

The Damascus Veteran

A Newsletter for Members & Friends of
Damascus American Legion Post 171 & Unit

July/August 2024

From the Post Commander

My Legion Family,

I've had the opportunity to visit numerous other Posts. None can compare to Damascus Post 171 because we have something special. It's called 'Family'. I want to thank my team, our Legion and Unit members, and community volunteers for their unwavering support. And I want to thank the spouses, significant others, and family members for sharing their loved ones with us.

The 2024-2025 Legion Year election was held at the member meeting on Monday, June 10. The results are shown below.

Elected Positions

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Commander | Anita Trotter |
| 1st Vice Cmdr. | Paula Gill |
| 2nd Vice Cmdr. | Kevin O'Neill |
| Adjutant | Mandy Buckley |
| Finance Officer | Ray Lewandowski |
| Judge Advocate | Fred Mitchell (PPC) |
| Sgt-at-Arms | Scott Dallas |
| Executive Committee | Steve Monteiro (PPC) |
| Executive Committee | Cary Henry |
| Executive Committee | Bill Raab (PPC) |
| Executive Committee | Mike Wright |

Appointed Positions

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Chaplain | Jim Serritella |
| Historian | Sam Lehane |
| Service Officer | Keith Midberry |



The 2024-2025 Post Officers were sworn in by Cliff Bergstresser, District 8 Commander, on June 29.

They were sworn in at the Installation Dinner on June 29 and will take charge as the last gavel sounds at the Legion Convention on July 19. I have full confidence these individuals

*Taking care of veterans, and
taking care of each other*



Damascus American Legion Post 171
10201 Lewis Drive
Damascus, MD 20872
(301) 253-0769
legionpost171.org

will continue to serve the Post and the Damascus community in the highest traditions of the American Legion. Thank you again!

Duty, Honor, Country

Steve Monteiro

Post Commander

From the Incoming Post Commander

My Legion Family,

Happy New Year! July 1 marks the beginning of the Legion Year 2024-2025. As the old year draws to a close, Post 171 just completed our annual election of officers and executive committee. I'm very excited and ready to lead Post 171 into the new year! Thank you for trusting me and all the newly elected and re-elected officers to take care of and grow this Post. You know what I know...they are a great group of individuals!

I'll start by thanking Steve Monteiro for his leadership over the past two years. Steve steered the ship through the end of Covid and diminished assets to a position of strength and prosperity. Steve was our rock of steadiness during the time of rebuilding. Thank you, Steve! You have a well-deserved rest awaiting you.

Thanks to all the outgoing and continuing Executive Committee as well. Your time and efforts over the past year have not gone unnoticed. You may not hear it often, but we all appreciate your accomplishments, your unique talents, and your willingness to jump in and do whatever is needed when needed.

My vision for this Post includes building on our current good works and growing new avenues of veteran support and community involvement. Our Post has a great tradition of Americanism programs like baseball, oratorical, scholarships, and other youth programs. We *can* do more for Damascus children and their families. Our Post has been generous in supporting veterans' programs like Lorien residents, Memorial and Veterans Day recognitions, Warrior Canine Connection, No Veteran Left Behind, and other veteran support charities. We need to do more direct 1-1 support to our own and Damascus' veterans.

All our successful programs and activities started and grew out of the passion of a single member. So, if you are a new or newly engaged member, what do YOU want to do with or for Post 171? What are you good at, what do you enjoy, what are your passions that you and we can turn into a Post service success? Don't be afraid to say so, don't be afraid to step on toes. If you want to support an existing program or start a new one, whether someone has or has not had that idea before, your Post officer team welcomes your ideas and acknowledges your potential. We'll find a way to fit your talents into a program or event of the four pillars of the Legion, which are Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. I want to meet every member where they are...what do YOU want to do in terms of service or what service do you need from colleagues? My ears are open.

Post 171 does not stand alone in Damascus. Over the past few years, we've started to develop or re-develop community partnerships and we need to grow those even more. This partnership

includes our own Unit and our fellow and nearby Maryland Posts. We don't have to go it alone. We will help them, they will help us, and we will all grow stronger. That's the plan!

Anita Trotter
Incoming Post Commander

From the Auxiliary Unit President

The following quote is from the Royal Canadian Legion Newsletter and applies to us, too. "Every Legion member has the power to make a meaningful impact on the lives of veterans and their families. From offering a helping hand to the veterans in your community to paying tribute to those who have passed, our collective efforts shine brightly. Whether you're engaging in heartwarming conversations, organizing events, or participating in commemorative activities, your involvement supports veterans and our community, as well as help to ensure their legacy live on forever." I couldn't have said it better. It is what we do.



