



The New Jersey **SALute**

Official Publication of the Detachment of New Jersey, Sons of the American Legion

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Winter 2024

Happy Holidays from the Detachment of New Jersey!

Sons of the American Legion
Detachment of New Jersey
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NEVER FORGET OUR POW/MIAs And Those Deployed for the Holidays

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You're Never Alone – Call 9-8-8 - Option

For God and Country, Gary S. Crawford PC,
Commander Neptune Sq 346, DEC and Adjutant
Monmouth County Exec Committee, Editor **SALute**

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Happy Holidays from Rich, Charline, and Andy!



Commander's Message:

Happy Holidays to our Legion Family!

*Thank you to everyone who has donated to my **Commander's Project**. As you know, I intend to raise \$25,000 toward my project of **The Forgotten Veterans Project**.*

As we know, no Veteran should ever be forgotten and we are taking that on this year.

We, as a Legion Family, do great things day in and day out at all of the large Veterans homes. We will continue to do so, and urge you to continue doing the same.

We would like to adopt five local homes. Each of these will represent a District of the Detachment of New Jersey that houses Veterans and is NOT one of the larger funded homes.

The Commander's goal is to raise \$25,000 and budget \$5,000 for each of the five chosen homes.

You can be part of the selection. If you know of a local facility that houses Veterans and we can help those Veterans out, please send that information to Chairman Nicholas Wingler (2024-2025 Project Chairman/PDC 2001-02) by email at Nicholasjwangler@gmail.com and by sending checks to Nick at 19 Edison St., Bayville NJ 08721, Attn: Commander's Project.

Richard Hodum, Commander, Detachment of NJ, Sons of the American Legion.

Office of the National Commander P.O. BOX 1055, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46206-1055

Let's End 2024 On A Powerful Note

Happy Holidays! * WWW.LEGION.ORG/SONS * P: 317-630-1205 December - 2024

I hope that the entire American Legion Family is having a happy holiday season. It is a wonderful time of year to embrace and support family and friends — especially those who find the holiday season a challenging one. That's why I continue to urge all of you, and especially the Sons of The American Legion, to keep finding ways to **Be The One**.

In October, I challenged the Sons in three ways:

Reach our membership goal of 400,000 members.

Raise \$500,000 for the Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF).

And take the pledge and become trained in the **Be The One** mission to prevent veteran suicide.

Well over half of our Detachments are ahead of the pace on Membership goals; we continue to post strong numbers in donations; and more virtual **Be The One** training sessions are to come.

I know that we can not only meet, but exceed those goals. I want every Son to continue to show why the Sons of The American Legion are such a vital part of the Legion Family.

A time to celebrate and give thanks. This holiday season, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all veterans and their families for your service, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication. As we celebrate, let us also remember the importance of never forgetting the values that unite us as members of The Sons of The American Legion. Our organization stands as a proud reminder of the legacy of those who have served, and it is our duty to honor their sacrifices by carrying forward the spirit of service, patriotism, and community. Wishing you peace, joy, and a meaningful holiday season.



Respectfully, Joseph Navarrete, National Commander, Sons of the American Legion





SAL National Commander Navarrete reflects on Veterans Day.

Hello, American Legion Family.

While we support and honor our veterans every day, there's something special about the holidays we set aside to recognize those who have fought to ensure our freedom.

It was my honor to represent the Sons of The American Legion and the Legion Family during the wreath-laying ceremonies on Veterans Day at Arlington National Cemetery, alongside American Legion Auxiliary National President Trish Ward and American Legion National Vice Commander Gary Leach.

Walking among the rows of white headstones at Arlington, and standing before the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, are always moments that move me to reflect on the sacrifices so many have made to keep us the land of the free and the home of the brave.

As always, thank you to all our veterans for their service.

I also want to thank the entire Legion Family on behalf of those impacted by hurricanes and other natural disasters over the last few months. These have been challenging times for us all, but it has been heartening to see Legionnaires, Sons and Auxiliary members nationwide taking time out of their lives and money from their pockets to support those who have lost their homes due to storm damage.

I'll be visiting Florida later this month and will see some of this damage firsthand. But I know I'll also see the Legion Family continuing to lift each other up.

I would be remiss if I didn't remind you that you can continue to support those impacted recently, and help The American Legion be prepared for future natural disasters, by donating to the National Emergency Fund (NEF). Go to [Legion.org](https://www.legion.org) for more information.

Keep up the good work.

"Todo es posible con Dios y Familia"

Everything is possible with God and family

Joseph Navarrete
SAL National Commander



The 2024-25 Officers of the SAL Detachment of New Jersey. LtoR: Tony Gladden -SAL Liaison (455 Ocean), Judge Advocate/PDC Amel Balega (227 Passaic), Vice Commander Greg Shaffer (174 Passaic), Commander Richard Hodum (166 Ocean), Adjutant Rusty Myers (105 Essex), Essex DEC and 105 Belleville Commander James Elsmore, ?, NEC/PDC Bob Phillips Jr. (262 Camden), PDC Michael Arner (338 Monmouth), Atlantic DEC Andy Malson (352 Atlantic), Historian PDC Nicholas Wingler (166 Ocean), PDC Bob Bascou (371 Camden), Chaplain PDC Matt Thalasinis (232 Ocean), PNVC/PDC Tom Marsden (348 Ocean), Vice Commander Bill Murphy (348 Ocean), PDC Dave Page (455 Ocean), ANEC/PDC Henry Hasselhan (311 Camden), PDC Mark Natale (321 Monmouth), and PDC Carl Albern Jr.(346 Monmouth).

From the Editor:

Back issues of the **NJ SALute** are up on the Detachment website. www.njsal.org/salute

I was honored to be part of the **NJ Run for the Fallen** in a small way. I attended two ceremonies (one in Avon and a dual ceremony in Bradley Beach) on Sunday, 29-Sept. At Avon I held the American Flag carried by the runners. Although raining and chilly, the spirit of the dedicated runners and those on hand to witness the ceremonies was not dampened. Videos of several of these can be found on Facebook, and information of the **NJ Run for the Fallen** can be found at www.njrftf.org. This 5-day event is held on the last weekend of September each year, along with Gold Star Mother's Day on the last Sunday of the month. If you've never attended one of these, try to get involved next year to honor our fallen and our Gold Star Families who've lost loved ones serving our country.



