



THE AMERICAN LEGION



Harry White Wilmer Post 82

6630 Crain Highway, PO Box 441, La Plata, MD 20646

August 2026

www.Alpost82.org

301-934-8221

Commander's Corner

Commander's Message:

By John Flatley, Commander, Post 82

The Question That Stopped Me

*What would you say if someone asked,
"Why should I join the American Legion?"*

Every July, delegates from American Legion Posts across Maryland gather for the Department Convention. Think of it as our annual business meeting, leadership conference, and training events all rolled into one. Delegates elect Department officers, establish priorities for the coming year, receive training, and help shape the direction of the organization before Maryland sends its voice to the National Convention later this summer. It's one of the ways our local Post has a seat at the table in an organization that spans more than 12,000 Posts nationwide.

Post 82 was well represented this year. Joining me in Ocean City were 1st Vice Commander Jamie Zayas, outgoing Adjutant Chris Zabriskie, incoming Adjutant Anthony Hudnell, and Finance Officer Chuck Marsh.

Before the convention officially began, we rolled up our sleeves on Monday to help with the Southern Maryland Region Fish Fry. Together with SAL Squadron 82 member Harry Lehman, we spent the afternoon preparing, cooking, and serving 245 pounds of fried fish to convention attendees.

What's Going on at the Post?

Friday, Aug 7th Steamed Shrimp Dinner
5:00 – 6:30 PM or until sold out

**Friday, Aug 21st Sons of the American Legion
Baby Back Rib Dinner**
5:00 – 6:30 PM or until sold out

Monday, Aug 24th Red Cross Blood Drive
CRMC Hosted 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

EVERY WEDNESDAY S.A.L. Queen of Hearts
Drawing in the Lounge at 6:45 PM

EVERY THURSDAY Auxiliary BINGO
Doors open at 4:00 PM

 **NFL Sign-Up** 
in the Lounge - Almost FULL

NFL Washington Commanders
Season Square – Different Numbers Weekly



Better Together: A Quilt of Kindness

On the serving line, Auxiliary members Angel Hindle and Rocky Berry, along with Kacy Marsh, kept everyone supplied with delicious sides and hot dogs. It was another great example of the Legion Family doing what we do best, working together in service and enjoying the fellowship that comes with it.

Tuesday brought a full schedule of Legion College training. I attended the membership recruitment and retention session led by National Commander candidate John "Jay" Bowen of Colorado. His challenge to us was both simple and convicting.

He asked, **"If a veteran asked you why they should join the American Legion, could you answer in 30 seconds?"**

His response was straightforward:

1. *We believe in God and Country.*
2. *We believe in supporting veterans and their families.*
3. *We believe in educating and mentoring youth.*
4. *We believe in patriotic spirit.*
5. *We believe in a strong national security strategy.*

If you believe in these things, you should be a member of the American Legion.

I'll admit—that one hit home.

When someone asks me about the Legion, I often jump into the incredible list of accomplishments we've achieved over the past 107 years. Those accomplishments matter, but I've realized they can also overwhelm someone who simply wants to know why membership matters.

The more I thought about it, the more I realized my answer doesn't have to start with a history lesson. People connect with purpose before they connect with accomplishments.

For more than a century, the American Legion has given veterans a way to continue serving long after they hung up the uniform. That's why

we've grown into the nation's largest veterans service organization—not because of buildings or benefits alone, but because generations of veterans have chosen to stand together in service to one another, their communities, and our nation.

For many of us, the Legion is also where we find people who simply "get it." We don't have to explain military life or why service still matters. We share a common language, common experiences, and a desire to keep serving. That's something worth inviting another veteran to experience.

Maybe your answer is that the Legion fought for benefits veterans enjoy today. Maybe it's because of the friendships you've built at Post 82. Maybe it's the opportunity to mentor young people, support fellow veterans, or continue serving your community alongside people who share your values. Or maybe it's simply because this Post feels like home. None of those answers are wrong. In fact, they're all part of the same story.

So let me leave you with the same challenge Jay Bowen gave me.

If someone asked you tomorrow, "Why should I join the American Legion Family?" what would you say?

Take a few minutes to think about it. Write your answer down. Practice it until it feels natural. Then be ready to share it with a family member, friend, coworker, fellow church member, or another veteran you meet along the way.

You never know when a 30-second conversation might change the life of another veteran. We truly are better together, and together we can accomplish far more than any of us ever could alone.

Ready to Serve



johnflatleyjr@gmail.com



1st Vice Commander's Corner

Hello Legionnaires and All our Post Members!

