

The Legion Link

April 2009

Vol. 16 Issue 9



Shining Stars

Shining Stars

Web Site: www.floridalegion.org

E-mail: mail@floridalegion.org

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Paul Martel
Department Commander
p.martel@floridalegion.org
561-389-3765

My friends, here we are starting to end our year. I would like to remind all of you that our year ends just a little sooner than it did last year, so you must send in all of your reports a little sooner. One of those reports that I am asking you to make sure is sent to the Department is your Consolidated Post Report (C.P.R.). Last year we were only 8 short from having 100% reporting. As all of you know this is what National uses when our National Commander reports to Congress. Congress only understands numbers, that is why it is so important that each and every post in our state sends in their C.P.R.

This past month has been so great. We went to Washington D.C. to represent you to Congress and make sure our issues are known. We had our Department Golf Tournament at 159 Venice. During this event we had a great turn out and I thank all those who put this together. Our American Legion 90th anniversary was on the 15th of March. Districts that I have visited are the 11th, 10th, 7th and 13th; thank you District Commanders and members. We also had the Mulberry Gathering at Post 72 and we're present for a gala opening for a new movie that tells how a family is informed when one of our hero's dies in combat.

I know that I have said this before but Thank You for allowing me to be your Department Commander. You have given me the greatest honor in my life. As I travel in and out of this state I have had to ask myself if this is real. No one person should be able to have this much fun. I do hope I have met some of your expecta-

tions. No one is perfect and I can only do the best I can do, but YOU make it that much easier. The way you have treated me at your post, bending over backwards to make me feel at home. The real kicker is that I feel that we have become FRIENDS. Yes we may not always agree on everything, but in the end it is the Legions best interest that we all have at heart.

Remember, that the District Conferences will be starting soon; the dates are on our web site. It is so important that YOU be there. It is so important that you VOICE your thoughts on all that matters to you and your District. Make sure that your post votes for the right future officers. Your Department - Florida - needs you to pick the right people that will do the job for the right reason. Remember, they will be working for the ENTIRE State, not just your District, because they are part of a TEAM. Please bring that new member and give that person the chance to be part of the voting process and meet other members from other post. That is how we expand our vision. Look at how the other posts view ideas and let them make new FRIEND'S. May God Bless All of You

Convention Information

This year we are excited to present the Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall at our 91st Annual Department Convention. The wall will be on display for everyone not just legion members. Please tell all to come and they are encouraged to stay at the Caribe Royale and may use our American Legion Discounted rates.

Phil Hearlson
Department Vice Commander
352-875-9054
phearlson@aol.com

It is great to be home! As most of you know I spent eighteen days in the hospital after having surgery for an abdominal aortic aneurism. There were a few bumps along the way, but I am on the road to recovery.

I received excellent care from the doctors and staff at Monroe Regional Medical Center in Ocala, but I was more than ready to get out of the hospital.

Peggy and I would like to thank all of you for your cards, phone calls and e-mail. We are grateful for your thoughts and prayers.

After a week or so of getting my traveling strength back I will be back attending our Legion functions.



John Burroughs
Department Sergeant-At-Arms
johnabd08bd@aol.com

First off I haven't heard from any one who wants to step up and help us out at the Department Convention. I know we have some good Sergeant-At-Arms out there. All I am asking is a few hours of your time. If you do want to help just wear your uniform and come to the meeting Friday Morning at 7 am.

Post Commanders, don't forget to submit your Sergeant-At-Arms for the Eddie Humer award. You can find the form in your Post Administrative Manual. Send it in along with your year end report.

Florida Children and Youth Fund Grant - As of March the 11th I only have one request for a grant. If anyone has a request make sure that I get it by May 1st, time is getting short. Please don't forget to tell your loved ones that you love them every chance that you get. For God and Country



Public Relations

Public Relations can be an intimidating subject to many, but it can also be very rewarding. It's everyone's responsibility to participate in public relations to further spread the word about The American Legion and all the good things we do.

Your first responsibility towards public relations is to determine the perceived image of The American Legion in your community. Talk with your local media representatives and the people in your community to see how they perceive The American Legion. Do they know who we are? What is their first impression when they hear the name? Are they familiar with the programs of The American Legion? Understanding the perceptions people have of our organization and the reasons they have them is crucial. Once you have a better understanding of the Legion's image in your community, the next step is to enhance and maintain that image.