Meeting Highlights from the Detachment DEC Meeting held on 23-Nov at Magnolia Post 370.

A reminder that all Sons are welcomed at these meetings. This is YOUR organization.

The upcoming wreath-laying ceremonies at the World War Two and Vietnam Memorials in Washington DC will be held on 23-Feb-2025. The NJ wreath-laying will be on 24-Feb. Box lunches and transportation will be available for Members in good standing. Sign up with NEC Bob Phillips (262) by 29-January. bjrsal@gmail.com.

Membership Chair Jeff Hicks (521) reports that we surpassed the 35% renewal rate and that 45% is attainable by 11-Dec. At this writing, NJ is in 28th place, and 3rd place in the Northeast region. Keep those renewals coming in! Also, **WE BROKE THE 10,000 MARK FOR THE FIRST TIME!**

2025 Membership Target Dates:

Congratulations Detachment of New Jersey!

We hit 36.56% as of 07-Nov. The 35% Target Date is 16-Nov!

The next Target Date is for 45% on 11-Dec.

Awards are available for anyone recruiting FIVE new Members.

DECs (Detachment Exec Committee Members) are to contact their respective County Squadrons regarding renewals and any other issues there might be, including wrong continuous years of Membership printed on the new cards. Squadrons should welcome a visit by their DECs

NEF Chairman Dean Staknys (348) reported that the National Emergency Fund is considering donations to help victims of hurricanes Helene and Milton. ANEC Henry Hasselhan (311) said that the NJ Dept of the Legion is directing help to North Carolina Department of the American Legion, "N.C. Dept".

Vice Commander Bill Murphy (348) reports the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) has been renamed to the Child Well-Being Foundation.

The National Americanism Committee is planning a National Day of Service. Their goals include an increase of 10% to benefit Boys State, promote American Legion Family Day, the last Saturday in August to be named "**Be The One**" Day, and to post amounts from Memorial Day grave decoration flag placings to be included in the counts of the national Flying Flags For Heroes program.

Adjutant and Children & Youth Chairman Rusty Myers (105) reported that 41,000 locations will be taking part in Wreaths Across America this year. His Post's (105 Belleville) ALA and Juniors will be taking part on 14-Dec at the BG Doyle Cemetery. To purchase wreaths, they are \$17 each. 105 Family's annual Girl Scout "Cookies for Veterans" drive is on tap again, orders should be in by 31-Jan.

COTA (Children's Organ Transplant Association) Chairman Greg Shaffer (174) has collected \$919 so far. He asks for Squadrons to consider a one dollar per Member donation toward COTA. A fundraiser is planned for 28-Feb at Post 147 in Elmwood, Bergen County. Tickets will be available at Little Ferry Post 310.

Special Olympics: The annual Polar Bear Plunge and programs are in the works.

VA&R (Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation) PDC Patrick Gallagher (346) reported there is a long list of donations to the Veteran homes we support: Vineland, Menlo Park, Vet Haven North, Vet Haven South, and Paramus. Holiday season wish lists of items needed and wanted to make the Veterans residents lives' that much more comfortable.

VE&E (Veteran Education and Employment) ANEC Henry Hasselhan (311) will represent the Northeast Region, and PDC James Noble (17) will represent the Southeast on a National level

ANEC PDC Henry Hasselhan (311) and his son Henry (311) attended the Stand-Down in Chester PA and Bernie Kofoet (84) will attend the Stand-Down in Atlantic City in May.

SALute Editor and Monmouth County DEC Gary Crawford (346) reported learning of a World War One Veteran KIA, Steven S. White, in a forgotten cemetery in Wall Township. He also found that a flat VA marker for another Veteran, Joseph Glowacki, that was discovered in a closed funeral home in Keyport. With help from the Monmouth County Office of Veteran Affairs, the investigation continues as to where PFC Glowacki is buried. There are plans in the works to honor these Veterans in ceremonies of some kind.

Camden County Chaplain Martin Widmer (262) was named Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms at the meeting. Marty is certainly “going places” in the organization!

The next DEC Detachment meeting is to be held at Spotswood Post 253 on 18-Jan. Reminder, **ALL** Sons are invited.



(Left) Marty Widmer being sworn in as Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms by Detachment Commander Rich Hodum. Looking on are (LtoR) PDCs NEC Bob Phillips Jr., ANEC Henry Hasselhan, and Carl Albern Jr. (Right) ANEC Henry Hasselhan (311) on right, presents a check to National Emergency Fund Chairman Dean Staknys (348) on left. Looking on are Adjutant Rusty Myers (105), Commander Rich Hodum (166) and Judge Advocate Amel Balega (227).



Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage . . .

Editor's note: On a recent visit to the hospital, I was issued a Patient's Booklet. In the booklet was an article on things to look for in someone who might not be handling things well. It went into a lot of detail about triggers and things to watch for. While **BeTheOne** is certainly beneficial, and calling **9-8-8 option 1** can certainly save lives, I chose to share the following - courtesy of HackensackMeridianHealth.org / Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Neptune NJ.

