

The Legion Link

March 2012

Vol. 19 Issue 8



AIMING HIGH FOR VETERANS



Web Site: www.floridalegion.org

E-mail: mail@floridalegion.org

In this Issue...

Page 1

Dept. Commander
Dept. Vice Commander

Page 2

Dept. Adjutant
Det. Adjutant
Sgt-at-Arms
Children & Youth

Page 3

Membership
Americanism

Page 4

Boy Scout Camporee
DD-214 Information

Page 5

Legislative
Roster Changes

Pages 6 - 7

Judge Advocate

Page 8

Flag Amendment

Page 9

FALPA



Fletcher Williams, Jr.
Department Commander
Commander@floridalegion.org
407.247.5232

As an organization, we support our youth through various programs. Our youth are the future of our great nation and we are constantly seeking to improve their lives.

The Department of Florida American Legion **Teacher of the Year** program serves to recognize dedicated and devoted individuals who, on a constant basis, give so much of themselves on behalf of the youth of Florida....Teachers. Just like veterans, teachers are the unsung heroes of this nation who build our nation's future by working with the youth of today. The Department Americanism Committee believes the Teacher of the Year program within the Florida American Legion will serve to strengthen the bond that exists between The American Legion, the schools of Florida and the administrators and educators of these schools.

Take the time to visit the schools in your location and ask the administrators to submit a deserving individual for Teacher of the Year. Most schools have a Teacher of the Year program so this would be an easy task. This is a sure way for our organization to be recognized.

The deadline for the Teacher of the Year is fast approaching. Do not wait until the last minute to submit an application. Show

the Teachers within your area that we, as an organization, do care and respect them for what they do. By doing this, the Community will see and hear of our good deeds.



Al "Gunner" Dudley
Department Vice Commander

We are only a few months away from the end of the membership year, I want to thank all of you that have worked very hard to make this a successful year! However, there is still work left to do. If any of you need any help do not hesitate to ask. Remember, we work for you. If you are in a Leadership position or are going to be, remember that a lot of eyes are on you so make a good impression and set the example for all to follow. There was a letter sent out to all the Post's asking for input on awards for next year. Please respond, your input is very important to us. "REMEMBER, EVERY DAY IS VETERANS DAY".

Michael McDaniel
Department Adjutant
mike@floridalegion.org

The Florida Revenue, by county (form in the back of this this issue), will show the number of Veterans in your counties and the number of dollars they represent to the State of Florida. Once we give our fellow Veterans a voice with the American Legion, imagine what can be accomplished.

**Note F.D.V.A.A.L. is an acronym for Florida Department of Veterans Affairs/ American Legion. They prepare Veterans claims on behalf of the American Legion.

Ed Sheubrooks
Detachment Adjutant

The Sons of The American Legion would like to remind everyone that the Homecoming for our very own Jim Roberts, National Commander is rapidly approaching. Mark your calendars for March 16-18, 2012. There are many activities that will take place during the weekend with the actual homecoming dinner taking place on Saturday, March 17, 2012.

All reservations must be made in advance in order for us to notify our hosts of the numbers that will be attending. See information in this issue.



Dianne Thibodeau
Department Children & Youth Chairman
C&Y@floridalegion.org



March has arrived which means April is right around the corner. We all know that April is "Children and Youth Month" however, while planning for this, don't forget to celebrate and enjoy "Our Legion's Birthday" March 15-17. On March 15, 1919, the first Legion caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris.

While planning, make sure you have enough materials to have a table containing brochures on the American Legion. At least try and have some of the following for Children & Youth:

- American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Awards Brochure
- American Legion Child Welfare Foundation - Precious Moments
- April is Children & Youth Month
- Children and Youth Programs Piece
- Children's Miracle Network
- Eight and Forty Nurse Scholarship Fund
- Family Support Network
- Gateway Drugs - Choose not to Use
- Make Halloween a Safe and Fun Night
- National Family Week
- Play it Safe - Child Safety
- Temporary Financial Assistance Program
- Warning Signs - Teen Suicide Prevention



While traveling, I have been distributing some "Don't Do Drugs...Make It Your Rule" six inch ruler/bookmark with the Pledge of Allegiance on the back that I informed you about last month. Do you have an immediate need for some? Let me know what date they are needed. I will get them to you one way or another. These are good to give to schools and libraries.

