

GREENBELT AMERICAN LEGION POST 136

CONTACT



6900 Greenbelt Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770

(301) 345-0136

<http://www.greenbeltmdpost136.org>

VOLUME LXXXII

January/February 2025

ISSUE I

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone had a great time on the Legion Road Trip which took place in November. The Legion members traveled to Francis Scott Key Post 11, Wheaton Post 268 and Henderson-Smith- Edmonds Post 86. Thanks to Dana Coleman it went off without a hitch. We'll plan another road trip in the future.

December went by so fast. We started out with honoring Pearl Harbor Day on December 6th which turned out to be a great event. December 9th the Greenbelt American Legion had the employees Christmas Party which turned out very nice.

We are starting Cornhole early this year to accommodate league scheduling. In order to start horseshoes early this year Cornhole was started on December 11th and will go on until March. Super Bowl Party 1 will be the 2nd Saturday of the month in January on the 11th and Super Bowl 2 will be on the 3rd Saturday of the month in January on the 18th. As always, we will need volunteers to make both parties a great event.

The first Executive Committee meeting will be held on Monday, January 6th at 6:30PM. Get ready for Valentine's Day, Friday February 14th. The Post will be serving a Valentine's Day Dinner which will be Surf & Turf. Look for the flyer in the Contact for more information. If you missed the Early Bird Dinner and didn't renew your Legion membership, remember you can renew your membership in the Members Lounge with the bartenders at any time. We are going to start checking Membership ID's at the beginning of the year.

The Legion's restaurant is creating tasty meal specials that are always offered at a reasonable price. You can always refer to the Greenbelt American Legion Facebook page, <https://facebook.com/GreenbeltLegion> for listings of the selections, or visit the restaurant in person to enjoy the food. Please tell your friends that our restaurant is open to the public and does offer a full menu as well as the specials. Bring your whole family. Restaurant hours are posted on our Facebook page and on our website at <https://www.greenbeltmdpost136.org>.

2024/2025
Commander: Greg Gigliotti
1 st Vice Commander: James Hawkins
2 nd Vice Commander: Butch Hicks
Judge Advocate: Tom Davis
Sgt. at Arms: Bill Muffley
Chaplain: Shawn Fenstermacher
Historian: Bernie Zempolich
Finance Officer: Harold Schlemmer
Members at Large: Richard Brown John Hardwick Timothy Meade Larry Williams
Adjutant: Mike Moore

God Bless America,
Greg Gigliotti
Commander
Greenbelt American Legion Post 136



CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Legionnaires,

As we step into a new year, it is fitting to reflect on the profound connection between faith and service that has defined so many of our military heroes. The American Legion's motto, "For God and Country," calls us to honor these values in every aspect of our lives. January and February provide powerful historical examples of military figures who embodied this motto, inspiring us to carry forward their legacy.

During the brutal winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge, General George Washington sought divine guidance and strength. Accounts of Washington kneeling in prayer amidst the hardships faced by his troops have become an enduring symbol of reliance on God during trials. His faith not only sustained him but also inspired his soldiers to persevere, leading to eventual victory in the Revolutionary War.

On February 3, 1943, four Army chaplains aboard the USAT Dorchester and made the ultimate sacrifice. As the ship was sinking after being torpedoed, they gave up their life jackets and prayed together, offering comfort to the men around them. These chaplains—John P. Washington (Catholic), George L. Fox (Methodist), Alexander D. Goode (Jewish), and Clark V. Poling (Reformed)—set an unparalleled example of selflessness and interfaith unity.

These stories remind us of the profound role faith plays in military service. It has sustained warriors, guided leaders, and provided hope in the darkest hours. As Legionnaires, we are heirs to this legacy of faith and courage. Whether we are honoring the fallen, supporting veterans, or mentoring the next generation, let us uphold the values of "God and Country" with the same steadfastness shown by those who came before us.

May their examples inspire us to serve with integrity, compassion, and unwavering faith in the principles that make our nation great.

