



Sons of The American Legion



"The Pride"

Detachment of Maryland

Editor: Bill Matoska
Co-Editor: Bill Hill

www.mdsal.org

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Commander's Corner

My fellow SONS, I am so excited to see what this new year will bring working together as One Family, with One Mission.

I would like to start off by congratulating everyone and thanking you for your hard work! The Detachment of Maryland has surpassed 18,000 members and has exceeded a 90 percent retention rate for the 2025 membership year! I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish in 2026 and I have no doubts under Vice Commander Davies guidance as Membership Chairman, we will have another record-breaking year.

Thus far, I have attended several Installations and events across the Detachment, and I thank you for giving me the honor of Installing your Officers and sharing in these special occasions. I feel so much pride and joy when I can get out and spend meaningful time with our Squadrons and Post Families. You all are what makes Maryland the best! I wish you all a healthy and successful year!

Our Commander's Project, **Patriot Point** has started off strong. We have received so much positive

feedback and support, and I know together it will be a success! We will get a safe and beautiful fire pit built and continue to support Patriot Point, so our Nations Heroes can continue to enjoy this retreat and heal at no cost to them for many years to come.

"Sons Honoring Veterans Everyday" is our motto for the year. I am asking all our Squadrons and members to do their part in supporting our area Veteran Facilities and programs this year. Make it a priority to get out and volunteer in these facilities and support their individual needs. Most importantly be sure to thank a Veteran when you see them out and about. I am pleased to announce that we now have a BeTheOne Coordinator, Michael Watts (130) for the Detachment of Maryland. It is our goal to increase awareness of Veteran Suicide, and I urge all our members to take the free training available to us all.

This year we will be adding a voluntary Commander's Challenge in the form of a BINGO card. The purpose of this challenge is to educate our American Legion Family and generate support for our many vital programs supporting our four pillars. I also encourage our

members to attend our meetings and events across the Detachment. The sharing of information and comradery makes us much stronger. Squadrons, Posts, Units and Chapters completing a "BINGO" will receive a Certificate of Completion for display and be entered to win a prize at the end of the administrative year. Let's do all we can to support these wonderful programs. Please reach out to Coordinator Jerry Hudson (116) with any questions. Again, thank you all for what you do and together let's make this the best year yet!

Yours in Service,
Jason C. Miller

Detachment of Maryland
Commander

"Sons Honoring Veterans Everyday"

Adjutant's Corner

Summer D.E.C.: The next Detachment Executive Committee Meeting will be called to order by Commander Miller, on August 2, 2025 at 1:00 P.M.

The meeting is being hosted at Laurel Post 60, located at 2 Main St, Laurel, MD 20707.

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52nd Annual Convention :

The 52nd Detachment of Maryland Annual Convention concluded on June 22, 2025 at the Hilton Garden Inn located in White Marsh, MD. I receive many inquiries in regards to the award recipients at convention for the 2024-2025 administrative year that came to a close at the conclusion of the Detachment Convention. I will list the major award recipients in each category.

Americanism Commission:

"The Robert Trueblood Community Affairs Trophy" winner is Greenbelt Squadron #136, The Commander's Choice Award recipient is C. Henry Price Squadron #246.

The Flage Replacement Award went to Parkville Squadron #183 and the runner up is Laurel Squadron #60. The National Emergency Fund Top Donor Award went to Overlea Perry Hall Squadron #130.

The Americanism Squadron 1st place recipient is Laurel Squadron #60 and the Americanism Regional 1st place recipient is the Northern Central Region. The Commander's Choice Squadron is Susquehanna Squadron #135 and The Commander's Choice Region is the Western Maryland Region.

Children & Youth Committee:

The George Grossnickle Memorial Scholarship Fund Top Donor Award recipients are Laurel Squadron #60 and Parkville Squadron #183. Special Olympics—Squadron #206 Casey Cares Foundation—Squadron #40 and Squadron #60.

Toys for Tots—Squadron #206

Laps of Love—Squadron #183

CWF—Squadrons #82 & #194

CMN—Squadron #82

The Joseph Gladden Trophy

Squadron recipient is Susquehanna Squadron #135 and the Regional Trophy went to the Northern Central Region. The Commander's Choice

Squadron Award was Squadron #82 and the Commander's Choice Region is Western Maryland Region.

VAVS Commission:

The Top Donor Awards:

Charlotte Hall—Squadrons #31, #47 & #82

Fisher House—Squadron #239

VAVS—Squadron #60

The William E Matoska Trophy—Cascade Squadron #239

The Commander's Choice is Laurel Squadron #60

The Richard L. League Trophy—Western Maryland Region

The Commander's Choice is

Northern Central Region.

The John S. Tingle Sr. Memorial Award given to the Maryland VAVS Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Thomas Deal for his volunteerism at the Perry Point VA Medical Center.

First Responder Awards:

The David Barr First Responder Trophy recipient is Firefighter-Chief Bradley Willis from the Perryville VFC submitted by Squadron #135 and the First Responder Regional Award recipient is Firefighter Dennis Regulski from the Kingsville VFC submitted by Squadron #130.

Internal Affairs Commission:

The Donald "JR" Hall Four Pillars Region Award—Northern Central The William Hill Western Maryland Four Pillars Squadron Award-Reisterstown Squadron #116 The Charles Thomas Eastern Shore Region Four Pillars Squadron Award Mason-Dixon Squadron #194 The Bruce Paquin Northern Central Region Four Pillars Squadron Award Overlea Perry Hall Squadron #130 The Joseph Lohman Southern Maryland Region Four Pillars Squadron Award—Harry White Wilmer Squadron #82.

The James Hartman Distinguished Service Trophy recipient is Past Detachment Commander Thomas Deal from Susquehanna Sq #135.

The James Hartman Service Award recipients are: Past National Commander William Sparwasser, Past National Commander Donald "JR" Hall, and Past Detachment Commander Thomas Deal.

The final major award given was the "Thomas Deal Four Pillars of Service Award" which was given to the Overlea Perry Hall American Legion Post #130.

Open Forum:

In an effort to better serve the membership of the Detachment of Maryland we will reserve an area in The Pride for members to ask questions, provide comments or opinions, and give examples of local squadron activities. Any overflow of information or feedback from the membership will be placed on the Detachment web page.

