



EARL GRAHAM POST 159

BRYAN, TEXAS

THE LEGIONNAIRE

For God and Country - Since 1920

Commander's Comments

Fellow Legionnaires,

As I exit the office of Commander I want to express my appreciation for the dedication of our membership to Earl Graham Post 159. For the past 14 months I have had the privilege to lead such a group. Our Membership and that of our Auxiliary have carried the load necessary to accomplish great things. I look forward to seeing all of you as we begin our 26-27 fiscal year.

I know you will support your new slate of officers. We will swear them in at our August 6th General Membership Meeting. Please plan to attend.

Again I state my gratitude to you all!!

For God and Country

Gary M Banta
Commander
Earl Graham Post 159



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Membership JOIN OR RENEW

Contact the Adjutant
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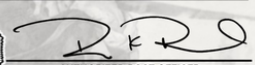
Administrative Notes

I'm pleased to report that the front door key inventory has been completed, and we have successfully accounted for every front door key. Thank you to everyone who assisted with this effort.

On a related note, if you are the last person to leave the hall, please take a moment to ensure that all exterior doors are securely locked before you leave.

We have also received the 2027 membership cards, and the renewal period is now underway. I will mail your new membership card within two days of receiving your dues payment, whether paid online or by mail along with your renewal letter. You can also pay your dues in-person at the Post. The cards have a new design this year.

Renew Today

The American Legion		2027
OFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP CARD		
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT RADAR O'REILLY		
AT THE DATE OF ISSUING THIS CARD WAS IN GOOD STANDING IN		
DEPT. Texas	POST NO. 0159	
MEMBER ID NO. 8675309	CONT. YRS. 2	
LOCATED AT Bryan		
NOT VALID UNLESS COUNTERSIGNED BY THE MEMBER		 AUTHORIZED POST OFFICER
"AMERICA" BY PENN-MEL		

Finally, I'm pleased to introduce your 2026–2027 Post 159 Officers. These Officers were elected on June 6 and will be installed at the General Membership Meeting on August 6.

Commander
 1st Vice Commander
 2nd Vice Commander
 Adjutant
 Finance Officer
 Judge Advocate
 Historian
 Chaplain
 Sergeant At Arms
 Service Officer

Jimbo Pfeffer
 Shawn Jarnagin
 Jack Moore
 Wes Wynn
 Brad Cunningham
 Randy Michel
 Rick Baker
 Virgil Marko
 Ralf Hauser
 Jose' Nava

Wes Wynn
 Post Adjutant

AMERICAN LEGION FLAG & EMBLEM

SERVING VETERANS. SERVING AMERICA.

Your Earl Graham Post #159 Emblem Sales Representative Frank Opitz. Note: Please be patient as the Warehouse is having internal difficulties (it is on its ear) current delays 4 months).

I may have other sources for some items, please ask me!



2025-26 Earl Graham, Post #159, American Legion Challenge Coin



- \$15.00 while supplies last or Signup and pre-pay for the next batch of



Post Eternal

David Pate, US Navy
James Smith, Air Force



Post 159 Meets Medal of Honor
Recipient Donald "Doc" Ballard

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

August 6 - Membership Meeting

5:30 PM - Legion Social

6:30 PM - Membership Dinner

Menu ~ Fried Chicken, Mashed Potatoes and Green Beans

{Bring Side Dish or Dessert to share}

7:30 PM Membership Meeting

August 8 - Manage Your Crazy Self

11:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Randy Guttenberger presents practical tools for understanding stress, communication and decision-making.

August 13 @ 6:00 PM - Sons of the American Legion Meeting

6:00 PM - Join us for an informative update on Squadron activities! We'll be helping eligible members sign up on the spot. Plus, if we reach quorum, we will hold officer elections—your vote counts!



NEW LEADERSHIP & LOOKING AHEAD

I am truly honored to take the helm as Commander of Earl Graham Post 159. We share a proud, 107-year legacy of serving veterans in our community. My goal is to fiercely preserve this heritage while driving innovation to attract new veteran members, elevate our fundraising, and deepen our community impact. Please take a moment to congratulate and thank our new officers. Their dedication is the engine that keeps Post 159 running!

State Convention Highlights

I recently had the privilege of attending the American Legion Department of Texas convention in Austin, where we celebrated, collaborated, and held elections. I enjoyed speaking with our new Department Commander, Danny Muth and the many legionnaires from around the state. The real value of these conventions is the ability to network and brainstorm with Legionnaires across the department. Thank you to everyone who made our recent spring conventions such a success as I received numerous accolades throughout the convention; we've truly set the bar high!