Our 2027 Legion Year is off to a great start, renewals are coming into the Post at a steady pace, keep them coming. Our membership committee has put together two events that I would like to share with everyone.

First, we will be conducting a Legion 101 class on August 1st starting at 10am in the Post Hall. This is an informative session to learn more about the American Legion, our Post, and the many ways we serve Veterans, our community and each other. Open to all Post, Auxiliary and Son's members.

Second, It's Membership Appreciation Day! Monday October 12th starting at 12 noon, show your 2027 membership card and receive a hotdog, chips and non-alcoholic drink. This is open to all Post, Auxiliary and Son's members. Bring your family, friends, neighbors and that veteran looking to join our community, non-members pay just \$5.

We are asking all our current members to renew as soon as possible so we can reach our 100% goal by the end of the Year or sooner! For members that are pre-paid for 2027, see me at the next Post event and ask me for your 2027 card. After the August membership meeting, I will mail out all cards not picked up; help us out with this cost and pick yours up. I would also like to remind members that they can renew online at www.mylegion.org and pay for up to 3 years in advance. I like this option, so you do not have to worry about it each year. You can also stop by Post 82 and drop off your renewal fee of \$45 or mail it to Post 82 PO Box 441, 6330 N. Crain Hwy, La Plata MD 20646.

If you would like to join our Membership Committee and play a key role in membership activities, please contact me via email below.

I look forward to seeing you at our next dinner or function. If you have any changes or updates to your address, phone, email or if you need assistance in renewing, please let us know.

Jamie Zayas, 1st Vice Commander

-- Always Serving

82postlaplata@gmail.com

301-751-2822 (call or text)



Hello Twizzlers!

Back from Ocean City and the Maryland Convention. We will be starting off a new year and thinking of ways you can help out this year. We can always use help at BINGO. We do have a signup sheet now on the computer for BINGO. We are now in the 21st century for signing up to help out.

I took our Poppy Hat to convention that our Poppy Rep Becky LaQuay made. As always, she did a great job!

The ladies who went to the convention were me, Janet Fogle, Darlene Willett, Edna Caywood, Kathie Flanagan, Angel Hindle and Barbara Vaughn.

We will be having a meeting on the standing rules and budget on August 4th at 6pm. Officers are encouraged to attend.

Our regular meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month at 6pm. Our next meeting is on August 11th at 6pm. I hope everybody has a great summer.

For Service not Self,
Lesley Radcliff
Auxiliary Unit 82 President

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

**S.A.L. Monthly Meetings are held the First
Tuesday of Each Month at 1800hrs**

The Squadron held the regular monthly meeting on July 7. We discussed plans for the bingo at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home on July 20 and the American Red Cross (ARC) Blood Drive on July 27.

Gale Willett, Gary Shupe and I worked the floor at the Southern Maryland Region bingo at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home on June 20. Forty-five residents participated with \$400 in prizes handled directly to the winners.

The Members Banquet/Installation dinner on July 25 was well attended. Special thanks to Southern Maryland Region Commander Lenny Wertz for installing the 2026-27 S.A.L. members. First Vice Commander and Adjutant Gary Shupe co-winners of the Squadron 82 Member Award.

Thanks to Gale Willett and Gary Shupe for handling the registration and refreshment tables at the ARC Blood Drive on July 27. Forty-seven units were collected. Great night guys. The next SAL Squadron 82 hosted blood drive is September 28th. Register early for an appointment at redcrossblood.org.

Yours in Service,

Dave Tatman
Commander, Squadron 82
tatman_david@comcast.net



Patriots on the Post 82 Memorials



S.A.L 1st Vice Commander Gale Willett continues to research and acknowledge the La Plata and Charles County heroes on the Post memorials. The following are five more individuals identified on the World War II memorial.

Sylvester Carroll Bell

Sylvester Carroll Bell, Jr., was the son of Sylvester Carroll Bell. He enlisted in the Navy on February 26, 1940. He served as a Radioman, 3rd Class on the USS Sims (DD 409) which was sank during the Battle of the Coral Sea on May 7, 1943. Although his body was not recovered, he was listed as killed-in-action on May 8, 1943.

Allen Alvey

Allen Alvey, born on June 12, 1920, was the son of Harry Joseph Alvey. He enlisted in the Army on January 12, 1942, at Fort George G. Meade. He served as a Private First Class, Company A, 145th Infantry Regiment, 37th Infantry Division, during World War II. He was killed on January 3, 1944, and was awarded the Purple Heart. He is buried in the Sacred Heart Cemetery in Bushwood, MD.

