



MASSACHUSETTS E-LEGIONNAIRE

Volume 16 Issue 4

September 2025

Commander's Corner



Scott M. Conner
Department Commander

August is busy. The month starts off in Indianapolis at the Membership & Post Activities committee meeting. Always great to meet up with old friends, make new friends, and discuss the latest thoughts of the moment. Did someone say committee work? Many of us have become involved in various committee work, and found enormous satisfaction in Being Part Of The Solution. Not on a committee? Ask your Post Commander, or reach higher, and approach your District Commander and inquire where you can help. We are always looking for fresh faces and new input. Hope to see you on a committee.

After two days of M&PA, the Membership Workshop started, a great event put together by the National Training Team. Sr. Vice Jerdan will be rolling out some programs to help you with membership to reach not only retention goals, but to also attract new members.

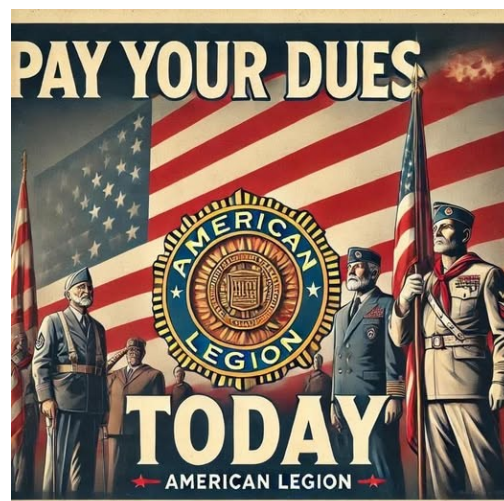
Helicopters, Parachutes, Warbirds oh my!! The 100th Anniversary American Legion Baseball program in Shelby, NC, was incredible. Though held up a day by weather, the tournament did not disappoint. Great weather, many, many, many baseballs left the park. Congratulations to Chesapeake, VA, World Series Champions. We're off to Tampa for National Convention, after 8 hours of driving and the occasional armadillo on the side of the road (Gracie, we are not on the Mass Pike) we arrived in beautiful Tampa, Florida.

Ahhhh National Convention. Many, many meetings were attended by most.

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Had a great time at the color guard competition, which takes some practice.

If you don't go to the Convention and make some new friends, well..... It is always a blast to meet up with old friends from around the country. What's a great adventure without a life long memory! A shout out to all my mates who participated in "Operation Commander Dry Dock." A tip of the hat to, Nelson, Grace, Lisa, Adam and Mary. A heart felt thank you for the rescue. So off to PDCC luncheon, and lunch with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. We are headed over to the National Commander's Banquet. Sorry to cut off the report of activities, but it's press time, gotta send this to PNVC Frank.

With September just off the horizon, many Posts will be getting back to regular meetings and operations. Quite a few will have new leadership in place. It's a great time to refocus, increase community relevance, and recommit to our "devotion to mutual helpfulness." Post Commanders, please reach out to District Commanders, and to your District staff for information and support. All Posts should have received the 2026 membership cards by now. Hopefully we'll be at 60% renewal by Labor Day. Coming Up: POW/MIA

My Commander's Charity is Operation Comfort Warrior.

CHANGE OF VENUE *** DEC - September 13th, Oxford Post.**

Scott M. Conner
Commander
Department of Massachusetts
774-239-6162
Scottscpo@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE

National Regional Information Conferences

JAN. 31, 2026 - INDIANAPOLIS or FEB. 7, 2026 - ATLANTA

WHAT? One-day, comprehensive curriculum that covers:

- Legal topics
- Be the One
- American Legion Programs
- Running an Effective Meeting
- Post Operations
- Membership Retention

WHY? To strengthen understanding and implementation of American Legion Programs and Services!

WHO? American Legion leaders in departments, districts and posts looking to increase operational effectiveness.

HOW? Contact The American Legion National Internal Affairs division at ia@legion.org or call **317-630-1287**.

REGISTRATION OPENS AUG. 27, 2025, AND SPACE IS LIMITED, SO SIGN UP NOW!!



Your 2025-2026 American [#LegionFamily](#) leadership team: [Sons of The American Legion](#) National Commander William “Bill” Clancy III, American Legion National Commander Dan Wiley and [American Legion Auxiliary National President](#) Pam Ray.



Honoring Our Heroes: POW/MIA Remembrance in the Department of Massachusetts American Legion Auxiliary

Each year, the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Massachusetts pauses to honor a solemn promise: "You Are Not Forgotten." That promise is made to America's Prisoners of War (POWs) and those Missing in Action (MIAs)—brave men and women who wore the uniform of the United States with honor, courage, and devotion to duty, yet have not returned home. Their service spans every conflict, from World War II to today's global missions. While their battles may have ended, the uncertainty for their families and loved ones has not. Massachusetts has a proud history of military service, stretching from the Minutemen at Lexington and Concord to the modern-day heroes deployed around the world. Our Commonwealth has always answered the call, and with that service comes the responsibility to remember those who remain unaccounted for. The POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony is one way the Auxiliary fulfills that responsibility. Often symbolized by the Missing Man Table, the ceremony uses powerful visual symbols—a white tablecloth for purity of service, a red rose for sacrifice, lemon for the bitterness of fate, salt for the tears of waiting families, an inverted glass for absence, and an empty chair for the missing. Each item tells a part of the story of service, sacrifice, and hope. For the Auxiliary, remembrance is more than a yearly tradition—it is a continuing mission. Through advocacy, education, and community en-

gagement, members keep the spotlight on the ongoing effort to bring every service member home and to support the families who still wait. From Boston Harbor to the hills of the Berkshires, Massachusetts will always keep faith with its heroes. Until the last POW and MIA is accounted for, the Department of Massachusetts American Legion Auxiliary will stand firm in its promise: You are not forgotten—and you never will be.