The 2024-2025 Unit Officers were sworn in by Andrea Anderson, Past Department President, on June 29.

I am pleased to announce that at our June Unit Meeting, yours truly was reelected Unit 171 President. But I will not be continuing as District President. I felt that was too much while continuing with my Legion responsibilities, too.

As a matter of fact, all Unit Officers will remain in the coming year. I have learned a lot this year and will continue much less confused than I was this past year! With Anita as Commander, we create an intimidating pair. Husband and wife have been Commander and President before throughout the Department of Maryland (including 171), but *this is the first time the roles have been reversed. The first time!!* I am actually looking forward to it!

I recently had the privilege of again organizing and presenting the American Legion School Awards in our area. After losing a school last year, we have 10. The new leadership at one of our schools felt that awards are not fair. I want to thank Anita, Keith Martin, Steve, and Fred for doing some of the presentations when 5 were scheduled for the 10 am hour on June 12. A lesson learned in my Legion Career is I cannot be 2 places at once. These Awards are much appreciated by our participating schools. When shopping the week after, I had 3 families recognize me and thank me profusely for doing the awards. The Veterans' recognition we do at each presentation is also well received.

Unfortunately, three of our long-time supportive principals are retiring this summer. I plan to meet with their replacements and offer what we have done and can do for them, not only the School Awards but also Veterans Day and classroom visitations.

As you can see, the Unit can provide needed help or even take the lead anywhere. For too many years, the Auxiliary was seen **solely** as the kitchen help. Fortunately, that attitude has gone away for the most part. Look at what you can do and go with it. We do not meet in the summer, but I am usually available. I will be attending both conventions like I did last year.

And with that, enjoy your summer and be ready to work in September.

Will Trotter

Unit President and District 8 President, PDC

The Post 171 Patriots Baseball Program

Legion Family —

On the evening of June 27, American Legion Post 171 Patriots and the Damascus Sports Association (DSA) Champions baseball players and coaches engaged in a competitive, but fun and friendly baseball outing at Laytonsville Park. The DSA Champions team provides the local special needs community with opportunities to enjoy America's game, and Post 171 was glad to be a part of this enjoyable community experience. The game was close, but in the end, the Champions managed to edge out the Post 171 Patriots for the win. Thanks to all who put this event together and to our young men who helped create a memorable experience for our special needs community.

Keith Martin

Baseball Committee



Legion Membership Report

Happy New Legion Year. We needed five members to renew to reach our goal of 100%. The Department helped out and transferred two from Post 297, the "Floating Post," and we renewed three from the "Membership Fund" to make 100%. Thanks to the 44 members who have already paid their 2025, 2026, and 2027 dues using the National "special."

National and the Department increased dues July 1, so our dues increased from \$30 to \$40. You can renew your 2025 membership online at: legion.org/renew, or send check made out

to A. L. Post 171 to P.O. Box 171, Damascus, MD 20872, or send to me at: 11798 Sier Drive, Monrovia, MD 21770. Contact me: racecarman0711@comcast.net or text: (301) 401-6479 if you have any questions.

Sam Baughman
Membership Chairman

Flag Retirement Ceremony

The Damascus Volunteer Fire Department and the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 171 assisted the Post in a flag retirement ceremony on June 14. The flags were respectfully retired at the Legion Post Home at 6 pm in a ceremony that was open to the public.



Color Guard

I want to thank the color guard for their solemn performance at the Memorial Day tribute. Several of the members are having issues with physically being able to continue serving in the color guard. I am looking for a few (or more than a few) good members to join the color guard. I am new to this position and still learning the ropes. There are 6 or 7 events we participate in. We have uniforms and boots available for the guard members. The next event is Damascus Days Parade, Friday, July 12.



This is one of the ways to keep our exposure to other veterans and the community.

Please contact me at scottdallas@verizon.net or (301) 467-8883 and leave a text or voicemail.

Scott Dallas
Color Guard

Memorial Day Flag Volunteers

I want to express my heart felt thanks to all of the members of Post and Unit as well as the family members of long time members who have kept this tradition going. I know first hand by the comments I have received, it definitely means a lot to the families of the deceased Veterans. This effort would not be possible without the volunteers who come out each year to honor our Veterans.



