SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

A newsletter of Sons of The American Legion

THE MILLENNIUM

Sons of The American Legion | PO 1055 | Indianapolis, IN 46206 | www.legion.org/sons

Volume 1 | Issue 6 | Number 6 | **April 2024**

www.legion.org/sons/newsletters

Detachment of Minnesota Commander John Weiss with Leading Candidate for National Commander Joseph Navarrete during the detachment's Spring Conference.

photos by Lou Michaels

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Top Ten Detachments Membership Percentage

1.	Hawaii	109.17%
2.	South Dakota	105.09%
3.	Puerto Rico	104.49%
4.	Wisconsin	97.91%
5.	Florida	96.34%
6.	France	95.83%
7.	South Carolina	95.41%
8.	North Dakota	95.26%
9.	New Mexico	94.18%
10.	New Hampshire	92.90%

as of March 20, 2024

BE THE ONE

Celebrate Children & Youth Month April 2024

AMERICAN LEGION

THE MILLENNIUM
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All information must be submitted no later than 12:00 noon the twentieth of each month and must be made electronically by emailing the editor.

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FOLLOW US:

Sons of The American Legion leads Legion Family wreath laying in Washington

Sons of The American Legion members, along with members of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary, participated in wreath-laying ceremonies around Washington, D.C., during the Legion's annual Washington Conference. They were joined by Samsung American Legion scholarship recipients.

Andy Proffet | February 26, 2024

'It's right to the heart': Sons, Legion Family lay wreaths to honor veterans

Standing before the granite column representing California at the World War II Memorial, Sons of The American Legion National Vice Commander James Fischer reflected on the veterans in his family.

"I'm here representing my grandfather, my father, my uncle who served in World War I, World War II and the Korean War (respectively), and I have two brothers who served in Desert Storm and my son served in Afghanistan," Fischer said. "… I was born on Memorial Day, and my grandfather was 70. He said I was God's gift to him; he lost his leg in World War I. Then when I got my contractor's license 31 years ago, I got it on Pearl Harbor Day even though I tested in August.

"Everything in my life has been reminders of the importance we have taking care of our veterans."

Sons of The American Legion, Legionnaires and Auxiliary members from across the nation participated in wreath-laying ceremonies around Washington, D.C., on Feb. 25 during the Legion's annual Washington Conference. They were joined by Samsung American Legion scholarship recipients.

It's been a regular event for the SAL, but SAL National Commander Don "JR" Hall reminded participants to not think of the event as routine.

"I hope you didn't come out for any other reason than who you represent," Hall said. "… Think about it as this year, this time, this moment, and make sure that when those wreaths are being laid, you're saluting the service of your family. You're saluting the service of our veterans. You're saluting our flag, and you're saluting the United States of America. That's why we're here."

The opportunity to honor veterans helped bring Detachment of New Hampshire Commander Scott Douglas to the event for the first time.

"This means a lot to me … my father was in World War II and the Korean War, so for me to come here from New Hampshire to Washington and to get to lay a wreath out in his name … it's right to the heart," Douglas said.

The SAL and other Legion Family members laid wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery and the Vietnam, Korean War and World War II memorials at the National Mall.

"You realize how much others have given for what we have," said Marty Widmer, a member of Squadron 262 in Audubon, N.J., and the Camden County SAL chaplain after the wreath-laying at Arlington.

Rusty Myers

Remembering More Than Me

Washington, DC – Those four words are the slogan of this year's National Commander of the Sons of the American Legion (SAL), Donald "JR" Hall of Maryland. They stand as an affirmation of everything we as Sons stand for – that each and every one of us is a member of the organization through our father, or our mother, or a grand- or great-grandparent. We work towards the betterment of our veteran's lives, and that or of children and community – all because of our veteran's service … our "why."