Department President Sofia Elizabeth Blake



Testimonial Banquet in honor of Department President

SOFIA ELIZABETH BLAKE

Date: Sunday September 21, 2025
Time: Social time Noon Meal (All American BBQ) 1 PM
Place: American Legion Post 221 - Bedford
 357 Great Road
 Bedford, MA 01730
Donation \$40.00

Please make checks payable to:

ALA District 5 Middlesex County Council Inc.

Please mail checks to ticket Chair:

ROSEMARY TOWER
 205 GREAT ROAD
 STOW MA 01775

For additional tickets contact your District Director
RSVP By: September 6, 2025



Detachment
Commander
Jesse Limanek

Greetings Department of Massachusetts American Legion Family, Just a few days ago, I returned home from the 53rd National Convention of Sons of the American Legion in Tampa Bay, Florida. It was truly an honor to serve as Delegate Chairman representing the nearly 5700 Sons that makeup the Detachment of Massachusetts. While the rain made for gloomy conditions outside the JW Marriott

Convention Center, there was energy and excitement inside the Tampa Bay Ballroom. This year, I completed Detachment Commander's Training, served as an instructor at the National Americanism Commission's Youth Academy and collected two national awards earned by the Detachment. More importantly, I had the privilege of putting forward a request before the convention that the chair recognize Past National Commander Cliff Smith for the purpose of seconding the nomination of William "Bill" Clancy III to serve as National Commander for the 2025-2026 Administrative Year.

In his acceptance speech, Commander Clancy proudly proclaimed that the good we do should not just be part of our meetings, and called upon us all to remain devoted to mutual helpfulness in all aspects of our lives. He also pointed out that "we" is infinitely more powerful than "I" and that "we" Sons being part of The American Legion are a source for good especially when we follow through on the principles con-

tained within our Preamble.

He also put forth many lofty goals for the now more than 400,000 members of the Sons of the American Legion. He called on all Sons to continue carrying forth the message of "Be the One", and encouraged us to take the official "Be the One" training offered through National. He also called upon us to assist in bringing all 15+ million veterans into the American Legion, where those who love them will welcome them unconditionally. And, he called on us join with him in aiding The American Legion in its obligation to community, state, and nation, by helping make the United States of America a better nation than it is today. Needless to say, he left the stage to thunderous applause.

Gentlemen, our mission is before us. Please join with me in contributing to all efforts, both big and small, that make our organization a true agent of justice, freedom and democracy.

Jesse Limanek
Commander for the Detachment of Massachusetts

myLEGION.ORG
TRAINING VIDEO SERIES

Learn the ins-and-outs of the myLegion platform, and how it can help you and your Sons manage membership in these videos produced by National Headquarters.

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/8339635>



The American Legion
Department Of Massachusetts

24 Beacon Street · State House Room 546-2 · Boston, MA 02133 · (617) 727-2966

September 2025

Greetings from Tampa,

Our Department of Massachusetts Delegation is currently down in Tampa Florida for our 106th National Convention. Our delegations are getting a plethora of training and attending many meetings. We plan on bringing all this important information back to Massachusetts.

I will start Post and District Zoom meetings in October. All are welcomed. The goal of this meeting is to provide information and training to all in the Department. The plan is to try to have one Zoom meeting a month. If you are interested, please contact the office.

Once again, the Department will be on the road. If your Post has internet, Dunkin Donuts nearby (good but not necessary), and want to host the Department at your Post, please contact the office. We are willing and able to help any Posts and/or Districts with paperwork, training on mylegion, processing membership, forms, and fundraising ideas.

Reminder for all, I will be having my knee replaced on September 3rd. The current plan is I will be heavily sedated for the first week after that I will be available to work from home a week or so. Grace will be in the office. She is nicer than me, I would call her.

Yours in Comradeship

Lisa A. McPhee

Lisa A. McPhee

Department Adjutant

Massachusetts

Veterans Straightening America Since 1919 and into the Future

*The American Legion was built on and committed to four key pillars that still stand today:
Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth*

American Legion Membership: The Foundational Growth and Belonging Track

The American Legion, as the nation's largest veterans service organization, is actively working to not only maintain but also grow its membership. The organization's approach to this is rooted in two key concepts: foundational growth and fostering a strong sense of belonging. This strategy focuses on both the practical aspects of recruitment and retention, as well as the deeper, more personal reasons that veterans choose to join and remain a part of the Legion Family.

Foundational Growth: The Pillars of a Strong Membership

Foundational growth for The American Legion is built on a proactive and multi-faceted approach to membership management. The organization understands that growth doesn't happen by accident, but is the result of dedicated effort at every level, from the national headquarters down to the local post.

