

# The Scoop

American Legion Post 372  
1532 Martin Ave.  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002



April—June 2024

Newsletter



## Welcome to The American Legion

### American Legion Youth Art Contest Update

Established in 2022, the Post 372 Youth Art Contest is a great opportunity for our local youth to show off their art and a chance to win a scholarship!

In addition to a scholarship, the first place winner paints their mural on the facade of the American Legion Post 372 building- on one of the 6 "Mural Walls" on the front of the building.

The first "Mural Wall" was completed last summer by Artist Emily Davidson, a stu-

dent at Cherry Hill West High School. As first place winner she painted a stunning mural representing World War I, which depicts soldiers, white memorial crosses and scenes from the victory parade in New York overlaying a bright red poppy.

This years Contest theme was World War II.

We are pleased to announce the following winners of the contest;

**Coming in 1st place is Emily Davidson.**

A big round of applause for Emily Davidson, who has once again proved to be an outstanding artist having also won last years Art Contest. She has won 1st Place again with her art submission titled "Land, Sea and Air". In addi-



#### INSIDE THIS EDITION:

- Art Contest Update: .... 1, 2
- Fireworks & Cigar Night .....2
- Boys State .....3
- Cherry Hill JROTC ....4
- Flag Retirement... 4
- Uncle Sam, Gardens, Donation...5
- Flagging of Veterans Graves .....6
- Memorial Day & Installations ....7
- Legion Baseball .....8
- NJ Legion Statewide Services .... 9
- Veterans Summer Fun Day....10
- Golf Outing.... 10
- Venue for You—Hall Rental...10
- Passing of Ltc Al Bancroft...11
- Canteen & Kitchen Scene ... 13
- 2024-25 Officers....14

tion to receiving a \$1000 Scholarship, she has begun painting her artwork on the



# www.alch372.com

### American Legion Youth Art Contest Update (cont'd)

façade of the American Legion.

**Coming in 2nd place is Cecilia DiPal**  
Cecilia, an 11th grader of Bishop Eustace Prep, won 2nd prize with her art submission titled "Honor and Remembrance". Outstanding job Cecilia! She will receive a \$500 Scholarship.

### Coming in 3rd place is Hana Koleovic

Hana, an 11th grader at Cherry Hill West High School, won 3rd prize with her art submission titled "World War Two memorial". Awesome job Hana! She will receive a \$300 Scholarship.

Stay tuned for the unveiling of her finished artwork. Next years Art Contest theme will be the Korean War.



Together with the Sons of Italy, American Legion Post 372 will be hosting a Bourbon and Cigar Night on Saturday, August 17th from 6pm-10pm. \$75. Music by Bobby D, Dinner and goody bag.  
For tickets Grizz at 856-203-2028

**FIREWORKS**  
*and Barb-a-Cue*  
*at Legion Post 372*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
**JULY 3, 2024** (Rain Date July 5th)  
\*\*\*\*\*  
**BBQ AT 6PM -(BURGERS & DOGS) - CHERRY HILL TOWNSHIP FIREWORKS BEGIN AT APPROX 9PM**  
\*\*\*\*\*  
BBQ in Picnic Grove \* Township Fireworks on the Field across the street  
**AMERICAN LEGION POST 372 MEMBERS ONLY**  
**BRING A DISH / DESSERT TO SHARE \* BRING A CHAIR TO WATCH FIREWORKS FROM THE LEGION PROPERTY**  
Food Donation Sign Up Sheet in Canteen  
\*\*\*\*\*

After more than 10 years, the Cherry Hill Township is bringing back the Independence Day Fireworks display, which takes place across the street from the Legion—by the football field. American Legion members are welcome to join us for a pre-fireworks BBQ at 6pm. Bring a dish to share & a chair to watch the fireworks.

