

## The American Legion Post 129, 2025 Church Road, Toms River, NJ 08753

## **COMMANDER'S MESSAGE**

Volunteers are the key to any successful organization.

I am thankful to those who put in numerous hours to run events for the benefit of our members, family, and friends. The Auxiliary, Sons, Riders, and Legionnaires have one goal in mind, our veterans. I have asked them to help me to come up with events that include children. We must not forget them.

In January I met with Congressman Chris Smith's press secretary Jeff Sagnep over the Cathedral of the Air. Our position is to preserve it as a historical landmark. The American Legion raised funds to build this monument to those who served during the First World War. At the time the Great Depression was taking place making it harder to ask for donations. After my conversation with him I believe the military views this as the 'White Elephant' and expense to maintain. Let us help make this a historical landmark.

In February I was invited to attend the promotion of General Lisa Hou from one star to 2-star General. It was an honor for me to be there representing our Post.

On Wednesday February 7th, the Ocean County Connection, in the Ocean Count Mall, had a ribbon cutting ceremony. There will now be a VSO (Veterans Service Officer) located in the County Connection on Wednesdays.

On February 28<sup>th</sup> we are having the first Claims Clinic in our Hall. If you have any questions concerning benefits, I suggest you attend. Phil Zimmerman, the Ocean County VSO, will be there with members of his staff to answer questions, offer guidance and submit claims to the VA. I realize not everyone can attend on that date. I will arrange a weekend date when the Hall is available.

We have been working on capital improvements for the past few months. It is an ongoing task. We are in need of a dishwasher in the Canteen. The dishwasher has to be a commercial one adding to

#### the cost.

We have leaks in our roof. We were looking to replace the roof in 2 to 3 years, but it will have to be sooner. It leaks into the Hall, Canteen, and Kitchen. We will have to raise funds for a new roof.

I am grateful to those members who come in every morning to keep the Post operating. Remember, many hands make light work.

We are always looking for volunteers for house cleaning, Hall setups, maintenance, accounting, grant writing, electrical, phone calls, etc. If you can spare the time, please keep your Post in mind.

For God and Country Ralph Moranz - Commander

Post 129 Commander Ralph Moranz with Major General Lisa J. Hou, D.O., The Adjutant General of New Jersey,



U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Lisa J. Hou, D.O., The Adjutant General of New Jersey, was promoted to the rank of Major General at The New Jersey National Guard Armory in Lawrenceville, N.J., Feb. 3, 2024.

### MEMBERSHIP MINUTE

Thank you to all our dedicated members that have sent in their dues so far. This helps us do all the important things that we do.

Fellow Legionnaires, as of February 15, 2024, our membership stands at 1,344. We are at 90% of our goal with 144 more to go over last year's numbers of 1488. So please send in your 2024 dues. There are a few ways to do this. if you go to:

**mylegion.org** you can pay online and receive your membership card in a few days, or mail to the Post.

Unfortunately, American Legion at National HQ is raising our per Capita per member. We have not had an increase in our dues in six years. With the price of everything going up, stamps, envelopes, paper, ink, and office supplies we are forced to raise our dues next year starting on July 1, 2024, to \$55.00. National has produced a three-year membership. If you wish to you can renew now before the increase and pay the old rate of \$45.00 before July 1, 2024. Eliminating the yearly hassle of remembering to renew your American Legion membership by taking advantage of the new multi year membership available to current and potential members. Legionnaires needing to renew for next year 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

A multiyear membership was approved by the National Executive Committee of The American Legion during the organization's spring meetings last May. Resolution 1: "Purchase of Multiple Years of membership approves a five-year program offering the purchase of three consecutive 12month member terms at the then current dues rate."

# Here is what you need to know about the three-year member-ship:

Multiyear membership sign-up is only available on the National American Legion website. Current or potential members cannot renew or join for a three-year membership at the Post level or through myLegion.org.

Renew now with a three-year membership by visiting:

**legion.org/renew** and save \$30.00 over the next three years. If you wait till June 1st the rate will be \$55:00 per year. Membership cards will be sent annually by the Legion Post. Those who sign up for a multi-year membership will not receive a renewal notice during the time that they have signed up for the multi-year membership.