- **Renewals and Retention:** A critical component of growth is retaining existing members. The Legion emphasizes the importance of personal contact and communication from post officers and membership

teams. This includes reaching out to members whose dues are about to expire, reminding them of the value of their membership, and making the renewal process as easy as possible. Initiatives like automatic and online renewal options, often promoted with QR codes on promotional materials, are designed to streamline this process. The organization has also introduced a multi-year renewal program to encourage long-term commitment.

- **Recruitment of New Members:** The American Legion is committed to attracting a new generation of veterans, particularly those from the post-9/11 era. This involves showcasing the relevance and impact of the Legion's programs and services. Posts with successful recruitment strategies often find innovative ways to engage with their communities, such as sponsoring youth programs, organizing local events, and collaborating with other community organizations. They also highlight the tangible benefits of membership, including access to a network of fellow veterans, advocacy efforts on national defense and veteran issues, and a range of discounts and financial services.
- **Effective Communication and Outreach:** The Legion uses all

available media to promote membership, from traditional mailings to electronic and social media. This includes targeted campaigns aimed at encouraging renewals, new joins, and rejoins. Posts are also encouraged to use resources from the national headquarters, such as "Why You Should Belong" booklets, to effectively communicate the organization's mission and impact to prospective members. The goal is to change the narrative from one of declining membership to one of sustained growth.

The Belonging Track: More Than Just a Number

Beyond the foundational mechanics of membership growth, The American Legion recognizes that a sense of belonging is the cornerstone of a vibrant and engaged membership. This is where the organization's core values and programs truly shine.

- **Camaraderie and Mutual Support:** The American Legion provides a space for veterans to connect with one another, an experience that is often crucial for transitioning to civilian life. As many members can attest, the support that only another veteran can provide is invaluable.

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This sense of camaraderie is fostered through local post activities, social events, and programs like "Buddy Checks," where Legionnaires reach out to veterans in their communities to offer connection and assistance.

- **Service and Mission-Driven Purpose:** Members of The American Legion are united by a common purpose: to serve their fellow veterans, their communities, and the nation. The organization offers countless opportunities for members to make a difference through programs such as:

"Be The One" Initiative: A nationwide effort to reduce veteran suicide by empowering members and the public to take action and lessen the stigma around mental health treatment.

Service Officers: Accredited

American Legion service officers provide free, expert assistance to veterans and their families with VA disability claims, benefits, and resources.

Community Programs:

From youth sports and oratorical contests to disaster relief and support for homeless veterans, the Legion's community work provides a powerful reason for members to stay engaged and proud of their affiliation.

- **The American Legion Family:** The concept of the "Legion Family," which includes The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, and the Sons of The American Legion, creates a broader network of support and belonging. This family-oriented approach al-

lows for the inclusion of spouses, children, and other relatives, extending the mission of service and patriotism to a wider circle of people who are dedicated to the same ideals.

In conclusion, The American Legion's membership strategy is a two-pronged approach. The "Foundational Growth" track provides the practical tools and techniques for recruitment and retention, while the "Belonging Track" reinforces the emotional and personal connections that make membership a meaningful and lasting commitment. By combining these two elements, the organization aims to continue its vital mission of serving veterans and strengthening communities for generations to come.

Bob Jerdan DSVC 25-26
Candidate for Department Commander 26-27
Department of Massachusetts

As a reminder, The American Legion three-year membership option is still available for new joins and renewals. The multiyear membership option can only be accessed on the national website at legion.org/join or legion.org/renew. More than 51,894 members have taken advantage of this option.

A few things to keep in mind about the multiyear membership: - Payment for the three-year membership is upfront. - There is not a discounted rate with the three-year membership. - Membership cards will still be sent annually by Legion posts. - Those who sign up for a multiyear membership will not receive a renewal notice during the time they have signed up for the multiyear membership.

EARLY BIRD/ NEF KICKOFF	SEPTEMBER 10, 2025	50%
FALL MEETINGS	OCTOBER 15, 2025	55%
VETERANS DAY	NOVEMBER 13, 2025	65%
PEARL HARBOR DAY	DECEMBER 10, 2025	75%
MID-WINTER	JANUARY 14, 2026	80%
PRESIDENTS DAY	FEBRUARY 11, 2026	85%
AMERICAN LEGION BIRTHDAY	March 11, 2026	90%
CHILDREN & YOUTH	APRIL 8, 2026	95%
ARMED FORCES DAY	MAY 13, 2026	100%
DELEGATE STRENGTH	30 DAYS PRIOR TO NATIONAL CONVENTION	



History of The American Legion Distinguished Service Medal: Tucked away on The American Legion national website, under the Information Center/Honor & Remembrance tabs you will find the complete list of Distinguished Service Medal Recipients.

