



GREENBELT AMERICAN LEGION POST 136

# CONTACT

6900 Greenbelt Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770

(301) 345-0136

<http://www.greenbeltmdpost136.org>

VOLUME LXXXI

July/August 2024



ISSUE IV

## COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

I wanted to let you know that Greenbelt American Legion Post 136 celebrated June 14<sup>th</sup> in a special way. That date was significant because it commemorated Flag Day and the 249<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the U.S. Army. In the afternoon, several members of the Executive Committee and I met with an exceptional young man, Boy Scout Ethan Mendoza from Cheverly Troop 257. Ethan has taken on as his Eagle Scout Project, the restoration of the Pearl Harbor Memorial, located in Bladensburg Memorial Park. The site is near our beloved Peace Cross Memorial. On behalf of Post 136, I presented a donation of \$1,700.00 to offset the cost of this important project. We were joined by Ethan's parents and by PG Parks Historic Preservation Officer Ed Day, who oversaw the restoration of Peace Cross. This modest donation exemplifies our ongoing commitment to supporting our local community organizations. I will keep you informed of Ethan's progress.

After all the rain in June, we can be hopeful that July offers us nicer weather, especially on the weekends. This is the time of the year when our faithful volunteers and staff at the Legion put on our 4<sup>th</sup> of July Family Picnic. This is a day where we can step outside, sit in the front of the Legion, and smell the fresh air, cut grass and be proud to live in our country. A day of celebration for the country that made us who we are today. A celebration of colors we are proud to wear. The Fourth of July is a culmination of everything that makes us, the United States of America. It's a chance to let our freedom flags fly in all their glory. The whole country is celebrating the same thing. As an added benefit, as the sun sets in the west, the members and guests of the Post will be able to enjoy a wonderful view of the fireworks provided by the City of Greenbelt from the rear of the Legion's parking lot.

The next big event, if you're interested in attending, would be the Department Convention in Ocean City. It will start on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July and run through the 19<sup>th</sup> of July. One of the biggest events for our Legion is hosting the Boys Nation Dinner on Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup>. It's a great time to meet some of the young promising leaders of the future. We will host National Commander Daniel Seehafer and 100 impressive Senators representing 49 states and the District of Columbia. This is another example of our Post's commitment to the Legion's Youth Programs.

The management staff is working hard to meet the request of our patrons. If you've noticed we've changed the Friday and Saturday dinner menu adding some new items

*(Commander's message continued on page two)*

## 2024/2025

Commander:  
Greg Gigliotti

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander:  
James Hawkins

2<sup>nd</sup> 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



at a fair price. Also, we started lunch at 12 noon at the request of our patrons. I am pleased to report that Hofberg Hall is booked for most weekends all summer. The S.A.L. and staff will put on another crab feast on September 14<sup>th</sup> and the S.A.L. will be asking for Volunteers to help. Look for more information about the feast at the Post and on social media.

Retention in any organization is of the utmost importance. This is the same with our American Legions. The older the American Legion institution gets, the more members we lose. Sadly, Post Everlasting is gaining in it's ranks. All of us Legionaries need to promote the American Legion to the younger men and women in the armed forces. If each of our members brought one new member in each year our ranks would increase back to healthy numbers. Each year we lose about 70 members. Please join me in recruiting new members. You can make a difference.

God bless American, and God bless you.

Greg Gigliotti,  
Commander  
Greenbelt American Legion, Post 136

## **CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE**

Dear Post 136 Members and Legion Family,

As we find ourselves in the warm embrace of summer, the months of July and August offer a unique opportunity to reflect on the presence of God in our lives. For many of us, these months are a time of rest and rejuvenation, a time to connect with family and friends, and a time to appreciate the beauty of God's creation. But for our military personnel, both past and present, these months also serve as a reminder of the constant presence of God in their lives, offering strength, comfort, and guidance.

**God's Guidance:** In times of peace and in times of conflict, God's guidance is a beacon of hope. For our service members, the path they walk is often fraught with uncertainty and challenge. It is through their faith in God that they find the clarity and courage to navigate these difficult times. God continues to guide our brave men and women through the trials they face, providing them with the wisdom and discernment to make the right decisions.

**God's Comfort:** The life of a service member can be filled with moments of loneliness and homesickness, especially during long deployments away from loved ones. In these moments, God's comforting presence becomes a source of solace and strength. The assurance of God's unwavering presence provides our military personnel with the emotional and spiritual support they need to endure their separation from home and family.

