

By The Post Lake

www.postbythelake.org



Aerial Photograph
by Brian Schaft

January/ February 2025

Commander's Corner



Post By The Lake Newsletter

Albert E Baesel
American Legion Post 91

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Happy New Year!

We are about to start a new year...2025. WOW! Where did the last one go? The year 2024 was a good one with lots of great events, some major projects were completed and our Post Bluecaps made our membership quota. We only had one small attendance setback in our membership meetings. This is your Post and your voice counts. Please spare 30-40 minutes each month and make a difference.

We will have a few more Post improvements completed this year. I am also sure our other units are preparing for a good year with events and programs, so watch the message boards in the canteen and follow us on Facebook. We will try to keep everyone up to date.

My challenge to all the Veterans: I would like to see a few more smiling faces on the second Thursday of the month at our meetings at 7pm.

Please be safe this winter. I look forward to seeing everyone in the new year.

James Lockyer



**Wreaths Across America Day
at Woodvale Cemetery, 2024**



Canteen Hours

Monday-Friday 12-12 pm

Saturday 12-1

Sunday 12-8 pm

Kitchen Hours

Lunch

Monday-Friday 12-2 pm

Dinners

Monday 6-8 pm

Tuesday 5-7 pm

Wednesday 5-7

Thursday 6-8 pm

(Third Thursdays 7-9 pm)

Friday 6-8

Hall Rentals

For hall rentals contact

Victoria Schaft (440) 610-2682

or

Legion Post 91 (440) 234-0091

Celebration of Life Events

- For members & immediate family members
- 4 hour hall usage
- Post 91 provides food at no cost
- Contact Marilla Baher of the Legion Sunshine Fund
- (216) 299-7744

www.postbythelake.org

My Time as a Ranch Hand

-by Robert Norton

After high school, rather than waiting for the draft, I enlisted into the Air Force. I was put into the mechanical field because I participated in vocational automotive training in high school. Then it was off to the Air Force, where I learned about the fundamentals of airplanes and was classified as an aircraft maintenance specialist.

My first duty station was at Fort Walton Beach in Florida, where I was trained on T29 Convair airplanes and learned how to run-up and taxi the planes. Then I was transferred OSMFB, which was their way of saying the “Other Side Of The Mother F-ing Base.” There, I specialized my training on C123 airplanes and learned the characteristics of that particular aircraft.

Then on February 10, 1970, it was time to deploy. The Sargeant looked over my orders and said “You’re going to be a Ranch Hand.” I thought, “cool.” At the time, I had no idea the Ranch Hands were the outfits for spraying Agent Orange. I was 19-years-old and on my way to a foreign country. The trip was a long 18-hour flight and extremely uncomfortable because my seat was in the very back and didn’t recline. Finally, we landed in Bien Hoa, an airbase close to Saigon. When I stepped out of the plane, the heat and humidity was like...WHAM! It just hit you in the face.



C123 Airplane called *Patches*, Summer of 1970

Continued on page 11



American Legion



1st Vice, Ed Leopold

Hello Everyone,

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

Remember ALL dues are due now. They need to be paid before December 31st, 2024, or you will not be able to enter the Post. All house members are also due.

Thank You,

Big Ed

2nd Vice, Keith Mattison

Happy New Year to all. As you're reading this, the holidays are over and we are beginning a fresh start to a new year. I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas.

Mark your calendars for February 15, 2025 for the Night at the Races. Tickets are on sale and are \$20 each. Doors will open at 5, dinner will be served at 5:30 and the races will start shortly after.

Make sure to bring snacks for your table. The event is a BYOB and wash will be provided. We are looking for ad sponsors and will be selling horses. See your bartenders for details. It's always a great time, and I hope to see you there. Also remember, we are selling memorial bricks again. Order forms are available at the Post, or see one of the bartenders.

I would like to thank all of the people that volunteered last year to help out in the kitchen. It only works with your help, and as always, we can use more volunteers.

Think spring.

Remember to always thank a Veteran. God bless the United States of America!!!!

Keith

*To the Colors!
The Travel! The Excitement!
The Pay! ---just kidding*

Your Post 91 Color Guard Needs YOU!