This will give every member the opportunity to interact with the leadership of the Detachment and give every member a forum to be heard across the state and assist the leadership to become more informed on the needs of the members.

These opinions and/or pictures can be sent directly to me electronically at matoskaw@yahoo.com

Yours In Service,

Bill Matoska
Detachment Adjutant
matoskaw@yahoo.com

Commander's Project

"Patriot Point"

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer. As the project chair for Detachment Commander Miller, we have a unique opportunity to support our veterans in need in our own backyard. Commander Miller's project this year is to help our

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veterans at a retreat facility near Cambridge Maryland. The retreat facility known as Patriot Point's overall mission is to provide a safe, secure and tranquil outdoor recreational retreat facility for wounded, ill, and injured, active-duty service members, veterans, their families and caregivers who face daily struggles related to their time spent defending our great nation.

The project will consist of building an upgraded firepit area along with a handicap walkway from the main building to the firepit area. This will help our veterans with limited accessibility to enjoy the firepit near the Little Choptank River.

We are looking forward to working with the 18,000 plus members of the Detachment of Maryland, turning this vision into reality. Please let us know of any fundraisers you may be having to support this project. If you have any additional questions regarding the Detachment Commanders Project, feel free to contact me at squadron60@verizon.net

Joe Lohman
Detachment of Maryland
Commanders Project Chairman

•Membership•

Congratulations go out to Commander Jason Miller who as 2025 membership chairman, along with his medical staff of membership recruiters, raised the Detachment of Maryland's membership level to more than 18,000 with a renewal rate of over 90%!

As our country enters its 250th year, I believe it will be a great year to build membership. We need to take advantage of the lead-up to the coming celebration of our 250th birthday and tell others why we are

members of the Sons of The American Legion.

We are members of the Sons because we want to honor the service of our forefathers. Encourage renewals by reminding your members of the need to continue to honor the service of the person from whom they have received their eligibility. We recognize we are "proud posers of a priceless heritage". The way we honor their service and that heritage is by working to support veterans and the community.

When you encounter an eligible non-member, explain to them what it means to be a "proud posser" and how they can honor the service of their forefather.

Renewals for 2026 have already begun. Our first target goal is 10% renewal by September 10th. As membership chairman for 2026, I and the region commanders, have a huge challenge ahead of us. We will have to match and beat the record of the 2025 team. I believe we can meet the challenge.

As you begin to have events to commemorate our 250th birthday, talk to the attendees. If they are members, encourage them to renew right then. If they are eligible but not a Sons member, hand them a membership application and explain how to become a member. Tell them what your squadron does to support veterans and the community and how they can participate.

I look forward to seeing all of you and unveiling my membership theme for 2026 on August 2nd at our DEC meeting. Together, we can continue the strong growth in membership the Detachment of Maryland has been experiencing.

Yours in service to God and Country,
John Davies, Membership Chairman
First Vice Commander Detachment MD

Americanism Report

I would like to thank everyone for allowing me to help the Detachment with Americanism this year. To me, Americanism is the most important pillar. It defines who we are both as Legion Family and as a nation. We do all of this for God and Country, and this is pure Americanism.

While the pillar is important, it is also very broad. There are several programs that fall under Americanism, and I would like everyone to try to take an interest in at least one. Whether that is supporting an existing program at your squadron or attempting to start one, any work you can do towards these wonderful programs is appreciated, both by myself and the Detachment.

This is the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. In honor of that, we are celebrating with the USA250 Challenge. Your participation, whether as an individual or part of a team, helps honor our veterans and uplift communities nationwide while promoting physical fitness, mental wellness, and community service. I will be involved getting my 250 miles in. For more information, check out <https://www.legion.org/get-involved/community-programs/usa250/challenge>

American Legion Baseball is a program for boys age 13 to 19. However, adults can both coach and volunteer. If you have a young one who wants to play or you are considering volunteering or coaching, please reach out to your post to see about starting or finding a team for you. Find out more at www.mdlegion.org/baseball.htm

The Department of Maryland Oratorical Scholarship Competition is

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another program for high school students. It develops knowledge of the Constitution as well as the skills to think and speak clearly and critically. The time is coming up for registration, so if you know a boy or girl who would excel in this, please find out if your post sponsors a contest or find one of that does. Find out more at <https://www.mdlegion.org/oratorical.htm>

Boys State wrapped up on June 21st of this year and we are proud of all our young men who graduated. The Department of Maryland is always looking for more participation and more squadrons to sponsor a youth. If your squadron is not sponsoring anyone, see if you can for next year. Also, reach out to your local high schools to see if there are young men interested in the week. Find out more at <https://www.mdlegion.org/boysstate/>

The American Legion Junior Shooting Sports Program is a gun safety education and marksmanship program that encompasses the basic elements of safety, education, enjoyment and competition. If you have more questions, check out <https://mdlegion.org/JSS.htm>

Americanism encompasses all this and more. Programs such as the NEF, Scouting America and Flag Replacement are equally important. Make sure your squadron is looking out for these programs all year long. If you have any questions about any of these programs, from participation to starting your own, do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have questions or issues.

Yours in God and Country,
Michael Donnelly
Americanism Chairman/
2nd Vice Commander
mdonnelly119@gmail.com

FLAG REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

The American flag is a powerful symbol of freedom, sacrifice, and unity. As members of the American Legion Family, it's our duty to make sure that symbol is always treated with respect.

Over time, flags can become faded, torn, or worn out from the weather. When that happens, it's important to replace them. A damaged flag can send the wrong message—not of pride, but neglect. Replacing it shows we care.

Flag replacement is more than just a task—it's a way to honor our veterans, our country, and those who have served. If you see a flag that needs replacing, don't wait. Reach out to your local American Legion post.

We're here to help.

Gabe Dorsey,
Youth Commander

THE BOYS STATE UPDATE REPORT:

Greetings Detachment of Maryland and readers of The Pride. My name is Sawyer Cornelius, Adjutant of Squadron 228 and your new Boys State sub-committee chairman. I have the privilege of reporting on the great program that is Maryland Boys State and thank Dennis Renehan for bringing you these updates before me.

