



# The LEGION LINK

*LEGION PRIDE: We Fight for Veterans*



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## Jim Ramos

*Department Commander*  
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## The Legion Family:

**Florida Legionnaires**, I would like to thank all the Districts I have visited so far this year. You have welcomed me with open arms and hospitality so thank you to the following

Districts: 7<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

**November included a visit:** To the 13<sup>th</sup> District visit from the 19<sup>th</sup> through 22<sup>nd</sup>. Thanksgiving week I was at Post 252 for Thanksgiving and I began my 16<sup>th</sup> District visit on the weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> though the 30<sup>th</sup>.

**As we all know November and December membership will start slowing down**, but we need to pick it back up starting in January 2016. So from me have a safe Holiday season: Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See if you can make 100% by Dec 31, 2015 it will help you and your Post.

**January let's get started with membership. Do what you can because January 20th dues will increase;** January is also we have our National Vice Commander Jimmy Lane visiting the Eastern Area (6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Districts) from Jan 14<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> and we're hopefully going to increase membership while we're doing this visit.

**In February every District and every Post:** Please check membership numbers and help us get membership going strong. One idea is to do a membership drive the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday). Also, call up your expired memberships from 2014 and 2015 they may be a new member now. Work the Post 400 and Post 208 list. We can start off a good membership drive throughout the whole Department of Florida. Try doing an Open House and invite the public and your community to see what your Post does with programs to help the Children & Youth, their families



and for our Veterans. Remember work with your local service's (VA representative, Service Officer, Fireman, Law-enforcement and Blood Mobile).

Every District and Post participating in the membership drive could also do a **Veterans Awareness Walk** to help our members highlight the **Legion Pride** visibility in your local communities by walking a mile around your Post or from a Veterans monument to your Post. Let people know what the American Legion does for their communities and for our Veterans around the state.

Thank you, Legion Families and have a safe 2016. "Legion Pride"

**"For God and Country"**

**Jim Ramos**  
*Department Commander*

### ***Fall Conference***

We had a great time seeing all of you at the Fall Conference and it went very well. We would like to have your input. What was great, what was good and what would you like us to improve?  
Email [commander@floridalegion.org](mailto:commander@floridalegion.org)  
or [mail@floridalegion.org](mailto:mail@floridalegion.org)



**Joseph Magee**  
*1st Vice Commander*  
 1stvice@legionmail.org  
 (561) 315-0672



Hello Legionnaires.

August 28 through September 3 were the dates this year for the National Convention. What a great time we had. Baltimore is such an exciting city, with more to do than you can imagine. The hotel and its personnel were most cooperative. The venue for the after Parade Party was probably the best ever. The

fears of violence were unfounded and the people most helpful. Even with all flights involved there were no delays!

Upon returning home, it was back to the business at hand. I attended the 9-11 Memorial Ceremony conducted by the City of North Port Police Dept. It was a somber and moving ceremony. Next up, the 9th District Meeting, where I spoke mostly on the benefits of attending the National Convention.

From there, I had a great time at Post 64 for Al Porter's Roast. All I can say is we had a HOOT of a time. The Children & Youth Annual Golf Tournament was held in Lehigh Acres, what a team we had. Past SAL Detachment Commander Kirk Miller, Past Dept. Sgt-At-Arms Bill McIntyre, Dean Brown, and myself. I won't say which of us really play golf and which of us bang the ball around.

Sept 28 I was invited to Homestead Post 43, for a street renaming ceremony. The portion of the street running past the Post was renamed American Legion Way. Congratulations on all who worked to make that a reality. While in that neck of the woods, a side trip to Key Largo, Post 333, was a must. While there, I ran into Woody (only old-timers will remember him) and had a lengthy conversation with the Post Commander.

Next was the 16th District Picnic, good food and all the trimmings. The weather cooperated, other than the wind. It was blowing at a good clip, not good for our curls. Then, there was the Fall Fest at Post 254, another good time.

Next was the 16th District Picnic, good food and all the trimmings. The weather cooperated, other than the wind. It was blowing at a good clip, not good for our curls. Then, there was the Fall Fest at Post 254, another good time.

Oct 11-13 I was off to Indianapolis for the Fall Meetings as a member of the National Americanism Council. Upon returning from Indy, I was off to Cocoa for Big Al and Rosie's wedding, another exciting good time. Also, while in Cocoa, I met with Representatives of the International Palms Resort in reference to holding the Commander's Leadership Retreat there. Some of you will remember the Holiday Inn on the beach, well it is now International Palms Resort.

The management there are extremely excited about having us back and quoted some fantastic rates, well below \$100.00 per night, and we will be right on the beach.

