

Commander's Message



I was reading the Free State Warrior the other day and couldn't help but notice a sentence used by the Department of Maryland officers and I quote, "Where did the year go?" To them I say, try the job for two years. You see, at Post 66 it's almost a given that you will have the job as Commander for two years.

In my 2006-2007 year as Commander I lost quite arguably the best Post Adjutant a Commander could have, James L. Pritchett, Jr. I know this because of a similar situation I had a few years ago as president of another organization that if you don't have a good secretary or in Jim's case, Adjutant, you are destined to have a miserable year.

Now to add insult to injury, the Post Finance Officer moved out of town. Thank God there had good people who could and did step up to the plate and help the Post with its yearly commitments.

The first Legionnaire to take on more responsibility was J.D. Larson, who took over the Adjutant job, along with his current job as First Vice Commander of the Southern Maryland District. Then there is Steve Williams who took the Judge Advocate position along with a handful of jobs he does for the Legion Riders. Next are Mark Ryan and Brian Frye who together took on the jobs of the Americanism and Children and Youth Committees, which by the way have at least six different and separate functions within those Committees.

May saw Memorial Day in the Bowie Veterans Park which was very successful. May also saw the nominations of Legionnaires who are seeking Post Officer positions and I wish them all good luck in the future. This year, three positions will be contested: , Commander, Historian, and Sergeant-at-Arms. All other positions are uncontested with the exception of the executive committee where seven Legionnaires will be seeking four available positions on the committee.

In June we had a very successful Flag Disposal Ceremony. We were very pleased with the performance of 10 year old Samantha Stevens playing the Star Spangled Banner on her clarinet, and her 11 year old brother Fred playing Taps on his trumpet. They will play again on our 4th of July Family Picnic.

Roger Goll, Pete Chambers, Bill Milligan and yours truly went to Walter Reed Army Hospital to visit our severely wounded soldiers. I personally was moved by the dedication of these young men and women whose lives are forever changed because of their service to our country. We will be making these visits a permanent program of Post 66 and I encourage you to become a part of it. It is the very least we can do to say "thank you" to these brave men and women.

The delegates to the Department of Maryland American Legion Convention will be headed for Ocean City the week of July 7-14. The hospitality room will be the same as last year, 102A Bradley on the Bay, 39th and Coastal Highway. The Post home (bar) will have convention hours of operation so check Post before scheduling any early or late visits.

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Adjutant's Call



The Adjutant of an American Legion post has a myriad of duties that are unseen by most members. Most members only see the Adjutant as the one responsible for taking minutes at Post meetings but there is a lot more to this vital Legion position.

The Adjutant works hand in hand with the Chairman of the Membership Committee in assuring that the Post membership continues to grow. The Adjutant collects the dues, ensures they get deposited, records payment, issues the membership card, delivers the membership information to the Department of Maryland, and maintains membership records.

The Adjutant is also the right hand "man" of the Post Commander. The position serves much like that of an organization's corporate secretary. The Adjutant is an endorser of checks, prepares an endless flow of required reports and submits them to the Department and National organizations. At Post 66, the Adjutant is also responsible for maintaining the infamous "bar book", which keeps the records of members' numbers in order to win big money. The Adjutant also maintains the bulletin boards, posts special announcements, keeps the Post, Auxiliary and SAL Officer Boards up to date, changes the electronic sign, and arranges for special Post events such as Early Bird Dinner, Post Birthday Dinner and Joint Installation of Officers Dinner. I am sure there are a few hundred items that have been omitted but you get the picture.

It has been both a privilege and an honor to be able to have served as the Post Adjutant after the untimely passing of Jim Pritchett last August. When the Legion year began in 2006, it was my intention to step back from a previously hectic Post schedule. As most of you know, my Legion service has continued at the District, Department and National levels and, inasmuch as I have served as an officer at Post 66 continually since 1995, it is time to realize last year's goal and allow others to step up and participate in the leadership of the best Post in The American Legion.

Thank you for the opportunities given me to serve our Post and The American Legion. It has truly been an honor.

In Service to God and Country,

J. D. Larson
Adjutant

TROOP 1688 RETURNS TO POST 66



On Tuesday, nights the boy scouts are at the post through September. With one of the largest troops in the county, it is often difficult to find a facility for meetings and the "back yard" of the Post works out perfect during summer months. The Scout storage shed is now on site! Promised to the organization during the 2004 American Legion year, it was delayed due to the permit process of the now famous (some say, infamous) pavilion.

Unit 66 Report

The election for this years officers was held at the May 16th meeting and the officers are as follows: President – Lois Van Sickle, Vice President – Cindy Morvant, Secretary – Judy Williams, Treasurer – Anna Thompson, Chaplain – Emily Goldman, Historian – Linda Healy and Sgt-At-Arms - Juanita Thompson. Congratulations to one and all.

The Auxiliary ended it's "dinners" this past year with Italian dinners which proved to be pretty successful. We want to thank everyone who participated and help make it a success. We look forward to all of you and hopefully others to join us when our dinners start up again in the Fall.

Our Red, White and Blue Wreath Raffle went well and the winner was our own Laura Martin. Way to go Laura.

Our Cold Cash Raffles have been ongoing. They will stop for the summer but will begin again in September so be on the lookout for any of our Auxiliary members who may be selling tickets or you can always ask the bartenders for tickets.

I hope everyone is able to come to the 4th of July celebration and wishing you a relaxing and enjoyable summer.