We are always looking for volunteers, Legionnaires and SALs. Represent your Post in local ceremonies and events. Uniforms are provided. Short monthly drills.

For more information contact,

Jon Silvis 440-823-1066 *OR* Bob Roginsky 440-582-5856



**Wreaths Across America Day
at Woodvale Cemetery, 2024**



American Legion, Cont



Finance Officer, Mel Baher

Name	Memo	Amount
American Legion Unit 91 (Rockin-R-Ranch Family Day)	Donation	\$387.24
Amsterdam Printing (give-a-way calanders)	Donation	\$622.94
Antonio's (Children's Christmas party)	Donation	\$225.94
Arrowhead Baseball Club	Donation	\$350.00
Berea City Club (Trees for Berea)	Donation	\$125.00
Berea Elks (Christmas to Remember)	Donation	\$250.00
Berea Kiwanis (Breakfast place mats)	Donation	\$125.00
C. Moon (Chldren's Christmas party)	Donation	\$125.00
City Mission	Donation	\$250.00
Dennis Simmerman Hospice Care Fund	Donation	\$150.00
J. Radar (Children's Christmas party - Santa)	Donation	\$200.00
Ohio Veterans Home (V.A.C.)	Donation	\$250.00
The Salvation Army	Donation	\$100.00
Wreaths Across America - check#592	Donation	\$1,000.00
	Total	\$4,161.12



Wreaths Across America Day at Woodvale Cemetery, 2024

Mel

Trick-or-Treat on the Trails, 2024





**Wreaths Across America Day
at Woodvale Cemetery,
2024**



2024 Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame Inductees:

Kent Anderson, Army, Greene County
Marshall P. Bahr, Army, Columbiana County
Guion S. Bluford Jr., Air Force, Cuyahoga County
Kenneth L. Bonnell, Army, Union County
Michael W. Carrell, Air Force, Fairfield County
Joseph Gary Fenderbosch, Army, Gallia County
Jason M. Graven, Army, Wood County
Billy M. Harris*, Marine Corps, Ashland County
Edward P. Horvath Jr., Army & Navy, Cuyahoga County
Richard D. Johnson, Air Force, Union County

A. Steve Klosowski, Army, Lake County
Mark E. Landers, Army, Montgomery County
David L. Levacy, Army, Fairfield County
Franklin D. LeValley, Air Force, Clark County
Anthony G. Massoud, Army, Montgomery County
Robert A. McDonald, Army, Hamilton County
J.P. Nauseef, Air Force, Montgomery County
Brad R. Wenstrup, Army, Hamilton County
JD Wetterling, Air Force, Warren County
Gerold W. Wilkin, Army, Highland County

* = Posthumous Award

For more information, see <https://dvs.ohio.gov>



American Legion Auxiliary



Auxiliary President, Nina Zdravecky

Hello happy people!

The holidays are over, and I hope everyone enjoyed special times with family and friends.

The next event to look forward to from the Auxiliary will be the annual Spaghetti dinner, which will be sometime after our fish fry season is over. The date will be determined soon and published in the next newsletter.

Have a safe winter and stay healthy.

Nina



1st Vice, Linda Joy

As the Christmas season draws to a close, I hope it's filled with good times and happy memories.

Last year, because of your support of our raffle baskets, we were able to donate to Judge Sara J. Harper Village in Cleveland to help women Veterans, sent 70 Berea Midpark elementary school children on an educational class trip who otherwise couldn't afford it, provided funding for Wreaths Across America to ensure that every Veteran's grave at Woodvale Cemetery had a wreath and found many other ways to help our community and Veterans.

Wishing you a year of happiness and good health!

Linda

Children's Christmas Party, 2024





American Legion Auxiliary, Cont



Membership and Community Service Chairman, Nancy Doutt

Membership Update:

Thank you to all the “early bird” members who paid by November 11, and to those who have recently paid to stay current for 2025. Since August 1, we have processed 320 members, or 78.6% of our 407 goal. Members who did not pay by January 1, 2025, are considered delinquent and member benefits have been discontinued through the National American Legion Auxiliary and also at Post 91. Card keys will be turned off and you will not be eligible for the drawings until dues are paid. A lot of extra steps have to take place by a number of people when dues are not paid by December 31, 2024. Hopefully our remaining 87 members have paid by the time this newsletter is released. Thank you.