American Legion Post 372 Auxiliary Presents.....  
**FIRECRACKER**  
**RAFFLE**  
\$10 Ticket -Only 150 being sold  
1st winner gets \$500  
2nd and 3rd each \$250  
Drawing for Winners;  
Sunday, July 14, 2024 @2pm  
Need Not Be Present To Win

The American Legion Post 372 Auxiliary Unit presents the Firecracker Raffle! Only \$10 per ticket, with only 150 being sold. Get yours before they sell out !

## Post 372 Sponsors Boys For 2024 American Legion Jersey Boys State Session

In April, as a sponsoring Legion Post for this great experience, veterans from our Post interviewed and sponsored 13 young men to attend the 2024 Session in June.

These young men came highly recommended by their counselors and included young men from Cherry Hill West, Cherry Hill East, Camden Catholic, Haddon Twp and St Joes Prep.

For those that are unfamiliar with this program, the American Legion Jersey Boys State is a mythical fifty-first state

organized and administered for citizenship training purposes under the auspices of The American Legion, Department of New Jersey. A session of Jersey Boys State has been held annually since the first session in 1946.

The 78th American Legion Jersey Boys State was held the week of June 16th at Riders University. Our Boys State Chairperson, Sue Shepherd, has already received some letters from the boys expressing their thanks



for the opportunity and what a great time they had. For more information, results, videos and more, visit their website at <https://aljbs.org>

### Happy Retirement Leon!



Oh how we will miss the daily stops and antics with our USMC brother and Cherry Hill Mailman Leon!

Members gathered in the canteen in mid May to send him off into retirement in style!



Pat Hawk (Aux), Kim Flynn (Aux) and Joe Flynn (SAL) were out distributing Poppies, Poppy Coloring Books and Poppy Bookmarks at Roger Wilco in Pennsauken this past May. Our Commanders, Grizz and Josh stopped by for a visit.



Our Legion partnered with Post 281 and the VFW in Run-nemede to hold a fundraiser for SpectraCare in June. The event was held at Post 281. Some of our members attended & we also donated 15 baskets for Auction.

### Cherry Hill West JRROTC Program At Risk

The Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) unit was established in 1978 at Cherry Hill West High School.

It is an elective course whose mission is to “Develop citizens of character dedicated to serving their nation and community”.

In April, it came to our attention that the Program was at risk of shutting down, in part due to post pandemic interest

of the students.

Members of the US Air Force Junior ROTC Program at Cherry Hill West High School, and Legion Post 372 member, Nelson

Melitz, attended the Board of Education meeting in April to save their program. In the end, the board granted it at least 1 more year.

Prior to the meeting, an



online petition circulated, which many of our members signed in opposition to closing the program. We hope to work more closely with the JROTC students in

### Cherry Hill West JRROTC Scholarships Awarded

Since 2005, American Legion Post 372 has been awarded the Cherry Hill West US Air Force Junior ROTC young men and women awards and scholarships.

In May 2024, Commander Merimonde and Jr Vice Com-

mander Jack Walsh presented 2 \$2000 scholarships and awards at the annual ceremony held at Cherry Hill West High School .



### Annual Flag Retirement Ceremony



The 10th Annual Flag Retirement Ceremony, a tradition with the Boy Scouts since 2014, was held on Monday, June 10th, 2024 outside at the Fire Pit.

After the Ceremony all were welcome to retire some flags in the firepit.

Post 372 provided pizza and soda for all to enjoy after ther Ceremony.

### Uncle Sam Statue Given a Facelift

Last year we had a donation of an Uncle Sam statue - but it was in need of a bit of loving care.

Thanks to Joanie Colwell for refurbishing and painting Un-

cle Sam. Terrific Job Joanie. Great addition to our welcoming entrance at American Legion Post 372!



### Victory Garden and Flowers



the help of new member John.

It looks great and is producing lots of veggies to share with our members.

And Sue has spiced up our outside area with a variety of flowers for all to enjoy.

The Victory Garden, established last year by Dave Colwell, is in it's 2nd year with

Thank you John, Dave, Sue, Phil, Robin and those that help with upkeep & watering.



