

The Legion Link

August 2009

Vol. 17 Issue 1



THE POWER OF COMMITMENT



Web Site: www.floridalegion.org

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Our Newest Post

Membership Wanted
Poster

Phil Hearlson **Department Commander** **phearlson@aol.com** **352.307.8119**

Thank you to The American Legion Department of Florida for electing me as your Commander. I am very honored and humbled to serve as your Commander. Congratulations to Al Porter-Department Vice Commander, Sue Mason-Department Historian, Robert Vicks-Department Chaplain, Mike Addis-Department Sgt-At-Arms, all the newly elected Area Commanders and all the newly elected District Commanders. We have a great team serving the Department of Florida and we are fully ready to make a commitment to you to serve you to the best of our ability.

Congratulations to Mary Kelly Perkins-American Legion Auxiliary Department President, Mike Dooley-Sons of the American Legion Detachment Commander and to Mike Amig-Coordinator for the American Legion Riders. What a superb family I have to work with. We are committed to give support to a strong working relationship between the American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary, The Sons of the American Legion and The Legion Riders. We are ready to lead by example to make our Legion Family a dynamic foursome.

As you know my theme is The Power of Commitment. Each month I will offer a suggestion to the Districts and Posts leaders. Make a commitment to connecting with the members of your Post or District; it will give your members a sense of purpose. Provide opportunities for your members to learn about the programs of The American Legion. Let your members feel you are focused on them and they will do more for you.

I have already witnessed The Power of Commitment by Legion Members across the State. I attended the ground breaking for an expansion of Lady Lake Post 347. The last membership report had Post 347 at 105.689% with 2,768 members; they were running out of space. That is fantastic! At the Volunteers Appreciation luncheon held at the Orlando VA Medical Facility I saw the dedication and commitment of the volunteers who work diligently to support our veterans. I had the honor of participating in the installations of Mulberry Post 72, Punta Gorda Post 103, Belleview Post 284 and Avon Park Post 69. I could see the pride in the Post Officers as they assumed the leadership in their Post. The 4th of July was a day of enjoyment as I participated in the first 4th of July parade held at Safety Harbor. The idea originated with Safety Harbor Auxiliary Unit 238. They soon had the Legion Family of Post 238 involved along with other Veterans Organizations. It was well organized and a great parade; a prime example of working together to have a successful event.

Boys State; there are not enough words to thank the volunteers who go to Tallahassee each year and work so hard to make the Boys State program a success. Their enthusiasm and commitment to the Boys State Program is outstanding. It was a privilege to participate in the program this year.

Again, thank you for allowing me to serve as your Department Commander. If I can assist you or participate in a special event in your District or Post, please let me know.

Al Porter
Department Vice-Commander
albertporter@bellsouth.net

First, I would like to thank the members for their support in allowing me to serve as your Department Vice-Commander. I promise to do my best and live up to the confidence you have placed in me. I am sure that in working with Commander Hearlson we will make our programs the best they can be for the American Legion. A special thank-you goes to Steven N. Gladwin Post#40 in Fort Pierce, who endorsed and supported me throughout the entire year. We have started the year attending posts installations in Punta Gorda Post#103, Belleview #284, Naples #135, Fort Myers Beach #274, Madeira Beach #273 and a number of posts in the 12th District.

On the Fourth of July it was a special treat to be invited by Post #238, Safety Harbor to participate in their parade along with Commander Hearlson, Historian, Sue Mason, Chaplain Bob Vick, Department Sgt-at-Arms, Mike Addis and 16th District Commander, George Paradise. Please let me know of any functions that you would like me to attend. Please e-mail me the information so that I may place your event on my schedule. We will strive to help our veterans, community, state and nation against the challenges we face. For God and Country



Law and Order
Dennis Bruland, Department Chairman
drbruland@embarqmail.com

A new year for the American Legion has begun. It is now time to start planning our programs for this year. Selection for Police Officer and Firefighter of the Year is a long way off, but it would be nice to have at least one applicant for each award from every district in the department.