In Service to God and Country,
Chaplain Shawn Fenstermacher

VALENTINES SPECIAL DINNER FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH

4:00 to 8:00 PM

Featuring "Surf & Turf"
Filet Mignon & Grilled Shrimp
Baked Potato
Green Beans Almondine

\$19.95

Reservations Required

TRY OUR SPECIAL DRINKS & DESSERTS

Regular menu items available

THERE WILL NOT BE A "HAPPY HOUR SPECIAL FOR THIS MEAL"



SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION SQUADRON 136



S.A.L. COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Dear Legion Family,

Your Squadron's continued hope is that this newsletter finds all in good health and spirits as we begin this new year of 2025.

Your Squadron took a brief break at the end of December. While doing that, we allowed ourselves to peek back in amazement at the year of 2024 and recognize how much our band of rabble-rousers accomplished with your generous support and participation! The Queen of Hearts game drove our year and enabled us to make several generous donations to hurricane relief efforts in the Mid-Atlantic region and to the Legion's National Emergency Fund. For Christmas, we made a generous donation for items to our Veterans living at Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. Donations to Toys for Tots, Tunnels to Towers, Maryland Special Olympics, and Wreaths Across America, to name just a few organizations, were also made. We also assisted replacing restaurant equipment in the kitchen as well as the repair of one of our outside grills. The S.A.L. is in the process of having the beige chairs in the Members' Lounge re-covered. We hope to have all chairs completed by February.

In the New Year, consider dropping by on Wednesdays to check in with the S.A.L., grab a quick bite or try your luck at finding the Queen of Hearts. We will be looking for volunteers to help support the Super Bowl parties in January as well as other activities in the coming months. Resolve to volunteer with a purpose! S.A.L. needs help to continue our core missions and engage in new missions. Specifically we are looking for assistance with coordinating flag placements for veterans in cemeteries, other than state veteran cemeteries, in our area for Memorial Day weekend. Looking for help with a possible Legion Family Day event at the end of April. We are also looking for several people to rotate on our Wednesday Queen of Hearts and food offerings. Speak with your officers when you see them for more information. A few extra hands make the work easy and usually more fun and rewarding.

As is my custom, I encourage all our Family members who have not renewed their dues to do so quickly. Renewing your dues triggers so many other components of our missions that strengthen the American Legion Family and our greater community. Stop by the Post to pay your dues or mail in to the Post. S.A.L. 2025 dues are \$25 for regular members and \$15 for dual and members Under 18. In addition to renewing your dues, renew your support and awareness of how our squadron supports our Legion Family, veterans and community missions. Join the squadron monthly meetings held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00PM.

Remember our restaurant is now open Friday and Saturdays for lunch, dinner and Sunday breakfast. The extra traffic generated by visiting the restaurant twice a month with a friend will ultimately allow our Legion Family to continue the mission of supporting the community as a whole and continue expanding offerings.

We all know that during this month the leadership of our country will complete its annual change of leadership. The Legion advocates for many pieces of legislation that are of direct benefit to our veterans and their families. The Legion encourages all

(S.A.L. Commander's Message Continued on Page 4)

2024/2025	
Commander:	Lenny Wertz
1 st Vice Commander:	Vacant
2 nd Vice Commander:	Dave Fendlay
Chaplain:	Kenny Hall
Finance Officer:	Kevin Foster
Historian:	Ray (Cory) Micallef
Sgt-At-Arms:	Marty Rousseau
Adjutant:	Ray (Cory) Micallef
Advisor:	Richard Dutton

**S.A.L.
MEETINGS**
Every 3rd Tuesday
7:00 PM

**DON'T FORGET TO
JOIN OR RENEW
YOUR MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2025**
Dues: \$25
\$15 Junior & Dual

of us to keep abreast of the legislation that it supports. If you are unaware of the current bills, the Legion is watching. Please go to: <https://www.votervoicenet.com/AmericanLegion/home> and join the site to receive updates. Use the site to send your support to your representatives who are voting on these bills. Your help is needed to hold our leadership accountable and to take care of our veterans and their families to the fullest.

Thank you to all of the Legion Family members who continue to help carry on the missions of our Post by volunteering & supporting in any way around the Post.

Building a Stronger Community,
Lenny Wertz
Squadron 136 Commander

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR CHARLOTTE HALL VETERANS HOME

Sons of the American Legion, responded to the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home "Wish List" by delivering Christmas Gifts that included personal care products, tasty treats, beverages, can goods and other products. Bryant said the gift's were an annual response by the Sons of the American Legion enhancing the Home's support for veteran residents.