I have written every month about doing your paperwork. I hope you have been listening. It will make your job easier when it comes time to fill out your Consolidated Post Report (CPR) at the end of the year which is coming soon.

"MISSION ACCOMPLISHED"
Art Schwabe, Dept. Sgt.-at-Arms

All 16 Districts have held a Sgt-at-Arms class. A total of 185 members participated in the classes..... THANK YOU!!! I hope this class has given you a better insight of the duties of the Sgt-at-Arms.

Now is the time to take the steps we talked about during the class. I have seen Sgt-at-Arms make changes to improve their Post regarding: sign in sheets, checking membership cards and Hallow Ground. Keep up the good work!!

The "Eddie Humer Award"

This award goes to a Post Sgt-at-Arms recommended by the Post Commander for his/her contribution to the success of the Post. The award will be presented at the Department Convention. A narrative is required with the form. The form will be sent with the Consolidated Post Report.

A second award will be given for the outstanding District Sergeant-At-Arms for his/her contribution to the success of the District. A narrative is required from the District Commander. This award will be presented at the Department Convention

With your dedication to our Four Pillars of the AMERICAN LEGION we can and will make a difference for our Veterans.

Still serving our Veterans, and will continue to do so, for the good of The American Legion

95% Goal

April 4, 2012

Membership Report as of February 24, 2012

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rec'd	% Goal
4	Jay Conti	4,065	4,009	98.62
6	Robert Kiley	9,710	9,506	97.90
5	Jerry Brandt	7,405	7,011	94.68
2	Homer Frailey	1,322	1,245	94.17
12	Mark Johnson	8,357	7,837	93.78
16	James Burgess	11,991	11,242	93.75
3	Larry Krull	1,686	1,575	93.42
17	David Corning	4,188	3,903	93.19
8	Debra Roush	8,284	7,668	92.56
13	Steven Slachta	8,682	8,019	92.36
1	William Bingle	6,197	5,721	92.32
9	Richard Davitt	4,390	4,041	92.05
11	Richard Smith	4,208	3,840	91.25
7	Nancy Thomas	4,002	3,634	90.81
15	James Zipler	5,286	4,798	90.77
14	Gary Decker	3,171	2,795	88.14
Eastern	William Walsh	18,067	17,343	95.99
Northern	Jim Ramos	17,344	16,498	95.12
Western	Charles Lecroy	7,519	6,966	92.64
SW	Gregory Putman	16,966	15,687	92.46
Central	Charlie Wing	21,279	19,674	92.46
Southern	George Rafajko	11,769	10,676	90.71
Department			86,844	
Post 400		14,133	11,308	80.01
Post 208		1,697	1,973	116.26
Totals		108,656	100,125	92.15

Bob Brewster
Membership Chairman
membership@floridalegion.org

I want to congratulate all the Posts in the Department of Florida who have already reached the 90% goal in membership. All of our Districts and Areas have been hitting their goals this year. At this time, we have only 4 Districts and 1 Area who have not hit 90% as of February 20, 2012. Everyone is very close in hitting their goals.

Department of Florida is at 90.095%, which places us in 11th position out of 55 Departments. All this success is definitely not me. It is all of you. Thank you for doing a wonderful job this year!

Now for the hard part - Always the last 10% trickles in. If you have been doing this job for years, it will drive you crazy, however, as you already know, you must communicate with those members who have not yet renewed for 2012. Try the phone, letters, post cards, and when all else fails, face to face communications. Looking at what you have done so far this year I know you will get your 100% plus.

Last, but not least, those of you who have not registered with "mylegion.org", do so A.S.A.P. This is a free membership tool that will really help you succeed now and also in the future. Only the Post Commander and Adjutant can register. This is very simple to do. Even my Post is registered. You will be able to do so many things on this website that I do not have enough space to list them all. I am really traveling now and will be seeing many of you during the next 3 months.

