

THE MIDLOTHIAN LEGIONNAIRE

FOR GOD & COUNTRY

A PUBLICATION OF MAJOR CHARLES A. RANSOM AMERICAN
LEGION POST 186 MIDLOTHIAN, VIRGINIA



Apr/May/June 2023

amlegionpost186@aim.com

americanlegionpost186.org

Commander's Message

Billy Heflin, Post Commander

Greetings Post 186 family! We have had a very busy 3rd quarter with the breakfasts, Brunswick stew, blood drives, socials, and membership meetings. Also, we presented our community service awards in February and March.

As we go into the last quarter of our fiscal year, the pace of events picks up even more. In addition to our regular monthly events, we are holding a job fair April 29th. Selecting candidates for Boys State, selecting Post awards, and election of officers for next year are on the calendar.

The call for individuals to fill leadership positions for the new year had extremely disappointing results. If you can help, please do so!

We are also embarking on a project to replace the building's hall floor. It is becoming harder and harder to keep the floor in usable condition.

This is your Post, so it is up to everyone to keep it moving forward!

For God and Country.

Welcome to the 2022/23

Executive Board:

Commander: Billy Heflin
1st Vice: Stevie Holmes
2nd Vice: Randy Lofland
Adjutant: Bill Seif
Finance Officer: William Pouch
Chaplain: Dale Mark Benedict
Service Officer: Henry Bowe
Judge Advocate: Richard Jackson
Quartermaster: Richard Hahn

Post 186 Calendar

April 2023

4	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
13	Legion Riders Meeting	6:30pm
8	40/8 Breakfast	8am
15	SAL Meeting	10am
18	Membership Dinner	6pm
21	Membership Meeting	7pm
27	Post Social	5:30-7:30pm

May 2023

2	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
11	Legion Riders Meeting	6:30pm
13	40/8 Breakfast	8am
20	SAL Meeting	10am
16	Membership Dinner	6pm
16	Membership Meeting	7pm
25	Post Social	5:30-7:30pm

June 2023

6	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
8	Legion Riders Meeting	6:30pm
10	40/8 Breakfast	8am
17	SAL Meeting	10am
20	Membership Dinner	6pm
20	Membership Meeting	7pm
22	Post Social	5:30-7:30pm
24	Commanders Renewal Lunch	10am-2pm

Membership:

March figures:

Renewed: 188

New: 9

On-Line: 67

PUFL: 35

Total: 299

Goal: 324

Percentage of Goal Met: 92.284%

Current Shortfall: 25

Post Everlasting:

Billy Dix

Joseph B. Glaab

Michael J. Thompson

James P. Bradley

Stewart Goff

Ronald R. Kimler

James M. Payne, Sr.

Paul J. Isenburg

Charles E. Webber, Jr.

Adolph U. Hionkala

Jerry P. Armeli

Joseph A. Vicente

Donald N. Dandliker

Don E. Smith

Robert Lyles

Wesley Barden

R. Fuller Johns

James Bernard

Gary Carpenter

William Valentine, Jr.

Jerry Pugh

Quartermaster:

Should a need arise, wheelchairs, walkers (with and without wheels) and platform canes are available at the Post for short or long-term loan. Please call 804-794-9785 if you have a need for any of this equipment.

Smoking Curtailment:

Please keep in mind, the Post is Still a completely a non-smoking facility.

Building & Grounds

Richard Hahn, Quarter Master

This is a call to arms! The B&G Committee, as currently constituted, is in desperate need of augmentation. We are down to 3 reliable members and those 3 would best be qualified as "walking wounded". As you will see if you read further, the project needs greatly outweigh the capabilities to perform. I often hear the suggestion "well why don't you call people and get some help". Sometimes that may be motive on a short term or narrowly defined effort, but with an extensive slate of efforts, I could clearly spend all my time on the phone and not achieve a productive list of contributors. Also, the current team doesn't have visibility into members physical shape, capabilities, interests or availability. If anyone is willing to contribute to improving our Post in any way,