Over the weekend of the 24th and 25th of February, three Sons of Belleville Squadron 105 went to Washington, DC to join hundreds of other members of the Legion Family from across the country to participate in what is called the Washington Conference. The highlight of the trip was participating in a ceremony where the SAL National Commander laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

For 64 years, the American Legion has taken this week in February to push the national organization's legislative agenda, which revolves around promoting veteran's rights and benefits. Per the American Legion's website, the "Conference [also] provides an opportunity for Legionnaires to meet with their respective lawmakers and hear from members of Congress and VA leadership…"

The rest of the American Legion Family – made up of the Sons of the American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA), and the American Legion Riders – are invited to participate in the weekend's events, which includes placing wreaths at memorials throughout our nation's capital.

"We're here today for great things …" stated National Commander Hall before the participants from the Sons boarded the buses with the wreaths at the Washington Hilton on Sunday the 25th. "A wreath laying is a symbol … we're here for a reason – to get together to show our passion and our love for our country and our veterans."

"…think of your 'why' … and that's why you are here today," he concluded.

The attendees – perhaps 150 Sons, Legionnaires, and Auxiliary members – rode three buses to Arlington National Cemetery afterward to witness the wreath laying ceremony, though the three Sons of Squadron 105 went to the cemetery a day earlier to walk what is called "our nation's most hallowed ground" as well. Essex DEC Rusty Myers, and SAL 105 Vice Commander James Elsmore, and Essex County Adjutant Richard Vlasakakis took that Saturday afternoon to reflect on our country's legacy of service and sacrifice.

Squadron 105

"Breathtaking – there is no other way to describe it other than breathtaking" noted Vlasakakis, who has not been to Arlington since he was young. "It is something everyone should experience."

For all three, this was their first time attending the Washington Conference.

The three toured some of the burials and monuments at Arlington, including the Eternal Flame of President Kennedy and the monument to the USS Maine. They saw the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and visited the graves of Audie Murphy and General "Blackjack" Pershing. The most striking and impactful views, though, were the rows and rows of white marble headstones all standing in perfect military fashion.

"Absolutely humbling…" stated DEC Myers.

On three of the memorials they visited, Belleville's Sons left challenge coins with the logo of the Sons of the American Legion…on three memorials which have connections to not only New Jersey but to the Nutley/Belleville area. The contingent from Post 105 made a special effort to locate those graves and memorials and honor their sacrifice. After a short prayer at each, they placed the coin and snapped a salute.

Squadron 105

James Elsmore, whose membership is derived from his father's Marine Corps service in Korea, placed a coin on the grave of Raritan, NJ's USMC Gunnery Sargent John Basilone, a Medal of Honor recipient from Guadalcanal.

Ricky Vlasakakis, who qualifies for membership though his grandfather's US Navy service, placed a coin on the USS Thresher Memorial. Seaman Pervis Robinson, Jr., a 22-year old sailor from Nutley, NJ died on the Thresher, when she sank during a dive test in 1963 becoming the first US nuclear submarine loss at sea.

Rusty Myers placed a coin on the memorial for Private Henry Svehla, our Belleville Medal of Honor recipient. Private Svehla joined the Army in 1951 and was deployed to Korea in 1952 as part of the 32nd Infantry Regiment 7th Infantry Division He was killed-in-action at Pyongony, Korea, on 12 June 1952. Through the heroic action of jumping on a grenade to save his brother soldiers in his platoon, Svehla posthumously received the Medal of Honor in 2011. The coin was placed on his memorial, as Svehla himself was never recovered from the Korean Peninsula. Squadron 105 has a special connection with Svehla, as they send a wreath during the holidays to be placed at his memorial.

While walking, the Sons also stumbled upon a memorial dedicated to chaplains who died in World War II, among which was listed Father Johnathan Washington, a priest stationed at Kearny's St. Stephens Church – and one of the famed Four Chaplains. Each year, the Post 105 family makes its way to St. Stephens to commemorate his sacrifice at the Four Chaplains Mass.

Other places the Sons laid wreaths on Sunday were at the Korean War Memorial and at the Vietnam Wall, which were equally as powerful. Each state, or detachment, gets to place a single wreath at one of the three memorials – and New Jersey placed theirs at the state's column at the World War II memorial. Detachment of NJ Commander Keith Branes placed his wreath at that memorial in honor of his grandfathers.

