



THE AMERICAN LEGION



Harry White Wilmer Post 82

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

March 2026

www.Alpost82.org

301-934-8221

Commander's Corner

Commander's Message:

By John Flatley, Commander, Post 82

Thank you, Post 82 Family, for all you do in our community. Last month I had the privilege of hosting the Charles County Economic Development Advisory Board meeting here at Post 82. Thanks to SAL Commander Dave Tatman, Auxiliary President Lesley Radcliff and Legion Riders Director Jeff Coombs for representing our Post Family. We had close to 30 local government and business leaders in the room, and they were quite surprised to learn how large our family is. Some days I think we are one of the best kept secrets in La Plata, hidden in plain sight on Crain Highway. But I know better. Our members volunteer in any number of organizations serving our community and our Post Family are very active both in the veteran space and in community support. Thank you all for your continued service.

Thanks, Tom Rowe, Harry Lehman and Bob Striegel for showing the Post a little love on Valentines Day! Together, we knocked out cleaning and touch-up painting in the hall. Thankfully, I did not have to use a paintbrush. But, they did let me clean some and lay down a little bit of painter's tape. Take a look the next time you're in the building and be sure to thank the fellas for their work.

Thank you, Jeff Coombs for taking time to shim the closet doors and especially for leveling out the dumpster gates. Both definitely needed repair.

What's Going on at the Post?

Friday, Mar 6 Steamed Shrimp Dinner

Members & Guests 5:00 – 6:30 PM

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/805044AAEAC2AA6FF2-61637244-legion>

Friday, Mar 20 S.A.L. Fish Fry Dinner

5 – 7:00 PM

Monday, Mar 23 S.A.L. Post #82 Blood Drive

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

Coming Up

Apr 15th Application Deadline for Department MD Scholarship

Apr 24th MD Dep Golf Tournament Scramble Black Rock GC Hagerstown MD

May 1st Application Deadlines for Boys State and Girls State

May 1st Scholarship Application Deadline for Descendants of Vietnam Veterans

Jun 26th Post 82 Golf Tournament Scramble 20th Annual Joe Williams Golf Tournament White Plains GC

ICYMI – The heat exchanger on the Kitchen HVAC unit went down a few weeks ago. The unit is back up and running. Thank you to the SAL, Auxiliary and the Riders for your financial support in this repair.

On February 18, our Post 82 Family leadership held our first meeting. The top two leaders from all units of our family spent an hour together setting up what will become regular meetings where we can share calendars and opportunities for shared service. I am looking forward to learning more and gaining a better understanding of how we all operate to strengthen our Post Family.

2025–26 Goals Update

- **Increase retention from 91% to 95%.**

As of February 13, our retention rate remains strong and is currently at 87.17%. I have complete confidence we can hit our goal of 95%. If you have not renewed your membership yet, please contact Jamie Zayas or myself and let us know what your Post can do to help you renew.

- **Grow membership from 795 to 835.** Last month we had over twenty Legionnaires move their membership from the Department holding post to Post 82. See Jamie's report for total numbers but again, I am confident that we will reach our 2025/26 goal of 835 members by May 1.

- **Legion Basic Training: 50 Legionnaires.**

I was pleased to hand out completion certificates to two more members at our last meeting, bringing our total to four members who have completed Legion Basic Training. Several members have told me they are currently in training. Learning about the American Legion, its history, and how we operate helps us grow deeper. We still have a long way to go to reach the annual goal but every educated member makes our Post stronger. I'd rather be an inch wide and a mile deep than a mile wide and an inch deep. Please commit to learning about YOUR American Legion. <https://register.legion.org/alei>

- **Be The One Training: 40 Post 82 Family members.**

10 members have completed this 60-minute Zoom. This training equips us to help a friend, co-worker or family member who is contemplating suicide with a simple series of questions. It's quick and easy but so valuable. Please consider registering for a session. Let me know when you complete it and I'll present you with a certificate of training and Be The One Coin.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Boys State Recruitment (2026).