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Soon after it was off to Dunedin for Kelli's fundraiser. What a fantastic time. What a job done by so many volunteers, they should be so proud of themselves. A week later, we headed back to Dunedin for a World War II appreciation luncheon with 13 WWII Vets in attendance. I left there to go to the 9th District Ball at Post 142. The next morning, we headed to Lehigh Acres first stopping in LaBelle. I had a nice talk with the Post Commander and some old friends. Unfortunately, the saddest ceremony attended this quarter was the Memorial Service for Donna Burkett at Post 323. Pat and my heartfelt condolences went out to Andy; Donna was such a lovely person and will be greatly missed.

I attended the Veterans Day Ceremony at North Port and later in the day attended the Ground Breaking Ceremony in Punta Gorda, the site of what will be a permanent replica of the Viet Nam Wall. This ceremony was attended by Gov. Rick Scott, whom I had the pleasure of having a short conversation with, and later on received the Governor's Veterans Service Award.

Attended the Department of Florida Fall Conference in Orlando. Besides the normal schedule, the highlight for me was the Candidate Call, where I had the privilege of announcing my Candidacy for the high office of Department Commander. It also was a pleasure meeting Charles Schmidt, the leading Candidate for National Commander.

And now I will end this article asking if there is anyone out there interested in working the Department of Florida Hospitality Room at the next National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Our previous hosts have resigned and we are looking for a new crew. Anyone interested, please call me at 941-204-4914.

Until next time, be safe on your travels, have a bountiful Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Joseph Magee**

*1st Vice Commander*

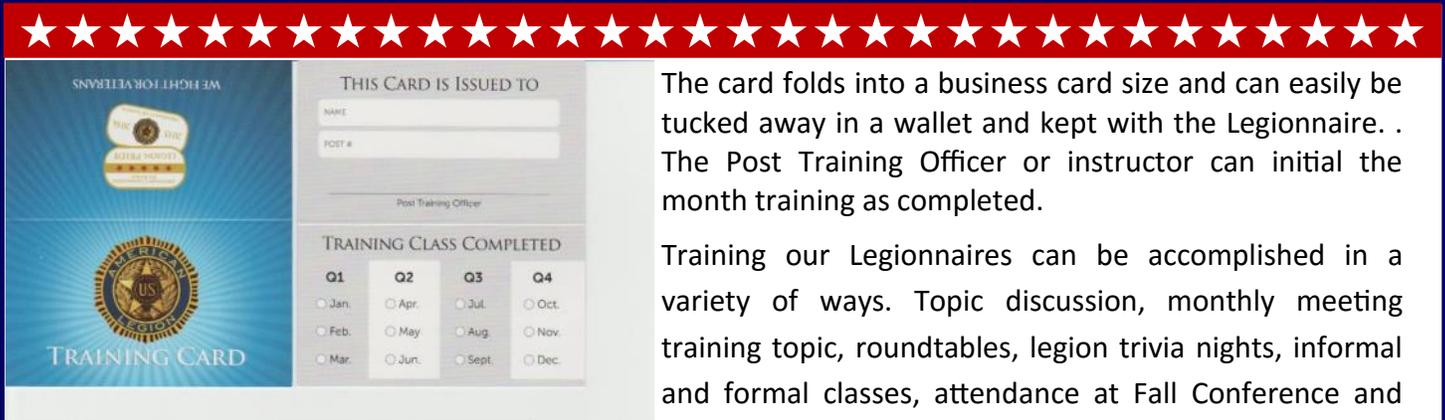


**Stephen Shuga**  
*2nd Vice Commander*  
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As we approach the various festive holidays, we are rapidly closing out the 2015 calendar year and beginning 2016. Training one another is necessary to be in tune with our American Legion.

Our American Legionnaires provided a training idea that bares merit. An individual Training Card was created and is available to Legionnaires by contacting the Department 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander, Steve Shuga.

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The card folds into a business card size and can easily be tucked away in a wallet and kept with the Legionnaire. . The Post Training Officer or instructor can initial the month training as completed.

Training our Legionnaires can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Topic discussion, monthly meeting training topic, roundtables, legion trivia nights, informal and formal classes, attendance at Fall Conference and Annual Convention classes. We often conduct some sort

of training to each other and this is creditable towards meeting out training requirements.

The Post must also record their Legion training and ensure that it is credited on their end of the year Consolidate Post Report (CPR). If no room exists, then complete an addendum sheet and gain the credit worthy of your efforts.

Remember, it is everyone’s responsibility to complete some sort of training often. We may say we know it all but we still need to brush up on our knowledge, skills, and abilities to be a training guru.

When you are pursuing Membership into The American Legion, express to them that they will receive training through various venues that will keep them informed so they can be a better steward for the organization.

With all that we are about to endure with the approaching New Year, remember to train one another to be a better, wiser, educated American Legionnaire. I wish you all Happy Holidays, a Merry Christmas and safe travels where ever you may venture to, during this holiday season.

