



FOCUS

Taking A Closer Look



Volume 16, Issue 2 April 2024

Detachment Officers

- Detachment Commander – Kevin Chaplin
- Detachment Vice Commander— Timothy Fincher
- Detachment Vice Commander—Jarrod Vass
- Detachment Vice Commander— Jay Rarick
- Detachment NEC—Jeff Lee
- Detachment Alt-NEC— David Boggs
- Detachment Adjutant—Joe Gallagher
- Detachment Asst Adjutant— Scott Williams
- Detachment Finance Officer— David Boggs
- Detachment Chaplain— Robert Wilson, Sr.
- Detachment Sgt At Arms— David Burnum

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April: Month of The Military Child



Military children are strong, resilient, and supportive individuals who face many challenges and unique experiences due to their parents' military service. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, there are more than 1.6 million military children in the United States. These kids encounter trials and tribulations that are often invisible and unacknowledged.

"Military children grow up facing a myriad of different issues than most children living in our communities — they face a huge number of challenges," said Dr. Coral

May Grout, ALA national Children & Youth Committee chair. "The responsibilities of dealing with a parent in the military impact not only the spouse or other caregiver, but it impacts the child."

To show military children our gratitude and recognize their bravery, April is dedicated as Military Child Appreciation Month, officially known as the Month of the Military Child (MOMC). Created in the mid-1980s, military support organizations use the month to honor the sacrifice and commitment our military children make every day.

"Devoting a month to these children demonstrates that we are behind them and that their needs are not forgotten," said Grout. "With all of these challenges facing military children, it's imperative that we join together within our communities and with our schools to provide support to these kids."

There are countless ways you can show your appreciation **Continued on Page 3**

About This Issue

This is the Second Issue of the 2024-25 year. This issue contains information on April—Month of the Military Child and Children and Youth Month. We look forward into May and look at different dates for Military Appreciation Month. We also

provide tips and suggestions on how to celebrate American Legion Post Home in the month of April. Many American Legion Family Posts are holding Open Houses on Legion Family Day. What is your Squadron doing to support your Legion Family Day?

Share some pictures on Facebook or send the pictures to SonsVA-DetADJ@comcast.net.

Also, don't forget that your Squadron CSR is due into Detachment in May. We need 100% reporting this year.

Commander's Corner—Kevin Chaplin



Greetings from the Detachment of Virginia. First, I would like to congratulate everyone on the outstanding work everyone is doing with membership. The Detachment has met every national membership goal this year well in advance of the goal date. As of March 31, 2025, the Detachment is at 93.8% of the 100% goal and 6th in the nation. We always set our sights a little bit higher, and our internal goals are to reach 105% of last year's numbers. Last year we reached 4,512 members at 103.32% of our goal. This year we are 4,276 and we are only

174 members from reaching the 100% goal. Keep up the good work!

By the time you read this article, your Squadron should have received the Consolidated Squadron Report. This report documents all the volunteer time and money donated to benefit The American Legion programs. It is very important that every Squadron submit this form to the Commander or Adjutant. This information is used by The American Legion National Commander when he testifies in Congress. It shows the immense value The American Legion family brings to our Veterans, our children and youth, our community and our Nation. Last year the Detachment of Virginia donated \$225,409 and volunteered 92,724 hours. A Volunteer hour is valued at \$29.95 which brings the value of hours donated to \$2,777,069. Combining the dollars donated and the value of hours donated, Virginia SAL volunteers donated \$3,002,478. We accomplished this with only 43% of active Squadrons reporting. Please make sure your Squadron submits a report this year. **Continued on page 4**

Adjutant's Blog—Joe Gallagher



OUR WORK AS SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE:

Our year is flying along, they seem to go by faster each year. Before we all realize it we have much to get done in supporting our SAL programs. We are facing the end of our SAL year within a couple of months. . We all need to take some time and assess where we are as individual squadrons. Have we met the goals we set last July? Have we made contributions to those programs that we set out to support? Have we ensured that we have tracked our volunteer hours to the best of

our abilities so that they can be submitted via our end of the year CSR report? Have we reached our squadron membership goal that is so important to the overall American Legion as our member numbers provide the American Legion with a great deal of power in requesting Congress to support our veterans? These and many more are the questions we need to ask ourselves as squadrons. We need to make sure we have done all of this so that the year-end paper work forthcoming in the not to distant future is completed with ease, that our programs and reasons for our organization are supported and continue to support our veterans, their families and our communities. Let us get these things done, and if any squadron or member needs our help with any of it, please reach out and we will support.

On another note, your detachment leadership needs your help. Please consider reaching out to join a committee at the detachment level. We also need much help in making sure that all yearly forms IE: The SDR and CSR and Officers reports are completed at each squadron and turned in. They can be sent to myself or any detachment officer. It ensures that all receive important communication as well as ensuring the correct information is uploaded for each squadron to National. Not to mention that it is essential now for National to know what each squadron's dues are for the system. Think about your passions and why you belong to the SAL **Continued on Page 5**

April—Month of The Military Child—Continued from Page 1

to our nation’s military kids during the Month of the Military Child, and all year long. We need to come together to celebrate their selflessness and sacrifice from behind the scenes as they too, serve our country.

“Units *and Squadrons* can contact their nearest United Service Organizations (USOs), and the USO will provide opportunities to help with events and activities,” Grout recommended. “Contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of America to offer your help — the ALA recommends this in the Children & Youth Program Engagement Plan. If you don’t live near a military facility, offer your help to local schools.”

In addition to April focusing on military children, there is also a specific day to honor them — Purple Up! Day — *April 11, 2025*. On this special day, people are encouraged to wear purple as a symbol of support for military kids. Purple symbolizes the combined colors of the branches of the military — Army green, Marine Corps red, Navy blue, Air Force blue, and Coast Guard blue. Purple Up! Day raises awareness of the unique challenges faced by military children, including frequent moves, deployments, and separations from loved ones. This day also serves as a reminder that these young heroes face obstacles not experienced by their civilian peers.

