

Commander's Message



Hopefully, you have adjusted well to the "two month" newsletter begun on the first of the year. Be sure you check the calendar carefully for upcoming events.

Mark Ryan has us on track for our return to Legion Baseball with two important elements: a team and a coach. Past Commander Clif Morvant will be the team's General Manager and we will have shirts and hats to purchase at the Post to support these young Americans. All proceeds from the sale of these items will go to support the team and help them to participate in special tournaments. A schedule is not yet available however, when it is, we will be sure it is listed in the next issue of The Rising Star as well as posted on the website and at the Post.

In January we held the election of delegates to our annual convention in Ocean City and have begun plans for that event. In February, the SAL hosted their annual valentine's dance and sock hop. The calendar stays busy in March with three annual events: the St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage feast, the SAL Bull & Oyster Roast on the 24th, and our Legion Birthday celebration on Saturday, March 31.

In April we will be conducting a Post Clean Up Day. Everyone is cordially invited to join in our spring cleaning and have a hot dog or two while you're here. Clean up day is Saturday, April 21 beginning at 9:00-ish. The following Saturday, April 28, we will conduct our Post Everlasting Ceremony. This is the most solemn of American Legion programs and is when we take the time to recognize those comrades who have passed away during the past year. As part of our remembrance, we also plant a tree on Post grounds in their memory. The ceremony begins at 3:00 p.m. and a small reception will immediately follow our program.

It is almost impossible to keep up with all the information going around the Post these days. You can keep in touch by subscribing to our address list to receive the latest changes in programs, the newest events being planned and important veterans' issues being distributed. Just drop our Adjutant, J.D. Larson, a brief e-mail at jdcoastie@msn.com and you will be added to our e-mail address book.

The weather is getting better and the Legion year never slows down at Post 66. Keep an eye on the calendar or better yet, drop by the Post to see what's going on.

God Bless our Veterans and God bless America

Thomas D. Murphy
Commander

Adjutant's Call



Many of you may not be aware that not only do I serve as the Adjutant for Post 66, but I have the pleasure of having been chosen by you as one of two representatives (Charlie Milstead is the other) from our Post to the Department of Maryland Executive Committee (DEC). Like our Executive Committee at the Post, the DEC is charged with the operation of the state organization of our Legion. We meet four times a year (excluding the Convention) at various Posts around the state.

This experience, along with serving as the First Vice Commander of the Southern Maryland District, has afforded me the opportunity to witness meetings at many posts throughout the state, as well be able to see first hand how other posts conduct their business, operate and support the programs sponsored by The American Legion.

Without hesitation, I can attest that Disney-Bell Post 66 is seconded to none in all of those three areas. Our membership meetings are conducted in a professional manner and adhere to the guidelines outlined in The American Legion's Officers Guide. Post operations are also conducted professionally, but more important, profitably. And, because of those two successes, we are able to support almost all of the Legion programs available to us. We also have the luxury of being able to work with an active Auxiliary and our Sons of American Legion.

When our Founding Fathers returned from "The War to End All Wars," they understood the need to band together to protect what they described as the four pillars of The American Legion: Americanism, Children and Youth, National Defense and Veterans Rehabilitation. You will notice that "Having a Place to Drink Beer" is not one of our pillars. Yet, after all is said and done, we do like to relax and enjoy ourselves. We have a bar and a business, which allows us the opportunity to raise the funds necessary to support the programs outlined in the four pillars.

You have heard "it takes a village" and we are the village. It takes all of us pulling together in order to accomplish the \$5,000 to sponsor a baseball team, the \$6,000 in scholarships we give away, the \$5,000 we use to sponsor our scouts, the more than \$12,000 we donated to Katrina's veteran victims last year and I could go on and on. Yet, after all of these accomplishments, more than 135 of you have yet to pay your dues. That is more than \$3,000 we will not be able to give to the Bowie Food Pantry, or the Junior ROTC program, or your kids' sports team. You already know that publication of the newsletter has been restricted to save money and we will be doing so again with the next issue. Please check your membership card NOW! If it reads "2006", this will be your last issue of *The Rising Star* until your dues are received. We regret that we have to take this action, but as you can see, we have more important work to do.

Submitted in Service to God and Country.

J. D. Larson
Adjutant

Unit 66 Report

The Auxiliary has gotten off to a good start this year with membership. We are 22 members ahead of last year at this time but we still need 41 new members to meet our goal. If you know of someone who is interested or is unaware of their eligibility to become an Auxiliary member please speak with them. Membership applications are behind the bar.

The Auxiliary dinners are Friday, March 9th and April 13th. The menu for both evenings is "homemade" spaghetti sauce on pasta along with salad, Italian sausage link, Italian bread and dessert. The cost is \$8.00. So come on out, enjoy a delicious meal and help support the Auxiliary and our veteran programs.

A reminder that May is "Poppy Month." If you like, you can make a donation to honor a veteran, or just a donation in general to help the veterans that make the poppies. The making of the poppies is one of the sources of income for these veterans and all donations are greatly appreciated.

Our "Cold Hard Cash" raffle is ongoing. \$100.00 is the prize each month. You may purchase your ticket(s) from the bar or from any of our Auxiliary members. The cost is one for \$1.00 or six chances for \$5.00. The drawings are at the Unit meetings on March 21st and again on April 18th and you do not need to be present to win.

Judy Williams
Secretary



Safety Tip

When you are home for the night, don't put your car keys away. Why not? Think of this: It's a security alarm system that you may already have. Put your car keys beside your bed at night. If you hear a noise outside your home or someone trying to get in your house, just press the panic button for your car. The alarm will be set off and the horn will continue to sound until either you turn it off or the car battery dies. Test it. It will go off from most everywhere inside your house and will keep honking until your battery runs down or until you reset it with the button on the key fob chain. It works if you park in your driveway or garage. If your car alarm goes off when someone is trying to break in your house, odds are the burglar or rapist won't stick around and shortly all the neighbors will be looking out their windows to see who is out there and sure enough, the criminal won't want that. This tip came from a neighborhood watch coordinator.