### Legion Receives Donation to Present to Home For the Brave

When the Cherry Hill Republican Committee approached us

in May for a way to help our local veterans, we suggested gift cards for the homeless veterans staying at the Home for the Brave, which is a program run by Volunteers of America that houses homeless veterans while they obtain resources to get

back on their feet. Pictured here is the Cherry Hill Republican Committee dropping off 30 \$25 Gift Cards to Commander Grizz and Sr Vice Commander Dan OPella, which will be delivered to Home for the Brave. Great way to help our less fortunate vets!



## Flagging of Veterans Graves 2024

Keeping up with our tradition of flagging our veterans graves prior to Memorial Day, members and the community assisted in flagging 3 cemeteries.

**LOCUSTWOOD CEMETERY**—The 89th Annual Flagging of our veterans graves at Locustwood Cemetery was held Sunday, May 19th .THANK YOU to all our Community Partners that have joined us in Flagging the Graves at Locustwood Cemetery over the years— Cherry Hill Township, Cherry Hill Fire Dept, Cherry Hill Police Dept, Camden County Govt Representatives, JFCS of South Jersey and other community volunteers!



**COLESTOWN CEMETERY**—On Wednesday, May 22, 2024, members of the Boy Scouts, American Legion Cherry Hill NJ , Camden County Commisisoner Melinda Hopkins Kane , Camden County Veterans Affairs Director Ted Gallagher, Cherry Hill Mayor Dave Fleisher, Cherry Hill Town Council Sangeeta Doshi and other community volunteers flagged the veterans grave at Colestown Cemetery in Cherry Hill.



**CALVARY CEMETERY**—On Saturday, May 25, 2024, members of the American Legion Cherry Hill NJ, alongside of VFW Pennsauken, and Camden County Veterans Affairs Director Ted Gallagher and Cherry Hill Fire Department flagged all the veterans graves at Calvary Cemetery in Cherry Hill.



Congrats!



### Installation of 2024-25 Officers

On Tuesday, May 28th our 2024-25 American Legion Officers were installed in the Legion Hall.

Congrats goes out to all our newly installed officers and a thank you to our outgoing officers for their dedication to the Legion and it's mission.

### Vice Commander Presents Membership

Senior Vice Commander Dan O'Pella was honored to present Army 2nd Lt Connor Nachurski with a free membership to the American Legion during Connor's family party in the Post 372 Hall. Congrats Connor and welcome to the Legion!

### Memorial Day Services 2024

We had our annual Memorial Day Service on May 27, 2024. Members of our Legion Post 372 and the community came out to honor and remember our fallen.

Services at the American Legion Post 372 were at 9am,

followed by services in front of the flagpole at Locustwood Cemetery and then services at Cherry Hill Township at 10am.

Let's we forget the sacrifices of those that gave their lives for our freedom.



## SAL Member Loses Home in Devastating Fire

June 25, 2024—We are sad to report that one of our SAL members, Richie Derer Jr and his fiancée Tiffany, lost everything in a house fire the other night, including their beloved cat. Richie is the son of Past SAL Commander Richie Derer Sr and Auxiliary



member Michele Derer - their whole family have been members of our Legion for years. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of them. Please consider helping them during their time of need - see the GoFund Page at <https://gofund.me/30ff2bbe>

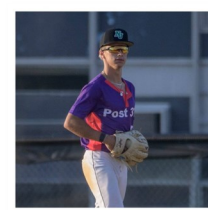
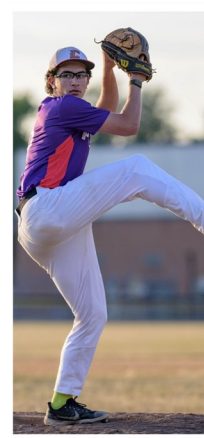
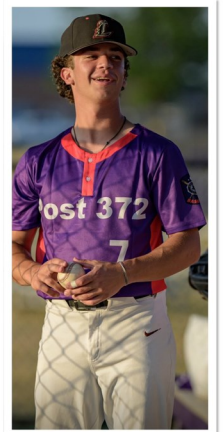
## American Legion Post 372 Youth Baseball Team

Did you know we have a Legion Youth Baseball Team?! Be sure to support them by attending their games - Home Field is right behind our Legion!

