



## THE DAMASCUS VETERAN

*A Newsletter for Members & Friends of Damascus American Legion Post 171, Unit & Squadron*  
**September/October 2020**

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### Greetings Post 171 Family:

I hope you are continuing to be safe during this pandemic and that your families are alright as well. Not a whole lot to put out as very little has changed in Montgomery County since the last newsletter – we are still in Phase 2 of reopening which severely limits the amount of people we can have at meetings, especially indoors. And again, I stress that many of our members are in the at-risk categories and we will not jeopardize anyone's health.

Our resident "IT" guru, Steve Monteiro, suggested that we have a virtual membership meeting soon and the Executive Committee is considering that suggestion. We had success with the virtual election this past month so a virtual membership meeting might work. As an aside, Post 41 indicated at the recent County Caucus that they meet outside and have been doing so for the past couple of months, so that might be a consideration as well. The Executive Committee does continue to meet virtually as scheduled (the first Monday of the month) to conduct Post business.

On Monday, 24 August 2020, the new Post officers were sworn into their respective positions. Pictures are available on the website. The next big event will be the Department of Maryland convention on 19 September 2020. Due to limitations on the number of people who can congregate at meetings in Baltimore, the Department is setting up satellite sites where delegates will be assigned to attend. Soon as I know for certain where we (Post 171 delegates) go, I will put it out to all. Thus far we only have 3 of the 8 delegate positions filled. Additionally, it was put out at the County Caucus on Wednesday (19 August) that the Department might be making the convention available for people to dial in and listen to it. More to follow as the information presents itself.

Finally, the bingo season would normally start the first Thursday in September, but it is on hold until the restrictions in Montgomery County are lifted. Similarly, the pancake breakfast for September may not happen as well.

That is about it. Stay safe and I hope to see you soon.

For God and Country

Fred Mitchell  
Post Commander

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



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## Post Elections

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, normal member voting procedures could not be followed. The Executive Committee met and developed an action plan. A Special Election Notice for Post officers and procedures were announced in the July/August Newsletter. Members had the option of casting a paper ballot and mailing it to the Post or casting an electronic ballot. An electronic ballot, which mirrored the paper ballot was designed and the link was emailed to members.

Voting was closed on July 20<sup>th</sup>. It is interesting to note that out of the 66 ballots cast, there was only one paper ballot.



County Commander Cliff Bergstresser administers the Oath of Office to Commander Fred Mitchell, Sergeant-at-Arms Bill Green, Adjutant Steve Monteiro, Finance Officer Anita Trotter, First Vice Commander (PPC) Tony DeShiro and Judge Advocate Dean Elliott.

The ceremony on August 24th was held outside due to COVID 19 restrictions.

The officers hope and anticipate that normal Post operations can resume soon and it is anticipated that bingo, rentals, Post dinners and community events will resume in the spring. Check the Post website <http://www.legionpost171.org/> for the latest information..

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## Sons of the American Legion

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### Greetings from Squadron 171

First I would like to thank those who attended or responded to our special called meeting on 8/10/2020. All input and encouragement was greatly appreciated! The Squadron realizes that there is a need to offer meetings on a virtual level and is working on a solution and are hoping to have our first crack at it on 9/21/2020 and hope to move it back to our original time on the second Monday of every month @ 7pm. An email will be sent out to confirm our meeting with a link to do so.

At our meeting we voted in our new slate of officers as follows.

**Commander: Todd Stockslager**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander: Tom Kaufman**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander: Tony Koontz**

**Adjutant: Adam Young**

**Finance Officer: Adam Young**

**Sargent at Arms: Tyler Baughman**

**Chaplain: Tyler Baughman**

**Historian: Brosh Brosher.**

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to lead our Squadron into the next legion year!

As for meetings in person we will have to wait until Covid 19 restrictions are lifted. The SAL Crab Feast will have to wait as well. We will be exploring alternative dates as the situation progresses, so please be patient. As soon as we know so will you, information will be available as soon as possible. Membership cards are in so we encourage you to get your dues in as soon as possible. Squadron 171 reached 107% on membership this past Legion year and we have you to thank for that so let's keep it going. In closing please be safe, follow CDC guidelines, and social distance.

**For God and Country,**

Todd Stockslager

SAL Commander

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*American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 171*

**A Newsletter for Members & Friends of Damascus Unit 171**

Because of the COVID 19 restrictions over the summer the Unit has decided to leave all officers in place for the new Legion year.

President	Amanda Baughman	Membership	Jane St. Louis
Vice President	Kelli Cole	Secretary	Nancy Sutherland
Sgt-at-Arms	Virginia Myers	Chaplain	Patricia Rice
Treasurer	Patricia Busche	Historian	Diane Capel

The unit is considering how to implement activities during the present crisis and will have updates in future newsletters.

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**FROM THE CHAPLAIN**

**Words of comfort during the time of COVID**

**Psalm 121:7-8 (NIV)**

The Lord will keep you from all harm -  
he will watch over your life;  
the Lord will watch over your coming and going  
both now and forevermore.



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### THE POST 171 PATRIOTS BASEBALL PROGRAM UPDATE

The Baseball Committee continues to hope that you and your loved ones are safe during the continued COVID-19 pandemic affecting our country.

Although the official Legion season was cancelled, our coaching staffs have done a wonderful job putting together appropriate protocols to enable a limited season for the young men representing our Baseball Program. Thanks to the generosity of the Fairfax County Legion Baseball programs, our Senior program was able to get in a brief 7 game season, while several other games rained out. The coaches, players and families were extremely grateful to enjoy some spirited competition and we will explore continuing our partnership with our Legion Posts in Virginia in the future. For those Senior players that have left for college, we wish them luck and are happy we could provide them with a few final games over the summer.

