



**American Legion**  
**Joseph Q. Johnson Post 96**  
**PO Box 7096**  
**Surprise, Arizona 85374-0101**



**Newsletter No. 258**

**azalpost96.com**

**May 2025**

**Commander:** Mike Elliott 623-533-4377  
**First Vice-Commander:** Arnold Kohl 602-692-0659  
**Second Vice-Commander:** Kelly Donlevy 602-299-5007  
**Finance Officer:** George Van de Langeryt 623-547-6668  
**Adjutant: (Acting)** Arnold Kohl  
**Chaplain:** John Chlopek 623-584-4653  
**Judge Advocate:** George Van de Langeryt  
**Executive Committee:**  
Mike Elliott, Arnold Kohl, Kelly Donlevy  
George Van de Langeryt, Nancie Scalercio

**Post 96 Officers**

**Newsletter:** George Van de Langeryt gvan8888@aol.com  
**Sergeant-At-Arms:** Rod Hage 478-501-6625  
**Membership:** Mike Elliott & George Van  
**Fundraising Chair:** Kelly Donlevy 602-299-5007  
**Service Officer:** Rodney Hage msgtrod@hotmail.com  
**VA Hospital Coordinator:** Rodney Hage 478-501-6625  
**Photographer:** Paul Satkowski 207-706-6250  
**Historian:** VACANT  
**Past Commander:** Nancie Scalercio 623-826-3488  
**ALR Chapter 96 Director:** Eddie Jenness 480-584-1145

*The Surprise Post 96 Newsletter is the official publication of Joseph Q. Johnson Post 96*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE!**

***NEXT Post business meeting 1730 May 22 at AZ Traditions***  
***We will have a Memorial for Chaplain Joe Urshan at 1730.***  
***We will have sandwiches and soft drinks.***

***17225 N Citrus Rd., Surprise, AZ 85374***

***We meet in the Traditions Neighborhood Center 18265 Traditions Loop Rd E***  
***PLEASE – ASK THE GATE GUARD FOR DIRECTIONS***

***Post Officer's meeting 1600 Thursday May 1 at the Commander's home***

***Voiture 1154 Promenade on 1000 Saturday May 24 at the Post 145 meeting room***

***Marty Schwab Memorial Breakfast 1000 Sunday May 18***  
***Richi's Diner - 15609 W Bell Rd #100, Surprise, AZ 85374***

***ALR Chapter 96 will be meeting after the Post meeting on May 22 at AZ Traditions***

**Nominations for 2025-2026 Post 96 officers. Final Nominations and Elections at the May meeting. Thus far, we have the following nominations:**

**Commander: Mike Elliot**  
**First Vice Commander: Arnold Kohl**  
**Second Vice Commander: Kelly Donlevy**  
**Finance Officer: George Van de Langeryt**

**COMMANDERS CORNER**



I will start my monthly newsletter with sad news: Our dear friend, fellow veteran, and colleague, Joe Urshan, our Chaplain has passed (early April 2025) into Post Everlasting. He served in the Army from 1960 to 1962, was very active as a substitute teacher, Chaplain for our Post, and did many wellness checks to our members. We will certainly miss him. We will have some services for him at our May Post meeting starting at 5:30

(1730), his daughter will be present, and there will be food. Please make plans to attend to show support for our fallen comrade.

On another note, our selection for incoming officers will be held as well as installation.

Last month my article included one I wrote as Director of San Jose Harley Owners Group (SJHOG). I will include here some of what I wrote in April 2005:

Last month I was approached about a subject that we heard about in the news—Identity Theft. The common version of Identity Theft is when someone acquires information about you such as SSN, birthday, birthplace, bank account, and so on. What I was asked is a different type; someone stole his license plate from his motorcycle. I have heard of this happening with cars, and this was the first about motorcycles. How can this be identity theft? Think about your license plate being used on a stolen motorcycle. Think further about that bike being used in crimes. If your license plate is suspected of a crime, then you can imagine how hard it can be to clear yourself. We all know how public attitude is toward motorcycle enthusiasts (a.k.a. bikers). An answer to this is to report the theft as soon as possible. Don't delay.