The purpose of the Law and Order program is to recognize individuals that go above and beyond the call of duty. They distinguish themselves both on their jobs and in their communities by their acts of citizenship. To find possible candidates contact your local police and fire department heads and ask who might be a good candidate.

At Post level hold an Awards Ceremony and if possible, a dinner, to honor the Law Enforcement, Firefighter, EMT and Paramedic personnel and their families who live and work in your community. Consider these professionals and volunteers as candidates for the Department award, but remember that only Florida certified Law Officers or Firefighters are eligible for the state award.

It will be a pleasure for me to assist any Post, District or Area that asks for help.

For God & Country
Mike Addis
Dept Sgt-at-Arms

Here we are starting out another year in the great Department of Florida. I want to thank everyone that helped me with my campaign and voted for me in the Department election.

This will be a busy year for me, as I plan to visit a lot of Posts in the state. If you have an event coming up that you would like me to attend, drop me an email, call or send a letter and I'll try and make it to your event.

Need help with your color/honor guard or Sgt-at-Arms? Let me know and I'll get you the help that you need, and if there is enough interest in your area, we can schedule an instruction school.

I look forward to serving Department Commander Phil Hearlson and, of course, you the membership.

On Sunday 30 May 2009, I had the pleasure of presenting a check in the amount of \$27,200 to the All Children's Hospital telethon in front of a live Chanel 8 TV audience. These funds were collected from Post's in our district and a donation from the Children's Miracle Network. The telethon raised \$3,775,924. Also present were George Paradise, 16th District Commander (elect), Ray Decker Post 14 Commander and Bill Horner, Post 14, who also sits on the Board of Directors for ACH.

All Children's Hospital was formed by Post 14 in 1927 as the American Legion Crippled Children's Hospital. With the advent of a cure for Polio, it was changed to All Children's Hospital, with a member of Post 14 to always be on the Board of Directors.

There cannot be a crisis next week.
My schedule is already full.
~~Henry Kissinger

Department Headquarters Staff		
Michael McDaniel	Department Adjutant	239
Jerry Mullenix	Department Assistant Adjutant	239
Rachel Castleberry	Executive Assistant	239
Irene Graham	Membership Director	231
Bobbi Halle	Bookkeeper	232
Jasmine Shipley	Post 400	228
Vanesa Anderson-Rosa	Receptionist/Administrative Assistant	221
Crystal Thrasher	Special Events Coordinator	233
Carol Polk	Programs Director	222
Cliff Collins	Building Maintenance/TFA's	226
Ryan Gonzales	IT Director	235
Jackie Gonzalez	Public Relations	229

Larry Sheets
 Department Internal Affairs Chairman
 rivetkckr@aol.com

Jim Ramos
 Children & Youth Chairman
 jramos149@bellsouth.net

Many Posts in Florida have not updated their Constitution and By-Laws in a few years. In some cases it has been many years since they have. Please make it a point to update your Constitution and By-Laws as soon as you can.

It is a good to do this every 2 years or so to keep up with changes in the National as well as the Department Constitution and By-Laws. If a Post changes its meeting day and time, their Constitution and By-Laws must be amended to include the change.

The Children & Youth program will work if you and your Post can do the following:

“All of these are suggestions only”

- ◆ Always plan two months in advance with all programs
- ◆ Plan programs for the year starting with August
- ◆ Make Contact with Veterans in your community see what your Post can do for them.
- ◆ Start planning Veterans’ Day events (Labor Day September 7 and Patriot Day on September 11).
- ◆ Go to your local schools (schools starts in September).
- ◆ Recognize that families of deployed and activated military personnel face special difficulties and hardships. See how your Post can help. (TFA)

September - make some plans for an open house in your Post (back-to-school campaign) also plan for Halloween Safety program. Prevention through education remains the best way to keep children safe. Brochures like Gateway Drugs, Warning Signs and Halloween Safety are available at Department Headquarters.

October is Halloween. Help plan a party with the school. Contact your local Law Enforcement agency to help with the party or co-sponsor the program.