Our 2025 session, held once again at McDaniel College in Westminster, MD., was from June 15-21 and totaled 138 graduates (or "citizens") from all 23 counties and Baltimore City. In addition, we had seven international students join us from the Netherlands, France and Germany whose parent(s) serve our nation overseas. We're one of very few Boys State programs that not only invites Americans abroad to join, but works with the American Legion, Department of France to

fully fund student airfare and tuition costs.

Staff facilitated activities for the young men through the formation of a mock local and state government while educating them on the value of an engaged and active electorate. We utilize two utopian goals to hopefully reinforce the concept: 100% voter turnout and 0% unemployment. The citizens drafted and enacted a city charter and elected city officials. They also formed a mock legislature and elected assembly leaders, and over a day and half conducted a highly successful political simulation by debating and voting on legislation put forth in Annapolis during this year's General Assembly session. Finally, the citizens elected state-level leaders and two national representatives, with the latter attending Boys Nation in Washington, D.C. in late July. The young men accomplished the goals for the week: everyone had a job, and everyone participated in the democratic process.

Citizens completed the required assessment, all earning passing scores, before visiting Camp Fretterd in Baltimore County to learn about the Maryland National Guard and operations of the Maryland Emergency Management Agency. Throughout the week, they heard from energizing speakers, including Rick Weldon of the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce, Robert Antoinin from Toastmasters, Dr. Allen Cox with the Maryland Coalition for Financial Literacy, as well as Major James Pyles of Maryland State Police.

With all this being said, Boys State is, however, in need of help. Word has gotten out and we're growing following that thing that happened in 2020. Students understand the value and are telling their friends.

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We now need Legionnaires and SAL members alike to step up and fill the ranks of our staff. Boys State truly is “a week that shapes a lifetime.” Don’t believe me? Join us next year to find out for yourself. We need you!

Learn more and apply to volunteer at mdboysgirlsstate.org.

Sawyer Cornelius
Chairman

National Emergency Fund—NEF

Part of our Preamble states, “Devotion to Mutual Helpfulness”. This is our call for the National Emergency Fund. Established in 1989 in response to Hurricane Hugo. The Fund has granted over 10 million dollars to help legionaries, their families, and their Posts. Recently the southern states have been battered with two hurricanes and the accompanying tornadoes. Many of our comrades have been affected and multiple Posts suffered damage. Granting \$3,000 per individual and \$10,000 per Post, the NEF has been a lifeline to help our comrades during these times of disaster.

This year, as your NEF Chairman, I am setting a goal of \$8,000 for the Detachment. Please contribute what you can. Thank you in advance. Send your contributions to... Detachment Adjutant William Matoska 3115 Orchard Avenue Baltimore, Maryland 21234 (NEF in the Memo section)

For God and Country

Bill Stem PDC and NEF Chairman

If you need assistance, please contact... WWW.LEGION.ORG/EMERGENCY/APPLY

CHILDREN & YOUTH CORNER

As we kick off another great year in the Detachment of Maryland, I’m honored to serve as your Children and Youth Chairperson. Supporting the next generation is a cause close to my heart—and one I’m already deeply involved with at **my own squadron**, where we’re now in our second year of our youth garden. There’s nothing like seeing the joy on kids’ faces as they plant, harvest, and grow together. That same energy is what I hope to bring to our programs across the state.

Let’s start strong—**have you signed up for the Detachment Campout yet?**

The campout takes place at the American Legion Youth Camp in Cheltenham, Maryland, from **September 12–14, 2025**. It’s **completely free** and open to the entire American Legion Family.

Expect youth-centered fun like **junior shooting competition, cornhole, trivia, outdoor movies**, and more. My personal favorite? **Candy Bingo**.

To reserve your spot, email ESJAdjutant@gmail.com.

Looking ahead—will you take the plunge this year? We have two Special Olympics events coming up, and it’s a great way to support these amazing athletes:

- **Sandy Point Polar Bear Plunge** – Saturday, January 31, 2026

Deep Creek Dunk – February (date TBD)

Whether you’re jumping in or just raising funds, let’s show strong SAL support this year.

It’s also **never too early to start collecting for Toys for Tots**. Led by Bob Gambill (Squadron 22), this annual effort helps brighten the

holidays for children in need. Start planning now so we’re ready by December.

As your chairperson, I’ve set a personal goal: **increase youth participation and visibility across the Detachment**. Whether it’s a mentoring moment, a squadron activity, or simply offering a space where kids feel welcome, every step matters. When we support youth, we invest in our future.

We have great programs already in motion thanks to dedicated volunteers:

- **Toys for Tots**
– Bob Gambill (22)
- **Casey Cares Foundation**
– Mark Fayer (135)
- **Scouting America**
– Thomas Wertz (136)
- **Laps of Love**
– Bobby Miller (40)
- **5-Star & 10 Ideals**
– Jeff Seiler (11)
- **Junior Shooting Sports**
– Buddy Mastin (7)
- **Special Olympics Maryland**
– Mitchell Matoska (130)

I’m especially looking forward to working with our junior officers. As youth themselves, they’re in a unique position to help us understand what engages their peers and to strengthen the connection between our squadrons and the next generation.

Does your squadron have a youth effort underway, or something that makes the post a place where young people feel welcome? I’d love to hear about it—and maybe come visit.

Let’s keep growing, together.

In service,
Sean Phelan
Children & Youth Chairperson

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Casey Cares

Casey Cares is a foundation that supports critically ill children and their families. The Detachment of Maryland has supported this foundation for more than 20 years.

Here are a few stats of what they have done: Birthday's Celebrated over 12 K, Programs Provided over 259 K, Pajamas Provided to sick children over 184 thousand pairs and over 470 thousand program participants.

Some of the programs that they provide are Birthday Blast, Kami's Jammies, Hammy's Heart, Family Festivities, Movie night packages. If you would like to donate to any of their programs, you can in several ways. Cash, Gift cards, time, pajamas or by supporting one of their events like the Rock and Roll Bash or the 10 -thousand-dollar raffle, both are on October 25th, 2025.

To find out more about Casey Cares go to their website. CaseyCares.org

Mark Fayer, Sr.

Casey Cares Liaison

Toys for Tots

Time to start thinking about Toys for Tots. The main effort starts in October, but it doesn't hurt to think ahead. Those attending the Fall D.E.C. meeting can bring toys with them. The Sons of The American Legion has supported Toys for Tots for many years, and it is a wonderful program for children.

