

# THE MIDLOTHIAN LEGIONNAIRE

FOR GOD & COUNTRY

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



Jan/Feb/March 2023

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[americanlegionpost186.org](http://americanlegionpost186.org)

## Commander's Message

*Billy Heflin, Post Commander*

Greetings Post 186 family! I really hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year.

Our Christmas Dinner was a great event thanks to the hard work of several post members, especially Dick Hahn, Linda Hahn, Doug Carroll, and the Ladies Auxiliary, who decorated the hall.

There will be no Membership Meeting in January, but we will still be busy with the breakfast on the 14th and our Brunswick Stew on the 27-28th.

In February we will be presenting our Community Service Awards to a deserving firefighter, deputy sheriff, and county policeman.

At the March Membership Meeting, the Ladies Auxiliary will be fixing an Irish meal.

Our membership drive is still ongoing, with our post at 80% of this year's goal.

The Red Cross blood drive, held each month, has been doing well. If you are able to donate, please volunteer.

We are in need of new leadership for next fiscal year, if you are interested in holding a position, please let us know.

For God and Country, Billy Heflin, Post Commander

## Post 186 Calendar

### JAN 2023

3	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
12	Legion Riders Meeting	6:30pm
14	40/8 Breakfast	8am
21	SAL Meeting	10am
26	Post Social	5:30-7:30pm

### FEB 2023

7	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
9	Legion Riders Meeting	6:30pm
11	Valentine's Dinner & Dance	5pm
18	SAL Meeting	10am
21	Membership Dinner	6pm
21	Membership Meeting	7pm
23	Post Social	5:30-7:30pm

### MARCH 2023

7	Executive Board Meeting	7pm
9	Legion Riders Meeting	6:30pm
11	40/8 Breakfast	8am
18	SAL Meeting	10am

## Adjutant Talk

*Bill Seif, Post Adjutant*

I had the honor of attending the Wreaths Across America program at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia, VA on December 17th. I cannot tell you how impressed I was. The turnout of people was tremendous. Old, young, children, vets, and civilians all were there to honor the veterans interred. Some came to show respect and appreciation for the sacrifices of those buried there. Some families came to celebrate the lives of their loved ones. I would encourage everyone to attend if you have the chance. Bring your children and grandchildren. Show them and tell them how important these sacrifices

## Welcome to the 2022 - 2023 Executive Board:

Commander: Billy Heflin  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice: Stevie Holmes  
2<sup>nd</sup> 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

were to our way of life here in the United States of America. There were enough wreaths donated for each of the thousands of graves.

This was my second time for wreath lying. I had done it several years ago at Arlington. I was still in service and went with my squadron. I must say that the ceremony, crowd enthusiasm, and heart felt feelings one gets is shared by all Americans at every Veteran's Cemetery across the country and around the world. It was a humbling experience.

Keep in mind it won't be long before February is quickly upon us. That means new Post officer elections. We are loaded with good people and many of you will make great leaders. Step up and consider a position on the executive board. Be an officer or a committee chairperson. There are even several positions currently vacant. Unfortunately, several programs have been abandoned due to lack of leadership. Think about volunteering for a Post position.

Financially we are in the best shape ever. Let us keep the Post strong and moving forward with dedicated, strong leaders.

### **Membership:**

Reported as of December 3; 6 new members, 138 members renewed, PUFL 35, 51 paid online for a total of 230 =70.988%. We have a shortfall of 94, to make our goal off 100%

We encourage you to get an online profile, so that any time you sign in, you will see if your membership is current.

Later in January you might be contacted regarding the Post Personnel List. We will be updating the information to assure its accuracy. Your cooperation is appreciated.

In the meantime, if you are not receiving "phone blasts" and e-mails, please provide us with your current phone number and e-mail address. In order to guarantee the continuity of communications it is important that you remember to submit contact information as soon as possible.

### **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

### **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.

### **Building & Grounds: Smoking Curtailment:**

We are now officially a non-smoking area in the stew room for the first 2 weeks of each month.

This was a necessary compromise action by the Executive Committee to support realizing additional rental revenue.

Thanks to all those affected by this change and we hope to provide the best possible facilities access and use profile for all involved.

Again, smoking is allowed after the first two weeks.

### **Field Days of the Past:**

We successfully completed our second year of support to Field Day during 16-18 September at Redfield Farms in Amelia, VA.

In addition to the heavy commitment in support hours this event usually requires, we stepped up to an additional level to provide late night gate security. Shifts were necessarily shorter, each averaging around 5 hours. This resulted in more shifts being added in order to provide coverage up to 11pm.

At the end of November, we received a donation check from Field Days for \$4,500. Thank you again to all who helped us keep our commitment.

## Building & Grounds

### Main Entrance Improvement

We are currently anticipating delivery of the new canopy over the main entrance after the first of the year. Once it is in place and the color is verified, I will be ordering trim paint and soliciting volunteers.