- ◆ My program push for is year is for Child Welfare Foundation. If you or your Post can give just \$25.00 it will help our Children and Youth.
- ◆ Do not forget to order your materials for your programs. Remember to Report your activities each month (man hours, miles and moneys).

UPDATE!

With the new year comes new information. We have updated all of our guides and manuals. Throw out all old materials. Communication is the key to keeping our programs active. Make sure your program chairmen have all the material they need. Send in the Packet Request forms; Administrative Manual pages 12-14.

Americanism
Dianne Thibodeau
diannethib@bellsouth.net

"To foster and perpetuate a 100% Americanism"

This is stated in the Preamble of the Constitution of the American Legion

Hello. I am Dianne Thibodeau, your Americanism Chairman this year. Since I was asked to take on this position, I have done a lot of reading and have learned a lot. I hope to pass on my knowledge to you; some of you may know a lot, others may know very little but knowledge is the key to success.

Americanism is defined as the love of America; as loyalty to her institutions to secure life, liberty, individual dignity, and happiness; and the willingness to defend our country and Flag against all enemies, foreign and domestic. It is a vital, active, living force. It is freedom without license, religion without bigotry, charity without bias, and a desire to secure the blessings of liberty for our nation and for our posterity.

To begin, you need to know how Americanism is separated into various programs and who the chairmen are.

Americanism Chairman	<u>Dianne Thibodeau</u>
Department Baseball Chairman	<u>Hector Castro</u>
Department Boy Scout Chairman	<u>Steve Shuga</u>
Department Boys State Director	<u>Deric Feacher</u>
Department Oratorical Chairman	<u>Ron Musselwhite</u>
Department Scholarship Committee Chairman	<u>Ben Bailey</u>
Department School Medals Chairman	<u>Debbie Roush</u>

You will be hearing from each chairman about their specific programs. They are the point of contact. I will be available to help them in any way possible. Be sure and appoint your chairman at the post level and always follow thru with the paperwork. Make sure their names and addresses are sent to department by filling out the Post Program Chairmen form found on pages twelve thru fourteen in your Post Administrative Manual. The chairmen will not receive all necessary information for their programs till department receives this form.

I look forward to working with you this year. My email is diannethib@bellsouth.net For God & Country



Boy Scout

Stephen Shuga - Boy Scout Program - shugaste@knology.net

Robert "Bob" Scott - Boy Scout Program - wvcaller@msn.com

We are beginning our trek once again down that dusty road only this time I have a dedicated assistant who will have a year to prepare his Legion Scouting Program as we embark into the next Century of Scouting. The summer heat is getting the best of us all as we begin to watch the tropics and wonder what Mother Nature and El Nino have in store for many of us around the state of Florida. Scouts have many mottos that we should heed when thinking about what we have been warned to possibly expect. Be Prepared, Do Your Best, and Search-Discover-Share come to mind. Scouts are ever mindful and some are ready to lend a hand when the going gets tough on us all. Summer vacations are winding down and Scout units will begin to prepare accepting new scouts and their families into the Scouting Adventure.



Now is the time to seriously consider your role as a Chartering Organization for Scout units in your area. We have two grand opportunities to really show our spirit to those children who have chosen Scouting as a means to search, discover and share their lives with others and members of the American Legion. The Boy Scouts of America turns 100 years old on February 8, 2010. We have a chance to exemplify a positive influence of our Americanism principles that we have fought to maintain. Ask your Department and District Boy Scout Chairmen how your Post can be a positive factor on our leaders of tomorrow.

The Boy Scout Program is the first Americanism program adopted by the American Legion Nov 1919. We aim to have every Post affiliated with a Scout unit by our Legion /Scouting birthday of 100 years in 2019. Our youth need us more than most think. Let's do our part and influence them with positive feedback now so they can make the best choices in the future.

The assistant Boy Scout Chairman for 2009 – 2010 is Comrade Robert "Bob" Scott of District 4. Robert brings along a wealth of knowledge and excitement to this program, building upon the foundation of Legionnaires who have searched, discovered, and shared their knowledge, skills, and abilities to strengthen our Legion/Scout program over the years. Come next summer during the Department Convention, I will pass my staff to Robert as he prepares to lead us for years to come.