Attention Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion!

We are officially working to restart and reactivate our American Legion Riders Chapter, and we need riders to make it happen!

If you love to ride, support veterans, and want to help build this program back up from the ground up, now is the time to jump in. Whether you ride two wheels or three, your involvement is key to getting our chapter back on the road.

Interested in helping us restart the Chapter?

Reach out today or join us at our next gathering to learn how you can participate!

Renew Your Membership for 2027

2027 Membership renewals are officially open! Be sure to sign up early so you can get ahead of the curve and be eligible to win exciting prize drawings.

James "Jimbo" Pfeffer
First Vice Commander

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NEWS

The Auxiliary reached 100% membership goal before July 4, 2026!

Poppy donations set a huge record for Memorial Day weekend. A total of \$5,873.75 was collected. Donations will be given to Patriot Paws to help train service dogs for veterans, yoga mats will be purchased and given to the RISE Unit in Waco, help with costs of supplies associated with Coffee & Donuts each Thurs, items for Christmas Baskets that are given to veterans in Nursing Homes, and various other veteran-related projects. Ladies are continuing to make poppies for Veterans' Day in November.

Jeanne Prestwood, President, was invited to be one of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, Fourth of July America 250 Celebration at the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial in Veterans Park. Brad Cunningham, Finance Officer, was also a signer.

Several Auxiliary members attended the Department Convention in Austin.

The Auxiliary 2026-2027 Budget has been approved.



Jeanne Prestwood, President, was invited to be one of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, Fourth of July America 250 Celebration at the Brazos Valley Veterans Memorial in Veterans Park. Brad Cunningham, Finance Officer, was also a signer.

The 2026-2027 Auxiliary slate of Officers has been voted on and will be installed on August 6, 2026, at the General Meeting. They are:



President	Jeanne Prestwood
Vice President	Ruth Bosquez
Secretary	Diana Mills
Treasurer	Licia Kim
Chaplain	Bea Hauser
Sergeant-at-Arms	vacant
Members at Large	Cathe Gayer & Marjean Neve

THE SERVICE OFFICER'S BRIEFING

STANDING ORDERS: SECURE THE HOME FRONT

PREPAREDNESS ISN'T OPTIONAL — IT'S A DUTY TO THOSE YOU LOVE

Every veteran knows the value of a plan. Before any mission, you rehearsed it, briefed it, and made sure every member of your unit knew their role. Somewhere along the way, too many of us stopped applying that same discipline to the mission that matters most: taking care of our families.

Getting your affairs in order is not about expecting the worst tomorrow. It is about making sure that if something happens to you — tomorrow, next year, or twenty years from now — your spouse, your children, and the people who depend on you are not left searching for answers in the middle of their grief. A well-organized, accessible file is the single greatest gift you can leave behind. It turns a moment of crisis into a moment your family can handle, because you already did the hard work for them.

Assemble the File

Every adult — veteran or not — should maintain one accessible file containing key documents and information. At minimum, that file should include:

Will, medical power of attorney, durable power of attorney, and personal directives

- Funeral and burial wishes, along with any pre-paid arrangements
- Financial accounts, insurance policies, deeds, and recurring payment information
- Copies of vital records — birth and marriage certificates, passports, and similar documents
- A list of digital accounts and instructions for accessing them
- Contact information for anyone who would need to be notified

For Our Veterans: Additional Orders Apply

Veterans and their families carry an added responsibility — there are benefits that go unclaimed simply because no one knew where to look. Keep copies of your DD 214 (or DD 256 / NGB 22) and your veteran ID in that same file. Make sure your family knows to call the VA Office of Survivors Assistance at 800-827-1000, and knows how to reach your local Veterans Service Officer for help with burial flags, headstones, survivor compensation, and final military honors.

That is exactly what this office is here for. You served. Now let this Post serve you and your family in return.

The Order of the Day

Do not leave this for someday. Set aside one afternoon, gather these documents, and tell your family where the file lives. It is one of the simplest missions you will ever complete — and one of the most important. Your family should never have to fight two battles at once: losing you, and figuring out what to do next. If you need help, contact my office. Standing by to assist — that is the job.