Again, thank you for what you have done and what you will do! For God and Country



Michael Clark
Dept. Americanism Chairman

We are fast approaching the Convention. Please have all reports and awards in on time. Attempting to get all of the awards sorted is very time consuming. So please help us out and do not delay in getting us the information that we need. If awards are late then do not complain that someone else received the award as they may have been the highest given by the due date. Also now is the time to send out the packets about getting the various school systems involved. They need a few months in order to get their Board to approve such items. For God and Country



Some where I have read that a picture is worth a thousand words. If that is the case these two pictures should be worth 2000 words; but words nor pictures can truly express what went on at the American Legion Skills Adventure Camporee - "The Cracker Trail"

This Skills Adventure Camporee consisted of 15 stations where 27 Patrols made up of 191 Scouts were challenged on their knowledge and skills. Their skills were tested before the Camporee as they had to build a chuck wagon. The rules for the chuck wagon were very simple: it had to have four wheels, no motor, big enough to haul all their equipment but small enough to pull. Before the competition started each chuck wagon was inspected to see if it had the proper equipment. They were judged on appearance and how well built they were.

Once the opening horn was sounded no Scout could return to his camp area or ask help from an adult or another patrol. Each patrol was issued a map showing the locations of each of the 15 skill stations. They were tested for 20 minutes on the particular skills of that station. They had 5 minutes to travel from station to station.

All of the Scouts want to return next year to test their skills once again at The American Legion Skills Adventure Camporee. They are returning home to challenge other Scouts to attend and test their knowledge of their Scouting Skills.

I want to thank all of the Legionnaire's that came out to assist with this Camporee. I want to thank the 11th District officers that came to participate and a special thanks to Richard Smith, 11th District Commander, Frank Maitland, District Vice Commander, and Joanne Maitland, 11th District Auxiliary Commander. I also want to thank Ed Manak, Paul Bosco, Carl Hoffman and all of the other staff personnel that made this weekend a success. A very big thanks to Bob Vick for giving his Sunday morning message to the Scouts at Chapel. Of course I cannot overlook Pietera who put this program together. To her it was a labor of love, and she was the glue that held it all together.

We are putting a video together of this event. When it is ready we will let everyone know.

Well it's time, according to the clock on the wall, to say "Have a nice day today and a better day tomorrow."

Yours in Scouting - For God and Country - Bob Scott, Department Boy Scout Chairman



A Great Tool from 4th District Service Officer "STU" from Post #58

No more filling out a SF Form 180 (If you had ever did one you will know how long it is and confusing) and waiting a long time, I just did my request for my DD-214 and it took me less than 3 minutes online and faxed a confirmation page to the National Archives for confirmation. This will speed up the process for your Adjutants and Membership Chairman when a member comes to your Post and cannot find their DD-214.

1. You will help them obtain their DD-214 for Benefits needed.

2. It will get the needed DD-214 for application into The American Legion a lot faster if your Post requires a DD-214 on file.

It takes you to a secure site and confirms your email address.

This is a great tool and every Service Officer should have this to help our members obtain their needed benefits from the VA faster than ever. On the website they have another way you can get it even faster in the case of a death of the Veteran.

Please place this website in your Post newsletters and let's get the word out to our members and Commanders please ensure that your Membership Team has this website bookmarked for future reference.

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html>

Legislative
Stanley Gold, Department Chairman
786.423.2458

February 25th to February 29th a group of Florida Department Officers will be in Washington, D.C. for the Winter Meeting. We will hold our 6th annual luncheon for our 27 members of Congress on the 28th. Each year we have more show up than the year before. Those who do not show up, we will visit their office to let them know what we want them to pass.

Letters of Support

On February 10, The American Legion sent a letter to Rep. Steve Stivers (OH), thanking him for developing draft legislation entitled "Helping Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Return to Employment at Home Act or HIRE at HOME Act." This bill would require states to align their certification processes to take into account the training received by transitioning military members seeking certification or licensure as a state-tested nursing assistant, a certified nursing assistant, a registered nurse, or a commercial driver. A large portion of military training can be directly converted into skills necessary for some civilian jobs. This measure would require states to alter this procedure and to take this training into account. If the states fail to do so, they risk losing certain federal funding. Rep. Stivers hopes to formally introduce the legislation in the coming days.

On February 13, our organization sent a letter to Sen. Olympia Snowe (ME), thanking her for introducing S. 2084, which requires states in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of transportation, to "...establish accelerated licensing procedures to assist veterans to acquire commercial driver's licenses." This measure is similar to the draft legislation of Rep. Stivers mentioned above.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK: "Since the final report of the Supercommittee was released, I (Tim Tetz, National Legislative Director of The American Legion) have been hearing conflicting stories of what will happen to VA medical care accounts. For that matter, I'm very worried about the effect that sequestration will have on other VA accounts. Can you shed any light on all of this?"