A good set of public relations tools includes a list of media contacts in your area and a variety of broadcast ready material. This material includes audio and video Public Service Announcements (PSA's) that promote The American Legion and its benefits and a Public Relations Handbook. Our National Public Relations Department can provide these tools upon request AT NO COST to the post. The National Public Relations Department can be reached at 317.630.1253.

Once you have a good set of tools you can begin your mission to spread the word about The American Legion. Start creating a rapport with the media in your area so they will already know you before you approach them with a story. Keep the media updated on any new information and encourage them to attend major events. Discover the available opportunities to host membership drives, educational seminars and events paying tribute to our veterans. Be sure to place emphasis on the overall goal of The American Legion to ensure our values aren't misconstrued.

Establishing a well configured plan to inform the public about The American Legion will ensure our communities understand that we're here to provide help and support to our veterans and their families.

Here are some upcoming events that you might be interested in participating in:

April 4th- Children & Youth Golf Tourney, Located at Post 159

April 5th- Coral Springs Police Annual Car Show for Special Olympics

Located on University Drive and Westview Drive, Coral Springs, FL

Call Cindy Heafy at 954-344-1833 for further information.

April 11th- 15th District Golf Tournament

Located at Rocky Point Golf Course, Dana Shores Blvd., Tampa

Contacts: Larry "LP" Patterson - 813-293-4910 (C)

Larry Faulkner - 813-885-2985 (H) Post 152 - 813-920-3282

April 23rd- Job Fair, Located in Tampa Area, Details will be posted on website calendar as date nears

April 25th- Northern Area Ball, Located at Post 316 - Atlantic Beach, FL from 6pm-10pm



100% Goal

May 6, 2009

Dianne Thibodeau, Membership
D.Thibodeau@floridalegion.org

District/Area Membership Report as of March 24, 2009

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rec'd	% Goal
4	Jim Ramos	3,813	3,825	100.31
2	George Segrest	1,323	1,308	98.87
6	Earl Friedeborn	9,237	9,113	98.66
16	Raymond Maya	12,033	11,593	96.34
12	Carl Schneider	8,657	8,332	96.25
15	Kathryn Ferrin	5,784	5,506	95.19
17	James Baker	4,343	4,129	95.07
7	Keith Holz	4,582	4,297	93.78
8	Richard Francis	9,281	8,703	93.77
9	Joseph Motes	4,890	4,572	93.50
11	David Knapp	4,867	4,502	92.50
1	Martha Harris	6,518	6,001	92.07
5	Robert Brewster	7,915	7,256	91.67
10	Larrio Walden	1,155	1,058	91.60
13	Frank Ward	9,796	8,901	90.86
3	James Troupe	1,705	1,528	89.62
14	Louis Woodward	2,606	2,214	84.96
Eastern	Arthur Dudley	17,894	17,445	97.49
Central	Mike Addis	22,399	21,396	95.52
Northern	Joseph Nolan	17,776	16,738	94.16
Western	Fletcher Williams	7,841	7,309	93.22
SW	Dennis Bruland	19,077	17,604	92.28
Southern	William Hoppner	13,518	12,346	91.33
Dept			92,838	
Post 400		39,232	20,575	52.44
Post 208		1,538	1,822	118.47
Totals		135,500	115,235	85.04

It's April already. There are only a few more months to go this year. Again we missed our goal, (90% - March 4th). District 4 (Jim Ramos) and Eastern Area (Art Dudley) still lead but as a Department, we only came in at 83.67% and now, even an Area didn't reached their goal. Would you believe the Southern Area only needed ten cards? Ten Cards! Are you in the Southern Area? Did you hold back some cards? Then shame on you. It is important to get those cards to Department. Even though it's getting late in the year, don't "Hold them" till next year. Process them right away.

Have you informed your members about our National Commander, David Rehbein, awarding his National Commander pin to any American Legion family member who signs up at least five new members or renews/reinstates five current members? The program will end June 30th or when supplies are exhausted. He also has the belt buckle as a recruitment prize as well as incentives for District Commanders and a Post excellence award. All this information can be found on the Department's web site. Speaking of which, I hope you have been checking out the Departments web site. There is a lot of information out there. Have you been watching the Commander's monthly viewings?