“Military children don’t wear a badge that identifies them as military children — their friends and family know, but it’s not something shared elsewhere,” said Grout. “Wearing purple is a quiet but powerful way to show those military kids you care.”

Ways to Celebrate Month of The Military Child

Get involved in schools. Contact your local schools and ask if you or your unit can devote a special day to military kids with a breakfast or lunch to show your appreciation.

- **Volunteer your time.** Volunteer at military events and activities in your area. Military bases offer events and celebration-like festivals and carnivals in April. Contact your closest military base or USO for any opportunities.
- **Plan an event at your American Legion post home for military children.** Plan fun crafts, followed by a dinner. Ask them to share their story and the adventures they’ve experienced.
- **Wear purple on Purple Up! Day.** Encourage your community members, friends, family, and Legion Family members to wear purple on Purple Up! Day. Anyone can support our military children — ask as many people as you can to acknowledge this day.
- **Raise awareness.** Share pictures of your American Legion Family wearing purple, and post them on social media to spread awareness. Post photos to the ALA Children & Youth Facebook group at www.Facebook.com/groups/ALAChildrenandYouth. Ask your local mayor, state senator, or state representative to recognize Purple Up! Day.
- **Share information.** Contact your local newspaper, radio station, or news station so they can include a segment about MOMC and spread the word about this important month. **Source—American Legion Auxiliary National Website.**



Commander's Corner—Con't from page 2

Let's share the great work we know you are doing.

My personal project this year is to raise funds and support REACHcycles, an all-volunteer 501c3 non-profit organization, whose mission is "Provide mobility and independence to children and veterans with disabilities." REACHcycles was established in 2014, as a chapter of AMBUCS a national organization, founded in 1922. James Howard, REACHcycles president, received an AmTryke from the LRDF chapter in SC to participate in a disabled veterans cycle event. This AmTryke gave him purpose and an opportunity to be with veteran comrades. This valuable step in his recovery led him to start REACHcycles in 2014 in Richmond, VA. This also led his mother, Nancy Wellons, to start a chapter, Wheels On The James, which is located in Lynchburg, VA. It operates under REACHcycles and the two organizations combined have donated over 1,000 bikes in Virginia. For more information about the great work done by REACHcycles, go to <https://www.reachcycles.org/>. I encourage every Squadron to have a fundraiser or donate some funds to support REACHcycles. Please send your checks to the Department Headquarters, payable to SAL Detachment of Virginia and put "SAL Commander's Project" in the memo. We will be grateful for any and all support you can give. **Kevin Chaplin, Detachment Commander, Virginia**

Passing of Past Detachment Commander, Fred Vaccarella



Fredric L. Vaccarella, 74, Norfolk, Virginia- A man of wit, wisdom, and endless love, passed away peacefully surrounded by the laughter and warmth of those he cherished most. Born to charm and destined to make everyone smile, Fredric had a knack for turning the ordinary into the extraordinary, whether through his sharp humor, impromptu dance moves, or the stories he spun like a master.

A lover of good food, old music, and the occasional wild adventure, Fred taught us all how to savor life—preferably with a cold beer in one hand & fine cigar in the other, while soaking in the warmth of the sunshine. He leaves behind a legacy of kindness, resilience, and a family that adored him more than words can ever express.

Fredric was the son of Benjamin and Phala Vaccarella, and the proud father of his daughter, Ashley Vaccarella Ng, who is the light of his life.

He shared a special bond with his brothers, Rick Vaccarella & Joseph Vaccarella and each of their families with many loved nephews and nieces. Fred is now also reunited with his late brother, David Vaccarella, sharing laughs once again.

Though our hearts are heavy, we know that Fredric "Flip Flop Fred", wouldn't want tears but rather laughter and love to fill the spaces he's left behind. So, let's honor him by sharing a joke, dancing to his favorite tune, or simply hugging those we hold dear. Fredric, you were one of a kind. Heaven just got a little brighter—and probably a lot funnier.

Mr. Vaccarella served in many capacities as a member of the Sons of The American Legion, Squadron 327 (Norfolk, VA). Mr. Vaccarella served as Detachment Commander, Detachment of Virginia as well as on the National Veterans Employment and Education Commission for the Sons of the American Legion. He was very passionate about serving veterans. Mr. Vaccarella was the recipient of the Sons of The American Legion, Charles B. Rigsby Award in 2018. The Detachment of Virginia created a new Detachment level award, The Fred Vaccarella 'Flip Flop' VE & E Award, in Mr. Vaccarella's memory. Cremation Society of Virginia and Scott Williams

Adjutant's Blog— Continued from Page 2

and take the step to begin working with us on the detachment level. There are committees waiting for your leadership.

Lastly, as we enter this time of year, let us all take stock in the little things we do each day to support our causes, the biggest in my book being seeking out and thanking a veteran for their service to all of us and our Country, also reaching out to BE THE ONE. You never know that reach out of Being the One could in fact be the contact that prevents a tragedy from occurring.

If you have ideas on how we can improve things for you and your squadrons and ultimately the detachment which continues to the National organization then speak up via a phone call, visit, or email to all of us in your detachment leadership. We often complain but seldom provide the avenue to move beyond the issue we are complaining about. Let's collaborate and make a positive difference for all of us. **Joe Gallagher, Detachment Adjutant, Virginia**

SAL National Commander, Joseph Navarrete(NM)

As we look to celebrate American Legion Family Day around the nation, let us all come together and honor those that have sacrificed so much for us to enjoy the freedoms we have today. These special events bring us together as veterans, their families, and communities as we celebrate the spirit of service and unity. The day highlights the important role of veterans and their families in the fabric of American society, and the dedication they show in supporting one another and their communities.

Activities will include local parades, picnics, barbecues, and various community service projects; these events foster camaraderie, promote family involvement, and raise awareness about the programs and benefits of being part of the Legion Family. They also offer an opportunity for the public to connect with veterans, learn about their experiences, and show gratitude for their service.

