

Lowe's Grove American Legion Post 416
Durham, NC

 **AMERICAN
LEGION**

THE SENTRY



Issue #60, January - March 2026

America is Turning 250, Join the Challenge

(Pg. 4)



Tax Filing Season 2026

(Pg. 5)



Commander's Corner

Happy New Year, Post 416 family! There's something magical about turning the page to a new year—a chance to dream big and set bold goals together. I'm thrilled to travel "highway 2026" with you, and I want to share what's ahead for our Post in the next six months.

What's Coming Up?

1. Officer Roles—Your Opportunity to Lead!

We're updating our officer roles to match our new Constitution and By-Laws, as well as aligning with National and Department standards. The current team will continue as-is through June, but new roles start July 1, 2026. Detailed description of the new roles is detailed on pg. 7-8, so be sure to check that out. If you're passionate about serving, let's talk before April 1—your energy could shape our future.

2. Vision 2040—Building Our Future Together

Phase 2 of our Vision 2040 project is almost here! By March 1, you'll see the site plan for our property at 5419 South Alston Avenue, plus a breakdown of construction costs and fundraising goals. This is our chance to create something lasting for our community. Want to catch up? The Phase 1 report is online: <https://al416nc.wixsite.com/al416nc/about/vision-2040>.

3. American Legion Baseball—A Season to Remember

We're gearing up for an incredible 2026 baseball season, with improvements across the board. Read elsewhere in this newsletter for full details—Post 416 is ready to hit it out of the park!

4. District 12 Meeting—Show Your Pride!

Mark your calendars: Saturday, May 9, 11am–1pm. We're hosting the TAL District 12 meeting and showing off our amazing members and programs. Come celebrate Lowe's Grove pride with us and connect with fellow Legionnaires.



We have plenty to keep moving forward, and I'm excited for the next level of projects already underway. Thank you for your dedication to Post 416 and to our mission of service—for God and Country! Let's make 2026 unforgettable together!

Sincerely,

Bill Granger

Commander, Lowe's Grove American Legion Post 416



Squadron Commander's Corner

2025: A Year in Review

As the year draws to a close, traditionally individuals and groups often look back on that year and recall the events that defined 2025. In keeping with that, we should do the same. In 2025, Lowe's Grove SAL Squadron 416 came into being. And we got a bank account.

Well, that was quick. Let's try something different.

2026: A Year in Preview

Now we're talkin'. Let's get into what 2026, our first full year as a Squadron, can bring us. The Sons of the American Legion program exists to support the greater American Legion to accomplish the Four Pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children & Youth. As Sons, we are well-founded to act on all of these. However, our particular Squadron has sort of an inside track on one of these: Children & Youth.

Lowe's Grove Post 416 has supported Scouting for many years. A couple of our Sons are in leadership positions with Pack 495, the Den of which meets at our Post three times a month. We must recognize and support these men, and that the Squadron will participate in their activities however they see fit. One of the ways is that other Sons can present discussion and activities related to the other three Pillars. In my experience, Cub Scouts are sponges for information that's presented in a fun and meaningful way. In this manner, Sons can reinforce the positive traits the Cubs are already learning throughout their Scouting experience. This is an opportunity not to be missed.

American Legion Baseball has been a huge part of the American Legion for 101 years now. The Post 416 team enjoyed great success last season, reaching the second round of the playoffs. This season, the program will include a Senior and a Junior team, both playing as the Bull City Lollygaggers Baseball at Post 416. More information about the Lollygaggers is found on page 9, but it's worth noting that at least one player is a member of Squadron 416. Further, I participate on the Board for the program along with Commander Granger on the Legion side. The baseball side of the Board consists of the coaching, training and management staff of the program. Our Squadron can help the Lollygaggers in many ways, not the least of which is attendance to Lollygaggers games. We would like to have a visible SAL presence at all Lollygaggers games this season as the teams compete toward a Championship.