Just two years after the birth of The American Legion, its founders saw fit to award a Distinguished Service Medal as tribute to those who made great contributions to veterans. The first award, presented in 1921 at the Legion's national convention, could not be limited to one individual. Instead, five were presented to recognize the importance of Allied forces in the victorious battles of World War I. United in Kansas City, Mo., the chosen site for the National World War I Museum at the Liberty Memorial, Legionnaires resolved: "...in recognition of the respect, admiration and affection which The American Legion has for the distinguished guests now honoring us, and as a mark of our esteem and gratification at the honor thus paid us by attending our National Convention, The American Legion, in



Distinguished Service Medal

convention assembled, hereby authorizes Marshal Ferdinand Foch (of France), Admiral Sir David Beatty (of Great Britain), Lieutenant General Baron Jacques (of Belgium), General Armando Diaz (of Italy) and M. Charles Bertrand (of France, president of the Inter-Allied Veterans Association) to wear the official badge of The American Legion.

It is the most prestigious award given by The American Legion. The medal is typically presented at The American Legion's National Convention. Past recipients include prominent figures like U.S. Presidents, military leaders, and organizations. The awardees are listed by decades, and the list is impressive to say the least. 1945 Admiral Chester Nimitz & General Dwight D. Eisenhower; 1946 J. Edgar Hoover; 1949 President Harry S. Tru-

man, the first President from Legionnaire ranks; 1958 Unknown Servicemen of WWI, WWII and Korea who live only in the memories of the comrades and families with no known resting place; 1975 Harry W. Colmery Considered the principal architect of the GI Bill, Colmery was the first past national commander to earn the Legion's Distinguished Service Medal in 1975. "No one deserves it more," National Commander James M. Wagonseller said. "All veterans of World War II owe him a debt of gratitude."; 2003 Dr. Jane Stellman & Steven Stellman recognized for their work linking illnesses of Vietnam War veterans to the herbicide and defoliant sprayed by the US Military in country (Agent Orange); 2021 Vietnam War combat nurse, Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation and Legionnaire Diane Carlson Evans received at National Convention in Phoenix for decades of Veteran advocacy.

I hope you take a walk-through history and check out the records, it was amazing! Enjoy the rest of your summer, Cindy Lacoste, Dept. Historian

On the Eve of our Trip to Florida for Convention we all have so much to do. Planning is perhaps the biggest taker of our time, we all work together to ensure everything goes as it should. September brings a busy time as well; kids are back to school now, It is a good time to also plan for providing flag history utilizing Legion comic books, getting it out to our young kids. Please make time to contact schools in your areas to perhaps lead a class on this subject. Department can provide direction on how to administer a program with your schools. We do have materials that can enable you to making the class a success.



These are available at Flag and Emblem for a reasonable price and are a big hit with the 2nd Graders. I have done this with several schools in the northeast, the children participated in flag raising ceremonies and showed great interest with our comic books. We move forward into our new year with enthusiasm and leadership to provide guidance in many endeavors with our Legion programs. **STEP UP when You can, HELP OUT lend a hand**

Interested in what the Legion is advocating for in Congress on ***The Veteran's Role in Supporting the Military?*** Check out our information papers in the Legislative Toolkit. This is a great starting point for a conversation with your elected officials!

As part of our ongoing Grassroots efforts, LegDiv staff is available to provide **Grassroots Training** tailored to the hosting Department's needs. If you are interested in hosting a Grassroots training event, please contact grassroots@legion.org or ejohnson@legion.org.

You can find relevant legislation and the Legion's stance on them in the [key legislation section of VoterVoice](#).

Register for Action Alerts today at <https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Register>



Congratulations to J.B. Hunt Large Employer of the Year!!
Dani Hance accepting for the company



Massachusetts Presenting Checks for Disaster Relief to the Departments of Texas and California





The Department of Massachusetts made the stage twice as winners of the Garland Murphy Award for donations to Child Wellbeing Foundation, and the CWF Meritorious Achievement Award for highest per capita increase in donations. CONGRATS!



At the National Convention in Tampa FL, I attended the Media and Communications Commission meeting. There was a lot of great information including the following: Be the One resources are available online, approximately 20,000 have been trained to date; the national website continues to be updated; there is a new book called "Rise of Our Flag (65 pages) , which tells the story of our symbol of freedom, available through Emblem Sale. The annual report is also available online as is the digital magazine. Let us not forget the podcasts continue to gain popularity. As noted in the past, remember that Legiontown is a page where you can post information about a project your Post has done, not everything is able to get into the Legion magazine.. It is also a source of ideas for projects you can do!

On the Legion national website (www.legion.org), there are a number of resources that are there for your use. This includes a buddy check toolkit; Be the One awareness and the USA 250 challenge.

You may want to check out on Youtube the documentary: Truths and Myths about the Vietnam War, narrated by Sam Elliott. It is about 45 minutes long and has received many positive reviews.

This Fall there will be an American Legion Baseball tribute on September 6 at Yankee Stadium along with a Holiday Discount/Gift guide in the monthly Legion magazine. Did you know that the Legion magazine has been published continuously since July 4, 1919? It is ranked in terms of male readership as #3 in the country and #8 among females. Personally, I always find a lot of good information in it.

The coming year will also see many patriotic celebrations as we look to the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The Legion Media and Communications Division is working on a toolkit that will be available to members to help with the celebration. Remember, in July, 2026, the USS Constitution will be leading the tall ships into Boston Harbor. What is your city or town doing to celebrate? Is your Post involved?

Remember: BE THE ONE. Saving lives. Changing lives. One at a time.