### Eagle Scout Projects

Project #1 to improve the area below the shed and install heavy duty exterior benches to create an outside area for a conversation pit or smoking area is complete. Three benches are in place and usable. In the spring, we plan to extend the utility by further clearing the ground, putting down weed blocker and pea gravel and building a table (or tables) to accommodate food and drinks.

A second inquiry has been made by a local troop and a list of candidate projects discussed with that Scoutmaster.

### Job List Posting

An updated job list has been posted in the stew room and will be provided to any requesting member. Contact Richard Hahn at [richardahahn@verizon.net](mailto: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.

Thanks go out to Bob Ruehrwein and Dan Allen for stepping up. Bob took on the needed repair of the stoop in front of the shed and the floor inside the pedestrian door. He cleaned the cracks and gaps and filled them with concrete patch. This should stop some of the water infiltration problems we have been experiencing during periods of heavy rain. Dan has volunteered to bring members of his girls' softball team to clean out the stone beds around the building and add more top dressing using new pea gravel.

### Sitting Area by the Flagpole

*Dan Allen*

5 members of the Starz Gold 18u softball team contributed community service hours to Post 186 on December 21. They completed a beautification

project around the sitting area by clearing leaves and weeds, mulching, and planting winter pansies.



They also cleared the leaves and weeds away from the perimeter of the building, and laid fresh rock in the beds closest to the main entrance and stew room entrance.



In addition to their labor hours, they covered the \$250 cost for the supplies used.

Nice work, young ladies!

### 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.

## **Chesterfield County Veterans Day Celebration** **11 Nov 22**

Our Post Commander, Billy Helfin, represented Post 186 in the Chesterfield County Veterans Day celebration.

To see highlights, go to:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFYEGZP334Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFYEGZP334Y)



## **Post 186 Historian**

*Bill Lipsett*

### ***From the Archives; Winter 2023***

Good day, fellow legionnaires. Starting with this quarterly newsletter, I'd like to highlight an event during the quarter about sacrifice or valor from the past. This particular event actually happened 80 years ago on 3 February 1943.

On this day, a troop carrier named the USS Dorchester, was part of a convoy delivering 900 troop personnel in the North Atlantic, when it was hit by a Nazi torpedo. By all accounts, there were only 27 minutes from when the torpedo first hit, until she slipped beneath the waves. On board were four Army chaplains who helped guide the men to safety. As life jackets were passed out, the supply ran out before each man had one. These four chaplains of different faiths (a priest, a rabbi, and two protestant ministers), voluntarily gave up their life vests to soldiers who had none; together, these chaplains went down with the ship; they were last seen with their arms linked, heads bowed in prayer on deck as the ship sank beneath the waves.



In 1951, President Truman instituted the Chapel of the Four Chaplains at Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia. Our Post actually has a memorial plaque in the Chapel to honor the service of a former past Post Chaplain; the esteemed Charles Miller, who was instrumental in having an observance of this event at the Post for many years.

There are multiple links online to further more research if you so desire, which go into further detail.

This sacrifice brings to mind a quote by Admiral Chester Nimitz, which is on the Iwo Jima memorial in northern Virginia which reads "uncommon valor was a common virtue".

God Bless America, and all who defend her.



## The Christmas Breakfast 2022

'Twas the night before Christmas breakfast and all  
through the region  
Not a creature was stirring, it was quiet around  
the Legion.  
The Christmas tree was placed by the chimney  
with care  
In the hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.



But before Santa arrived, attendees were  
treated to a fantastic breakfast.



Seats were hard to find  
as everyone anxiously awaited Santa.





Finally, the anticipated visitor arrived.  
It didn't take long for the kids to spot him.



Based on the smiles on the faces of the children, I would say all the efforts by the ladies and gentlemen who volunteered their time, talents, and muscle, were well worth it.

A giant thanks to all involved.

## Christmas Dinner

*Bobbie Murphy*

Everyone enjoyed good food and great company at the recent Christmas Dinner.



Welcoming Committee



Maybe some Eggnog before dinner?



I think we need to tighten up the line.



The chef behind the scene.



Looks pretty good!



Who wants seconds?



Standing room only?

### Rental Manager:

Daniel Allen continues to manage the Post Rental duties. He is doing a great job.



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>

### Brunswick Stew:



### Remember:

The Post is currently taking orders for their famous Brunswick stew! Get your pre-order in before January 20<sup>th</sup> and pay only \$8 a quart. After that date the price rises to \$10 a quart.

Simply call the Post to put in your order. You pay when you pick it up. (804.794.9785).

Your stew order will be available at the Post on the 28<sup>nd</sup> of January between 2pm and 5pm. Or, you can pick it up at the Post during the week between 9am and noon.

It's also a great volunteer opportunity. When stew weekend rolls around (Friday the 27th food prep & Saturday the 28th stirring) crews are needed to assist. You can also come help with stew pick-up on Saturday (2pm until 5pm).