**God's Strength:** The physical and mental demands placed on our service members can be immense. Whether training for a mission, enduring the rigors of deployment, or facing the aftermath of conflict, the need for strength is paramount. Through faith, our service members are endowed with a divine strength that empowers them to overcome any obstacle, no matter how insurmountable it may seem.

**God's Protection:** In the line of duty, our military personnel often find themselves in dangerous and life-threatening situations. It is through their faith in God that they find the assurance of His protection. His promise of divine protection gives our service members the courage to face their missions with confidence, knowing that they are never alone.

**God's Peace:** The quest for peace is at the heart of every service member's mission. Whether maintaining peace at home or restoring it abroad, the ultimate goal is to create a world where all can live in harmony. God's divine peace, which surpasses all understanding, is a gift from God that sustains our military personnel and their families, providing hope for a better, more peaceful world.

As we honor the dedication and sacrifice of our service members, let us also remember the importance of keeping God at the center of our lives. Through prayer, faith, and trust in His divine plan, we can find the strength, comfort, and guidance needed to face life's challenges. Let us continually seek His presence, knowing that with God, all things are possible.

Blessings to You All,  
Shawn Fenstermacher,  
Chaplain



## SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION SQUADRON 136



### S.A.L. COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Greetings to our Legion Family members as we attempt to keep cool through the summer. I offer up the wishes to everyone of a safe and pleasant summer wherever the winds take you. With thanks to our editor at the time of finishing this article the Detachment (State) S.A.L. completed its 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention. The convention was full of moments to reflect on the past and to look to the future of the S.A.L.. The new officers for the Detachment & Regions of Maryland were installed for the coming year on Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup>. One of those new officers is our own Jerry Darnell who will serve as the Southern Maryland Region S.A.L. Commander for the next year. We wish Jerry luck and offer our support to him as he works to represent not just 136 but the Squadrons of the Region S.A.L. for the next year.

Thank you to all of our S.A.L. members who paid dues before June 1st, unfortunately we missed our membership goal by 45 members over 2023. If you have not paid your 2024 dues, please stop by the post and do so. 2025 Early bird dues are now being accepted. Dues are \$25 for members; \$15 for junior (under 18) and dual members, please do not hesitate to renew. You may pay at the Post or the national legion organization has a website that is now available to S.A.L. members ([www.mylegion.org](http://www.mylegion.org).) This site will allow you to update & renew membership information automatically online and access other Legion related information and discounts. In order to create your account, you will need your member number from your most recent membership card. However, if your membership has lapsed before 2021 you will need to renew for lapsed years directly with the Post if you want to keep your continuous years intact. The National Organization is continuously working to improve the functionality of their site. They are eventually moving to online renewals. After processing the cards is completed for Members with local mailing addresses, the envelopes will first be left in the members lounge for pick up then mailed out if not picked up within 2 weeks. We have been experiencing an uptick in lost or returned mail. You may also pay S.A.L. dues in person during Wednesday night Queen of Hearts. Dual and Jr. Members still need to pay in person at the Post.

During this year's convention, the incoming Detachment S.A.L. Commander shared that his theme for the coming year would be Sons having fun getting things done. Here at Squadron 136 we have already had the fun to get things done part for quite a while and would like more to join us in any way possible. You know, the more the merrier... The Sons, as an organization across the country, are tasked with supporting the four pillars of the Legion, which are Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, Strong Defense, Americanism, and Children & Youth. Our Squadron is part of The Greenbelt Legion Family and has a long history of fun with various methods to advance the pillars and grow the Legion Family. We continue to look for ways to do this and we need "u" to have fun getting things done as an organizer, a participant and supporter. Our Legion Family has a couple of informal groups that get together to go visit other Legions, play golf, share a meal as ways of checking in with each other and have fun. If you cool off in the lounge long enough you may connect with somebody with shared interests looking to create a group. You are needed to bring your ideas for fun activities, programs of interest for members and community to support and participate in. Maybe resurrect some things that have not been done in a few years here at the Post.

*(S.A.L. Commander's message continued on page four)*

#### 2024/2025

Commander:  
Lenny Wertz

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander:  
Vacant

2<sup>nd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday  
7:00 PM**

**DON'T FORGET TO  
JOIN OR RENEW  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP  
FOR 2025**

Flyers and tickets for our September 14<sup>th</sup> Crab Feast should be available soon. This will be a fun time unless you are a crab.

Our monthly meetings are held every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 PM. It is also a fun way to join our committees like the S.A.L. cook crew, membership, and service committees to name a couple. Our meetings or Queen of Hearts nights are a fun time to bring up new ideas and proposals. Flyers for other events and activities will be posted soon. The need is here for your service, participation and ideas. You are needed to visit our restaurant and members lounge a couple times a month.