John Lenotte, National Executive Committeeman Department of MA; Member, American Institute of Parliamentarians.
Local Board Member, Selective Service System.
I may be reached at jplenotte@gmail.com


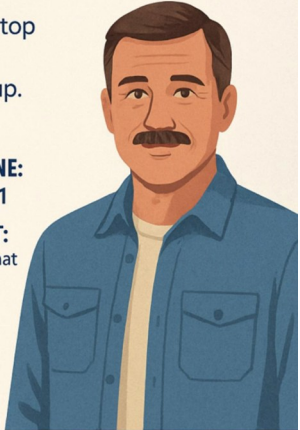


BE THE ONE.

SAVE A LIFE. CHANGE A LIFE.

Together, we can stop veteran suicide.
Reach out. Speak up.
Stay connected.

VETERANS CRISIS LINE:
Dial 988, then Press 1
TEXT: 838255 | CHAT:
VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat

BE THE ONE.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Sheffield American Legion Riders aim to forge a path in the Berkshires

The chapter can boast being the first division in South County.

Written by [Leslee Bassman](#) Berkshire Edge June 3, 2025



The Sheffield Legion Riders debut in the town's Memorial Day parade with members Shannon Johndro (left) and Lynda Burke. Photo courtesy of Cindy Raymond.

Sheffield — A random stop at a Walmart store led Lee residents Neal and Cindy Raymond to combine their love for motorcycles with their military service to steer the couple down a philanthropic path.

The retired veterans are now spending their days developing the [Sheffield Legion Riders #340](#), the first American Legion Riders chapter in the southern portion of Berkshire County. The motorcycle group serves within The American Legion, “focusing on patriotism, charity, community, and country, with a strong emphasis on supporting veterans and their families and the community,” Neal Raymond said.

[The American Legion](#) is a veterans’ organization that aids veterans as well as the community, with the Riders constituting a program within that organization. The American Legion is comprised of Legionnaires, or the veterans; offspring of the veterans; and the Auxiliary that, historically, included the women who were related to veterans. The Riders is the fourth component of the American Legion.

“This is our first year, so we are in an active recruiting phase,” Neal Raymond said of the Sheffield Legion Riders. Anyone who is a veteran, son or daughter of a veteran, or related to a veteran, such as a grandchild, niece, or nephew, can become a member of the Riders.

The [11 American Legion posts in Berkshire County](#) are housed within the organization’s District 1: #68 Pittsfield, #125 North Adams, #152 Williamstown, #155 Dalton, #160 Adams, #254 West Stockbridge, #298 Housatonic, #340 Sheffield, #350 New Marlborough, #446 Lanesborough, and #456 Sandisfield. Only the Dalton and North Adams chapters currently include Riders groups, with Sheffield and its 10 members counting as the third such division in the area.

The Raymonds started the process to create the Sheffield group in January when they received a message from one of the South County post officials asking for a local Riders chapter. They have been members of the Dalton Legion Riders for 14 years.

“Cindy and I took a look at the Legions and felt that the Sheffield [American] Legion was probably the most appropriate one given the fact that it literally sits on Route 7 and you can’t get much more south in South County than Sheffield,” Neal Raymond said.



**SHEFFIELD
LEGION RIDERS**

The Sheffield Legion Riders (ALR) is a motorcycle group within The American Legion, focusing on patriotism, charity, community, and country, with a strong emphasis on supporting veterans, their families, and the community.

Are you a Veteran, a spouse, child, or grandchild of a Veteran?

Do you ride a motorcycle?

Join the Sheffield Legion riders to support Veterans and the community!