These two activities that are already key components of Post 416's existence are well suited to participation and support of our Squadron. There's one other aspect to emphasize, though. Just as current Squadron members are involved in Scouting and Baseball now, we can seek to expand our membership drawing from the young men who are Scouts and ballplayers. I'll recall back to something I touched on in the last newsletter. That's the three-word message from the Commander of the American Legion Department of North Carolina, Devell "Bo" Durham: Inspire and Engage. Inspiring and engaging these young men as positive male role models who lead by example and demonstrate a commitment to fulfilling the Four Pillars will leave an indelible impression on them, and they will, like each of us who are already Sons of the American Legion, be proud and honored to be members. Everything we do is out of respect and admiration of our fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers and all the other American servicemen in our past.

As always, thank you for everything you do to support the Post, the Unit and the Squadron. Please reach out with any comments or opportunities to broaden our presence in the local veteran community. I wish you and yours a New Year of peace, prosperity and positive action.

Best regards,
Philip A. Goldsby
Commander, Lowe's Grove SAL Squadron 416



American Legion Family USA 250 Challenge

Celebrate the nation's 250th by taking part in The American Legion's USA 250 Challenge. Your participation, whether as an individual or part of a team, helps honor our veterans and uplift communities nationwide while promoting physical fitness, mental wellness, and community service.

About the Challenge

The American Legion Family is honoring the nation's 250th birthday with a commitment to embracing physical activity, supporting mental health and serving its communities. The USA 250 Challenge encourages American Legion Family members, other veterans and all Americans to participate, and even raise additional money to support our disabled veterans and families in need through The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation.

American Legion National Commander Dan Wiley encourages everyone to join the challenge, which was launched by Past National Commander James LaCoursiere on July 3, 2025. The year-long initiative offers three categories — fitness, mental wellness and community service — in order to engage more American Legion Family members and others to participate.

Participants may engage in one, two or all three activities as an individual or as part of a team like an American Legion post, American Legion Auxiliary unit, Sons of The American Legion squadron and/or an American Legion Riders chapter.

For a \$30 registration fee, participants will receive their choice of a USA 250 Challenge tech shirt. Donations will go to the Veterans and Children Foundation (VCF).

Register here: <https://legion.myeventscenter.com/event/Usa-250-Challenge-111671>

Support a Participant or Donate here: <https://go.legion.giving/usa250challenge/>

Learn more about VCF here: <https://www.legion.org/get-involved/community-programs/veterans-and-children-foundation>

Source: American Legion ([Legion.org](https://www.legion.org))



Get Ready for 2026 Tax Filing Season

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is reminding taxpayers that the 2026 filing season is rapidly approaching. The agency encourages taxpayers to take steps to ensure they can file promptly and accurately for the upcoming season.

The IRS maintains the irs.gov/getready webpage with helpful information. The page has many practical tips and resources for taxpayers. Preparing for the filing season can be simplified into two main steps.

Gather and Organize

Taxpayers should gather all their tax documents. The most common are IRS Form W-2, Form 1099, records of digital asset transactions and other information forms. There may be specific paperwork to support your income tax deductions, education credits or mortgage payments. You will need the adjusted gross income (AGI) from your prior year's tax return if you want to file electronically. Taxpayers must wait until all forms are received to file an accurate tax return.

IRS Online Account

You may create an IRS online account and enjoy multiple benefits – you can review your most recent tax return and AGI; obtain an Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN); or sign a power of attorney for your tax preparer. The online account allows you to authorize a tax professional to access your tax records electronically. You can review and cancel payments and set up a payment plan.

Setting up direct deposit remains the quickest option for receiving a tax refund. Per an executive order, the IRS has started to phase out paper checks for tax refunds. Taxpayers without a bank account may want to explore opening an account or looking into alternative methods to receive a direct deposit.

You should gather your tax information and have an organized system for maintaining your records. The required forms are generally issued by the end of January and would be expected to be received by early February. Older adults and military members may benefit from the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) or Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs.