**Steve Shuga**

*2nd Vice Commander*



**Dianne Boland**  
 3rd Vice Commander  
 3rdvice@legionmail.org  
 (561) 315-0672

Greetings: In my travels I have met many wonderful new people and reconnected with many old friends. One such new person is only 8 years old. His name is Alan and he is in 3rd grade. His community project this year was to raise \$20,000 to send veterans on the Honor Flights. He has raised money for this project for the last two years increasing the dollar amount each year. He calls it a “Super Hero Fun Run for the Real Heroes”

I’m also working with the Auxiliary on what’s called “The Dictionary Project”. This project helps every student in 3rd grade receive their own personal dictionary.

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If you hear about it around your post or district, be sure and help them make this project successful.

How much knowledge do you have of the American Legion? Have you attended the National Legion College or the Department Legion College? How about the National Legion Extension Institute? This course is a computer based, online course that's available whenever you have the time. It's only \$4.95 for Legion or SAL members and \$9.95 for everyone else. It can be found at <https://www.legion.org/alei>. It's a great refresher course also. Check it out.

What I have for December, January and February are:

National Employer of the Disabled Award – Dept deadline Dec 16, 2015

Employer of Older Workers Award – Dept deadline Dec 16, 2015

Employer of Veterans Award – Dept deadline Dec 16, 2015

Employment Service Awards – Dept deadline Dec 16, 2015

Homeless Veterans Outreach Award – Dept deadline Dec 14, 2015

Boys State Money Due - Dept deadline Dec 23, 2015

Junior Shooting Sports deadline Jan 1, 2016

Post Oratorical Contest deadline Jan 17, 2016

South Western Area Ball Jan 16, 2016

Central Area Ball Jan 30, 2016

District Oratorical Contest deadline Jan 31, 2016

Southern Area Ball Feb 13, 2016

Boy Scout Registration Deadline for Cracker Trail Feb 15, 2016

National Washington Conference Feb 21-24, 2016

Area Oratorical Contest deadline Feb 21, 2016

Boys Scouts Cracker Trail Feb 26-28

Need help? Give a call. Is your post having a function that supports one of our programs? Ask. I'd love to help and attend (if possible). Have you already had a big function? Write. I'd love to hear about it.

***Dianne Boland***

*3rd Vice Commander*

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## Dennis Boland

*NEC*

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### THE CULTIVATION OF FUTURE AMERICAN LEADERS

The American Legion's Americanism Commission continues to foster and enrich the lives of young men and women – a responsibility it has been upholding for decades. More than 170,000 young men and women participated in Americanism youth programs in 2014. Participants learned important values such as leadership and citizenship through Boys State, Boys Nation, American Legion youth programs will continue to enjoy robust participation as they produce the next generation of law enforcement officers, political leaders, entertainers, Major League Baseball players, astronauts and high-profile public servants. After all, molding today's youth into the leaders of tomorrow is a founding premise of both Americanism and The American Legion as an organization.

The Youth Cadet Law Enforcement Program is the most recent addition to Americanism's portfolio of youth programs. Founded in 1985, the program provides a week's worth of hands-on education sessions to young men and women on the importance of law enforcement and the day-to-day life of an officers. It was transferred from the National Security Commission to Americanism in 2011, and continues to teach young people respect for law enforcement while giving them a glimpse of an average day's work for a police officer or state trooper. Currently, 17 American Legion departments operate Youth Cadet Law Enforcement programs.



## Larry Sheets

*Department Judge Advocate*

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All Posts should check to see that their Constitution and By-Laws are up to date, and in compliance with the new Department Constitution and By-Laws that are in the Legion Roster you recently received from Department Headquarters.

If by chance your Post Constitutional and By-Laws are not up to date, you should make the necessary changes and submit them for approval. Remember that any changes must be first approved by your Post membership in accordance with the Amendment process in your Constitution and By-Laws.

A rule of thumb is Posts should update their Post Constitution and By-Laws every three years.

I also receive questions, emails, and phone calls regarding problems with the Post Lounge. Be advised that the American Legion does not recognize the Lounge, Bar, Club Room, etc. as being a part of the Post. Posts



## Shelli Romeu

*Department Historian/100th Anniversary Chair*  
[historian@legionmail.org](mailto:historian@legionmail.org)



I had been asked in the past about a contest for websites/social media. Although this does not fall into the "History Contest" category, there is actually a contest at both the Florida and the National levels with the FALPA and NALPA. If you have not done so, please check out the Centennial Web Page and look at your Post (or other Posts!) to see if there is something needed to help show your History. If you do not want to update this yourself and have a picture or a bit of History, let me know – I can do this for you. If you want to be the POC for your Post, the only steps to take are to create an account on the [www.centennial.legion.org](http://www.centennial.legion.org) site using the email contact address, and then send this email address and the Post number to associate it to and I will get this updated for you so you can start updating your Post information. We need to get more Post history (past and present) out there so our state shows the best 100 years possible.

