 184 finished the year with a Christmas Dinner Pot-Luck celebrated with Family and Friends with a review of the year’s activities. Post 184 collected up ‘Sweats for Vets’ to benefit the Veterans at the VA Hospital in Martinsburg, WV. Post Members also signed Christmas Cards that were delivered to local Senior Centers in Herndon. We are all looking forward to 2024 as a year to better support our Veterans.

#### **Arlington Post 194 – Commander Dewanda Mintz**

Post 194 & Auxiliary ended the year with Christmas Cheer:

December 8<sup>th</sup>

We had food, fun, & fellowship @ our ‘Annual Christmas Party’



December 13<sup>th</sup>

We collected & wrapped donated gifts of toys, games, books, clothing, & coats for students, Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade @ Christmas Twinkle Shop 2023 - Hoffman Boston Elementary School

### *Supplications*

Prayers of complete healing for our fellow Legionnaires & Auxiliary confronting health challenges

Prayers & blessings for our deployed troops & their familie

*~ New is the year, new are the hopes, new is the resolution, new are the spirits, and new are my warm wishes just for you. Have a promising and fulfilling New Year ~*

### **Annandale Post 1976 - Commander Dorothy Vigano**

We have the most amazing and dedicated volunteers here at Post 1976. I just wanted to highlight all they do to make our post a welcoming home for our veterans, their families, and our community.

Post 1976 had a Thanksgiving Dinner for our local veterans while teaming with Cooks For Vets (CFV), the DAR, SAL, Riders and our spectacular Auxiliary. CFV is an organization that is like meals on wheels for our local veterans providing hot meals and groceries for veterans that are "Food Insecure." Turkeys, potatoes and the fixings were provided by the DC Kitchen, CFV, Wegmans, Nothing but Bunt, the Auxiliary and the Annandale DAR.

Post 180 in Vienna volunteered to cook 6 of the 15 donated Turkeys while Tennessee, Gary Indre, Pam McCarthy, Tom Uglietta and Dan Vigano cooked the rest. This event was a super success serving around 126 people in our beautifully decorated hall.



In December, the Auxiliary decorated and hosted a Christmas Dinner with music provided by D.J. Jingle Dan. While the post provided ham and turkey, ALL the sides and desserts were provided by our members. It was absolutely delicious! "But wait, there's more..." The next morning, the SAL provided a stunning Family Breakfast with our volunteer waitresses using their tips to raise \$351 for the Northern Virginia Veterans Association.

In addition, our volunteer waitresses raised enough tips to purchase 51 wreaths for the Wreaths Across America and the Riders headed up the Toys for Tots drive collecting 7 JUMBO sized boxes! Your generosity and willingness to serve says so much about the members of our post.





We are eternally grateful for our volunteers.

Happiest of New Years to you all!

For God and Country,

*Dorothy Hennessey Vigano,*  
*Commander*

### **Centreville Post 1995 –** **Commander Randy Young**

**Potluck Holiday Dinner** – We held our annual Christmas party after an abbreviated membership meeting at the Sully Government Center on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December. After adjourning the meeting, we accepted Life Scout Brendan Nitz's flag collection box and positioned it outside Supervisor Kathy Smith's office (see photos below). We then joined our awesome Auxiliary for dinner. After a blessing by Chaplain Al Schenck, we observed the missing man table ceremony presided over our POW/MIA Chairman, Jim Robison. As is tradition, we invited police officers from the station at the Government

Center to join us in food and fellowship.



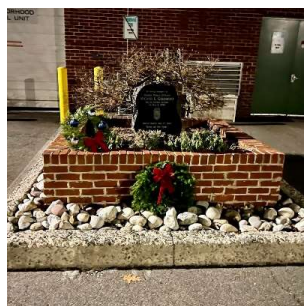
Attendees to Post 1995's 2023 Holiday Dinner

### **Wreath Laying for Fallen Officers –**

Two days later, on December 14<sup>th</sup>, we returned to the Police station to lay wreaths at the memorials to Detective Vicky Armel and Master Patrol Officer Michael Garbarino who were ambushed in a gunfight in the station parking in May 2006. Captain Dan Spital welcomed us and showed the memorial in the station common area. We then proceeded to the parking lot where a prayer for the fallen was read, and at each memorial a wreath was placed, and honors were rendered. Our visit was facilitated by MPO Meg Hawkins, Community Outreach Officer at the station. This observance is in conjunction with our annual Wreaths Across America participation.



