



# The LEGION LINK

*"Lil Leprechaun Fighting For Vets"*



Department  
of Florida

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**Joe Magee**  
Department Commander  
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I must apologize to many of you out there for taking some aspects of the New Year for granted. The theme for the year is the "Little Leprechaun Fighting for Vets", the official shirt color for the year is Kelly Green, and the vehicle this year is dubbed the "Leprechaun Limo", why you may ask? Well, because of my Irish ancestry. One other reason I picked the Chevy Traverse was because it is one of only 4 SUVs made in the US. That being said the Leprechaun Limo was on the road quite some time this month. It started with an invite from Gunner to Titusville, and before I get into that I would like to thank Gunner, Belinda and Harley for making Pat and my stay a fun filled experience. We appreciate their hospitality and it's times like that when you reflect on why we are here.

Back to the business at hand, there were 7 installations to attend to in the Eastern Area that weekend. There was Cape Canaveral, Satellite Beach, Port St John, Merritt Island, Cocoa and Titusville. To finish off the weekend was the Shuttle launch. I must say Pat, Belinda, Maria and Harley went to a Private beach to watch it, Felix, Gunner and myself watched it from the Pool. Next up a was couple of meetings in Orlando at Department HQ. On from there more Installations Ellenton and Palmetto. Following those, it was off to Indianapolis for the National Membership Meeting or as I commonly called it the 'Inquisition', that's when the Dept. Commanders, Dept. Adjutant and Membership Chairman meet with the Incoming National Commander, and others to discuss the Goals for

the upcoming year, or at least you Listen. It was an experience to remember.

Upon returning from Indianapolis it was off to Cocoa Beach for the Commanders Leadership Retreat at the International Palms Resort, it was had a great atmosphere, casual and enjoyable. So far, the feedback has been extremely positive. Of course, there is always an element with a complaint or two, however, in the long term I believe it was an overwhelming success. The attendance was remarkable from both sides of the aisle, the wives showed up in a significant number and had a great time. Hopefully I have covered it all, if I left anyone out please accept my apology. By the time you receive this article I will have returned from the National Convention in Cincinnati. Hope to have a fun filled report from there. Keep smiling, work hard and let's get the job done we are here to do. "Remember the harder you play the harder you work".



(L-R.) Steve Shuga, Joe Magee, Jerry Brandt





Leprechaun Limo

**SEPTEMBER 2016**

25-2	National Convention 🍀
5	Labor Day
5	Dept HQ Closed
7	Dept Membership Goal 55%
10	Jacksonville National Cemetery 🍀
11	Grandparents Day
11	Patriot Day
12-13	Dept Finance Meeting 🍀
15	Legion Link Articles Due
16	American Legion Day
16	Renewal Cut-Off
16	POW/MIA Recognition Day
16	PVR Golf Tournament 🍀
17	Dept C&Y Golf Tournament (P323) 🍀
18	Air Force Birthday
22	First Day of Fall
24	COTA Golf Tournament (P117) 🍀
25	Gold Star Mother's Day
30	COTA Golf Tournament (P347) 🍀

🍀 - Commander Joe Magee's Attendance  
Events are subject to change.

*(1st Vice Commander Continued)*

Retention is an area that we need to do better in. It's easy to bring in new members but we end to lose members over time due to the lack of personal contact, communicating events and activities, and not addressing the need for assistance.

Volunteers are crucial for our Posts to be successful. Every member has gifts and talents that enhance our Posts. Use them to keep them active and wanted. Legionnaires want to be engaged, they want to give back, to see that their efforts contribute to bettering their community. When others see them having fun, it will bring more potential members to your Post asking what they can do for you, and for their community!

Remember to praise them for their service and support by means of immediate recognition in front of their peers. Make sure they know they are appreciated for what they do.



**Dianne Boland**  
2nd Vice Commander

Greetings: Now that most of our officers have been installed, it's time to start planning the year. Have you got any training scheduled? If not, Why not? A lot of newly elected officers

may need a little help during their year. Are you initiating your new members? They must have a lot of questions that could be answered with a little training. There's a lot of information out there. All you need to do is go looking for it or – Just Ask.

There is one Post that has done an outstanding job not only giving the training but documenting it. That's Beverly Hills Memorial Post 237. Every month they choose a different topic to train on during their monthly meeting. Then, every quarter they turn in the names and the subjects in order to receive their training certificate for the quarter. They will each receive a certificate signed by the Commander and the 2nd Vice Commander. This is a great way to train, a little information at a time, in order to give the members time to absorb the information.

The American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI) is the tool that would be best for your new members who are interested in learning all about the American Legion; from their history to the four pillars of service. To register and take the course, visit [www.legion.org/alei](http://www.legion.org/alei). (Due to high traffic volume, you may experience some delays. If you experience delays, please try again later.)

*(2nd Vice Commander Continued)*

The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each one, followed by a final exam.

The online course is \$4.95 for members of The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion. The registration fee is \$9.95 for non-members. Payment can be accepted securely and conveniently on the course registration page.

The Department of Florida's Legion College is another way to receive training. This year, it will take place in Orlando from October 6, 2016 thru October 9, 2016. A \$200.00 registration fee is required for rooms, coffee, donuts, and lunches and must accompany the application. They must be at Department no later than September 1, 2016. You can find the application form at [www.floridalegion.org/forms](http://www.floridalegion.org/forms).

If you have any comments, questions, concerns, or suggestions I would like to hear from you.



**Rick Johnson**  
3rd Vice Commander

Hello legionnaires, I hope this finds you well. Your leadership in the state attended the Leadership Retreat and we all learned something to bring back to our Districts and Areas.

My saying for this year is: "remember from the past, mentor the future". We need to get out there and start mentoring our replacements as we move up in this great organization.