According to its web site, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home has been proudly serving those who served since 1985. The Home is located on 126 beautiful acres in St. Mary's County. For more information, visit the Homes website: Charlotte Hall Veterans Home - St. Mary's County, Maryland



(From Left) Jerry Darnell, Sons of the American Legion Squadron 136; Sade Herbert, Director of Volunteer Services, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home; Tommy Bryant, 2nd Vice Commander, Southern Region



AUXILIARY UNIT 136



2024/2025

Unit Officers

President:
Kathy Gigliotti

1st Vice President:
Elizabeth Darnell

2nd Vice President:
Elizabeth Rice

Secretary:
Mary Fava

Treasurer:
Sandi Dutton

Chaplain:
Susan Wiener

Historian:
Rusty Beeg

Sgt.at Arms:
Dana Coleman

Executive
Committee:
Laura Fendlay
Dora Hamm
Patty Rousseau

AUXILIARY PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone enjoyed their holidays and is healthy for the New Year.

I would like to take this opportunity to say what a productive and active year we had.

I would like to thank all my fellow officers, members and volunteers that helped make it so successful.

Supporting our community and Veterans is our goal and that is what we accomplished.

Looking forward to keeping up the work in this New Year.

Please feel free to reach out if you have time to help volunteer during the New Year, the more the merrier!

For God and Country,
Kathleen Gigliotti
President

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Ladies, now that the holidays are over we can relax. The Auxiliary is trying to meet the annual membership goal for 2025. So please if you have not yet paid your dues, mail your \$30.00 check to Post Office Box 1063, Greenbelt, MD 20768. As the Unit Membership Chairman, I thank you.

Our newest members are Rosemarie Weikert as a transfer and Shirley Bridges has come back to us as a rejoin. We all send them a hearty **WELCOME** to Unit #136.

Have a wonderful 2025!!!
Susan Wiener
Membership Chairman



Like our Juniors
on Facebook @
136juniorsala



2025 Dues For Auxiliary Members

\$30.00 Regular (Sr. with 50 years or more \$26.00)
Dual Members \$26.00, Juniors (under 18) \$6.00

PLEASE MAIL YOUR DUES TO:

ALA 136
PO Box 1063
Greenbelt, MD 20768

Please make checks payable to ALA 136 and include your phone number on your payment.



AUXILIARY MEETINGS

1st & 3rd Thursdays
7:00 PM

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA 2024



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR BREAKFAST WITH SANTA VOLUNTEERS!





Queen of Hearts Wednesday Evenings



A New Drawing Will Be Held Every Wednesday Until the
Queen of Hearts is Drawn

**All Tickets Must Be Purchased by 7:45 PM
the Night of the Drawing**

Drawing Held: 8:00 PM - Tickets: \$5.00 each/3 for \$10.00 - Pot Starts at: \$1000.00

This is a progressive raffle open to the public.

One (1) ticket drawn every Wednesday.

Your full name must be on your ticket(s) to be valid.

If your ticket is drawn, you may pick a card from the Queen of Hearts Board.

The amount of money won depends on the card drawn.

ATTENTION ALL QUEEN OF HEARTS PLAYERS

Hold 'em cards are available for additional prizes.

****This offer good until further notice****

Sponsored by The Sons of the American Legion Squadron 136



SHOTGUN BINGO

Tuesday Evenings

7:00 PM

*Bring a friend,
enjoy some food,
friends and, maybe
even be a **BIG** winner.*

Sponsored by the Auxiliary Unit #136

(NO SHOTGUN BINGO IN JULY OR DECEMBER)



MONEY BUNNY!!

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN \$300.00

Please support our Merit
Scholarship Program

TICKETS ARE \$1.00 EACH

Drawing Date:

November 11th, 2025 - Veterans Day

Please send your address labels and
checks made payable to

Greenbelt Unit #136 to:

Greenbelt Unit #136

ATTN: Sandi Dutton

P.O. Box 1063

Greenbelt, MD 20768



GARY BARBOUR - CELEBRATION OF HIS LIFE

By Butch Hicks

Gary Barbour transferred to Post Everlasting on October 6, 2024. Since then, remembrances from his fellow Post 136 members, relatives, friends and associates, in informal comments and at Gary's celebration of life extolled virtues of Gary's friendly nature, kindness, and generosity. Those virtues partnered with his Post 136 landscaping and groundskeeping talent, focusing on projects and determination completing tasks.

