



GREENBELT AMERICAN LEGION POST 136

CONTACT

6900 Greenbelt Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770

(301) 345-0136

<http://www.greenbeltmdpost136.org>

VOLUME LXXXII

March/April 2025

ISSUE II



COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

The sudden loss of my beloved wife Kathy on February 12th has been devastating to me and my family. She lived a life full of love, laughter and service to the community. She was remembered by her friends and family in a memorial service at Gasch's Funeral Home on Friday afternoon, February 28th and a Celebration of Life at Greenbelt American Legion Post 136 on Friday evening. On behalf of the Gigliotti and Houchen's families, I want to express our deepest gratitude for your love, support and presence during this difficult time.

In mid-January, we had two successful Super Bowl Parties. Thanks to all our block holders, our volunteers and staff for upholding this Legion tradition. The Executive Committee is looking at ways to improve the event experience by reducing the administrative and logistical burden. We will keep you informed as we work through these issues. We got rave reviews on our Valentine's Day dinner. The food was great, and the staff did an extraordinary job serving 140 romantic meals.

The last couple of weeks have been gloomy with cold and cloudy weather. It's time to move on into the windy March and rainy April. With the weather changing we should see the grass on the Legion's front lawn turn green, the trees bloom and feel the March wind come in like a lion with the April rain following behind. It's a great time of the year to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a dinner on Saturday, March 15th and a St. Patrick's Day lunch on Monday the 17th. Come and enjoy yourself with the Legion Family.

Last year we hosted, for the first time, with the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department, an Easter Egg Hunt. This year on April 13th the Legion Family and the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department will host the event again at the Post.

The American Legion's Department of Maryland has guidelines on the timely renewal of membership. Your 2025 membership is in effect. If a member does not renew their membership between the 1st of January and 31st of March you will be considered delinquent. Between 1st of April and the 31st May your membership will be suspended and last but not least, on the 1st June your membership will be terminated. If terminated, you will have to apply all over again and lose your cumulative years status. Signs at the Greenbelt American Legion have been posted and the bartenders are required to check all ID cards. So, 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. Again, we are going to start checking Membership ID's in the Member Lounge. If you do get suspended, you'll be asked to go to the restaurant during the restaurant hours. You can enjoy the Legion's restaurant tasty meal specials, that are always available at a reasonable price. You can always refer to the Greenbelt American Legion Facebook page for the hours of operation or visit the restaurant in person to enjoy the food. Please tell your friends that our restaurant is open to the public and bring your whole family. You can view the full menu at <http://www.greenbeltmdpost136.org/dining.html>

God Bless America,
Greg Gigliotti,
Commander

2024/2025

Commander:
Greg Gigliotti

1st Vice Commander:
James Hawkins

2nd 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

Kathleen Gigliotti

December 20, 1961 - February 12, 2025



Our Unit President, Kathy Gigliotti (Houchens), 63, passed away on February 12, 2025, in Silver Spring, Maryland. Born on December 20, 1961, in Washington, D.C., she lived a life full of love, laughter, and dedication to her family and community.

Kathy attended St. Jerome's Elementary School and later earned her GED from Elizabeth Seton High School. She embarked on a career in administrative work, beginning at Foremost in the early 1980's before moving on to Rent-A-Crate in 2000. In 2017, she took time off to care for her first granddaughter, a role she cherished deeply. She later returned to the workforce at ReStream until 2024.

A devoted member of the Greenbelt Unit #136, Kathy was an integral part of our organization. She served as our President for the past couple of years and also worked as a part-time bartender at the Post, forming lasting friendships while contributing to the community she loved.