Email for more information
Sheffieldlegionriders@gmail.com

sheffieldlegionriders@gmail.com

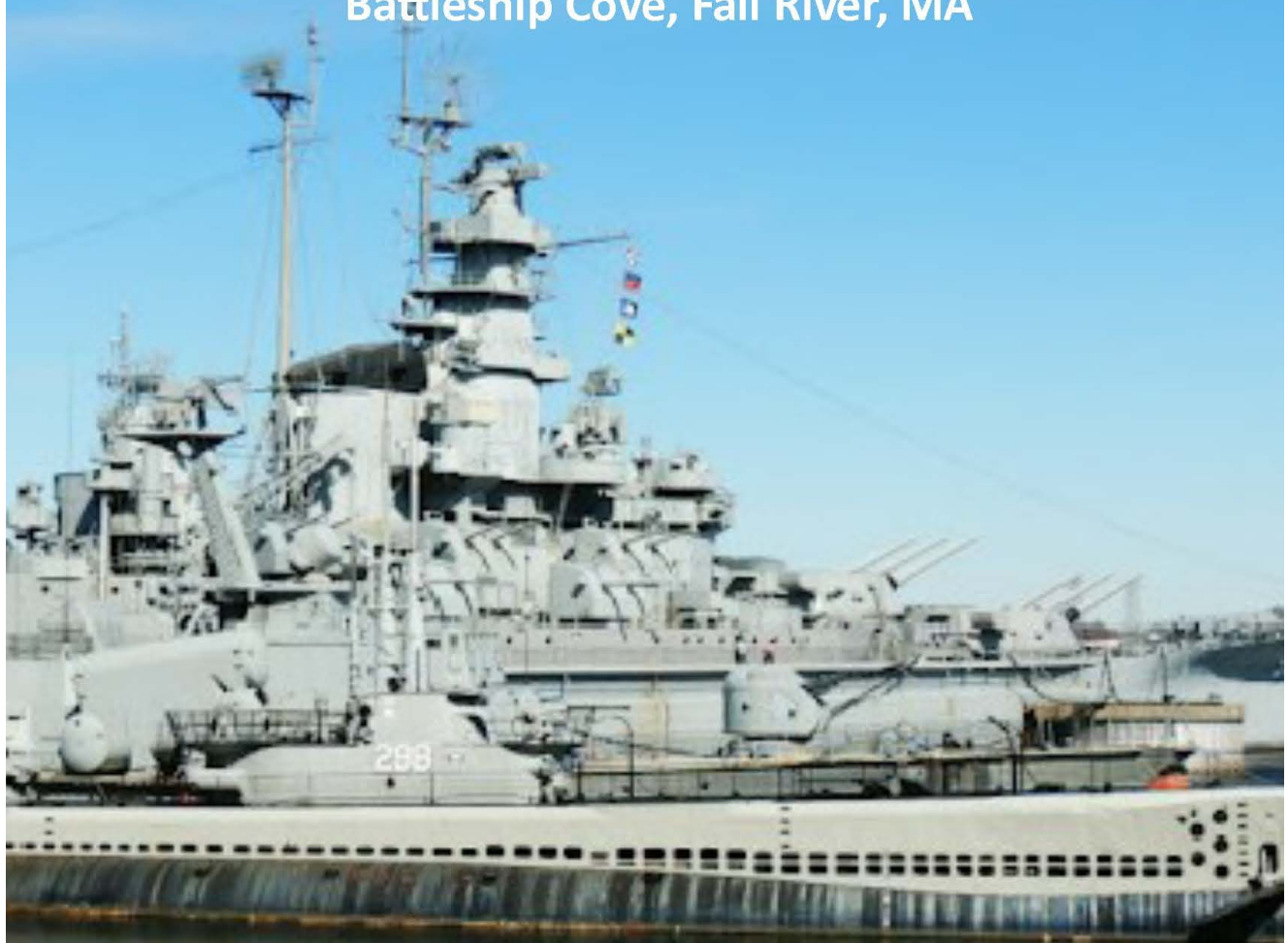


POW/MIA Ceremony



POW/MIA Ceremony

September 7, 2025 @ 1:00 pm
Aboard the USS Massachusetts
Battleship Cove, Fall River, MA



All are Welcome!
Collation served after ceremony at
American Legion Post 303
73 Ocean Grove Ave, Swansea, MA
Contact Ken Starks @781-708-7934 or
Tony Dias @ 508-369-4223

.WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today it has processed more disability benefits compensation & pension ratings claims in a single year than ever before.

In fiscal year 2024, VA processed a total of 2,517,519 ratings claims, and this year the department reached an all-time high of 2,524,115 ratings claims issued Aug. 8 — nearly two months before the end of FY25.

The milestone is the latest in a string of noteworthy VA claims processing achievements. Since President Trump was inaugurated Jan. 20, the backlog of Veterans waiting for VA benefits has dropped by more than 37%, after rising 24% during the Biden Administration.

In July, VA completed more than 300,000 ratings claims in a single month for the first time ever. VA is processing claims faster in FY25 than in FY24, completing them 17.8% faster even as receipts are 10% higher than this time last year.

“Under President Trump, VA is making major improvements to better serve Veterans, and this announcement underscores that fact,” **said VA Secretary Doug Collins**. “We look forward to implementing more reforms to increase customer service and convenience for those we are charged with serving.”

Other highlights of VA’s accomplishments during the second Trump Administration include:

VA has opened 16 new health care clinics around the country.

- Since Jan. 20, VA has offered Veterans nearly 1 million appointments outside of normal operating hours.
- These early-morning, evening, and weekend

appointments are giving Veterans more timely and convenient options for care.

-

VA is spending an additional \$800 million on infrastructure improvements to ensure VA facilities provide safe and effective patient care.

VA has made it easier and faster for VA-enrolled Veterans to access care from non-VA providers at the department’s expense.

VA has implemented major reforms to make it easier for survivors to get benefits, after serious problems during the Biden Administration.

VA is accelerating the deployment of its integrated electronic health record system, after the program was nearly dormant for almost two years under the Biden Administration.

VA partnered with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to identify and recover \$106 million in duplicate billing.

VA is phasing out treatment for gender dysphoria. Frankly, this commonsense reform should have been done years ago, but only President Trump and Secretary Collins had the courage to do it.

VA ended DEI at the department, reversing the divisive Biden-era policies and stopping more than \$14 million in DEI spending.

VA has brought tens of thousands of VA employees back to the office, where VA can work better as a team to serve Veterans.

VA encourages all Veterans to visit VA.gov to learn more and apply for the care and benefits they have earned.

Vietnam Veteran Ron Cabral, 81, Graduates from Bristol Community College: A Testament to Lifelong Learning and Veteran Resilience

By Dennis Cosmo

In a moment that inspired an entire community, 81-year-old Vietnam Veteran and Purple Heart recipient Ron Cabral walked across the stage at Bristol Community College's 58th Commencement Ceremony on May 17, 2025, earning his Associate in Arts in General Studies [1]. His achievement is more than personal—it's a powerful testament to the enduring spirit of Vietnam Veterans and the transformative power of education at any age.

