



American Legion Post 290 Newsletter

edited by Siegfried Gates



The Friendliest Place in Virginia!

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Stafford, Virginia

December 2023

Commander's Call to the Post 290 American Legion Family:

.Dear Comrades,
Greetings All,

As we prepare for the holiday season, it's good to remember that there are those who don't have money for gifts and dinners. Please do what you can to help them out.

And speaking of helping out, it's truly a mystery as to why we have SO many Legion members and yet the same amount of people show up to volunteer at every function. If the majority of our members would volunteer to help at an event at least 3 times a year, we would be able to have ample help at all our events. PLEASE consider volunteering just a portion of your time to help YOUR Legion!

I do understand that some were bitter from previous issues at the Post, but we are trying to rectify these situations and make the Legion a priority. We want all to have a good time and enjoy getting together for the betterment of our community. Please consider giving it another try.

Thanks to ALL who continue to come out and support us at events. You do not go unnoticed and your help is appreciated!

Wishing you and yours a safe, healthy and Happy Hanukkah, MerryChristmas, and a prosperous Happy New Year!

Thanks,

Rick Schultz
Commander, Post 290

The Veterans Crisis Line HOT LINE is live! Dial 988 then Press 1.



Post Everlasting

Darren King

Comrades: It is always with great sorrow when I must announce the transfer of any Legionnaire to Post Everlasting:

NOTHING TO REPORT

If you know of any member of Post 290, Unit 290 or Squadron 290 who transferred to the Post Everlasting, please contact me at bsuking@yahoo.com, (816) 550-5228 or 111 Van Horn Lane, Stafford, VA 22556 .

Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain Darren King

We are in the midst of the holiday season. We have just celebrated Thanksgiving. A nice family holiday where we get together with family and friends and eat to much food and watch to much football (if that is possible). Hopefully, since it is Thanksgiving, you also take time to give thanks to God for all the blessings of this life that you enjoy.

Thanksgiving was originally more of a communal event put now we celebrate it in many different ways and no longer with just Turkey and pumpkin pie. My family went the home-made pizza route this year but we still gave thanks to the Father of Lights from whom every good and perfect gift comes (James 1:17).

Soon we will be celebrating other holidays. My wife and I will be celebrating Christmas. We may or may not decorate the house with holiday cheer every year, but we will gather with at least one of my sons and possibly a few other people for food, exchange a few gifts, and yes, watch some football. More importantly as Christians, we will celebrate the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ and give thanks for Him.

We will celebrate God taking on flesh and dwelling among us in the person of Jesus Christ. We will celebrate his birth, his life, and his death on a cross for the forgiveness of our sins. We will celebrate the life that He has given to everyone who believes and trusts in Him. While all the other things of Christmas may be nice and fun, the truth of Christmas is found in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

After Christmas we will celebrate the new year with others. We will thank God for the new year and more opportunities to serve Him. We will have fun and refreshment together (the non-alcoholic kind for this Baptist preacher) and then probably not make it to midnight as sleep often seems better than staying up to ring in the new year.

Finally, my wife and I will celebrate on the first day of the new year our wedding anniversary. Marriage is another good gift from God to be thankful for. So we will put on nice clothes, eat at a nice restaurant, and say nice things to one another, as we show our gratitude to God for our marriage.

So in the midst of what often becomes the holiday rush, take time to be thankful. Take time to give thanks for every good and perfect gift that you enjoy in life. Don't let holidays be just something you do, but something that enriches and adds meaning and purpose to life and I pray in the midst of it all, you are able to recognize and give thanks to the Giver who gives life.

BINNACLE LIST

John Patrick, 2nd Vice Commander has been in the hospital for an infection. Continue to pray for him.

If you know of any other member of Post 290, Unit 290, Chapter 290 or Squadron 290 who is ill, and/or hospitalized, or if you have updates on any of the above issues, please contact me, Darren King at darren@northstaffordbaptistchurch.com or call me at (816) 550-5228 (cell), or mail me at Darren King, 111 Van Horn Lane, Stafford, VA 22556.



American Legion Auxiliary Unit 290 News

By Marilyn Butters

Special thanks to member Kathy Payne who is coordinating the annual Children's Christmas Party being held on Sunday December 3rd at 2 p.m. Kevin the Magician will be back to entertain attendees...shhh... Kevin needs quiet to perform.

See sign up information elsewhere in this newsletter and be sure to sign up – last year we had to turn families away and we don't want to do that to your family so sign up ahead of time!

Our Unit recently enjoyed a morning of sewing stockings for the Children's Christmas Party and afterwards 6 members tried their hand at canvas painting in a class provided by our own Mary Schelin. Our Unit would love to offer more 'get togethers' - do you have a skill you would be willing to share for interested members such as crocheting, knitting, etc.? Please consider setting up a session for interested members to attend, learn, and share fellowship. Contact any officer to discuss.