We are also gearing up for our National Executive Committee (NEC) spring meeting at the beginning of May. This is your opportunity to engage with the Sons of The American Legion's leadership, and be part of the decision -making process. This is where we have the chance to discuss key issues, propose initiatives, and vote on resolutions that shape our future. This process strengthens our mission of The Sons of The American Legion and provides a platform that impacts veterans, their families, and children. Let us all join together and support Legion Family Day, and always remember...

***"Todo es Posible con Dios y Familia - Everything is possible with God and Family."* Joseph Navarrete, SAL National Commander(NM), SAL National Newsletter, The Millennium—April Issue**

Day On The Hill, Richmond, VA—January 2025



American Legion Family from the Department of Virginia met with their elected officials in January 2025.



Sons of The American Legion
Accomplishments



June 1, 2023 to May 31, 2024
for

DETACHMENT OF Virginia

Overall Totals	
Dollars Donated \$	225,409
Hours Volunteered	92,724
Value of One Vol. Hour*	\$29.95
Volunteer Hours Value \$	2,777,069
Total Volunteer Value \$	3,002,478

Pillar	Donations	Hours	Hours Value*
Americanism	\$123,316	59,350	\$ 1,777,518
Children & Youth	\$32,219	9,322	\$ 279,194
Vets Affairs & Rehab.	\$38,259	5,057	\$ 151,457
Vets Employ & Edu.	\$4,189	3,607	\$ 108,030
Internal Affairs	\$27,427	15,388	\$ 460,871

Americanism	
<i>Boys State / Girls State</i>	with \$4,832 in Donations to Boys State / Girls State 616 Hours of Participation
<i>Legion Ed. Programs</i>	with \$260 in Donations to 5-Star / 10-Ideals Progs. 66 Hours of Participation
<i>Flag Programs</i>	with \$2,432 in Donations to Flags Presented (All) 1,727 Hours of Participation 2,444 Flags Presented (All Sizes / Events)
<i>Flag Education</i>	with \$3,853 in Donations to Flag Education Progs. 662 Hours of Participation
<i>Other Ed. Programs</i>	with \$7,442 in Donations to Scholarships Awarded 673 Hours of Participation
<i>Oratorical Contest</i>	with \$429 in Donations to Oratorical Contest 57 Hours of Participation
<i>Color Guard</i>	with \$1,194 in Donations to Color Guard 644 Hours of Participation
<i>Community Service</i>	with \$51,157 in Donations to Other Organizations 32,050 Hours of Participation
<i>Scouting</i>	with \$9,810 in Donations to Scouting 5,487 Hours of Participation
<i>Jr. Shooting Sports</i>	with \$1,299 in Donations to Jr. Shooting Sports 942 Hours of Participation
<i>Am. Legion Baseball</i>	with \$12,630 in Donations to Am. Legion Baseball 1,500 Hours of Participation
<i>Other Teams</i>	with \$15,436 in Donations to Other Teams 6,210 Hours of Participation
<i>Blood Drives</i>	with \$1,463 in Donations to Blood Drives 187 Hours of Participation
<i>N.E.F.</i>	with \$575 in Donations to Nat'l Emergency Fund 236 Hours of Participation
<i>Legacy Schol. Fund</i>	with \$850 in Donations to Legacy Scholarship Fund 680 Hours of Participation
<i>Other Amer. Projects</i>	with \$9,654 in Donations to Other Amer. Projects 7,613 Hours of Participation

Children and Youth	
<i>CWF</i>	with \$8,195 in Donations to Child Welfare Found. 1,870 Hours of Participation
<i>Special Olympics</i>	with \$2,406 in Donations to Special Olympics 150 Hours of Participation
<i>CMN</i>	with \$100 in Donations to Children's Miracle Net. 18 Hours of Participation
<i>Ronald McDonald House</i>	with \$100 in Donations to R. McDonald House 12 Hours of Participation
<i>C.O.T.A.</i>	with \$150 in Donations to Child. Org. Trans. Assn. 24 Hours of Participation
<i>T.A.L. Vets. & Child. Found.</i>	with \$3,505 in Donations to T.A.L. Vets. & Child. F. 120 Hours of Participation
<i>Other C&Y Projects</i>	with \$17,763 in Donations to Other C&Y Projects 7,128 Hours of Participation

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation	
<i>VAMCs & Facilities</i>	with \$5,809 in Donations to VAMCs & Facilities 1,413 Hours of Participation
<i>State Vets Facilities</i>	with \$300 in Donations to State Vets Facilities 119 Hours of Participation
<i>Nat'l Vets Assist. Day</i>	with \$133 in Donations to Nat'l Vets. Assist. Day 120 Hours of Participation
<i>O.C.W.</i>	with \$1,567 in Donations to Op. Comfort Warriors 28 Hours of Participation
<i>Fisher House</i>	with \$4,000 in Donations to Fisher House 122 Hours of Participation
<i>Other VA&R Projects</i>	with \$23,618 in Donations to Other VA&R Projects 2,920 Hours of Participation
<i>Homeless Veterans</i>	with \$300 in Donations to Homeless Veterans 31 Hours of Participation
<i>Troop & Family Support</i>	with \$2,532 in Donations to Troop & Family Support 304 Hours of Participation

Veterans Employment and Education	
<i>VE&E Projects</i>	with \$4,189 in Donations to VE&E Projects 3,607 Hours of Participation

Internal Affairs	
<i>Other Totals</i>	with \$27,427 in Donations, Not Covered Above 15,388 Hours, Not Covered Above

*As reported by: [Independent Sector](#) in [April 2023](#) .