During the June 22nd weekend, the boys had a Double Header and stopped in for lunch and to beat the heat during their break between games. They won both games!

As of the printing of this, they are 11 wins and 1 loss! Great job young men!

To view their schedule online and some great photos of our team! Visit <https://www.alch372.com/legion-post-372-baseball/>



Date	Opponent	Time	Home/Away	Location
Thursday, June 13, 2024	Harrison Twp	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Saturday, June 15, 2024	Mullica Hill	11AM/2PM	Away	Kingsway
Monday, June 17, 2024	GT-White	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Tuesday, June 18, 2024	Harrison Twp	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Wednesday, June 19, 2024	Brooklawn-Blue	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Friday, June 21, 2024	GT-Blue	5:45 PM	Away	Taylor Ave
Saturday, June 22, 2024	Washington Twp	11AM/2PM	Home	CHW
Monday, June 24, 2024	GT-White	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Tuesday, June 25, 2024	Brooklawn-Red	5:45 PM	Away	Brooklawn
Wednesday, June 26, 2024	Brooklawn-Blue	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Saturday, June 29, 2024	GT-Blue	11AM/2PM	Home	CHW
Monday, July 1, 2024	GT-White	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Tuesday, July 2, 2024	Mullica Hill	5:45 PM	Home	CHW
Monday, July 8, 2024	Harrison Twp	5:45 PM	Away	Clearview
Tuesday, July 9, 2024	Washington Twp	7:00 PM	Away	Alcyon
Thursday, July 11, 2024	Brooklawn-Blue	5:45 PM	Away	Brooklawn
Saturday, July 13, 2024	Brooklawn-Red	11AM/2PM	Home	CHW



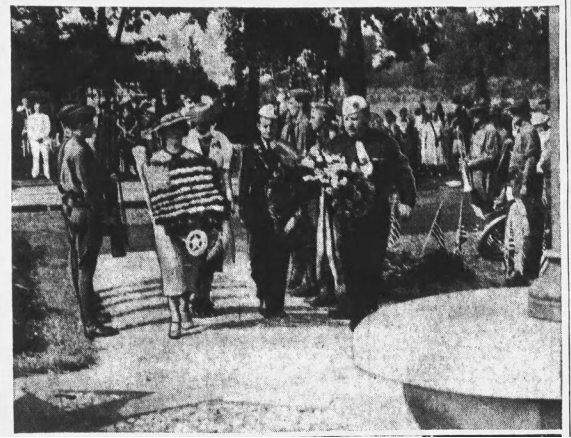
## Honoring our Legion Dead at NJ Legion Statewide Services and Social

June 3rd was a day of remembrance for our deceased Legion comrades and show of appreciation for the exclusive American Legion section at Locustwood Cemetery. This year marks the 89th year Anniversary.

Locustwood Memorial Park , in the mid 1930's, donated graves/section to the NJ American Legion, for Legionnaires and their families, which is located by the Legion memorial and flagstaff.

The cemetery is the only official American Legion burial ground in New Jersey. Since that time, NJ American Legion Posts throughout the state hold a Memorial Service honoring all our Legion deceased on the Sunday after Memorial Day, along with a parade through the cemetery and a Social at our Post afterwards.

Legion Honoring Dead at Locustwood Exercises



## Auxiliary Feeds Members of NJ Legion Posts attending Statewide Services

The Post 372 Auxiliary unit, in it's usual rock star fashion, made the 89th Annual NJ American Legion Statewide Services Social at the Legion a great event - delicious food/drinks and desserts for over 100 guests that came back to our Post after the annual Memorial Services at Locustwood. Thank you to all those that helped set up, prepare, donated and cleaned up for this important event.