Judy Williams
Secretary



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The Joint Installation of Officers for The American Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, and Legion Riders will be Wednesday, July 25, 2007, at which time I will join the ranks of the Past Commanders.

And, as a special going away present for me, the building permit for our PAVILION is in the house, which is to say, it's here, taped to the window, and ready to go. Thanks go to Roger Goll, who endured months and months of endless aggravation dealing with Pee Gee County and MNCPPC. To Roger I offer my sincere gratitude and to the to the other two I say, “*^#@(!!?!>*&>”.

I want to thank everybody for the help I received during the past two years, to the Legionnaires, to the Auxiliary, to the SAL, and to the Legion Riders...

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!

God Bless our Veterans and God bless America

Thomas D. Murphy
Commander
Disney-Bell Post 66

Children and Youth Participate in Flag Retirement Ceremony

June 14th, Flag Day, was our annual flag retirement ceremony. This year, the ceremony was dominated by the youth organizations that are supported by Post 66. Seven scouting organizations and our baseball team were present. The Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts retired the Post flag, worked as honor escorts, helped with set-up, and out numbered Post members at the event. The National Anthem was played by clarinetist Samantha Stevens and Taps was played by her brother Freddy Stevens...a real family affair. Overall, this was a great event with the youth of our community demonstrating patriotism and giving a little back to the post. A small reception was held afterwards in which tons of hot dogs were consumed by the participating groups.



Legion Riders Escort National Guard

Members of the American Legion Riders of Disney-Bell Post 66 of Bowie, Maryland, joined with members of the Southern Maryland District American Legion Riders of Post 293 on June 12 to help send off 400 members of the 1-158th Cavalry Regiment of the Maryland



National Guard. The event started at the Naval Academy stadium in Annapolis with great pomp and circumstance. Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, congressional representatives, the adjutant general of the Maryland National Guard and the Maryland department commander, lauded the efforts and heroism of the unit. They all pledged to support the troops, and their families, during their one year deployment.

Following the ceremonies, the soldiers said their farewells to their families, and friends, then boarded six buses. They were escorted to the Maryland/Delaware state line by a Maryland State Police motorcade, and over 69 motorcycles comprised of veterans and veterans support groups

from across the state. They traveled up Interstate 95, toward their final destination, Fort Dix, N.J. There, they will receive their final training before deploying to the Middle East. Prior to crossing the Delaware border, the American Legion Riders of Bowie, pulled off the road, near Havre de Grace, and stood at attention alongside the highway, rendering honors, in the form of a salute to the six buses carrying the members of the 1-158th Cavalry Regiment.

Veterans of the Viet Nam era said that they had learned from "their war" and wouldn't let the same mistakes happen to these brave soldiers that befell them. We must stand with our troops, and with their families, during these most trying of times.

American Legion Riders



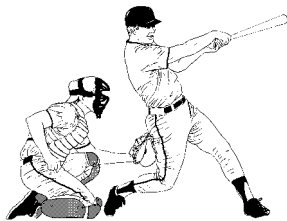
Summer is here and the riding is easy, just finding the time seems to be the problem. The Legion Riders have been very busy since Memorial Day. On 9 June we conducted our First Annual "Ride To The Colors" to help support the Baltimore United Volunteers (War of 1812-1814 re-enactors) and the Fisher House at Andrews Air Force Base. On 10 June, we rode in the Concerns Of Police Survivors (COPS) ride supporting the families left after a Law Enforcement Officer has given their all to our communities. On 12 June, we supported the activation and deployment of members of the 1-158th Cavalry Regiment of the Maryland National Guard as they departed Annapolis for Fort Dix, NJ to train prior to deployment. Members of the Legion Riders also participated in the Flag Disposal Ceremony held on Flag Day, 14 June.

Now for July and August we will be actively engaged once again with rides to support Casey Cares (a Maryland foundation similar to Make A Wish), the Post 4th of July Celebration and Charlotte Hall Veterans Poker Run to provide for the needs of our veterans. The Chapter continues to grow and our commitments do too! As of the Consolidated Post Report for Legion Year 2006-2007, our chapter has provided over 1,332 volunteer hours to our Post and its programs along with raising and distributing over \$7,400.00 to programs that reflect the Four Pillars of the American Legion (Veterans Rehabilitation, Americanism, Child Welfare and National Security).

Have great summer and ride safe!

Yours in Service,
Stephen "Big Bird" Williams, Director

American Legion Baseball



Have you been to a Legion baseball game, yet? Why not?

The Post baseball team is winding down the season. This has been a "rebuilding" year after several years of administrative problems and just skipping last season. We have a great group of young men on the field from four high schools (Bowie, Parkdale, DeMatha, and Gonzaga). We have put a solid program together which we will build upon next season. Many quality players from Bowie did not come our way this season because of the past problems but we have proven we can do this and I am sure we will see many at tryouts next year. Community newspapers have given us great coverage and the word is getting out that Post 66 is serious about Legion baseball. The only shortfall seems to be filling the stands. A hard core 12-15 Legion family members are at every game, but where is everyone else?



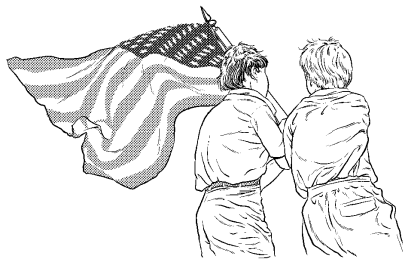
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The Rising Star

July-August 2007

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Happy Birthday USA