**Sons of The American Legion
2023-2024 Accomplishments**



**Consolidated Reports Summary
Published: August 23, 2024**

National Overall Totals	
Dollars Donated	\$10,656,134
Hours Volunteered	5,455,332
Value of One Vol. Hour*	\$33.49
Volunteer Hours Value	\$182,699,074
Total Volunteer Value	\$193,355,207

Pillar	Donations	Hours	Hours Value*
Americanism	\$4,807,821	4,644,639	\$155,548,974
Children & Youth	\$1,506,463	134,541	\$4,505,761
Vets Affairs & Rehab.	\$2,281,859	200,523	\$6,715,524
Vets Employ & Edu.	\$61,757	33,610	\$1,125,599
Internal Affairs	\$1,998,234	442,019	\$14,803,216

Americanism	
Boys State / Girls State	\$305,008 in Donations to Boys State / Girls State with 57,190 Hours of Participation
Legion Ed. Programs	\$19,632 in Donations to 5-Star / 10-Ideals Progs. with 2,247 Hours of Participation
Flag Programs	\$178,055 in Donations to Flags Presented (All) with 961,636 Hours of Participation 648,634 Flags Presented (All Sizes / Events)
Flag Education	\$26,615 in Donations to Flag Education Progs. with 97,537 Hours of Participation
Other Ed. Programs	\$625,412 in Donations to Scholarships Awarded with 17,770 Hours of Participation
Oratorical Contest	\$25,412 in Donations to Oratorical Contest with 4,209 Hours of Participation
Color Guard	\$91,479 in Donations to Color Guard with 95,603 Hours of Participation
Community Service	\$1,173,943 in Donations to Other Organizations with 2,807,409 Hours of Participation
Scouting	\$205,011 in Donations to Scouting with 89,441 Hours of Participation
Jr. Shooting Sports	\$45,298 in Donations to Jr. Shooting Sports with 16,214 Hours of Participation
Am. Legion Baseball	\$237,846 in Donations to Am. Legion Baseball with 37,036 Hours of Participation
Other Teams	\$501,118 in Donations to Other Teams with 26,067 Hours of Participation
Blood Drives	\$27,491 in Donations to Blood Drives with 14,076 Hours of Participation
Nat'l Emer. Fund	\$47,827 in Donations to Nat'l Emergency Fund with 2,224 Hours of Participation
Legacy Schol. Fund	\$70,862 in Donations to Legacy Scholarship Fund with 10,853 Hours of Participation
Other Amer. Projects	\$1,226,812 in Donations to Other Amer. Projects with 405,128 Hours of Participation

Children and Youth	
Child Welfare Foundation	\$301,858 in Donations to Child Welfare Found. with 16,423 Hours of Participation
Special Olympics	\$162,073 in Donations to Special Olympics with 11,236 Hours of Participation
Children's Miracle Net	\$54,528 in Donations to Children's Miracle Net. with 2,329 Hours of Participation
Ronald McDonald House	\$24,971 in Donations to R. McDonald House with 2,580 Hours of Participation
Children's Organ Transplant Assn.	\$50,224 in Donations to Child. Org. Trans. Assn. with 5,468 Hours of Participation
TAL Vets. & Child. Found.	\$74,903 in Donations to T.A.L. Vets. & Child. F. with 11,366 Hours of Participation
Other C&Y Projects	\$837,906 in Donations to Other C&Y Projects with 85,139 Hours of Participation

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation	
VAMCs & Facilities	\$318,340 in Donations to VAMCs & Facilities with 43,212 Hours of Participation
State Vets Facilities	\$158,943 in Donations to State Vets Facilities with 10,654 Hours of Participation
Nat'l Vets Assist. Day	\$25,522 in Donations to Nat'l Vets. Assist. Day with 6,596 Hours of Participation
Op. Comfort Warriors	\$40,739 in Donations to Op. Comfort Warriors with 5,104 Hours of Participation
Fisher House	\$99,808 in Donations to Fisher House with 5,499 Hours of Participation
Other VA&R Projects	\$858,171 in Donations to Other VA&R Projects with 129,459 Hours of Participation
Homeless Veterans	\$566,173 in Donations to Homeless Veterans with 18,971 Hours of Participation
Troop & Family Support	\$214,163 in Donations to Troop & Family Support with 18,992 Hours of Participation

Internal Affairs	
Other Totals	\$1,998,234 in Donations, Not Covered Above with 442,019 Hours, Not Covered Above

Veterans Employment and Education	
VE&E Projects	\$61,757 in Donations to VE&E Projects with 33,610 Hours of Participation

*As reported by: [Independent Sector](#) in [April 2024](#) .

2025 American Legion Department Convention Registration Form—Pre Registration Deadline June 16, 2025.



**2025 American Legion Department Convention
Hilton Washington Dulles Airport
9 July – 13 July 2025**

DISTRICT: _____ **POST:** _____ **UNIT:** _____ **SQUADRON:** _____ **CHAPTER:** _____

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: (Please PRINT CLEARLY on this form and complete it in its entirety)

Please circle your Legion Family Affiliation:

Please circle the Meal Option from below if attending the banquet:

1. Name: _____	Legion	Auxiliary	S.A.L.	Riders	Junior	Guest	1	2	3
2. Name: _____	Legion	Auxiliary	S.A.L.	Riders	Junior	Guest	1	2	3
3. Name: _____	Legion	Auxiliary	S.A.L.	Riders	Junior	Guest	1	2	3
4. Name: _____	Legion	Auxiliary	S.A.L.	Riders	Junior	Guest	1	2	3

Contact Person's Information: Membership ID# _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Conference Events:

You must Present your Registration Badge to attend all events and meetings!!