Warning Signs of Potential Self-Harm /Suicide:

Ideation (Thinking about suicide)
Substance use or abuse (increase or change in substance)
Purposeless (no sense of purpose or belonging)
Anger
Trapped (feeling like there is no way out)
Hopelessness (there is nothing to live for, no hope or optimism)
Withdrawal (from family, friends, work school, activities, hobbies)
Anxiety (restlessness, irritability)
Recklessness (high risk-taking behavior)
Mood disturbance (dramatic change in mood)

Additional Warning Signs of Potential Self-Harm / Suicide

Talking about suicide
Statements about hopelessness, helplessness, or worthlessness
Preoccupation with death
Suddenly happier or calmer
Loss of interest in things one cares about
Visiting or calling people one cares about
Making arrangements; setting one's affairs in order
Giving away things, such as prized possessions



*If not us, then who
If not me and you
Right now, it's time for us to do something, yeah
If not now, then when
Will we see an end
To all this pain
Oh, it's not enough to do nothing
It's time for us to do something*

-Do Something - by Matthew West



The last Sunday of September is recognized nationally as Gold Star Mother’s and Family’s Day. It’s a day to honor the families who have lost a loved one while serving our country. American Legion Post 53 in Ridgewood calls Gold Star families “the unseen part of Memorial Day.” Their new monument unveiled on Sunday is just the second in New Jersey to honor the sacrifices of military families.

“They put our country’s security above their own,” said Gold Star survivor Maria Bombace. “These families put their chins up and their shoulders back no matter what the country asked them. We still need to honor the families. We need to break the silence.”

“I was not even aware of the fact that there was such a thing as the Gold Star,” said American Legion Post 53 treasurer David Langevin. “The more I learned about this during this process, the more I saw the history of my family.”

The monument was five years in the making. Ridgewood artists Lynne Brady Schlein and Tess Giuliani designed the monument.

“Their artwork transforms the emotion of a Gold Star Family into something visibly enduring and reflective,” said American Legion Post 53 commander Lou Francis.

“I’m very proud that we have it here,” Langevin said. “Hopefully people will come and just reflect on what it means.”

Residents can visit the monument at Van Neste Square beside the village’s other war memorials.

Be the One is the American Legion Family’s initiative to stop veteran suicide; to **Be the One** to change or save one Veteran’s life. **Be the One** to ask a veteran how he or she is doing. **Be the One** to listen to a veteran who needs to talk. **Be the One** to reach out to a veteran who is struggling. **Be the One** to start a conversation. Let’s change the narrative together! [#BeTheOne](https://www.facebook.com/BeTheOne)

Check out The Detachment’s Facebook page. Included is information on **BeTheOne** training and the latest **Millennium** SAL Newsletter. <https://www.facebook.com/SonsDetNJ>





Camden County Stand-Down 27-Sept. (Center) Rosie and Marty Widmer from Audubon 262 ALA/SAL

The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic Veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. It is the nation's largest wartime Veterans service organization, committed to mentoring youth and sponsorship of wholesome programs in our communities, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting strong national security, and continued devotion to our fellow service members and veterans.

Founded in 1932, **Sons of The American Legion** exists to honor the service and sacrifice of **Legionnaires**, and is open to all male sons and grandsons of eligible Veterans. Completing the **Legion Family**, in the spirit of Service, Not Self, the mission of the **American Legion Auxiliary** is to support **The American Legion** and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our Veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad.

At the DEC Meeting, 28-Sept, at Post 352, Somers Point:



LtoR: Adjutant Rusty Myers (105), Commander Rich Hodum (166), and Judge Advocate Amel Balega (227).



New Jersey cleaned up at the National Convention. CWF Chairman and Vice Commander Bill Murphy (348), Adjutant Rusty Myers (105), and ANEC/PDC Henry Hasselhan (311) display the Child Welfare Foundation Certificate of Recognition presented to the Detachment of New Jersey.



(Left) Belleville Squadron 105 was presented with the two National Snapshots of Service and one Videos of Service Awards at the DEC Meeting at Somers Point Post 352 on 28-Sept.
 (LtoR): Squadron 105 Commander and Essex DEC James Elmore, Squadron 105 Adjutant and Detachment Adjutant Rusty Myers, and NJ ANEC/PDC Henry Hasselhan (311).
 (Center and Right): Belleville Squadron 105 was presented at the DEC Meeting with a certificate recognizing it as a “Four Pillars Squadron”, an award presented to the New Jersey delegation at the National Convention in New Orleans, presented by outgoing SAL National Commander Donald JR Hall.

This award was an initiative of Past National Commander JR Hall (2023-24), which recognized squadrons which supported the Four Pillars - Veterans Affairs, Children and Youth, Americanism, and National Security. It is given to those squadrons which made per-capita donations to Operation Comfort Warrior (OCW), the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF), a donation to the home post’s Boys State program, and ran a blood drive.

105 went above and beyond their donations with more than our per-capita, sent not one but two candidates to Boys State, and ran six blood drives.
 To the best of their knowledge, if they aren’t the only one in NJ to receive this, they are one of the few Squadrons who did.





At the meeting, Henry Hasselhan (311) discusses the awards Marty Widmer (262) received at the National Convention. In the group pic are (at table) Adjutant Rusty Myers, Commander Rich Hodum, and Judge Advocate Amel Balega (standing) Marty Widmer and Henry Hasselhan. (seated) Tony Gladden (455), Mark Natale (321), James Elsmore (105), Mike Arner (338), and half of Carl Alber Jr. (346).



(Left) ANEC Henry reads one of Marty's awards. (Right) Proud grandpa Henry Hasselhan 3rd tells of young Henry 5th's fundraising achievements and awards received at the National Convention.



At the Indianapolis NEC Meeting 5-Oct:



(Left) At O'Reilly's Irish Pub and Restaurant in Indianapolis, PDCs Mark Natale and Carl Albern with New York SAL Delegates (LtoR) Peter J DeAngelis and Gaither Espey. (Right) PDC Mark Natale presents a CWF donation check to National Commander Joseph Navarette Convention on 6-Oct.

Meanwhile, at the 105 . . .



Belleville Post 105's Oktoberfest on 7-Oct. (Left) Detachment Vice Commander Greg Shaffer and Adjutant Rusty Myers. (Right) Carl Slaughter – got scratch-offs?





The American Legion Post 105 Family was honored with a resolution by the Belleville Town Council and the New Jersey General Assembly this evening (23-Oct) on the occasion of Post 105's 105th anniversary. Belleville's American Legion was chartered on 09 Sept 1919 by 24 sons of Belleville who had returned from the Great War.