Source: American Legion ([Legion.org](https://legion.org))



2025: A Year in Review

As I think back on 2025, it's clear that this year has been one of remarkable growth, community engagement, and meaningful achievements for Lowe's Grove American Legion Post 416. Let's take a quick journey down memory lane and reflect how well we've lived out our vision of Veterans Strengthening our Community.

We began the year by expanding our reach, welcoming Girl Scout Troop 1462 in January and Daisy Troop 1518 in September, further strengthening our commitment to youth development and leadership. Our partnerships flourished as well, with new collaborations established with the Raleigh Sea Cadets and the U.S. Army Recruiting Service, while our ongoing relationship with Cub Scout Pack 495 continued to thrive.

Community events were a highlight of the year. We hosted two successful BBQ Chicken Dinners and organized a special Legion family recruiting event at Golden Corral on Veterans Day, bringing together members, families, and friends in celebration and service. Our commitment to honoring tradition and service was evident as we installed a new flag drop box at the front gate for retired flags and continued to honor our fallen veterans by placing U.S. flags on their gravesites at Memorial Day and Veterans Day, ensuring respect for our nation's heroes.

2025 also marked significant milestones in our long-term vision. We completed phase one of Vision 2040 and launched phase two, setting the stage for a future filled with promise and progress. A new sign now stands proudly in front of our post, symbolizing our renewed spirit and visibility in the community.

Membership soared this year, with our post achieving an impressive 114% of the TAL 2025 membership goal. We were also honored to charter a new Sons of The American Legion Squadron at Post 416, further expanding our family and legacy. Our efforts and impact were recognized beyond our walls, as Post 416 was featured in USO Southeast magazine for hosting a military spouse baby shower, and I was interviewed on the local Southpoint Access podcast, sharing our story and mission with a wider audience.

Sports and youth engagement remained at the heart of our activities. We celebrated the 100th anniversary of American Legion Baseball with an outstanding 11-3-1 record and a trip to the second round of playoffs. Our sponsorship extended to two SDLL little league teams and one softball team, nurturing the next generation of athletes and leaders.

Education and support for veterans and their families were also central to our mission. We awarded a \$500 scholarship to Gabriel Ferrell for attendance at Montreat College and supported the 4th annual 5K walk for the Morrisville Veterans Memorial Foundation. Our presence was felt at the 535th Military Police Battalion family day event, where we stood alongside those who serve.

As we look back on 2025, we should be filled with pride for all we have accomplished together. Each new partnership, event, and milestone is a testament to the dedication and spirit of our members and supporters. With gratitude for the past and excitement for the future, we move forward—stronger, more united, and ready for the opportunities that lie ahead. As always, I am so proud of the amazing team assembled at Post 416!

-Written by Bill Granger, Commander, Lowe's Grove American Legion Post 416

Updated Officer Roles & Responsibilities

As we step into 2026, we're updating our officer roles to match our new Constitution and By-Laws, as well as aligning with National and Department standards. The current team will continue as-is through June, but new roles start July 1, 2026. Post 416 is excited to announce refreshed officer roles and responsibilities, each designed to help our Post grow, serve, and thrive. Here's how your leadership team will work for you:

Commander & Adjutant: The Strategic Duo

Commander:

- Define annual goals for post with advice and consent from the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
- Chair the PEC
- Train and supervise all post officers
- Approve the post annual budget, and plan the post operations for the year
- Lead annual post officer elections
- Lead post membership meetings
- Serve as primary communication lead with American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion Squadron at Post 416
- Represent Post 416 at district/department meetings
- Represent Post 416 at internal/external events

Adjutant:

- Record and publish post meeting agendas and minutes for every membership meeting
 - Submit all membership records to the Department
 - Maintain and organize all post paper/electronic files
 - Serve in the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
 - Serve as a backup to Financial Officer
 - Lead post internal communication efforts, to include publishing a quarterly newsletter
 - Manage the post regalia inventory
 - Submit all required National and Department annual reports on behalf of the post
-