Kathy is survived by her loving husband, Gregory Gigliotti; her children, Craig May, Jake Gigliotti (Lindsey), and Anthony Gigliotti (Sarah); and her adored grandchildren: Ryan May, Josh May, Andrew Gigliotti, Owen Gigliotti, Anthony Gigliotti, Emilia Gigliotti, and Gianna Gigliotti. She is also survived by

her siblings: Bernadette Zanger, Regina Cubbage, Dolores Giesen, JoAnn Reynolds (Freddy), Michael Houchens (Pamm), Lauren Grothe, Patrick Houchens, Rita Lukacsina (Thomas), Charlene Hoagland, Richard Houchens (Christine), Robert Houchens (Linda), and Alice DeGroat (Danny) and many, many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her sister, Susan Fields, and her parents, Bernadette Costello and Williams Houchens.

Kathy was known for her fun-loving and outgoing nature. She had an incredible sense of humor that could brighten any room and a warmth that made it easy for her to form friendships wherever she went. Her love for sports was undeniable—she enjoyed watching all kinds of games but was especially passionate about cheering on her beloved Washington Commanders (Redskins).

An active person who loved the outdoors and travel, Kathy found joy in scenic walks and spending time at her second home in Lake Anna, Virginia. There, she created countless cherished memories entertaining friends and family. Her favorite moments were spent basking in the sun at the beach or pier while watching her grandchildren play in the lake — a place that brought her immense happiness.

Kathy's legacy is one of love, laughter, and unwavering devotion to those she held dear. Her memory will live on in the hearts of all of us who knew her.

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Legionnaires,

As we journey through the year, we are reminded of our steadfast commitment to God and Country. It is this faith that guides us, strengthens us, and unites us as members of The American Legion family. In these months of reflection and renewal, we remember the sacrifices made for our freedom and the hope that sustains us.

Looking back at our nation's history, March and April remind us of pivotal moments shaped by courage and unity. In March 1919, weary but determined veterans gathered in Paris to form The American Legion, laying the foundation for generations to come. Their vision, rooted in patriotism and fellowship, continues to inspire us today.

April is also a month of remembrance and renewal. In April 1945, our nation mourned the loss of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose leadership through hardship embodied the resilience of the American spirit. That same spirit of compassion was witnessed in April 1975 during Operation Babylift, as American service members rescued thousands of orphans from war-torn Vietnam, reflecting our nation's commitment to hope and humanity.

These moments in history remind us that from sacrifice comes hope, and from hope, renewal. This resonates deeply as we approach Easter, a time when Christians around the world reflect on the ultimate sacrifice made for our redemption and the promise of eternal life. Just as our Savior's resurrection brought hope to a weary world, may we also find strength in our faith to overcome challenges and serve with purpose.

As your Chaplain, I am honored to stand with you, united by faith, fellowship, and the call to serve. May we continue to draw courage from our history, hope from our faith, and strength from each other.

May God bless you, your families, our Post, and this great nation we proudly serve.

In Service to God and Country,
Chaplain Shawn Fenstermacher

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2025 - 2026 ADMINISTRATIVE YEAR

Nominations for Greenbelt Post 136 Officer positions for the 2025 - 2026 Administrative Year are now being accepted.

Nominations for the following officer positions are listed below.

Please contact Post Historian Bernie Zempolich with your nomination at: (240) 601-3566 or bazemp@aol.com

Commander

1st Vice Commander

2nd Vice Commander

Judge Advocate

Sgt. at Arms

Chaplain

Historian

Finance Officer

Adjutant

Executive Committee (4 positions available)



POST 136 CHAPLAIN SHAWN FENSTERMACHER NAMED PASTOR OF NEW CARROLLTON BIBLE CHURCH

By Past Commander Mike Moore



In January 2025, our own Post Chaplain, Shawn Fenstermacher was selected as the Interim Pastor of the New Carrollton Bible Church. My wife Audrey and I have attended several services led by Shawn and have been impressed with his deep commitment to the spiritual well-being of the members of his new church. Located on Good Luck Road, the New Carrollton Bible Church holds services every Sunday beginning at 11:00 a.m.