Registration:	\$15 Each		#'s Registered: _____	Registration Total: \$ _____
Registrations received after 16 June 2025 will incur a late fee of \$10 Each			#'s Late: _____	Late Fee Total: \$ _____
Thursday: Cook-Out	\$35	Each	#'s Registered: _____	Cook-out: \$ _____
Friday: Trivia	\$15	Each	#'s Registered: _____	Trivia: \$ _____
Friday: Indoor Poker Run	\$15 Pre-Registration	(\$20 At the Door) For VCF	#'s Registered: _____	Poker Run: \$ _____
Saturday: Karaoke	\$15		#'s Registered: _____	Karaoke Night: \$ _____
Saturday Banquet:	\$60 Each		#'s Registered: _____	Banquet Total: \$ _____

Banquet Meal Selections: (Note: No banquet tickets are available for late registrants. **For Special diets, please contact department**)

- 1 Lemon Caper Chicken
- 2 Flank Steak with Peppercorn Brandy
- 3 Pan Seared Salmon with Dill Cream

Please make check payable to: American Legion Department of Virginia

Total Amount Due: \$ _____

Please mail registration and payment to:

A.L. Dept. of Virginia, PO Box 11025, Richmond, VA 23230

Please email registration and credit card payment to: eeccleston@valegion.org

Credit Card Information: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Exp: ____/____ SEC: _____

Hotel Information: Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Rd., Herndon, VA 20171

- 1. Call the hotel at: 703-478-2900
- 2. If you prefer to make your reservations online, please visit the Dept. of VA website.
- 3. Under "Upcoming Events", there will be a link to the hotel reservation system. You can also scan the QR code for the link.
- 4. You MUST identify that you are with the American Legion Department of Virginia Conference for the rate of \$120/night.



For Questions or Assistance, please contact: Rick Ward – at 804-695-4567/wlfmn53@hotmail.com or Tonya Meunier-804-840-2708/TLMEUNIER77@gmail.com



NEXT MEETING MAY 20TH

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

APRIL 2025

NEXT TARGET DATE - APRIL 9TH - 90%

90% MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

ALL SQUADRONS SHOULD SET A MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL GOAL AT A MINIMUM OF NINETY PERCENT.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT IS THE KEY TO MEMBERSHIP RETENTION. ALL SQUADRONS ARE URGED TO COMMUNICATE WITH ALL MEMBERS ON A CONSISTENT BASIS INCLUDING ACTIVITIES WITHIN YOUR SQUADRON AND COMMUNITIES, EMAIL, NEWSLETTERS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND BUDDY CHECKS!

NINETY PERCENT (90%) RENEWAL DETACHMENT AWARD

AWARDED TO EACH DETACHMENT REACHING NINETY PERCENT BY THE 105 PERCENT TARGET DATE. DETACHMENTS WILL QUALIFY FOR A \$100 EMBLEM SALES GIFT CERTIFICATE, AS WELL AS A CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT.



NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

- SQUADRON COMMANDER OF THE YEAR
- RECRUITER OF THE YEAR
- INDIVIDUAL RECRUITMENT AWARD
- BLUE BRIGADE AWARD
- ALL TIME HIGH HONOR RIBBON
- SQUADRON CITATION OF ACHIEVEMENT
- LARGEST SQUADRON
- 100 PERCENT SQUADRON HONOR RIBBON
- FIRST QUOTA DETACHMENT REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP AWARD

AWARD FORMS CAN BE FOUND AT
LEGION.ORG/SONS
(PUBLICATIONS & FORMS)

RENEW NOW!

MEMBERS NOT RENEWED FOR 2025 ARE NOW EXPIRED.

SCAN ME 

LEGION.ORG/SAL-RENEW

APRIL IS CHILDREN & YOUTH MONTH

THE AMERICAN LEGION HAS BEEN ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH CHILDREN'S ISSUES SINCE THE EARLY 1920S. IN MANY INSTANCES, THE AMERICAN LEGION HAS BEEN THE DRIVING FORCE ON BEHALF OF CHILDREN ON THE FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS.

IN 1938, APRIL WAS FORMALLY DESIGNATED AS CHILD WELFARE MONTH (NOW CALLED CHILDREN & YOUTH MONTH) AND HAS CONTINUED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS. DURING THIS SPECIAL TIME, WE ENCOURAGE EACH OF YOU TO SHOW YOUR COMMUNITY THAT THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY IS DEDICATED TO AMERICA'S YOUTH.

LEGION.ORG/YOUTH




 The logo for Sons of the American Legion, featuring the text "SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION" in a blue oval with a stylized American flag graphic.

National Americanism Commission
American Legion Family Day
2025 Guidance

Purpose: to be observed annually on the last Saturday of April (April 26, 2025). It encourages posts to open their doors to members of their community for a day and celebrate our accomplishments.

Sons of The American Legion (SAL) members can coordinate with their Posts to showcase Americanism by:

- Have “Be The One” information available.
- Make sure there is a serviceable American Flag present
- Pamphlets for Americanism “Youth Programs” should be available (Boys Nation, Oratorical, Legion Baseball, Shooting Sports, etc.)
- Contact your Department regarding the availability of the “Star-Spangled Kids Kits” created by the Auxiliary.
- Host a blood drive (falls under Americanism in the SAL).
- Host a flag-etiquette program with a flag retirement ceremony.
- Place flags to honor veterans and record your event on the Flying Flags for Heroes website. Flags can be ordered from American Legion Emblem Sales.
- Have comic books and coloring books available. They can be ordered from American Legion Emblem Sales.
- Recognize individuals and businesses in your community at the event by utilizing the “SAL Flag Appreciation Certificate”

Questions: Chairman Jeffrey Hicks (NJ);
 call/text: (609) 206-6583; natsalamer@gmail.com

 @SonsAmericanism



\$1 PER MEMBER IS ALL IT TAKES

TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE
LIVES OF VETERANS AND THEIR
FAMILIES

THE AMERICAN LEGION VETERANS & CHILDREN
FOUNDATION FEEDS AND HOUSES CHILDREN
OF MILITARY PERSONNEL AND VETERANS
FACING URGENT, UNEXPECTED HARDSHIPS. IT
PREVENTS EVICTION, KEEPS THE POWER ON
AND FULFILLS BASIC NEEDS TO HOLD A FAMILY
TOGETHER THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES.



[LEGION.ORG/VCF](https://legion.org/vcf)

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND
TO DONATE

April is Children and Youth Month

Greetings from the SAL National Children and Youth Committee. This year the committee is focused on bringing awareness to the National Children and Youth Month in April and American Legion Family Day on 26 April 2025, where American Legion posts are encouraged to open their doors to the community for a day to recognize the accomplishments of the American Legion family. April is also Military child month, recognizing the children of Military families over the world and the sacrifices they make while moving to different housing on a regular basis.

