Virginia Legionnaires Remember Our Fallen

It was a cold and rainy day but thousands of Virginia Legionnaires braved the weather to remember our fellow Veterans that have passed on to Post Everlasting. In what has become an annual event, Virginia Legionnaires laid wreaths at the gave sites of Veterans throughout Virginia, at National Cemeteries as well as local Cemeteries.

While the actual wreath laying lasted only a few hours, the preparation began around Virginia with the delivery of wreaths at each cemetery, many involving a solemn procession through the local highways and streets. Many towns turned out to provide escorts and Law Enforcement was a major participant to provide the honors of escorting the wreaths into town. One Deputy who participated stated, “It was my honor to escort the wreaths to the cemetery. The wreaths represent the lives of thousands of Veterans and it was as though we were able to provide them a funeral procession that they may not have received, especially our Vietnam Veterans.”

The full operation is a year-round effort to raise funds through participation in parades and local events to highlight the Wreaths Across America program. At each Cemetery they start the before the ceremony by receiving, off-loading, and accounting for the thousands of wreaths delivered.

The many volunteers carefully unpack the wreaths and position them around the cemeteries to be prepared for the next day. Many of these activities are full day in and of themselves, and the Legionnaires play a big part in making this happen.

On December 14, 2019 the morning started out with rain in many areas of Virginia. Around noon the rain had moved through most of the state, but the cold still remained. Despite this there were Legionnaires throughout the state placing wreaths at both the national and local cemeteries starting early in the morning and lasting well into the afternoon.
Mark Stein, Manassas Post 10 Commander, leads the wreath laying ceremony at Manassas Cemetery.

Ziggy Levison, 16th District Adjutant, placing a wreath at Saint James Baptist Church in Bealeton, VA.

Danville Post 325 Commander, Dale Roberson, salutes the wreath he just placed.

Legionnaires Kenny Fitzgerald and Steve Walker of Danville Post 325 hand out wreaths to volunteers for placement.

Danville Post 325 Legionnaires prepare to present Memorial Wreaths honoring each branch of service. From left to right are, Van Elliott, Phil Shepard, Mac Booth, Kenny Fitzgerald, Kenny Irby, Post 325 Commander Dale Roberson and Steve Walker.

Danville Post 325 Legionnaire Phil Shepard salutes a wreath symbolizing past veterans.
Alexandria Post 176 Legionnaire Craig Hendrickson preparing to place a wreath in Alexandria National Cemetery.

Department of Virginia President Lisa Chaplin and SAL Member Kevin Chaplin saluting during the ceremony at Culpeper National Cemetery.

Manassas Post 10 Commander Mark Stein conducts a ceremony with Post 10 Legionnaires at Manassas Cemetery.

Sandston American Legion Post 242 placing wreaths on all the graves at Seven Pines National Cemetery for the Wreaths Across America Event.