I am pleased to announce that Shawn will continue as our Post Chaplain and will continue to lead the Bible Study and Prayer Group for the University of Maryland Men's Soccer Team. Shawn and his wife Hope are both veterans and continue to be active in our Legion Family. Due to Hope's military service as a Major in the U.S. Army, Shawn has qualified to join Greenbelt Auxiliary Unit 136. His military service in the U.S. Navy makes for an interesting mixed marriage – especially during the Army-Navy Game. He is also a member of Greenbelt S.A.L. Squadron 136, making him a triple Legion Family member.

I have had the pleasure of working closely with Shawn and can confidently say that his service to our Veterans and their families has been exceptional. Shawn has been the officiant for numerous funerals, offering comfort and solace to grieving families during their most difficult

times. His ability to bring dignity, respect, and spiritual care to these services has touched the lives of many. Additionally, Shawn has represented our American Legion Post at various memorial services, performing ceremonial duties that honor our fallen heroes and their families with great professionalism and reverence.

In his role as Post Chaplain, Shawn consistently demonstrates compassion, wisdom, and a deep commitment to the spiritual well-being of our members. He is always available to provide pastoral care, whether it be through a word of encouragement, prayer, or offering a listening ear. His presence is both steadying and uplifting, and he brings a calming assurance rooted in his faith.

Shawn's contributions extend beyond his pastoral duties. As an integral member of our Executive Committee, his input and leadership have been invaluable in guiding our Post. His ability to relate to individuals from all backgrounds, whether Veterans or their families, has made him a trusted and respected figure in our community. His leadership during difficult moments has truly set him apart. Please join me in thanking Shawn for his exceptional service as our Post Chaplain.





SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION SQUADRON 136



S.A.L. COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Dear Legion Family,

Legion Family, as always, I encourage all who have not renewed dues for this year to do so quickly. Currently 45 members of the Squadron need to pay their 2025 dues in order to be at 100% renewal by April 25th. If you want to renew online you may do so at www.mylegion.org site. You will need your membership card number from your most recent membership card (2024) to set up and pay online. Our dual members and under 18 members will still need to pay/mail into the Post. Members will be able to update their mailing address and find discounts and other Legion Family information available to members on the site.

The Squadron is preparing to wrap up this administrative year and begin planning for the next year. Please find it in your heart to come help the S.A.L. a couple of hours a month; helping on Wednesday nights or with other related tasks. Many hands do ease the efforts and help to grow the team. Something that we all can do in about 5 minutes is to sign up for Legislative alerts from VoterVOICE. You can follow the American Legion Legislative Priorities before Congress. These can be reviewed at www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/Bills and provide detailed descriptions of each bill before our Congress. These bills cover a range of support from benefits and employment opportunities for veterans to issues on national security. Please sign up for alerts at www.votervoice.net/americanlegion/home we encourage everyone to contact your Representatives and Senators to let them know you support these bills.

Allow me to remind and encourage each of our Legion Family to Be the One! Be the One is continuing Legion initiative and collaboration that aims to reduce the rate of veteran suicide. You don't need to be an expert to make a difference for a veteran; sharing this information that resources are available, and help is just a click or phone call away is a start. Dial 988 and press 1; chat online at www.MilitaryCrisisLine.net or send a text to 8838255 to receive free, confidential support. Be the One to check in on a Veteran. Be the One to make a difference in sharing this information with a neighbor or anyone in crisis.

The Southern Maryland Region S.A.L. is hosting a Spring Bull & Shrimp Feast on April 5th held at Post 66 in Bowie. Tickets are \$40, If you are interested in tickets check with an S.A.L. officer and we can work to get them for you.

If you have any ideas or suggestions; Be the One to bring them to any of our monthly meetings or share them with our leadership team beforehand. Wednesday nights during Queen of Hearts is generally a good alternative. The S.A.L. monthly meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM. Nominations for the next slate of officers will take place during the April monthly meeting with election at the May meeting.