Another program the committee has focused on is the Veterans and Children Foundation (VCF). VCF provides vital support for military and veteran parents in unexpected financial crises and support for service officers in their tireless efforts to obtain care and due benefits and opportunities of disabled veterans and families. Commander Navarreté has given us a goal to raise \$500,000 for the VCF. This will help the foundation to be self-sufficient and be able to assist more veterans and children during emergency relief efforts.

We are also working on promoting the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) program which is a premier organization that provides fundraising assistance to transplant families. COTA's services and guidance are provided at no charge to transplant families.

We are also proud to announce that the Children and Youth Committee will be working with the Americanism Commission to assist with updating the Youth Academy program at the National Convention in August. **Joe Lohman (MD), Chairman, SAL National Children and Youth Committee, The Millennium, SAL National Newsletter—April Issue**

May is Military Appreciation Month

In May 1999, Congress via the late Senator John McCain (AZ) adopted a month-long observance in the United States dedicated to people who are currently serving in, and veterans of, the United States military. Each year, the month observance runs from 01 May to 31 May.

May was adopted because it has more than a few patriotic military holidays and remembrances ... among them:

- **Silver Star Banner Day:** Per Congressional resolution, 01 May is an “official day to honor wounded, ill, and injured veterans.”
- **Victory in Europe Day:** Observed on 08 May, this day marks the end of World War II in Europe.
- **Military Spouse Appreciation Day:** Celebrated on the Friday before Mother's Day, this day recognizes the contributions and sacrifices of military spouses. This year it falls on 09 May.
- **Armed Forces Day:** Celebrated on the third Saturday of May, this day honors those currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. This year it's on 17 May.
- **Memorial Day:** Observed on the last Monday of May, this federal holiday commemorates the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. This year it is on 26 May 2025.

Shortly after the end of the Civil War in 1865, communities across the nation began the tradition **Continued on Page 12**

May is Military Appreciation Month—Continued from Page 11

of Decoration Day, which wouldn't be formalized into Memorial Day until 100 years later. Decoration Day was set aside as a day to remember the over 700,000 war dead from the four-year war between the states, in the footsteps of what Abraham Lincoln spoke about in the Gettysburg Address in 1863—*"It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion ..."*

As a Son, make sure you do your part in May to honor and remember their service and sacrifice ... on Armed Forces Day, those still serving in uniform, and on Memorial Day, those who fell while in uniform. **Rusty Meyers III (NJ), Editor, The Millennium, Sons of The American Legion National Newsletter-April Issue**

CONSOLIDATED SQUADRON REPORTS

THE CONSOLIDATED SQUADRON REPORT (CSR) IS PERHAPS THE MOST CRITICAL DOCUMENT A SQUADRON CAN COMPLETE. CSR INFORMATION IS COMBINED WITH OTHER SQUADRONS IN CREATING A FINAL REPORT USED BY THE AMERICAN LEGION, FORWARDED TO THE U.S. CONGRESS, AND USED TO APPLY AND VERIFY AWARDS AT NATIONAL CONVENTION.

NOT ALL SQUADRONS PARTICIPATE IN EVERY PROGRAM; LEAVE THOSE FIELDS BLANK. THE KEY IS TO REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES YOUR SQUADRON PARTICIPATED IN FROM JUNE 1ST TO MAY 31ST.

ALL DETACHMENT/DISTRICT/SQUADRON DONATIONS AND ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE REPORTED INDIVIDUALLY TO YOUR DETACHMENT ADJUTANT. THE CSR WILL REQUIRE INPUTS, SUCH AS THE NUMBER OF VETERAN HOMES VISITED OR VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED TO A PARTICULAR PROGRAM. OTHER PROGRAMS, SUCH AS THE AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL EMERGENCY FUND (NEF), ENTER THE NUMBER OF DOLLARS DONATED OR SPENT IN WHOLE NUMBERS.

IT IS PREFERRED CSRS ARE FILLED OUT AND SUBMITTED ONLINE VIA MYLEGION.ORG. SQUADRON ADJUTANTS AND COMMANDERS HAVE ACCESS TO COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THE ENTIRE FORM. CSRS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT LEGION.ORG/PUBLICATIONS AND LEGION.ORG/SONS/PUBLICATIONS.

PLEASE PRINT OUT THE FORM AND COMPLETE EACH PAGE BY HAND. MAKE SURE IT IS LEGIBLE AND MAIL TO THE DETACHMENT AND RETAIN A COPY FOR THE SQUADRON'S RECORDS. CHECK WITH YOUR DETACHMENT FOR THEIR DEADLINE DATE; IT MAY BE DIFFERENT THAN THE NATIONAL DEADLINE.

DETACHMENTS AND DISTRICTS SHOULD FORWARD A COPY BY SCANNING AND EMAILING THEIR CSRS TO CPRANDCSRFORMS@LEGION.ORG OR BY USPS TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED.

FORMS CAN BE FOUND AT LEGION.ORG/SONS (PUBLICATIONS & FORMS)

Please use the Excel Format CSR provided by the Detachment Adjutant and send the completed CSR back to the Detachment Adjutant.

Around The Detachment In Pictures



Left Picture—Congratulations and well done to Squadron 8, in South Boston, for winning the Detachment Americanism award for a medium sized Squadron. Here Squadron 8 Commander, Cary H Barksdale, JR, receives the award from Detachment Vice Commander (West) and Americanism Chair Jay Rarick. Second picture- Graduation for the American Legion Department of Virginia's 2024 Leadership College. Sunday, August 4th. Legion, Auxiliary, Detachment and Riders Commanders & President handed out the completion certificates. Third picture—At the American Legion Post 17, they held their Patriot's Day ceremony. Right picture—Detachment Commander, Kevin Chaplin presents a donation check at the Fall NEC Meeting in Indianapolis.

