



LEGION NEWS

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WWW.NCLEGION.ORG

FALL 2025

Message from the Department Commander

Commander's Quarterly Message – Fall 2025

By Devell “Bo” Durham Jr.

NC Department Commander 2025-2026

Legion Family,

As I write this first of three quarterly messages to our Department, I'm filled with excitement and purpose.

We are bringing back a newsletter that has long been dormant—and with it, a renewed commitment to connection, inspiration, and unity.

Just nine days ago, I entered my fourth month as your Commander. Over the past 90 days, every mile traveled, every handshake exchanged, and every visit to a Post, District, or Division has reaffirmed my belief in the power of presence.

I'm reminded of the words of former First Lady Rosalynn Carter: “A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be.”

We've assembled a team for the 2025–2026 membership year that is truly Gung Ho—driven, united, and committed to our Department's success. I encourage you to read every article in

Each piece has been crafted to inspire, engage, and align our collective focus—like sight alignment and sight picture—toward one goal: North Carolina Winning. We need every Legionnaire, along with our Auxiliary, SAL, Riders, and Cruisers, to man the rails. This is our moment to move forward together.

As your Commander, my mission still reminds clear:

- To uphold the values of the American Legion
- To advocate tirelessly for our veterans and their families
- To strengthen the bonds that unite us as a Department

Together, we will honor the legacy of those who came before us and pave the way for those yet to serve.

As I shared in my first communiqué on June 21, 2025, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Over the next nine months, I pledge my unmatched, unwavering dedication to



In my three-month update for all to see on Social Media, I reflected on the travels and encounters that have shaped this journey.

I remain your voice, your hands, and your feet—leading with integrity, enthusiasm, and a steadfast commitment to all 32,000 members of this great Department.

Because leadership isn't about titles. It's about trust. It's about showing up when it matters most.

It's about living out the oaths we've made—every single day.

So today, let us move forward together. Let us Inspire. Engage. Because when North Carolina stands united—we all win.

#IENCWin



Department Adjutant's Corner

Mark Cauble

NC Department Adjutant

Dear Legionnaires,

The 106th American Legion National Convention held in Tampa, Florida, was a great success! Thank you to all who attended and contributed to making it a memorable event.

Back here at Headquarters in Raleigh, we're wrapping up our annual audit and looking ahead to upcoming events. The National Fall Conference in Indianapolis is just around the corner, taking place October 4–9. Following that, the Department of North Carolina Fall Conference in Raleigh at the Raleigh North Hills Hilton are scheduled for October 23–25. Be sure to mark your calendars and plan to participate.

As we all know, time marches on—and with it comes the milestone of Medicare eligibility. Medicare Open Enrollment is quickly approaching. Now is the time to review your current coverage and determine whether you should make a change or explore new vendors offering better benefits or services. For guidance on when and why to sign up, visit the Social Security Administration's website: ssa.gov/medicare/plan/when-to-sign-up.

Did you know that the Legionnaire Insurance Trust (LIT) offers Medicare-related plans and other valuable benefits? Even better, a portion of your purchase through LIT returns as a royalty to the North Carolina American Legion—helping support our programs and services. Always consider LIT first when evaluating your insurance options!

A word of caution: Be on alert for spam emails that claim to be from the Commander of the American Legion Department of North Carolina. These emails may request that you purchase gift cards or send money—do not respond. The Department will never solicit money or personal purchases in this manner.

Stay informed. Stay connected. And as always—thank you for your continued service and support of The American Legion.

ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

What's Happening in your Legion Community??

Do you have an article or news announcement to share with the rest of the Department of North Carolina? If so, please follow these guidelines for submissions.

- Submit text in Word format (.doc, .docx) or as a text file (.txt or .rtf) or as a PDF. ONE ARTICLE PER EMAIL PLEASE.
- The ideal word count for our format is 200 - 500 words (maximum), with no double spacing. •
- Give your article a TITLE! Create a HEADLINE and save with a proper file name so we can easily recognize it.
- Tell us who the author is, whether it's you or if you are just forwarding it to us. •
- Attach any photos or artwork for your article separately in your email. DO NOT embed them in your Word or PDF file. Larger photos are best, and high resolution JPG files of 300 dpi or better are preferred. Please name these files accordingly so we can track them along with your article. •
- Let us know in your e-mail or Word doc of any photo captions, the name of the photographer, etc. Please note that due to spacing and layout requirements, we may not be able to use every photo or caption submitted (preferably 2 - 3 photos per article). •
- Please spell check everything! Especially people's names, web addresses, etc. We do our best to catch typos, and make corrections, but sometimes they still slip by. You can help us greatly by simply running the spell check function in your word processing software.
- • We publish on our Website on the FIRST FRIDAY of the Quarter with few exceptions. E-mail everything directly to by the 20th of the month, for it to appear in the next issue. Submissions received after the 20th will be considered, but may be held over or discarded due to space and layout restrictions. We hope you enjoy this issue, and hope you continue to help us grow and improve The Legion News!