I challenge all the Department Chairman to get with the Posts to promote all of the programs that we have out there. These programs are our future, and by doing this, you will be better noticed within your communities. Working together will only make us stronger. Chairman, please update your site within the Department and let us know what you are doing. I only have three Department chairman who have updated their site. To the Posts, PLEASE let us know what is going on out there within your community so we can visit and help you with anything that you may need. Here are some dates coming up for Florida Special Olympics:

**State Golf Championship**

**Date/Time:** Sept. 9, 2016; 9:00 AM – 8:30 PM

**Date/Time:** Sept. 10, 2016; 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Location:** Disney's Palm, Magnolia & Oak Trail Golf Courses; 1950 Magnolia Palm, Lake Buena Vista, FL 32836



**Steve Shuga**  
1st Vice Commander

The Department Commander has released his Leprechauns amongst the Posts in Florida with hopes of sharing their lucky Charms to acquire those Pots of Gold (Membership).

Membership is everyone's responsibility. We need to tell our story well, invite potential US Veterans into our Post homes and encourage them to become part of our Legionnaire family. Always welcome guests in your Posts! If you are the member escorting them, introduce them to the Post members present, and be a great steward. Answer their questions or locate someone at the Post to provide them the answers they seek if you are not certain.



*(3rd Vice Commander Continued)***State Surfing Championship****Date/ Time:** Sept. 17, 2016; 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM**Location:** Alan Shepard Park; 202 E. Cocoa Beach Causeway, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931For more information, please go to: <http://specialolympicsflorida.org/compete/competitions>.

If anybody can go to these events, they would love having us there.

Another date coming up is the **Children and Youth golf tournament September 17th 2016 at Post 323**. The flyer will be sent out with the September issue of the Legion Link. Would like to have at least a hole sponsor from each District.

So, let's have a great, fun year and let's work together as a family to attain our goals as one.



**Dennis Boland**  
NEC

### SERVICES FOR WOMEN VETERANS

Substantial growth in the number of women veterans and

increasing needs to provide gender-specific care and services led The American Legion to pass Resolution 18 in October 2015; a comprehensive statement to amplify its position that all service members deserve quality health care, including gender-specific care. After the 2013 System Worth Saving Task Force focused on the health care of women veterans, American Legion field research identified several concerns, including:

1. Many women veterans do not identify themselves as veterans.
2. Many women veterans do not know their benefits.
3. VA medical facilities do not have adequate baseline plans to close the gender gaps and improve use of facilities and services for women.
4. Additional research is needed to determine the purpose, goals and effectiveness of VA women health-care models on overall outreach, communication and coordination of women's health services.
5. Women veterans do not receive timely mammogram results.
6. Many VA medical facilities do not offer inpatient/residential mental health programs for women veterans.

*(NEC Continued)*

Most of these concerns are still plaguing our nation's women veterans. For 2016, The American Legion is conducting a new women veterans survey to pinpoint major areas of concern, as well as conducting at least one major event for women veterans during the year and participating in similar events nationwide.

The number of women veterans receiving VA health care has more than doubled since 2000, to more than 337,000

While VA care for women has improved, recruitment and performance of VA staff, personal and electronic communications, and delivery of gender-specific health-care services for women veterans remains challenges for VA.

The American Legion urges VA to work with the Department of Defense and Labor to develop a customized women veterans health-care track for the Transition Goals, Plans and Success program and to facilitate that program with female clinicians.

### WHAT CAN CONGRESS DO?

Pass Legislation permanently extending the VA child-care program for veterans.

Pass legislation to better facilitate the needs of the Department of Veterans Affairs to obtain gender-specific care that includes clinicians, mental health care providers and prosthetics.



**Tom Gora**  
Sgt-at-Arms

**"You will guard especially against the loss of one of The American Legion's greater possessions, our deep and abiding spirit of comradeship."**

When this September 2016 edition of the Legion Link is published I will be at the National Convention in Cincinnati along with other department delegates. The new chapter (#14) in the Sgt.-at-Arms Procedural Manual is now posted on the Department of Florida web site along with four Color Guard instructional videos. You can find these items under "Officer Reports." I hope that this new chapter and videos will assist Posts and Districts that have color guard questions. I will review a portion of the new chapter in this and future editions of the 'Legion Link.'

First let's discuss the membership and uniform

*(Sgt-at-Arms Continued)*

requirements of typical American Legion Color Guard Units. As the name "Color Guard" indicates the primary purpose of the guard is to present and protect the National Colors and The American Legion organizational banner(s) with military dignity during ceremonies. There are basically two type of color guard units we typically use in The American Legion, the 'Military Class' and 'Military Open Class.' The Military Class is limited to a maximum of 5 members including the member in charge of the guard, or 4 members without the color guard commanding officer. In the Military Class all members MUST be eligible veterans, or Legionnaires. In the 'Military Open Class' there can be a maximum of 7 members, and membership in this class is extended to any current member of any of the organizations in The American Legion Family. The Military Open Class is the model for your Post if you must rely on members from the Legion, Auxiliary and/ or Sons to make up an entire color guard. Yes, a color guard can represent a Post, District or Department with mixed membership. Both types of color guard units post and retrieve the colors at events, they may just do so differently. Military Class Color Guards, with two weapon bearers and two flag carriers march in military fashion and usually post and retrieve without performance of any special maneuvers. The Military Open Class often contains additional weapon bearers or an additional banner and these units usually perform special floor routines such as a unique marching move, the flipping or twirling of rifles, or banners, etc.

The color guard should design and wear one common uniform, and each member must wear a cover. Obviously, for Military Class the uniform can be the Legion uniform; shirt, cover, etc. For the Open Class a uniform with cover should be worn by each guard member, regardless of organization membership. Yes, you can design and wear a beret or helmet as a uniform cover with local approval. If there is no uniform color guard cover then each member of the Open Class must wear the cover representing their organization (Legion, Auxiliary, Sons). That is a quick summary of color guard membership and uniforms, and in the October Legion Link we will review the equipment specifications for color guard units.

At the 2016-17 Department Leadership conference I was able to present the Department a gift donated by the Florida Highway Patrol. The banner pictured below was donated to the Florida Highway Patrol for their museum by a Boy Scout in 1997. It is the banner that was posted





*(Sgt-at-Arms Continued)*

over stage at the 1948 American Legion National Convention which was held in Miami.