The next day, on Monday, before the three Belleville Sons took an AMTRAK home, they had a chance to tour some of the museums on the National Mall. They visited the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum, and the Smithsonian American History Museum. At the latter, they viewed the original 1814 "Star Spangled Banner" Flag which flew over Fort McHenry and walked through an exhibit dedicated to our 250-year history in uniform called "The Price of Freedom."

Honor and remembrance could best describe what the three members of Belleville's Sons of the American Legion took out of that weekend. It was an awe inspiring visit, giving the three a chance to redirect and reflect on why the SAL exists … to live up to the slogan of "Remembering More Than Me."

John Cook, National Vice-Commander

Northeast Report

Hello folks!

It's been a great journey so far as your Northeast National Vice-Commander. Attending "ALL" the Zoom meetings and getting a handle on all the committees and commissions has been quite an experience. I am really learning a lot of valuable information.

I can't say enough about our committee and commission chairmen and their teams. They are all extremely knowledgeable and dedicated in getting their jobs done. My hat goes off to each and every one of you.

I have been in contact with many squadron and detachment members helping them address issues they may have, as well as hearing about their accomplishments and goals. I have been watching our membership grow in leaps and bounds. I truly believe we could make the 400,000 mark this year!

I have had the privilege to visit the great state of Delaware. It was nice to see how other squadrons and detachments run. Thank you to NEC James Stewart for taking us to visit many area sites and to visit several posts, as well as for your top-notch hospitality. We had a great time. I am looking forward to many more visits as I continue my year.

It was an honor to attend the Washington Conference again this year to pay tribute to our fallen heroes. Our National Commander, JR Hall, laid a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns, while many others laid their wreaths at the various other memorials.

Don't forget that April 27 is designated as American Legion Family Day.

Please, please, please send in ALL squadron reports, Officer Certification Form, Squadron Data Form, and Consolidated Squadron Report.

And finally, don't forget about Commander Hall's Four Pillar Challenge. Let's make him proud!

I hope to see you all soon!

The Newshound

A special section for Young Sons of The American Legion

April is Children & Youth Month

The American Legion

What can I do?

The American Legion has been actively involved with children's issues since the early 1920s. In many instances, The American Legion has been the driving force on behalf of children on the federal, state, and local levels.

In 1938, April was formally designated as Child Welfare Month (now called Children & Youth Month) and has continued on an annual basis. During this special time, we encourage each of you to show your community that the American Legion Family is dedicated to America's youth.

Each year, the Committee on Children & Youth focuses on three primary areas of concern. They may include:

Child Health
- Immunization programs
- School nutrition programs
- Teen pregnancy prevention programs

Child Safety
- Child pornography
- Drug abuse prevention
- Drug trafficking
- Alcohol abuse prevention
- Child/sexual abuse and neglect
- Teen suicide prevention

Family Support
- National Family Week activities
- Daycare safety
- Temporary Financial Assistance
- Missing and exploited children

Promote your activities

You should publicize your programs and activities. Have the mayor or another local official issue a proclamation declaring April and Children & Youth month. The post (and squadron) commander should issue a news release proclaiming April as Children & Youth Month and list what the post (and squadron) will be doing for the annual observance.

Remember, programs supporting the children and youth of your community are news! Invite news media to your activities and keep them informed.