Post 136 inside and outside support needs became a life focus for Gary. Dickie Dutton, a former Post commander said Gary's association with people followed Will Rogers's saying, "Gary never met a man he didn't like." The Post Home support group hired Gary to do Post landscaping and groundskeeping, which he did for more than 20 years. He did a great job, and the Post received many compliments on his work."

Gary ensured Post members, Greenbelt and surrounding communities viewed an aesthetically pleasing American Legion property. His Post projects included maintaining a manicured lawn, along with strategic planting of decorative bushes, plants and flowers, and Fall leaves collection. He maintained groundskeeping hardware and associated equipment. He ensured the historic Post 136 building was an additional property highlight by using his own power-washing equipment give the building a thorough power bath. When he was frequently complemented about his landscaping efforts, his responses often deflected pride in his work. "The flowers near the end could be closer together. I might move those plants to get a little more sun." And to be clear Gary said, accompanied with a big smile, "I am a groundskeeper doing what needs to be done."

Retirement from the US Postal Service left Gary with time on his hands that he frequently used to work around the Post. While tending Post property, Gary discovered an area growing wild cherry tomatoes. He decided if those wild tomatoes would grow so would other things and the Victory Garden was born: squash, tomatoes, basil - he grew all kinds of vegetables and spices. He also tried watermelons and cantaloupes. Post members' home veggie supplies were enhanced and the Post cooks used bounty from the Victory Garden.

If Gary wasn't doing groundskeeping, he supported other Post 136 activities. Every year, the Post's two Super Bowl parties require shucking hundreds of oysters to make oysters Rockefeller for Super-Bowl dinners. The "Mother Schuckers" team, a voluntary group of Post members and associates gathering to shell oysters for each Super Bowl party, will miss Gary's expert oyster shelling contribution accompanied by his humorous commentary keeping a tedious activity full of lighthearted banter and smiles.

When the Post conducted Memorial and Veterans Day events; Fourth of July celebration, Boys Nation and Girls Nation program, Gary ensured the Post's best appearance with last minute groundskeeping trimming foliage and arranging outside furnishings. He then continued supporting whatever event with grilling, moving tables, serving food; doing whatever he could to help.

Gary's Sons of the American Legion Squadron 136 membership, his association with others through his Post work provided him input about programs and activities conducted by the Post 136 Family. Their comments indicated a strong interest in throwing horseshoes. Gary, joined by Billy Steele and Paul Facemire followed through and got permission to create a horseshoe throwing area. He also started a horseshoe throwing league that met instant success. In addition to maintaining shoe-pit structures, Gary's collaboration with others produced night lighting to extend horseshoe league shoe-throwing time. The now spring and fall horseshoe league honored Gary's efforts by renaming the horseshoe activity the Gary Barbour Horseshoe League. With Gary's usual sensitivity to Post appearance, he ensured that after digging the pits, the area received landscaping including new bushes, evergreen trees and flowers and became an area of utility and attractiveness.

(Article Continued on Page 9)

Greg Gigliotti, Post 136 commander, during his comments at Gary's celebration of life, shared his appreciation of Gary's Post support, his work ethic and cordial nature. Gigliotti shared that Post 136 is one of the Washington area's most influential Posts. The activities supported such as Boys Nation, donating turkeys to military families, and hosting the annual National Security Forum give the Post influence and high visibility. Maryland government, American Legion leadership, guest speakers from the Pentagon, and journalists, among others, have commented on the Post's beauty. "To make a place like this great, it takes a network of dedicated people, and Gary was a key part of that network," said Gigliotti. "Most mornings, you'd see Gary out there, working hard, spreading mulch, or doing whatever needed to be done. He kept the lawn manicured and the grounds looking pristine. Gary had a knack for knowing exactly what had to be done at the Legion. For example, Gary determined that trees lining the service road needed pruning. He and I tackled the job. After three hours of chainsaws roaring, we had all the trees trimmed. The trees now look beautiful. We're going to miss Gary. It will be difficult to find someone that's going to fill Gary's shoes. Gary tried to teach everybody things down the road that they needed to do taking care of the land and taking care of the yard and everything related to doing that."