We as Veterans, Sons, and Auxiliary Members - together a family - are blessed to be part of a town which is so unbelievably supportive of its servicemen past and present. Thank you to all involved for the recognition we received today!



(Left) On 30-Oct, PDC Patrick Gallagher (346) delivered twelve cases of tissues and ten AM/FM/CD alarm clocks to the Menlo Park Veterans Memorial Home, part of the annual VA&R (Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation) Committee donation program made to Veteran homes by the Detachment. More donations were planned to be delivered to Vet Haven North. DMAVA staffer Marissa Konopka accepts the donations.

(Right) Got cake? Keansburg Post 273's Veterans Day cake.





Big shoutout to Joe Petrosky and the Sons of the Legion for taking the initiative and reaching out to some amazing union brothers to get the front steps at **Roselle Park Post 60** repaired! Thanks to Joe's efforts, we were able to connect with Mike Fasulo (Local 4), Leroy San Pedro (Local 4), Albert Galvez (DC21), Adolfo DiCosmo (Local 7) and Twin Boro Lumber & Supply Center to get the job done – all while saving over \$10,000! We're so grateful for this incredible show of community support, and for everyone who came together to make it happen. Thank you for your dedication and service to our post! [#Post60](#) [#CommunitySupport](#) [#Thankful](#) [#SonsOfTheLegion](#)



The American Legion National Headquarters • Following
7h • 🌐

A virtual [#BeTheOne](#) training session will take place from 2:30-4 p.m. ET on Thursday, Oct. 17. Learn to ID the signs & ask the tough questions.
Learn more/register for the training:
<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEvdOurrz0tGtf0U7tpeCSMI92W2wRYNJ>
C.
[#SuicideAwareness](#) [#mentalhealth](#)
[#SuicidePrevention](#)

AMERICAN LEGION
BE THE ONE
TRAINING

Soldiers' Angels
TREATS FOR TROOPS

GOT CANDY?

Don't get stuck with piles of leftover Halloween candy this year! Donate your excess candy to Soldiers' Angels Treats for Troops.

Soldiers' Angels will get this candy to our Troops and Veterans for a sweet treat!

For more info & locations to donate:
www.SoldiersAngels.org/TreatsForTroops



Union Blue And Confederate Gray Veterans Reunite At Gettysburg In The Year 1913 — Standing By “The Bloody Angle” Where Pickett’s Charge Took Place 50 Years Earlier And Over 3,000 Soldiers On Both Sides Lost Their Lives — Now They Clasp Hands Over The Stone Wall As Brothers.



Members of the Essex County American Legion Family took part in a memorial dedication on 10-Nov at Woodland Cemetery in Newark.

Four servicemen from Vietnam - two Soldiers and two Marines - who were killed in action were buried in unmarked graves. Through the hard work of Mike Perone and the Belleville Historical Society, the graves were located 50 years later and had markers installed on them.



Henry 5th has his Lemonade and Philly Pretzel stand set up for Atco Post 311's **Veterans Day Walk-a-thon**. Many stopped by and helped them raise money for the Children's charities of the American Legion Family. Three generations of Hasselhans man the stand (right). They made about \$100 and donated \$40 to the Veterans and Children Foundation, with the rest going to CWF.

Sons of the American Legion was created in 1932 as an organization within the American Legion. The S.A.L. is made up of boys and men of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the United States military and became eligible for membership in The American Legion.

Together, members of the American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, the Sons of the American Legion, and the Legion Riders make up what is known as the Legion Family. All four organizations place high importance on preserving our American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our nation's children, caring for veterans and their families, and perhaps most importantly, teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship.

JUNIOR MEMBERS



JUNIORS RAISE MONEY FOR ALA'S CHILDREN OF WARRIORS NATIONAL PRESIDENTS' SCHOLARSHIP FUND

New Jersey Unit 12's Junior unit president had an idea of raising money to help the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship fund. Three Juniors and one Sons of The American Legion member participated in

the fundraiser.

Together, the kids raised \$1,000.

"I created a donation flyer for them, and they used it to ask for donations from friends and family," said Tara Adair, Unit 12 Junior Activities chair.

The only challenge they really faced in this process was wanting to raise even more money.

"We will try again this calendar year to beat that number," Adair said.

The fundraising was gratifying for the youth involved.

"What was rewarding for us was to see the amount we raised and to know we helped another person further their education," Adair said.

For other ALA units wanting to encourage their Junior members to participate in fundraising for this scholarship, Adair offers some advice.

"Create a script letter and a fun way to ask for donations," she said. "And encourage as much unit participation as possible."

Check out the Auxiliary Magazine! Unit 12 Juniors highlighted for their project! Way to go Somerville Unit 12!



Congratulations to our 2023-2024 Ocean County Officers: LtoR SAL Commander Jeff Kleinow, President Deb Lasky, and Commander Frank Landis, on 9-Nov-2024 at Barnegat Post 232. Mmm . . . Cake.



Hopewell 339's Rifle Squad at Veterans Day Ceremony, 9-Nov. Bugler Carson Schooley. I want to thank all our Members for coming out to participate and celebrate the Hopewell Valley Veterans ceremony in Wolsey Park. A very nice turnout. This includes the Auxiliary Unit, the Sons of the Legion, and even a Legionnaire from Livingston, NJ also participated in the Rifle Squad. Thank you all. – Post 339 Commander Mark J Marotta.



The American Legion Family of Post 105 presented a check for \$2,200 to the Gail's Angels Foundation, from money raised at their annual picnic and from donations from the Sons, the Post, the Auxiliary Unit, and DAV Auxiliary Unit 22.

Gail's Angels is a Belleville-based cancer charity which gives help to moms with breast cancer who have special needs children at home.

Great job to SAL Vice Commander Vinnie Ferriole, who has chaired this project since its inception five years ago.



(Left) Saddle Brook Sq 415 Veterans Day ceremony.