We need your help so we can continue to help our Veterans, their Families, and the Community where we live. Please do not forget the Buddy Check by reaching out to our Legion Family and friends to see if they need any help and offering words of encouragement especially during these trying times. With the cost of food becoming extremely high these days, and the price of everything on the rise we need to look out for one another. That is what we do, Veterans taking care of Veterans.

Please let me know if there is some service that our Post or at the Department level can provide for you or if there is any reason that has kept you from renewing your Membership. Please contact me at <u>rig548@comcast.net</u> or 732 -604-8326. The American Legion needs your support. Remember: **Membership is the life blood of The American Legion**.

Remember To BE THE ONE

To ask Veterans in your life how they are doing.

To listen when a veteran needs to talk

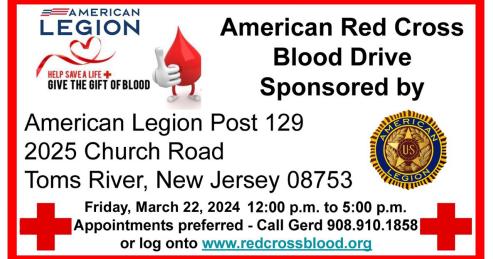
To reach out when a veteran is struggling.

It just takes one to help save a Veterans life, you can be that one. To learn more, go to:

#### betheone.org

For God and Country Rich Godfrey Department of New Jersey Membership Chair





## AUXILIARY MESSAGE

I hope everyone is staying healthy and well. As of this writing we have been working on some projects for the springtime. As of this writing the SAL had their Comedy show and I hope that everyone who attended had a fun evening of laughs and entertainment. We are getting to that time of year where our Unit will be looking to present our slate of officers for the upcoming year 2024-2025. Please come out and support them. Our own Lisa Mayer will be moving up in the chairs in both the county and Dept. Let us wish her much success and support her in her future endeavors.

Our membership chairperson Mary Lindsey is doing a great job with our membership! We are currently at 83% of our goal to 100% membership! Keep up the good work Mary! If you need to speak with Mary, you can mail her at 288 Barbados Dr. N Toms River, NJ 08757 or you can call her at (732) 281-3176. Mary will be able to answer your questions.

Laurinda Miller is doing a great job with the lawn signs! I am sure that you have seen them around the Post, or your neighbors have one. If you are interested in a lawn sign you can reach out to Laurinda at L Miller PO Box 45 Island Heights NJ 08732 or you can stop in at the Post.

Please ladies, if you know of anybody who is having a hard time getting to meetings reach out and offer assistance to them. They may just have ideas to help in our programs for Veterans, Children & Youth and Community. Also please let us check on our veterans' friends and family members. It's BUDDY CHECK! Let us help support our veterans who may be struggling with PTSD or anything else. Just a phone call or a knock on the door can do wonders for someone.

On a personal note I am getting ready to do the annual PO-LAR PLUNGE in Seaside on February 24<sup>th</sup>. This is for Special Olympics, and it is a good cause. I hope to do Unit 129 and Special Olympics proud!

For God & Country Pam Bowen Unit President

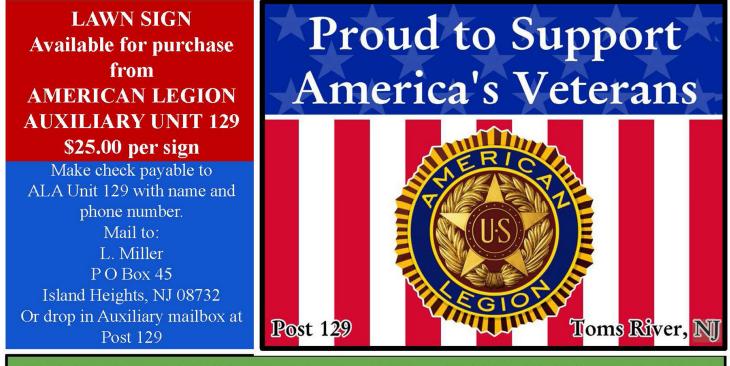


Tin Can Sailors meet at Post 129 on the 3RD Wednesday at 12 noon.