We have much work to do and many items to review, update, and begin plans on future endeavors. I ask you all to assist me and

Congratulations To all over 100%!

District/Area Membership Report as of July 29, 2009

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rec'd	% Goal
17	Arthur Schwabe	4,368	1,438	32.92
4	Gerald	4,044	1,056	26.11
12	Carl Schneider	8,772	2,276	25.95
16	George Paradise	12,144	3,122	25.71
7	Keith Holz	4,440	1,134	25.54
15	Larry Faulkner	5,793	1,434	24.75
8	Gregory Putman	9,042	2,186	24.18
11	Paul Bosco	4,757	1,148	24.13
1	Stephen Shuga	6,473	1,406	21.72
10	Larrio Walden	1,095	227	20.73
13	Frank Ward	9,365	1,920	20.50
14	Angela Glover	2,314	446	19.27
6	William Walsh	9,571	1,772	18.51
9	Joseph Motes	4,818	811	16.83
5	Gregory Lovejoy	8,154	1,080	13.24
2	George Segrest	1,376	182	13.23
3	James Troupe	1,655	123	7.43
Central	Kathryn Ferrin	22,377	5,690	25.43
SW	Richard Francis	18,407	4,106	22.31
Eastern	Earl Friedeborn	18,343	4,048	22.07
Northern	James Corner	18,221	3,697	20.29
Southern	David Knapp	12,984	2,632	20.27
Western	Martha Harris	7,849	1,588	20.23
Dept		39,232	2,348	5.98
Post 400		1,942	685	35.27
Post 208		135,500	24,794	18.30
Totals				

*Robert Brewster, Membership
brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net*

To all members of the Florida Legion Family:

This is the beginning of a very important year in Florida's history. This year, for the first time ever, the National Commander will be a Floridian. He is from District 5, Post 316, in the Northern Area. We all need to work very hard in securing the highest level of Legion members in our history. This is the year we would like to move up the ladder and become Number One of all 55 Departments. This is a very lofty goal, but not impossible. The Department of Florida has decided to give back \$5.00 of every new membership fee to the recruiter of that member. The purpose of this reward is to get everyone out there selling the American Legion to new members. We also want you to renew all of your current members, plus contact those who have dropped out for one reason or another.

Last year, our membership Chairperson was Dianne Thibodeau. Her membership motto was "Just Ask." That meant ask someone to renew, join for the first time, etc. I liked her motto and decided to carry it one step further. Our new motto is "*One More*," which translates into this: If each of us signs one more member, there will be well over 250,000 members. As this year's Membership Chairman, I will be visiting all Areas, Districts, and as many Posts as humanly possible. I will be talking membership everywhere I go. The things I will be talking about are things that have worked for me. At this past convention, I received my 5th Gold Brigade Award. If you have a membership drive of any type and you want my help, give me as much advanced notice as possible. As long as I am not committed to anything else, I will be there. I have recruited at military bases, job fairs, air shows, car shows, county fairs, etc. I will be as "hands on" as you will let me.

As a recent Department Commander said, "Work hard, very hard, but let's have fun doing it." For God and Country



Legislative Report
Stanley Gold
gold.stanley@yahoo.com

Thanks Phil for another year as Legislative Chairman. This year will be very special year with Clarence Hill becoming the first National Commander from Florida. It will be an honor to sit in the same room when our new National Commander speaks to the joint Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committee this September 10th in Washington D.C.

I requested from Steve Robinson, our National Director of Legislation, to give you the following update on what was accomplished in Congress with the support of The American Legion:

Working with veterans' and military service organizations, this year Congress has enacted the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, to turn our economy around with new jobs and provide a tax credit for hiring veterans. The nation's budget includes the largest veterans funding increase ever requested by a President. This builds on a significant record of accomplishment for veterans and service members over the last two years – including the new GI Bill of rights for education, historic veterans' funding to strengthen health care, progress in improving our veterans' hospitals and facilities, and improving care for those with PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury, and an increase in other benefits for our troops and their families.