The Post hall is 'beginning to look a lot like Christmas!' thanks to the efforts of members who attended the hall decorating mornings in November. Special thanks to president Ginger Briggs and Historian Mary Schelin for spearheading the work.

Last December our Unit had numerous members help with the annual Christmas Basket program. Member Kathy Payne is heading this committee and your help is needed. Friday December 18th, sort food goods, Saturday, December 19th, pack boxes, Sunday, December 20th, assist giving boxes to families. We hope to see you at the Post Annex on American Legion Road on one or all of these mornings.

Kitchen news: Our Unit now works the Bingo kitchen on the 1st and 2nd Wednesday of the month. We would love to have more members join us. 4 hours a month, please consider it! We have a good time and you get to know other members through working side by side to prepare food to keep the Bingo players fed. Join us!

Membership news: We are more than half way to meeting our membership numbers from the close of 2023. Please renew your membership now. Bring your check by the Bingo on Wednesdays or Fridays or mail it to Box 125, Stafford, VA 22555

Save the Date!

Annual ALA Unit 290 Children's Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, December 3.

Children 10 years old and under are welcome.

This is a FREE community event. Seating is limited. Registration and **tickets are required for ALL attendees.**

ATTENTION: REGISTRATION HAS FILLED TO CAPACITY. IF YOU REGISTER NOW YOUR CHLD WILL BE PLACED ON A WAITING LIST.

Online registration opened on November 1. Please use the provided QR code or visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/stafford-post-290-childrens-christmas-party-tickets-576352093627>

We need volunteers to make this a success. Questions, concerns, or to volunteer Kathy Payne at slimzeke@aol.com



Holiday Food Basket Program Schedule

By BJ Payne

VOLUNTEERS & FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED!
Spread the word!

Please help Post 290 collect food for the Holiday Food Basket Program. Drop off food donations at the Post on Wednesdays and Fridays during Bingo (large canister in lobby).

Volunteer schedule is as follows:

THE MORE VOLUNTEERS, THE FASTER WE WILL FINISH!

FYI Stafford County Public Schools Hours of Operation
(Boxes MUST be picked up during school hours of operation)

High School & Rockhill Elementary: 7:30am - 2:00pm

Elementary School: 8:25am - 2:55pm

Middle School: 9:20am - 3:50pm

Dec 11-14 @ 8:00am

Meet at Annex to pick up boxes from schools

Trailers/vans/pickups are helpful but not necessary

Friday, Dec 15 @ 8:00am

Sorting @ Annex

Saturday, Dec 16 @ 8:00am

Packing @ Annex

Sunday, Dec 17 @ 8:00

Food Basket Distribution @ Annex

Questions? Contact: post290foodbasket@gmail.com

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American Legion Riders Chapter 290 News

By Marty Partridge

Happy Holidays Post 290!

The Riders had a VERY SUCCESSFUL *Rider's Bingo* on Saturday November 4th, 2023 with 101 Bingo Players showing up to support the 290 Riders. Over the several weeks and couple months leading up to the special Bingo, we let the regular Bingo Players know about the great Veteran and Community causes we support throughout the year, and the significant donations 290 Riders and Post 290 have given for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship. We let them know that our Special Bingo is our main fundraiser that helps us support all of those great causes. We also let them know that in 2024, the Virginia Legacy Run will transition its focus and support to the American Legion Veterans and Children Foundation. That created a lot of interest and let the Bingo Players know what the 290 Riders were all about, and that the funds raised were going to support worthy causes. They did not disappoint when they showed up in force. The Riders served them breakfast and lunch, we had great door prizes, we raffled off our special baskets, and we all had a Great Time with the Bingo! We are now set to continue to do even Greater things in 2024! A special "Thank You" from the 290 Riders to all of the regular Bingo Crew Volunteers that helped make this a great event!

Once again, Rider Greg Nilges braved the cold on November 4th and represented the 290 Riders for the Chapter Installation Ceremony at Post 233 in Varina, Virginia, and presented a check for \$100 to help get their Chapter up and running. Riders supported the Stafford County Veterans Day Ceremony at the War Memorial behind the courthouse on November 10th, and participated in the Post 290 Veterans Day Wreath Laying Ceremony on November 11th. Following the Post ceremony, the Riders changed into festive uniforms, and made the annual Toys for Tots Ride to the National Museum of the Marine Corps to deliver all kinds of toys for children in need. The Riders supported with \$700 and individual Riders added an additional \$1,180 for a total of \$1880 in donations. Thanks to all the Riders that supported this important community cause.

The Riders are holding their Holiday Party and monthly meeting on December 2nd, 2023 at 1630 (*no meeting on December 11th*) at the Post Club Room, where we'll close out a great 2023 and look forward to an even better 2024!