Ocean County Memorial Chapter of the DAV meet at Post 129 the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7 PM





SUPPORT OUR VETERANS - SHOW YOU CARE

## SAL MESSAGE

Greetings! I am happy that we are getting out of the winter months and heading into spring. We just had another successful Valentine's annual Comedy Show. We had a great time, and it was a lot of fun, as always. I would like to thank everyone who took the time out to help set up the room and work the event. Another great team effort! A special thank you goes out to Mollie Sperduto and her company Ginger Ninja Productions who always deliver great comics and a great evening. We cannot wait to do it again next year! We do not have any SAL events coming up in the next couple of months; however, we are looking forward to supporting the post, Auxiliary and Riders in any upcoming events they may need assistance with.

We are at that time of the year again where we have nominations of officers. We run nominations in January, February and March with elections being in April and installation of officers in May. Any SAL member in good standing can run for an officer position. You just need someone to nominate you. So, if you are interested in getting more involved, please come to our meetings (second Wednesday of each month at 7pm) and get involved.

Looking ahead, we will be having our annual Pig Roast & BBQ Saturday, May 25th with a rain date of Sunday, May 26th. There will be more about that coming in the next SOUNDOFF as well as advertising throughout the Post at the appropriate time.

Finally, your 2023 membership cards are expired! If you have not already, please renew your dues. The dues are \$25.00 and can be renewed by mailing a check to the Post, paying in the Canteen or, most conveniently, paying online

#### SOUNDOFF

#### at http://www.salpost129.com.

NOTE: This website is for the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) ONLY. Not for any other units.

We look forward to seeing you around at our great Post!

For God & Country, Joe Rutzler Commander, SAL Squadron 129



# LEGION BETTEONE

## HELP US STOP VETERAN SUICIDE





Hands on CPR Training is <sup>10</sup> feeling accomplished at American Legion. George P. Vanderveer Post 129, 2025 Church Road, Toms River, NJ 08753 Great CPR/ AED training class for staff and members... January 6, 2024 Knowledge is power! Saving lives

## **RIDERS MESSAGE**

Hello Brothers & Sisters of Post 129 American Legion Family.

We are All starting off with an awesome year.

Thank you to all Members who have renewed their membership. This is what makes our Post stand out successfully in serving our Veterans & Community. There is still an opportunity for those members who have not yet renewed their membership to do so asap. Thank you.

#### **SOUNDOFF**

I personally wish to thank everyone from the American Legion Family who attended the Services of the Four Chaplains held at The Cathedral of the Air in Lakehurst, NJ. The Services were Beautiful! The Cathedral of the Air is an outstanding Chapel in History. To be appreciated by All.

Saturday, April 20 10:00 AM The Riders will be having Our Bike Blessing with the help of Our Post 129 American Legion Chaplain, Tom Kraszewski. All are welcome to attend! Great opportunity to meet Riders from different Posts. The Riders are busy preparing for the upcoming riding season and wish Everyone a Happy Healthy Spring!

For God & Country God Bless Cliff Johnson - Director American Legion Riders Post 129







**Veterans of New Jersey** 



#### CANTEEN NEWS Ed Rutzler

So Far, So Good. So far, Mother Nature has been kind, and we all appreciate that our snow shovels are unused in the garage. Please Mother Nature, let it stay that way. I hope I did not jinx it.

Our outside Bunker Bar will be opening on Friday, April 5th, at 5PM. You can bring "opening night snacks." The Bunker is now heated, so no more frozen bar stools and frozen behinds. As always, we try to improve the Bunker each year.

The Bar Committee would like to give a big thank you to Ocean County Corrections for helping us with our Spring cleanup. Thank you, Officer Mike, for supervising.

**SAINT PATTY'S DAY PARTY:** Our annual St. Patty's Party will be held on Sat., March 16<sup>th</sup> all day long. At 7PM, entertainment will be provided by The Powertones. Tom King and the Shamrock & Thistle Pipe & Drum Band will also be making an appearance. They both put on a great show.



The Canteen will be offering Guinness, Irish Coffee, Nutty Irishman's, and Leprechauns all week long. For our Jameson Drinkers, we have JAMESON, JAMESON ORANGE, and JAME-SON BLACK BARRELL. Chef Mike Speary from Ryan's Catering will be offering Corn Beef Platters and Sandwiches on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th,</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, along with Ryan's regular menu.