But this is just the start. Right now Congress is working in a bipartisan manner to:

Assure timely and reliable veterans funding

Strengthen support for military families, both while their loved ones are deployed and when they return home

Expand the new GI Bill to children of fallen service members

Provide troops and veterans with the quality health care that they need and earned.

H.R. 2346, FY 2009 Supplemental Appropriations

Extended GI Benefits: allows the extension of the 21st Century GI bill of Rights college education benefits to children of members of the armed forces who die while on active duty.

Stop Loss: Provides over 185, 000 service members who have had their enlistments involuntarily extended since September 11, 2001 with \$500 per month for every month they were held under stop loss orders.

Defense Health and Military Family Support: \$1.8 billion for defense health and programs to support military families, including:

\$708 million for family advocacy programs, which provide military families with access to child Psychologists, child care, financial counseling and other support to help them cope with the disruption and stress common with military life

\$75 million for Traumatic Brain Injury and Psychological Health Research

\$20 million for rehabilitation equipment for state of the art care for wounded warriors.

Equipment for the Troops: Provides \$25.8 billion for equipment used by service members in OIF/OEF, including \$500 million for National Guard and Reserve equipment and \$4.5 billion for lightweight Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles.

Wounded Warrior Support: Supports construction of nine wounded warrior support complexes to help soldiers to recover and remain on active duty or transition to civilian life and support families through this process.

Military hospitals: Invests \$488 million in military hospital construction to renovate hospitals that are decades old and do not meet current standards for medical care.

Child Care facilities: Provides for the construction of 25 new child development centers on military bases, which will provide care for an additional 5,000 kids.

H.R. 2647, FY 2010 Defense Authorization

Military Pay Raise: Authorizes a pay raise of 3.4 percent.

Caregivers for Wounded Warriors: establishes a monthly compensation allowance for members with combat related catastrophic injuries or illnesses so they can receive assistance from a non-medical attendant with the daily functions of life such as eating, dressing and hygiene.

Mental Health: Strengthens DoD efforts to expand mental health care for troops.

Enhancing Spousal Job Opportunities: Establishes an internship pilot program for military spouses to obtain employment with Federal agencies and departments to provide them with opportunities in careers that are portable as they move from military station to station.

Military Housing: provides nearly \$2 billion for family housing programs.

Education: provides \$50 million to assist local education agencies providing support to military children.

FY 2010 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies

Contains \$108.8 billion in overall funding - \$14.5 billion over current year funding

Provides \$53 billion in discretionary funding for VA – a \$5.4 billion increase over current funding.

This year's increase is on top of the unprecedented increase of \$17.7 billion provided over the last two years.

It also includes \$48.2 billion in advance appropriations for VA medical care in FY 2011.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Dick Mondro, Department Chairman

dickmondro@comcast.net

The Department of Defense Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is for eligible demobilizing service members in the Guard and Reserves. The four components of TAP for the Guard and Reserves are:

1. Transition Counseling – mandatory and conducted by the Military Services
2. Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) Briefing that is normally conducted by a representative from the Department of Labor (DOL).
3. Veterans Benefits Briefings – facilitated and sponsored by VA
4. Disabled Transition Assistance Program (DTAP) – facilitated and sponsored by VA

NOTE: The VA Benefits and DTAP Briefing information is usually combined as one presentation, facilitated by a representative from the VA.

The transition process begins with the completion of the, DD Form 2648-1 for demobilizing Guard and Reserves. This is a mandatory legal requirement and a copy of DD Form 2648-1 is required to be filed in each Service members' personnel file.

The Transition Guide for Demobilizing Members of the Guard and Reserves was developed primarily to augment the four components of TAP with special emphasis on the preparation counseling component. The guide provides information on the various services and benefits available to Guard and Reserve Service members and their families.

Guard and Reserve Service members can contact the local Transition Counselor/Office nearest to their home for transition assistance and services once released from active duty. This may only be feasible for those Service members that reside in close proximity to a military installation that has a transition office or a Command Career Counselor. Guard and Reserve Service members are also encouraged to contact the National Guard Transition Assistance Advisor (TAA) in their own state. The TAA is located at each of the State Joint Forces Headquarters.