Bob Brewster (3730), Tom Gora (54) and Ed Krass (54) are pictured holding the banner at the Florida Highway Patrol Academy.)



**Steve Newman**  
*Chaplain*

*Hello and a blessed greeting to all my fellow legionnaires and the American Legion Family.*

Hopefully all has been and still is well with everyone. I have been quite busy attending numerous Post installations and most recently the Department of Florida Leadership Retreat, which was held in Cocoa Beach. It was a very informative retreat with lots of good information that was disseminated among all attendees. Things are not going to slow down anytime soon. However, I feel it's great to keep busy as time passes by so quickly.

September is also going to be a very busy month for me. I will be attending the chaplains conference in Indianapolis at the end of September. I will also be doing a 22 person walk on Veteran Suicide Awareness Day (Sept 10th), and attending more Post installations.

Speaking of Suicide Awareness Day, I am following the example of Larry Roberts of post 69 and I put a challenge up to all Posts to host a one mile walk with as many individuals you can get in support of Veteran Suicide Awareness Day on the 10th of September. It would not cost you any money, just a little bit of time. This event brings awareness to the number of veteran suicides (22) that occur in our country on a daily basis. This is a

*(Chaplain Continued)*

serious issue that must be addressed. The more individuals you can get to walk for this cause, the better. When I give my Chaplain class, I always talk about suicide and how we all can play a role in identifying the signs and preventing it. Being aware and knowing what to do can sometimes be helpful in those kinds of situations that we might encounter. I always state that your Chaplain has to be able to keep things confidential except in the case when an individual says he/she is going to do something to themselves or others. That is when you have to communicate to the Commander and others about the situation quickly and get help as soon as possible. Once again, I challenge all of you to do the 22 a day Veteran Suicide Awareness walk on the 10th of September.

Remember with God everything good is possible. As I have said many times in the past, with God all can be right. He gives us the sense of direction to full fill our wants and needs to the best of our abilities. As always "be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9.



**Larry Sheets**  
*Judge Advocate*

The proper procedure for a Post to submit proposed amendments to their Constitution and By-Laws, is to send them to Department headquarters along with a cover letter stating that the amended Constitution and By-Laws were approved by the Post membership. List the date of the meeting at which they were approved. Rachel at Department will then scan and email me the Constitution and by-Laws, and place what the Post submitted in a file. I will review them and either approve them, or if there are changes required, the Post will receive a letter advising them of the required changes. Once the changes have been made, the Post can resubmit their Constitution and By-laws for approval.

All Post Constitution and By-Laws are kept on file at Department, in case they are needed in the future. It is important to note that a Post must abide by their Constitution when conducting business as well as in the day to day operation. If a Post is not sure if the Constitution and By-Laws they have are the most up to date version, contact Department Headquarters and they will check the date of the newest approved ones that are on file.



**Sid Damsgard**  
*Central Area Commander*

Greetings from the Central Area,

I would like to thank the Central Area for electing me to this post and I intend to support all Posts the best I can. Thanks to Past Commander Eunice Butts for two years of excellent leadership. She is much loved in this area and I look forward to working with her to maintain that level of excellence.

Installations are progressing and we hope to have them completed soon. District meetings are being held as well. As we go forward toward Department Conference, Posts holding events should be contacting Department with dates and times to ensure maximum attendance. If you don't tell us what you are doing there is no way, we can help you.

On a sad note the 16th District has suffered the loss of two officers of our family. Joe Hutto District Vice commander passed due to a massive heart attack and Department Detachment Sargent at Arms Bill Fuller was lost to a motorcycle accident. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families both related and Legion. They will be greatly missed.

At this writing I know of only one event in the Central Area. Post 138 Port of Tampa will be holding their 15th annual S.A.L. Fishing Tournament. The event is scheduled for September 24th beginning at 0600 until 1600. Prizes will be awarded in three categories, Snook, Redfish and Seatrout. Registration fee is \$40.00 for adults and \$15.00 for children. A captain's meeting will be held on the 23rd.



**Felix Ayala**  
*Eastern Area Commander*

Hello Legionnaires,

I thought I was busy last month, who was I kidding! I put over a

thousand miles on the road this month, but we are almost done with installations so it should slow down a bit, I hope anyways.

This month I had the opportunity to visit 12 posts, and attend 14 installations in the Eastern Area (6th and 12th Districts). The 12th District was visited by our Department Commander Joe Magee and



*(Eastern Area Commander Continued)*

his lovely wife Pat. They joined us in several of the installations.

This coming month I look forward to attending the American Legion Leadership Retreat in Cocoa Beach, as well as the National Convention in Cincinnati, Oh. After that, it is back for more installations and District Meetings. I want to encourage everyone to try and attend your District meetings. A quorum is needed to be able to vote on any resolution or important matters that might be brought to the floor. Not to mention it is a good time to catch up with your District Officers and talk with them about any issues you might have. Last but not least, I want to thank all the Posts that have gone out of their way to make me, my wife, and the District Installation Teams feel comfortable at their Posts. Remember that we are all here for one thing and that is the betterment of our Veterans.



**Andy Burkett**  
*Southwestern Area Commander /  
Americanism Chairman*

Hello American legion family,

As your Southwestern Area Commander, I have completed most of my installations and all went very well. I will now start my visits of all my Posts in the Southwestern Area. I hope to see you all in my future travels.

As your Department Chairman for American Legion Baseball, we have completed our state tournament. American Legion Post 13 will represent the state in the regional tournament.

As your Americanism Chairman, I am looking forward to be invited to all the great things you do in your Post. I would love to hear from all your chairman in the Districts. I am leaving soon to go to the National Convention, and I hope to have news for you on my return.