Speaking of Ryan's Catering, do not forget their "Saturday Night Specials." No, not the gun, the food. You get two salads, two entrees (you can mix and match) and a shared dessert for \$25 on Saturday Night. Try to get that at your local restaurant, with entertainment. Not Happening.

**NFL DRAFT PARTY:** On Saturday afternoon, April 27<sup>th</sup>, the Canteen will be hosting our annual NFL Draft Party. This is the third and final day of the Draft when the  $4^{th}$ ,  $5^{th}$ ,  $6^{th}$  &  $7^{th}$  rounds are selected.



Coors Lite, Bud, Bud Lite, Miller Lite, Pabst, Mich Ultra & Yeungling pint drafts will be just \$2.00. There will be a discounted football menu. Wear your Game Jersey (numbers on front and back and players' names on the back) and receive a Canteen surprise.

**HORSESHOE LEAGUE 2024:** The start-up meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6PM, down at the Bunker. All are welcome—Singles & Teams. If you are interested, there will be a signup sheet behind the Bar in the Canteen. You can contact Mike Feimer (732-684-9790) or Dan Szpyt (732-996-4406) for more information.



Remember, when you support Post 129, you support **THE BEST POST IN THE USA.** 





## Legion Family urged to garner support for Gold Star Spouses

The American Legion FEB 14, 2024

The American Legion is calling on members of the American Legion Family to <u>contact their</u> <u>members of Congress</u> and urge support for H.R. 3651, bipartisan legislation designed to allow surviving spouses of military servicemembers to retain survivor benefits should they remarry.

The Love Lives on Act is geared toward changing the current situation for Gold Star Spouses who choose to remarry before age 55 and face losing critical benefits. Specifically, the legislation will:

- Eliminate the age limit for remarrying without loss of benefits.
- Allow remarried surviving spouses to retain education benefits.
- Preserve Commissary and Exchange benefits for remarried spouses.
- Enable remarried spouses to regain TRICARE benefits if the subsequent marriage ends.
- Abolish the "Hold Themselves Out to Be Married" clause, an outdated law causing unnecessary fear and inhibiting freedom.

The American Legion believes in standing up for the rights and benefits of our Gold Star Spouses. They should not be penalized for finding love again. They are still the surviving spouses of our fallen heroes, and they have earned their benefits through their service and sacrifice.

## **CHAPLAIN'SCORNER**

I thought I might share something I had written a while back when I started to have my neuropathy problem and walking became more difficult than I had anticipated! I hope you will read it once or more than once if need be, especially if you are going through difficult times.

#### I'M A HOBBLER By Chaplain Tom

I'm a Hobbler and as I go along I look around and sing my song Just a Hobbler slow and true So I get to see a lot more this way Giving life a different Hue... But as a Hobbler I miss a lot For speed and endurance I haven't got So if I'm to see something away from me a mile It has to stay there for a very great while And if I miss something I need to see I've learned to depend on others to somewhat enlighten me... I do miss certain things along my way But I focus for tomorrow brings another day...

Yes I certainly am a Hobbler but you see one day I met the Cobbler Who built this road for both you and me With Blood, Sweat and Tears He paved the way Laying down His Life the Debt of our Sin to Pay So Join me as I travel this path so Great For you see I met the Master, the Author and Finisher of All Faith

Yes, I'm just a Hobbler but so was She With her issue of Blood for twelve years fought through the crowd to just Touch the Hem of His Garment and be cleansed of her infirmity The Bible says that he couldn't walk so he said to his Friends lower me Through the Roof to see This Jesus of Galilee Then I was told to Rise by Jesus and Take Up my Bed I was healed by the Master in Faith Believing what he had Said... So one thought I leave you with This Day Slow down and allow the Cobbler To shine His Light of Love on Your Very Own Way...

#### WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!

Tom Kraszewski Post 129 Chaplain

The time for action is now. Contact your members of Congress today and urge them to pass the Love Lives On Act. Do so by visiting our <u>Grassroots Action Center</u> to learn more about the Love Lives On Act and other legislation The American Legion supports.