The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (the Supercommittee) failed to reach an agreement for budget cuts by its November 23rd deadline. Consequently, the only possible way for \$1.2 billion in funding reductions to be achieved was believed to be through sequestration. This across-the-board process was touted as a way to evenly distribute the "pain" of deficit reduction among all federal agencies.

At the same time, VA was in a kind of limbo. Under the terms of P.L. 112-35, VA programs were liable to the same sequestration cuts as other agencies. However, under the terms of the Balance Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-177), certain VA programs were either completely exempt from reductions (veterans' medical care). There is the possibility that VA's budget for next year may be cut by 2 percent, depending upon which law the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) decides will have precedence.

On February 7, our organization sent a letter to Rep. Jeff Miller (FL) - chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee - thanking him for introducing H.R. 3895, legislation entitled the "Protect VA Healthcare Act of 2012." This measure will amend P.L. 99-177 to clarify that all veterans programs are exempt from sequestration.

When the president released his FY 2013 budget request, VA was slated to receive a 10 percent funding increase. The American Legion is concerned about potential funding cuts should sequestration be imposed on the FY 2013 VA budget. We believe that VA's budget is already insufficient. America's enrolled veterans should not lose their benefits, nor should their healthcare be sacrificed to solve the nation's budget problems.

Roster Changes through February 15, 2012

Post # Title-Name

5th District Commander- Jerry Brandt

ALR Post 197

49 Commander- Frank Kolb III

332 Commander- George Furis

2 Commander- Joseph Filice

2 Adjutant- Lawrence Pelton

126 Adjutant- Gerard Bilquin

27 Adjutant- Gene Andrews

New Info

Contact # 904.910.5201

americanlegion197@yahoo.com Legion Riders Chapter: YES Mtg Time: 1/3 TH

P.O Box 164, Wacissa, FL 32361 h: 850.491.1262 lonesailor84@aol.com

1300 Marshall St. Merritt Isl, FL 32953 H: 325.454.9303 georgefuris@mindspring.com

323 Riverside Dr., Wauchula, FL 33873 H: 863.773.2440 joe.filice@hardeecounty.net

4152 Sasser Rd, Zolfo Springs, FL 33890 h: 863.735.1904 two.bowlers@hotmail.com

1469 SE Tidewater PL, Stuart FL 34997 772.631.8869 g_bilquin@comcast.net

3421 SE 6th Place, Ocala, FL 34471 352.789.5886

*How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single
moment before starting to improve the world.*

~ ~ ~ *Anne Frank*

IT DOESN'T SAY WE CAN'T DO IT
Dick Mondro, Department Judge Advocate

Recently I received a call, trying to find the answer to a question, posed by a member of his Post. The member wanted to do something and couldn't find in the governing documents where it was allowed. So he posed this question to me, "Where does it say we can't do it?" My natural instinct was "If it doesn't say we can do it, then we can't." This is a quote in Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised, 10th. edition): "In bylaws, as in legal documents of any kind, every punctuation mark may have an important effect; and what is omitted may carry as much significance as what is included."

In this article, I will attempt to address this issue. I will show how the governing documents of an organization, empower it to do something. If it isn't in the governing documents then it is not allowed. The idea about writing down what the organization can do is defining its purpose, limiting its' power, and putting forth in positive rules its scope of activity.

Prohibitions are usually not written into the bylaws unless they are of great importance. And often prohibitions are written into the governing documents in positive statements. By defining in specific terms what the officers or the members shall do, it is also saying, "other things not mentioned in these bylaws, the officers or the members can't do."

Again Robert's Rules comes to our aid. In the chapter on writing bylaws, and under the section about officers and their duties, the book says, "Great care must be taken in the writing of the article not to omit any duty, since an implication that the duty is not required could be read into the omission. For this reason, if such an article is to be included, it is well to conclude the section on each office a clause such as "...and such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Society." However, before we begin this subject it is important to understand some political theory about government itself. The concept that everyone needs to understand in a constitutional country, or organization, is: the consent of the governed.

THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED

The political philosophical concept of the "consent of the governed" was brought forth by John Locke in his "The Second Treatise Government." It greatly influenced Thomas Jefferson who wrote the "Declaration of Independence." It has become a basic principle in American democratic thought. John Locke wrote that man basically lives in a state of nature where all men by nature are "free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent." In this state of nature each is governed by the state of nature which respects the rights of others.



In short, we join a society, and relinquish our right to act the majority. If we don't like it, then we can withdraw our membership from that society and no longer be under its control, or we can persuade others to consider that we give our right to be governed by acts of "positive law". We propose the laws; we discuss them, and then adopt them. After they are adopted we agree to obey them.

independently, and agree to adhere to the will of membership from that society and no longer be changing the rules. But the basic principle here is law". We propose the laws; we discuss them, and

When a group of people come together to begin an organization, by writing and adopting bylaws they are agreeing how they are going to be governed. How much power are the members going to have? How much power are the officers and board of directors going to have? How much power are the committees going to have? How are they going to select their officers? Who can serve as officers? What are the rights that come with being a member? What are the responsibilities that come with being a member? These are put into the governing documents and agreed to by the members. When new people apply for membership, then they need to read the bylaws of the organization because by joining they are giving their consent to be governed by these documents.

Another idea of consent by the governed is the idea of withdrawing consent or in essence changing the bylaws. If after a while the bylaws are not working, then the members have the right to amend the bylaws and give their consent to new rules by which they will abide.

If the members give their consent in the bylaws that they will have monthly meetings, a board of directors or a president can't decide to have bi-monthly meetings unless there is a provision to call special meetings. Even though the bylaw doesn't say a president or board can have bi-monthly meetings, the bylaw in "positive law" say the meetings are to be monthly, which preclude more frequent meetings.

If everyone understood this basic concept about the consent of the governed and respected it, there would be none of the tyranny and disrespect for righteous government that we find in so many organizations today.

RIGHTS AND LAWS ARE STATED IN THE POSITIVE

If you know your history, an interesting thing happened on the way to adopting our United States Constitution. There was a very strong debate and even opposition to the constitution because it did not include basic rights or freedoms, such as free speech, right to a trial by jury, right to bear arms, right to assemble, right to free worship, and protection against unlawful search and seizures. These rights were basic rights of Englishmen and the colonists. Anti-Federalists were insistent that they

continued on next page.....

.....continued from previous page

be included in the Constitution. The Federalists insisted that they didn't need to be there because they were natural rights and given in state constitutions.

And as we know, a Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution as the first ten amendments of the constitution. These rights have become the corner stone of constitutional law, and they have become the basis for many of the Supreme Court decisions. What would we do without them? When writing our documents, we must too put them in the positive. It is a general principle that motions be put in the positive. So should our governing documents. Because of this basic rule, we don't have to have lists of "thou shalt not do's." If this basic principle would have been understood in ancient times, there may not of have been the need for all the expanded "thou shalt not" laws in the Bible found in the book of Leviticus. In the new testament, these laws were summed up: love God, and love your neighbor as yourself. This fulfills the entire law.

Another point that I must make is that when a power or right is given in specific terms it sets limits or boundaries within which the members can act. For example, Robert's Rules states that a board of an organization can only do what is assigned to it in the bylaws.

The board can't take an action that conflicts with an action of the assembly, and the members can reverse any action of the board unless the power is specifically given to the board in the bylaws, or if the members disagree with the board action. If the bylaws states that the board can only enter into contracts, then the assembly can't oppose any contract made by the board. However, if this power is not given to the board and the board enters into a contract, the members have the right to rescind this contract. Board decisions dealing with contracts, or any expenditure of post funds, should always be brought before the membership for ratification of the terms of the contract. If the membership does not agree with the way the board uses the power delegated to it by the members, the members have the option of removing those board members. Let's not underestimate the power of the members.

By understanding this basic principle of consent of the governed, putting the governing documents in the positive, members can protect their organizations from those who have no respect for the rules and principles of righteous government. So what is your response when some says, "It doesn't say that we can't do it?" The reply is "where does it say that we can do it."

The moral of this effort is to impress on all the importance of reviewing your bylaws annually, to be sure they say what you want them to say. If they don't, you have the option to amend them, following proper procedure.