1st & 2nd Vice Commanders: Champions of Engagement

1st Vice Commander:

- Lead the annual membership drive
- Serve in the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
- Backup the Post Commander at post meetings in case of their absence
- Lead a Post Buddy Check twice annually (March and November)

2nd Vice Commander:

- Lead all post social events
- Serve in the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
- Oversee and execute post special events per the American Legion Manual of Ceremonies (pages 44-81)
- Organize all quarterly membership meals, as well as any special meals

Finance Officer & Chaplain: Heart and Stewardship

Finance Officer:

- Deposit, disburse, and track all post funds
- Serve in the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
- Prepare annual post budget for Commander review
- Create all post financial reports
- Lead post quartermaster responsibilities

Chaplain:

- Serve as moral leader for post meetings and special events
 - Serve in the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
 - Coordinate all post funeral and sick call support
 - Lead post Memorial Day and 4 Chaplains Day ceremonies
-

Sergeant at Arms & Historian: Tradition and Storytelling

Sergeant at Arms:

- Lead all post “welcome wagon” activities
- Serve in the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
- Oversee and/or execute physical space changes before and after post meetings
- Lead post flag retirement ceremonies

Historian:

- Serve in the Post Executive Committee (PEC)
 - Complete annual post history according to Post Officers Guide (pages 140-149)
 - Lead post external PR initiatives (such as social media and webpage content)
-

By clearly defining these roles, Post 416 is set for a future of growth, camaraderie, and service. Thank you to all our officers and committee members for your dedication and leadership!



Making 2026 a Baseball Season to Remember

As we step into the 101st year of American Legion Baseball, Post 416 is embracing a new era—one built on tradition, innovation, and a renewed commitment to mentoring youth through our vision of “Citizenship Through Sportsmanship.” Since September, a dedicated team has been working tirelessly to lay a stronger foundation for a season that promises to be more focused, purpose-driven, and impactful than ever before.

Leadership and Vision

Guided by a new Board of Directors—chaired by Bill Granger and including Philip Goldsby, Ken VanDine, Jason Beaulieu, Derrick DePriest, and Jimmy Smith—our program is strategically positioned for maximum competitive success. With improved financial transparency and operational planning, we’re working to ensure every decision supports our athletes and our mission.

Embracing Nostalgia and Building Identity

This year, we’re proud to introduce the “Bull City Lollygaggers at Post 416,” a name inspired by the beloved movie “Bull Durham.” This new identity connects us to our region’s rich baseball heritage and brings fresh energy to our program. Look for our new logo (pictured on next page) and team merchandise, designed to unite fans and players alike.

Elite Coaching and Player Development

We’ve assembled an exceptional coaching staff, including two coaches with Major League Baseball experience: Derrick DePriest (head coach) and Jimmy Smith (coach). Jason Beaulieu of Beaulieu Elite Sports Training will lead player development and recruitment, ensuring our athletes receive top-tier guidance and support. Learn more online at <https://al416nc.wixsite.com/al416nc/about/baseball>.

Expanding Opportunities for Youth

With both junior and senior teams, we’re doubling the number of young adults in our program compared to last year. Our draft process is already underway, creating more opportunities for player development and advancement. This growth reflects our commitment to nurturing talent and building future leaders.

Enhancing the Fan Experience

We’re making every home game at Jordan High School an event to remember. Tickets are required (\$10 each), with 12–16 home games each for both junior and senior teams. Enjoy concessions, a lively scoreboard, announcers, and special food truck nights. Team merchandise will be also available, so you can show your support in style.

Join the Booster Club and Get Involved

Support Bull City Lollygaggers Baseball at Post 416 by joining our new Booster Club! Choose from Bronze, Silver, Gold, and exclusive Post 416 member levels, each offering exciting perks—from concession items and team t-shirts to season tickets and invitations to our end-of-year celebration.