**Please call us and don't wait
for us to call you.**

Main Entrance Improvement



The new canopy has been installed over the main entrance. The company provided us with swatches of the Pacific Blue material to use in matching paint for the building trim. That paint

has now been procured and the mild weather provides many opportunities to apply it. If you are interested in helping with the painting project, please call Richard Hahn @ 703-508-1544 to schedule times and ensure all necessary material are available and accessible

Eagle Scout Project Completion



A recent Eagle Scout project improved the area located near the shed. Heavy duty exterior benches have been added to create an outside area for a conversation pit or a smoking area. Three benches are in place and usable and we plan to extend the project by further clearing the ground, putting down weed blocker and pea gravel and building a table (or tables) to accommodate food and drinks.

Anyone that would like to participate in any aspect of the project is welcome and the time is now. Please call the Post @ 804-794-9785 to schedule your participation.

Job List Posting

An updated job list has been posted in the stew room. It will be provided to any member by contacting richardahahn@verizon.net. This list is open to anyone willing to fund, act as project manager or individual performer. Please review the list of needs and let us know of any level of interest. If you have an idea for a project, please contact the Post @ 804-794-9785 to discuss and plan any necessary budget

Dan Allen volunteered to bring members of his girls' softball team to clean out the planting beds around the flagpole, stone beds around the building and top dressing with new mulch or pea gravel. Not only did Dan manage the project and get his hands dirty, he also personally funded the efforts. There is still work to be done to clean the stone beds to the sides and rear of the building and spread more stone. Anyone with a fairly strong back that will help should call Richard Hahn @703-508-1544 to help with procurement, transport and installation of stone.

Honor Guard:

Billy Heflin, Honor Guard Coordinator

The mission of the Honor Guard is to show reverence to those veterans who have passed on by providing a proper, distinguished military memorial, and to support patriotic events, in order to promote and preserve our nation's independence.

The Post continues to solicit volunteers to be members in the Post 186 Honor Guard. The Post will subsidize 50% of the cost of personal uniforms up to 3 new volunteers.

The Honor Guard normally meets the 4th Tuesday of every month at 7pm.

The January Breakfast

It appeared the cold and windy day kept some of our members from attending the first breakfast of the new year.

Those that braved the cloudy, cold day, however, were treated to a wonderful meal and even better fellowship.



February Dinner/ Meeting

The weather was better this time and the meal was fantastic! We saw a lot of familiar faces and a few new ones.



During the meeting the Ceremony Of The Four Chaplains was performed.



The Four Chaplains, also referred to as the Immortal Chaplains or the Dorchester Chaplains, were four World War II chaplains who died rescuing civilian and military personnel as the American troop ship SS Dorchester sank on February 3, 1943, in what has been referred to as the second-worst sea disaster of World War II.

March Breakfast

Did you notice how nice the Post looked for the March breakfast and wonder how it got this way?



These ladies worked hard getting it ready.

(I'm sorry to say the men who set up the tables and chairs refused to be in the picture.)



And let's not forget the servers.

The breakfast was great as always. We saw some new faces and missed some of the regulars. We hope to see each of you in the coming months!



March Dinner/Meeting

Bobbie Murphy



Pay your \$10 and come on in!



Take off your coat off and visit with friends.



Come and get it!



Perhaps a before dinner drink?



Dig in, there's plenty to eat.



Don't just stand around, mingle.



Waiting for the dinner bell to ring.



Our Quarter Master and our Post Commander, Richard Hahn and Billy Heflin.

If you missed any of these events, we hope to see you at the next one. Don't be shy.



**All gave some, but some gave all.
Never forget.**

Rental Manager:

Daniel Allen continues to manage the Post Rental duties.



If you, your family, or your friends are interested in renting the Post, contact Daniel at 804-677-1587 or use the link at <http://americanlegionpost186.org/post-rental.html>

Meet the Rental Manager

As you may know, our Rental Manager is Dan Allen. He took over the position from Richard Hahn several months ago. Dan was born and raised in Annapolis, MD. He graduated from the University of MD. After 5 years with the U.S. Army, Dan worked for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, where he retired. Dan is married to Sue (21 years) and has two teenagers.