Robert III, Henry M., Evans, William J., Honemann, Daniel H., and Balch, Thomas J.,
Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th Edition, (Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2000)

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES **Dick Mondro, Department Judge Advocate**

Undoing Done Deals

Once a motion has been adopted, it may still be possible to change the decision. At the same meeting where the motion was adopted, a member who voted for the motion can move to "reconsider" it; any member can second the motion to reconsider; and a majority vote can adopt it. This brings the original motion back to its debate stage, where it is open to amendment and a new vote. To undo or change a decision at the same or a later meeting, anyone can move to "rescind" the motion (to totally annul it), or to "amend the motion previously adopted"; it takes the lesser of a two-thirds vote or a majority of the entire membership (or if at a later meeting and notice of intent to make the rescind/amend motion is given at the previous meeting or in the call to the meeting, it takes only a majority vote). Vote requirements differ from the above for bylaws, procedural rules, and in committees. -- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), p.304f, 293f.

(See RONR for the timing rules for "reconsider" for multiple meetings per day and for a series of meetings on different days with a single order of business, such as at a convention.)

Can you only reconsider an adopted motion?

At the same meeting, a member who voted against a motion that failed adoption can move that it be reconsidered. At a later meeting (session), anyone can move the originally defeated motion as if it had never been moved. -- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, p.304, 86.

Is discussion never allowed on an issue before a motion is pending?

In general, "Until a matter has been brought before the assembly in the form of a motion proposing a specific action, it cannot be debated" (Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, p.373). But, in a board or committee meeting where there are not more than about a dozen members present, "informal discussion of a subject is permitted while no motion is pending" (p.470), and even larger assemblies may specifically authorize "that a particular subject be discussed while no motion is pending" (p.33). This practice also "may assist a member in framing a proper motion" (p.383). *CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE*

.....continued from previous page

May the chair vote only in case of a tie?

The chair of a small board or committee can always vote (those with about a dozen or fewer in attendance). The chair of larger assemblies can vote on any ballot vote, and whenever his vote would affect the outcome. This latter condition includes voting to make a tie to defeat a motion, voting to break a tie to adopt a motion. See RONR p. 51, 392, 393.

Do Ex officio members of boards and committees have the right to vote?

Ex officio members of boards and committees have all the privileges of membership, including the right to make motions and to vote, as other members (RONR p. 466, 480). "Ex officio" means by virtue of holding an office. E.g., if the bylaws provide that the treasurer is a member of the finance committee, he holds that membership ex officio, by virtue of his office.

When Robert's Rules Don't Matter

Ever been miffed when Robert's Rules of Order weren't followed? Well, sometimes Robert's Rules don't matter! Robert's Rules aren't binding when they aren't adopted as the parliamentary authority. (Check your bylaws to see what book, if any, is the parliamentary authority.) See Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th edition (RONR), p. 16.

Robert's Rules don't matter even when adopted, if a higher rule supersedes the particular rule. The higher rule could be, for example, corporate law, national parent organization bylaws, your own bylaws, or your own special rules of order.

Robert's Rules don't matter if the violated rule is suspended by the required vote (usually a two-thirds vote). See RONR, p. 252.

Robert's Rules also don't matter if a minor rule is violated and no one objects by immediately raising a point of order. A point of order must be made at the time of the offense except for when a continuing breach occurs. See RONR, p. 244.

If no parliamentary authority is adopted, then the organization doesn't have to follow any rules at all?

General parliamentary law (common law) must be followed by groups with no adopted parliamentary authority or other rules of order. See RONR, p. 10, and The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, 4th edition, p. 2-3.



Jay Conti Sr., USN Retired
4th District Commander
Cell: 352.287.1400



This hits home very hard, it needs to pass once and for all as we need to stop radicals from desecrating the United States Flag. The same Flag that many of you fought so hard for, may of your loved ones fought hard for to let Old Glory keep standing high and tall without being desecrated on our own land!

Please push your Senators and Congressman to pass this Senate Joint Resolution 19 and House Joint Resolution 13!

We have been taking it on our chin long enough in our own country, its time for it to finally pass and The American Legion Family will lead the way to ensuring that the American Flag is never desecrated on United States Soil again!

Please pass around for MASS DISTRIBUTION!

INDIANAPOLIS (January 31, 2012) – A spike in flag desecrations has led the leader of the nation's largest veterans organization to call on lawmakers to quickly pass a proposed constitutional amendment that when ratified by the required states would allow Congress to protect the U.S. Flag from desecration.