Bob Gambill

Chairman

5-star / 10 Ideals

In this first Newsletter we will be going over The Five Star Awards.

When a SAL Member demonstrates perfection in the Five Point Program of Service, they are eligible to receive the Five Star Award. It is a gold-plated Medal bearing the SAL Emblem and the symbolism of the five points.

Star Number 1 is Patriotism. A member must show knowledge of the history of the flag, The proper ways to displaying it and the proper respect due to it. They should know the time and occasions for display. The position and manner of Display. The folding of the flag, and conduct during hoisting, lowering, or passing of the flag

Star Number 2 is Citizenship. The SAL member who by his usefulness in activities outside the program of the SAL Displays a working knowledge of the qualities of a good citizen.

Star Number 3 is Discipline. This is for the SAL members that shows respect for RULES and obedience to them.

Star Number 4 is Leadership. This is for a member who develops the qualities of leadership in athletic, drill formation, and church activities. It is in everyday life that one develops these traits.

Star Number 5 is for Legionism. This is for the member who thoroughly understands the ritualistic work and the program of activities for the Sons of The American Legion.

PDC Jeffrey Seiler

Scouting America

Currently many of the various Scouting America units are enjoying summertime activities that they have in some cases prepared all year for. Very quickly as summer ends, they

will be looking toward new opportunities. Squadrons are encouraged to reach out to your local units to engage. Squadrons can possibly offer local units help with experts in various areas. A Squadron member only needs to have knowledge and enthusiasm about a career, hobby or other subject who is willing to share that knowledge and enthusiasm within a unit or for an area event interacting with multiple units at one time. Squadrons may be looking for additional help with an event or project. Scouts are a great help with events like Flag placements, Flag retirements, & Dinners. Your committee is developing a way to capture information on the different ways you already support a unit or district across the state. This will help us stay connected to a Pillar of the Legion family. By supporting Scouting America's mission of developing citizens who are engaged in their communities.

If you have any questions please contact me at:

Buffalo8265@msn.com

Lenny Wertz

Program Chairman

Special Olympics Maryland

Gentlemen,

My name is Mitch Matoska, Detachment Sgt-At-Arms and your new Special Olympics Chairman. I want to begin by applauding the accomplishments of our own Maryland Special Olympics Hall of Fame member and former chairman, Eddie Souder. Thank you, Eddie, for your many years of service to the Detachment of Maryland and Special Olympics.

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I want to start by sharing with everyone why the Special Olympics is such an important program, their mission to the state of Maryland and why they are most deserving of our support.

Special Olympics is founded on the belief that people with intellectual disabilities can, with proper instruction and encouragement, learn, enjoy, and benefit from participation in individual and team sports. These must be adapted only as necessary to meet the needs of those with mental and physical limitations. Special Olympics believe that consistent training is indispensable to the development of an individual's sports skills. In addition, competition among those of equal abilities is the most appropriate means of testing these skills, measuring progress, and providing incentives for personal growth.

The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. This gives them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community. Our purpose is through sport, creating a world where opportunity is not limited by disability.

As your chairman I will strive to keep our membership informed of the schedule of activities and fundraisers sponsored by Special Olympics across the state of Maryland and how to get involved. I am asking every squadron to identify

what activities are in their area and consider engaging the event either with volunteers or monetary support and to please offer your feedback to me via email of your participation.

Special Olympics Maryland is currently conducting a raffle for a Nissan Kicks or a cash prize. Tickets are available for \$10 each, and the winner will be announced on July 19 at Lone Oak Brewery. Volunteers are also encouraged to participate and if interested go to the Nissan Kicks link on the Special Olympics site.

Additional information regarding the 2026 Polar Bear Plunge event will be provided in the future. The annual Bowling Championship holds significant importance as it represents the Detachment's commitment to supporting Special Olympics Maryland's largest sponsored event by the Sons of The American Legion. We request that every squadron contributes \$1, ensuring that everyone plays a part in this meaningful initiative. This collective effort not only demonstrates the detachment's dedication to the cause but also fosters a sense of unity and community among its members. Volunteers for this or any event should reach out to me, Mitch Matoska, for more information at Mwilson.88@hotmail.com.

Yours In Service,

Mitch Matoska, Chairman

Legislative Alert!

The 119th Congress is in session and working through several Bills, the major one is the Big Beautiful Bill that just passed both the House and Senate after some long debates. Parts of the Bill signed into Law by President Trump on July 4th, 2025, will dedicate funding for increased Border Security and our Military for our National Security.

The American Legion asks for your help to support several Bills that are still working through committees and sub-committees this session. Through The American Legion Grassroots Action Center you can find all of them listed for your review.

Please go to <https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home> where you can sign up for alerts, find officials and legislation and once you have signed up for an account you can use the links to send a message to your congressional representatives to support the bill and make it Law.

Here are some of the Bills submitted and endorsed by the American Legion.

The "SAVES Act", H.R. 2605 and S. 1441, the Service Dogs Assisting Veterans Act, based on Resolution No. 134 which is Service Dogs for Injured Service Personnel and Veterans with Mental Health Conditions. By helping the Legionnaires advocate for passage of these bills you reaffirm your dedication to enhance the quality of life for veterans through innovative and effective support mechanisms.

The Guard and Reserve GI Bill Parity Act of 2025, (S 649 & HR 1423)

Currently, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers only earn credit toward their Post- 9/11 GI Bill benefits when they mobilize and deploy for federal missions. National Guard and Reserve servicemembers activated under state orders do not accrue eligibility for Post- 9/11 GI Bill benefits.

This bill proposes to count every day spent on weekend drills, annual training, attending military school, and participating in an exercise. The American Legion and Sons of the American Legion firmly believes that every day in uniform counts.

Major Richard Star Act, currently combat-injured veterans face a reduction in their retirement pay for every dollar of disability compensation they receive. This act aims to rectify this by allowing combat-injured veterans to receive

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both their retirement pay and disability compensation without offset.

The SHIPS for America Act, (S 410 & HR 1004)

The American Legion endorse these and so do the Sons of The American Legion endorse this Shipbuilding and Harbor Infrastructure for Prosperity and Security for America Act (SHIPS) to improve maritime security of the United States of America. This crucial element has been overlooked for far too long.