## Fun Times At The Veterans Summer Fun Day in June

Even with the record heat, the 1st Veterans Summer Fun Day on June 22nd was a lot of fun - the water balloon games sure helped keep all cool! A delicious spread of fruits, danish, bagels, coffee and water was supplied as friendly competition of Jenga, Table Tennis and Connect Four provided a lot of fun for all. Our picnic grove provides a lot of shade, so don't be shy in coming out for

the next one even if the temps are high. Speaking of which, we need RSVPs for the next Veterans Summer Fun Day which is July 13th from 9am-noon. To RSVP to Sue Q at 856-495-7270 or <https://www.alch372.com/events/>



veterans-summer-fun-day-2/ - Veterans are welcome to bring guests.

Join the American Legion Post 372 & Cherry Hill FOP Lodge 28 for our 3rd Annual Golf Outing on Monday, September 23, 2024 at Pennsauken Country Club. 1pm SHOTGUN Start. Registration 11:30am \$150 Per Golfer. Ad Book and Sponsorship Opportunities. We also need volunteers to help with sponsorships, baskets, and day of. For details <https://www.alch372.com/events/golf-outing-2/> . Questions? Contact Tim Servis or Grizz.

Whether it's a Bridal Shower, a Baby Shower, a Birthday Party or anything in between, our Hall is a perfect choice for your next party! Did you know that members of the American Legion Post 372, who have belonged to our Legion for 1+ years, get a discount on renting our beautiful Hall? Check out all the details about our Hall at <https://www.alch372.com/hall-rental/> , or call Sue Q at 856-495-7270 for more details.

## Passing of LTC Al Bancroft—A True Veterans Advocate



It is with heavy hearts we report the passing of our dear friend USMC veteran Ltc Alfred Bancroft, who was also a prior member of American Legion Post 372.

Al was born an identical twin in New Haven, Connecticut on August 31, 1939. On March 14, 1958 Alfred and Raymond enlisted in the USMC. The Colonel went on to complete three tours in Vietnam and was among the first Marines who landed in 1965. While in Viet Nam, he served in Da Nang, Chu Lai, and Hoi An. He also served near the beach, where he worked unloading weaponry from ships and volunteering for patrols. In 1967, he helped establish an orphanage for Vietnamese chil-

dren. On November 1, 1991 The Colonel retired from the USMC with 33 years of active service. Throughout his military career he was a highly decorated and accomplished Marine. He has received numerous awards and letters of appreciation for all that he has done. He continued to serve the military community by working as an officer with the Camden County Office of Veterans Affairs. In 2022 he retired from the Camden County Office of Veterans Affairs.

It gives some comfort that we were able to show Al just how



much we cared and appreciated him prior to his passing.

Just last year we honored him at the Annual Veterans Appreciation Dinner at the American Legion Cherry Hill NJ, hosted by the Cherry Hill PBA – and WOW – what an emotionally packed evening it was. Our beloved Ltc Al Bancroft was honored for his service to our country (USMC 30+ yrs) and his recent retirement from the Camden County Veterans Affairs Office (20+ yrs) and he presented a local Vietnam Veteran, Thomas Flynn, with his fathers WWII Dog tag that was found in England.

We were also able to honor his service in 2010 at the American Legion with presentations from numer-

### Passing of LTC Al Bancroft (cont'd)

ous veterans organizations. Al an impact on us all. He will be posterboards for the family  
was involved in everything for sorely missed. and also flagged the perime-  
our veterans and made such Sue Quinn made up photo ter of the church for his ser-

vices which were held in Cher-  
ry Hill, NJ. Our thoughts and  
prayers are with his wife Nan-  
cy , his children and the many  
friends he had. He was a leg-  
end in our community and a  
true advocate for all veterans.  
There will never be another Al  
Bancroft.