### American Legion Auxiliary

*Bea Miller, Auxiliary President*

Ladies Auxiliary Board:

President: Bea Miller

1<sup>st</sup> Vice: Brenda Custer

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice: Christina Smith

Secretary: Maura Seif

Treasurer: Catherine Fletcher

Chaplain: Pat Welling

Historian: Bobbie Murphy

Sergeant-at-Arms: Frances Bowe



We, the Auxiliary, hope that you and your family had a very Merry Christmas and that you're looking forward to a Happy New Year!

May you have joy, love and peace during this upcoming year!

The Auxiliary will be hosting a Valentine's Dinner and Dance on Saturday, February 11th from 5 to 8pm. Please mark your calendars. We will provide more information as it becomes available in January.

Bea Miller

### **Presentation at the Post**

*Bobbi Heilman*

Brenda Custer and Bobbie Heilman Murphy present US Marine Major Ted Lipka, a watercolor painting of the *National Museum of the Marine Corps*.

The painting belonged to Bobbie's father, the late Doctor E. Bruce Heilman. Dr. Heilman was a member of the post and of the Riders. He was a founding member of the museum. He was also president of the University of Richmond for 17 years and was Chancellor there until his death in 2019. The painting hung in the Chancellor's home.



### **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](mailto:dengraffum@aol.com)

### **Barfly Tales**

#### **No Golf Shot Like It!**

I was at the Post 186 Social, sitting at the corner of the bar sipping my Merlot like usual. There was conversation about the fund-raising golf tournament held in August.

I couldn't resist. I just had to talk about the golf shot I made back when I was a younger man. It was before my balance went south and I had to quit. I couldn't stand steady over the ball and was shanking the ball all over the place. I had been golfing for 32 years when my hobby ended.

Well, the story goes like this: It was back in the early 70's I'm thinking. It was a cool fall day in the Kansas City area. Lots of color in the trees. Oaks, maples, cotton woods, sycamores, and a few nut trees just to name a few. Their collective beauty was splendid. Just a great day to play a round of golf—long sleeve sweater weather.

It was the fifth year I'd played on my Peace Lutheran Church best ball four-man golf team. It was a Lutheran Church league consisting of ten teams. We had won the league all five years, mainly because of Mel, who was a scratch golfer. We also had Bear, a powerfully built man. Bear could hit a golf ball a country mile. Then there was Jack who was pretty good. Me, I was the duffer in the foursome. Even I, the duffer, contributed a *best ball* every once in a while. As a team we shot way under par.

We were playing the back nine of the Staten Meadows 27-hole golf course. It was reserved for the league and we would be playing it twice. It was the second time around and we were teeing off on hole 19. About 150 yards out on the right side of the fairway was a black walnut tree. There were woods at the edge of the fairway—just beyond the walnut tree. I was the fourth to tee off. Given my propensity to push and slice, I setup to hit at the left center of the fairway.

After my wiggle and waggle, and forward press; then a long loopy back swing, I hit a real shot. Just one problem, the ball didn't go where I aimed. The ball



was still rising and slightly slicing when it went into the walnut tree. I'll swear it knocked most of the yellow leaves off that tree. When I searched for my ball, I found it near the base of the tree. Since I was the farthest from green, I got chance for the *best ball*. I pulled out my four wood and addressed the ball.

Suddenly a gray and orange object dropped out of the tree right on top of my ball. It was obviously a fox squirrel in its death throes. Mel moved the squirrel off my ball. In my excited condition I put power swing on the ball and hit it far out of bounds into the woods.

Mel said, "My golfer friend, you just shot a *squirrely two*."

*Newb'y Kent Scott*

### **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](mailto: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**



### **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>.



### **Blood Donation Program**

The American Legion Blood Donor Program [www.legion.org/security/blood](http://www.legion.org/security/blood) is easily supported through our local blood centers such as the American Red Cross [www.redcross.org/give-blood](http://www.redcross.org/give-blood) and Virginia Blood Services [donateblood.vablood.org/](http://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](http://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.

## My Legion:



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.



## 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>

## Veterans' Service Opportunity



Post 186 Legionnaire James Howard is the President of Veterans & Athletes United (VAU). You may have seen his travelling memorial for the soldiers who lost their lives serving during the Global War on Terror. The memorial is a moving tribute comprised of dog tags for each servicemember lost, to include our Post namesake, Major Charles Ransom.

James relies on a network of volunteers to transport and set up the memorial as it moves throughout the country and, from time to time, drivers and workers are either scarce or unavailable. VAU covers the

expenses of the volunteers during the course of the work.

If you might be interested in transporting and setting up the memorial on a regular or occasional/rotational basis, please contact James at 540-597-3186 or via e-mail at VeteransAU@gmail.com.

To learn more about the travelling memorial as well as Veterans & Athletes United, please visit his website at vetsau.com.