Ron's journey back to the classroom after more than five decades exemplifies the courage and determination that defined his military service. His graduation was not just a milestone—it was a celebration of perseverance, purpose, and the belief that it's never too late to pursue your dreams.

His success was made possible in part by the **MassEducate** program, a groundbreaking initiative in Massachusetts that provides free tuition and fees for all eligible community college students, regardless of age or income [2]. Adult learners over 25 who have not earned a bachelor's degree can now attend any of the state's 15 public community colleges tuition-free, with additional allowances for books and supplies.

Ron's story also highlights the vital role of veteran support networks. His accomplishment was supported by a strong partnership between **Bristol's Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter**, **American Legion Post 303**, and **VFW Post 2045** in Swansea, MA. The SVA chapter at Bristol, led by nationally recognized advisor Dennis Cosmo, fosters a vibrant community of military-connected students and alumni, promoting academic success, leadership, and camaraderie [3].

Research shows that elder veterans returning to campus are more engaged, which enhances neural plasticity and contributes to a better quality of life. Ron's achievement is a shining example of this phenomenon—his intellectual curiosity and commitment to growth have not only enriched his own life but also inspired others.

As Ron crossed the stage to receive his degree, he carried with him the legacy of Vietnam Veterans and the promise of lifelong learning. His story reminds us that education is not bound by age, and that veterans continue to serve their communities in powerful ways long after their military service ends.





Bristol Community College to Host Veterans Day 2025

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Day National Committee (VDNC) has selected **Bristol Community College** as the official regional host site for **Veterans Day 2025**, a prestigious honor that recognizes the college's deep commitment to veterans and community engagement. Bristol's **Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter** was recognized as a **2024 SVA Chapter of the Year finalist**—a monumental achievement for a small community college. This national recognition reflects the chapter's outstanding leadership, advocacy, and support for student veterans on campus and beyond.

This year's celebration will bring together the entire **Southcoast Massachusetts veterans community** to honor the men and women who have courageously defended the Constitution and the citizens of the United States. Veterans, families, and supporters are invited to gather at Bristol for a day of reflection, pride, and fellowship. The year **2025** marks a powerful convergence of history: it is **America's 250th anniversary** and **160 years since the end of the Civil War**. This Veterans Day is a special opportunity to reflect on our shared legacy, honor those who have served, and show **solidarity, community, and pride in one Nation**. Bristol Community College is proud to host this meaningful celebration at such a pivotal moment in our national story.

The event will feature a **short speaking program** with distinguished guest speakers:

Justin Hsu, Naval Aviator

Daniel Goulart, Navy SEAL

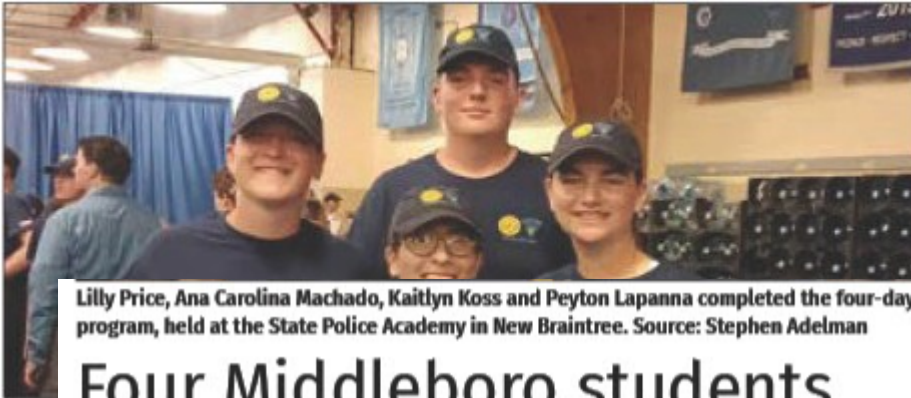
Following the program, attendees are invited to enjoy a **luncheon** provided by Bristol Community College. To ensure adequate food preparation, **please RSVP in advance**.

All members of **American Legion District 9** and **VFW District 6** are strongly encouraged to wear their **member caps** to the event. This visible show of solidarity and pride will highlight the strength and unity of our veterans community and demonstrate your ongoing commitment to service and civic engagement.

Join us in celebrating the legacy, sacrifice, and strength of our veterans. Let's make Veterans Day 2025 a powerful reminder of the values we share and the heroes who protect them.

RSVP here: <https://forms.office.com/r/exYAv00r2C>





Lilly Price, Ana Carolina Machado, Kaitlyn Koss and Peyton Lapanna completed the four-day program, held at the State Police Academy in New Braintree. Source: Stephen Adelman

Four Middleboro students graduate from police program

MIDDLEBORO — Four Middleboro High School students recently graduated from the Massachusetts State Police Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program.

Lilly Price, Ana Carolina Machado, Kaitlyn Koss and Peyton Lapanna completed the four-day program, held at the State Police Academy in New Braintree, on Saturday, July 19. Now in its 34th year, the program offers student "troopers" courses in first aid,

criminal law, officer safety, internet safety, investigation, safe driving, team support and physical fitness.