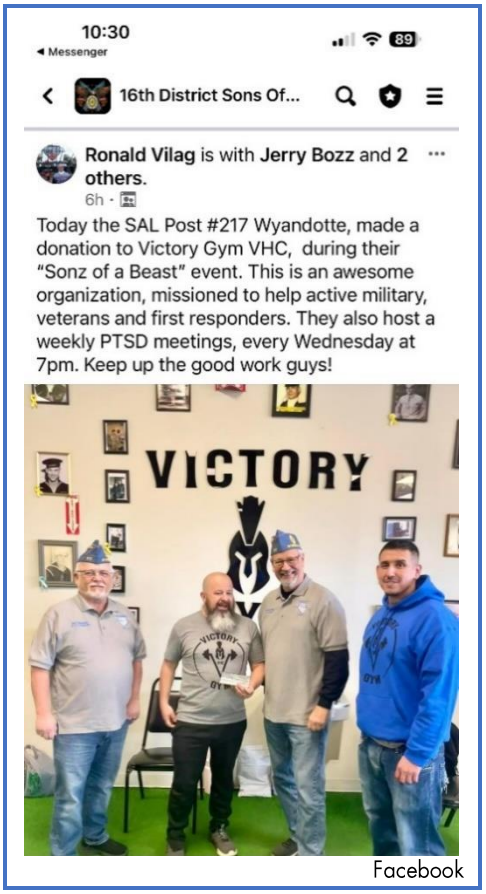
Report successes

Following the observance of Children & Youth Month, the Children & Youth chairmen need to turn their attention to the annual reporting of expenditures and activities. Be sure you have an accurate record of all money spent for the benefit of children and youth by your post/unit (and squadron) during the current year, as well as the number of children who received services and assistance.

Shortly after the first of the year, American Legion departments (and detachments) receive copies of the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) for later distribution to posts (For squadrons, it is the Squadron Consolidated Report Form – CSR). This form has been developed to track necessary information about The American Legion's overall. It is the responsibility of the post Children & Youth chairman to report his/her program activities to the individual designated in the post (and squadron) to complete the Consolidated Post (Squadron) Report. The CPR (CSR) can be done online at MyLegion.org by the post adjutant.

For additional information about Children & Youth month, you can download the April is Children & Youth Month brochure and see The American Legion's Children & Youth programs.

You can also share your activities on Legiontown.org.



Facebook

Important Web Links

The National Public & Media Communications Committee has created this Important Web Links document for our members, as well as for all members of the American Legion Family, to use to get to some of our most important websites. Please save this document and refer to it often. Thank you!

SAL National Web Site
https://www.legion.org/sons

Publications and Forms (SDR, Handbook, Awards and much more)
https://www.legion.org/sons/publications

Subscribe to Newsletters (requires signing into MyLegion.org)
https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/My-Account/Opt-In-Out

Millennium Newsletters
https://sites.google.com/view/teamvrabel/the-millennium?authuser=0

Round-Up Newsletters
https://sites.google.com/view/teamvrabel/round-up-newsletter

Newsletter Digital Archives
https://www.legion.org/library/258352/50-years-sons-american-legion-newsletters-now-available

Be The One
https://www.legion.org/betheone

Voter Voice
https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home

Membership Reports
https://www.legion.org/sons/membership-reports

SAL Resolutions
https://www.legion.org/sons/resolutions

Future Meetings
https://www.legion.org/sons/events

Emblem Sales Digital Catalog
https://emblem.legion.org/catalog-legion.asp

Business meetings schedule

Sons of The American Legion is announcing its 2023 – 2024 Zoom Business Meeting schedule. To attend on the appropriate date, please click the link on the meeting you would like to attend. If you will be calling in, the number for all meetings is (877) 853-5257.

These meetings are open to all members to listen in and find out more about the organization, learn about how national programs are going, and get ideas that may work at home.

Central Region
Second Wednesday Quarterly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 919 4714 3789 | Passcode: 241 429
11/10/23 | 12/12/23 | 03/13/24 | 04/09/24 | 06/11/24 | 08/13/24

Midwest Region
Fourth Wednesday Quarterly | 7:00 p.m. Mtn
Meeting ID: 924 0402 2733 | Passcode: 371 685
09/27/23 | 12/27/23 | 03/27/24 | 06/26/23

Northeast Region
Third Wednesday Quarterly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 980 7046 7820 | Passcode: 469 153
09/20/23 | 12/20/23 | 03/20/24 | 06/19/23

Southeast Region
First Wednesday Quarterly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 945 1723 1230 | Passcode: 58543
06/06/23 | 12/06/23 | 03/06/23 | 06/05/23

Western Region
Third Wednesday Quarterly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 964 2285 1563 | Passcode: 433 552
09/20/23 | 12/20/23 | 03/20/24 | 06/19/24

Americanism Commission
Third Monday Bi-Monthly | 7:30 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 935 4066 0918 | Passcode: 571 659
10/16/23 | 12/18/23 | 02/19/24 | 04/15/24
06/17/24 | 08/19/24