The Love Lives On Act (S410 & HR 1004)

Our Gold Star Spouses are currently having to choose between companionship and remarriage before the age of 55 or keeping their benefits. This predicament creates an untenable choice for our widows and widowers between personal happiness and financial stability. This bill proposal aims to correct this egregious wrong by proposing to eliminate the age limit for remarriage without loss of benefits, allow remarried surviving spouses to retain education benefits, preserve commissary and exchange benefits for remarried spouses, enable remarried spouses to regain TRICARE benefits if the subsequent marriage ends and abolish the "Hold Themselves out to be married" clause, an outdated law causing unnecessary fear and inhibiting freedom.

Please go to <https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home> and submit the auto-generated forms supporting these bills and let you Congressmen and women know that you are holding them accountable to get these acts passed into law.

For God and Country

Darryl English

Detachment of Maryland
Legislative Chairman

Vice Commander, ESR

VAVS Variety

Honoring Our Veterans and Supporting Their Care

I encourage everyone to take time to stop by a Veterans facility and thank the men and women who have served our great country. Your presence and appreciation can make a lasting impact on those who sacrificed so much for our freedoms.

As a reminder, the Sons of The American Legion (SAL) proudly support The American Legion in promoting a wide variety of programs that benefit veterans, their families, and our communities. SAL members actively assist their local Posts in various initiatives such as:

Veteran's programs

VA home and hospital volunteerism

Children and Youth projects

Community fundraising efforts

One key area of service is through the VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) program, a vital partnership between the Department of Veterans Affairs and veteran service organizations, including The American Legion. SAL members can serve as VAVS volunteers alongside American Legion and Auxiliary members.

How SAL Members Can Get Involved:

To volunteer, members should contact:

Tom Deal- Perry
Point tom.deal@verizon.net

Bob Manzo- VA Clinics
bmanzo1085@yahoo.com

Drain Plummer El- Baltimore VA
ikon69@icloud.com

Robert Filippi- Lock Raven
kassbob@aol.com

Jim Alexander- Charlotte Hall

jimalex83@verizon.net

Darryl English- Heroes Haven

englishsta14@msn.com

Michael Watts- BeTheOne

lakehousemw@yahoo.com

What Volunteers Do:

SAL members serving through VAVS may:

Provide companionship to veterans

Assist with recreational and therapeutic activities

Help transport veterans to and from appointments

Support administrative functions at VA facilities

Why It Matters:

Volunteering through VAVS is not only a way to give back—it's a meaningful opportunity to honor veterans' service, strengthen our communities, and experience the personal rewards of helping others.

Let's continue to show our respect and gratitude by supporting those who've given so much for our nation.

Thank you,

Mike Anderson

VAVS Chairman
443-413-9289

VA Clinics

Greetings,

As we begin the 2026 administrative year, I am pleased to bring you updates on the VA Clinics located in Maryland. Did you know there are 13 Community based VA Community Outpatient Clinics in Maryland? These clinics are located across the state from Pocomoke City to Cumberland and serve communities

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where there may not be a regular VA hospital. These clinics vary in services provided; most have Internal Medicine doctors, pharmacy, and other medical assistance available.

In addition to the Outpatient clinics, there are also 9 Vet Centers that provide non-medical assistance such as counseling, PTSD care, Substance Abuse Care, and other great services. In most cases, you do not need to be enrolled in the VA Healthcare System to use these centers. The locations of the community Clinics and Vet Centers can be obtained by visiting the VA website@ <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/state.asp?STATE=MD&dnum=ALL>

I look forward to bringing any updates as the year progresses.

Yours in Service,

Bob Manzo

VA Clinics Representative

Loch Raven Medical Center

Volunteer positions at Loch Raven include Coffee Station operation in the morning and Escorts in the morning and afternoon. Items needed are Ground or prepackaged Folgers (Classic Roast) coffee for coffee cart and lounge use. If you are interested call Pam at 410-605-7000 x55877. Dave Edwards, Chief, Community and Public Relations and CDCE retired on 6/26/2025. I talked to Dave about 6 weeks ago and he said he has been with the VA for 40 years.

Bob Filippi
Liaison

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home

"the only Veterans Home in the state"

The CHVH has been proudly "Serving Those Who Served" since 1985 with a 168-bed assisted living program and a 286 bed skilled nursing program. As the only Veterans Home in the state, residents come from all over the state.

If you are interested in donating to the CHVH, a "Wish List" is available on the website, www.charhall.org. Monetary donations are always welcome. If you don't have a specific program or project in mind, donations can be made to the Veterans' Assistance Fund which assists residents as needs arise such as dental and optometry costs, Final Honors arrangements, and activities both inside and outside of the Home. Donations should be accompanied by a Donation Form which can be found at

www.charhall.org/donations.htm.

Please schedule a visit, the veterans will enjoy your company. In your visit you will have the opportunity to see the needs of our veterans.

For God and Country
Jim Alexander PDC
CHVH Representative

Heroes Haven, Inc.

We just held our annual Crab Feast on June 14th, and it was another huge success.

Thank you to PDC- Obremski and all that attended and supported us with sponsorships to make this a fun-filled event.

Our next event will be a Bike Show being hosted by Johnnys Tavern in East New Market, MD on August 16th. More info will be posted shortly on our website and Facebook page.

We will also be hosting a Poker Run on October 4th starting at Harley-Davidson in Salisbury, Md and traveling to various American Legions in Delaware and Maryland ending at Dor-Wic Post 218 in Sharptown, MD. More info will be posted shortly on our website and Facebook page.

October's quickly approaching and final invitations are going out to this year's recipients for our annual Deer Hunt hosting Veterans and 1st responders during the Maryland Deer Hunting, Muzzle Loader Season, 2025. Hunting Property are all lined up and Weapons have been ordered. We are well underway coordinating this year's event and look forward to providing this once-in-a-lifetime experience for our guest Heroes.

Please go online to www.heroeshaven.org and on Facebook at Heroes Haven, Inc. to learn more about our organization and stay informed of our upcoming events.

Thank you for all your support and we ask for your continued support so we can continue our mission to provide outdoor activities and support for our Nations Injured Veterans and 1st Responders.