If you see Dan at any of the Post functions or just around town, say hello!

Brunswick Stew:



Friday:

Things started out with 18 volunteers showing up for the stew prep on Friday. Beef and chickens were chopped up and potatoes were peeled and cut up for the pot. Beans and corn were made ready.



By the time it came to pouring the stew in the containers, there were more than enough volunteers to help out.



*Note: No fingers were lost during the prep.

Saturday:

Things got started early on Saturday. The Stew Master and his assistants arrived around 2:45am. As the morning progressed volunteers showed up to help get the fixins in the pot and start stirring.



After a very successful weekend, the Post Stew Master was having trouble staying awake!



Great job Don.
Go get some well-deserved sleep.

American Legion Auxiliary
Bea Miller, Auxiliary President

Ladies Auxiliary Board:

President: Bea Miller

1st Vice: Brenda Custer

2nd Vice: Christina Smith

Secretary: Maura Seif

Treasurer: Catherine Fletcher

Chaplain: Pat Welling

Historian: Bobbie Murphy

Sergeant-at-Arms: Frances Bowe

London Luncheon

Some of the ladies from the Auxiliary attended a London luncheon on February 15th arranged by Jane Ruehrwein at Salisbury Country Club. We enjoyed an excellent and entertaining presentation by Joe Malerba.

Attending was (sitting) Bea Miller, Bobbie Murphy, Dottie Hall, Anne Weeks, Maura Seif, Catherine Fletcher, Frances Bowe; (standing) Jane Ruehrwein & Pat Welling.

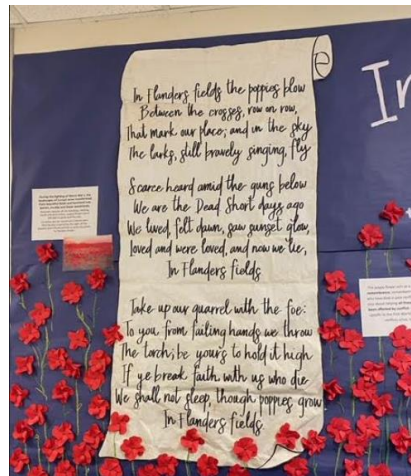


Visit to Tomahawk

Denis Graffum and Bea Miller had the pleasure to visit a total of eight 7th grade classes at Tomahawk Creek Middle School on February 2nd and 3rd. We shared information about Poppies, and a brief history on 'In Flanders Field'. Denis captured the student's attention by telling them how he got the name of 'Leak'. Then he asked the students who has family members in service and/or were in service. Denis and I were amazed that three-fourths of the students in All of the classes have family members serving or have been in service.



Then he proceeded to share information on how the Poppy flower came about, and the history of 'In Flanders Field'. He asked the students questions and they responded quickly. It was evident that the students had learned well from their teachers. The students knew the true meaning of the poem, which is Hope! Finally, Denis shared information about the American Legion and how we can support our Veterans and our servicemen that are serving our Country. Also, Denis mentioned that we are members of the American Legion Post 186.



Caritas

Caritas, at 2220 Stockton St, Richmond, VA 23224 is accepting furniture that is in good condition. They are in need of all types of furniture. Please check their website, <https://www.caritasva.org>, for specific furniture that they need.

In speaking with my contact at the VA Hospital Volunteer Department, they receive donated furniture from Caritas to set up home furnishings for the Veterans that are in need.

They do not accept furniture that has pet hair. If you need Caritas to pick up, there is a \$45.00 pickup fee. Thank you for your support.

Bea Miller, ALA President

ALR:

Den(Leak) Graffum

ALR director

Post 186 American Legion Riders are a group of Legionnaires committed to helping veterans, their families and their fellow Post 186 family in their mission to support our community.

There are ALR chapters throughout the United States with over 150,000 members committed to serving the needs of other Americans.