On June 27<sup>th</sup>, your 2024-25 S.A.L. officers were sworn in during the Post Installation reception and ceremony. Thank you to both our 2023-25 officers and newly installed officers for the time they lend to our Squadron and Post. Especially those joining for the first time. S.A.L. membership represents the service of our Family members, your service within the Legion Family continues and honors that legacy.

Sons having fun getting things done,

Lenny Wertz

S.A.L. Post 136 Commander



# 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**





## AUXILIARY UNIT 136



**2024/2025**

### Unit Officers

**President:**

Kathy Gigliotti

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:**

Elizabeth Darnell

**2<sup>nd</sup> 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

Hello all,

Welcome summer!

May was poppy month, we went to the Greenbelt City Council meeting and read the Poppy, Flanders Field information and Rusty Beeg spoke to the Council about it.

We delivered flower arrangements to St. Hughes and Greenridge house with poppies in them.

We had a pizza party at Kenmoor MS and presented the essay winners with checks.

For teacher's week we presented 5 large baskets of Peppermint Patties to all of the local schools for all their commitment to our youth, thanking them for all they do.

We sponsored six girls for Girls State and one was elected mayor and two were elected as city officials.

We sponsored a hole for the S.A.L. Golf tournament.

We gave out two more scholarships to deserving students.

We donated to the Greenbelt Recreation Department for their summer camp program.

We held our elections (see new officers on the left. They will be installed at the Post on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Reminder:** No Shotgun Bingo for the month of July. Everyone enjoy their summer!

Best Regards,

Kathy Gigliotti

Auxiliary President

### AUXILIARY CHAPLAIN /MEMBERSHIP MESSAGE

Happy July 4<sup>th</sup> You Independent Ladies!

Summer is here and it's time for the July/August Contact.

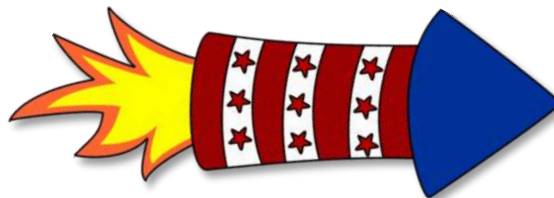
For those of you who have not paid your 2024 dues, you can send your \$30 check to the post office address on page 6. As of June 1<sup>st</sup> we have 89% paid membership so we won't make goal. Let's try harder for 2025. We've done it before, we can do it again!

If you would like to be an EARLY, EARLY Bird ( we already have 5 paid 2025 members) you can add your 2025 dues (\$30) to the same check. Please include a \$1.00 scholarship donation (also known as Money Bunny) on that same check and you could win \$300...YEAH. Remember, absolutely every single dollar counts and we thank you for your generosity.



### AUXILIARY MEETINGS

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays  
7:00 PM  
excluding July &  
December



(Chaplain's message continued on page six)

We extend a hearty WELCOME to our new members: Terri Fendlay, Suzanne Bartlett, Traci LaFontant and Valerie Talbert. Rejoining the Unit is Marayna Smith.

Sympathy to the family of Joyce Magnum who has passed away.

Ladies, call me with any questions at (301) 474-0849.

Susan Wiener,  
Membership Chairman/Chaplain  
Auxiliary Unit 136



### 2024 Dues For Auxiliary Members

\$30.00 Regular  
(Seniors 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.



Unit #136 went to Kenmoor Middle School and brought goodies/pizza and gave out the Americanism Essay Contest awards.



Like our Juniors  
on Facebook @  
136juniorsala



## 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)\**



## MONEY BUNNY!!

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN \$300.00

Please support our Merit  
Scholarship Program

TICKETS ARE \$1.00 EACH

Drawing Date:

November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - 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



# POST INSTALLATION RECEPTION AND CEREMONY FOR THE 2024/2025 POST 136 OFFICERS

June 27, 2024



## Newly Installed Post Officers



*From Left to Right: Finance Officer Harold Schlemmer; Historian Bernie Zempolich; At-Large Member Larry Williams; Sergeant-at-Arms Bill Muffley; Adjutant Mike Moore; Commander Greg Gigliotti; 1st Vice Commander James Hawkins; At-Large Member John Hardwick; Judge Advocate Tom Davis; At-Large Member Richard Brown; Chaplain Shawn Fenstermacher; and 2nd Vice Commander Butch Hicks. Not pictured - At-Large Member Timothy Meade.*