Note: You are eligible for additional transition services for up to 180 days after demobilization from any of the Military Services Transition Offices.

Transition Counselors are located in the following offices at local military installations:

- Army: Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP)
- Air Force: Airman and Family Readiness Center
- Navy: Fleet and Family Support Center
- Marine Corps: Career Resource Management Center (CRMC)/Transition & Employment Assistance Program Center
- Coast Guard: Worklife Division – Coast Guard Worklife staff can be found at the nearest Integrated Support Command.

http://www.transitionassistanceprogram.com/export/sites/default/transition/resources/PDF/TransitionGuide_RC.pdf

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)

ATTN: DoD Transition Assistance Program Manager

4000 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-4000

FLORIDA JOB FAIRS

July 2009

WORKFORCE CENTRAL FLORIDA - ORANGE COUNTY JOB FAIR

July 30, 2009, 12:00pm – 4:00pm

The Florida Hotel and Conference Center

1500 Sand Lake Rd., Orlando, FL 32809

(407) 531-1222

August 2009

WORKFORCE CONNECTION - OCALA/MARION JOB & CAREER FAIR

August 11, 2009, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

CFCC Klein Conference Center in Ocala, across from the Paddock Mall

RECRUIT MILITARY CAREER FAIR

August 20, 2009, 11:00am - 3:00pm

Dolphin Stadium

2269 Dan Marino Blvd, Miami, FL 33056

3rd Annual Military Day & Veterans Resource Fair

August 29, 2009, 1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

East Lake High School

1300 Silver Eagle Drive, Tarpon Springs, FL 34688



WORKFORCE
CENTRAL FLORIDA



Ride Safe
Mike "Smiley" Amig
Department Legion Riders Chairman
flalr@comcast.net
904-742-0841 (c)

I have been appointed by Florida Department Commander, Phil Hearlson, as your Department of Florida American Legion Rider Chairman for 2009 – 2010 and look forward to another great year.

First I want to thank Jimmy Lee Martin for his guidance and leadership for past two years. The Legion Riders of Florida had tons of successes due to his perseverance and dedication to the Riders and The American Legion. We look forward for your continued support. Last year we started 7 new Chapters bringing the total to 56 ALR Chapters in Florida, plus the riders raised a over \$110,000 for various community charities and Legion programs.

The ALR is growing everyday and one person can't guide this organization alone. So Jimmy Lee will be our Assistant ALR Chairman and will continue to send ALR event flyers and announcements, plus keep me out of trouble. The Area ALR Chairman will start canvassing their areas and identify which Districts have Riders and solicit volunteers for a District ALR Chairman.

Here is the list of the Legion Rider Area Chairman for 2009-2010:

- Eastern - Dave Sellers, Chapter 53, dave.sellars@us.army.mil
- Northern - Sherry Shelton, Chapter 137, ssherry15@yahoo.com
- Central - Sid Damsgard Chapter 275 district16alr@yahoo.com
- Southern - Ken Soule, Chapter 268, webmaster@alr268.org
- Western – Mike Kirchoff Chapter 392 mikekirchoff@knology.net

Southwestern – OPEN

Recommend ALR District Chairman work with the ALR chapters in your district. Have quarterly meetings to share schedules so Chapters don't set up events on the same day. This will allow Riders to support each other events and make bigger impacts. Our success depends on communications between Chapter, District, Area and Department.

We are going to forward a recommendation to change to the ALR guidelines to the Department Executive board later this month to require your top 4 Officers to own a motorcycle: Director, Asst. Director, Road Captain and Safety Officer. This is not a requirement just a suggestion. Florida Guidelines do not require a member to own a motorcycle and that will remain the same. If your Chapter membership wants its members to own a motorcycle to be a full member, then put it in your By Laws. Whether or not your Chapter requires you to own a motorcycle to be a Legion Rider or not is up to your members.

The Ride to the National Convention in Louisville will be leaving Jacksonville August 19th, stopping in Charlotte, NC, then on to meet the Legacy Scholarship fund ride in Charleston, WV on the 20th, then on to Louisville, KY on the 21st. We'll spend the weekend and start heading home on Monday the 24th. If you are interested in participating please contact me ASAP.