- Route 1** Curtis Duvall & Laura
- Route 2** Tina Duvall Green & Family
- Route 3** Brownie Chichester & Steve Monterio
- Route 4** Bill Green, Carey Henry, Larry Earl, & Sam Lehane
- Route 5** Jason Moxley, Bernie Moxley, Sr., & Bernie Moxley, Jr.
- Route 6** Lynn & Steve Zebroski, & Cheryl Minekime

- Route 6a** Warren Fleming
- Routes 7 & 8** Fred Mitchell & Lyndelyn, Mo Applebee, Jane St.Louis, Rozanne Tedder, & Ryan & Marisa Anthony
- Route 9** Sandy Seipp, Phil Purcell, Scott Dallas, & Mike Wright
Keith & Mary Gene Martin (Retrieve)
- Route 10** Brent & Laura Moxley
- Route 11** Don Brightwell & Sharon Chaney

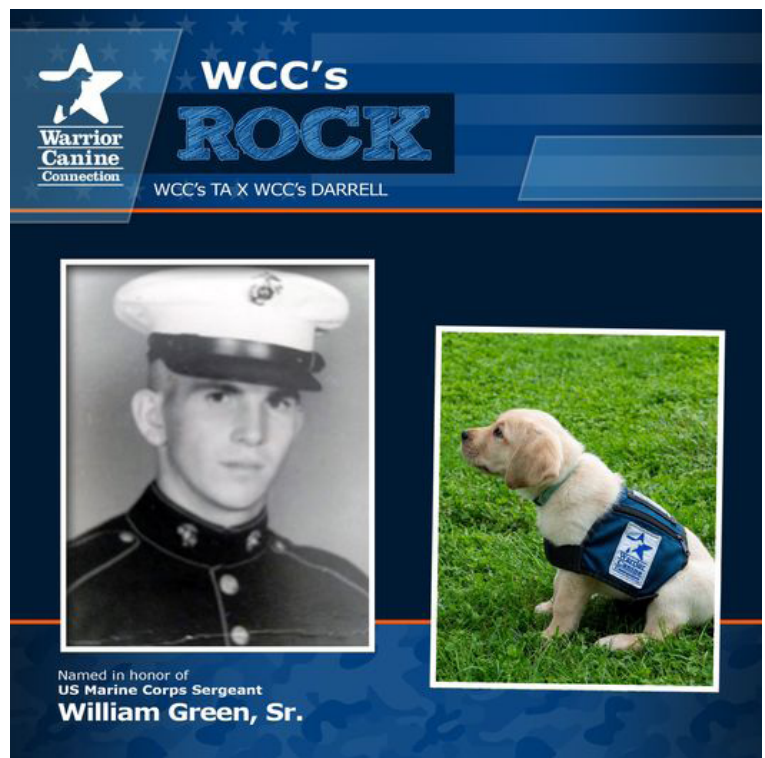
Sandy Seipp
Historian and Chaplain

Warrior Canine Connection

Warrior Canine Connection helps veterans by enlisting recovering Warriors in the therapeutic mission of training service dogs for their fellow veterans. The Post is proud to support them and many Legionnaires give their time and expertise to this cause.

Recently, Bill Green, a USMC SGT, was honored when a dog that will fulfill this special role was named after him: Rock. Congratulations to Bill on this recognition of his dedication to helping veterans! Rock was inducted as an honorary member of Post 171 at the June Membership Meeting.

Check their [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [website](#) for more information and pictures!



Francis Scott Key Post 11 Golf Tournament

The Tournament will be held Friday, July 26, to support veterans & Frederick families at Christmas. It will be at the Quail Valley Golf Course at 9 a.m. and prizes can be won!

For more information contact Chairman Wayne Kaikko at (240) 405-5050 or see Post 11's [newsletter](#).

Calling All Bingo Fans!

Two special bingo events are just around the corner.

FSK Post 11 Past Commanders Club - July 7

Doors open at 11:30 a.m. Lunch served at noon. Games start at 2 p.m.

Program includes 20 \$500 games, 2 \$1,000 Jackpot games, and 2 50/50 games.

\$60 Advance Ticket/\$70 At The Door

Reserve seating for advance ticket sales, available in the lounge - 1450 Taney Ave.

Proceeds benefit the programs of the Past Commanders Club.

Post 171 Baseball Team - July 11

Doors open at 5 p.m. Games start at 7 p.m.

Regular Thursday night bingo format, including Vegas games with payouts of up to \$1000 and a \$500 jackpot bingo game.

Proceeds will benefit the Post baseball team and program. Come support these dedicated young men!

Installation Dinner

Thanks to Kevin O'Neill for a great event and meal! Here are some views from the night.