Wreath's presentation at Sully District  
Police Station Honor Wall



Memorials for Detective Vicky Armel and  
Master Patrol Officer Michael Garbarino

### **Recruiting at Coast Guard**

**Exchange** – Post 1995 held another successful recruiting drive at the Coast Guard Exchange on Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> in Centreville. Under the leadership of Membership Chair and Adjutant, Steve Hunter, we transferred three members and recruited three new Legionnaires. These occasions are a great opportunity to speak to veterans about their service and hear about their pride in having defended the country. Our Auxiliary also picked up a new member.

**Flag Collection Box** – Post 1995 with the support of Fairfax County Fire Station 40 arranged for Eagle Scout Tyler Morley to find a home for his last collection box. Captain Dave Cox, shift commander, welcomed Tyler and his parents to the station.

Attending for the Legion were Commander Randy Young, Adjutant Steve Hunter, and Sergeant at Arms Mark Miller. We greeted the assembled firefighters and stated that this was a gathering of three institutions who are community based and devoted to community service, the Fire Service, Boy Scouts, and the Legion. Tyler recounted how he chose the service project and his sense of accomplishment in completing the project. Captain Cox accepted the box for Station 40, he will post the location on the station web site to alert the public and stated that he was pleased the station could offer an additional service to the community.



Eagle Scout Tyler Morley's Flag Collection  
Box presentation to FCFS 40 on December  
29<sup>th</sup>.





Life Scout Brendan Nitz's flag collection box in the Sully District Government Center

**Rechartering Troop 1995** – For the 28<sup>th</sup> year, Post 1995 has continued to sponsor our namesake Scouts BSA Troop and supporting them in our jointly held values of Americanism.

We signed a mutual support agreement between our Post, the troop, and the National Capital Area Council. Our Chartered Organization Representative, Steven Hunt, signed the charter document and it was submitted to the Council office in Bethesda. We look forward to working with both the Boys and the new Girls Troop throughout the coming year on projects of mutual interest and benefit.

### **Centreville Unit 1995 Auxiliary Bake Sale**

The Auxiliary conducted a successful “Bake Sale” at Patriot High School in Prince William County on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Proceeds may support Girls State and/or veterans and military family causes such as the Fisher House at Fort Belvoir.



### **Legion Auxiliary**

Happy New Year! Ladies of the Auxiliary,

I hope all had a good Christmas and Happy New Year. Welcome 2024 in and let's get started by contributing on many levels this year.

Plan events and get organized for the year ahead. Donate blood, fly the American Flag, donate to a food drive, contribute to the Auxiliary Emergency Fund, for example.

This supports our troops, their families and our communities in Northern Virginia.

Include attending The Four Chaplains remembrance ceremony scheduled the first Sunday in February.

Attend the Spring Conference, start compiling hours for the annual reports due on April 15, 2024.

As always thank you to all the Auxiliary members for your support

and amazing work you do  
volunteering for all members of the  
Military and their families.

For God and Country!

All the best,  
Tamara Parks  
17<sup>th</sup> District President

**SAL**

Happy New Years!

I hope everyone had a wonderful  
holiday season. The new year brings  
new fortune and change for all. This  
time of year should serve a somber  
reminder for all that some of us are  
blessed that we may have family  
waiting for us while many may not.  
Always keep your loved ones deep in  
thought.

Membership should be constantly be  
turned in from the members. Please  
reach out to your members and  
remind them to renew! It would be  
ideal if every member was paid up for  
the year by December 31<sup>st</sup>. That is  
always the goal and each squadron  
should know where they are in that  
goal.

Did you know you can register for the  
American Legion Leadership College  
already? It will be held August 2-4<sup>th</sup>,  
2024 at the Hilton Hotel Richmond-  
Midlothian in Richmond. It is a  
fantastic way to learn proper etiquette,

protocols, and duties of officers in the  
American Legion Family. These are  
held to support you! Please attend and  
give feedback. That is the only way  
the program can improve.

I hope you'll have a fruitful 2024 and  
may you continue serving our  
veterans, their families, and your  
community.

For God and Country,  
Tyler Vanice  
Detachment Vice Commander