THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 175

8700 Bell Creek Road, Mechanicsville, VA 23116-3867
Phone: (804) 789-8667 Web: www.Post175.org E-Mail: info@post175.org

January and February 2026
VETERANS SERVING VETERANS

LEADERSHIP

Commander
Warren Rice
(804) 852-8108

1st Vice Commander (Membership)
Kelly L. Schips
(804) 519-9932

2nd Vice Commander (Hall Rentals)
William (Bill) Todd
(804) 402-6636
(Rental Line)

Adjutant
Robert (Bob) White
(804) 240-4220

Building & Grounds
Anthony (Tony) Nelson
(804) 295-2673

Chaplain
Arthur (Art) Aumock
(631) 807-2979

Finance Officer
Lyn M. Spencer
(804) 334-9036

Historian
Doug Snell
(804) 441-4114

Judge Advocate
Jack Barbour
(804) 690-1863

Legion Riders (ALR)
Jack Barbour
(804) 690-1863

Sergeant-at-Arms
Myrtle Starling
(540) 809-2861

Service Officer (VSO)
Andre Hunt
(804) 613-8405

Sons of The American Legion (SAL)
Jim Oliver
(804) 754-5860

News Highlights:

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Comcast (and other) e-mail services being used by our members are "throttling" our messages. Meaning: you are not receiving important information from the Post as your e-mail service will not deliver our messages to you. Therefore, we will be posting the Newsletter and minutes for the Executive Committee (ExCom) and general Membership meetings to the Post website as soon as they are available. You will no longer be receiving e-mail notifications of their posting.

We will continue to provide Post closing and/or event/meeting delays or cancellation notices to our website and distribute notifications via e-mail. However, please note that your e-mail provider may not deliver those e-mail notifications to you. Check the Post website for updates. Thank you.

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CONGRATULATIONS to **Robert (Bob) White**, our Post Adjutant, on his also becoming Chair for the Hanover County Veterans Committee (HCVC) for 2026.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Kelly L. Schips**, our Post First Vice Commander and Membership Committee Chair, on also becoming Vice Chair for the Hanover County Veterans Committee (HCVC) for 2026.

Other Post members reappointed by the County to the HCVC include: **Jim Edmunds**, **Jim Legg**, and **George Navas**. **Colin Williamson** is member Emeritus of the Committee.

Members of the Hanover County Veterans Committee serve as Advisors to all Hanover County Departments and Agencies, and any other public or private entity within Hanover County, on the proper protocol regarding honoring veterans. They also represent veterans and speak at public and private events. They host public ceremonies on behalf of the County at our Veterans Memorial every Memorial and Veterans Day.

CONGRATULATIONS to **George Navas**, presented the "Community Hero of the Year Award" for 2025 by the Vets on Track Foundation. The Citation reads in part: "In recognition of your selfless dedication to your community and service to others..."

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION (SAL)

Happy New Year everyone. This month our 4H shooting team will be competing in the first round of the American Legion and Civilian Marksmanship Program **national air rifle matches**. The first round of these matches will be conducted at our Post with the targets transmitted electronically to the scoring site. Please wish us luck and feel free to come to the Post on Sunday **January 18** and Sunday **February 1** at **3 pm** to observe and support our shooters. Also we still have several openings on the team, so if you know of a youth aged 12-18 that might be interested in the program, please let me know. (POC: Jim Oliver, (804) 754-5860)

Plans are underway for the next **Fish Fry** sometime in **March**. We will keep you posted as details are finalized.

AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS

As 2025 fades away into memories, 2026 is upon us. We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas. In December we participated in the Mechanicsville Christmas Parade, and Wreaths Across America at Cold Harbor National Cemetery. We would love to thank our Auxiliary for a great Post Christmas Party.

In January we plan to make a great batch of Brunswick Stew! Also several of the Riders will be attending the Virginia Legacy Run planning session. Stay tuned for more upcoming events as we enter into a new year. Thanks to everyone for your support of the Riders. “We ride for the cause, not the applause”.