**Fred Matthews**  
*5th District Commander*

September 17th was the 2nd year of District-wide Training. The 5th District includes four counties with 19 Posts and

attached Auxiliary Units, ALR Chapters and SAL Squadrons. The District Training is designed to answer specific questions that our Post

*(5th District Commander Continued)*

Commanders, Vice Commanders, Executive Committee members and the general membership have about how their Post should operate and where they fit in the Legion as a whole. On the agenda was the Duty and Responsibility of the Post Commander, Finance Officer, Adjutant, Programs, the Executive

*(5th District Commander Continued)*

Committee and how the Post fits into the National Organization.

Post Revitalization was a major target these first two months of the Legion year. We're pulling for three Posts in our District: 174, 102 and 244. Each of them have undergone significant changes in leadership, membership and loss of programs. District Officers have made targeted visits to develop present and future leadership for these Posts and to educate them on how to conduct meetings, manage their membership and their plans for the future.

Thanks to all who attended the dedication of the 5th District Monument at the Veterans National Cemetery in Jacksonville. The monument and dedication ceremony marks another milestone for the 5th District. It was led by Past 5th District Commander Tom Gora with the herculean fundraising efforts of Gary Lester and the Legion Riders. The monument serves as a living reminder of the Legion's mission to all those who visit this solemn resting place of heroes.



**Bruce Thurber**  
*12th District Commander*

Having completed the first month as District Commander, I have learned a lot of lessons. At installations I found each of

the 22 Posts I visited has a different set of ideals and goals, all of them being great.

It was my pleasure, along with Department Riders Chairman Jim Day and 12th District Riders Chairman Ed Parker, to present Post 40 Riders Chapter with their Charter. I had the honor of meeting Sylvester McIntosh of Post 181, who recently received his Silver Star from Vietnam. District 12 Vice Commander Scott Dunn and I were privileged to attend the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to three members of the 65th Infantry Regiment (The Boringueeners), presented by Congressman Bill Posey. The 65th Regiment served during WWI, WWII and Korea. It always amazes me that we are just now honoring our heroes of past wars.

*(12th District Commander Continued)*

The 12th District Picnic for Boys and Girls State transportation will be on September 24th at Wickham Park. We are also sponsoring a Law Enforcement Chili Cook-off September 10th at Space Coast Harley.

If you haven't gotten your tickets for the Mustang Raffle contact any 12th District Post Commander *(12th District Commander Continued)* or Ron Fashano.

Remember 9-11 is just around the corner and I hope that each and every Legion Family is preparing to honor their Local First Responders in some way.



**Donna Artola**  
*Blood Chair*

This past month I have visited in the following posts:

- District 9, Posts 180 and 321
- District 14, Posts 333, 154 and 28.
- District 11, Posts 268, 390, 62, 271 and 367.

When I visited the above Posts I spoke to the WHOLE legion family.

September is our Children and Youth Golf Tournament at post 232 in Lehigh Acres. There will be a blood mobile there. This blood mobile will be helping the community and only the local community of Lehigh Acres. I had contacted the Lee Memorial Health Systems for our event that is taking place on the 17th of September. The blood that Lee Memorial Health Systems collects stays in the community to help the locals that are in need. I hope to see everyone there giving the gift of life. They will be there from 11am to 5pm. I will be on site to assist in this drive.

Let us all remember that giving the gift of life on one pint of blood saves the lives of 3 people.



**Sid Damsgard**  
*Children & Youth Chair*

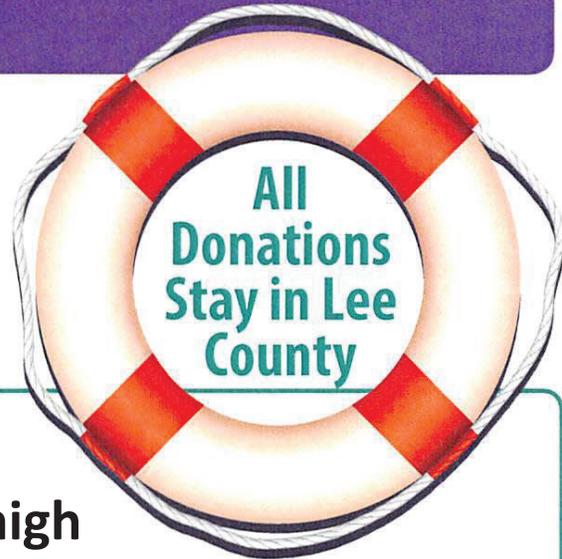
Leadership Retreat is over and now it is time to concentrate on programs supporting The Four Pillars of our organization. As

the Children and Youth Chairman, I have learned that Americanism and C&Y closely resemble each other in many ways. The similarities between



# Save the Life of a Neighbor— Donate Blood

**The Lee Memorial  
Blood Centers  
Bloodmobile is  
coming your way**



**American Legion Post 232**

**1124 Ashler Ave.—Lehigh**

**Saturday, September 17, 2016**

**11:00 am – 5:00 am**

***Children & Youth***

***Golf Benefit***

Permanent donation locations also conveniently located in Bonita Springs, Cape Coral and Fort Myers. For location and schedule information, call 239-343-2333.

Blood donated at the Lee Memorial Blood Center locations and on the purple bloodmobile stays in Lee County.

## **Thank You Gift**

**Free Health  
Check-up, Cholesterol  
Screening, & Bottle  
Cozy**



**LEE MEMORIAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM**

[www.LeeMemorial.org/BloodCenter](http://www.LeeMemorial.org/BloodCenter)



*(Children & Youth Chairman Continued)*

them, with the focus on activities as opposed to charity, can be confusing at times. I learned that Children and Youth is mostly dedicated to supporting charities that benefit youth issues such as COTA, Anti-Child Pornography Taskforce, Catastrophic Illness, Intellectual Disabilities, Family Integrity and Drug Abuse to name a few.

The question is, how do we achieve this? There are many organizations at the national and local levels that depend on charitable organizations like us to sustain these efforts. It is up to each Post to find what best fits within their communities. Local recognition is probably the best way to portray what the Legion is really about and it is our mission to change the negative image often associated with the organization. We as an organization are one of the top donors of money and time in the country as we continue to serve Community, State and Nation. Always remember the future of our nation depends on our youth and the guidance we give them.