If your Post or Chapter has funds to be donated to the Legacy Scholarship Fund, please send them to Department so we can present the Florida money in Charleston, WV to the National Commander.

Florida ALR State Ride In - Friday October 30 to Sunday 1 November, Gainesville Florida. Chapter 16 in Gainesville, FL will be our host. Register at Econolodge (see below). The ride will be followed by dinner and Karaoke at Post 16 Gainesville starting @1700. Saturday there will be a ride to the VA Domiciliary in Lake City followed by a Biker Halloween Party; Leather and Lace theme (OOOOHHH BOY) with prizes for best Lady and best Dude. Live music, vendors, games etc.....

• Accommodations:

- o EconoLodge \$55.99 Per night call to reserve mention "Legion Riders" 1-800-424-6423
- Travelers Campground Tent Sites \$15.00 386-462-2505
 - RV 30 Amp \$29.00
 - RV 50 Amp \$32.00

Hotel and campground are within 1 mile of each other the Post is 10 miles down 441 so it will be easy getting around.

If you're interested in being a vendor or have any questions contact:

Scott Campbell (Preacher),
Director, Chapter 16
E-mail: deliman2254@aol.com
Phone: 386-853-0194

Our very own Clarence Hill will be installed as the National Commander for 2009 – 2010. He will be collecting funds for Legacy Scholarship Fund next year in Milwaukee, WI. So stay tuned for plans for next year's Ride to National Convention.

In closing, I look forward serving as your ALR Chairman and with everyone's help and the "Power of Commitment" we'll make Florida ALR stand above them all. Remember you are a Legionnaire, Auxiliary, or Sons of the Legion first.

Oratorical Report:
Ron Musselwhite
Dept. Oratorical Chairman
ron_seis@comcast.net

A new year is just now starting. Now is the time for the Post and District Chairpersons to get the new rules brochure out to the schools. The new Assigned Topics are in them. Anyone needing material can get them from Carol Polk at Dept. Headquarters. Post and District Chairpersons need to work with the local Home Schooled Administration.

The dates for this year's contests are as follows:
Post contest to be completed by Jan. 10, 2010, District contest by Jan. 31, 2010, Area contest by Feb. 21, 2010. The Department Finals will be March 6, 2010 at Department Headquarters.

District chairpersons need to work with the Posts in their District. Any District or Area Chairperson can get in touch with me at any time. All materials will be sent to the Area, District and Post by Carol Polk. You have to contact her for your request.

Area Chairmen:

Northern: Ericka Groleau
1480 Jasmine St.
Atlantic Bch., FL. 32233
904-252-2762

Central: Herb Hope
4432 W. McCoy St.
Port Tampa, FL. 33616
813-837-0075

S.Western: Debra Roush
405A 3rd. Ave. S.E.
Ruskin, FL. 33570
droush@tampabay.rr.com

Eastern: Joe McNeil
804 Poplar Lane
Melbourne, FL 32901
jmjoecrane@aol.com

Western: Fletcher Williams
5908 Meadow Lane W
Crestview, FL 32539
Fletcher.williams@cct.net

Southern: Bill Gemayel
7470 NW 1st Court
Pembroke Pines, FL 33024
954-987-8941



Security Commission
Fletcher Williams, Jr
850-689-1895

Security Commission is composed of several entities and they are as follows:

Department Blood Donor Chairperson

Robert "Bubba" Perkins
352-597-5300

Department ROTC/Shooting Sports Chairperson

Loretta Young
954-257-6763

Law and Order Chairperson

Dennis Bruland
941-743-5064

The Chairpersons are committed and dedicated Legionaries who want to see their respective programs flourish, but the programs are no better than the individuals that you appoint to chair your local programs. It was repeated several times at the recent retreat to be sure that you appoint those that truly want to work the programs and not just fill a vacancy. The members of the Security Commission are available to assist you with your programs but will not work them for you.