Please spread the word that registration is open for Boys State at <https://www.mdlegion.org/boysstate> contact Adjutant Chris Zabriskie at zabriskiect@gmail.com for more information. Maryland Boys State is also looking for volunteers to serve at the camp scheduled for June 21-27, 2026 at McDaniel College in Westminster, MD. If you are interested in serving, email or call me and I'll connect you with the right people.

Thank you again for the privilege of serving as your Commander this year. Post 82 has a proud legacy and a bright future—we are truly better together.

Ready to Serve.



johnflatleyjr@gmail.com

301.848.7664

1st Vice Commander's Corner

Hello, my fellow legionnaires!

Hope this newsletter finds you well and you are like me and counting the days until we are out of this chilly winter. Our current membership status is 740 members renewed for a 92% membership rate, thank you to all that have renewed. For those that have yet to renew for the 2026 Legion year I ask for your assistance, on behalf of Post 82, to help us reach our goal of 100%. We value you as members of our Post and do not wish to move forward without you. I will personally be reaching out via phone to complete buddy checks and to see if there are any needs the Post can assist with. You can renew online at www.mylegion.org or you can stop by Post 82 and drop off your renewal fee of \$45. We encourage you to complete this as soon as possible to keep your membership in good standing and maintain your active years of membership. You can also mail in your renewal to Post 82 PO Box 441, 6330 N. Crain Hwy, La Plata MD 20646.

I would also like to welcome our newest Post members, I have recently completed transfers from Post 297, which is the holding Post for the State of Maryland. So, if you see fresh faces in the lounge, introduce yourself and welcome them into the Post.

On February 10th we conducted our first American Legion 101/ New Member Orientation and had a great turnout from legionnaires and Son's members. We shared information about the American Legion, our Post 82, and the great programs we have going on and benefits we offer. Our next Orientation will be on April 14th, and time to be determined, we are thinking of conducting it either before or after our general membership meeting. If you have a preference, send me an email.

I would also like to solicit ideas for membership appreciation. If you have something you would like to share with our membership committee, a function or get together you would like to see happen, something more we can do in the

lounge or a family event, please send that to me via my contact information below. Also, if you would like to join our membership committee we would love to have you on the team.

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.

Thank you,

Your 1st Vice Commander
Jamie Zayas -- Always Serving
82postlaplata@gmail.com
301-751-2822

Adjutant's Corner

AMERICAN LEGION GAMING

American Legion Gaming (ALG) is an initiative of the American Legion to engage members, families, and the community through gaming. This could include online computer-based gaming as well as more traditional board and/or card games. Right now ALG is open to legion members and non-members alike and supports goals of Comfort, Connection, and Careers. CALL TO ACTION: Post 82 is looking for one or two people to lead the effort to promote ALG at our post.

AMERICAN LEGION WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Save the Date: On Saturday, March 28th, the American Legion Southern Maryland Region Women's Veterans Committee will host Women's Veterans Appreciation Event. The event is open to all, and will take place at 1 pm at AL Post 217 in College Park, MD, 9217 Baltimore Avenue.

Post Adjutant
Chris Zabriskie
zabriskiect@gmail.com
240-320-6694



Chaplain's Corner

So, how was your Valentine's Day? Was it more fun than your Super Bowl activities? Did you and your Valentine have a romantic evening out or did you have one at home? Or did you spend the day reminiscing over a passed love? Did you have any real celebration of it at all?

In consideration of the holiday, did you give any thought to the meaning of the love behind it? Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines love, in part, as follows:

- (1) "strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties"
- (2) "affection and tenderness felt by lovers"
- (3) "affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests"
- (4) "warm attachment, enthusiasm, or devotion"

Do any of the above items resonate with you? While the Bible has more than a hundred verses addressing love, I find the following one particularly meaningful:

1 Corinthians 13:4-7: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects,

always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

How would life be for us if we loved others and others loved us in the manner described above?