Giving Tree:

THANK YOU to our members and their friends who donated gifts for the Giving Tree. We donated over 150 gifts to Berea Community Outreach, Second Mile Outreach Food Pantry clients’ children, a female Veteran, her sister and each of their four children, and a couple of other needy families. We received a note from Juan, the Veteran we sponsored last year through SMO, and his eight grandchildren. He said our generosity made his year and was life-changing for him. He never felt anyone cared so much about him and his family. THANK YOU to everyone who made a difference in his life and for doing the same for all of this year’s recipients.

VA&R—There will be a party for the patients on the 4th floor of the Cares Tower at Wade Park VA Hospital on January 18, 2025, at 1pm. If you are interested in helping at the VA, please contact Nancy at (440) 552-4713.

Nancy

Children’s Christmas Party, 2024



Welcome New Members

- Doris Addison
- Sandra Brady
- Anne Graham
- Linda Heffern (dual member)
- Crystal Orban Holloway
- Samantha Hovanec
- Paulette Jackson
- Allison James
- Geraldine Liskay
- Jesica Murphy
- Sherri Robertson
- Christine Tomasch

Sick Call

- Janet Molek
- Donna Squires





Sons of American Legion



SAL Commander, Sean Boddy

**SAL Tailgate Party,
OSU vs Michigan, 2024**

Happy Holidays!

What a fall season we had! We had many November events, beginning with our Veterans Day dinner on the 11th. It was a great turnout, and we were honored to serve those who have served and fought for our rights. It is always an honor and a privilege to do so. Thank you again to all our Veterans for their service and sacrifice!



OH-IO! In November we had our Annual OSU vs Michigan Tailgate. It was a great success! The food and drinks were flowing as we had our emotions thrown back and forth the entire game. Even though OSU sadly lost, we ALL won that day because we were surrounded by good food, drink, and friends. We always look forward to these events and they never disappoint.

This November 24th, we also donated food to the Wade Park VA for the Veterans inpatient Thanksgiving Dinner. Dale Dragony, our SAL Advisor, took charge of the event. It was warmly welcomed and greatly appreciated.

This coming February 9th, we will be hosting our annual Super Bowl Party, which will be bigger and better than ever, so keep a lookout for our flyer. Make sure to get your tickets...boy they go fast! See you there!

This past holiday season, while you were diving deep in the hustle and bustle of it all, I hope you remembered there are Veterans and people of all kinds who had no one to spend the holidays with. Even the smallest donation of just some of your time and/or a quick meal means the world to them. Always be kind and remember to share the joy and love of the holidays with others and let us never forget those who could not be home for Christmas. Whether they are fighting overseas or are no longer with us, keep them close in mind and heart.

Please visit the Sons of American Legion Squadron 91 Facebook page for updates on future events and activities. As always, please consider joining us for one of our monthly meetings. They are held every second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the upstairs hall. If you have any inquiries about our organization and/or membership, questions, comments or concerns, please contact an officer. Feel free to send us a message on Facebook or email us at Salpost91@gmail.com.

"The Joy of brightening other lives, bearing each others' burdens, easing each other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of the holidays" - W. C. Jones

"I never eat December snowflakes. I always wait until January" (Lucy Van Pelt in "A Charlie Brown Christmas") - Charles M. Schultz

I wish you all the happiest new year!

Sean



Sons of American Legion, Cont



Membership Chairman, Jim Matej

On behalf of membership and all our elected officers, I would like to thank you for being a part of the Sons of American Legion Squadron Post 91. Thanks to those that have renewed their membership and welcome to all the new members of our Squadron 91 family. This year's State of Ohio quota is 380, and as of writing this, we have 197 renewed members, which brings us to 50% of our quota met. I hope those remaining members will send their \$30 dues in by the end of our Legion calendar year, May 31, 2025. We need your help to continue to be the largest and best Squadron in the 13th District of Ohio. As a reminder, if you have NOT paid your 2025 dues, please take the time to do so. If you haven't renewed, your key card was de-activated January 1st, denying you access to both Post 91's canteen and eligibility for the weekly drawing.