(Right) Neptune 346's Veterans Day ceremony. Post 346 would like to thank our distinguished guests for attending our Veteran's Day Ceremony: LtoR Post 346 Vice Commander Heath Bertini, Assemblywoman Margie Donlon, SAL 346 Commander, Acting Chaplain, and *SALute* editor Gary Crawford, and Committeeman Derel Stroud.



The New Jersey Crew at NYC's Veterans Day parade.



The SAL marching crew.



(Left) LtoR Detachment Adjutant Rusty Myers, Essex County Commander James Elmore, and Detachment Vice Commander Greg Shaffer at the NYC Veterans Day parade.



(Right) The Lakewood 166 crew at the Leisure Park Nursing Home in Lakewood NJ, for the ribbon cutting of their new Wall of Honor, with Sq 166 Commander Fran Catrel, Nov 11.



NJ Veterans Memorial Home in Vineland 11-Nov. Rosie and Marty Widmer handling refreshments.



(Left) PDCs on the High Seas: Mark Natale and Carl Alberm Jr about to embark on the Carnival Vista for Mark's 50th birthday cruise. Happy Veterans Day birthday Mark! (Welcome to AARP eligibility) (Center and Right) A devastating fire in Pine Hill destroyed a 16-unit apartment building. Juniors from Pine Hill 286 and Audubon 262 provided sandwiches to the police and fire departments. As always, Rosie and Marty Widmer answered the call.

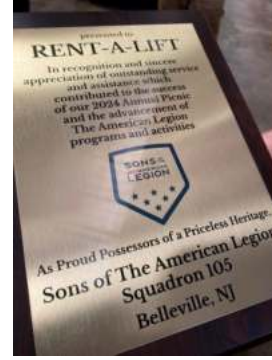


(Left) SAL Squadron 70 Nutley Vice Commander Kevin Iron and Post 70 Nutley Past Commander Al Dubey during the Post 70 Veterans Day celebration.

(Right) Kirk Conover at left, Veteran member of American Legion Greenville SC Post 3, and SAL Squadron 70 Adjutant Ken Ackerman trade American Legion license plates on November 29, 2024.



For the third year, the 105 Family has gone 'Down Neck' at Newark Penn Station to give out food and clothes to the homeless. Chairman SAL Vinnie Ferriole does an amazing job organizing an event that cares for those in need. They made 160-plus sandwiches the day before, and on a 25 degree 1-Dec Sunday morning went to Peter Francisco Park in Newark to hand them out along with some warm coats, hats, and gloves. Helping the homeless speaks to the very best in what the Legion is here to do - good job, all.



SAL 105 dropped off a plaque to **Rent-a-Lift** in Paterson, NJ on 2-Dec. Owner Ed Gerena and his company are unbelievably generous, and this year made two sizeable donations to the Post Family and to the Squadron. Ed is also a member of SAL 105. Thanks for your support, Rent-a-lift!!



**NEW NUMBER,
SAME SUPPORT.**
Dial 988 then Press 1.
Share it with your networks.

Sq 346 Commander Gary Crawford and PDCs Patrick Gallagher and Carl Albern Jr with a Pride Victory 10 electric scooter they picked up, donated to Post 346 on 7-Dec. Legionnaire Bruce Smith provided the pickup to haul it.

Ocean County Christmas Party at Toms River Post 129, 6-December.



(Center) Lisa Natale, Frank Landis, Mark Natale. (Right) Commander Andy Jackson.



(Left) Pat and Melinda Gallagher (Center) Nick Wingler and Tom Marsden (Right) Murph and Santa. (Many more photos on Nick Wingler's Facebook page)(Santa was alleged to come from Lakewood Sq 166)



Barnegat Legion Post 232 and VFW Post 10092 Pearl Harbor Ceremony, 7-Dec.



SAL National Commander Joseph Navaretti attended the 83rd anniversary ceremony at Pearl Harbor.



(Left) Welcome aboard! Sq 346 Commander Gary Crawford welcomes Anthony J. “Bobby” DiMarco. Bobby is now a Member through his father’s Air Force service. (Center) Detachment Chaplain and PDC Matt Thalasinis (232) fronts his Matt Thal Band at the Ocean County Holiday Party at Toms River Post 129. (Right) Josh Seib (brown coat) leads the SAL crew at Cherry Hill Post 372. With winter closing in, the SAL’s held their inaugural Log Splitting event on December 7th! A big shoutout to all the wonderful souls who showed up to lend a hand – our members will surely be snug as bugs in a rug when the cold sets in now that we have plenty of firewood to keep our fireplaces going! Kudos to our members for braving the chilly weather to keep the fire burning, quite literally!



As busy as Santa is during this time of year, his brother Kent Claus filled in and dropped by Blackwood Post 281 for the Auxiliary's holiday party.



SAL Essex County Exec Committee held its Christmas party at Nutley Post 70 on 14Dec.



Meanwhile, at Neptune 346:



Neptune Post 346's annual Egg Nog Sunday (15Dec) was a success as always. Along with lots of food and both leaded and unleaded eggnog and a gift auction, donations were presented to Commanders Rich and Andy, and President Charline's projects. At left, LtoR Squadron 346 Commander Gary Crawford, SAL Detachment Commander Rich Hodum, Auxiliary President Charline Gladden, Neptune Unit 346 President Mandy Trail, Legion Department Commander Andy Jackson, and Post 346 Commander Wil Fetherman. At right, Mandy presents Rich with the Auxiliary's donation to his project. (Carl's Eggnog Jell-O shots were a big hit - \$1 each for COTA)



On 18Dec, delivery was made to Lyons Veterans Hospital of want-list items. This is an annual program of the VA&R (Veteran Affairs and Rehabilitation) Committee to assist Veterans with items not provided, such as toothbrushes, shampoo, underwear, jacket, blankets, and entertainment items such as playing cards. At left, Sq 346 Commander Gary Crawford, Detachment Vice-Commander Bill Murphy (Brick Sq 348), and PDC Patrick Gallagher about to load up and head to Lyons. At right, delivery complete.