Gary's family coordinated with Post 136 and held a celebration of Gary's life November 6. At its core, a celebration of life is about connection, support, and healing. It's a meaningful way to say farewell. Almost 200 family, friends, and associates gathered in the Post's Hofberg Hall and shared joyful, humorous, and appreciative remembrances of Gary's legacy. Post Adjutant, Mike Moore, said it was appropriate the celebration was held at Post 136. "Gary had devoted so much of his life ensuring that Post property presented a pastoral view that the American Legion family and the Greenbelt community enjoyed."

Gary's daughter, Kelly, served as celebration's emcee and introduced John Hill who provided an opening prayer: Father. We just thank you for this great night. Thank you for a day to pause. Remember, such a great friend, a family member to so many folks. It's great that you put awesome people like that in our lives, and we're all blessed. Bless the families. Bless everyone here tonight. And may we have great memories of our dear friend, fan family member Gary in Christ saying we pray. Amen. Hill also shared stories of interesting adventures water skiing, and tubing. His descriptions of skiers rocketing across the water and tuber becoming airborne brought laughter from his audience, some of whom had participated in such water-based fun.

Jack Rambo shared his memories of Gary who he met 30 years earlier. "He and I did everything with each other, Rambo said. "I help him. he'd help me. We went hunting, fishing, and he even tried lobstering. They went out in a boat, but he had no luck. The others caught about thirty-five lobsters that day. "But the things Gary and I did together, we had a lot of fun, he said. "that's what I'll always remember about Gary; just all the fun we had." Rambo shared Gary has a lot of friends, "He's a very rich man." He said Gary was a doer identifying a needed project and did what was needed. "Everything in Post 136. "Everything in the Post and outside has Gary's touch on it." When Gary became ill, Rambo took over the horseshoe league for him. "He did a lot of work for that horseshoe league, which was his baby. He did all those league picnics; two every year for about 20 years." He started the league. I remember one time Billy Steele and I and Gary were cleaning it up getting ready to put pits in. We had this big pole that they had used for a light pole. Billy said, we gotta get rid of this. It's too ugly. We can't put that out there in front. Billy, grabbed one end, I grabbed one and Gary got in the middle. Of course, Gary's a little bit shorter than me and he's a lot shorter than Billy. So, he's thinking this thing's light, right? We're walking along, Gary starts yelling me, Just drop it Jack, just drop it." I said, Gary, you don't want me to do that - I drop it. Billy and Gary both went to the ground. He was sorry he said that. Billy says "Barbourized again." But Gary was so fun, I can't say enough about him."

Kelly shared a story about well Rambo could communicate with her dad after his surgery. "As you well know. since my dad's surgery, because his speech was affected. So, you know, had little word salad sometimes and we all tried to make sense of it. But whatever he said, he thought it was important. He'd emphasize and he like comport to it and all his words, and we did our best. But there was some kind of weird magic that occurred whenever he would talk to Jack. I mean listen they'd be at the table next to me, I'm like, what is

(Article Continued on Page 10)

happening. He is fluid, he's talking. I understand every word he's saying. We started calling Jack the Gary Whisperer because for some reason when this man talked to my dad like he made sense and I just want to thank Jack for his friendship and for all the moments to Clarity that he gave my dad in all of us because he was the Gary, Whisperer.

Tina, the Tiki Bar girl shared her memories of Gary. Tina has been the one manning the Tiki bar for several years and she used to sit up at the Horseshoes in a chair next to a cooler. Finally Jack and Marty and all the guys that chipped in and built the Tiki Bar on the side of the league now. And it's a great place for everyone to sit and keep company while Tina serves some beer and it's way more comfortable for her now. Jack made a sign engraved the Gary Barber Horseshoe League. Tina said, When Kelly asked me to speak at first, I was like, I don't know if I could do this, because it's a little bit easier to say what's not about Gary versus what is about Gary. So, the first time that I met Gary, my husband, and I came to the legion, and this is where we started.