Safety is number one for all riders. If it is rainy most would prefer not to ride. But if you are caught in it, then it is different. Keeping rain gear with you during this time of year is good practice. Riding at a slower pace is required. Hot weather is coming too. Hydration, Hydration, Hydration. Did I mention that you need to keep yourself hydrated? If it is very hot, 100+ degrees, you need to stop more often and get yourself cooled down. When you stop for gas, make sure it is a place where there is air conditioning inside (either the gas station or a restaurant). Gatorade or something like it, with water, should be your drinks of the day. When you sweat, your electrolytes are diminished, and they need replacing. Sodas or alcohol do not help. Be safe out there.

For God and Country,  
Mike Elliott, Legion Rider, Post 96 Commander

### **FROM THE FIRST VICE-COMMANDER**



### **Remember**

Memorial Day is one of the federal holidays in the United States for honoring, mourning and remembering the U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. It is observed on the last Monday of May. Many locations claim to be the first in the United States to observe Memorial Day by decorating the graves of fallen soldiers after the Civil War. The day was first called Decoration Day. The first large observance of Decoration Day was held on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1868, at



Arlington National Cemetery, across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. Maj. Gen. John A. Logan gave orders for his posts to decorate graves in 1868 “with the choicest flowers of springtime” urged: “We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. ... Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic.” The crowd attending the first Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery was approximately the same size as those that attend today's observance, about 5,000 people. Then, as now, small American flags were placed on each grave — a tradition followed at many national cemeteries today. (\* Source: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs- Celebrating America's Freedoms.)



This Memorial Day weekend Post 96 will continue to remember the fallen warriors of America by participating in two Memorial ceremonies. On Saturday, May 24, Post 96 will be joined by DAV Star Chapter 24 at the location of Fighters Field, AKA Luke Auxiliary Field 3 which was located in the area behind the library at Surprise Park. The area where the park and



Surprise City Hall now stand was once a WWII pilot training field for those destined to fight in the war. Please join us there to honor those who trained there, many of whom never returned home. Details are in the flyer in this newsletter.





Members of Post 96 will also be participating with other member organizations of the North West Valley Veterans Association in a remembrance ceremony at Sunland Memorial Park in Sun City.



All members of Post 96 and their guests are encouraged to attend. Sunland provides a free meal afterwards to all in attendance. (See flyer in this newsletter)

I encourage you to get out and attend these observances and remember those who gave all in service to their (our) Country.

For God and Country,  
Arnold "Arnie" Kohl, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander

#### **FROM THE FINANCE OFFICER AND JUDGE ADVOCATE**



Remember, Post 96 dues are now \$50!

The March 27 meeting was a disappointment. We had three Officers and four Members present. Our by-laws require a minimum of three elected

Officers and five Members for a quorum. We did not have a quorum so Commander Mike canceled the meeting and we all went home. We accomplished nothing. Please attend meetings.

The May meeting is Final Nominations and Election of Officers for 2025-2026.

We will be discussing whom we will support at the June State Convention elections.

Our District 11 Commander Gary Vaughn is a candidate for Dept of AZ Commander. The election will be at the June State Convention. He has the support of Post 96. Gary is a retired USMC Colonel and served as a fighter pilot. He worked as a pilot for Delta Airlines. He is very active in the Boy Scouts. Gary was Dept Legionnaire of the Year in 2024.

Semper Fi!

George Van de Langeryt  
Finance Officer & Judge Advocate  
Past Commander & Legion Rider  
AZ Veterans Hall of Fame – Class of 2018

#### **FROM THE CHAPLAIN**



Our Post Chaplain, Joe Urshan, went to Post Everlasting on April 14. He was in Hospice for about a week. That is all the details we have. Nancie Scalercio with Menke is handling the service. Joe will be cremated and interred in the National Cemetery in Chicago.

Joe is 89 and a 19-year member of the American Legion. He served in the US Army. Joe has faithfully served Post 96 as Chaplain since March 2017. He has a sister, Lisa Maldonado, living in the area.

The Post will honor Joe at a memorial service prior to the Post business meeting on May 22. We will have sandwiches and drinks starting at 1730.

