

# Donato "Dan" Laviola

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<https://www.lyndhurstamericanlegion.com/sara-s-spotlight>



I'm a bit excited for our June spotlight; it has a special meaning to me because without this person this website would still be a figment of our spotlight's imagination and something he'd continue to grumble about. I am happy to say that it was definitely perfect timing or divine intervention that I was there during one of those grumbles and offered to create this website. I'm not sure what I was thinking at the time because I am not a professional web developer but I was up for the challenge and I thought "hey I can at least try!" Fast forward a few months later and here we are! So first I want to say thank you for all of your help during this entire process!! And without further ado, let me introduce this month's spotlight: Donato Laviola!

Donato Laviola, also known as Dan, was born on September 15th, 1949. That makes him a Virgo like me! No wonder we get along so well! Born in Jersey City, Dan was raised in North Bergen before making Lyndhurst his current residence with his beautiful wife Maria of 25 years along with their daughter, Victoria, who is 21. Dan is part of our American Legion Family both as Legionnaire and as an SAL member. He is currently the Adjutant for the Legionnaires and is the Sargent-in-arms for the SAL. Let's find out more about Dan!

Dan was drafted into the Vietnam War when he was 19 and served in the "Third army in Ft Benning, GA & while in Vietnam with the 554 Engineers attached to the 20th Engineers then we were attached to the 18th Engineers." An interesting fact I learned

during our little chat, Dan and his father, who served in World War 2, both served in the Third Army! Actually, his father fought with Patton at the Battle of Bulge; that's also where his father earned his medical discharge. It's no wonder when I asked Dan if he could have lunch with anyone, dead or alive, he said his choice was easy. He'd want to go with his father. Dan shared that "things changed for us after the war. They changed for the better. We became closer."

Family definitely seems to mean a lot to Dan. When I asked Dan what his biggest or greatest accomplishment was? He quickly replied "Victoria. The day we adopted her. Actually we just celebrated her 20th Gotcha Day!" And while he couldn't think of an interesting fact about himself on the spot, his wife and daughter did! They say he loves to cook and that he's actually pretty good at it! We'll have to see if we can get him to cook something down at the post for us!

I ended our little chat with asking Dan what advice would he like to share with you all. His reply: "If you're a Vet: don't be afraid to come to us. We look after our own, we'll help you. We'll help with housing, food, whatever you and your family needs. We're not just a bunch of old grumpy drunks, we've got some young ones! If you're not a Vet: come volunteer to help one."

Thank you for your service Dan and for all of the hard work and dedication you invest into the Legion! :)