Basic Post information needed: Namesake, Post Picture, Webpage URL, Facebook URL, Youtube URL, 1<sup>st</sup> Commander Name, Notable members, any historical tidbits (like history of Post's name or location, etc.).

I want to really thank the following Posts for their great updates on the Centennial website: Post 0019 Orlando, Post 0024 Bradenton, Post 0054 Fernandina Beach, and Post 0063 Winter Garden. Great job! Everyone can check these out to get ideas for your own Post shell updates! For those who are not currently managing your own Post shell, please do not create a new shell for your Post – I will make you the Administrator of the current shell out there, just contact me.

There are 169 Posts that do not have an associated "Post Picture" – if one of these is your Post and you have a picture, let me know. I can scan and input this, or if you have digital you can email this to me. If your Post does not have a "Post Home", you can send a picture of something relevant to your Post that would showcase what it means in the community – i.e., a picture showing support of one of the Post Programs such as the Baseball team and Post members, signage, old Drum & Bugle Band photos, Parade pics with Post Members/Cars/Floats, etc. This gives a more meaningful touch to the Post's presentation on the website.

I especially need photos and any other information for our 1919 Chartered Posts. Specifically these: Post 0012 W Palm Beach, Post 0017 New Smyrna Beach, 0022 Cocoa, 0027 Ocala, 0028 Key West, 0033 Pensacola, 0036 Ft. Lauderdale, 0038 Ft. Myers, 0039 Vero Beach, 0040 Ft. Pierce, 0041 Eustis, 0043 Homestead, 0046 Tarpon Springs, 0047 Lake Worth, 0049 Monticello, and 0052 Leesburg. If you can assist or know someone I can contact from these Posts that may have photos/history, please let me know!!

The Florida Centennial Committee needs YOU!!!! Please let me know if you can participate – at any level – so we can get our celebration ideas finalized and move forward with planning! Any input would be greatly appreciated and welcomed.

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I had been asked in the past about a contest for websites/social media. Although this does not fall into the "History Contest" category, there is actually a contest at both the Florida and the National levels with the FALPA and NALPA. To enter the contest, you need to be a member of FALPA (Florida American Legion Press Association) and/or NALPA (National American Legion Press Association). For more information, please see the FALPA Blog at <http://floridaamericanlegionpressassoc.org/wordpress> or facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Florida-American-Legion-Press-Association-FALPA/154971781275869>. These are great groups to be a part of especially if you are the person doing your Post newsletter(s) and website/FB content!

One last comment regarding the Post and ALR History Narrative/Yearbook contest next June: Please remember to fill-out and include with your contest entry the "Certification Form" for your specific contest. This helps us for tracking/judging/and subsequent shipping.

### **Shelli Romeu**

*Department Historian/100th Anniversary Chair*

*Historian@legionmail.org*



## THE AMERICAN LEGION *Centennial celebration*

### **Florida American Legion Specialty License Plate**

**Congratulations!** The Department of Florida has reached the 1,000 pre-sale of the specialty license plates! Those who pre-ordered should have been notified by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLDHSMV). Plates are now in all local Tax Collector's Offices, for \$35.00. Proceeds from the plate will go towards the programs of The American Legion, Department of Florida. Help support our programs and get your plate today!



For more information, visit the Department Website:

[Www.floridalegion.org](http://www.floridalegion.org)



**Tom Gora**  
*Department Sergeant-at-Arms*  
 Sgt-at-Arms@legionmail.org



“You will guard especially against the loss of one of The American Legion’s greater possessions, our deep and abiding spirit of comradeship.”

Congratulations to the Honor Guard of the Dorie Miller Post 331, Orlando, who won FIRST PLACE at the 2015 National Convention in the Honor Guard Military Class competition! I also want to send out ‘kudos’ to those who proudly represented the Department of Florida as they joined me working the national convention floor as National Assistant Sgt. At Arms; Bill Hoppner, Jim ‘Radar’ Henry, and Loretta Young. Next year join me as a volunteer in Cincinnati to proudly represent the Department of Florida on the floor of the National Convention so please consider volunteering! You will be rewarded with a pin, meeting dignitaries from all over the country, and from foreign lands, and you will experience things that most delegates on the floor don’t have a chance to experience. Most importantly, all delegates and guests that you encounter will see that Florida orange on your cap, and that what it is all about, service to others and pride in our Department.