Working Post 400, doing membership drives, initiations, mailings and phone calls to get old members to renew; these are just a few of the things you and your members can do together to build up our membership. Use the local media to advertise. Pick out a local police, fireman and/or teacher. Invite them to the post for an award or a certificate. Invite the mayor or other local dignitaries. Make them feel welcome. Let them know how important we are to the community. The more we educate the public the easier it will be to build our membership.

Got ideas? Need help? Call or write. Just ask! I will do everything in my power to help us reach the top and then some. I want to meet all of you Shining Stars out there. For God & Country,



*Welcome To
Spring!*

Florida Oratorical Contest Winners

The Florida American Legion would like to congratulate all of this year's Oratorical Contestants on a great job. Below are the standings and awards of each contestant.

1st place – Werner Ferrone, \$2500.00, Homosassa

2nd place – Josh Holtzman, \$1500.00, Tampa

3rd place – Ludlow Dawes, III, \$1000.00, Pembroke Pines

4th place – Corey Johnson, Jr, \$500.00, Orlando

5th Place – Jenna Peoples, \$500.00, Milton

6th Place – Luis Ramirez, \$500.00, N Fort Myers

Stephen Shuga
Boy Scout Program
sshuga@cfl.rr.com



Stephen Shuga - Boy Scout Program - sshuga@cfl.rr.com

March was special month as we selected our American Legion Department of Florida Eagle Scout of the Year and three runner-ups. The fourth runner-up was Eagle Scout Harrison Hatcher who will receive \$500.00, third runner-up was Eagle Scout James Welch III who will receive \$1,000.00, second runner-up was Stevie Stark who will receive \$1,500.00, and our Eagle Scout of the Year for 2008 is Eagle Scout Brandon Scholet who will receive \$2,500.00 and his package will be forwarded to the American Legion National office to be reviewed against other Department Eagle Scout candidate packages in an attempt to be considered and potentially selected as the National American Legion Eagle Scout of the Year award with a scholarship of \$10,000.00 or place as a runner-up with a scholarship worth \$2,500.00. Thank you to all Eagle Scouts who submitted candidate packages.

A variety of Scouting data that Florida Posts provide will be used in a short essay that will describe our Legion Scouting status and atmosphere around the state of Florida. The ultimate goal is to obtain the Frank N. Belgrano Trophy. This award began in 1936 and the State of Florida has received this in 1996, 1998, and 2004. We are well overdue and hope that this year's input will bring home the Frank N. Belgrano Trophy to the Department of Florida.

Now is the time to review your compiled Boy Scout data for your Consolidated Post Reports. Also there are the various awards that posts can submit for and if selected will receive recognition at the annual convention in Orlando. Posts that have provided support as Charter Organizations or Sponsored Scout units over the past year must ensure that your Post CPR is turned on-time to be considered for any Scouting recognition or awards that may be warranted.

I am searching for a vice chairman to assist me over the next year of Scouting activities and to prepare to take the lead in 2010. This Legionnaire should be someone that has the desire to take this chairmanship to the next level. Those interested in filling the Boy Scout Vice Chairman position, please contact Carol Polk as soon as possible.

The Department Boy Scout Program link will undergo some minor changes/updates soon. Please be patient as we improve the link. For God and Country – Yours in Better Scouting,

A free society is a place where it's safe to be unpopular.
Adlai Stevenson

Legislative Report
Stanley Gold, Department Chairman
gold.stanley@yahoo.com

As stated in my last article, on March 3rd the Florida legion Delegates in Washington held our 3rd Annual Luncheon. We again thank Congressman Kendrick Meek for arranging a room at the U.S. Capital. Seventeen members of Congress showed up plus six aides of the other 8 members who couldn't make it. Senator Martinez had his aide there. Senator bill Nelson met with us the next day. On Wednesday, the Jewish War Veterans of USA held a reception for top members of Congress and Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz was given the JWV Medal of merit for her work with veterans. Our National Commander, David Rehbein, Steve Robertson, Director of Legion Legislation, were with me at this time. At the National Commander's Luncheon the Legion honored Ben Klein for News - Public Relations Award.