As always, if you or your family have any needs with which I may be able to assist, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours in Christ,
Paul Stockman, Chaplain
301-768-2514
papastockman@yahoo.com



Hello Twizzlers:

We have had some nasty winter weather, and we had to cancel BINGO two Thursday due to the ice and snow. BINGO is back now and hopefully we will not see any more nasty winter weather!

If you have not paid your 2026 dues please send it to Anna Sexton or you can leave it at the post in our mailbox.

For God and Country program will be on March 22nd at 2pm. Post 238 Hughesville will be hosting this program. All should attend as it is a very moving program.

The Auxiliary donated \$2,000 to the Post for the HAVC unit in the kitchen. We donated \$2,000 to Warfighters.

As always we can use volunteer to help out with BINGO. I would like to give a BIG thank you to Chris LaQuay who is always there

helping me out when I am short of workers in the kitchen. Also a BIG thank you to the riders who help with BINGO they are truly appreciated as are all the folks that help out. If it was not for BINGO we would not be able to help out the veterans and our community.

It will soon be election time and if you would like to be on the election committee, please let me know at our March 10th meeting. As always our meeting starts at 6pm.

Please visit your elderly neighbors and veterans to see if they are in need of any assistance. With the weather being so cold a lot of them cannot venture out in the cold.

Our next meeting is on March 10th at 6pm.

Everybody stay warm and safe.

For Service not Self,

Lesley Radcliff
Auxiliary Unit 82 President



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

More snow. I'm going to let Mother Nature take care of it this time. Looking forward to spring and March 8 when Daylight Saving Time begins and we gain that extra hour of daylight in the evening.

At the regular monthly Squadron meeting on February 3, the members discussed the election of officers for the 2026-27 administrative year. We are still looking for a candidate for Squadron Commander. Candidates for the other offices are not a

problem. If you are interested in filling the Commander's position, please let me know.

Gale Willett and Gary Shupe worked the floor at the Southern Maryland Region bingo at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home (CHVH) on February 16. Forty three residents attended. Four hundred ten dollars were handed out in prizes.

Thanks to Gale Willett, Gary Shupe, Roy Yanosh, Alana Lentz, Lennie Lentz, Cindy Moruzzi, Carol Karpiak, David Quade, Kathleen Quade, Cathy Bryant, Kevin Bryant, Harry Lehman, Carl Lehman, John Earle, David Earle, Steve Willett, Brent Wilson, and Pat Wackerie who volunteered at the fish fry on February 20. Two hundred thirty dinners were served. It was a pleasure to have eight residents and two staff members from the CHVH as guests of the Post 82 family. The next, and last, fish fry of the year will be on March 20. Check the flier on the website, www.alpost82.org.

The Squadron will host an American Red Cross (ARC) Blood Drive on March 23.

As of the February 19 report, the Squadron 2026 membership is 195 which is 89.45% of our goal of 218. If your card doesn't have 2026 at the top, please renew as soon as possible. Dues can be paid on-line at www.legion.org/sal-renew, by mail to PO Box 441, La Plata MD 20646, or in person by dropping it off at the Post. Please note, the on-line process is set up for renewals at the \$20 rate. Dual members and those under 21 should only use the mail or in person options.

Yours in Service,

Dave Tatman
Commander, Squadron 82
tatman_david@comcast.net
301-752-8273



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

The latest scoop from the Steel Pony Corral:

The Riders would like to send out our deepest sympathies and condolences to Mike Hanks and family on the passing of Mike's mother Bonnie Hanks. If you never met his mom, she was an angel on earth who now has her wings. May she Rest In Peace. A Celebration of Life is planned for Sunday March 8, from 3-6pm at FOP Lodge #24 10285 Rosewick Road La Plata MD 20646

The Riders dinner was held on Saturday Feb. 21. There was a total of 28 people in attendance which included Riders and their guests. Great food and service was provided by Chef Gary and staff at Blue Dog Saloon in Welcome MD. Beautiful fellowship and conversation was provided by The Riders with all attendees thoroughly enjoying the evening.