Darryl English

Heroes Haven, Inc.
Executive Committee Member

Perry Point VA Medical Center

Center for Development & Civic Engagement.

Perry point is open to all volunteers. If you want to plan a visit, host a party or just talk to our veterans, Contact Brandi Sima at 410-642-1038.

Perry Point volunteers needed:

Red Coat Ambassadors, Tues, Weds. 8:00 a.m. - Noon Coffee Volunteer Monday 8 a.m. - Noon Sunday 9 a.m. Protestant Service escorts Roving musicians on CLC unit Escorts (morning & afternoon) Coffee station volunteer at LR Outpatient Clinic (morning) Loch Raven Item Needs Perry Point Volunteer Needs Perry Point Item Needs Sunday

Perry Point item needs: Full size body wash, shampoo, deodorant Razors (at least triple blade) Colored pencils

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Vet Center volunteer needs:

Elkton and Baltimore Vet Centers are looking for weekday front desk help answering phones and greeting veterans

Again if you want to host a party you can contact Brandi Sima at 410-642-1038

Follow VA Maryland on Facebook for VA Maryland volunteer updates!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/vamhcsvolunteers>

PDC Tom Deal
Perry Point VA Rep.

Fisher House

Hello Detachment of Maryland,

I was asked to help stay around to help out with Community Affair and Fisher House and look forward to this mission and appreciate your support in this endeavor to help the families of our military.

Did you know that Fisher House offers "a home away from home" at no cost for families of patients receiving medical care at military treatment facilities. Each Fisher House offers comfortable accommodation that allows military families to focus on the medical care and recovery of their loved one. The houses have well-stocked community kitchens and inviting living rooms with libraries. Other features include a playroom with toys for children at select houses, laundry facilities, housekeeping services, and common area computers with internet access.

However, Fisher House still needs help with support not only in monetary donations but also that of non-perishable items and I know that the Detachment of Maryland and the rest of The American Legion Family can help step up. I will be having a full WISH LIST available at

the upcoming DEC meeting to be held on 2 August at Laurel Post 60. But I did wish to list some items right now as a priority on their list and since everyone goes shopping, I ask for any and all for assistance to pick up any of the items and bring them to the DEC meeting with you and pass them over.

Paper towels, Cleaning Masks, Cleaning Gloves Medium & Large (Nitrile Latex Free), Dryer Fabric Softener Sheets, Keurig K Cups, Toilet Paper.

Again, the full list of items will be available at the DEC meeting for all. Let's all get together as a Legion Family and help support that families of the Veterans who have done so much for us and show we are Sons Honoring Veterans Everywhere.

Respectfully,
PDC Mike Obremski
Community Affairs - Fisher House

BE THE ONE

VETERAN'S SUICIDE PREVENTION

As many of you know The American Legion "BE THE ONE" program is now in it's fourth (4) year with The American Legion Family. I have had the satisfaction of being involved since its formation, starting at American Legion Post 130. The program is designed to prevent suicide among our veterans. I was honored this year to be appointed as the Chairman for our Detachment of Maryland BE THE ONE program.

The BE THE ONE program since its inception into the Maryland SAL Detachment has steadily grown and the future for its growth both within our Detachment and the national direction through The American Legion and the SAL is very robust. This year my plan as chairman for BE THE ONE program for our

Detachment will bring both a strong educational understanding, training and direction for our members. There are many resources available and able to be obtained. I will be working with our detachment offices, post commanders, and post brothers of our SAL to provide the necessary means by which results are brought about and measured to help save the lives of our veterans through the BE THE ONE program.

At The American Legion Post 130 in Perry Hall, Maryland we have saved 9 lives both directly and indirectly through our direct efforts and training with our members through the BE THE ONE program. This is 9 wonderful lives that are still with their family and friends because of the actions of our post members and BE THE ONE program to prevent their personal suicide. Gentleman, this program works!

On Saturday, September 13, 2025, from 1pm to 6pm American Legion Post 130 in Perry Hall, Maryland will be hosting the CHAMPIONS OF HOPE-UNITED FOR LIFE MUSIC FESTIVAL to benefit BE THE ONE "Veteran Suicide Prevention". This special afternoon will bring together local veterans, their families, community leaders, Veterans Affairs services, 3 live bands, food, children entertainment, adult games, and educators. This is designed to help our veteran heroes who struggle in silence knowing that The American Legion Family stands with them and to help them through their troubling time. Come stand with us on this day and show your support for these veterans who need our help. In the last 10 years we have lost over 80,000 veterans to suicide. That's more than all of the American Casualty of 58,220 lost in the war in Vietnam in military combat within

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between 1965 to 1973.

Also, we are looking for financial sponsorship from all of our American Legion Post in Maryland for this wonderful and heartwarming event on September 13, 2025. If you are interested in helping, please reach out to me as soon as possible.

You can reach me at americanlegionophetheone@yahoo.com for a sponsorship form. The funds will go to a worthwhile need

Michael Watts

Be The One Chairman Maryland SAL Detachment

americanlegionophetheone@yahoo.com 667-494-2667

Time and Place Committee

Our first 52nd Annual Convention is now in the history books!

As always it was a good time to come together from across the state and catch up with old friends, make new ones and share in the overall comradery we have as members of the Sons of The American Legion.

It was again held at the Hilton Whitmarsh, and overall it felt as if it went well and everyone was enjoying themselves.

Would again like to extend a great note of appreciation to Overlea-Perryhall American Legion Post 130 for their generous and gracious hospitality during the entire weekend, and for hosting our outdoor events. The success and complements we received, go to you and your entire Legion Family. Thank you!!

Now it's time to start planning for our **53rd Annual Convention!**

We're still working out the details of the location, but most likely it will be in the same location.

Details for the hotel will be available on our website before the Fall DEC. And details for all other events will be detailed in the convention packages being distributed shortly after the new year and will be updated on our website www.mdsal.org.

On behalf of the Time & Place Committee, we look forward to seeing you at the convention and if there are any questions, please let us know.