Finance Commission
Third Thursday as scheduled | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 966 1733 0121 | Passcode: 463 702
09/21/23 | 02/15/24 | 04/18/24 | 07/18/24

Internal Affairs Zoom Business Meeting
Fourth Thursday Bi-Monthly | 6:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 932 2650 4089 | Passcode: 725 519
10/26/23 | 12/28/23 | 02/22/24 | 04/15/24
06/27/24 | 08/22/24

Legislative Commission
Second Thursday Bi-Monthly | 7:30 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 937 1376 7924 | Passcode: 172 912
10/12/23 | 12/14/23 | 02/08/24 | 04/11/24
06/13/24 | 08/08/24

Public Media & Communications Commission
Fourth Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 914 4414 8114 | Passcode: 977 759
10/24/23 | 12/26/23 | 02/27/23 | 04/23/24
06/25/23 | 08/27/23

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission
Second Monday Bi-Monthly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 971 3717 7471 | Passcode: 712 824
11/29 23 | 12/11/23 | 02/12/24 | 04/08/24
06/10/24 | 08/12/24

Veterans Education & Employment Commission
Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 989 2627 5747 | Passcode: 26060
11/19/23 | 12/21/23 | 02/15/24 | 04/18/24
06/20/24 | 08/15/24

Century Committee (CENTCOM)
Second Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 919 4714 3789 | Passcode: 241 429
10/10/23 | 12/12/23 | 03/13/24 | 04/09/24
06/11/24 | 08/13/24

Child Welfare Foundation Committee
Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 984 7031 4786 | Passcode: 780 858
09/21/23 | 11/16/23 | 01/18/24 | 03/21/24
05/16/24 | 07/18/24

Children & Youth Committee
Second Monday Bi-Monthly | 7:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 951 1622 6587 | Passcode: 799 095
09/11/23 | 11/13/23 | 01/08/24 | 03/11/24
05/13/24 | 07/08/24

Member Training & Development Committee
First Monday Bi-Monthly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 957 9605 2218 | Passcode: 528 704
09/04/23 | 11/06/23 | 01/01/24 | 03/04/24
05/06/24 | 07/01/24

Membership Committee
Third Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 8:00 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 989 3388 3350 | Passcode: 546 900
09/19/23 | 11/21/23 | 01/16/24 | 03/19/24 | 05/21/24 | 07/16/24

National Convention Committee
Second Tuesday Bi-Monthly | 7:30 p.m. Eastern
Meeting ID: 953 4866 3402 | Passcode: 670 002
09/12/23 | 11/14/23 | 01/09/24 | 03/12/23
05/14/23 | 07/19/24

Butch Ray

What's in a name? Part 2

Fellow Sons, here is article # 2 of "What's in a Name?" We must always remember that we stand upon the sacrifice of those veterans from which our eligibility has come.

Douglas M. Lyons American Legion Post # 72 (TN)

Douglas M. Lyons. WWI Veteran who was killed in combat action in Verdun, France, 12 October 12, 1918. Posthumously Awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions. The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, takes pride in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) to Second Lieutenant (Infantry) Douglas M. Lyons, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving with 114th Infantry Regiment, 29th Division, A.E.F., near Verdun, France, 12 October 1918. Inspiring his men by his fearlessness, Lieutenant Lyons led an attack against a strongly fortified enemy position, and, in so doing, was killed.

On September 23, 1930, forty-two men from the Stewart County, Tennessee area met and completed the Application for Post of The American Legion. The Post would be named after Douglas Milford Lyons, a WWI Veteran who was killed in combat action in Verdun, France, 12 October 12, 1918. Post 72 was granted its Permanent Charter on February 26, 1931 and has been a part of the Stewart County Community for nearly 93 years.

Don (Dominic) Gentile American Legion Post # 532 (OH)

Dominic Salvatore "Don" Gentile (December 6, 1920 – January 28, 1951), was a World War II RAF and USAAF pilot who achieved fame as he came close to surpassing Eddie Rickenbacker's World War I record of 26 downed aircraft. He later served in the post-war U.S. Air Force.