Since the start of the membership year I have been busy as Department Sgt. at Arms and I love it! I have provided two Sgt. at Arms classes reaching over 45 members in the 5th and 16th Districts. I was also honored to be an instructor at the Florida Legion College in July. In October I made a return trip back to the Florida Highway Patrol Academy with Bob Brewster and PDC George Wehrli to discuss development of the Youth Law Cadet Program, an initiative started last year by Past Commander Conti when I was Department Law and Order Chairman. FHP has developed a great new program for the Department of Florida and they made a presentation including an impressive video about the program at the Fall Conference. During the Fall Conference in November I held another Sgt. at Arms class as well as instructing the American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI). I would be happy to provide either class to any Post, District or Area, just contact me at [Sgt-at-arms@legionmail.org](mailto:Sgt-at-arms@legionmail.org). I have also identified four short U.S. Army instructional videos about basic Honor Guard maneuvers, a great refresher course or a basic training tool for a Post starting a new Honor Guard. I can e-mail you those videos, just ask.

Now let’s take some time to review American Legion uniform cap etiquette. Sometimes we forget the basics so it is worth reviewing the basics from time to time.

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district, or state lettering. (When you un-cover and lay the cap down, always lay it down with the American Legion emblem side up).

\* If desired, the following items must be placed on the right side of the cap:

- o Additional lettering, restricted to either the name of a Post or to an officer title, such as Past Commander
- o Cap insignias or badges for past or present officers
- o Consecutive membership insignia, membership stars, and/or authorized Legion or military service decorations

\* Names or nicknames of individual members cannot be used on caps.

\* The Legion uniform cap should be worn by its members only when in attendance at official Legion meetings or ceremonies or as official guests at patriotic or other civil functions or by individuals when officially representing The American Legion on public occasions.

\* A member is considered to be in uniform if wearing an official Legion uniform cap. Therefore it is not proper to wear the cap while eating a meal at an official Legion or civic luncheon or dinner. Most can expect to pay a fine small fine if you forget this one!

\* The cap should be worn in a place of worship only by the Guard of Honor, Color Guard, and Commander of same while in marching order or standing guard. When returned to and seated in pews, the cap should be removed.

\* Legion posts marching in formation into a place of worship should uncover at the door, hold the cap with the right hand over the heart until the arrival in the pews and commanded to take seats, remaining uncovered during the entire service. At the close of the service, upon command, the post shall arise, the members holding the cap with the right hand over the heart will march out of the place of worship and recover after marching through the door.

\* Legion members not in formation will uncover upon entering the place of worship and remain uncovered during the entire service and will recover after leaving the place of worship.

\* When at a funeral, the cap should be held over the heart as one approaches the casket and is not at any time worn in a place of worship (except by the Guard of Honor, Color Guard, or Commander of same while in marching order or standing guard.) At the graveside, the cap should be held in the right hand over the heart during the entire service. In cold and inclement weather, the cap should not be worn.

\* In Legion meetings, the cap should be worn except during moments of the Pledge of Allegiance, prayer, and when standing in silent reverence in memory of departed comrades, when the cap should be held with the right hand over the heart.

\* Female members of the Legion should wear their caps in the manner prescribed for female personnel of the armed services.



On November 9, 2015, the Honorable Ander Crenshaw, U.S. House of Representatives, 4th Congressional District, honored veterans from Nassau County with a ceremony and reception to honor their service in recognition of Veterans Day. Each veteran was presented a Congressional Medal and Certificate to thank them for their service. Among the veterans recognized was a group of Legionnaires representing American Legion Post 54, Fernandina Beach. The members of Post 54 are pictured here, wearing their medals, in a group photo with Congressman Crenshaw



**Steve Newman**  
*Department Chaplain*  
[Chaplain@floridalegion.org](mailto:Chaplain@floridalegion.org)

Greetings and a big hello to my fellow Legionnaires. I hope all has been well for each and every one of you. Well it's that time of year again to reflect on family and friends, joyous gatherings and celebrations. It's a time to put into perspective all those in need for many various reasons. We need to put aside our differences and come together as a family, even if it is for a short period of time. Giving thanks and praise for all those things we are in receipt of and want to have is so important during the holiday season. Being with others whenever and wherever possible can make things that much more pleasant and pleasing to the heart and soul. Having

God in your life will only add to that occasion. With God everything can be positive, good, and productive. This season count on God to be a part of your celebrations in every thought, word, and deed. I know that many things in life are not easy and sometimes it difficult to get through the holiday season, however, with God in your life He can make it bearable and easier. Remember too, that prayer is a strong tool that is so simple to use and has powerful results. Praying with God increases your well-being, gives you hope and a sense of right direction. Remember you are never alone because God is always with you. So when you have a free moment take time out and say a prayer. It can be about anything or anyone. It gives you comfort, a sense of direction, and guidance. The other good quality about prayer is that it's free. It only costs a little bit of your time but it is greatly worth it. So in closing I wish all of you a truly happy, safe, and joyous holiday season. I leave you with the following thought, "Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua1:9. "