During the graduation ceremony, Price and Machado led the singing of the national anthem. Machado also received the Roy Lamb Scholarship Award for leadership.

The students were sponsored by the Simeon L. Nickerson Post 64 of the American Legion.

Operation dry dock when the commanders rental scooter decides to die halfway between the convention center and the hotel the rescue team heads out to save him when the rental company isn't able to.





Post Events



Post 98
Saturday morning
Coffee break

Veterans, Aux, and Potential Members

American Legion Hall
32 Beach st
8:00—10:30
Come on down



HINGHAM FRIDAY VETERANS' COFFEE
EVERY 3RD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH
9:00AM – 10:30AM
GRAND ARMY HALL 358 MAIN ST. HINGHAM
GUEST SPEAKERS FOR EACH EVENT
COFFEE AND REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED
MEETING DATES:
MAY 16TH, JUNE 20TH, JULY 18TH, AUG. 15TH,
SEPT 19TH, OCT. 17TH, NOV. 21ST, DEC. 19TH
TEMPORARY CONTACT: DAVE IRWIN
781-910-2377
FIRST COFFEE IS FRIDAY MAY 16TH



Coffee Hour

Last Friday of the Month

09:00 - 12:00

Free

American Legion North Adams



American Legion North Adams Post 125

FUNday !!!

4th Sunday of the Month

Lunch	Meat Tables Begins at 3PM	Queen Of Hearts
We will service a simple lunch starting at 12:00pm until sold out or 3pm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win. 2. Win various cuts of meat or other prizes. 3. Tickets are randomly drawn, and winners receive their prizes. 	The QOH with begin 15 minutes after the last Table is raffled.





Post Events

American Legion Post 327

Hosts

2025 Veterans Golf Tourney

Saturday, September 20 1130-6 pm

Norwood Country Club

(lunch/snack 1130-130pm, golf 1130-5pm, dinner 4-6pm)
\$125. Per person (cart, golf, snack, and dinner plus prize raffle)

HOLE IN ONE ON #7 \$15,000

All par 3's have prizes
-Raffle for prizes during dinner
-Closest to Pins prizes

Golfers/Donations/Sponsors welcomed

DONATIONS TAX DEDUCTABLE (vet charity org: 501(c) 19)
Proceeds benefit injured/ill/need veterans

Info: Contact George Rollins cell 703-209-2124
Post Commander AL Post 327

Make Checks to: AL Post 327
Send to: COL (ret) George Rollins
15 Kelley Road
Wilmington MA 01887

Golfer: _____

Golfer: _____

Golfer: _____

Golfer: _____

Hole Sponsor:
(\$100 hole/ \$50 half-hole)

Donation: _____

- NOTE: Two years ago we had a hole in one on #8 (\$500 credit card)

**Winchendon American
Legion Auxiliary Unit 193**

Back by
popular
demand

*Spaghetti
Dinner*



\$12 ea

September 11, 5-6:30pm

Winchendon American Legion Post 193
295 School St Winchendon, MA 01475



MEDIC NOW FOUNDATION, INC. PRESENTS

2025 SALUTE TO SERVICE CELEBRATION

OCT 25, 2025



★ ALL-AMERICAN ★

Freedom Concert

Featuring the American Bombshells

**ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT
U.S. MILITARY VETERANS**
Honor. Celebrate. Give Back.
Because our heroes deserve nothing less.

PLATINUM PRESENTING
SPONSOR



FREEDOM FIGHTER
SPONSOR



Plymouth Memorial Hall, Plymouth, MA





Veterans' Farmers Market





Fresh fruit and vegetables provided for Veterans and their Families.

Worcester VA Clinic
403 Belmont St
Worcester, MA 01604
1st and 3rd Fridays
11:00 am - 1:00 pm



www.projectnewhopema.org

DELIVERING ON THE NATION'S PROMISE





NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

Massachusetts National Cemetery, Bourne

Observances Will Be Held At 6:PM

September 19, 2025





Massachusetts E-Legionnaire

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ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of Massachusetts? If so, please follow these basic guide-lines for submissions.

- Submit your text in Microsoft Word format (.doc) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf). Save your file as the same name as the article, so we can easily keep track of it. Be sure to make it clear who the author is, whether it's you or if you are just forwarding it to us.
- **WE LOVE ARTICLES WITH PHOTOS**, or any other kind of images! Include photos and/or artwork for articles *separately* (NOT embed-ded in the article) as high resolution (300 dpi, or better) JPGs. Please name these files accordingly so we can track them along with your article. Let us know in your e-mail of any corresponding captions, and/or name of the photographer if necessary.

- Spell check everything! Especially people's names, web addresses, etc. You can help us greatly here by simply running your spell check function in your word processing program.

- **E-mail everything directly to us at fmacdonald53@comcast.net *no later than the 25th of every month for it to appear in the very next issue.*** This way we have plenty of time to work with in case we need to clarify anything with you.



Want to Subscribe to Mass E-Legionnaire:

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Still receiving correspondence through the U.S. Postal Service? Send the Department office your Name & Address and you will get a hard copy mailed to you.

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