Jose L. Nava Sr.
Service Officer
American Legion Post 159

Explaining the Preamble to the American Legion, Part 12

To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

We have reached the final installment of our journey through the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion. We close with a phrase that is perhaps the most deeply personal of them all:

"To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

These are solemn, sacred words. To "consecrate" and "sanctify" mean to set something apart for a higher, noble purpose. But how do we make our comradeship sacred? The Preamble gives us a direct, active answer: through our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

This final clause acts as the mortar that holds every other section of our Preamble together. Throughout this series, we have discussed upholding the Constitution, maintaining law and order, and fostering 100% Americanism. While these are noble ideals, what truly breathes life into them is the unique bond of the veteran.

Our experiences set us apart from the civilian world. While civilians might not understand the grind of a long deployment, a grueling flight line, or the monotony of a midnight watch, we do. Yet, these very differences—the trials, the discipline, and the shared sacrifices—are exactly what

unite us. We speak a common language. Because of this, we share a sacred, lifelong duty to one another that did not expire when we took off the uniform.

In the military, survival depended on having each other's "six." We may transition to civilian life, but we never stop being the men and women who instinctively look out for one another.

Today, having each other's back means ensuring no veteran is left behind in the transition to civilian life. It is the Legionnaire driving a comrade to a VA appointment, a Post rally to assist a family in financial distress, or the simple, life-saving phone call to check on a buddy struggling alone.

By dedicating ourselves to this mutual helpfulness, we elevate our comradeship from a simple veteran association into something to be truly revered and respected. We honor those we served alongside, those we have lost, and those still searching for their way home.

The Preamble is not just a historic text to recite at the start of our meetings. It is a living, breathing blueprint. As we conclude this series, let us pledge to keep looking out for one another, keeping the unquenchable fire of our comradeship burning bright.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

THE MEANING OF THE AMERICAN FLAG AND ITS 13 FOLDS



The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars representing states our veterans served in uniform. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right and is inverted only when draped as a pall on the casket of a veteran who has served our country in uniform.

In the U.S. Armed Forces, at the ceremony of retreat, the flag is lowered, folded into a triangle, and kept under watch throughout the night as a tribute to our nation's honored dead. The next morning it is brought out and, at the ceremony of reveille, run aloft as a symbol of our belief in the resurrection of the body.

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it has the appearance of a tri-cornered hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under Gen. George Washington and the sailors and Marines who served under Capt. John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the U.S. Armed Forces, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedom we enjoy today.

The source and dates of origin of this Flag Folding Procedure are unknown; however, some sources attribute it to the Gold Star Mothers of America, while others attribute it to an Air Force chaplain stationed at the United States Air Force Academy.

The 13 folds of the American flag each carry symbolic meaning reflecting life, faith, patriotism, and honor, culminating in the national motto, "In God We Trust."

The Symbolic Meaning of Each Fold

- 1st Fold: Symbolizes life.
- 2nd Fold: Represents belief in eternal life.
- 3rd Fold: Honors veterans who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of the country.
- 4th Fold: Represents the weaker nature of citizens and trust in God for guidance.
- 5th Fold: A tribute to the country, reflecting loyalty and patriotism, echoing Stephen Decatur's words: "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right, but it is still our country, right or wrong."
- 6th Fold: Signifies where our hearts lie, pledging allegiance to the flag and the republic.
- 7th Fold: Honors the armed forces, who protect the country and the flag.
- 8th Fold: Pays tribute to those who entered the valley of the shadow of death and to mothers, particularly on Mother's Day.
- 9th Fold: Honors womanhood, recognizing their faith, loyalty, and devotion in shaping the nation.
- 10th Fold: Honors fathers, reflecting their guidance and support.
- 11th Fold: Represents the emblem of eternity, glorifying God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- 12th Fold: Represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, symbolizing the heritage of religious faith.
- 13th Fold: When fully folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

Our country was founded on our forefathers' firm belief in the Eternal Living God, His only begotten Son who was sacrificed for our sins, and the Holy Spirit who lives inside us when we accept Christ to help us grow closer to God. We are not lucky; we are blessed with God's loving grace and protected by His mighty hand.

Virgil (Goofy) Marko

Chaplain, American Legion Post 159



EARL GRAHAM POST 159

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TERRENCE NUNN
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TOM SMITH
TERM EXPIRES 2028
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TERM EXPIRES 2027
LARRY "LEFTY" FIKES (EMERITUS)
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