For God and Country" Department Chaplain Steven Newman

**Steve Newman**  
*Department Chaplain*



**Mike Kirchoff**  
*Western Area Commander*  
[WesternArea@legionmail.org](mailto:WesternArea@legionmail.org)

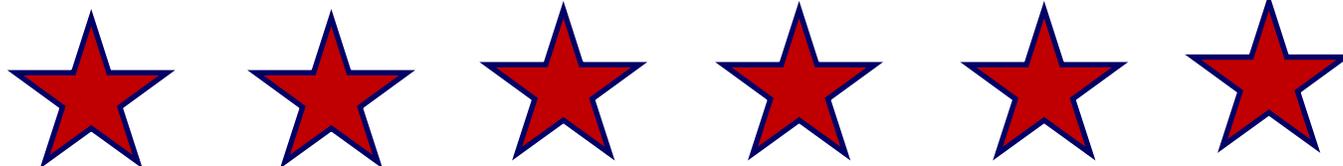
Western Area is moving along, still need work in several areas especially membership. We have a couple of Posts that need help getting their membership renewals turned in. Since the last article I've been on the National Legacy Ride from Indianapolis to Baltimore to escort the National Commander to Convention. I also attended National Convention. Florida had a great turn out for both the ride and attending the Convention. September was spent mostly on the road either at Convention or riding back to Ohio for my 50th High School Reunion.

While home for the weekend of September the 12<sup>th</sup> I attended the 1st District Auxiliary Meeting, thanks to 1st District President Linda for the invite. The meeting was held at Pensacola Naval Air Station at the National Flight Academy. What an experience at the Flight Academy! I would ask everyone who knows of a young student that is interested in STEM Program to check out the Academy.

October was back on the road to Indianapolis for the Fall Meetings. 1st District has also held several Round Robins in support of Project: VetRelief, we will have the totals at Fall Conference from all the Districts.

In the last two months visits were made to Post 365,375, 403, 221, 296, 78, 240, 340, 66, 296, 384, 235 in District 1 and Post 116 in 2nd District. After Conference I will be traveling to 2nd District more often as well as more Posts in District 1.

**Mike (Goat) Kirchoff**  
*Western Area Commander*



**Jerry Brandt**  
*Membership Chairman*  
[membership@legionmail.org](mailto:membership@legionmail.org)



Commanders,

We've had a good increase from two weeks ago, we are now at Department Level, 67.56%. This year we are down 549 renewals/new members from where we were this time last year. Please reach out to your Posts, have them send in any renewals they have. By the way, currently at National, we are #36 or the 55 Departments of the American Legion, let us do better!

I want to specially thank those Posts who have already reach their 100% goal.

- Post 32, Hialeah, with 102.174%
- Post 84, Havana, with 107.317%
- Post 144, Miami Lakes, with 101.493%

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## PROJECT: VETRELIEF

A PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

**Those who bravely served our country are facing extreme challenges - right here at home.**

We need your help to continue our mission of providing a Legion of support for our service men and women as they transition into civilian lives. As you make your final 2015 tax-deductible donations, please consider the immediate, and in some cases life altering, impact you can make on your country's service members and their families.

With your help, PROJECT: VetRelief can confront these issues by addressing a service member's need in a time of crisis, working to secure benefits, and offering a support system, all serving to lessen the burden carried by our service men and women and deter these major issues from affecting their lives.

Your year-end gift moves us one step closer to our vision of a nation where no service member stands alone. Best wishes for a bright and beautiful holiday season, from our family here at PROJECT: VetRelief to you and yours.

P.S. You will make a difference with your tax-deductible donation of any amount.

### THE FLORIDA SENTINEL BULLETIN: NEWS RELEASE:

#### TRINITY CME HOSTS BLACK PEARL AWARDS

Trinity CME Church will present Black Pearl Awards to select women of faith at its Annual Women's Day Celebration on Sunday, November 22, 2015 at its 11:15AM and 3PM services. Women who have quietly and unselfishly rendered decades of services to the community in the areas of religion, arts, volunteerism, music, health, media, youth mentoring, military or other areas of service will be celebrated.

The 2015 Black Pearl award recipients are **Eunice Butts**, Doris Cannon (Purple Passion), Diane Hart, Gwen Hayes, Florence Howell, Josephine Hubbard, Bonnie James, Denise Meteye James, Venus Jones, Ruth Jefferson, Lillie Mae Iglis, Paula Kay, Ruth McNair, and Sonji Rhanes, who like a Black Pearl are described as "extremely rare," "strong," "The Pearl of Queens," a symbol of "hope for wounded hearts", "truth", "wisdom," "healing" and "life."

Reverend Debra Thomas, Pastor of Mount Calvary CME Church, Lake Wales, Florida will deliver the 11:15AM morning sermon, and Rev. Dr. Delores Cain of Heritage Community Baptist Church will deliver the 3PM afternoon sermon. The theme for the celebration, "What's Love Got to Do With It? Loving God, Self and Others", will focus on forming stronger and healthier bonds of love for God and self, and showing greater love for other women and our children and men. Thus, the women of Trinity, its members and guests will be celebrating women of faith who work to make our women, families, youth, and community healthier and stronger.