Detachment 2024 Fall Conference Pictures



Fall Conference pictures. Top row pictures are of tour of Colonial Williamsburg with SAL National Commander, Joseph Navarrete. Remaining rows of

pictures are from the Friday Night SAL DEC Meeting and the Saturday SAL Fall Conference Session. Guests at our Fall Conference included SAL National Commander Joseph Navarrete, American Legion National Commander, James A. LaCoursiere, Jr., American Legion Auxiliary National President, Trish Ward, and Leading Candidate for American Legion National Commander, Dan Wiley.

Detachment 2025 Spring Conference Pictures



Photos on the top row are from the Detachment Spring Conference including Department Auxiliary President, Ethel Carson, Southeastern Auxiliary Vice President, Cheryl Shine, and Southeastern Region National Vice Commander for the American Legion, Joseph Lysaght. Second and third row pictures are from the Detachment Mid Winter Meeting held at Colonial Heights Post 284. Third row, third picture from Squadron 293, Purcellville, VA Food Drive in November; Last picture on row 3 is Squadron 144 Member, Robert Tucker played Taps at a Veterans Day Ceremony. Fourth row—Squadron 148—Colonial Beach distributes Christmas Gifts to Veterans in their local community; last photo are the Winners of the Squadron 293—Purcellville—Annual Chili Cookoff. Bottom row - Gloucester Squadron 75 member presents Wreath at a local Veterans Day Ceremony; Squadrons 284 Boston Butts, Squadron 293 Chili Cookoff, PNVC Steve Gower with new Detachment VE & E Award, Detachment Commander, Kevin Chaplin at Day on the Hill in Richmond.

Voter Voice Sign Up

VoterVoice is a comprehensive digital advocacy solution to help the American Legion mobilize American Legion Family Members, amplify the American Legion message, and take action on the legislation and regulations that matter to you.

The American Legion’s Legislative Division uses VoterVoice as its grassroots advocacy platform for connecting the American Legion Family members and advocates with their members of Congress. VoterVoice allows The American Legion to contact every member of Congress on large, national campaigns as well as target specific members on key committees that pertain to The American Legion’s legislative priorities.

It's Simple & Painless and just freaking easy!! Take two minutes and become an advocate for all veterans! Joining VoterVoice allows you to continue supporting the ideas and beliefs of The American Legion, The American Legion Family, and the individual who gave you eligibility to join the Sons and become the Sons member you are today.



If you're a veteran in crisis or concerned about one, contact the Veterans Crisis Line to receive 24/7 confidential support. Dial 988 then Press 1, chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat) or text 838255.

Membership Pointers



1. Please make sure your Squadron has turned in their Squadron Data Report Form.
2. Please make sure your Post Adjutant has updated the Post Records with the current Squadron Commander and Adjutant’s name.
3. Please make sure that your Squadron Adjutant has access to MyLegion.org..
4. If you have not renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible.
5. Please do not hold any memberships!!!
6. Please direct all Membership Questions to the Detachment Commander or Detachment Adjutant.



**2024 - 2025
SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP
TARGET DATES**

MAY 14, 2025

100%

**** JULY 22, 2025**

105%

**** DELEGATE STRENGTH TARGET DATE**



INDIVIDUAL RECRUITMENT AWARD

EARN YOUR 2025 MEMBERSHIP RECRUITER PIN AND PROUDLY DISPLAY IT ON YOUR COVER BY RECRUITING FIVE NEW MEMBERS!

LEGION.ORG/SONS

PUBLICATIONS & FORMS

2024 Detachment Convention Pictures



2024 Detachment Convention Pictures—Left to right—Friday Night DEC Meeting, Saturday Subcommittee Meeting, and Convention Opening Ceremonies.



RENEW!





Detachment of Virginia

\$1,500 Scholarship Award



Eligibility:

- ✓ Graduating HS Senior
- ✓ Current SAL Member
- ✓ Attending accredited University, College or Trade School in Fall 2025
- ✓ Active in your Squadron

Scholarship to be awarded at Detachment Convention in July

Application Available at www.vasons.org

DEADLINE:

June 10, 2025

\$1,500 Detachment Scholarship For Rising High School Seniors

In an effort to promote programs, which encourage its members to seek higher education, the Sons of The American Legion, Detachment Of Virginia is proud to continue its Annual College Scholarship Competition.

The winner of the scholarship will be announced at the Detachment's July 2025 Detachment Convention in Herndon. The individual

will receive \$1,500, to be available for use during the 2025-26 school year (scholarship check is issued to the winner through the school's finance office).

Anyone interested in being considered for this scholarship must complete an application. The rules of the scholarship program are as follows:

- Applicant must be an active member of a squadron within the Detachment of Virginia, Sons Of The American Legion.
- Applicant must be a high school senior who graduates with his class in the spring of 2025
- Winner must attend an accredited college, university, or trade school.
- This is a one-time award. Any recipient of this scholarship may not apply in subsequent years.
- Applicants will be judged largely on their involvement in the activities in the Sons Of The American Legion. Transcripts, SAT Scores, GPA, work experience, and special interest will also be considered.

Scott Williams, Detachment Scholarship Chairman

Squadron Everlasting

Please keep the families of the following members in your thoughts and prayers—Gary Adams (25), Steven Clifton (146), James Dawson (327), John Logan (67), Bruce Mahn (25), Solomon McCauley (74), Scott Pipenhagen (55), John Price (177), James Sette (284), Joseph Skaggs, Sr. (327), Michael Varnecky (180), James Weiner (56), Charles Williamston, Jr. (67), Nolan Warnick (159), Fred Vaccarella (327), Charles Burke (139), Tim Cole (1976), Lee Cryderman (146), Nathaniel Levin (3), Vincent Rose (130), and Larry Tavenner (21). If your Squadron has any members who have passed away, please notify our Detachment Adjutant, Joe Gallagher (saljgallagher@gmail.com) and Detachment Chaplin, Robert Wilson, Sr. (Roberwilsonsr54@gmail.com)



supports this grant.

Briggs & Barrett Project of Norfolk, Neb., was awarded \$15,000 for "Every Baby Initiative." The American Legion Auxiliary and the Eight & Forty support this grant.