If you are holding an event supporting Children and Youth charitable programs, please contact the Department or me with your information. Our only tool to get you support from other Posts is through the Department calendar. Send us the flyers so that we can attend your events when possible. Here are a few dates that have already filled. Please hold these dates open at your Post to allow those wishing to attend without conflict at your Post. We have told everyone about the Children and Youth Golf Tournament being held at Post 323 in Lehigh Acres on the 17th of September. If you cannot send a team, please consider a hole sponsorship for \$100.00. All money will be divided between the Department Family units to be used for their Children and Youth charity. On the 24th and 25th of September there will be a picnic and golf tournament at Post 117 in Palm Bay. See the Department calendar for details. This is in support of Department Commander Joe Magee's charity COTA. On Friday September 30th There will be another golf tournament supporting COTA held by Lady Lake Post 347. Entry is \$80.00 per golfer. Details also available on the Department calendar.

In closing, keep doing what you have been doing. Every effort makes a difference.

**MEMBERSHIP GOAL**  
**55%**  
 September 7, 2016



**Jerry Brandt**  
*Membership Chair*

Legionnaires,

National has given us a goal in which we can achieve 100%, the goal is 111,855 members

for the upcoming year. In order to make that goal we need to do 1 thing: make the goal at each of our Posts. The Department goal for the coming year is same number of members your Post had on June 30, 2016 to be renewed for the following year.

As of July 25th, National released 2500 DMS members to the state of Florida. They are now available for all Posts to be able to be picked up. Use MyLegion.org and locate them in your Location.

Also, upcoming changes will be coming out soon on MyLegion.org and www.legion.org that will make recruiting easier. Please review:

[www.members.legion.org/legion/ws2016.zip](http://www.members.legion.org/legion/ws2016.zip)

and

[www.members.legion.org/legion/mylegion.zip](http://www.members.legion.org/legion/mylegion.zip)

As you should know, the renewal notices were sent to our members on July 1st, the new renewal notices will be sent on October 7th. This would be a great time to have your 1st Vice Commanders / Membership Team reach out to those members who did not renew as of the Posts first renewal notice.

Again our 1st Goal of 55% is September 7th. Currently, we have 33 Post's showing '0' of their cards being renewed.



**Bill Hoppner**  
*Disaster Preparedness Chair*

I would like to thank Department Commander Magee for the opportunity to serve as your Disaster Preparedness Chairman for 2016-2017.

As we all know that any disaster is a crisis, be it floods, tornadoes, or hurricanes. Each year between June 1 and November 30 is designated as hurricane season.

*(Disaster Preparedness Chairman Continued)*

The question we should ask ourselves, am I prepared and do I have everything in place before, during, and after a storm. The answer should be yes if not this is the time to prepare. It's never too late to prepare. There's that word again PREPARE, it is vital to have everything in place to make the transition thru the 3 stages of storms as easy and comfortable as possible.

I will be sending emails to all Area and District Commanders in the hopes of compiling a roster of names, addresses, and telephone numbers for the chairmen in their areas. This will help in getting aid to those in your respective Area or District, if and when the need arises.

Each month I will be sending out information on how to prepare.

You may email me your chairmen at [Gonepost1@aol.com](mailto:Gonepost1@aol.com). I may also be reached at 305-968-7979. Remember the key word PREPAREDNESS.



**Arnold Markovsky**  
*Finance Chair*

Our Department Leadership Retreat was as a great success. It started with a meet and greet. Commander Joe opened our meeting by greeting everybody and gave our new Officers and Chairman a chance to get to know each other.

The Finance Committee, with the help of our Department Staff has tried to make reporting your monthly expense reports easier, hopefully. Our Finance Committee will always be open to new or better ideas, so please if you think of anything, let us know.

I would also like to welcome our newest member, Dan Reffitt, to our Finance Committee, I believe he will be a great assist to our team.



**Loretta Young**  
*JROTC/Shooting Sports Chair*

The National 26th Jr. Shooting Sports Championship Tournament was held at the USA Olympic Training Center in Colorado Spring, July 19-24, 2016. There were 30 shooters from across the country. The National Finalists were 15 Precision

**ARE YOU PREPARED? YOU SHOULD BE.**  
 HURRICANE SEASON JUNE 1 - NOVEMBER 30

*(JROTC/Shooting Sports Chair Continued)*

and 15 Sporter Categories from 20 different states. Florida was represented in the Sporter Category by Luis Vasquez Garcia from Summerlin Academy in Bartow and sponsored by American Legion Post 3.

I had the opportunity to be selected as a National Staff Member to volunteer for the week's event and to be able to accompany, and assist them during the registration process through the final competition day. The 30 competitors, along with their coaches, were the guests of our National Organization and had their transportation and accommodations provided by National. Everyone was met on arrival and escorted throughout the week from the hotel to the Center. All athletes were given team jackets, shirts and backs for the week's events.

The competition started with all athletes competing in Sporter and Precision with 20 shots in Prone, Standing and Kneeling positions. These events were held on Thursday and Friday. After Friday's events and the top 8 shooters were determined for the final competition, there was a Pizza Party for the athletes and a Reception for the Coaches and Chaperons. Saturday's Final Competition was attended and awards presented to the winners by National Commander Dale Barnett and National President Sharon Conaster. The USA Olympic Training Center has the latest and most up-to-date equipment with automatic targets and scoring so there were no delays in getting the results. The final shoot off was held on Saturday morning with the Awards Banquet being held Saturday evening. The top athletes were given Gold, Silver, Bronze and Pewter Medals. The National Winners were Taylor Gibson from Colonel Allison Junior Rifle Club, Salem Oregon for the Precision Category and Emma Thompson from Freeport NJROTC in Freeport, Illinois for the Sporter Category. Both will receive a \$5,000 Scholarship and will be attending the National Convention next month in Cincinnati. There was also an Award from the National Americanism Commission the "Francis M. Redington" Sportsman Award for good sportsmanship and fair play presented to Jimmy Ellefson from the Des Moines MCJROTC Unit in Des Moines, Iowa.