- i. Bronze: \$100/ea – 2 concession items per game, plus a team t-shirt
- ii. Silver: \$250/ea – 1 season ticket for all games, 2 concession items per game, plus a team t-shirt
- iii. Gold: \$500/ea – 2 season ticket for all games, 4 concession items per game, 2 team t-shirts, an invite for 2 to end-of-year celebration, and a team autographed baseball
- iv. AL Silver (for Post 416 members only): \$100/ea - 1 season ticket for all games, plus a team t-shirt
- v. AL Gold (for Post 416 members only): \$250/ea - 2 season ticket for all games, 2 team t-shirts, and an invite for 2 to end-of-year celebration

Parents can also earn cash back for volunteering, and business sponsors can gain valuable exposure through ads and in-game promotions. Please refer any business sponsorship opportunities to Bill Granger at AL416NC@gmail.com.

Scholarships and Volunteer Opportunities

We're proud to offer full-ride dues scholarships for both junior and senior teams, ensuring that financial barriers don't stand in the way of participation. There are also many ways for Legionnaires to get involved—help with game day operations, join the Booster Club, assist with logistics, or serve on the board after completing volunteer opportunities.

Let's make 2026 a season to remember—on the field, in the stands, and throughout our community. Together, we're building something special at Post 416. Join us and be part of the legacy!



2026 TAL Membership Drive Overdue

2025 memberships have expired and are overdue for renewal. We currently have 53 (88.66%) members renewed for the 2026 campaign. It is not too late to renew. Check out ways to renew on page 14.



Thanks to the following members who have already renewed for 2026:

Willie Alford
Kellen Arney-Johnson
John Barricelli
John Bennett
Austine Brooks
Richard Chilausky
Amos Cooper
Robert Davis
Joseph Dean
Spencer Dewaele
Deanna Dooris
Zach Drum
Manfred Emmrich
Ronald Eurquhart Sr.
Bryant Farrell
Michael Fenning
Gale Forest
Pete Gaydosh
Bill Granger
Doug Green
Christopher Greene
Bobby Haggy
David Hartmetz
Eugene Harvey
Walter Henderson
Larry High

Jon Hunter
David Hutson
Paul Judge
Rob Kaufman
Ricard Lofton
James Lowe
Alan Mangum
Thomas Meyer
James Mitchell
Mike Mitchell
Joe Oleniacz
Missy Owen
Al Rowland
Reynaldo Ruybal
Leo Scrivner
David Sellars Sr.
Marshall Shipp
James Snyder
Larry Strickland
Arvin Swanson
Ken VanDine
Jerry Vaughn
James Vollmer
Arley Webb
Thomas Wilkie
Wayne Wrenn



2026 SAL Memberships Achieved!

The 2026 Sons of The American Legion goal had been set at 10 members for 2026, and we are achieved 10 members joined/renewed. With 3 existing SAL members on the 2025 roster yet to renew, we can hit 130% of our goal. Please renew today if you are one of those three! Check out ways to renew on page 14.



Thanks to the following members who've renewed/joined:

Sean Canoy
Philip Goldsby
Ron Goodson
Bill Granger
Patrick Granger
Ewan Hanson
Liam Hanson
Julian Speight
Felix Stumpe
Thomas Wilkie



Post 416 Continues Support for Morrisville Veterans Memorial

On Saturday, November 8, 2025, three members represented Post 416 at the 4th annual 5K walk to raise funds for a future Morrisville Veterans Memorial. American Legion Auxiliary President Jennifer Weidemann was the guest speaker for the event, Sons of The American Legion Squadron Commander led the charge on marketing and logistics for the event, and Post Commander Bill Granger piped the Star-Spangled Banner at the ceremonial start of the walk. Well done!



Membership Information

Ways To Pay Annual Dues at Post 416

Current dues remain at \$40 for TAL, \$32 for ALA, \$30 for SAL. There are four different ways you can renew:

- Cash/check in-person to the Adjutant at a post meeting
- Check in the mail to P.O. Box 12202, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
- Online at MyLegion.org . Can do one year or multiple year renewals.
- Online at <https://al416nc.wixsite.com/al416nc>.