Hello Riders, Thank you for renewing your current memberships in the Legion, SAL, and The Auxiliary and in the Riders. We are at 100% membership renewal for 2026.

We are kicking off our 4th Annual Gun Raffle this month. We will still be selling only 500 tickets for \$20 each with the winner receiving a choice of \$1000 cash or a Henry 45-70 Lever Action Rifle. The raffle drawing will be May 23, 2026, at the completion of our SMD Legacy Ride. If you wish to purchase tickets please see any Rider at one of the Post events or contact me. Also if you're a Rider who wants to sell tickets please get in touch with me.

The Riders have started soliciting sponsors for Our 5th Annual SMD Legacy Ride. The ride will be held on May 23, 2026 with registration starting at 0830. This ride will help to fund The MD

Legacy Run, Warfighter Advance, Vacations 4 Vets and other veterans and community causes throughout 2026. If you want to support either financially or volunteering to help, put on the event, please see Director Jeff Coombs. You can also register to ride the event online at our American Legion Riders Post 82 Public Facebook page. All bikes and cages are encouraged and welcome to ride.

Upcoming Rides and Events:

Thursday, March 12 - ALR Meeting 1800

Saturday, April 11- State ALR Meeting @ 1200

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

"We ride In HONOR of those who have served"

**DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE
GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**

Applications are due **April 15, 2026**
Scholarship Winners notified in **August 2026**
To be considered for a scholarship, the applicant must: be a **child or a grandchild** of a veteran and be a Maryland resident.

- Not attained their 20th birthday by Jan1, 2026
- Be a full-time student when he/she enters college (at least 12 credits per semester)
- Applicants may complete the online version of the application at

<https://mdlegion.org/formspage.htm>



This isn't just another class—it's a powerful, 60-minute Zoom session that could help save a life.

Through this training you will learn how to:

- Use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale to recognize those at risk.
- Spot key risk factors and warning signs.
- Understand the types of suicidal ideation and four urgent behaviors that indicate imminent danger.
- Communicate with compassion and confidence when someone may be in crisis.

This opportunity is open to **everyone in the Legion Family—Legionnaires, Auxiliary, SAL, and Riders. Get more information and register for a session here**

<https://www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one/be-the-one-training>



VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LINEAL DESCENDANTS OF VIETNAM VETERANS

Washington, D.C. - The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is excited to announce the new Legacy Scholarship for the lineal descendants of Vietnam veterans. Applications are now open for the children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren and so on, aged 16-30, of U.S. military servicemembers who served in the Vietnam war.

Scholarships include up to ten (10) at \$2,000, two (2) at \$5,000 and one (1) at \$10,000 and are for students pursuing post-secondary education or career job training.

“We are proud to provide this opportunity to the descendants of our nation’s Vietnam veterans. Instead of the usual scholarship application where a student writes an essay about themselves, applicants are required to submit the stories about their Vietnam veteran so that we can preserve these stories of service for generations to come. We hope to gather the stories of as many Vietnam veterans as possible, while honoring their service by offering their descendants this scholarship opportunity,” said Jim Knotts, president and CEO of VVMF.

Selection for the scholarships will not be need-based or merit-based solely on academic achievement of the student applicant, but rather on a combination of the quality of the factual narrative of the Vietnam veteran while meeting minimal student qualifications. For living Vietnam veterans, the applicants must work with their veterans to collect their stories. For those on The Wall or those who passed after returning home, the applicants must interview family members or friends to collect their stories.

The application period is now open and the deadline to apply for a 2026 scholarship is May 1, 2026. Recipients will be announced on July 15, 2026. The application and details can be found here: www.vvmf.org/scholarship.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is the nonprofit organization that founded the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall) in Washington, D.C. in 1982. VVMF continues to lead the way in paying tribute to our nation’s Vietnam veterans and their families. VVMF’s mission is to honor and preserve the legacy of service in America and educate all generations about the impact of the Vietnam War and era. To learn more about VVMF, visit www.vvmf.org.