Mechanicsville Christmas Parade

Cold Harbor Cemetery

Wreaths Across America (WAA)

POST SERVICE OFFICER (VSO)

New Scam: VA Benefits overpayments - Link: news.va.gov

The VA will send a letter with information about overpayment. A claimant can call **800-827-1000** to find out more on overpayment information, a payment plan and obtain letters. Sample letter verbiage (opening and closing paragraphs) is below:

"A clear and unmistakable error (CUE) is an error that is undebatable, so that reasonable minds could not differ. A determination of CUE must be based on the record and the law that existed at the time of the prior decision. Such error must have been prejudicial to the claimant. Once a determination is made that there was a CUE in a prior decision that would change the outcome of that decision, that decision must be corrected as if the former error had not been made. (38 CFR 3,105)"

"Your current overall or combined rating is xxx%. We do not add the individual percentages of each condition to determine your combined rating. We use a combined rating table that considers the effect from the most serious to least serious conditions."

Americanism / Youth Programs:

Wanted: Outstanding high school junior boys to attend the 2026 **Boys State** to be held at Radford University on 21-27 June 2026. Students get hands-on experience of state and local government. Selection in April-May 2026. Contact Doug Snell at 804-441-4114.

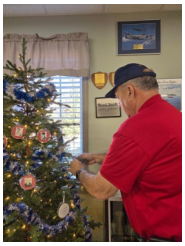
Wanted: Outstanding high school junior girls and boys to attend the 2026 Virginia **Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Academy** to be held at the Virginia State Police Training Facility in Chesterfield VA on 15-20 June 2026. Selection in April-May 2026. Sports, driving a cruiser, shooting a pistol. Need doctor's school athletic physical. Contact Doug Snell at 804-441-4114.

American Legion Auxiliary

From the Unit President:

Happy New Year from your Unit 175 Auxiliary. Thank you all for making the first half of our Auxiliary year an exciting, meaningful and memorable time. We finished off 2025 by decorating our new Veterans' Christmas Tree with the new ornaments showing off our Veterans in uniform when they served.

Decorating For Christmas



We participated in *Wreaths Across America* at Cold Harbor National Cemetery, joined in the Mechanicsville Christmas Parade and hosted a fabulous Christmas Party for our Legion Family with nearly 100 attending. We collected toys and books for Toys for Tots and the Children's Hospital. We filled and delivered nearly 100 stockings and ditty bags to the McGuire Center and Sitter/Barfoot. We signed nearly 300 holiday cards for Veterans, delivered to several locations.

Community Service
Wreaths Across America

Charitable Giving

IN THE SPIRIT OF SERVICE, NOT SELF

Let's begin the new year focusing on our fundraising and growth initiatives, service projects for our Veterans and youth in our community as well as continuing to celebrate our Post's Veterans.

Our Auxiliary will initiate a direct contact fundraising campaign in January through letters designed to educate local businesses on the Missions of the ALA and seeking their partnership to further our important projects.

President
Fayth Heath
(540) 809-2454

Vice President
Janice White
(804) 730-1775

Chaplain
Janice White
(804) 730-1775

Historian
Patricia Edmunds
(804) 401-3423

Membership
Lynn Barbour
(804) 614-5085

Secretary
Lynn Barbour
(804) 614-5085

Sergeant-at-Arms
Doris Sydnor
(804) 221-4224

Treasurer
Jeannie Rummel
(804) 310-7200

Strengthening our Family

Bright New Year!

Our Auxiliary will be offering a scholarship for local students who have exhibited support and respect for our Veterans through volunteerism and community service while achieving academic excellence.

Our Ladies Who Lunch will enjoy the hospitality of Veteran John Crowe's sister's establishment, *Sally Bell's Kitchen* in January and our outing in February will be to Game Day Grill.

The Mahjongg Group will continue meeting on the first and third Wednesday of the month but stay tuned for a possible meeting location change.

We are in the early stages of planning to host a 2-day Sit and Sew for *Quilts of Valor* in cooperation with VFW Post 9808. If you don't sew, there are many opportunities to assist during those two days and all help is appreciated. We will also have applications available for nominations of Veterans to receive quilts.

Our Crafty Ladies will be back in business with two community events: in January a card making event for creating Valentines for our Veterans and in February a Beginner's Counted Cross Stitch event.

We will continue to help source assistance for our Veterans and their families in need. Contact us. If we can't help, we will reach out to locate someone who can.