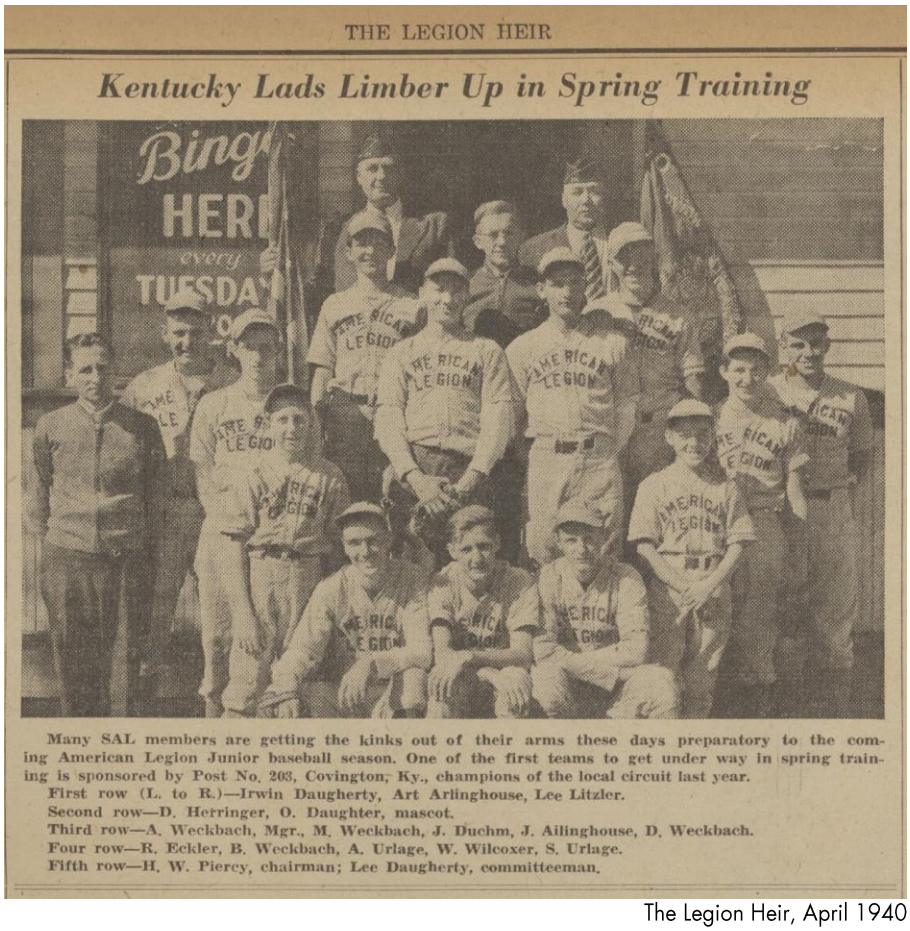
Royal Canadian Air Force

The U.S. military required two years of college for its pilots, which Gentile did not have, so he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was posted to the UK in Dec 1941 as a Pilot Officer. Gentile flew the Supermarine Spitfire Mk V with No. 133 Squadron, one of the three famed RAF Eagle Squadron's beginning in June, 1942.

4th Fighter Group

In September 1942, the Eagle squadron pilots transferred to the USAAF, becoming the nucleus of the 4th Fighter Group.[1] Gentile became a flight leader in September 1943, now flying the P-47 Thunderbolt. After conversion to the P-51B at the end of February 1944, Gentile built a tally of 15.5 additional aircraft destroyed between March 3 and April 8, 1944. After downing three more planes on April 8,[13] he was the top scoring 8th Air Force pilot.

This series will over time tell brief stories of some of these posts that honor our legacy. If your post home has a story to share about the Veteran for which it is named, please send me that information for future articles.