At the Awards Banquet we also bid farewell to the longtime Chief Range Officer, Past National Commander David Rehbein. His many year's devotion to this program will be greatly missed. The Assistant Range Officer, Ida Jewell from Indiana will be heading the team for next year

*(JROTC/Shooting Sports Chair Continued)*

and I wish them both much success for the future. Thanks must also be given to our Headquarters Staff, Tournament Director Shayne Abrams and his Assistant, Mishelle Evans. They did an outstanding job of coordination to make the entire week's events run in a smooth and organized manner. Thanks also are due to our Transportation Coordinators David Dew from Texas and Neal Warken from Kansas who were up early every morning to shuttle staff, athletes, coaches and chaperons to get everyone to the events on time throughout the week. The Match Director Loren "Bud" Sperry from Washington and all the Volunteer Deputy Line Officers did a great job assisting in the week's events.

This is an example of both what our National organization has available for our youth programs and the great young people that our programs support. The Target Order forms for this competition will be on the National website after November 01. Teams and schools can register online and the post reimburse the cost to sponsor the shooter. Invest in our youth, they are our future. Many thanks to all who support our Youth Programs.

**Bill McIntyre**  
*Law & Order Chair*

I have visited many Posts at their Installations encouraging them to name a Law and Order Chairman for this year. Every community has these brave men and women working to keep us safe and come when we are in need. Let us do our part by honoring them. You see on TV and read in the newspapers everyday where the police or firemen place themselves in harm's way to help and protect us. Just watch a Fireman run into a burning building to save someone. Let us recognize these remarkable people who are not always sure if they will be going home at the end of their shift. Go out and find them in your community and honor them and report them in your year-end reports.

We do not recognize our Law Enforcement and Firefighters enough for the amazing and dangerous job they do to keep us safe and to save lives.

I am asking you to appoint a Law & Order Chairman in your Posts and in your Districts. Go to your local Police Stations and Firehouses and ask for a candidate to recognize. Tell them what you are looking for and why you are there. Let them know that we appreciate all they do for your community.

*(Law & Order Chair Continued)*

I have picked up brochures and other information from headquarters and I will be sending them to you. Let's get started on the great program of the American Legion.

**Dave Miller**  
*POW / MIA Chairman*

Hopefully all of the legionnaires in Florida have seen my first article so they know I am available anytime for Pow-Mia ceremonies or Flag dedications at both your Post homes and in the Districts.

September is National Pow-Mia month and the third Friday is National Pow-Mia Day so hopefully your post homes or your towns are doing something special for that particular event.

I am still awaiting some responses from our Area Commanders as to what dates are available to hold our Area Pow-Mia Black and White formal dinner events with the formal table ceremony at each event. Please check with Posts in your area to see who would want to host these special events. I would like to do one in each Area this year as I have done in the past.

The Pow-Mia issues are still very important with our Congressional delegates so please stay in touch with them to make sure we have a full accounting from every WAR or CONFLICT to get all of them back home to their families. Once again I am available for any events or meetings you would like me to come and speak and explain our protocol for our Pow-Mia events and ceremonies.

Please keeps the word spreading throughout our Department of Florida.

**BRING THEM HOME!!**



**Roy Havekost**  
*Social Media Chair*

Greetings Legionnaires;

This past month I viewed a sampling of Facebook pages/groups from within Districts 11 through 17. Congratulations are in order for Post 65, Delray Beach; Post 268, Riviera Beach; Post 200, Satellite Beach; Post 303, Bonita Springs; Post 323, Lehigh Acres; Post 154, Marathon; Post 7, Clearwater; Post 26, Plant City; Post 6, Deland; Post 104 Pinellas Park; Post 238, Safety Harbor;





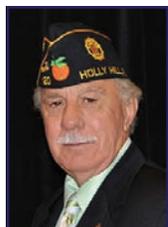
*(Social Media Chair Continued)*

Post 273, Madeira Beach; Post 275, Dunedin; and Post 144, Miami Lakes. These Posts are making good use of Facebook for advertising their events and promoting their Post activities. Once again, extra kudos go out to those Posts who are incorporating video clips in their presentations.

It is important for all Legion Posts to keep their Facebook pages/groups up to date preferably on a daily basis but at a very minimum weekly. Remember that the community in which we serve sees our activities and programs via this media outlet. This is a free advertizing tool and should be used to the maximum to try to recruit new younger members into the American Legion organization. Remember anyone who served since August 2, 1990 is eligible to join. Just to make a point, there are still many Legion Posts in the state that have no Facebook presence, but guess what, your Auxiliaries, Sons and Riders do. We are family, so reach out to your entities for help in creating your online presence, do it today, okay?

Again, I am looking for feedback on what you would like to see in a training class for Social Media. Please send your suggestions to me at [socialmedia@legionmail.org](mailto:socialmedia@legionmail.org) I will try to accommodate all suggestions.

One last note on emailing, the Department of Florida provides us with a complete list of email 'aliases' for all department officers, area & district commanders, PDCs, department chairmen, and department staff. When an email is addressed to [department@legionmail.org](mailto:department@legionmail.org) ( a global alias) you should be aware that everyone on the list receives a copy of that email, that's over 100 people. When sending sensitive content emails you should be specific in addressing to only those individuals who you want to view it.



**Paul Martel**  
*Legislative Chair*

Good day Legionnaires:

We are all very busy in our day to day affaires, and I know we have been asking you to call, write, or e-mail your representatives, and I also know that you have, or I hope you have. We need to work as a team, this is not a one-person job, it is way too important to leave to just one person. The men and women who work for us at the State capitol or Washington D.C. need to understand that the American Legion is with one mind, we are locked in step, whether it's for our Veterans special legislation..