Happy Holidays!
Keep the rubber-side down!
Marty Partridge
ALR-290 Director

American Legion Post 290 Oratorical Contest

By Erin Fox

Post 290 Oratorical Contest 2023- 2024

Post Date: December 9th @ 9:30 am arrival,
10:00 competition begins

The post contest is open to all high school students under age 20.

Cash prize at the post level

1st \$500.00, 2nd \$300.00 3rd \$150.00

If you want to compete please register

with erinfoxal@gmail.com before Dec. 3 2023

We will be accepting contestants at the door

American Legion National scholarship contest winner

1st \$25,000 scholarship, 2nd \$22,500, 3rd \$20,000

For More information and Video's visit the American Legion National Website at <https://www.legion.org/oratorical>

Competition begins at the post level and advances to the District level then regional level, then the state competition. Legion department representatives certify one winner per state. Each department (state) winner who is certified into and participates in the national contest's first round receives a \$2,000 scholarship. Where department winners compete against each other in two speaking rounds. The contest caps off with a final round that decides the three top finishers. The American Legion's National Organization awards scholarships can be used at any College or University in the United States.

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Since 1938, the program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. The program has featured numerous politicians and prominent contestants over the years, including former presidential candidate Alan Keyes, national television commentator and talk radio host Lou Dobbs, and Vice-President of the United States Mike Pence.

Speeches

There are two distinct speeches in this contest: the Prepared Oration and the Assigned Topics.

The Prepared Oration

This is a prepared speech that must be no less than 8 minutes and no more than 10 Minutes long.

The oration must be on some aspect of the Constitution, with emphasis on a citizen's duties and obligations to our government.

The same subject and oration used in the department contest must be used in the national contest.

Contestants may have a copy of their prepared oration while waiting in the first holding room. They may consult the copy until they exit to begin the contest.

The copy will then be surrendered to the contest official monitoring the first holding room.

Quotations must always be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than 10 words in length, the author's name must be given in the manuscript and cited orally.

It is acceptable to utilize or incorporate short phrases in a foreign language to develop the argument, establish a point, etc. It should be understood that the vast majority of the prepared oration and/or assigned topic must still be delivered in English.

Singing is not permitted and will result in immediate disqualification. The contestant may, however, quote a verse(s) of a song (s) provided proper attribution is made.

Continued on next page

American Legion Post 290 Oratorical Contest

By Erin Fox (continued)

Assigned Topics

The assigned topic discourse must not consume less than 3 minutes or more than 5 minutes for delivery. The purpose of the assigned topic discourse is to test the speaker's knowledge of the subject, the extent of his or her research, and the ability to discuss the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution.

The assigned topic is drawn by the contest official in full view of the audience immediately before the last speaker begins delivery of his or her prepared oration and will be made known to the audience and each contestant approximately five (5) minutes prior to the time of delivery. The topic will be on some phase of the U.S. Constitution, selected from Articles and Sections as listed under assigned topics for the current year's contest on the national web site. www.legion.org

All contestants at each contest level are required to speak in the English language on the same assigned topic.

The Assigned Topics for 2024 Oratorical Contest

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, not be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall *private* property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment XXV, Section 3

Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

Amendment XXIII

The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct: A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the State, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

Amendment II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

SAL INFO

by Fargo Wells

Greetings SAL members and your families! I hope everyone is well and safe.

Members can login into their myLegion.org account and renew directly or via the quick renew website: legion.org/SAL-Renew.

The procedure for modifying the current dues in the system is the submission of a Squadron Data Report (SDR) that is available at the Sons of The American Legion website under Publications and Forms. The SDR should be sent to the detachment and the email address Post and Squadron Reports (postsqdnupdates@legion.org) for processing.

If you have any questions please contact Kevin Mook the National SAL Liaison at kmook@legion.org

The SAL has not had a dues increase in many years.

However, we have to send a portion of the dues to the Department and a portion to Nationals.

The Nationals Dues have increased, therefore we will need to increase the amount that we collect from our members to \$20.00.

If I can help you out with anything. Text, e-mail or call

Fargo Wells, Commander Sons of the American Legion Squadron 290 Stafford

(703) 362-8277 call, text or write rfargowells@hotmail.com.

Thank you,
Fargo Wells

FIREWOOD AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES IN NEED

The Stafford Post 290 BSA Venture Crew Scouts are conducting a community service project to deliver firewood to families, in need, in Stafford County. The Venture Crew will also cut up and remove wood from properties that may have fallen after a storm or wood that individuals are willing to donate.

The Venture Crew is accepting monetary donations to help in this project or to support the Venture Crew.

If wanting to volunteer to help cut and split wood, or help stack or deliver firewood for this project, please call Mike Robinson, (540) 760-3255.