The Department Chairpersons will be placing articles in the future, but this is to identify who they are and their contact information. These programs give the American Legion positive exposure within our local communities and we should take advantage of it.

If you have any questions concerning the programs, please feel free to contact the respective Department Chairperson or myself. We will come to you. For God and Country



POW/MIA Legion Link Article for August 2009
Kathryn Ferrin, POW/MIA Chairman
usafkf@yahoo.com

Third Friday in September is POW/MIA Remembrance Day. Invite all Ex-POW's to the Post Dinner that night as honored guests. They gave a lot for our great Country.....they are our silent heroes.

The American Legion POW/MIA poster contest will start August 1st. Posters do not have to be turned in until June 1, 2010. This gives you sufficient time to put thought into it. You can work on this as a Post or an individual. The rules and application will be E-mailed to each post with computers and snail mailed to those posts without computers. E-mail questions to FLDEPTPOW-MIA@yahoo.com For God & Country

Our Newest Post
Mike Kirchoff, Commander
Paul W, Airey American Legion Post 392

“Downtown Panama City is about to get even more military friendly,” as quoted from the *Panama City News Herald* on May 4, 2009. This was the lead sentence for an article announcing the development of the Paul W. Airey American Legion Post 392. The post is named for the first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force who passed away in March. The new post will be located in the Elks Lodge located on Beach Drive in Panama City. To help get the new Post up and running, Bill Sloan, the Assistant Director of Internal Affairs and Membership -- from National Headquarters in Indianapolis -- spent three days in early May with members of the new post helping with the organization and setting up a membership drive. During his visit, Mr. Sloan toured Tyndall Air Force Base to get a first hand look at the number of men and women available to support this new American Legion Post. As of July 1, 2009 there are over 115 members; 51 are members that have never joined the American Legion before. Out of the newly elected officers, four are active duty airmen stationed at Tyndall.

What I have discovered in starting this new post is that there are a lot of veterans and active duty members that want to be part of something related to their time in the military. They will not come looking for your post; you have to go looking for them and have something to offer that will draw them to the post. One huge concern for many older and younger prospective members is smoking within the post. Many do not want to be around smoking anymore, and they do not want their families exposed to it. Another concern is having something for their families to do, especially the members of the military. They work hard and are gone from home a lot more, so when they get back home from a deployment and off from work, they want to spend time with their families as well as having the opportunity to be out sharing time with friends.

That’s where the American Legion can be a major player in offering a family friendly atmosphere and smoke free environment. These are the two major reasons why we started a new American Legion Post in Panama City. There are currently three other American Legion Posts in the area -- but none are in downtown Panama City -- that can provide for the members and families in the downtown area. The Elks Lodge is a non-smoking fraternal organization that has opened its doors to us, so we can meet and socialize with our friends and family. It is not easy starting a new post and not having your own post home to begin with, but, with the great team and members wanting to get involved, we are on the way to becoming a Post the Department of Florida, as well as our community, will be proud of.



Hang this poster in your meeting hall to let everyone know of the reward for recruiting new members. Give your community a chance to be WANTED!

CONGRATULATIONS to Kirby Stewart Post 24. Their baseball team is the Baseball State Champion and will represent Florida at the Southern Regional Tournament in Sumpter, SC.



American Legion Baseball

The National Americanism Commission is seeking bids from any American Legion post, team, or community within their respective region to host a Regional Tournament for a two year period (2011&2012).

As Official host, the local American Legion team will participate in this eight team, double elimination tournament. This is a five day tournament. The current tournament format utilizes a double elimination tournament in which all eight teams will play four games on days one and two. Three games will be played on day three. Two games played on day four and one or two games on day five (subject to the weather).

The host team will retain all gate receipt, souvenir sales, concession stand sales and local sponsorships.

Bid packages must be endorsed by Department Executive Committee resolution and are due to the national office no later than February 1, 2010.

◆Dates of the tournaments will be: August 4-8, 2011 and August 9-13, 2012.

◆A minimum bid is \$15,000 per year

◆A complete financial report is due to the national office 30 days after the tournament.

◆Full tarp for infield is preferred.