And remember to carry your keys while walking to your car in a parking lot. The alarm can work the same way there. Share this information with your family and friends. It just might save a life or prevent a crime.

Legion Baseball Returns to Post 66



On January 24th, the General Membership approved the sponsorship and funding of a Post 66, American Legion baseball team for the 2007 season.

Under the plan presented by the Baseball Committee, the team will be formed this spring from players attending Bowie High School and Riverdale Baptist High School. Mr. Chuck Ford, a post member, has been selected as the Head Coach. Past Commander Clif Morvant has volunteered to serve as the General Manager and provide “hands on” oversight of the team. The Committee would also like to thank post member Charlie Blackburn for all his assistance in getting the information required to sponsor this team and his advise support to the project.

The Baseball Committee is also planning a “Fan Store” to open by the end of March. The store will be available for members, family and friends to purchase hats and team jerseys to wear at games. We will also ensure that the schedule will be posted on the web, in the newsletter, and around the post.

Volunteers are needed to pull a few more things together. If you can “pitch” in (sic), please talk to Brian Frye, Clif Morvant, or Mark Ryan.

2007 Patriotic Desktop Calendars



We still have 2007 Patriotic Desktop Calendars for sale that are personalized for Post 66. The \$4.50 cost includes postage. They measure 8 1/4” wide x 3 3/4” high. Every month displays a beautiful color patriotic photo. You may purchase your calendar at the Post or mail payment to: The American Legion Post 66, 9605 Old Laurel-Bowie Rd. Bowie, MD 20720.

Please help support your Post. Thank you.

American Legion Riders



WELL THE NEW YEAR IS OFF WITH A BANG! WE HAVE COME UP WITH A RIDE AND EVENTS CALENDAR FOR THE YEAR AND ARE ON THE WAY TO CONDUCTING OUR FIRST ORGANIZED RIDE TO SUPPORT THE BALTIMORE UNITED VOLUNTEERS (A WAR OF 1812 RE-ENACTORS GROUP FROM AMERICAN LEGION POST 38 IN DUNDALK) IT SHOULD BE ANOTHER GREAT YEAR FOR THE GROUP.

WE ARE LOOKING AT MORE FUN RIDES THIS YEAR WITH A RETURN TRIP TO ST. MICHAEL'S, MARYLAND FOR GOOD FOOD AND FUN. THERE ARE ALSO "ROUGH" PLANS FOR AN OVERNIGHT RIDE AND POSSIBLY A TRIP TO CHARLES TOWN SLOTS IN WEST VIRGINIA. WITH THIS KIND OF EXCITEMENT YOU DON'T WANT TO BE LEFT BEHIND. SO COME ON OUT TO ONE OF OUR MEETINGS (THE FOURTH THURSDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:30 P.M.) AND GET ALL OF THE INFORMATION FOR YOURSELF. IF YOU CAN'T QUITE GET THERE, CHECK US OUT ON THE POST WEB SITE WWW.ALPOST66.ORG.

WE HAVE TWO NEW CHAPTERS WITHIN THE STATE OF MARYLAND WITH ONE AT GREENBELT POST 136 AND THE OTHER IN ROSEDALE (BALTIMORE), POST 180. THEY BOTH CONTACTED OUR CHAPTER FOR ADVICE AND HELP IN GETTING THEIR CHAPTERS STARTED AND WE WELCOME THEM INTO THE AMERICAN LEGION RIDER FAMILY. WE LOOK FORWARD TO RIDING WITH THEM DURING THE YEAR AS WELL.

I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO HELP PRESENT THE WREATH DURING MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONIES AT THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY ON SATURDAY, MAY 26, 2007 AT 3:15 P.M. AND I AM HONORED TO DO SO. I WILL STAND TALL AND REPRESENT ALL TEN AMERICAN LEGION RIDER CHAPTERS WITHIN THE STATE. RIDE STRONG, RIDE SAFE.

YOURS IN SERVICE,

STEPHEN "BIG BIRD" WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR

A Gathering of Traitors

On Saturday, March 17, 2007 a group of socialists that include "Hanoi" Jane Fonda, Susan Sorandon and Cindy "Al-Qaida" Sheehan, intend to march on the Pentagon through the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The last time this group was in Washington (two weeks ago) they defaced the Capital Building with spray paint while the police stood by with orders "not to interfere", and several more of their friends spit on our troops.

Does this sound familiar? While these individuals may be well intentioned, they are giving aid and comfort to our enemies and showing them that Americans have no stomach for conflict, no matter what the goal. They are the same ones that protested Vietnam and then cried when millions were executed in "re-education camps" or when Pol Pot murdered another million or so in Cambodia.

I have put out a call to all American Legion Riders in the Old Line State (Maryland) to come together to protect the memorials to our fallen war veterans on that day. I for one will stand with my flag in my hand and hold the faith with my brothers and sisters. You do not have to be a Legion Rider to participate. If you feel the calling to stand tall against the tide of ignorance and traitorous actions of these individuals, please join us at the Wall around 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 17, 2007. For more information go to: <http://gatheringofeagles.org/>.

Stephen J. Williams



American Legion
Disney-Bell Post 66
9605 Old Laurel-Bowie Road
Bowie, MD 20720
Tel: (301) 464-9814
Fax: (301) 805-6832
Website: www.alpost66.org

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Bowie, MD
Permit No. 30

pppp
The Rising Star
March-April 2007



Legion Baseball is Back!