Page 8			SOUN	DOFF			American	Legion Post 129
Feb 2024			March	2024				Apr 2024 ►
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CHANGE YOUR BATTERY								
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10 Daylight Saving Time Begins	11 AUXILIARY MEETING 7 P.M.	12	MEE	A.L. TING P.M.	14	B         I         N         G         O           7         25         44         57         62           15         22         40         50         70           11         30         22         46         74           2         28         37         55         68           10         27         39         59         75	15 AMERICAN LEGION BIRTHDAY 1919	16
17 St. Patrick's Day	<sup>18</sup> BOARD/ TRUSTEE MEETING 7 P.M.	19	-	'ing gins	21	B         I         N         C         O           7         25         44         57         62           15         22         40         50         70           11         30         72         46         74           2         28         37         55         68           10         27         39         59         75	22 BLOOD DRIVE 12 PM-5 PM	23
24	25 RIDERS MEETING 7 P.M.	26	27		28	B         I         G         O           7         25         44         57         62           15         22         40         50         70           11         30         22         46         74           2         28         37         55         68           10         27         39         59         75	29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day	30
31								
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Friday. March 8 <sup>th</sup> SureCats			Saturday, March 30 <sup>th</sup> No Promises					
Saturday, M	larch 9 <sup>th</sup>	New Daze						
Friday, Marc	ch 15 <sup>th</sup>	Wild Rose				AND/OR	FOR LAST MINU CANCELLATION	IS.
Saturday, M	larch 16 <sup>th</sup> I	Powertones		UPI	DATE	D FLYERS A	RE POSTED IN T	HE CANTEEN

<ul> <li>Mar 2024</li> </ul>		2024				May 2024 ►			
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21	22 RIDERS MEETING 7 P.M.	23	24		25	B         I         N         G         O           7         25         44         57         62           15         22         40         50         70           11         30         22         46         74           2         28         37         55         68           10         27         39         59         75	26		27
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APRII	LENTER	TAINME	INT	Frida	y, A	April 19 <sup>th</sup>		Rene	e & Friends
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Saturday, A	april 6 <sup>th</sup>	Sound Matte	rs	Friday, April 26 <sup>th</sup> Lenny Davis Bar		y Davis Band			
Friday, April 12 <sup>th</sup>		Surecats		Saturday, April 27 <sup>th</sup>			Deco	у	
Saturday, A	April 13 <sup>th</sup>	Perfect Blend	1						
				Entertainment is scheduled from 7 to 10 p.m. in the Canteen. Time, Venue, and band subject to change.					

Page 10

## I want to tell you about a dream…

...I had the other night. I dreamt about our Post being a renowned post for its unwavering commitment to uplifting the lives of our veterans. Its mission: to bridge the gap between despair and hope, one act of kindness at a time.

At the helm of the Post sat the Commander, a visionary leader with a heart as vast as the ocean. The commander believed that every dollar entrusted to the post was a sacred promise-a promise to change lives, to heal wounds, and to ignite dreams.

The Post funds flowed like a mighty river, and the Commander knew that their stewardship was paramount. He gathered his teamthe tireless Vice Commanders, the Finance officer, and the Trustees and other compassionate volunteers-for a crucial meeting. The agenda: the strategic use of funds.

1. Operational Reserves: The Commander emphasized the importance of operational reserves. These were the lifeblood of the organization, the funds that kept the lights on, the doors open, and the operation on a level and growing footing. The Commander said that they must be prepared for any storm, whether it is a sudden drop in donations or an unforeseen crisis and that his vision was a safety net woven from the threads of prudence and foresight. These reserves would ensure that the Post would provide vital programs such as feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless veterans and keeping them warm with winter coats and new socks.

**2. Capital Reserves:** The Commander's gaze shifted to the window, where sunlight danced on the leaves of a giant oak tree. "Capital reserves," he said, "are our silent guardians." They stand ready for

#### SOUNDOFF

the day when our roof leaks, our kitchen equipment breaks down and our heating and cooling systems fail to come on. "We owe it to the men and women we serve to maintain our physical assets. A broken furnace should not be the cause of the Post closing down and stealing the benefits that our veterans derive from it.