**Diane Schmidt**  
*Public Relations Chairman*  
[PublicRelations@legionmail.org](mailto:PublicRelations@legionmail.org)

Public Relations-it is all about image-how you come across to the public. When you hear the word "Lexus" what do you think: Luxury and quality? When you hear the word McDonalds-you think something else.

Wall Street Journal? Penny saver? Each of these "institutions" project a certain image and attract a certain audience. What is the Image of your American Legion Post? In some communities, the Legion has no image because no community programs are conducted. In other towns, members of the Legion are Champions on social issues and pillars of the community. Still others may view a Legion Post in their town as a watering hole for older veterans without offering much to Iraqi/Afghanistan veterans and families.

Each public perception is its reality. It is what it is. You should constantly review your Post standing on the image meter. Ask a Reporter how they perceive your Post. Winter Park, Post 112 is a good example. They have developed an excellent rapport with media and get very good coverage. If your Post is successful in obtaining results, share these ideas at your District meetings.

When we plan an event, who do we target as our audience? Do we really reach the people we needed to reach? Who came? It is up to you to make Public Relations important in your Post. If you are known to be exclusive to your own tight group, others won't be inclined to stop by. Think about how you come across.

If you are known to reach out and help other veterans, you will attract Veterans who want to do the same. Public Relations will have an impact on everything you do in your Post and everything you do in your Post will somehow impact your Public Relations. National Media and Communications is equipped to assist you with recordings for your specific needs. They are just a phone call away: 317-630-1253.

**Diane Schmidt**  
*Public Relations Chairman*



**Paul Martel**  
*Department Legislative Chairman*  
*Past National Sgt-at-Arms*  
[StateLegislative@legionmail.org](mailto:StateLegislative@legionmail.org)

Hello to all the believers in freedom, and thank you for being in contact with your state and Washington representatives. As you know freedom is not free, we must take the time to let them know what YOUR thoughts are, what YOU want them to do, remember, they work for us. Many of them think otherwise but with work, knowledge, and your voice we can change their minds.

I hope you are on my mailing list receiving information and you are passing it along, bringing the information to your post and speaking about what you received, informing your members, under the good of the Legion. If you are not on the list please, send your name and e-mail address to me, I will add you.

By the time you read this we will have had our Fall Conference; I will have information from our state legislators on Saturday when I give my report to the members that will be relevant for our veterans as well as some of the bills that are coming up in the future, we may be asking to defeat some of them. I am waiting from one of the legislator for that information, but either way, if you are at the conference you will learn what this is all about or you will be getting an e-mail with that information.

I received a letter from Congressman John Mica speaking about the opening of various additional medical departments at the new Lake Nona VA Hospital center, positive action on the future of the Lake Baldwin complex and success to the expansion of the Orange city VA clinic. Lake Baldwin will remain open and continue to serve outpatient needs. Currently the clinic and pharmacy are open and operating. The Lake Baldwin Center is also adding additional medical services including podiatric and wound care.

The Lake Nona Center is now open with different departments and specialties becoming operational every month. Outpatient surgery will begin in December with full inpatient surgeries set to begin in January of 2016.

In the next few months the completion of a fully-functional state of-the-art Emergency department staffed 24 hours a day will be activated. Congressman Mica is a dedicated man who works for you, the veteran, he was instrumental in getting the Lake Nona debacle cleaned up and keeping Lake Baldwin alive, his e-mail in Washington is: [www.mica.house.gov](http://www.mica.house.gov), if you are so inclined to say thank you. Make sure you say you are from the American Legion.



**John P. Bell**  
*16th District Commander*  
[16thDistrict@legionmail.org](mailto:16thDistrict@legionmail.org)



Let's not forget our long term members. They were the life blood of our American Legion during its growing years. I had the distinct pleasure to present award plaques to two long term members during our District installations in June. Post 173 in Holiday Fla. honored Gerald Clark a FIFTY year member as well as past department officer and still very active in the Post. Post 335 in Hudson Fla. honored Clarence Cedars a SEVENTY year member of the American Legion. Check your green membership sheets and seek out these long term members and give them their well deserved accolades.

For God and Country

**George Wehrli**  
*Boys State Chairman*  
[DeptBoysState@legionmail.org](mailto:DeptBoysState@legionmail.org)



## **BOYS STATE \$350.00 FOR POSTS FOR 2016**

Thanks to the American Legion Department of Florida Executive Committee, on Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of November they voted for Posts to contribute \$350.00 for each Boys State Delegate and the Department of Florida will contribute \$100.00 for each delegate the Post sends. If you as a Post has already sent in \$450.00 per Boys State Delegate, Department will refund the \$100.00 per delegate. As a reminder your Post money is to arrive to the Department by December 23, 2015.