Our Junior team continues to play with members of the Western District, Pennsylvania teams and other opponents willing to play baseball. Their current record stands at 9 wins, with 5 losses and 2 tie games. The Junior program is continuing to play and will even extend into a fall season. With a strong coaching staff and a large group of dedicated young men, the growth of our Post Baseball program will continue for years to come.

We continue to monitor the health status of all of our players, coaches, families and opponents. To date, there has not been a single incidence of COVID-19 or a documented contact with an infected person. We will continue to abide by all health directives from the County, State and CDC authorities to ensure the continued good health and safety of all those involved with our program.

We hope you and your families are doing well,

Alan T. Rannals

Thanks, and please stay safe!

**2020 POST 171 BASEBALL COMMITTEE:** Alan Rannals (Chairman), Bob Bellison, and Evelyn Hernandez.  
**Civilian advisors:** Keith Hernandez, Sean Manion, and Dave Retherford.

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## **2021 American Legion oratorical Contest**

The 2021 Oratorical Contest season will be affected by the continuing pandemic closures, delays, and shutdowns throughout the state. Public schools in Maryland are foregoing the traditional classroom start in September in favor of virtual on-line instruction. Many private schools are opening as usual and, of course, home schooling is not affected. School closures will impact contestant recruiting and, if changes are not forthcoming by early 2021, it will impact actually holding oratorical contests.

The National Championship Oratorical Contest is currently planned and scheduled for April 9 – 11, 2021 in Indianapolis as usual. The Department of Maryland Contest is currently scheduled for Sunday, March 7, 2021, at Stevenson University in Owings Mills (Stevenson is planning to open with on campus classes on August 31).

The Post 171 Executive Committee is exploring all options for how the Post will react this year. One option that seems to be gaining traction is rather than recruiting contestants and having a full-blown contest, Post 171 could find a suitable candidate to sponsor for the State Contest. Posts are not required to have a “contest” in order to present a candidate. Only State Finals must follow the rules to the letter. So, rather than have a full-up contest at the post, we mentor and have practice sessions with just a single candidate.

Again, this is just one option the Executive Committee is evaluating. Look for firmer details in the next Post Newsletter.

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## **Legion 2021 Membership Renewal Time**

We are just getting into the Legion New Year, so it's 2021 Membership Renewal Time. Wanna save a stamp? It's easy to renew online. Go to [Legion.org](http://Legion.org) and click on "Renew Your Membership". All you need is your ID#, if you don't know it, or can't find it, call or text me: 301-401-6479, and method of payment. You can also mail a check for \$30.00 to me at: Sam Baughman, 11798 Sier Drive, Monrovia, MD 21770. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks, and stay safe.

## Lorien Veterans Program Update

.Covid 19 is keeping Post 171 from visiting our comrades at Lorien. We hope to be able to resume our visits soon. In the meantime please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

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## Website and newsletter

Nearly all of the voting for this year's officers was electronic. As Steve Monteiro reported above, of the 66 votes cast only one was mailed in from the last issue of the newsletter. We are in the process of determining the cost of the printed newsletter versus the number of our members who read it. Steve has done an outstanding job with the website <http://www.legionpost171.org/> and the newsletter appears there before it is mailed because it doesn't have to go through the printing and mailing process.

Each month we have many printed copies left over, unread. For these reasons we are asking those who rely solely on the printed copies to let us know. Our goal is to increase readership and feedback from members. If you want, need or rely on the printed newsletter please slip and send the form below to Larry Matthews, editor of the newsletter:

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Mail this in if you prefer to receive the printed copy of the Post 171 newsletter

**YES! I rely on the printed copy.**

Name and address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to: Larry Matthews, 19920 Chesley Knoll Drive, Gaithersburg, Md. 20879**

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**American Legion Post 171**

**Officers**

Commander	Fred Mitchell	(301) 916-8395	Membership	*Sam Baughman	(301) 401-6479
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander	* Tony DeShiro	(843) 855-9353	Historian	Sam Lehane	(407) 230-3117
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander	Kevin O’Neill	(301) 525-2071	Chaplain	Larry Matthews	(301) 370-4079
Adjutant	Steve Monteiro	(240) 401-0370	Sgt.-at-Arms	Bill Green	(301) 253-5420
Finance Officer	Anita Trotter	(301) 661-6904	<b>Executive Committee</b>		
Judge Advocate	Dean Elliott	(240) 793-6868	*Bernie Moxley, Sr		

**Executive Committee**

Larry Matthews  
Steve O’Neil  
Paula Gil

\*denotes Past Post Commander

**Auxiliary, Unit 171**

**Officers**

President	Amanda Baughman	(240) 409-8226	Membership	Jane St. Louis	
Vice President	Kelli Cole	(240) 832-7733	Secretary	Nancy Sutherland	
Sgt-at-Arms	Virginia Myers		Chaplain	Patricia Rice	(301) 253-2266
Treasurer	Patricia Busche	(301) 391-6752	Historian	Diane Capel	

**SAL Squadron, 171**

**Officers**

Commander	Todd Stockslager		Sgt-at-Arms	Tyler Baughman
1st Vice Commander	Tom Kaufman		Historian	Brosh Brosher
2nd Vice Commander	Tony Koontz		Finance Officer	Adam Young
Adjutant	Adam Young		Chaplain	Tyler Baughman

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