I almost forgot, I would like you to save the date of September 13th to attend the Legion Crab Feast. Tickets will be available mid-summer.

Be the One...to make a difference,

Lenny Wertz

S.A.L. Commander 2024/2025

2024/2025

Commander:
Lenny Wertz

1st Vice Commander:
Vacant

2nd 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





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



S.A.L. SQUADRON 136 AND AUXILIARY UNIT 136

PROUDLY SUPPORT THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS

By Butch Hicks



Jerry Darnell, S.A.L. Southern Maryland Regional Commander, led a contingent of swimmers into the cold waters of Chesapeake Bay; part of the thousands who participated in the Maryland State Police's Polar Bear Plunge fundraiser for the Special Olympics. Darnell said temperatures were in the 30's and had an even colder wind chill. "Many of us were hesitant, but we plunged into the cold water anyway motivated by the event's purpose of raising money for the Maryland Special Olympics. Between gasps of breath acknowledging how cold they were, some swimmers declared the fundraising purpose kept them going." The ongoing tally of accumulated funds helped cold-plungers' excitement and gratitude for generous donations." Darnell said the Sons of the American Legion detachment of Maryland donated \$15,000 and the Auxiliary Unit 136 and Sons of the American Legion Squadron 136 donated \$5,000 each toward the more than \$3 million raised. "S.A.L. Squadron 136 and Auxiliary Unit 136 proudly support the Special Olympics," said Darnell. "The Special Olympics Maryland works to provide sports opportunities for athletes, no matter their ability level."

(Photo Courtesy of Jerry Darnell)



AUXILIARY UNIT 136



2024/2025

Unit Officers

President:

Kathy Gigliotti
(Dec. 20, 1961 -
Feb. 12, 2025)

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 1ST VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi Everyone! Spring is coming, maybe later than we want it to, but I'm so ready to have it arrive!

Girls State is coming up and we need candidates to Sponsor. We are reaching out to all our local high school Juniors to apply. It is such a great experience and looks good on a college resume.

We've been busy and have given donations to various local organizations: School supplies to local schools; Charlotte Hall Wish List; Loch Raven, Perry Point & Baltimore VAs; Eleanor Roosevelt staff Appreciation Fund; Candy for Troops; Polar Bear Plunge for Special Olympics; Branchville Volunteer Fire Dept; Wounded Warrior Project and VA Homeless of MD.

Supporting our community, veterans and active military is our goal.

Thank you to those who come and support our Tuesday night shotgun bingo, this is our biggest fund raiser so we can help all the organizations for which we donate. Haven't been? - please consider coming and see what it's all about - it's not your every day bingo! We also offer games of chance and food for sale. Spread the word, we like seeing new faces.

A reminder to all members, if you participate in or volunteer for any events regarding community service, Americanism, children and youth, etc. we get credit for the hours. This may include transporting individuals to medical appointments or the grocery store, volunteering at schools, meals for the poor or church activities to name a few; so please let us know the number of hours, the event, and how many participated. You can email that information to: Unit136alamd@gmail.com.

Here are a few dates for upcoming events-so mark your calendars!

April 13th - Easter Egg Hunt in conjunction with the Post Family

May 16th - Auxiliary Shrimp Feast

June 27th - Shotgun bingo in conjunction with the S.A.L.

We are looking forward to the exciting things happening around the Post and around the State of Maryland with the Auxiliary. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me. As always, helping hands are welcome for any event.

God Bless America,
Elizabeth Darnell
Auxiliary First Vice President

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



MEMBERSHIP CHAIR’S MESSAGE

The Auxiliary is proud to welcome our newest members Kimberly Harrison, Heather Pope, Teakita Blair, Debra Whetzel, Elizabeth Harrington, Kayla Fenstermacher, Mary Keller, Tina Mattingly, Khloe Smith, Monique Frazier, Christy Flippo and rejoin Katharine Reinhardt.