Veterans interested in learning more or joining the group, please contact Denis Graffum, Rider Director 804.305.8090 or email dengraffum@aol.com

What Else Does the Post do?

Sheriff Karl Leonard

Chesterfield County Sheriff's Office

Charles Elam is a proud Army Veteran and retired LTC. His life started to shatter following the death of his wife and eventual fall into dementia. He was estranged from his son who lived in Arizona and his daughter who lived in the Richmond area. As a direct result of his failing mental capacity, he was arrested on November 17, 2020, and committed to the Chesterfield County Jail. When I learned that he was a veteran and suffering from dementia, I started to look into how we could help him.

I found out the car he was operating at the time of his arrest was towed and held in a lot accumulating a significant daily storage fee on top of the initial tow bill. Knowing that if he stayed in my jail for any length of time that the cost to get his car out of the lot would be several thousand dollars, I called Post 186 Past Commander Randy Lofland who set the Post 186 wheels in motion.

Through coordination with Henry Bowe, who is the Post VA & R representative, monies were secured to pay for the vehicle and get it released. Another member of Post 186 was designated to drive the vehicle back to Mr. Elam's home and park it in his driveway. What we didn't know was that due to his dementia Mr. Elam was not taking proper care of himself nor the interior of his car. Even though the car had an overwhelming stench, Denis drove the car to Mr. Elam's house.

The next step was to get Mr. Elam into the proper care facility at the VA which Henry Bowe, who also serves as the Post Service Officer, identified. Once a memory care bed was identified at the VA, we then had to have his criminal charges dropped so we

could legally move him into the facility. Through working with the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, we were able to do that and eventually move Mr. Elam into the facility where he received care for his situation.

After receiving excellent care, I am happy to report, because of the great work of American Legion Post 186, Mr. Elam has been doing much better, and is now living with his son in Arizona after reestablishing their relationship. This is just one example of what this Post does on a regular basis between meetings that largely go unnoticed.



More Public Service

A very nice lady stopped by the Post and said she had a problem and she didn't know who else to go to for assistance. She had a burial flag that wouldn't fit into the display box. Our Post Quarter Master told her to leave it and we would take care of it for her.

Three of our Post members volunteered to have the honor of folding the burial flag and placing it in the flag display case.



Community Service Awards

Billy Heflin

During February and March, we presented plaques to Deputy Anthony Johnson for Deputy Sheriff of the Year; Senior Officer Steven Bailey for Police Officer of the Year; and Firefighter Joseph W Mackereth for Fire and EMS Firefighter of the Year. They were selected by their leaders at Chesterfield County.



Job Fair

Hosted by American Legion Post 186
and Voiture 53

Remember, spread the word to those you feel would be interested.

Saturday, April 29th, 10:00am to 3:00pm.

JOBFAIR
Hosted by American Legion Post 186 & Voiture 53

Bring your resume!

Veterans, transitioning active duty service members, or anyone looking for meaningful work are encouraged to attend.

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**Saturday
April 29, 2023
10am - 3pm
American Legion Post 186
901 Otterdale Road, Midlothian, VA 23114**

americanlegionpost186.org | 804.794.9785 | amlegionpost186@aim.com

- ♦ U.S. Army
- ♦ U.S. Navy
- ♦ U.S. Air Force
- ♦ Virginia National Guard
- ♦ Virginia State Police
- ♦ Richmond Airport Police
- ♦ Chesterfield Police Department
- ♦ Chesterfield Sheriff's Department
- ♦ Chesterfield Fire/EMS
- ♦ Chesterfield Emergency Communications Center
- ♦ Chesterfield County Public Schools
- ♦ Defense Logistics Agency Police Department
- ♦ Central Office for the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
- ♦ Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation Svc
- ♦ Central State Hospital
- ♦ Eastern State Hospital
- ♦ Hiram W. Davis Medical Center
- ♦ Piedmont Geriatric Hospital
- ♦ Service Center Metals
- ♦ Liz Moore Realty

Did You Know?

Did you know the Post has a pool table? And like most of the members of the Post, the pool table is in pretty good shape for its age. It's located in the lounge but if you want to shoot a game during business hours, just ask and we'll unlock the door for you.