**In Loving Memory of Julius Urshan.**

#### **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

As of 4/19, we have 60 members pay dues to the Post, 68 pay online, 1 transfer from Post 100 and 35 PUFL's: total 164. Our goal is 170 so we are at 96.47% of goal.

We did not have a quorum at the March meeting so there was no membership drawing.

**Have you moved, changed your phone number or email address?** If so, please contact Mike or George. Give us the new information and we will update the records so you will continue to get your Legion Magazine and the Post Newsletter mailed or emailed to the proper address.

Mike & George

### American Legion Riders Report



The American Legion Riders of Post 96, Surprise, AZ stayed busy this month with two events in one day that tested the stamina of the fast growing team. Thank you Nina for being there every time, thank you Dana who did the double duty also, and Karina for managing the managers at the Classic car show,



Riders Fundraiser at Classic Car Show



Riders Director Eddie Jenness at the City of Surprise VETFEST.

Eddie Jenness, Director ALR 96  
Directoralr96.president@gmail.com

### May Calendar

**May is National Military Appreciation Month**, is a month-long observance in the United States, dedicated to people who are currently serving in the United States military.

**Thursday May 1** – 1600 Post 96 Officers meeting at Mike Elliott's home.

**Thursday May 1** – National Day of Prayer - The National Day of Prayer is an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, inviting people of all faiths to pray for the nation.

**May 2, 2011** - U.S. Special Operations Forces killed Osama bin Laden during a raid on his secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The raid marked the culmination of a decade-long manhunt for the elusive leader of the al-Qaeda terrorist organization based in the Middle East. Bin Laden had ordered the coordinated aerial attacks of September 11, 2001, in which four American passenger jets were hijacked then crashed, killing nearly 3,000 persons. Two jets had struck and subsequently collapsed the 110-story Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York, while another struck the Pentagon building in Washington, D.C. A fourth jet also headed toward Washington had crashed into a field in Pennsylvania as passengers attempted to overpower the hijackers on board.

**May 5** - Celebrated in Mexico as Cinco de Mayo, a national holiday in remembrance of the Battle of Puebla in 1862, in which Mexican troops under General Ignacio



Zaragoza, outnumbered three to one, defeated the invading French forces of Napoleon III.

**May 7, 1915** - The British passenger ship Lusitania was torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, losing 1,198 of its 1,924 passengers, including 114 Americans. The attack hastened neutral America's entry into World War I.

**May 7, 1945** - In a small red brick schoolhouse in Reims, Germany, General Alfred Jodl signed the unconditional surrender of all German fighting forces thus ending World War II in Europe. Russian, American, British and French ranking officers observed the signing of the document which became effective at one minute past midnight on May 9. Jodl was then ushered in to see Supreme Allied Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who curtly asked Jodl if he fully understood the document. Eisenhower then informed Jodl that he would be held personally responsible for any deviation from the terms of the surrender. Jodl was then ushered away.

**May 7, 1954** - The French Indochina War ended with the fall of Dien Bien Phu, in a stunning victory by the Vietnamese over French colonial forces in northern Vietnam. The country was then divided in half at the 17th parallel, with South Vietnam created in 1955.

**May 7, 1992** - The 27<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, prohibiting Congress from giving itself pay raises.

**Wednesday May 7** – 0900-1000 - Veterans Coffee Hour at Surprise Funeral Care, 16063 W Bell Rd, Surprise, AZ. Every 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month, Veterans are invited to a free coffee hour, compliments of Dignity Memorial.

**Wednesday May 7** – Senior Day at Fry's, Bashas' and Albertsons. 10% discount on your groceries.

**May 10, 1869** - The newly constructed tracks of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railways were first linked at Promontory Point, Utah. A golden spike was driven by Leland Stanford, president of the Central Pacific, to celebrate the linkage. It is said that he missed the spike on his first swing which brought roars of laughter from men who had driven thousands upon thousands of spikes themselves.

**Sunday May 11 – Mother's Day** is an annual holiday celebrated in the United States on the second Sunday in May. Mother's Day recognizes mothers, motherhood and maternal bonds in general, as well as their positive contributions to their families and society. It was established by Anna Jarvis, with the first official Mother's Day celebrated through a service of worship at St.