On 19Dec, Neptune Post 346 Legionnaire Grover Freidemann, SAL Commander Gary Crawford, and his grandson Murphy Izquierdo attended a flag retirement at the Monmouth County Fire Academy.

*There are 154 (possibly more) S.A.L. Squadrons in New Jersey, plus County Executive Committees. Surely you've done something important lately. Let the **SALute**, and the rest of New Jersey's Legion Family, know what you've been up to. Pat yourself on the back, gloat if you must for a job well done. Our S.A.L. Family does so much to benefit Veterans and the community. Share your stories. Send articles and jpg photos to njSALute@gmail.com. Please be sure to ID people in your photos.*



Rudolph the Red-Nosed C130 – Little Rock AFB, Air Mobility Command



National League of POW/MIA Families ·
BREAKING NEWS.

A NEW JERSEY VIETNAM WAR VETERAN HAS BEEN ACCOUNTED FOR!

DPAA announced today that U.S. Army Warrant Officer Albert R. Trudeau, 22, of Teaneck, New Jersey, killed during the Vietnam War, was accounted for September 11, 2024.

Welcome home, sir.



Trudeau's family recently received their full briefing on his identification, therefore, additional details on his identification can be shared.

In October 1971, Trudeau was assigned to the 68th Aviation Company, 52nd Aviation Battalion, 17th Aviation Group. On Oct. 26, Trudeau was serving as the pilot of a CH-47B "Chinook" helicopter when it went down over water in bad weather while flying from Tuy Hoa to Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam. Remains of four of the 10 Soldiers on board were recovered during search and rescue operations following the crash, but Trudeau was not accounted for.

An unsuccessful recovery attempt was made in 1974 when divers from the Joint Casualty Resolution Center dove on what was believed to be the crash site. A number of investigation and recovery efforts took place between 1994 and 2021, with a June 2021 recovery mission finding possible osseous remains and material evidence, not linked to Trudeau.

From May 7 to July 9, 2024, a DPAA Underwater Recovery Team excavated an aircraft wreck site which correlated to Trudeau's crash site. The team excavated roughly 336 square meters of underwater surface area, which resulted in the recovery of possible osseous remains, possible life support equipment, and various other identification media. All evidence was collected and turned over to the DPAA laboratory for analysis and identification.

To identify Trudeau's remains, scientists from DPAA used anthropological and dental analysis, as well as material and circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the [Armed Forces Medical Examiner System](#) used mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis

Trudeau's name is recorded on the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the [American Battle Monuments Commission's](#) Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, along with others who are unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Trudeau will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, on a date to be determined.

For family and funeral information, contact the Army Casualty Office at (800) 892-2490.

DPAA is grateful to the government of Vietnam for their partnership in this mission.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans who went missing while serving their country, visit the DPAA website at www.dpaa.mil or on social media at www.facebook.com/dodpaa, <https://www.linkedin.com/company/dodpaa>, <https://www.instagram.com/dodpaa/>, or <https://x.com/dodpaa>.

Teen honors veterans through service, compassion

by *Christina Leslie, Correspondent* November 10, 2024 in DOC Homepage, Latest News, Parish Life



Martin Widmer of Mater Ecclesiae Parish, Berlin NJ, accepts an award for assisting homeless veterans during the 52nd National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion in New Orleans. The award was one of two he received at the convention. (Photo courtesy of Jeffrey Thorne)

To Martin Widmer, Veterans Day is not celebrated just on Nov. 11. The 18-year-old member of Mater Ecclesiae Parish, Berlin, makes it his mission to honor veterans year-round.

“On both sides of my family, almost every male has been in the service,” Widmer said. “My mother was in the ROTC in college, and my dad was in the Marine Corps. Ever since I was young, I was raised to have respect and understand what [veterans] give for our freedom.”

Widmer and his younger sister, Rosie, followed the example of their mother, Shannon, and began reaching out to veterans who crossed their path. “We would see someone in a veteran’s cap and thank them for their service. As we got older, we started making [thank you] cards and sending them to a veterans home,” he said.

This past May, Widmer graduated from Liberty University Online Academy with his high school diploma as well as an associate’s degree in theology. (He is in the process of applying to the U.S. Air Force Academy and is taking college courses in the interim.) While an undergraduate, he participated in the Federation of North-American Explorers, a Catholic faith-based, outdoor youth movement in Canada and the United States based on the methods of Venerable Jacques Sevin, SJ, and others.

The teen’s flexible education schedule allowed him to continue his work with veterans, volunteering with area “Stand Down” events, which offer homeless veterans meals, clothing and necessities. In addition, Widmer visits the N.J. Veterans Memorial Home-Vineland, where he helps veterans celebrate at the monthly birthday parties, and visits Veterans Haven South Transitional Housing, Winslow, where he plays board games with the residents.

“They are bundled up in their room all day,” he explained. “This gets them out and moving and brightens up their day. Often their families are not involved in their lives, and this is always really appreciated.”

Widmer is a member of the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 262, Audubon, serving as the post’s chaplain as well as chaplain for the Sons of the American Legion Camden County. This role requires him to send cards of encouragement, healing and sympathy, as well as often lighting candles at his home parish for the veterans in need.

Charles Ross, Commander of the Audubon Post, expressed his admiration of the teen’s many corporal works of mercy for area veterans.

“Marty has a great knack for it,” Ross said. “He comes over to the Vets Haven on his own time, and assists residents to apply for jobs since he is computer savvy. He holds hoagie sales for them six times a year, serves as sergeant-at-arms and is part of the Resolution 22 Committee for Camden County, which tries to mitigate and prevent veteran suicide.”

Ross added, “I am not able to continue this year as squad leader due to my work obligations, but the first person who popped into my head to take over was Marty. When he hits his stride, he will be unstoppable.”