What a Surprise!

Recently several members of the Post were treated to lunch by Mission BBQ. What a spread they provided! A few members that normally drop by for coffee and talk, were pleasantly surprised by the visit. Nobody left the Post hungry. Thanks again to Mission BBQ.



13439 Hull Street Road Midlothian, VA 23112

PACT Act Fraud Prevention

On August 10, President Biden signed the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act (PACT Act) into law. This law helps millions of Veterans and their survivors by:

- Expanding VA health care eligibility for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and Post-9/11 (post-September 11, 2001) eras

- Expanding benefits eligibility for Veterans exposed to toxic substances and their survivors

Tips to Avoid PACT Act Scams

Scammers are taking advantage of new opportunities to commit fraud. There's been an increase in PACT Act-related phishing (email), vishing (phone), and social media scams targeting Veterans to access their PACT Act benefits or submit claims on their behalf.

Veterans should be cautious of anyone who guarantees a lucrative financial benefit or service.

Do's

You may submit your application securely online via VA.GOV or in person at any Regional Office. You may file your claim directly with VA and then, VA will assist in gathering evidence necessary to support it. There are no costs or hidden fees to apply.

Be cautious of companies who advertise VA benefits can only be obtained with their help. These companies may not be recognized by VA and may be attempting to charge illegal fees.

Be cautious of aggressive companies who may try to pressure you to sign their contract through frequent communications or by insisting "you must act now or lose your chance for benefits."

Be cautious of companies who claim to be contacting you on behalf of VA or to have a special relationship with VA. Contact VA at 1-800-827-1000 if you are unsure about the authenticity of any message received.

Validate: If you are interested in working with a Veteran Service Organization (VSO), agent, or attorney, use the Office of General Counsel Accreditation tool to confirm and validate their credentials.

Don'ts

Do not sign a contract agreeing to pay an unauthorized company a percentage of your benefit payment in exchange for their assistance with your VA claim. If you need help filing a claim, there are representatives of VSOs, agents, and attorneys who have been accredited by VA to assist you.

Do not sign a blank form for someone else to complete later. Always review the completed form before signing and keep a copy for yourself. Do not be fooled by companies who advertise they have special relationships with medical professionals and can guarantee your benefits award. If they are defrauding the Federal government, you could be held responsible for paying those benefits back.

Do not provide your social security number, medical records, or other personally identifiable information to anyone offering claims assistance before confirming their credentials using the Office of General Counsel Accreditation tool.

Do not sign forms that are not VA generated or third-party authorization for someone to provide "behind-the-scenes" claims assistance.

www.VA.gov/PACT is the official source of PACT Act information.

We want Veterans and survivors to apply now for their PACT Act-related benefits. To report suspected scams, please contact the VA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Hotline (va.gov). File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission. Visit the Cybercrime Support Network for additional resources to help Veterans, service members, and their family's combat cybercrime.

Fundraising:

American Flag:

Purchase an American Flag from the American Legion Flag and Emblem Store and designate Post 186 to receive a portion of the proceeds when you check out. You simply click the "please click here" below your normal log in, register and designate Post 186, Virginia in the blanks. It's easy and provides our Post additional funds just by showing your patriotic pride with a vibrant new flag. Order here <https://emblem.legion.org/American-Flags/departments/756/>

Post 186 Hat Sale:

The ball cap is popular! Don't miss out on this awesome SWAG! Cost is \$15 ea. Contact the post at [804-794-9785](tel:804-794-9785) to place your order.

Cans for Cash Program:

Save your aluminum cans and bring them to the post for recycling. Minimal effort = cash for the Post!

Geezer Talk:

NOT Forgotten...unable to make it to Post events or would like a visit for conversation? Please contact the Post at [804-794-9785](tel:804-794-9785), or americanlegionpost186@aim.com. We care about you and would like to keep in touch.