Wreaths Across America (Quantico National Cemetery)

This year the Wreaths Across America 2023 program will take place over two days. The event is Saturday, 12/16/2023 & Sunday, 12/17/2023. We will have large groups (such as those coming with buses) scheduled for Saturday, 12/16/23.

The start time is for community groups is TBA, but most likely will begin around noon after the grave specific wreaths have been placed. The Sunday date is for general wreath laying. Both events will be scheduled through Eventbrite. If your community group or office is interested in assisting with wreath laying, please reach out to: NOVAVETS.WAA@novavets.org. We also have corporate/group sponsorship opportunities available as well.

This year QNC will be in dire need of wreaths – so selling wreaths is important. This is because the Sgt Mac Foundation that used to provide up to 10,000 wreaths for QNC has disbanded and is no longer able to provide and place those wreaths. Wreaths can be sponsored here: <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/165232/Overview/?relatedId=17252>

In addition to wreath laying, we also need volunteers to help run the event on both days. So, there is both the opportunity to lay wreaths & volunteer with event logistics. In particular, traffic control/directions, checking in participants, etc. We will have shifts both days from early morning until about 4 PM. Volunteers sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E45ADA729A3FFCE9-44938364-operations>

DECEMBER 2023 HIGHLIGHTS AT THE POST

December (National Bingo Month)

Dec 03 - Children's Christmas Party
 Dec 07 - Pearl Harbor Day
 Dec 07 - 15 - Hanukkah
 Dec 09 - Post 290 Oratorical Contest
 Dec 09 - Army vs Navy Football Game (The only collegiate game that matters!) 1500hrs start
 Dec 11 - 14 Food Basket Program - Meet at Annex, 0800 Collect boxes from the schools
 Dec 15 - Food Basket Program - Meet at Annex, 0800 Begin sorting
 Dec 15 - Bill of Rights Day - 1791 First ten Amendments to the Constitution Ratified
 Dec 16 - Wreaths Across America - Arlington National Cemetery - Wreath Laying to Start 0800
 Dec 16 - Food Basket Program - Meet at the Annex 0800, Packing boxes
 Dec 17 - Food Basket Program - Meet at the Annex, 0800, Distribution of Food Baskets
 Dec 21 - Winter Solstice - First Day of Winter - Shortest Day
 Dec 25 - Christmas Day
 Dec 31 - New Year's Eve Party (Details TBD)

CONSTANT BEARING, DECREASING RANGE

2024

January

Jan 01 - NEW YEAR'S DAY HAPPY 2024!

Jan 08 - Blood Drive at the Annex 1000-1600
 Jan 14 - District Oratorical Contest
 Jan 15 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
 Jan 16 - Virginia Religious Freedom Day, per Virginia General Assembly vote in 1786
 Jan 27 - Holocaust Memorial Day

February

Feb 17 - 16th District Spring Conference, Middleburg, VA

March

Mar 01 - 03 Department Spring Conference, Portsmouth, VA



**YOUR ELECTED POST
290 OFFICERS**

Commander Rick Schultz
 1st Vice Lewis Bunch
 2nd Vice John Patrick
 3rd Vice Ken Westenberger
 Adjutant Mike Scullin
 Finance Robert Ponzio
 Service Ofc. Jim Richey
 Chaplain Darren King
 Sgt at Arms Lester Wood
 JAG Garry Briggs
 PAO VACANT
 Historian Brandy Fitzgerald

CORPORATION OFFICERS

Michael Flanagan, Chair
 John Cox, Secretary
 Brian "B.J." Payne, Director
 Steve Albertson, Director
 Lester Wood, Director



**YOUR AUX UNIT 290
ELECTED OFFICERS**

President Ginger Brigs
 Vice Pres Sherilyn Pierce
 Secretary Marilyn Butters
 Treasurer Frances Shelton
 Chaplain Dale Seward
 Historian Mary Schelin
 Sgt at Arms Teresa Hardisty

**STAFFORD AMERICAN
LEGION POST 290**

**We are on the Web
www.staffordPost290.org**



December 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 Children's Christmas Party 1400 hrs	4	5	6 BINGO	7 Pearl Harbor Day Begin Hanukkah	8 BINGO	9 Post Oratorical Contest Army-Navy Game
10	11 Collect Food Boxes From Schools	12 General Members Mtg. - 1930 Collect Food Boxes From Schools	13 BINGO Collect Food Boxes From Schools	14 Collect Food Boxes From Schools	15 BINGO Hanukkah Ends Sort Food Baskets Bill of Rights Day	16 Pack Food Baskets Karaoke 1600-1900
17 Distribute Food Baskets	18 Executive Committee Meeting	19	20 BINGO	21 Winter Solstice Shortest Day First Day of Winter	22 BINGO	23
24/31 New Year's Eve New Year's Eve Party (Details TBD)	25 Christmas Day	26	27 BINGO	28	29 BINGO	30