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS:

JANUARY 2026

10 (Saturday) - **Oratorical Contest** - 13th District, 10 am, Post 74, Charlottesville (Keswick)
17 (Saturday) - Virginia Governor's Inauguration
17 (Saturday) - The American Legion Riders (ALR) College, 10 am to 3 pm, Post 280, Chesapeake
25 (Sunday) - **Oratorical Contest** - Regional, 1 pm, Post 176, Springfield
27 (Tuesday) - Membership Meeting, 7 pm, Post Main Hall
31 (Saturday) - Community Breakfast, 7:30 am to 10 am, Post Main Hall - PUBLIC WELCOME $
31 (Saturday) - ALR and S.A.L. Meetings, @ 11 am (Following the Community Breakfast)

FEBRUARY 2026

10 (Tuesday) - Deadline to register for a 2026 session of The American Legion College (No cost to attend)
21 (Saturday) - The American Legion Riders (ALR) College, 10 am to 3 pm, Post 3, Salem
24 (Tuesday) - Membership Meeting, 7 pm, Post Main Hall
27 (Friday) - Department Spring Conference, Portsmouth
27 (Friday) - **Oratorical Contest** - Department Level, 7 pm, Portsmouth
28 (Saturday) - Community Breakfast, 7:30 am to 10 am, Post Main Hall - PUBLIC WELCOME $
28 (Saturday) - ALR and S.A.L. Meetings, @ 11 am (Following the Community Breakfast)
28 (Saturday) - Department Spring Conference, Portsmouth
29 (Sunday) - Department Spring Conference, Portsmouth

LOOK AHEAD

28 February to 04 March - Washington DC Conference (National Commander Testimony to Congress)
07 March (Saturday) - The American Legion College (**Eastern Region**), 8 am to 5 pm, Post 284, Colonial Heights
14 March (Saturday) - The American Legion College (**Northern Region**), 8 am to 5 pm, Post 176, Springfield
21 March (Saturday) - **13th District Spring Conference**, 10 am to @2:30 pm, Post 74, Charlottesville (Keswick)
28 March (Saturday) - The American Legion College (**Western Region**), 8 am to 5 pm, Post 3, Salem

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Wish to be more active in our Post, or in the community? Wish to support one or more of our Four Pillars?

Looking for volunteers to serve in a wide variety of programs, projects and initiatives. A partial list on what we do as a "Legion Family" is on the next page. Check it out !

Community Programs and Activities

Backpack Program – Providing school supplies to children in need
Blood Drives – In coordination with the American Red Cross
Boys State Leadership Program - Summer In-Residence program for High School Juniors
Color Guard – Participating in Ceremonial (Public) Events (Parades, etc.)
Community Breakfasts - Monthly Public Breakfast (Fundraiser)
Community Food Banks – Providing non-perishable food to local non-profits
First Responder Awards Program – Recognizing top Fire/EMT and Sheriff Deputies
Fisher House – Supporting military families in-need of temporary housing
Flag Education Program – Providing information to all First Grade students (In-school visits)
Flag Retirement Program – In conjunction with Scouts
Girls State Leadership Program - Summer In-Residence program for High School Juniors
Hanover County Veterans Committee - Honoring all Hanover veterans (Ceremonial events)
High School Oratorical Contest - Providing college scholarship money
Honor Flights - Honoring veterans with trips to D.C. to visit memorials
Honor Guard - Honoring veterans at funerals (Flag presentations to next-of-kin, etc.)
Hospital Support - Providing hospitalized veterans with needed supplies
Liberation Veteran Services – Providing meals and housing while undergoing treatment for addictions and homelessness (In cooperation with VFW Post 9808)
Lonesome Dove – Supporting physical therapy for wounded warriors
Middle School Essay Contest – Provides prize money to students, teachers, and schools
Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) – Sponsor all county High School units
Junior Shooting Sports Program (JSSP) – Air rifle training and competitions (ages 12 to 18)
Poppies – Funding veteran needs (Rehabilitation, etc.)
Scouts USA - Sponsor for Troop 553
Service Dogs – Supplementing the purchase and training costs of service dogs for veterans
Troopster Program - Providing "care packages" for deployed (overseas) U.S. service members (In cooperation with VFW Post 9808)
United Service Organizations (USO) – Volunteer in support of service members with countless acts of caring, comfort, and connection
Wreaths Across America – Honoring our fallen with graveside wreaths during the holidays
Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Academy (YCLEA) - Summer In-Residence program for High School Juniors

Note: The above are only highlights of programs (past and present) provided or supported by The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) and The Sons of The American Legion (S.A.L.). Contact a Post officer for full details on these and other programs and **how to help support our veterans and their families**.