## Newly Installed S.A.L. Officers



*From Left to Right: Immediate Past Detachment S.A.L. Commander Joe Lohman; Detachment S.A.L. Commander Mike Obremski; Post 136 Finance Officer Kevin Foster; Post 136 Commander Lenny Wertz; Southern Maryland Region S.A.L. Commander Jerry Darnell; Post 136 2nd Vice Commander Dave Fendlay; Post 136 Chaplain Kenny Hall; Post 136 Sergeant-at-Arms Marty Rousseau; Post 136 Adjutant/Historian Ray (Cory) Micallef. Not pictured - S.A.L. Advisor Richard Dutton.*

*(Newly installed officer photos continued on page eight)*



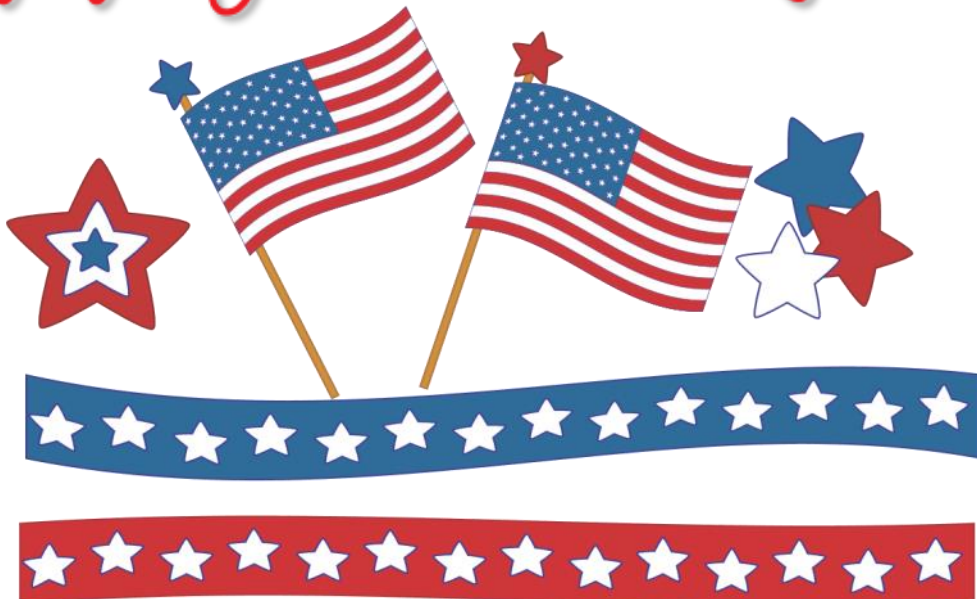


## Newly Installed Auxiliary Unit #136 Officers



*From Left to Right: Executive Committee Patty Rousseau; Executive Committee Laura Fendlay; 1st Vice President Elizabeth Darnell; President Kathy Gigliotti; Treasurer Sandi Dutton; Executive Committee Dora Hamm; 2nd Vice President Elizabeth Rice; Sergeant-at-Arms Dana Coleman. Not pictured-Secretary Mary Fava. Not pictured-Chaplain Susan Wiener. Not pictured-Historian Rusty Beeg.*

Happy 4th Of July





## ETHAN MENDOZA OF TROOP 257 TAKES ON HIS EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT



Greenbelt American Legion Post 136 Commander, Greg Gigliotti; Post 136 Adjutant, Mike Moore, presented a check for \$1700 to Life Scout Ethan Mendoza of Troop 257 in Cheverly, Md. Mendoza had to complete a project as part of becoming an Eagle Scout. He began a project to replace the Pearl Harbor Memorial anchor in Bladensburg Memorial Park. The anchor had become worn over time and needed replacement. Joining the check presentation were Post 136 officers from left: Harold Schlemmer; Tom Davis; Adjutant Mike Moore; Post Commander Greg Gigliotti; Ethan's parents Penny and Cristian who is Scout Master of Troop 257; and Ed Day of the National and Historic Division of the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission.

(Photo courtesy of Butch Hicks)



### 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

## MEMORIAL DAY HONORS THOSE WHO SERVED AMERICAN DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY, OUR VALUES

American Legion Post 136 held Memorial Day services at its Post, rather than Greenbelt's War Memorial Park this year, to avoid predicted inclement weather. Even with the change in venue, Post 136 Commander, Greg Gigliotti, greeted more than 100 Greenbelt and surrounding community participants who came to honor fallen veterans who gave the last full measure of devotion defending our country.

Gigliotti shared that during Memorial Day services, we honor the more than one million men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation while serving in wars and missions since the American Revolution. He said, "Each story is unique, and each story represents heartbreak to the family and friends left to mourn."