Andrew's Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia, on May 10, 1908.

**Tuesday May 13** – 0900-1000 Veteran's Coffee Hour at Sunland Memorial Park. All vets and friends are invited for coffee and nibbles. Second Tuesday every month. In the Chapel building at 15826 N Del Webb Blvd, Sun City, AZ 85351.

**May 13, 1846** - At the request of President James K. Polk, Congress declared war on Mexico. The controversial struggle eventually cost the lives of 11,300 U.S. soldiers and resulted in the annexation of lands that became parts of Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah and Colorado. The war ended in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

**Wednesday May 14** – 1730 – White Tank Mountain Detachment 1246 of the Marine Corps League meets at:

Kimbles Kitchen

17300 N. Sun Village Parkway #D

Surprise, AZ 85374.

Meet and greet is 1600-1730. Join us for dinner and drinks.

**May 14, 1942** - During World War II, an Act of Congress allowed women to enlist for noncombat duties in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), the Women Appointed for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES), Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS), and Semper Paratus Always Ready Service (SPARS), the Women's Reserve of the Marine Corp.

**Thursday May 15** - 1030 North West Valley Veterans Association Memorial Day Pre-Event meeting at Sunland Memorial Park in the Funeral Home where we usually meet.

**Saturday May 17** - 0900 Regular North West Valley Veterans Association meeting Sunland Memorial Park.

**Sunday May 18** - 1000 Marty Schwab Memorial Breakfast at Richi's Diner, Bell & Reems. All veterans and family are invited to this informal gathering.

**May 18, 1998** - In one of the biggest antitrust lawsuits of the 20th century, American software giant Microsoft Corporation was sued by the U.S. Federal government and 20 state governments charging the company with using unfair tactics to crush competition and restrict choices for consumers. The lawsuits alleged Microsoft used illegal practices to deny personal computer owners the benefits of a free and competitive market and also alleged Microsoft extended its monopoly on operating systems to "develop a chokehold" on the Internet browser software market.

**May 20, 1927** - Charles Lindbergh, a 25-year-old aviator, took off at 7:52 a.m. from Roosevelt Field, Long Island, in the *Spirit of St. Louis* attempting to win a \$25,000 prize for the first solo nonstop flight between New York City and Paris. Thirty-three hours later, after a 3,600 mile journey, he landed at Le Bourget, Paris, earning the nickname "Lucky Lindy" and becoming an instant worldwide hero.

**Thursday May 22** – American Legion Post 96 AZ Traditions Neighborhood Center.

1730 Joe Urshan Memorial Service. Join us for food and drink as we remember Joe.

1900 Business Meeting. Come for the raffle prizes! Bring a guest.

**Thursday May 22** – About 2000 American Legion Riders Chapter 96 meeting after the Post 96 business meeting at AZ Traditions. This is a temporary change.

**May 23-24-25** – Friday to Sunday **Post 96 Fundraiser** at Sam's Club. We need HELP! Please give us TWO hours of your time and help POST 96 HELP VETERANS! Call Kelly Donlevy, Fundraising Chair, at 602-299-5007. We will be collecting on Friday and Saturday from 0900-1700 and on Sunday from 1000 to 1600. Give Kelly a call and reserve a time slot.

**Friday May 23 – 0900 Special Memorial Day observance at Camino Del Sol Funeral Chapel.** 13738 W Camino Del Sol, Sun City West, AZ 85375. All are welcome and there will be light refreshments following the ceremony. For information, please call Renae Kramer

**Saturday May 24 – 0900 Annual Memorial Ceremony at the Lake** – Post 96 and DAV Star Chapter 24 will host a memorial ceremony at the Luke Auxiliary Field #3 WWII Memorial (by the Library). Host for the Ceremony is George Van de Langeryt. Guest Speaker is Past DAV Commander Rod Hage. Wear your Legion cover and shirt. We will lay a wreath at the Air Force Memorial.

**Saturday May 24** – 40&8 Voiture 1154 Promenade at Arrowhead Valley Apartments is cancelled this weekend.

Next Promenade is June 7.