*(Legislative Chair Continued)*

When you do speak to your Representative or their aide, please be as pleasant as you can, if he or she has helped with a bill that you were in favor with, THANK THEM, let them know you are with the American Legion with 180,000 thousand members, say what you need to say with RESPECT, make it short and to the point, they may have a question, answer with the best of your ability. If you do not know, say you will get the answer to them as soon as possible. Remember, they put their pants on the same way we do, they are human.

Our state is out of session right now, making it a good time to make an appointment to speak with your Representatives. Just because we are not in session, does not mean we are not paying attention to what still goes on, we will try to keep you informed of anything that may come up.

As always, send me your e-mail for more information or, if you receive information from your Representative, please pass that along to me so we can share it with the owners of the state of Florida, YOU.

**Bob Brewster**  
*Youth Law Cadet Chair*

In the August edition of the Legion Link I gave you an overview of the initial program that occurred July 10-15, 2016. Nearly all of the young cadets that attended this year have already said they would like to do it again in 2017! I think that is testimony from the kids who experienced just how good this program is! Here are a few pictures of our cadets involved in their training.



*At the firing range*

There will be a briefing on the program for next year at the 2016 Fall Conference.

The next Law Cadet Program is scheduled for the week of July 9-14, 2017, and we can accommodate up to 25 cadets, male and female in the age group of 16-18. Parental approval required, medical clearance required, and the fee

*(Youth Law Cadet Chair Continued)*

for a week of training, room and board is \$350/ cadet. Transportation to and from the Highway Patrol Academy in Havana is the responsibility of the parents or sponsoring Post. Other details will be provided at the Fall Conference in November.



*Cadets headed to class*



*Learning to load a weapon*



**Larry Roberts**  
*VA Entitlements Chair*

As the VA Entitlement Chairman, I am always looking for benefits to share with other Legionnaires, here are a few.

All Information is from the Florida Veterans' Benefit Guide 2016.

- Free Health Care for Recent Combat Vets  
Combat veterans who were discharged or released from active service on or after Jan. 28, 2003, are eligible to enroll in the VA health care system for five years from the date of discharge or release. The enrollment period begins on the discharge or separation date of the service member from active duty service, or in the case of multiple call-ups, the most recent discharge date, Veterans including activated Reservists and National Guard members, are eligible if they served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11 1998, and have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.
- Basic Property Tax Exemption  
Eligible resident veterans with a VA certified service-connected disability of 10 percent or





*(VA Entitlements Chair Continued)*  
greater shall be entitled to a \$5,000 property tax exemption. The veteran must establish this exemption with the county tax official in the county in which he or she resides by providing documentation of this disability.

- The unremarried surviving spouse of such a disabled ex-service member, who on the date of the disabled ex-service member's death had been married to the ex-service member for at least five years, is also entitled to this exemption. (FS 196.24)

- **Additional Property Tax Exemptions**  
Any real estate owned and used as a homestead by a veteran who was honorably discharged and has been certified as having a service-connected, permanent and total disability, is exempt from taxation if the veteran is a permanent resident of Florida and has legal title to the property on January 1 of the tax year of which exemption is being claimed. (FS 196.081(1))

Any real estate owned and used as a homestead by the surviving spouse of an Armed Forces member who died from service-connected causes while on active duty is exempt from taxation if the member was permanent resident of Florida on January 1 of the year in which the member died. (FS 196.081(4)(a))

If, upon the death of the veteran, the spouse holds the legal or beneficial title to the homestead and permanently resides there, the exemption from taxation carries over to the benefit of the veteran's spouse until such time as he or she remarries, sells, or otherwise disposes of the property. If the spouse sells the property, an exemption not to exceed the amount granted from the most recent ad valorem tax roll may be transferred to new residence as long as it used as the primary residence and the spouse does not remarry. (FS 196.082)

Any partially disabled veteran who is age 65 or older, any portion of whose disability was combat-related, and who was honorably discharged, may be eligible for a discount from the amount of ad valorem tax on the homestead commensurate with the percentage of the veteran's permanent service-connected disability. Eligible veterans should apply for this benefit at the county property appraiser's office. (FS 196.082)

Any real estate used and owned as a homestead by any quadriplegic is exempt from taxation. Veterans who are paraplegic, hemiplegic, or permanently and totally disabled who must use a wheelchair for mobility, or are legally blind, may be exempt from real estate taxation. Check with

*(VA Entitlements Chair Continued)*  
your local property appraiser to determine if gross annual household income qualifies. The veteran must be a resident of Florida. (FS 196.101)  
Service members entitled to homestead exemption in this state, and who are unable to file in person by reason of such service, may file through next of kin or a duly authorized representative. (FS 196.071)



**Alan Cohen**  
VA & R Chair

Greetings, fellow Legionnaires, another busy month has come and gone.

Some news to share: I'm happy to announce that after no small amount of diligence we developed an ongoing relationship with "Cellphones for Soldiers" who has made a commitment to provide us with prepaid phone cards for use by patients at all the VA hospitals in the state. Just as importantly, this is being done at no cost to the veteran or to the Legion and we thank them for their support.

On another note, with the cooperation of the 15th District Commander I am in search of a replacement for our VAVS rep at the Tampa VA hospital who needed to step down due to health reasons. Should any of you be aware of individuals who might be a good fit for this important slot, please contact me. I'm comfortable that the right person will make themselves known soon.

Lastly for now, let us please remain aware that Veteran Suicide affects us all. While this tragedy is indeed a national problem, let us do what we can on local levels to reach out and prevent its proliferation.

**Dept Convention Raffle Winners 1st Place**



Keith and Rosemary Snow

**Xavier Muhammad Breaking Records Jr. Olympics**



After only five months of throwing the shot put, seven-year-old Xavier Muhammad, oldest son of Rosalind Branch-Muhammad, who is the oldest daughter of Reverend Willie W. Branch, Jr. the 17th District Chaplain and Past Commander of Post 267, Ormond Beach, is breaking records. The record stood for six years before Xavier threw 28 feet 11 inches to break it.