For God and Country,

Bill Hill

Chairman

Chaplin's Corner

When the word "chaplaincy" is either seen or heard most think of the military. That is true because of the significant and historic role the chaplaincy has long played in the military. That is still true. However, there are many types of chaplain's service, including that of The American Legion, available to those willing to serve in such a capacity. Each type of chaplain's service is distinct depending upon its purpose and those being served. The chaplaincy has a long and honorable history. For it is as old as the story of military operations. The term goes back to a legend of the fourth century about Martin of Tours. It is said that on his way home from battle he met a shivering beggar. He cut his cloak into two parts and gave one to the beggar. Legend says that night he had a vision of Christ wearing the part given to the one in need. His part, known as a "cappa"

was kept in a shrine called "cappella", becoming an object of veneration. French kings applied the term "chaplains", which meant "keepers of the cloak", to those clergy who ministered to them. In the years that followed chaplains were found wherever men went to war. In Colonial America the tradition continued. The legal origin of the chaplaincy as a part of the American military service dates from 29 July 1775 when the Continental Congress recognized the chaplaincy as being part of the army. From that date the role and mission of the chaplaincy grew. Now the chaplaincy plays a significant role in all branches of service. One might well ask, Is The American Legion chaplaincy important well Our founding fathers must have thought so because an office of chaplain was established. From that day until now the chaplain has been an integral part of the total program. And no program is complete without the services of a chaplain.

The chaplaincy has many purposes. One of its major purposes is to help persons grow in their relationship with God and one another. Also, we serve as a reminder of the transcendent and seek to develop an environment within which Legionnaires are encouraged in their personal and collective moral and spiritual growth. We are to remind all Americans that God is the source of all rights and privileges. The American Legion is comprehensive in nature embracing all religions, faiths, and denominations within its ranks. The chaplaincy, being non-denominational and nonsectarian, wishes to minister to the spiritual needs of all without regard to either affiliation or no affiliation. Chaplains seek to minister to people wherever

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there is a need. For many, chaplains are the only ministers they will ever know, as they have no affiliation with either church, synagogue, or other religious institution. The role of the chaplain is ever increasing due to the aging of our membership. Each Legionnaire should be alert to the physical and spiritual needs of his/her comrades. The chaplain should be notified when there is death, illness, or special concern in the membership. At that point the chaplain should provide all the ministry and service available.

Notifying me is simple you can text me the Legionaries name and Squadron to 443-413-9289. If you could give, there contact information and brief information on what's going on that would be great so I can sit in Prayer for them or on the day of a meeting you will be required to have all this in writing and to me before the start of the meeting.

Mike Anderson
Chaplain

Western Maryland Region

Welcome to a new administrative year 2025-2026. My name is Jerry Hudson the newly elected Commander for the Western Region. I hope to get around and see as many of you as I can. I would like to thank Mike Donnelly (Sq. 116) for the work he did as commander last year and wish him a great year as the newly elected 2nd Vice Commander of the Detachment. I would also like to wish John Davies (Sq. 239) a great year as the Newly elected 1st Vice Commander of the Detachment.

I would like to congratulate everyone on a successful year. We

exceeded our membership goal of 100%, in fact we hit 102.381%. As a Region with 6535 members, by far the most in the Detachment, shows the hard work, the dedication and the strength of our region. I would also like to congratulate the region on receiving the Richard League trophy for 2024-2025 on outstanding work on VAVS, as well as two Commander awards for work in Children and Youth and Americanism. Great work to all the Western Maryland Region Squadrons.

The new Detachment Commander Jason Miller has a new theme for this year and that is **Sons Honoring Veterans Every Day!** Please contribute to his Project at Patriot Point to build a larger Fire pit and patio as well as the walkways down to so that all veterans can enjoy the comradery and discussions around the fire pit!!

The next Detachment meeting will be at on August 2nd at 1:00 PM at Laurel post 60. If you are able to attend, please think about sticking around for the Bar tenders challenge where all proceeds go towards the commander's project. Please look for our next regional meeting in August as well. Hope to have more info soon.

Thank you and hope to see you there,

Jerry Hudson
WMR Commander
jhudsoniii@comcast.net

Eastern Shore Region

Hello Comrades

Here's a start of a new year first I would like to give thanks to all of the ESR squadrons for a great year. We were first place in the detachment thanks to all the DEC men and squadron commanders. Now it's

time to get new membership processed. All squadrons should have at least one membership in the department before our first DEC meeting On August 2nd at Laurel Post 60.

At our convention this year we were honored to have our own past regional commander Jason Miller elected as Detachment Commander for the 25-26 year his leadership is remarkable so let's support his fundraising program this year

Patriot Point needs upgrades and I know all my ESR squadrons, Legionnaires and Auxiliary members will support this for our veterans.

Here are a few upcoming events

July 20th @ Post 18 Detachment Commanders Homecoming 12:00 PM

August 9th @ Post 77 Easton Md Starts @ 2:00 PM

October 4th @ Post 296

Cost and Time TBD

Let's have another successful year

ESR Commander
Freddie Taylor

Southern Maryland Region

As the Southern Maryland Region starts its New Year I'd like to try and keep our squadrons more informed on dates and activities happening in our Squadrons, Region and Detachment. Such as dates and times of events and paperwork that need to be submitted.

First of all, Southern Maryland Region would like to congratulate Detachment Commander Jason Miller and the other newly electric officers of the Detachment. Hope you all have a great year.

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This year's Detachment Commanders Miller's project is Patriot Point a retreat facility for our veterans so they can go and relax and talk with other veterans. A lot more about Patriot Point will be sent out to the squadrons.

For God, country and our veterans

Commander Jerry Darnell

Northern Central Region

Fellow members of the Northern Central Region. First, I want to thank every member who has been elected and or appointed for the administrative year 2025-2026. With out your continued commitment and support we will never reach the goals set for this year.

My officers and chairmen for this administrative year are as follows:

First Vice Commander/Membership Chairman, Roscoe Holley (19)

Second Vice Commander/Americanism Chairman, Drain Plumber-El (19)

Third Vice Commander/Children & Youth Chairman, Nathaniel Russell (187)

Adjutant, William L Sparwasser, PNC (277)

Treasurer, William E, Matoska, PNC (130)

Parliamentarian, Robert Manzo, PNVC (183)

NCR Membership Ambassador, Larry Ford (130)

DECman:

Ronald Holcombe, (285), Marshall Burkins (128), George Wright (19), James Sullivan (109), Tim Bryant (187), Nathaniel Russell (187), Robert W. Russell (17)

Chaplain, Dave Sprucebank (40)

SGT-AT-Arms, George Wright (19)

Commander's Project, Kevin Kohler (17)

Veterans Rehabilitation, Bill Dawson (130)

I am very happy to report that we have a full slate of officers and chairman for 2025-2026 with much work to do this year I am very excited, so my commitment to everyone is "if you work hard, we can play hard".