3. Restricted vs. Unrestricted Funds: The Commander traced his finger along the edge of his desk. He said, restricted funds are like delicate orchids- they bloom under specific conditions. Donors entrust us with their intentions-to build, let us say, a playground for the children and we use the funds donated for that purpose and make their dreams come true. On the other hand- the Commander continued-Unrestricted funds grant us wings. They allow creativity, innovation, and adaptability. With these, we can pilot new programs, explore uncharted territories and respond swiftly to emerging needs like a new Veterans PTSD center in the lower part of the Post or a mobile quite room for children in need.

As the meeting concluded, the commander stood by the window, his gaze spanning the afternoon sky. The funds were more than numbers to him-they were stories waiting to be written. He vowed to honor each donor's trust, to wield the resources wisely, and to weave a tapestry of hope, as every man and women filed in behind him with their support.

As I said in the beginning, it was only a dream, but one that we all should hope will come true. The takeaway from this writing is this: When you hear that our Post has substantial funds, first thing you do is come to me or any of the officers / trustees. They will tell you what those funds are for, and you will be surprised to see the enormous detail and work that has been put into keeping our promise to our brothers and sisters.

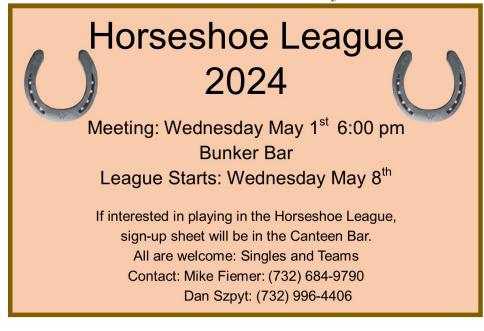
Respectfully submitted:

Ralph E. Wolff, Finance Officer Post 129









**SOUNDOFF** 









Legionnaires:	Remembrance Day	February 1	National Freedom Day				
Post:	Remembrance Day	February 23	lwo Jima Flag Raising (1945)				
	Remembrance Day	February 27	Persian Gulf War Cease-Fire Day				
	Remembrance Day	February 27	Coast Guard Reserve Birthday				
	Remembrance Day	March 25	Sea Bee Birthday				
	March 17, 2024	St. Patrick's Day					
	March 15, 2024	American Legion Birthday					
		Remembrance of Iraqi Freedom (2003)					
	Remembrance Day	etnam Veterans Day					
	Remembrance Day	April 11, 1991, Desert Storm Cease-Fire					
	Legion College	April 26, 27, 28 Legion College					
	INSTALLATION DINNER	MAY, 2024	TBD				
	Remembrance Day	May 8, 1945	V-E Day				
	Remembrance Day	May 18, 2024 Armed Forces Day					
	Remembrance Day	June 6, 1945	D-Day Invasion				
Auxiliary:	February	Psychic Fair	6PM-10PM				
	February/March	Paint & Sip					
	Remembrance Day	May 15, 1942	2				
		Women's Arn	ny Aux. Corp Established				
SAL:	February 10, 2024	Comedy Night 7PM					
0/12.	May 25, 2024 (Saturday)	Memorial Da	y Pig Roast 1-5PM				
		May 26, Rain	Date				
Riders:	February 23, 2024	70, s Dance	6-10PM				
	April 20, 2024	Bike Blessin	g 10-12PM				
	/ pril 20, 2024		5				





Gerd Trommer– Events Chairman

LEGION



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PUBLISHED6 times per yearDEADLINEfor the next issue (May—June<br/>2024) is April15.SUBMISSIONSshould be emailed to:<br/>soundoff.al.post129@outlook.com

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S My dog did it.

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Mike Feimer, Owner & 🥮 SAL Member Post 129

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- iphone/Android Repair







Registered Investment Advisor

I'm John P. Hammack, a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER<sup>™</sup> with over 30 years of experience and I can guide you through whatever life throws your way. From investment management and estate planning to retirement distribution strategies and small business planning.



I'll be by your side every step of the way so you'll never be without your "battle buddy". Because in personal wealth management, like the military, relationships matter.

Please call my Toms River office at 848-844-1017 to schedule your free consultation today.



Investment advisory services offered through Main Street Financial Solutions LLC., an SEC registered investment advisor.