We are more than just another organization. We are "Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage," as it states in the preamble of our Constitution. We are direct male descendants of Veterans from WWI, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, Lebanon, Panama, Grenada, Persian Gulf and now the War on Terrorism. This is indeed something to be proud of, and you have honored the service of your parent or grandparent by signing up as a member and becoming a part of our American Legion Family.

Our membership dues assist in fighting for Veterans' benefits, provides funds to the National Organization, who in turn keeps a staff in Washington D.C. and lobbies on behalf of our Veterans. They also help support many children and youth programs both locally and nationally, Americanism programs, and Veterans rehabilitation efforts. In conjunction with assisting at the National level, we conduct many local programs and activities to benefit children, Veterans, our community and promote Americanism.

Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm in the Post Hall. They only last about an hour. Come see what we have planned for our members of our Post 91 family. We can always use your input and help.

If you have a question about membership or have moved, drop us a note or send us an email at salpost91@gmail.com. You can learn more about programs and the benefits of membership at www.legion.org. Thank you again for becoming a member of the Sons of American Legion and showing your support of our Nation's Veterans, past, present and future.

Sincerely,

Jim

www.postbythelake.org



SAL Veterans Dinner
Volunteers, 2024





American Legion Riders



Director, David Rodriguez

Hey All ALR 91,

Riders will be hosting a pancake breakfast every second and fourth Sunday from 10am-12pm beginning January 12th until April 27th.

We will be donating \$500 to two families this holiday season.

The Riders will have new officers, which include Tommy D. (Assistant Director) and John Barnett Sr (Secretary). All other officers remain the same.

Please stay tuned in March as we will be hosting a 70's Disco Night.

With that, all the Riders would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

David



**Wreaths Across America Day
at Woodvale Cemetary, 2024**





My Time as a Ranch Hand, Cont

When the Sargeant and line chief saw I had an airplane run-up and taxiing license, he assigned me to a C123 called *Patches*. I thought it was kind of glorious because I'd be on flight status and fly with the airplane everywhere, I'd be the crew chief and would also get extra pay. What they didn't tell me was that we were a moving target—like they were going to use us for skeet shooting. At first, I had thought *Patches* was a cute name, and then I learned the reason she was named *Patches* was because she took the most hits than any other airplane in Vietnam. They told me, "When she gets a bullet hole in her skin, they just put a patch over it." I never received a bullet hole in *Patches*, but I came close to being wiped out by rockets. One time we were on the taxiway at Pleiku ready to take off, and there were rockets hitting everywhere—way too close to our airplane. We did a 25mph U-turn onto the runway and got the hell out of there. I didn't feel comfortable until we were about 2,000 feet in the air. We accomplished our mission and flew back to our home base at Bien Hoa. Other targets included Cam Rahn Bay and DaNang.

During one particular mission, we were at Pleiku to spray Malathion for mosquito control. I didn't have my headset on, but the tower called and told the pilot they had been receiving heavy suppression (rockets) in the area, but it was still ok to spray over the base. I was sitting in the back of the airplane doing the flight engineer's duties when I noticed something unusual and asked the pilot "What are those puffs of smoke coming from that mountain?" It turns out, they were shooting mortars at us and trying to get a bead on the plane. He said, "oh God... hang on," and he did a vertical outta there! I received an Air Medal for saving the airplane and crew.