THE LEGION HEIR

Kentucky Lads Limber Up in Spring Training

Many SAL members are getting the kinks out of their arms these days preparatory to the coming American Legion Junior baseball season. One of the first teams to get under way in spring training is sponsored by Post No. 203, Covington, Ky., champions of the local circuit last year.
First row (L. to R.)—Irwin Daugherty, Art Arlinghouse, Lee Litzler.
Second row—D. Herringer, O. Daughter, mascot.
Third row—A. Weckbach, Mgr., M. Weckbach, J. Duchm, J. Ailinghouse, D. Weckbach.
Four row—R. Eckler, B. Weckbach, A. Urlage, W. Wilcoxer, S. Urlage.
Fifth row—H. W. Piercy, chairman; Lee Daugherty, committeeman.

The Legion Heir, April 1940

Bruno Williamson, Chairman

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Hello, my brother Sons, in this month's article we are continuing to talk about the different programs your commission is promoting this year. We will talk about the programs that Jeff Gibson and Bill "Buster" Sutterlin are working on this year.

Jeff started a program in Alabama that quite frankly is not discussed enough. And that is our widows and widowers of fallen veterans and active-duty service personnel. Here is a little bit about the **Widows and Widowers Luncheons**. (WWL)

To Honor our veteran widows and widowers. In the month of February, on the Saturday after valentine's we provide a luncheon and gifts (token) to honor widows and widowers. The WWL is our way of honoring the men and women (pass & present) that sacrificed their life for our country. This small gesture shows our gratitude and lets their spouses know that they are not alone. Once a spouse is gone, they may feel all alone. Not true. They are welcome to attend the widow's and widower luncheon to find encouragement. They suddenly feel comfortable and accepted at the luncheon. They have a chance to talk about their experiences. We will share the Love with the widows and widower.

"The key to success in all human relationships is as simple as mastering the art of giving happiness. Instead of expecting happiness, give it. Yes, to do that you have to put someone else first. But when you master the art of giving happiness, you will discover that you cannot give it without getting it back."

- Norman Vincent Peale

All too often the spouses of our fallen service members are forgotten, and this is a pretty amazing way to remember and to support them.

"Buster" is promoting a program many of us are familiar with and it is near and dear to him. Fisher House. What are Fisher Houses? Sometimes compared to Ronald McDonald houses for the military. These are houses built at military bases or at VA Medical Centers. And there are currently 96 Fisher Houses in the United States, Germany, and United Kingdom that have been built since 1991. There are three currently under construction and twenty-one houses in the planning stages. The construction of these homes is funded by the Fisher House Foundation and then they are gifted to the military or Department of Veterans Affairs.

These comfort homes are built to provide a place for military or veteran families to stay at no charge while their loved one is in the hospital. Also, this is a place for the military or veteran to stay if they are undergoing tests and need to stay close by to return to the VA medical center the next day. These Homes vary in size having 7 to 21 suites and can house 16 to 42 family members. The bedrooms and bathrooms are private with the kitchen, laundry, dining room, and living room are shared. Once these homes are built, they are gifted to the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

While the homes are professionally decorated and fully furnished, families must bring their own food. Which they can prepare in the home's kitchen. To date over 500,000 families have been severed, $600 million saved and more than twenty-one million days of lodging saved for Veterans, Active Duty, and their families. Donations to help with food, furnishings, and perpetual maintenance are always in need and appreciated. We have Sons serving on the board of directors at different homes across the country. Detachments, Districts, and Squadrons can donate or volunteer at houses close to them or donate to the Fisher House Foundation at fisherhouse.org.

Once again, I know I am a bit early, but the next VA&R article will come after the event. Do not forget the 3rd Saturday in May is National Veterans Assistance Day (NVAD). Let us know what you are doing on that day and if you cannot do something on May 18, just pick another day. And two things, please report it on your CSR. Theres a place for it and send us pics so we can put it on the VA&R Facebook site.

Spring is here and Salute week has come and gone, the Holidays have come and gone. And this is a time when our hospitalized veterans tend to get forgotten. Please remember our Veterans in VAMC's, Community Living Centers (CLC), nursing homes and our State-run VA Homes.