Not surprisingly, Widmer was recognized for his service and dedication to veterans at the 52nd National Convention of the Sons of the American Legion, held Aug. 23-25 in New Orleans. He was presented with the organization’s **Marvin P. Nay Outstanding Veterans Education and Employment Contributor of the Year Award** with more than 70 reported hours assisting homeless veterans, as well as the **Charles B. Rigsby Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Volunteer of the Year Award** with more than 460 hours volunteering with Veterans.

Widmer has a practical, faith-based message for teens who may be reluctant to volunteer with veterans: put themselves in the other man’s shoes.

“Why not? What do you have to lose?” he queried. “Yes, they may be old, but you are going to get old, too. They were our age once and are still human and have feelings. They are the biggest reason we are able to have our own beliefs now.”

“Thank God for giving me the ability to do what I do and the passion to help others who do without,” he said.



Curious about other goings-on of the Sons across the country?

Subscribe to the *MILLENNIUM*, a newsletter of the Sons of the American Legion.

<http://www.legion.org/information-center/in-the-media/e-newsletters>



Continuing to showcase the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Detachment of New Jersey Children and Youth Commission's commitment to two of the four pillars of the American Legion – Children and Youth, and Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation – we will be conducting our highly successful “Cookies for Vets” program for the fourth year in a row.

Over those four years, “Cookies for Vets” - carried out in April's National American Legion Children and Youth Month – has put over \$5,000 worth of Girl Scout Cookies into the hands of veterans who are short- or long-term residents of VA facilities in NJ. A key component of the project is to have the Scouts and Young Sons again deliver the cookies and chat with the vets in-person, so they can see where the cookies go, and bring a little sunshine into the day of the residents of VA Lyons and East Orange.

What we are asking of you is to make a donation to this program – cookies on average are \$5 to \$6 a box – with our goal to raise at least \$2,500 so we can deliver around 500 boxes to the two veteran's hospital locations. Please consider making a donation of whatever you or your organization is comfortable with, and when we publish a release following the cookie delivery, we will credit you or your organization as donors. Should you wish to make a donation, please let me know via the email address below - a check can be made out to Girl Scout Troop 20122, and sent to the address listed below ... or a donation can be made via Venmo @sal105NJ. The deadline to place the cookie orders is January 31, 2025. Many thanks, and I look forward to “making our vet's day a little sweeter!” As a “Proud Possessor of a Priceless Heritage”, Russell “Rusty” Myers III (NJ-105) Children and Youth Commission Chairman 2024-25 Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of New Jersey.

137 Highfield Lane, Nutley NJ 07110 – 862-684-0131 – r.myers@sons.njamericanlegion.org – www.facebook.com/Candy

(Image Courtesy of the Denver Post)



TAPS: Past National Commander John Dietz (KY), 1965-2024



John Thomas Dietz, 59, of Kentucky, passed away on December 6, 2024. He was born February 17, 1965. He was a long time member and **Past National Commander of the Sons of the American Legion in 1996-97**. John was preceded by parents: Fred & Betty Dietz Jr., sister: Dianne Dietz, brothers: Fred Dietz III & Jerry Dietz. Survived by: nieces & nephews: Michelle Dietz, Chelsea Stacy, Jake Dietz, Eric Dietz, Christine Dietz, Bryan Morgan, & numerous family & friends. Visitation was held Friday, December 13th at Linnemann Funeral Homes, Erlanger. Mass was held on Saturday, December 14th at the Cathedral Basilica. John was buried at St. John's Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell, KY. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in his name to: Echo Dogs White Shepard Rescue (PO Box 95705 Hoffman Estates, IL 60195) and Historic Lindon Grove Cemetery and Arboretum (401 W. 13th St. Covington, KY 41011)



Who chose individual nicknames that would appear on WW2 aircraft?



Usually the crew themselves.

This was particularly so in the USAAF, proud of individualism and unit morale.

Sometimes, the ground crews got into the act, or a crewman might name the plane after his girl - a little pin-up art often went with the name.

Of course, there were some no-go areas.

Nothing obscene - though double entendres got through - and, officially, no names of living people without their permission. You don't want some poor guy finding out in the newspaper that his B-17 just got taken down over Berlin.

Some names became legendary.

Behold the **Memphis Belle**: that B-17F brute was one of the first heavy bombers to complete a 25-mission tour. Basically, most of those nicknames on their bombers and fighters had been decided upon by the air crews

Or **Nine-O-Nine**, another B-17, and this one was flown by the Eighth Air Force's own commander, General Ira Eaker.

There is, of course, the **Enola Gay** - you know, that B-29 piloted by Colonel Paul Tibbets, which changed everything in the skies above Hiroshima. The aircraft was named for Tibbets' mother.

They were always good for a laugh, or, more often, at least some sort of dark humor that could lighten the mood. You'd normally find them painted right on the nose, next to the plane's serial number and squadron markings.

It was one means for those guys to fully own those flying machines-to show they were proud of what they were doing, even if it freaked them out big time.

But apart from the official nicknames, unofficially many names preponderated in the air: spicy ones you would hear the guys whisper to one another but never on the plane.

Some “Mindboggling” Facts About WW2

By Michael Herndon, Former Law Enforcement Officer (Retired) & US ARMY Vet. (1989–2021)
 Article appearing on Quora.com, Oct 13, 2024.



Maybe not necessarily “mind boggling”, but an interesting sidebar fact from WWII. In 1943 Mary Babnick Brown, a 36 year old resident of Pueblo Colorado, responded to an advertisement from the US Government, requesting human hair to be used in the war effort, but gave no further details stating only that the hair was to be blonde, at least 22 inches long, & was not to have been treated with chemicals or with heat. Brown’s hair was 34” long had never been cut, treated with heating irons, or with chemicals. Brown sent off samples of her hair to the Government that accepted it for use in 1944. Her hair was later used in the production of meteorological instrumentation. Post war, an urban legend would grow that claimed that Brown’s hair was used as the cross hairs in the Norden bomb site, however this was not true as the Norden’s cross hair was etched into the glass, & not made from hair, and Ms. Browns donation did not occur until 1944, long after the Norden had entered into production. Brown was offered compensation, but never accepted any, feeling that it was her patriotic duty to do so.