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E-mail:lmiller@nclegion.org OR jduvall@nclegion.org

Building the Future: Youth Programs Thrive Across North Carolina

By John DuVall

Department Program Manager

Dear Legionnaires,

One of the greatest legacies we can leave as members of The American Legion is the investment we make in our young people. Across North Carolina, our youth programs are thriving thanks to your dedication, sponsorship, and volunteer efforts.

Here's a look at the exciting progress happening in 2025

American Legion Baseball -

Our baseball program continues to showcase the very best of North Carolina talent. Teams across the state played a strong season this summer, carrying on the Legion's proud tradition of competition, discipline, and sportsmanship. Special thanks to the coaches, parents, and Posts that keep this program running strong year after year. The Asheville Post 70 Seniors were State and Regional Champions and represented our State well in the American Legion World Series! South Caldwell Post 29 were State Junior Champions. Congratulations on a great season.

American Legion Softball – A Growing Tradition.

We're excited to report that Legion Softball is gaining momentum statewide. More Posts are stepping up to sponsor teams, giving young women the same opportunities to compete and learn teamwork under the American Legion banner. Participation numbers are climbing, and North Carolina is quickly becoming a leader in this new and exciting program. The Davidson County Post 8 were Senior State Champions and South Caldwell Post 29 were Junior State Champions. Congratulations on a great season!

Tar Heel Boys' State

Held again at Catawba College, this year's Tar Heel Boys' State welcomed some of North Carolina's most promising young leaders. For one week, students immersed themselves in the workings of government—forming cities, counties, and even a state government of their own. Many participants describe the experience as “life-changing,” and it continues to produce leaders for tomorrow. This year we maxed out with 150 approved delegates due to construction efforts at Catawba. Look out for a site change this year, we are working on finalizing our new site with potential delegate capacity up to 375. Congratulations to Connor Clark, Governor 2025 THBS, Post 283, and Connor Wilkerson, Attorney General 2025 THBS from Post 503 who went on to represent our state well at Boys Nation!

Student Trooper Program

In partnership with the **North Carolina Highway Patrol**, the American Legion proudly sponsors the Student Trooper Program each summer. High school students from across the state attend a week-long, residential training program at the Highway Patrol Training Academy.

Participants experience first-hand what it takes to become a law enforcement officer—physical training, classroom instruction, and leadership development are all part of the curriculum. The program emphasizes discipline, teamwork, and respect for the rule of law, while inspiring students to consider careers in public service. This year we had over 20 students participating in this program, with 2 returning Junior Counselors.

This program has become one of the most respected youth experiences in North Carolina, and many graduates go on to serve in law enforcement, the military, and other fields of community leadership.

Junior Shooting Sports

Our Shooting Sports Program continues to grow in participation and achievement. Young athletes are developing safety, precision, and self-discipline, while representing North Carolina at the state and national levels. Congratulations to Gabrielle Horton from Post 230 who won the 2025 Junior Shooting State Championship.

High School

Oratorical Contest

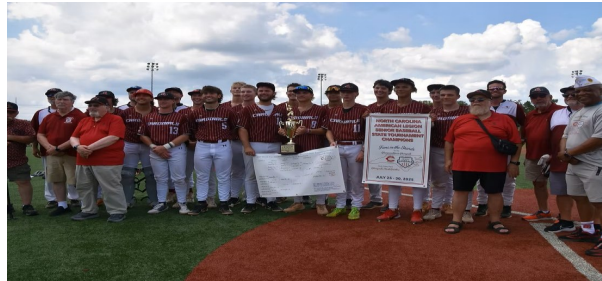
The Oratorical Contest is preparing for another strong year, giving high school students the chance to sharpen their public speaking skills while deepening their understanding of the U.S. Constitution. Every Post is encouraged to sponsor a student—the opportunity is life-changing, and scholarships await those who rise to the challenge. Congratulations to Malik Harris from Post 322 who won the 2025 State High School Oratorical contest in Chapel Hill and went on to represent our state well at the National High School Oratorical Contest!

Looking Ahead

Every one of these programs depends on Legionnaires like you. Whether your Post is sponsoring a team, encouraging a student, or volunteering your time, your involvement changes lives.

Together, we are building the next generation of leaders—for God and Country.

Youth Programs 2025



**Please see our website Gallery for more photos of all the
2025 AL Department NC Programs and events!**

<https://www.nclegion.org/gallery>

Multi Year Membership is available!

Look into our Newest 3 Year Renewal Program

Three-year memberships are available for renewals and newly joined members.