Gary was one of the first people that I met, and we became fast friends. We became very close. to know Gary is just unique. - You don't find too many of Gary's in this world. Such a unique person. He was a friend. He was my mentor. He was my release, all when I needed to release all like his grandson said, he cultivated relationships. He surrounded himself by many, many good people. And if you weren't good at the time, you were going to be good after knowing Gary. Because that's what he produced. That's what he surrounded himself with. After Gary and I became very, very close friends. We don't always say Tina, you've got so much going on, just let it loose with me. There would be a better place if we had more Gary's in it. Gary you will always have a place in my heart, and I love you."

Kelly, introduced Julie. She said, "Julie is a manager here. She is the number one patron also. She visited us in the hospital. I loaded her down with 20 bags to help me get back to my car after spending a week in the hospital with him. Julie is very special and a very good friend."

"Everybody knows my history, the police department not getting locked up but just being a part on the police department," said Julie. "I retired in 2015 and started working at another Legion and then had Fortune enough to work here as part of management. I would come to work every morning, and Gary would be outside doing the lawn and making the flowers and everything just so beautiful. And we would sit out early in the morning because he's like, Julie, I got it. Well, he called me Jules. Everybody calls me Jules. Jules I gotta be here early before the sun would hit, and it's just so hot. I couldn't do anything. So, we would sit out and he told me how to do my lawn, which I have a long service now because I can't do it and all, but I still have two plants that I made myself or, or not me, but just brought them together. Gary and I would have these times after I retired to sit outside and talk in the morning before I started my day, and we would just talk about the soil, the trees outside and just about life and about his family. His kids we're more important to him than anything in this life, and I just wanted to tell you guys that that he cherished every minute and talked about you guys like sunshine that brought light into his life. Despite a Gary's not here right now in his flesh, he's with us for always and we will see him again because we are all Christians. I know that and we all love him and we're going to be there again. And we're gonna see him. We're going to shed some tears, it's okay."

Children, grandchildren, other relatives, friends and associates gave their farewell to Gary Barbour. And as the celebration continued, more family and friends expressed their grief at losing Gary. It was a time of laughter and tears and an opportunity to experience healing and closure. Dickie Dutton said "He's another soul that will be greatly missed."

(See Photos on Page 11)



Kathy Watkins and Peggy Owens view a display of Gary's favorite things, displayed with another table displaying more of Gary's favorite things. (Photo by Butch Hicks)



Gary Barbour and Family (Photo Courtesy of Family)

AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF MARYLAND NATIONAL SECURITY COMMISSION FALL SECURITY FORUM

By Butch Hicks

As part of Greenbelt American Legion Post 136 annual Pearl Harbor Day recognition, it also hosts The American Legion Department of Maryland's Fall 2024 National Security Forum.

The guest speaker was Major General Janeen L. Birkhead, 31st Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard. Under her leadership, the Maryland National Guard has played a vital role in responding to domestic emergencies natural disasters and global missions to support the United States national security. She has commanded at every level. company. battalion, brigade never gave what I call the Tactical Edge to where she's at today. She achieved notable accomplishments, including leading Maryland's vaccine equal task force, to expand covid-19 vaccinations with access to vulnerable populations. She also commands over 15 000 National Guard troops

After her introduction, Maj. General Birkhead first recalled how she was bonded with the American Legion. She said her daughter was two-time Junior President at Maryland's American Legion Auxiliary's Girl State. And her daughter showed her involvement by being the largest fundraiser for her Girls State project. Birkhead is also a Boys State Mom.

Birkhead recalled bringing treats to deployed military. She said she brought the best gift boxes for every Soldier, Airman, Marine and they knew her in Kabul because they got the best including pallets of Girl Scout cookies. Providing treats for troops in the field was comparable to Post 136's recent project of sending "care packages" to deployed troops.

National Security Concerns

National Guard, are responsible to safeguard Americans remaining true to our values while responding to ever-changing environments. That is the responsibility of the U.S military as it has been for the American Legion for many years.

"Over 100 years ago, the American Legion was in its early years," she said. "It could boast a pretty large membership, an impressive achievement." The new American Legion began addressing many World War I returning veterans issues for which the government had not planned. Chief among them were jobs for veterans. Efforts by the American Legion led to increased disability compensation, establishment of the Veterans Bureau, which become the Veterans Affairs, dedication of the tomb of the unknown soldier, creation of the National Archives to preserve military records, the pension for post-traumatic stress disorder among many other things. The common theme for the achievements advocating for those who served. Birkhead said, "The American Legion has endured because people like you who stay true to the values even in changing times."