At our meeting of National Security and Foreign Relations Commissions we were given a high level talk on U.S. Foreign Policy on China in the aftermath of Secretary Clinton's recent trip to that Region. The Adjutant General of the Army spoke on the Physical Disability Agency of the Army. There were speakers on energy and an update on POW/MIA.

Every member was urged to contact their members of Congress to support Senate Bill S-546 and House Bills 303 and 333. These bills further the "Retired Pay Restoration Act."

I would like to thank the members of the Florida Legion Auxiliary who also attended our luncheon. A Special thanks to Bob Proctor, NEC, Adjutant Michael McDaniel and Michael's secretary, Rachel Castleberry, for their work on this meeting. It was a good feeling to know that our own Clarence Hill is moving closer to becoming National Commander.

I would like to tell one happy ending story of a World War II Navy veteran who, for many years, tried every way he knew to open his claim for hearing at the VA. When every thing else fails - go to your Senator. I mentioned his story to John Newstreet, former Department Adjutant and now aide for Senator Mel Martinez in his Orlando office. He started by opening a "new door" last August and last week my friend told me he got 40% VA disability plus four years back pay (this is the limit you can get in back pay). Thanks to Senator Martinez and to aide John Newstreet.

Deric C. Feacher
Boys State Director
directorofboysstate@floridalegion.org

Greetings and Salutations!

Can you believe it.....we are a few months away from Florida's Premier Youth Leadership Program; American Legion Boys State. Post Chairs it is incumbent that you make contact with your delegates and their families to answer any and all questions relative to the upcoming session.

Packets for the Boys State program will be mailed from the Department Headquarters. If you have any questions or concerns about the packet delegates should contact Carol Polk at 407-295-2631, extension 222. It is crucial that the Post Chairs remain in constant contact with the delegate from this point forward until the completion of the 2009 program.

I have started receiving emails and phone calls concerning District Orientations and that information is not privy to me. Therefore, it is incumbent upon you to make contact with all of your delegates and their families to inform them of the orientation meeting, time and location. During these orientation meetings, please encourage your delegates to enroll in the Tallahassee Community College Dual Enrollment State and Local Government Course. Upon successful completion, the delegate is awarded college and high school credits. Any questions your delegate has concerning the dual enrollment program, please advise them to contact Dr. Rick Murgo at TCC at 850-201-8145 or murgo@tcc.fl.edu.

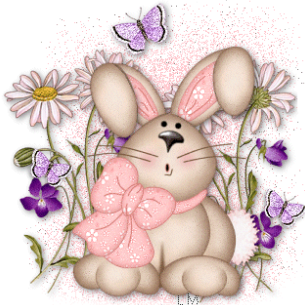
Also, please communicate with delegates and their parents about sending required medication with any delegate that need certain medically approved prescriptions. Once they arrive in Tallahassee; they are required to make contact with the Medical Staff concerning their medications and protocol for medical assistance. If this information was included on their delegate registration card, medical staff will make contact with them during their first meeting.

Please review the Transportation process for pick-up point, date and time each delegate needs to be ready for Boys State. Coordinate with Post to have volunteers to be onsite to insure delegate safety and timely departure for the program. If parents desire to drive the delegate to Tallahassee, that is their expense and need to communicate this desire to the local post. If your delegate does not show at the pick-up and is substituted with an alternate, please contact Kellum Hall at 850.644.4291. Boys State must account for all delegates who are on the roster. At the conclusion of the program we don't encourage alternate transportation, but we understand that certain alternate travel arrangements are necessary. If a delegate needs to leave the program on alternate transportation a Alternate Transportation form must be on file and signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Please encourage your delegate not to bring a large amount of money, credit cards or valuables such as laptops or other electronic communication or gaming devices. Boys State will not be responsible for these items if they are stolen, lost or broken. Cellular phones are permitted, but there are restrictions when these devices can be used.

Boys State is almost here and we are ready for your delegates in Tallahassee.