Paid Up For Life (PUFL) Membership Program

American Legion members interested in the discounted Paid Up For Life program can now easily join online: www.legion.org/join/pufl

Legionnaires who become a Paid Up For Life member will avoid any future increases to membership dues and will never have to pay annual dues or receive renewal notices. Other benefits include a lifetime subscription to The American Legion Magazine.

Once registered:

- Members can either pay in full
- Pay in 12 monthly installments
- Members may also print a personalized Paid Up For Life application from the web page and mail in their payment.

Each Paid Up For Life member receives a permanent plastic card, as well as an annual paper card to verify membership in The American Legion. The annual card is mailed in July of each year.

After a member signs up, his or her respective department and post will be notified either electronically or by mail. The post has 30 days to notify the department in writing if the applicant is ineligible for a Paid Up For Life membership. The department will then notify National Headquarters about why the application was denied.

Posts may continue to process applications on the current paper forms until informed otherwise.

For more information about the Paid Up For Life program: call (800) 433-3318 or email ia@legion.org.

Multi-year Memberships Available

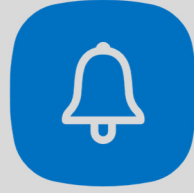
Eliminate the yearly hassle of remembering to renew your American Legion membership by taking advantage of the new multiyear membership available to current and potential members. Legionnaires needing to renew for 2024 or veterans joining the organization for the first time can lock-in a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew or legion.org/join.

Here is what you need to know about the three-year membership:

- Multiyear membership sign-up is only available on the national American Legion website.
- Renew now with a three-year membership by visiting legion.org/renew.
- Payment for the three-year membership will be upfront.
- There is not a discounted rate with the three-year membership.
- Membership cards will still be sent annually by Legion posts.

Those who sign up for a multiyear membership will not receive a renewal notice during the time they have signed up for the multiyear membership.

A blue rectangular graphic with white and yellow text and logos. At the top, it says 'JOIN THE LEGION FAMILY AT' in white. Below that are four logos: the American Legion logo, the American Legion Auxiliary logo, the Sons of the American Legion logo, and the American Legion Baseball logo. In the center, 'POST 416' is written in large, bold, white letters. At the bottom, the address '5419 S. Alston Avenue, Durham NC 27713' and contact information 'AL416NC@gmail.com ★ AL416NC.wixsite.com' are listed in white.



UPCOMING POST ACTIVITY REMINDERS

January 2026

- 1/1 – New Year's Day/Be the One Day
- 1/13 – ALA membership meeting @ 1:30pm
- 1/13 – TAL/SAL membership meeting @ 7pm
- 1/27 – TAL/SAL membership meeting @ 7pm

February 2026

- 2/1 – Be the One Day
- 2/7 – District 12 Meeting at Post 6 Chapel Hill @ 11am
 - 2/10 – ALA membership meeting @ 1:30pm
 - 2/10 – TAL/SAL membership meeting @ 7pm
 - 2/24 – TAL/SAL membership meeting @ 7pm

March 2026

- 3/1 – Be the One Day
- 3/10 – ALA membership meeting @ 1:30pm
- 3/10 – TAL/SAL membership meeting @ 7pm
- 3/24 – TAL/SAL membership meeting @ 7pm

TAL – The American Legion **ALA** – American Legion Auxiliary **SAL** – Sons of The American Legion

LOWE'S GROVE, NC POST 416

The Sentry is a free, quarterly publication of Lowe's Grove American Legion Post 146, NC.

Commander - Bill Granger
The Sentry Editor - Thomas Wilkie

Physical Address: 5419 South Alston Avenue, Durham NC 27713
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 12202, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Four small circles arranged horizontally.

AL416NC.WIXSITE.COM/AL416NC WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ALPOST416NC AL416NC@GMAIL.COM