Benjamin George Baum

Benjamin George Baum, born on April 29, 1919, was the son of Lillian Sutherland. He served as a Corporal in the United States Marine Corps. He served in the Southwest Pacific Theatre, Philippine Islands where he was captured by the Japanese and held in Prisoner of War Camp #1, Cabanatuan 1-2-3 Nueva Province Luzon Philippines. He died on June 27, 1942. He received the Silver Star and is "Commemorated in Perpetuity" at the Manila American Cemetery.

Vernon Edward Billingsley

Vernon Edward Billingsley, born on April 22, 1925, was the son of Thomas McNeil and Stella Virginia Billingsley. He enlisted in the Army at Fort Myer on June 14, 1943. He served as a private in the Army's 1496th Engineering Division, Corps of Engineers, Floating Power Detachment. While in Belgium he contracted tubercular meningitis. On May 13, 1945, he was flown to the Mitchell Field Long Island hospital in New York, where he died three days later on May 17, 1945. He is buried at the Marbury Baptist Church Cemetery.

Joseph Thomas Bolger

Joseph Thomas Bolger, born on November 21, 1918, was the son of Mary Bolger. He enlisted in the Army on June 26, 1942, in Baltimore. Private Bolger served in Headquarters Battery, 105 Coast Artillery Corps. He was killed in action on January 3, 1944, from an aerial bomb blast. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Medals he received include the Purple Heart, American Campaign Medal, Europe/Africa/Middle Eastern Campaign, and World War II Victory Medal.



**ALR Meetings are held the
Second Thursday of Each Month at 1800hrs**

The latest scoop from the Steel Pony Corral:

Congratulations on a job well done Post 82 family. The MD Gold Star Legacy Ride presented over \$230K to MD Convention in Ocean City on July 15th. Of that total donation Post 82 gave \$15,918 good enough for a fourth-place finish among all Posts in MD. The highest donation was from Laurel Post 60 for over \$28K with the 10th place finisher giving over \$9,000. In August when the MD Riders present our check at the National Convention in Louisville, KY Maryland will be among the top of all states in giving to the Veterans and Children's Fund.



On July 3rd, the Riders rode out of Pittsburgh PA to take part in the pre-ride briefing for the Sojourn 250 ride. This ride left Pittsburgh very early on Saturday July 4th with over 200 motorcycles and a full law enforcement escort for the entire ride to Washington DC. The law enforcement support kept the bikes rolling with temperatures well over 100 degrees to give some comfort to man and machine. The Riders were delivering a flag which had flown over 250 Veterans Cemeteries and Monuments, the final stop being at Arlington National Cemetery as part of the 250-Year Anniversary celebration of

these United States. The Riders were also to take in a ball game at Nat's Park and be honored in a ceremony before the first pitch.

On Saturday July 11th, the Riders ventured up to Towson Post 22 to take part in their Hero Dogs ride. This annual ride in July is to raise money for service dogs and their training to love and support a struggling veteran. Each year Hero Dogs partners with a veteran to provide them with a service dog and a week full of training with the veteran and his new best friend. These canines and their training are presented to struggling veterans free of charge which is the reason for this ride hosted by ALR Post 22.

Riders, if you have any submissions of rides or events, please email to k_bryant@care.saddomcast.net so they can be included in the upcoming newsletters.

Upcoming Rides and Events:

August 13- ALR Meeting at Post 82 @ 1800

August 15- Healing Heroes Ride at

Patriot Harley-Davidson @ 0800

August 16- Sandwich Sales at

Avenue Post 221 @ 1230

August 21- Elkins WV TBD

August 23- National Legacy Ride

Lincoln NB to Fort Knox KY

On behalf of Director Jeff Coombs, (Animal)
Kevin (BIG SEXY) Bryant

“We ride In HONOR of those who have served”

Better Together: A Quilt of Kindness

Sometimes the simplest acts of kindness say the most about who we are as a Legion Family.

Earlier this month, during the American Legion Riders' annual Ice Cream Social at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, SAL member Harry Lehman had the opportunity to spend time visiting with Navy veteran Eloise Dela Cuesta. Touched by their conversation, Harry returned to Post 82 and shared her story with Shannon Willett, our Bar Manager and a proud Unit 82 Auxiliary member.

An accomplished quilter who enjoys sharing her handmade creations with others, Shannon immediately offered to make Eloise a quilt. Harry later returned to Charlotte Hall to personally present the quilt on Shannon's behalf, surprising Eloise with a beautiful gift made especially for her. Her smile said it all.

This thoughtful act is a wonderful reminder that serving veterans is a shared mission. When members of the American Legion, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders each contribute their unique gifts, together we make an even greater impact.

Better Together. Legion Family Strong.