**May 26 – Memorial Day** - originally known as Decoration Day, is a federal holiday in the United States for honoring and mourning the U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. From 1868 to 1970, it was observed on May 30. Since 1971, it is observed on the last Monday of May.

**Monday May 26 - Memorial Day – 0900 NWVVA Ceremony at Sunland Memorial Park.** Come early and enjoy the patriot music. Ceremony will last one hour and

afterwards enjoy a luncheon sponsored by Dignity Memorial. Guest Speaker is Brig Gen. David J. "Mudd" Ciesielski, USAF.

**Tuesday May 27** – 1000 Disabled American Veterans Star Chapter 24 meets at Flagstar Bank, 14543 W Grand Ave., Surprise 85374. The meeting is held in the basement and there is an elevator. All veterans are invited.

**May 31, 1889** - Over 2,300 persons were killed in the Johnstown flood in Pennsylvania. Heavy rains throughout May caused the Connemaugh River Dam to burst sending a wall of water 75 feet high pouring down upon the city.

## **SAVE THE DATE**

### **Up Coming, District 11 Meetings**

All Meetings on Sunday

### **Gary Vaughn, District 11 Commander**

Note: Post Commanders are required to attend District Meetings. They may be accompanied by members of their leadership teams. If a Post Commander cannot attend, a "proxy" may be assigned in writing and delivered to the Adjutant before the meeting. "In person" attendance is preferred, however participation via ZOOM link is permissible (link to be posted on the Facebook page and sent by message to District and Post leadership).

May 18, 2025: Crandall-Palmer Post 61

35 N Dysart Rd, Avondale, AZ 85323

(3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday change due to Mother's Day)

Times: Training 1300-1345, GMM 1400-1600

Remarks: Officer Elections

Coordinating Instructions:

- District Officer and Committee Chair reports are due to the District Adjutant one week prior to the published meeting date so they may be distributed for review before the meeting.
- Training will include Service Officer and other administrative training deemed necessary by the District Commander or as requested by Post Commanders.





### **FROM THE EDITOR**

Please help us find new businesses or individuals to advertise in our newsletter. It is only \$5/month (\$60/year) and we give Legion Members a 20% discount.

George Van de Langeryt  
Past Commander & Newsletter Editor



City of Surprise Community and Recreation Services in partnership with American Legion Joseph Q. Johnson Post 96 and Disabled American Veterans Star Chapter 24  
present:

# **MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND WREATH LAYING CEREMONY**

**Saturday, May 24, 2024, 9:00 A.M.**

EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE AIR FORCE WWII  
MEMORIAL LOCATED BY THE REGIONAL LIBRARY  
16089 N. BULLARD AVE. SURPRISE, ARIZONA

**Speaker Rodney Hage**

HOSTED BY GEORGE VAN DE LANGERYT  
FOR MORE INFORMATION: (714) 206-7959



**NORTH WEST VALLEY VETERANS ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY**

**0900 May 26, 2025**

**Sunland Memorial Park**

**15826 N. Del Webb Blvd, Sun City**

**Guest Speaker**

**Brig. Gen. David J. Ciesielski**

**Patriot music at 0830 - Flyover by Falcon  
Warbirds & Post 96 Legion Riders at 0900**

**MARY ELLEN PIOTROWSKI AMERICAN  
LEGION POST 94 Honor Guard**



**With Honor & Gratitude  
We Remember**





Second Vice Commander and Fundraising Chair Kelly Donlevy and Linda Satkowski



VA Coordinator and Service Officer a happy Rod Hage



Rider Nina Olsen, one of our woman veterans. She helps out at the Valley Food Bank.



Linda Cernetisch and daughter Skylar.



Commander Mike Elliott



Fred Havlock



Marine Mike Finley



First Vice Commander Arnie Kohl sets up POW/MIA table



Jim Harris



Riders Director Eddie Jenness



Ron Swanberg, Ron Wilson, Roberta Ernes, Stephan Collins and John Daniels.  
Visitors from the Happy Trails Veterans Club.



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**American Legion  
Joseph Q. Johnson Post 96, Inc.  
PO Box 7096  
Surprise, Arizona 85374-0101**



Forwarding Service Requested – May



**Have you signed up a *NEW* member for 2026?**