My project for this administrative year will be following with our Detachment Commander, Jason Miller and supporting "Patriot Point". We are going to promote a dedicated fund raiser just for this program. Additional details will be made available as the plans are completed and ready to kick-off.

Our 2026 membership cards are here. Let's get out and that membership in as we are not going to be the slow region in membership this year.

I look forward to working with each of you and the Detachment of Maryland this year. Thank you for putting your trust in me as your new commander.

Serving for GOD & Country.

Earnest Russell, Jr

NCR Commander 2025-2026

NEC Update!

I bring you greetings from our SAL National Commander Joseph Navarrete from New Mexico. BE THE ONE IS STILL THE FOCUS to help end Veteran Suicide. Remember you can dial 988 for the hotline. The American Legion does have training to help you to "Be The One" at: www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one/be-the-one-training. Commander Navarrete's Project is Veterans & Children Foundation. National Commander Joseph Navarrete is in his last month as SAL National Commander, and he has represented the Sons very well. He traveled to Maryland in February for his cold visit and had a great visit with fellow Sons. The Detachment of Maryland gave him a fantastic tour

of our state. He will go out of Office on August 24 in Tampa, Fl. It will be a great convention, and I hope many of you can make the trip to the National Convention. We will leave Tampa with a new commander expected to be William Clancy from New York. We will look forward to the convention and the new Commander's plans for next year.

And as for our own National Vice Commander for the Eastern Region, Robert "Bob" Manzo from Squadron 183 is finishing his year. Bob has traveled and lead us well this year. Membership is very important, and Maryland is doing our part as we reached over 18,000 members this year. Great Job everyone. Now you should be getting ready for 2025-2026 and let's keep the pressure on for next year.

Tom Deal

National Executive Committeeman
Detachment of Maryland

Sons of The American Legion

Public Relations Advisory

We want to brag about you!

If you are hosting an event, or have had a successful one which you just want to brag about, please send an outline. It may be about either what's taking place or what has taken place. Provide some details around what the event may be supporting, such as a Draw Down to raise funds for a scholarship program, or a Dance to support the Detachment Commanders Project and an event, which may be purely held in your community to support a local program such as a food bank, or children's clothing drive. We'll do our best to publish them on the Detachment website in advance of the event and we'll help get the word out to the Detachment and Legion Family. Please send all articles to:

Bill Hill (PDC)

Email: Hill1062@MSN.COM

AMERICAN LEGION POST 60
AND
THE DETACHMENT OF MARYLAND

PRESENTS

2025 BARTENDERS CHALLENGE

SAL-MANIA

Jason "Diesel" Miller

VS.

Joe "F'ing" Gladden

3:00PM AUGUST 2ND 2025

FOOD • GAMES OF CHANCE • ENTERTAINMENT

All Profits Benefit Detachment Projects

OPEN TO ALL LEGION MEMBERS AND THEIR GUEST

DETACHMENT OF MARYLAND CAMPOUT



SEPTEMBER 12TH-14TH, 2025

AMERICAN LEGION YOUTH CAMP

9201 SURRATTS ROAD, CHELTENHAM, MD 20623

FREE
FOR ALL!

AMERICAN
LEGION
FAMILY



ACTIVITIES

- ✓ Jr Shooting Sports
- ✓ Cornhole
- ✓ Candy Bar Bingo
- ✓ Fire Pit
- ✓ Flag Retirement
- ✓ Youth Meeting
- ✓ Gardening
- ✓ Movie Night

This event is free of charge and open to the entire American Legion Family, compliments of the Detachment of Maryland. Join us for a weekend filled with activities and comradery. Bunks are available in the cabins or bring a tent. Please be sure to RSVP!



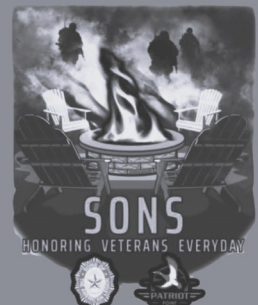
WWW.MDSAL.ORG

RSVP

Names & Ages to:

Michael Brison- Assistant Adjutant

ESRADjutant@gmail.com





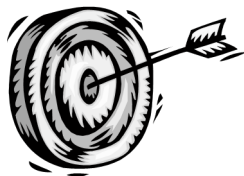
“Sons Honoring Veterans Everyday”

3115 Orchard Avenue Baltimore, MD 21234

We're On The Web Visit Us At www.mdsal.org

Follow us on Facebook:

Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Maryland



2026 Membership Target Date:

SEPTEMBER 10, 2025	10%
OCTOBER 15, 2025	25%
NOVEMBER 13, 2025	35%
DECEMBER 10, 2025	45%
JANUARY 14, 2026	60%
FEBRUARY 11, 2026	75%
MARCH 11, 2026	80%
APRIL 8, 2026	90%
MAY 13, 2026	100%
**JULY 29, 2026	105%

** Delegate Strength Target Date

30 days prior to National Convention

Detachment of Maryland Meeting Schedule 2025—2026

Summer DEC

August 2, 2025 (Saturday) / Laurel Post 60 @ 1pm

September 12 — 14, 2025

Annual Detachment Campout @ Southern Maryland Youth Camp

Past Detachment Commander's Crab Feed

November 1, 2025 / Overlea Perry Hall Post 130

Fall D.E.C. Meeting

November 8, 2025 / Towson Post 22 @ 1pm

Mid-Winter Conference

January 30 to February 1, 2026

All events for this weekend will be at The Grand Hotel

Mid-Term Squadron Officers Training

PDC Ray Edwards Memorial Children & Youth Fundraiser—Draw Down

January 31, 2026 (Saturday)

Winter D.E.C. Meeting

February 1, 2026 @ 11am

Detachment Commander's Project Drawdown

March 7, 2026 / Perryville

Spring D.E.C. Meeting

April 11, 2026 / Kent Island Post 278 @ 1pm