He is headed for a meet in California where he intends to break his own record and set a new world record at the USATF meet in Odessa, Texas. He later Threw 34 Ft to break his previous record in Sacramento, California at the USATF Nations.

At the AAU Jr. Olympics he finished second with a throw of 9.64 meters, first place was 9.71. He is coached by Nick Capuano of the Beast Mode Track Club of Houston, Texas.



Xavier Muhammad





# PROJECT: VETRELIEF

A PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA



## SERVICES PROVIDED



### Emergency Assistance

Provide financial assistance during live's emergencies.



### Benefits Support

Ensure veterans can access and utilize all benefits earned with service.



### Community Engagement

Eliminate isolation by creating a community of veterans helping veterans.

## POPULATION SERVED

PROJECT: VetRelief supports ALL service members in the state of Florida: whether they are active duty, newly returned, or have been home for years. Additionally, we provide service to their immediate family (spouse, parent, or child) - **at no cost to them.**

## You are cordially invited to...

Join us at Orange County National Golf Club in Winter Garden for the 3rd Annual Charity Golf Tournament hosted by RL James General Contractor. It will be a rewarding day and all monies will go directly to support the mission of PROJECT: VetRelief! Enjoy a round of golf, contests, awards, prizes, and lunch reception!



### Event Details:

When: Friday, September 16th  
 Time: 8:00 AM Registration | 9:00 AM Shotgun  
 Where: Orange County National Golf Center and Lodge  
 16301 Phil Ritson Way, Winter Garden

**Few spots left, sign up today:**

[www.projectvetrelief.org/get-involved/fundraising-events/](http://www.projectvetrelief.org/get-involved/fundraising-events/)

## EMERGENCY FUNDING GUIDELINES:

1. Veteran, Active Duty Military, or Immediate Family Member (Spouse, Legal Guardian, or Child)
2. Honorable Discharge
3. Show Sustainability
4. Provided for necessities: shelter, food, utilities, and some transportation and medical expenses
5. Application / Interview does **not** guarantee funding
6. Funds are awarded on a case by case basis
7. Funds are granted one time annually

*"We Veterans have a resource we can believe in! Thank you!"*

**- Army Veteran**

## CASE REPORTING:

January 2016 - July 2016

★ **TFA** - 20 families  
 \$19,354.84

★ **PVR** - 45 families  
 \$32,416.72

★ **Benefits Cases** - 64

For more information visit our website: [www.ProjectVetRelief.org](http://www.ProjectVetRelief.org)





**Squadron 19  
is pleased to announce  
our 10<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Golfing for Charity  
Sunday October 9<sup>th</sup>**



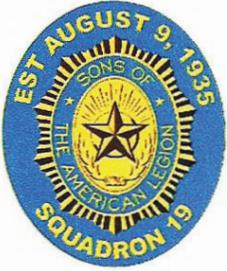
**Proceeds will benefit the  
Fisher House Foundation  
Lake Nona Project**

**4 person teams \$45 per player  
Best Ball, Closest to the Pin,  
Mulligans  
Lunch to follow at the post**



**SAL Memorial Post 19  
5320 Alloway St Orlando 32810  
(407) 622 - 1807**

**A 501 c 19 Veterans Charity  
SALMemorialPost19.org  
SAL Memorial Post 19**



Sons of the American Legion  
 Orlando Memorial Post 19  
 d/b/a SAL Memorial Post 19  
 5320 Alloway St. Orlando FL 32810  
 (407) 622-1807 Post | (407) 622-1113 fax  
 SALMemorialPost19@gmail.com <http://www.SALMemorialPost19.org>  
 SAL Memorial Post 19



7/26/2016

**To our Friends:**

I, the undersigned, am writing on behalf of The Sons of the American Legion, a 501 (c) 19 Veterans Organization, with a proud history of 81 years serving our veterans and the community. We are a program with the American Legion Orlando Memorial Post 19.

We strive each and every day to make the lives of our Veterans and their families easier. This is achieved greatly through our volunteers and donation from the community. We strive to make every event family friendly and safe for children of all ages.

We are working on our 10th Annual Charity Golf Tournament to be held on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Your generous donations will allow a greater percent of our net proceeds to be donated to an organization affiliated with the American Legion Family.

We are seeking Hole Sponsors:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Red - \$25.00 Individual Sponsorship
- \_\_\_\_\_ White - \$50.00 Small Business Sponsorship (>25 employees)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Blue - \$100.00 Corporate Sponsorship (<25 employees)
- \_\_\_\_\_ All American Sponsorship – Any in kind donation.

Consider how good it would feel to donate to an organization that helps our Veterans.

We appreciate your time and consideration

*Douglas Enos*

Doug Enos  
 SAL Finance Officer and Adjutant  
 46-3352274 SAL 19 EIN  
 35-0144250 National EIN Tax Deductibility  
 (321) 438-7179 cell#



cc: file post commander

enc: IRS Letter of Determination

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FIANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.



Florida Not For Profit Corporation  
 SAL MEMORIAL POST 19, INC.  
 Document Number N16000001384  
 Expires 12/31/2016

Registration Number: CH47462  
 Expires: 3/10/2017



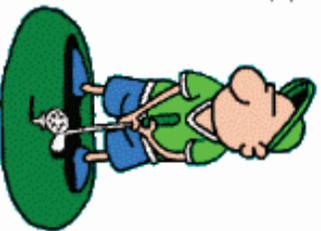
Sons of the American Legion  
 Orlando Memorial Post 19  
 Annual Golf Tournament

Sunday October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

8:30 am Shotgun Start

Best Ball Scramble

Make your own four  
 (4) member team.



At least one player must have  
 membership at Post 19  
 (Post, Unit, or SAL)



# 2016 Golf Outing

Name of your Team:



Player 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Player 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Player 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Player 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Fee is \$45.00 per person

Deadline to Register is Sunday October 2nd, 2016

Entry Fee Must accompany this application.