Mary Babnick Brown



SOHS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

NEXT MEETING NOVEMBER 18TH
 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

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STOCKINGS FOR OUR TROOPS

American Legion Family #346
 21 Gully Road Neptune, NJ 07753
 Needs your help...

Our regular Stockings for our Troops drive has a new twist this year. We have become aware of local Veterans in need of support. We will be providing food support and care packages to our Veterans during the holiday season. The Next Coast North Fork Food Pantry, which supports Monmouth County, also needs our help restocking the shelves. Due to the holiday season, the request for food items, will empty the supplies. Let's get together and show support to help our Active Duty and Veterans.

As you know, our military members, and Veterans make the choice to serve, are dedicated, and give so much to our country. This is a tangible means to show our support and gratitude for their sacrifice. Your help is needed this year to take away some of the pressure and make the New Year a bit brighter.

Suggested items include:

• Corned Beef	• Pasta Sauce	• Detergent
• Chicken Broth	• Baby Wipes & Diapers	• Shells
• Bread (any Crustless loaf)	• Cereal for Adults & Children	• Packaged Nuts
• Toothpaste/Toothbrush	• Dishsoap & Conditioner	• Shampoo & Conditioner
• Candles & gum	• Cans of M&M's	• Salt & Pepper
• Lip balm	• Hot Chocolate Mix (packet)	• Other Confections
• Tissues	• Individual Meals (microwavable)	• Oats Mix
• Heartly Snacks	• Fruit Snacks	• Gift Cards to grocery stores

Please check all items for expiration dates before we coordinate handoff of any donated items.

All donations should be brought to Post #346.
 Drop off on the following dates:
 Thursday, 12 December (open-house)
 Thursday, 19 December (open-house)
 Thursday, 8 January (open-house)
 Thursday, 16 January (open-house)

For more information contact
 WJL #3464645
 wjlbrown@allegion.com or 732-863-4947

Were there always “three strikes you’re out” and “four balls are a walk” in baseball or did that evolve over time? Why did they end up with the three strikes and four balls?

By Aaron Brown, Columnist at Wilmott Magazine (1999–present)

In the earliest recorded versions of baseball, there were no balls and strikes. Pitchers tried to throw hittable pitches, and batters tried to hit them. The game was about what happened once a ball was hit, not before. Pitchers were only 50 feet away from the plate, and were prohibited from throwing overhand, trying to curve the ball or getting a running start.

The main problem with this was incompetence—pitchers who couldn’t throw hittable pitches, batters who couldn’t hit anything. The usual answer was substitution, the umpire would insist pitcher or batter be changed.

An emerging problem was strategic: pitchers who threw barely hittable pitches hoping for weak hits or flies, batters who waited for a perfect pitch. Rules eased up for pitchers during this period so there were trickier pitches.

There was no single official rule book at the time and practices differed in different places and leagues. The National Association of Base Ball Players (NABBP) 1857 rule book set the nine-inning format and was largely adopted at the top levels of the game.

In 1858, umpires warned batters who let a hittable pitch pass, but swinging and missing was not a strike. A fourth warning could get a batter declared out, but it was not mandatory.

In 1863, umpires started counting unhittable pitches. Nine got a batter to first base. Swinging and missing counted as a strike.

In 1880, eight balls got you a walk. In 1882, six balls got you a walk.

In 1887, five balls got you a walk, and a strike zone was introduced. The number of allowed strikes was raised to four. That reduced the umpire’s discretion, but also meant every pitch had to be a ball or strike. Before that, an umpire might decide not to call either. In 1888, back to three strikes.

In 1889, baseball finally settled on three strikes and four balls.

All of this was trial-and-error, trying to make the games fun and competitive.



Happy Holidays from The NJ SALute!

***And from Gary S. Crawford PC, Editor
and the Crawford Family***

Upcoming Events:

2025

Jan 08: Commander Hodum's Official Visit to Bergen County, Rochelle Park Post 170
Jan 09 and 16: Red Cross NWS Earle Stockings for our Troops 4-8 pm, Neptune Family 346
Jan 11: Passaic Co Leadership Beefsteak Fundraiser, Wayne Post 174
Jan 18: DEC Meeting, Spotswood Post 253
Feb 19: Detachment Commander Hodum's Ocean County Homecoming, Toms River Post 129
Mar 22: DEC Meeting, American Legion Post 342, Chester NJ
Apr 05: Commander Hodum's Testimonial, New Egypt Elks 2457
Apr 27: American Legion Family Day
May 24: National Poppy Day

Contributors:

Detachment Commander Richard Hodum, Lakewood SAL 166
SAL National Commander Joseph Navarette
Adjutant Rusty Myers, Belleville SAL 105
ANEC/PDC Henry Hasselhan SAL 311
Chaplain/PDC Matthew Thalasinis, Barnegat SAL 232
PDC Nicholas Wingler, Lakewood SAL 166
PDC Carl Albern Jr., Neptune SAL 346
PDC Patrick Gallagher, Neptune SAL 346
PDC Mark Natale, Union Beach SAL 321
SAL Squadron 105 Belleville
Barnegat Post 232 Family
Keansburg Post 273 Family
Hopewell Post 339 Family
Neptune Post 346 Family
Ocean County Legion Family
Comdr Charles Ross, Camden Co SAL
Comdr Mark J Marotta, Hopewell Post 339
NJ Dept American Legion
Tara Adair, Somerville ALA 12
Maureen Davies, Keansburg ALA 273
ShannonLee Widmer, Pine Hill ALA 286
NJ Run for the Fallen
News12NJ
Aaron Brown, Wilmott Magazine
Parish Life Magazine
Quora.com
Legion.org
HackensackMeridianHealth.com / JSUMC

Please send articles and pictures to njSALute@gmail.com