POST 372 SALS presents

## Annual FAMILY DAY at the Legion



# SEPTEMBER 21, 2024

(Rain or Shine) Noon - 5:00pm

Location: American Legion Post 372,  
1532 Martin Ave, Cherry Hill, NJ  
856-665-3889

**JOIN the FUN ! Food includes Pig, Hamburgers,  
Hot Dogs, Clams, Sides, Desserts, Refreshments**

**DJ Music \* Horseshoes \* Cornhole \*  
Winning Chances \* Raffle Drawing**

**Tickets In Advance:  
\$30pp / \$50 couple  
\$30 at Door**

**OPEN TO PUBLIC**

Stop by the Legion to purchase tickets  
or contact a SAL Officer

## **CANTEEN SCENE**

The 2nd quarter of 2024 brought a lot of fun times in the Canteen. Events included the following;

April 10th—Donkey Day at the Legion—(Janine) - Pre orders taken for Donkey Sandwiches, a portion benefitted the Legion.

April 13th—Cantina Mixer and Karaoke Night—(Josh and Bobby) - A fun Saturday Evening at the Post filled with singing, fun drinks and camaraderie. Was open to American Legion Members & their guests. (Canteen Event)

May 18th—Pre Summer Margarita Luau—(Josh and music by Bobby) - Music by Deke & Zeke at the Pre Summer Margarita Luau with bartender Josh's tropical themed drinks and great melodies.. Open to Legion members and their guests.

**LEGION KITCHEN:** Be sure to stop in Tuesday through Friday (12-6) for lunch by Chef Patti! Delicious food at great prices. Check out her facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/kitchenpost372/>

### **Upcoming Canteen Events**

**FROZEN FRIDAYS**—Began in June and run through the Summer—(Robin) - Come on in for Specialty Drinks by bartender Robin every Friday in the summers, from 12pm - 6pm. Pina Coloda's, Flavored Margaritas, Strawberry Daiquiris and more ! Open to Legion members and their guests.

July 20th—Siesta Fiesta—(Josh) - Come on out for a fun summer evening of latin inspired food, beverages, music and dance in the Legion Canteen with bartender Josh. 7pm until Double Time Dances !.. Bring a dish to share. American Legion members and their guests welcome .



**2024-25 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP OFFICERS & TRUSTEES**

Commander - Joe Merimonde  
Sr. Vice Commander - Dan O'Pella  
Jr. Vice Commander - Jack Walsh  
Finance Officer: Fred Pederson  
Chaplain: Sue Shepherd  
Judge Advocate: Fred Pederson  
Adjutant: George Hubel  
Service Officer - Paul Pollard  
Membership - Daniel Serabo  
Sergeant-at-Arms: Bob McQueen

Trustees: John DiNapoli, Bill Quinn, Tim Kraft, Keith Nocho, George Kelly, Fred Pederson and Tom Parkhill  
Past Commander—Tim Kraft

**2024-25 Sons of the AMERICAN LEGION**

Commander – Josh Seib  
Senior Vice – Jerry Renteria  
Junior Vice – Mike Loabascio  
Adjutant – Joe Flynn  
Finance/Membership - Sean Conway  
Chaplain – Mike Dempsey  
Historian – Mike Caputo  
Sgt At Arms - Rick Adams  
Communications - Mike Dempsey  
Trustees – Randy Smith, Greg Dobinson, McKee Duncan, Mike Green

**2024-25 LADIES AUXILIARY OFFICERS**

President - Pat Hawk  
1st Vice President - Dawn Christ  
2nd Vice President - Cindy Nims  
Sgt at Arms - Heather Wentzel  
Secretary - Ruth Seel  
Treasurer - Lisa Renteria  
Chaplain - Michelle Derer  
Sunshine - Kim Flynn  
Historian - Sue Quinn-Morris  
Girls State Chairperson - Marianne Steinhagen

**2024-25 AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS**

Director - Steve Lina  
Assistant Director - Bobby Deconcini  
Treasurer/Membership - Art Schneider  
Road Captain - Victoria Gable  
Secretary - Valerie Young  
Chaplain -Jai Schneider  
Sgt at Arms - Rich Dickinson