Chaplains Corner

Here we go again

Ladies and gentlemen, the message today is “I hope you attended and voted for the new slate of your legion Post 171 Officers.” A powerful note directly affecting all American Legion Post 171 and Members.

Most of the Officers were re-elected into their prior positions. There were only a few new Post Officers elected, helping to represent the younger guys and gals filling in from us “old timers.” Gotta have young blood driving the ship!

You can always do the military thing: volunteer for a committee or event without being an officer. AND you are always welcome to attend the Executive Committee meetings to see “What’s coming down the pipe?”

The last two months were really busy. I hope you had a chance to participate in the May and June projects. Memorial Day—just a great representation of several community organizations sharing their pride and participation with the Post sponsoring the activity. The Flag Day Retirement tribute to “Old Glory” is always a momentous occasion. We paid tribute to “Old Glory” and recognized all the years she stood to honor us in peacetime and in battles. Great job, Scott Dallas—prayers and salute...TOO!

The Chaplain’s Corner offers a hand salute and a prayer for the new Officers elected in the June 10 meeting. Congrats to the incoming Post Commander, Anita Trotter, and a great salute to our outgoing Post Commander, Steve Monterio. See the front page of the newsletter for the “who” will be leading us forward for the next year or two.

And for the young Legionnaires, keep your hand in and follow the activities presented in the newsletter. Thanks to Mandy for the great editing, assembly, and distribution.

The Chaplain position is an appointed/accepted position and I appreciated the time spent serving the outgoing Post Commander. I have been asked by the incoming Post Commander, Anita Trotter, to continue in this position, which I have accepted for another year. Thank you for the opportunity to serve Post 171 members.

Jim Serritella
Chaplain



Saving Lives of Veterans, Their Families, and Communities with the Columbia Protocol

From [The American Legion](#)

As part of The American Legion Be the One mission to end veteran suicide, we have joined forces with Columbia University to develop training for those who want to learn more about interacting and responding with veterans who may be in crisis.

After the training, participants will be able to:

- Use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale to determine at-risk individuals.
- Identify risk factors and warning signs
- Outline the types of suicidal ideation and four behaviors that indicate imminent risk.
- Communicate effectively with an individual who may be at risk of hurting themselves.

Members of The American Legion Family are encouraged to take part in this training and share the training with their communities. Check back to this page or subscribe to The American Legion Online Update newsletter to receive information about new training opportunities as they become available.

Upcoming Online Sessions

Thursday, July 11
2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m. Eastern

[Register](#)

Thursday, July 18
2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m. Eastern

[Register](#)

Thursday, July 25
2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m. Eastern

[Register](#)

IMPORTANT NOTE: All attendees will be asked to complete an online survey before the class and upon completion. These surveys help track the effectiveness of the training and allow us to plan for future development.

Find more news, information, and resources from the American Legion at legion.org.

American Legion Post 171

Officers

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Commander | Steve Monteiro | (240) 401-0370 |
| 1st Vice Cmdr. | Charles Bradsher | (301) 253-9327 |
| 2nd Vice Cmdr. | Kevin O'Neill | (301) 525-2071 |
| Adjutant | Anita Trotter | (301) 661-6904 |
| Finance Officer | Ray Lewandowski | (301) 775-7152 |
| Membership | Sam Baughman* | (301) 401-6479 |
| Historian | Sam Lehane | (407) 230-3117 |
| Chaplain | Jim Serritella | (301) 253-3600 |
| Sgt-at-Arms | Bill Green | (301) 253-5420 |
| Service Officer | Keith Midberry | (240) 472-5317 |
| Judge Advocate | Fred Mitchell* | (301) 916-8395 |

Executive Committee

Paula Gill Will Cole*
Keith Martin Mandy Buckley

* denotes Past Post Commander

Visit the [Post Officers page](#) for other available contact information.

Auxiliary, Unit 171

Officers

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|--|
| President | Will Trotter [†] | adjutant171@comcast.net |
| Vice President | Marianne DiSomma* | marianne62@msn.com |
| Secretary | Cheryl Minekime | Ca.minekime@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Patricia Busche | buschep@msn.com |
| Chaplain | Sandy Seipp* | idahoss@aol.com |
| Historian | Sandy Seipp* | idahoss@aol.com |
| Sgt-At-Arms | Virginia Myers | pappydee@verizon.net |

* denotes Past Unit President

[†] denotes Past Post Department Commander

[‡] denotes Current District President

Visit the [Auxiliary Officers page](#) for available phone numbers.

Have feedback or an article to share? Please send it to the newsletter editor, Mandy Buckley, at news@legionpost171.org. Articles are due by the 20th of every even month.