Eliminate the yearly hassle of remembering to renew your American Legion membership by taking advantage of the new multiyear membership available to current and potential members. Legionnaires needing to renew for 2026 or veterans joining the organization for the first time can lock-in a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew or legion.org/join.

A multiyear membership was approved by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion during the organization's Spring Meetings 2023. Resolution 1: Purchase of Multiple Years of Membership approves "a five-year pilot program offering the purchase of three consecutive 12-month member terms at the then current dues rate."

Here is what you need to know about the three-year membership:

Multiyear membership sign-up is only available on the national American Legion website. Current or potential members cannot renew or join for a three-year membership at the post level or through MyLegion.org.

Renew now with a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew.

Join now with a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/join.

Legionnaires already renewed for 2026 will soon be able to renew under the multi-year membership starting with the 2025 membership year.

Payment for the three-year membership will be upfront.

There is not a discounted rate with the three-year membership.

Membership cards will still be sent annually by Legion posts.

Those who sign up for a multiyear membership will not receive a renewal notice during the time they have signed up for the multiyear membership.

Please note that the multi-year membership will work just like PUFL. Whatever rate the member renews at is what the post/department/national will receive for the duration of that time frame. For example, if a member renews today National will receive \$23.50 for the next three years. Let's say the department's per capita is currently \$14, the department will receive the \$14 for the next three years. Once the member renews after the three-year renew-

2026 RENEWAL DATES

CUTOFF DATES*	RENEWAL DATES
MAY 14, 2025	JULY 1-8, 2025
SEPTEMBER 10, 2025	OCTOBER 4-10, 2025
OCTOBER 15, 2025	NOVEMBER 8-14, 2025
DECEMBER 10, 2025	JANUARY 3-9, 2026
FEBRUARY 11, 2026	MARCH 1-8, 2026
APRIL 8, 2026	MAY 2-8, 2026

Looking for a Lifetime Membership option?

PUFL FAQ'S

American Legion members interested in the discounted Paid Up For Life program can now easily join online: www.legion.org/join/pufl

American Legion members interested in the discounted Paid Up For Life program can now easily join online: www.legion.org/join/pufl

Legionnaires who become a Paid Up For Life member will avoid any future increases to membership dues and will never have to pay annual dues or receive renewal notices. Other benefits include a life-time subscription to The American Legion Magazine.

Once registered:

Members can either pay in full

Pay in 12 monthly installments

Members may also print a personalized Paid Up For Life application from the web page and mail in their payment.

Each Paid Up For Life member receives a permanent plastic card, as well as an annual paper card to verify membership in The American Legion. The annual card is mailed in July of each year.

After a member signs up, his or her respective department and post will be notified either electronically or by mail. The post has 30 days to notify the department in writing if the applicant is ineligible for a Paid Up For Life membership. The department will then notify National Headquarters about why the application was denied.

Posts may continue to process applications on the current paper forms until informed otherwise.

For more information about the Paid Up For Life program: call (800) 433-3318 or email ia@legion.org

Post Dues	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85 +
41.50	1291	1187	1074	958	841	727	615	515	444
42.00	1305	1199	1085	967	848	733	620	518	447
42.50	1318	1211	1095	976	856	739	625	522	450
43.00	1331	1223	1106	985	864	746	630	526	453
43.50	1344	1235	1117	994	872	752	635	530	456
44.00	1357	1247	1127	1003	879	758	640	534	459
44.50	1370	1259	1138	1013	887	765	645	537	462
45.00	1384	1271	1148	1022	895	771	650	541	465

2025-2026 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

DEVELL "BO" DURHAM JR

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

David Shore, National Executive Committeeman
 Jerry McClough, Alternate N E Committeeman
 Tom Cerniglia, Immediate Past Dept Commander
 Mark Cauble, Department Adjutant
 Monica Lockwood, Department Chaplain
 Gaither Keener, Department Judge Advocate
 Bill Richard, Department Historian
 Justin Nicholson, Department Service Officer

DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDERS

Dave Sammons, 1st Division
 Demetrice Raspberry, 2nd Division
 Charles M Johnson, 3rd Division
 Darrell Bonapart, 4th Division
 Jim Sherman, 5th Division

DISTRICT COMMANDERS

Tammy Hamilton, 1st District Commander
 Ernie Payne, 2nd District Commander
 Red Beddard, 3rd District Commander
 Able Fragoso, 4th District Commander
 Karen McFadden, 5th District Commander
 Dennie Hoynacki, 6th District Commander
 Barbara Seale, 7th District Commander
 Anthony Prewitt 8th District Commander
 Jim Torr, 9th District Commander
 Raymond Hunt, 10th District Commander
 Vickie Woodard, 11th District Commander
 Jim Parise, 12th District Commander