EDUCATE * ELIGHTEN * EMPOWER



Happy Easter



★
★ **ROSTER CHANGES** ★
★

<u>POST TITLE-NAME</u>	<u>INFORMATION</u>
Cauleen Dolan	cauleendolan@bellsouth.net
Post 159	americanlegionpost159.org
Gregory Putmna	adjutant@novel159.org
Hector Castro	813-368-4280, hjcleigion@yahoo.com
Norman Maclellan	commander@novel159.org
Post 138- Adjutant Herbert Hope	4432 W. McCoy St, Tampa, FL 33616
Post 268- Commander Donna Artola	6154 Seven Springs Blvd, Lake Worth FL 33463
Post 323- Commander Frank E. Shaw	1303 Abbott Ave., Lehigh Acres, FL 33972
Post 254 - Commander Dale Smith	3344 Tropicaire Blvd, North Port, FL 34286
Post 254- Adjutant Tom Garant	600 La Sala , North Port FL 34287-2547
Post 389- Address	PO Box 6264 Sun City Center FL 33571-6264
Post 375- Adjutant Gary A. Bartlett	7121 W. Lakeland Dr., Panama FL 32404 – 4268
Post 72- Address	1500 Highway 37 N , Mulberry, FL 33860
Post 367- Commander Robert G. Meyer	17068 83 rd Pl. N, Loxahatchee, FL 33470

District Constitutional Conferences

DATE	DIST	PLACE—POST #	REG TIME
May 2	14	43	8:00 am
May 16	2	241	2:00 pm
May 16	6	53	9:00 am
May 16	7	8	8:00 am
May 16	15	111	9:00 am
May 17	11	64	9:00 am
May 23	12	163	9:00 am
May 30	1	235	9:00 am
May 30	10	29	9:00 am
May 31	16	273	8:30 am
June 6	3	57	Noon
June 6	4	284	9:00 am
June 6	8	159	8:00 am
June 6	13	103	1:00 pm
June 7	5	316	8:00 am
June 7	9	180	8:00 am
June 7	17	6	Noon

Dick Mondro Veterans Employment Chairman Department of Florida

April 2009 Career / Job Fairs

Are you looking for a job? Visit with employers that are hiring in Jacksonville, Orlando and Fort Lauderdale areas during the month of April. Bring your resumes, dress to impress and stand out from the pack. Don't Miss Your Opportunity to Find a Job. Meet Face-to-Face with Great Employers!

Jacksonville Career Fair

Date: April 15, 2009

Time: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Facility: Ramada Inn Mandarin

3130 Hartley Rd

Jacksonville, FL 32257

Orlando Job Fair

Date: April 16, 2009

Time: 10 AM - 2 PM

Facility: The Plaza Theatre

425 North Bumby Avenue

Orlando, FL 32803

Community Job Expo

Date: April 21, 2009

Time: 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Facility: African-American Research Library

and Cultural Center

2650 Sistrunk Blvd.

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311



ENDORSEMENTS

Phil Hearlson - Department Commander
 Al Porter - Department Vice Commander
 Sonny Bywaters - Department Vice Commander
 Fletcher Williams - Department Vice Commander
 Robert Meyer - Department Chaplain
 Robert Vick - Department Chaplain
 Charles Haig - Department Chaplain
 Sue Mason - Department Historian
 Marie Kraemer - Sergeant-at-Arms
 Dale Lueck - Department Sergeant-at-Arms
 Mike Addis - Department Sergeant-at-Arms
 Jim Corner - Northern Area Commander
 David Knapp - Southern Area Commander
 Bob Koger - Eastern Area Commander
 Earl Friedeborn - Eastern Area Commander
 Kathryn Ferrin - Central Area Commander

Richard Francis - Southwestern Area Commander
 Jim Troupe - 3rd District Commander
 Jerry Montgomery - 4th District Commander
 Greg Lovejoy - 5th District Commander
 Keith Holz—7th District Commander
 Gregory Putman - 8th District Commander
 Joseph Motes - 9th District Commander
 Paul Bosco - 11th District Commander
 Mark Johnson - 12th District Commander
 Carl Schneider- 12th District Commander
 Thomas Northcutt—12th District Commander
 Frank Ward - 13th District Commander
 John Ebling - 13th District Commander
 Larry Faulkner - 15th District Commander
 George Paradise - 16th District Commander
 Art Schwabe - 17th District Commander