Birkhead said that America is now attuned to conflicts far away and their ethnic, religious and political volatility that's disruptive to the effects of our institutions. Today cyber operations and a wide range of remotely controlled surveillance and combat platforms are studied for combat implications. Training exercises are no longer limited to state-side centers. We are testing our people in emerging doctrine in Europe, in the Middle East and the Asia Pacific. Significantly, those exercises are hand in hand with regional partners and allies. We live in an interconnected. What happens in one part of the world reverberates throughout.

(Article Continued on Page 13)

“Our world is increasingly interconnected with more and more at stake, Birkhead said.” “The role of our nation's military is first and always to protect its people and its interests. For decades the national security strategy and the national defense strategy have enshrined those priorities and for decades, government leaders and the American people have kept faith with the truism that a strong military is an effective deterrent. And so, I turn to you. The American Legion that has been so effective at advocating for service members and veterans for so long to accept the responsibility of ensuring that we have health care and disability payments. How can we, you and I best support our service members? How do we advocate for recruiting and training equipment that is best flexible interoperable and give us the ability to look around corners. And how do we increase the bonds of trust between the U.S and the American people that we serve. I believe that our programs are on point job placement assistance, mental health, programs reintegration, and for our communities, resilience, and building initiatives for disaster response, youth development programs, like Boys State and Girls State and oratorical contests. These Legion programs foster patriotism and leadership in the next generation.

So I salute you for continuing to do that and be creative. Being able to look around the corner. I note it time and time again, the best military operations and exercises, bring mutual benefit. I believe that applies to our relationship as well. Through mutual collaboration between you and I, and the Maryland National Guard, we can continue to serve and protect our Nations always ready and always ready and always there.

End



American Legion Department of Maryland Commander, David Heredia, Jr., joined by Wanye Kaikko, Chair of the Department's National Security Commission, presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Major General Janeen L. Birkhead, 31st Adjutant General of the Maryland National Guard. Her certificate showed "...recognition and sincere appreciation for outstanding service and commitment in advancing the National Security which is one the four pillars of the American Legion. (Photo by Butch Hicks)

ROLLING THUNDER MARYLAND CHAPTER ONE COLLABORATES WITH AMERICAN LEGION POST 136 TO DISTRIBUTE TURKEYS TO MILITARY FAMILIES



David Lutzow, President Rolling Thunder Maryland Chapter One, veteran's advocacy group, gives a turkey to Jason Love who joined sister Troy and mother, Kelli acquiring the families Thanksgiving treat They were among the more than 50 military families receiving free turkeys and all the fixings. The local chapter of Rolling Thunder. collaborated with American Legion Post 136 to have the drive-through event on the Post's property.

Rolling Thunder no longer organizes the massive annual motorcycle ride through Washington, D.C . Its organizers originally called it a demonstration intended to honor veterans and troops killed in action and to also put pressure on the U.S government to find service members who are still missing. (Photo by Butch Hicks)

GREENBELT AMERICAN LEGION PROVIDES TURKEYS TO ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY FAMILIES



American Legion Post 136 Commander, Greg Gigliotti, gives a turkey to Air Force airman Antonio, wife Ashton, and daughter Troy. The Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department provided the vehicle to show its appreciation of the active duty military and to give youngsters an opportunity to learn up close about fire-fighting equipment.



UPCOMING EVENTS JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2025



Monday, January 6th:

Saturday, January 11th:

Thursday, January 16th:

Saturday, January 18th:

Saturday, January 25th:

Monday, February 3rd:

Friday, February 14th:

Thursday, February 20th:

Post 136 Executive Committee Meeting: 6:30PM

Super Bowl Party #1

Post 136 General Membership Meeting: 7:00PM

Super Bowl Party #2

Super Bowl Party Weather Make-up Day

Post 136 Executive Committee Meeting: 6:30PM

Valentine's Day Dinner

Post 136 General Membership Meeting: 7:00PM

THE CONTACT

The Contact is a bi-monthly newsletter published by the American Legion, Greenbelt Post 136.

Publisher: Mike Moore - Editor: Bernie Zempolich - Composing: East-West Web Solutions