Mark Brooks, 13th District Commander
 Dandra Ritter, 14th District Commander
 Roger Cranford, 15th District Commander
 Georgia Nelsen, 16th District Commander
 Oscar Outen, 17th District Commander
 Michael Thorpe, 18th District Commander
 Bob Price, 19th District Commander
 Alesia Bell, 20th District Commander
 Mike Hasson, 21st District Commander
 Chris Duschel, 22nd District Commander
 Ric Francis, 23rd District Commander
 Joseph Schmidt, 24th District Commander
 Robert Seibert, 25th District Commander

2025-2026 DETACHMENT OFFICERS

BRIAN WHITE

DETACHMENT COMMANDER

Terry Pressley, National Executive Committeeman
 Andrew Zjac, Alternate N E Committeeman
 Larry Barnwell, Department Adjutant
 Jerry Harrell, Detachment Chaplain
 Gaither Keener, Department Judge Advocate
 Darryl Robinson, Detachment Historian
 Colby Thomas, Detachment Sgt-at Arms

DIVISION COMMANDERS

Bob Wesley, 1st Division
 Gene Bellando, 2nd Division
 Patrick Dunkle, 3rd Division
 Herbie Cooper, 4th Division

2025 - 2026

SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP TARGET DATES

SEPTEMBER 10, 2025	10%
OCTOBER 15, 2025	25%
NOVEMBER 13, 2025	35%
DECEMBER 10, 2025	45%
JANUARY 14, 2026	60%
FEBRUARY 11, 2026	75%
MARCH 11, 2026	80%
APRIL 8, 2026	90%
MAY 13, 2026	100%
** JULY 29, 2026	105%

** DELEGATE STRENGTH TARGET DATE 30 DAYS PRIOR TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

LEGIONNAIRE BENEFITS

As a Member of the Legion Family, You Know How Important
It Is to Help Protect Those in Need ...

NOW WE CAN HELP THE LIT PLANS CAN HELP WITH

- **Hospital HELP Plan**
- **Cancer Care**
- **Accidental Death Protection**
- **On-The-Move Travel Accident**
- **Emergency Assistance Plus**
- **ID Resolve**
- **Medicare Supplement Insurance**
- **Health Insurance**
- **Dental Insurance**
- **Long-Term Care**
- **Lifeline Medical Alert Service**

Hospital HELP Plan — Provides benefits for hospital stays including intensive care, cardiac care, care for cancer, rehabilitative facilities, and V.A. hospitals. *

Cancer Care — Provides important protection and a daily benefit if you are hospitalized due to cancer. *

Accidental Death — Helps provide financial protection for you and your family. Up to \$5,000.00 LegionCare AD coverage at no cost to Legionnaires is available: (activation required). * You can also purchase additional Accident coverage up to \$100,000.00.

On-The-Move Travel Accident — Provides up to \$200,000.00 coverage when fatally injured in a covered accident while traveling, plus \$500.00 per day if a covered accident lands you in the hospital. *

ID Resolve — Provides 24-hour identity theft resolution that helps protect your money, your time and your financial reputation. *

Emergency Assistance Plus — Provides you with 24/7 emergency medical and travel assistance services should something happen to you or your family while traveling away from home.

Medicare Supplement Insurance — Supplements your Medicare Coverage at group rates.

Health & Dental Insurance — Request a quote on various Health & Dental Insurance Plans designed with you in mind.

Long-Term Care — Can help provide home health care, supervised adult care, and more.

Lifeline Medical Alert Service — Provides fast access to help in the event of a fall or medical emergency so you can live confidently and independently.

DeviceGuard — A simple, comprehensive, and affordable way to protect your devices—from smartphones to laptops to digital doorbells. Flexible plans and bundles ensure that you only pay for the protection you need.



ENDORSED BY YOUR
AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT

**To Learn More and Enroll, Visit www.TheLIT.com
For Questions Call 1-800-235-6943**



SAVE THE DATE

National Regional Information Conferences

JAN. 31, 2026 - INDIANAPOLIS or FEB. 7, 2026 - ATLANTA

WHAT? One-day, comprehensive curriculum that covers:

- Legal topics
- Be the One
- American Legion Programs
- Running an Effective Meeting
- Post Operations
- Membership Retention

WHY? To strengthen understanding and implementation of American Legion Programs and Services!

WHO? American Legion leaders in departments, districts and posts looking to increase operational effectiveness.

HOW? Contact The American Legion National Internal Affairs division at ia@legion.org or call **317-630-1287**.

REGISTRATION OPENS AUG. 27, 2025, AND SPACE IS LIMITED, SO SIGN UP NOW!!

The Legion News assumes no responsibility for material submitted and reserves the right to edit any submissions. Editorial deadline is the 20th of every month for inclusion in the following month's issue. We typically publish on the First Friday of each Quarter, with few exceptions. Contact the American Legion, Department of North Carolina for more details. The Legion News is the official publication of the

American Legion Department of North Carolina

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