Gigliotti told the story of one hero. "There was Private Furman L. Smith, who served with the Army's 135th Infantry Regiment, 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Eighty years ago, his unit came under intense fire from German forces near Lanuvio, Italy. Severely outnumbered by the enemy, Private Smith tended to seriously wounded comrades, even as others withdrew. Smith emptied clip after clip of his M-1 Garand rifle and killed at least 10 enemy soldiers before he was fatally shot. The 19-year-old from Six Mile, South Carolina, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor."

State Senator, Alonzo Washington's comments further supported the day's solemnity. "Memorial Day is more than just a long weekend or unofficial start of summer," he said. "We gather today on this solemn occasion of Memorial Day, we come together not only to enjoy the comradery of community but also to honor and pay tribute to the greatest men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to serve our nation..."

Mayor Emmett Jordan presented a Memorial Day Proclamation extolling heroes' sacrifice and devotion. "We're forever grateful for their courage, selflessness, and dedication to serve," he said. "We should always honor the fallen men and women who served and defended our great nation with prayers for peace."

It has been said many times, but it is particularly relevant on Memorial Day. As proud Americans, we should all remember that our freedom is not free. "It is only possible because heroes, some from our own families or neighborhoods, have paid a high price. It's that price which enables us to have ceremonies and observances like this in towns across this great country," Gigliotti said. "In The American Legion Preamble, we pledge to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars. We do this not to pat ourselves on the back or impress people with stories of our own military service. We know what we did, but we are also witnesses. Veterans have seen heroism in its purest form."

Veterans served alongside the very men and women that we remember today. One such witness was Lou Conter. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Lou passed away at age 102. He was the last survivor of the USS Arizona. During Pearl Harbor observances in 2020, Lou said to The American Legion, "We're not the heroes. The 1,177 who went down with the ship are the heroes. You have to remember we got to go home, get married, have children and grandchildren, and we've lived a good life. Those who didn't get to do that should be called the heroes...We were able to raise families, continue careers and live good lives because of the sacrifices made by young men and women who never came home. We must always remember them. May they all rest in peace."

**Story and Photos Courtesy of Butch Hicks**  
(See more photos on page eleven)



*More than 100 participants from Greenbelt and other communities honored deceased veterans at Memorial Day services held at Greenbelt American Legion Post 136.*





Wreath placing honors, accompanied by playing taps, were led by Greenbelt City Council members Jenni Pompei and Silke Pope; Auxiliary Unit 136 member Elizabeth Rice; Greenbelt Police Department Officer PFC Ritson; and Sons of the American Legion Squadron member, Jim Harbaugh.

(Photo courtesy of Butch Hicks)



Post 136 officers, Greenbelt, county and state officials display Memorial Day Proclamation presented by Mayor Jordan to officers of American Legion Post 136. (from left) Greenbelt City Council members, Silke Pope; Jenni Pompei; Rodney Robers; Mayor Emmett Jordan; Auxiliary Unit 136 Treasurer, Sandi Dutton; Sons of the American Legion Squadron 136 Commander, Lenny Wertz; Post 136 Commander, Greg Gigliotti; State Senator Alonzo Washington; Delagete Anne Healey; Delegate Ashanti Martinez.

(Photo courtesy of Butch Hicks)

# MEMORIAL DAY

## A DAY TO REMEMBER. A DAY TO HONOR.



# 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY PICNIC

## Thursday, July 4, 2024

**2:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

Picnic open to the Public

Come and enjoy the music, cold  
beverages and great food!!

Fried Chicken

Hot Dogs

Baked Beans

Burgers

Italian Sausages

Corn on the Cob

Assorted Cold Salads

### MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING ONLY

Stay and watch the fireworks from the parking lot.

ATTN: The parking lot is not available to  
the general public for fireworks viewing.



## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR JULY/AUGUST 2024

Thursday, July 4<sup>th</sup>  
July 16<sup>th</sup> – July 19<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup>

Fourth of July Legion Family Picnic 2 PM – 5 PM  
Department of Maryland Convention – Ocean City  
Boys Nation Dinner 5 PM

Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, August 5<sup>th</sup>  
Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup>

U.S. Coast Guard 231<sup>st</sup> Birthday  
Executive Committee Meeting 6:30 PM  
Post 136 General Meeting 7:00 PM

## S.A.L. CRAB FEAST



Saturday, September 14, 2024  
Keep an eye on our [Facebook Page](#)  
and sign up for our email list [here](#)  
More details coming soon!