"For years opponents of this measure have been telling us that flag desecration in the United States was so rare that this amendment was not needed," American Legion National Commander Fang A. Wong said. "Yet the Associated Press reports that there have been several such incidents at the Occupy Oakland demonstrations. Moreover, some in Congress say that this is a waste of time. What they don't understand is that most Americans are sickened when they see Old Glory desecrated and polls show that they widely support this amendment. This measure has bipartisan support. The flag protection amendment is a prime opportunity for members of Congress to come together and accomplish something great for the American people."

The struggle to protect the flag from desecration began shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1989 that flag desecration was "protected speech." The American Legion and other organizations were outraged that the 5-4 ruling invalidated flag protection laws in 48 states and the District of Columbia. In response, The American Legion and the Citizens Flag Alliance, a coalition of more than 140 organizations that is now chaired by Harvard Law Professor Richard Parker, have championed the passage of a narrowly drawn constitutional amendment that would return to the people the right to protect the flag of the United States. Such an amendment has passed the House of Representatives six times but has fallen short of the necessary two-thirds supermajority required to pass the Senate.

"The last time a vote was taken in the Senate it fell only one vote short," Wong said. "As people are again seeing images on YouTube of their flag being desecrated – the same flag that covers the coffins of our war heroes returning from Afghanistan – we think it's time for Congress to take another vote. The American people should tell their representatives and senators to support S.J. Res 19 and H.J. Res. 13. Congress can either stand with the one percent who desecrate the flag or the 99 percent who revere it."

The amendment itself would not ban flag burning. It would simply authorize Congress to pass a law which would prohibit the desecration of actual U.S. flags. Its entire text is "The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." If the measure were passed by Congress, it would require ratification by three-fourths of the states before it would become enshrined in the Constitution.

Bonnie Carter, FALPA President
4211 Helena St NE
St Petersburg, FL 33703
727-521-4049
dincwaz2@tampabay.rr.com
Ps. I'd love to get your newsletter!



2011-2012 Annual FALPA 'Best Papers' Contest

CATEGORIES:

1. District, Area, Miscellaneous Publications

For District-wide, Area-wide or Regional-wide publications:

A. Legion publications

B. All other district, area or regional publications (SAL, Auxiliary, 40 &8, La Femmes, 20&4, etc.)

2. Larger Posts

For all publications produced at the post level:

A. Posts over 750 members

B. Posts with 250 - 749 members

3. Smaller Posts, Units, Squadrons

For all publications produced at the post level:

A. Posts up to 250 members

B. All other unit/squadron publications (SAL, Auxiliary, etc.)

4. Editorials

Must have appeared originally in an American Legion or member publication within the contest year.

A. George Hartley award -- Original effort of Editor

B. Guest editorial (by lined or author identified)

Rules

Please read and follow the rules carefully. Competition Year - Papers and editorials submitted must have been issued / published between May 1, 2010 and April 30, 2011.

Basis Of Judging - Papers will be judged on: Content (Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, local, county, district, state and national news, as appropriate); clear, concise and balanced writing; make-up; design and appearance; use of photos and illustrations.

Editorials will be judged on: Headline and lead arousal of interest; clear, concise and imaginative writing; Research and grasp of subject; Timely and appropriate objectives suitable to publication.

Entry Instructions

- Must be a current member of the Florida American Legion Press Association
- For categories 1, 2, 3 and 4, submit three (3) papers, one each of three separate issues.
- For category 4, submit only one (1) editorial. Send entire paper and put on coversheet the name and page number of the editorial.
- For all entries, an identifying cover sheet must be submitted, to include the following information, typed or printed neatly:
 - a. Name and Number of Post, District, Unit, Squadron, etc.
 - b. Full address of Post, Unit, Squadron, etc.
 - c. Name of Publication
 - d. Frequency of Publication
 - e. Average circulation number
 - f. Name mailing address, phone number of Editor
 - g. Name, mailing address, and phone number of entrant, if other than editor
 - h. For Editorials, also include: Name of author and title of editorial

Entries must be postmarked no later than May 15th, 2011 and mailed to: Jim Ramos, 6609 SE 85th St, Newberry, FL 32669

Please mark the lower left corner of your mailing envelope: "CONTEST" and indicate the entry category for judging