Camp Corral of Raleigh, N.C., was awarded \$25,000 for "Camp Corral-summer Camp for Children of Military Heroes-2025." The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.

Children's Hospital & Medical Center Foundation of Omaha, Neb., was awarded \$20,000 for "Children's Nebraska's Child Passenger Safety Program."

Cleveland County ALWS Baseball, Inc. of Shelby, N.C., was awarded \$125,000 for "2025 American Legion World Series." The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

Father Flanagan's Boys' Home of Boys Town, Neb., was awarded \$25,000 for "Boys Town National Hotline."

Gift of Adoption of Northbrook, Ill., was awarded \$20,919 for "Adoption Assistance for U.S. Born Children." The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.

LifeCamp USA of Delafield, Wis., was awarded \$25,358 for "LifeCamp USA 2025." The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

Southeast Missouri Network Against Sexual Violence of Jackson, Mo., was awarded \$5,000 for "The Green Bear Project."

Spectrum Sailing of Mt. Pleasant, S.C., was awarded \$3,500 for "Spectrum Sailing National Autism Sailing Camp." The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

The American Legion National Headquarters of Indianapolis was awarded \$525,000 for "The American Legion Children and Youth National Program-2025." The American Legion Auxiliary supports this grant.

The National Children's Cancer Society of Belleville, Ill., was awarded \$27,266 for "Journey of Hope: The Transportation Assistance Fund." The American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.

The Child Welfare Foundation is now doing business as the Child Well-Being Foundation

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation is now called the Child Well-Being Foundation.

On Oct. 6 during the annual Fall Meetings of The American Legion, a motion was made and voted on by the American Legion CWF board of directors to change the name of the foundation to one that encompasses the overall needs of the whole child and all aspects of their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing.

The Child Well-Being Foundation will still have the acronym CWF.

CWF will continue to provide grants to nonprofits for projects that contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of children. Grants are only given to entities that help U.S. children in a large geographic area; they are not awarded for day-to-day or special operating expenses. Thanks to the generosity of Legion Family and community members, the foundation has awarded over \$21 million in grants since 1954 — giving youth-serving nonprofits across this nation the means to promote and operate their programs, plus educate families and communities about the needs of children.

The 2025 CWF grant recipients were announced during the Fall Meetings. In its 71st year, CWF awarded 13 grants totaling \$852,593 to youth-serving nonprofit organizations.

American Kidney Fund of Rockville, Md., was awarded \$25,000 for "American Kidney Fund Virtual Camp: National Camp for Pediatric Kidney Patients." The American Legion and the Sons of The American Legion support this grant.

ASXL Rare Research Endowment Foundation of Portland, Maine, was awarded \$10,550 for "Care Management Educational Materials." The American Legion Auxiliary



WANT TO ADD A SQUADRON?

If your post does not have a Squadron and is interested in starting up a Squadron, you need 10 members to charter a Squadron. It also needs to be approved by the sponsoring American Legion Post.

If you need more information about starting a Squadron, please feel free to contact Detachment Commander, Kevin Chaplin, Detachment Vice Commander, Jarrod Vass (Eastern Region), Detachment Vice Commander, Jay Rarick (Western Region), Detachment Vice Commander, Timothy Fincher (Northern Region), or Detachment Adjutant, Joe Gallagher. We would be glad to help you in any way to get a Squadron started.

THE FOCUS

The Focus is the Detachment of Virginia, Sons Of The American Legion's E-Letter or newsletter. This is a great tool for our Squadrons to promote their activities and accomplishments. Every Squadron does something within the Detachment. It can be putting flags on veterans graves to a Fisher House Fundraiser to having a Squadron Member who is an Eagle Scout to a Child Well Being Foundation Fundraiser. We want to hear what your Squadron is doing.

It does not take that much time to put a simple article together for The Focus. A few of our Squadrons contributed articles to this issue. The basic points or questions the article needs to answer are as follows: 1. What was the event? Dinner, Raffle, etc. 2. Who held the event? 3. What was the event for? 4. When was the event held? 5. Where was the event held? 6. Other highlights from the event... 7. What were the results from the event? How much did you raise?

We are in REAL need of getting articles from our Squadrons on their various activities. We know Squadrons are active. We want to hear from you! Please send your articles to Scott Williams at SonsVADetADJ@comcast.net.

Find us on 

Like us on Facebook - Sons Of The American Legion, Detachment Of Virginia. This is one great way to promote our activities and accomplishments. Please like us today to keep up with our Detachment Activities.



Founded in 1932, Sons of The American Legion exists to honor the service and sacrifice of Legionnaires.

SAL members include males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and were eligible for American Legion membership. Members of The American Legion, [American Legion Auxiliary](#) and Sons of The American Legion comprise the Legion family, which has a combined membership of nearly 4.2 million.

Although Sons has its own membership, the organization is not a separate entity. Rather, SAL is a program of The American Legion. Many Legionnaires hold dual membership in SAL.



Detachment Officers and Committee Members Needed - If you are interested in serving at the Detachment Level—either as an officer, committee chairman, or committee member, please contact Detachment Commander, Kevin Chaplin, NEC, Jeff Lee, Alt NEC, David Boggs, or Detachment Adjutant, Joe Gallagher. It is a great honor to serve and represent your Squadron.



SONS OF THE
AMERICAN
LEGION

Sons Of The American Legion Detachment of Virginia

"The Focus"

Articles and information contributed by: Detachment Commander Kevin Chaplin, Detachment Adjutant, Joe Gallagher, Detachment Assistant Adjutant, Scott Williams, Detachment, SAL National Commander, Joseph Navarrete, The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Joe Lohman, SAL National Children & Youth Chairman, Rusty Meyers, SAL National Newsletter, The Millenium Newsletter Editor **Photographs provided by:** Scott Williams, Detachment Vice Commanders, Jay Rarick, American Legion Post 284, and various other Detachment Members.

Edited By: Scott Williams