Our Unit’s paid 2025 membership is 305 which puts us at 86%. Let’s continue to 100%, if you have not yet paid your 2025 dues you can send your check made payable to: ALA 136 and mail to: PO Box 1063 Greenbelt, MD 20768 or drop it off at the Legion with the bartender. This Unit is nothing without your support.

The Legion family: Auxiliary, Post, and SAL have broken hearts with the passing of our Auxiliary President, Kathy Gigliotti. Kathy has transferred to Post Everlasting way too soon. She will be missed for all her love and good works.

Those we love don’t go away, they walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near, so loved, so missed, so very dear.

We send prayers of love and comfort to Greg and his family.

Sympathy also goes out to the family of Helen Whetzel who has passed.

Please call me with any questions: (301) 474-0849

Susan Weiner,
Membership Chair/Chaplain



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



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

AMERICAN LEGION POST 136 FAMILY SUPPORTS MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD INAUGURAL TROOPS

By Butch Hicks

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 136 and Sons of the American Legion Squadron 136 combined efforts aiding Maryland National Guard troops supporting the 60th presidential inauguration. Auxiliary Unit 136 President, Kathy Gigliotti, said the Auxiliary Unit used its association with the Maryland Army National Guard to determine how American Legion Post 136 could support the Guard Unit's presidential inaugural parade activities. "The Guard rep shared that their unit of approximately 800 troops would be helping with the inaugural parade," said Gigliotti. "She let us know that any way we could help would be appreciated. The troops would be exposed to cold for an extended time. We decided various snacks such as power bars and other goodies would help. Because the troops were exposed to the cold, we included 300 pairs of hand warmers. All of our shopping efforts online and at discount centers were assembled and delivered to the Guard Unit at the Naval Warfare Center."

S.A.L. used its monetary contribution to purchase hundreds of snacks and power bars. "It was an opportunity to join the Auxiliary Unit in both community and military support by assisting the National Guard," said Jerry Darnell, S.A.L. Southern Maryland Regional Commander.



Dickie Dutton, American Legion Post 136 Legionnaire, wheels one of many food carts bound for the Maryland National Guard troops that supported the 60th presidential inaugural day events. Approximately 800 members of the Maryland National Guard were in Washington to support the 60th presidential inauguration. (Photo courtesy of Jerry Darnell)

The Post 136 Annual ST.PATRICK'S DAY Dinner
Saturday, March 15th



Corned Beef & Cabbage, Parsley Potatoes, Carrots

4-8pm Saturday Night Dinner Special in the restaurant*

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

\$14.95

Special Desserts that will make your mouth water!

Special Drinks

NOTE: To avoid extra wait time and with a shortage of staff, to have a sufficient amount of food and time, we are asking for RESERVATIONS for this dinner. Call us with your reservation (301) 345-0136 ext. 1
You may request 4:00, 5:00, 6:00 or 7:00pm (Keep in mind that most people won't take an hour to eat so we could possibly take the next group a little ahead of time) Thanks for your cooperation on this!

Regular menu items will be available!



The Post 136 Annual

St. Patrick's Day

Luncheon – Monday, March 17th

Corned Beef on Rye & Potato Salad

\$8.50

1-3pm At Post 136 Deli in the back hall



LEGION FAMILY MEMORIES

2024





UPCOMING EVENTS MARCH/APRIL 2025

Monday, March 3rd:

Saturday, March 15th:

Monday, March 17th:

Thursday, March 20th:

Monday, April 7th:

Sunday, April 13th:

Thursday, April 17th:

Sunday, April 27th:

Post 136 Executive Committee Meeting: 6:30 PM

Saint Patrick's Day Special Dinner

Saint Patrick's Day Special Lunch

Post 136 General Membership Meeting: 7:00 PM

Post 136 Executive Committee Meeting: 6:30 PM

Easter Egg Hunt

Post 136 General Membership Meeting: 7:00 PM

American Legion Family Day