Sometimes you just had to put some humor into your days. When I was at Hurlburt Field in Florida (pre-Vietnam), we had navigation training stations on a particular airplane, where they would take a group of navigators and fly over the ocean in certain formations to log points of longitude and latitude. During that time, I requested to be flown to Lockbourne Air Force Base in Columbus, Ohio, so I could start my leave. I wasn't content with the four-hour-long flight, and where I was sitting, there was a navigational scope at the navigation station...and I had a devilish idea. I reached into my duffle bag, pulled out some black shoe polish and rubbed it onto the hood of the scope. After they dropped me off, the crew went on another mission. The officer that sat at that particular station wasn't very well liked, so nobody told him about his new disguise, neither on the plane nor after they landed. They all went into Base OPS to grab lunch, and when he went into the bathroom he discovered the black ring around his face. He stormed out and yelled, "I'm gonna kill that son-of-a-b****." He didn't know it was me and no one said a word, but there were only six of us on that crew, so it was a short suspect list.



**Robert Norton Flying
the C123 Airplane Called *Patches***

Continued on page 12.



My Time as a Ranch Hand, Cont

Once, while on TDY (temporary duty assignment) in Cam Ranh Bay, I was surprised to bump into an old buddy. We had gone to high school together, lived across the street from each other and even enlisted into the Air Force together. Perhaps the most shocking was that when we deployed, he went to Japan and I went to Vietnam...and yet, there we were at the same place at the same time. That night, we did what we did best—stayed drunk. We went on a joy ride in our staff car, and I don't even know how we ended up on the beach, but when we saw a grunt out there, we picked him up. We all had a couple of beers together, enjoying the nice evening. After a while, I looked at my buddy with the straightest face I could muster and said, "You know, if the General finds out we got his staff car, he's gonna be pissed." The grunt's eyes went alarmingly wide and he said, "I'll get out here." So, we dropped him off in the middle of nowhere and drove to an army base for another beer. Like I said, sometimes you just had to put some humor into it.

Eventually, the government decided we're getting too much flack about Agent Orange. We got orders from Washington DC to dismantle all the spray equipment from all 15 airplanes. That was a tough order because each tank held 1,000 lbs of fluid. We remodeled the planes for "Candle Stick Missions," kicking flares over Cambodia to light up the night. This went on for about two months and then we were ordered to spray again, so all of the Agent Orange tanks had to be reloaded onto the planes. We sprayed for about two more months, and then the squadron was disbanded and we had to take all the tanks back out again.

Back in the early 60's, the Ranch Hands got a call to help Iran during a locust famine, so a crew flew *Patches* to Iran to spray chemicals to save the food supply for the locals. When that mission was completed the flight crew determined that they were half-way around the world already, so why not just keep going? That said, *Patches* was the only C123 to fly all the way around the world and is now displayed at the National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio.

I took the freedom bird home on Feb 10, 1971. When I arrived at the Cleveland airport, a hippy wanted me to buy a flower for the cause. When I said "no thank you," he called me an F-ing baby-killer, and I knew that would be with me for the rest of my life. But when I got home, my family told me to come down the stairs, and what they had set up for me made me feel in awe. There was a Valentines Day card, an Easter basket, fireworks—gifts for every holiday I missed while I was deployed. It just really tore me up.

My next mission in life at the age of 21, was to adjust to this new world that I had left in 1968.



Robert Norton was the Last Crew Chief of *Patches* in SE Asia

Bob



Bulletin Board

January

- 1: New Year's Day (Canteen Closed)
- 2: ALR Meeting, 7pm
- 4: DJ Jerome, 7pm
- 8: SAL Meeting, 7:30pm
- 9: Blue Caps Meeting, 7pm
- 11: Work Party, 8:30am
- 13: AUX Meeting, 7:30pm
- 23: E-Board Meeting, 7pm
- 27: AUX Meeting, 7pm

February

- 1: DJ Jerome, 7pm
- 6: ALR Meeting, 7pm
- 8: Work Party, 8:30am
- 10: AUX Meeting, 7:30pm
- 12: SAL Meeting, 7pm
- 13: Blue Caps Meeting, 7pm
- 15: Night at the Races, 5pm
- 24: Auxiliary Meeting, 7pm
- 27: E-Board Meeting, 7pm



TAPS

William Boston
Harv Bradish
Barbara Buckwald
Al Lee

NOT A MEMBER?
Ask an Officer or Bartender
how You can Join
Our American Legion Family



To share your patriotic stories, photos and artwork, contact Victoria at vschaft@outlook.com and type "Post 91" into the subject line.