Notary Services Available:

Need a notary? Don't look any further than your legion! Barbara Vonada (804-433-9735) is a Commonwealth of Virginia Notary and has volunteered her services to any Legion Family member in need.

Visitation and Transportation:

If you or another Legionnaire you know is in the hospital or confined to their residence due to health reasons, please contact the Post at [804-794-9785](tel:804-794-9785) to let us know and advise us if a visit is appropriate. We take our fellowship obligations seriously and that means assuring our fellow Legionnaires are not alone in times of illness or despair. This also includes assisting with arranging alternate transportation for you if you are uncomfortable driving at night and wish to attend our evening events. It is important you know that when you need us, we will be there for you.

Beyond Our Doors



11th Annual Ransom Run – 27 April 2023 @ 0700

Eaglewood Golf Course, Langley AFB

Description: Major Charles A. Ransom is a fellow Black Knight that was killed in action serving during Operation Enduring Freedom on 27 April 2011. In the years following his passing, the 83 Network Operations Squadron has paid tribute to Major Ransom's ultimate sacrifice by hosting a memorial run each year at the end of April, the anniversary of his passing. This 4.27-mile run/ruck is held on Langley AFB each year. The run begins with 8 individuals representing the 8 Airmen killed in the attack taking the run lead. Along the route, runners and ruckers will see signs posted throughout the course that give information about each of the 8 lives that were lost on 27 April 2011. This annual event continues to honor Major Ransom's legacy, keeping his memory alive with every step.

Ransom Run 2023 Details

- **Date:** Thursday, 27 April 2023
- **Time:** 0700 (no end time specified; all participants will complete the course)
- **Location:** Eaglewood Golf Course

Sequence of Events

0645 – Volunteers will report to water stations and turn markers

0700 – Invocation, Opening Remarks, and Safety Briefing

0730 – Run/Ruck begins

0815 to 1000* – Runners/Ruckers return to Eaglewood Clubhouse for refreshments

Note: Runners/Ruckers are dismissed after the completion of the course. Participants are invited to enjoy refreshments and use the facilities before departure.

OK all you runners, mark your calendars. Come on out and participate or if you want just help out.

For information on signing up for the run or volunteering to help, contact Lt. Gabrielle Prentice at 757-225-0977.



Department of Virginia Leadership College

Our Department Leadership College was held July 29, 2022. The objective is to ensure attendees receive the mentoring and training necessary to return to their Posts, Units, Squadrons and American Legion Riders Chapters with the knowledge and enthusiasm to promote and develop American Legion Family Programs. More information is available on the Department of Virginia website <http://valegion.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/2018-Leadership-College-Registration-Package-03022018.pdf>.

My Legion:



MyLEGION.ORG
A MEMBERS-ONLY WEB PORTAL

Take a moment to register at

MyLegion.org through the American Legion website at legion.org. Select MyLegion.Org at the top right of the page to connect to the Introduction Page and choose the "Members" site. You will benefit from the additional information available to you and the ability to view and edit your personal information. You will also assist your Post leadership provide the best support and administration.



Blood Donation Program

The American Legion Blood Donor Program www.legion.org/security/blood is easily supported through our local blood centers such as the American Red Cross www.redcross.org/give-blood and Virginia Blood Services donateblood.vablood.org/. Appointments are available at blood drives through their websites or in person. Persons in good health between 17 and 65 are eligible to donate blood. Donors older than 65 may need special permission from a blood center's medical director. Current standards set an 8-week interval between donations or limit them to no more than 5x a year.



The American Legion recognizes its donors with a series of blood donor tacks available through the American Legion Store emblem.legion.org/Activities/products/338/2/0 and even a certificate when each level of giving is achieved. National, Department and Post recognition also supports dedicated participants in the program.



American Legion Basic Training Course

The majority of service and support programs conducted by the American Legion for their members and communities are unknown to them. Each member of the American Legion Family should consider completing the free Basic Training Course available through the American Legion website. The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each one, followed by a final exam. Graduates can print a completion certificate and order the cap/lapel pin. Enroll now to learn more about your American Legion and the additional contributions you can make.

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