If none of these facilities are close; contact the VSC or VSS at your closest VAMC and investigate joining the Compassionate Contact Corps. These are buddy checks for our Veterans. After a small amount of training and filling out a compatibility form. You are matched up with a homebound veteran where you would contact them once week or every other week to see how they are doing. This is always done by phone, and you do not go to the Veterans home. You can spend as much or as little time on the phone as you want with your Veteran, and these hours are counted as VAVS hospital hours. Contact your VA Medical Centers CDCE (volunteer services) department for more information. Or you can contact me at: nellazecca@mchsi.com and I can send you the information.

"Together Making a Difference"

VA&R

Rusty Myers | March 15, 2024

Remembering More Than Me

Belleville, NJ – The American Legion Family of Post 105 of Belleville, NJ celebrated the 105th birthday of the national organization on 15 March 2024, on a Friday evening at the Post's clubroom. With perhaps 50 people in attendance, "the 105" had a brief ceremony, a speech by the commander, and of course a birthday cake.

Every year, Posts around the world – around 12,000 local posts in 55 departments – celebrate 15 March 1919 as the official founding of the American Legion. On that day 105 years ago, about 1,000 officers and enlisted men from the Allied Expeditionary Force met in caucus in Paris, France to create an organization which would specifically advocate for the young veterans of the Great War returning home. Some of the more famous founding members included Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. (son of the president), Sergeant Alvin York (one of World War I's most decorated soldiers), and Colonel Henry L. Stimson (an ex-Secretary of War).

Since then, the American Legion has grown to be the largest wartime veteran's organization in the world, with around 2 million veteran members, a million American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) members, and around 400,000 members of the Sons of the American Legion (SAL). The organization has been instrumental over the past 105 years by pushing for the creation of the Veterans Administration, the GI Bill of Rights, the US Flag Code, and many other veterans' rights initiatives like the federal PACT Act and the "Be The One" campaign intended to destigmatize the need for mental health support thereby curbing the veterans suicide epidemic.

In so many words, the American Legion serves as a force for good in the world.

At a meeting of the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 105 in early March, the membership voted unanimously to purchase a cake for the following Friday night, when the Post normally celebrates members birthdays. The Sons wanted to do something for the American Legion Birthday to stand in solidarity with the veterans for whom they support.

At 10:00 p.m., Post 105 Commander Joe Cobianchi read a prepared speech, after the Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence remembering our departed members.

"National Defense, Americanism, Veterans and Youth. These are the bedrock principles that made The American Legion a great idea in 1919 and make it a great organization today", the commander read.

Following his speech – and photo ops with the cake emblazoned with the Legion's logo – all of the members stood together to take a group photo, raising their hands holding up their pointer fingers, which has become nationwide the "Be The One" symbol when Legion family members get together for pictures. Many in the photo were also wearing red, which is worn on Fridays – standing for Remembering Everyone Deployed.

Post 105 will celebrate its 105th birthday on 9 September 2024, which is the date in 1919 when it received its charter. The national organization received its federal charter from congress on 16 September 1919 – making Post 105 in Belleville, NJ one of the first Post's within the organization. 105 years later, we are still serving our veterans – and always welcome any serviceman, veteran, male descendent, or direct relation to a veteran to join as a member of the Legion Family. We are located next to the Motorcycle Mall on Washington Ave. and are terrifically active – and invite anyone who would like to be involved to drop by.

Photos courtesy American Legion Post 105, Belleville, NJ.

DEVOTION TO
MUTUAL
HELPFULNESS

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
A newsletter of Sons of The American Legion
THE MILLENNIUM
Sons of The American Legion | PO 1055 | Indianapolis, IN 46206 | www.legion.org/sons

No.: S.A.L. Resolution 3 - National Convention, 2022
Title: American Legion Family Day

WHEREAS, the American Legion Family is an integral component supporting those in need within their local communities and does so in an unselfish manner without want of notice, personal gain, or recognition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the Sons of The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on August 26-28, 2022, that a special day to be known as "American Legion Family Day" be established and observed annually on the last Saturday of April, when all American Legion Posts throughout the nation open their doors to their members and the members of their local communities with the intent of celebrating all great deeds and works of the American Legion Family with the intent to educate, recruit, recognize, and to give back to those members that continually support the gift of giving; and, be it further