On behalf of Florida American Legion Boys State Program I would like to thank the entire Finance Committee and the Executive Committee for their action to assist our Posts in these stressful financial times. When the 530 young men arrive in Tallahassee at 10:00 AM on Sunday June 19, 2016, I am sure that you will have selected the very best students for the Boys State Program. The Boys State Staff is grateful to the Posts for your selections. The staff can assure you the delegates arrive with great skills and we will return these delegates with even greater skills.

If you have not updated your Post Boys State Chairman's name, please let the Department know as soon as and send in your Post check for your delegates. The Post Chairman's Guide has a guide line with dates for sending your Boys State money to Department, selection process, on line delegate registration, on line alternate registration, transportation etc.



**Roy Havekost**  
*Social Media Chairman*  
 SocialMedia@legionmail.org



Greetings Legionnaires;

First I would like to thank those members who attended the Social Media Training at the Fall Conference, including those members representing the Auxiliary, Sons and Riders. I hope you were able to take away some important information on how to promote your *Facebook*™ presence so that it can be more easily used as a membership recruitment tool for your Post and/or District. Remembering too, that the activities that occur within your Post need to be advertized on your page or group and as long as you are properly promoting your presence, you will definitely see a rise in attendance. For those of you who may have missed the class I intend to repeat it again at the 2016 Convention.

As Department Chairman, I am interested in those Posts and Districts that have a *Facebook*™ presence and how you are utilizing your site. Please send me a screen shot of your page or group, along with a short description of its use, and include your site URL (ie [www.facebook.com/group/ALxxx](http://www.facebook.com/group/ALxxx)). I will be using the emails received to judge sites for awards being presented at the 2016 Convention. Send your screen shots to SocialMedia@legionmail.org.

In closing, if any District Social Media Chairman would like a DVD copy of this training class Power Point Presentation, simply send an email request and your postal mailing address. The file is too large to be sent via email.

*With Legion Pride*

*For God and Country,*

**Roy Havekost**

**Social Media Chairman**

### **Legionnaires Insurance Trust**

Good news! Online enrollment is now available.

Any Legion member can go to the LIT website to enroll. To sign up online, go to: <http://www.thelit.com> and follow the links.



## Troy Horsley

*School Awards Chairman*

[SchoolMedals@legionmail.org](mailto:SchoolMedals@legionmail.org)

My fellow legionnaires, **now** is the time to start making contact with your local schools and letting them know of this opportunity to recognize students at the end of the school year. Hopefully by now our District Commanders and post commanders have identified an ambassador of the American legion to be the liaison with your local schools. The American Legion is an organization dedicated to the service of God and Country. We believe that one of the best ways to perform this service is to take an active interest in the preparation of our youth so that they will carry on the tradition of patriotism and become freedom-preserving citizens. It is in this interest that The American Legion School Awards Plan was born and is maintained on a National level through The Americanism Commission of the American Legion. With so many changes in our communities and their lack of supporting our shared values of duty, honor, and commitment to God and country, it is very important to recognize our youth who are guided by the highest ideals and on the right path.

The American Legion School Medal is the highest honor awarded presented to Youth by the American Legion. It is a medal that proclaims they are kind of boy/girl that we believe worthy of such an honor. Your Post Commander needs to appoint a committee of not more than three members to contact local school authorities. When this has been done, it will be possible to run a coordinated program with the school and legion to ensure a quality candidates are awarded at the end of the year. With the upcoming holidays approaching and schools being closed for break, it is very important to get this interaction happening. Before you know it, the school year will be coming to an end.

In working with school administrators, it is important to explain the details on how the recipients are to be selected and selections should be made well in advance of the elections. Members of the graduating class and the faculty are to cast secret ballots to determine the boy awardee and the girl awardee. Traits underlying the selection of the boy and the girl will be Courage, Honor, Leadership, Patriotism, Scholarship and Service. Ensure that the voters understand the meaning of the qualities and their weights in the selection. The Post Committee upon the recommendation of faculty members and school administrators are charged with making the final selection.

The sole purpose of the undertaking by The American Legion is the cultivation of high character and wholesome ideals in youth approaching active citizenship. No trace of politics, sectarianism or favoritism should be allowed to attach itself to the School Award Program. Awards shall be made to the boy and to the girl of the graduating class in elementary, junior and senior high schools and colleges. Awards are limited to the graduating classes because of the candidates' positions on the threshold of entrance upon a more extensive period of education, or upon entrance into the wage-earning world.

*Continued on Page 21*

threshold of entrance upon a more extensive period of education, or upon entrance into the wage-earning world.

On the Department of Florida American legion web site, resources exist to help accomplish this worthwhile task. If you need assistance or help please contact me via email and I will be glad to help. I have put together a package that can be emailed to anyone who requests assistance whether your post is experienced with the program or to help posts that have not done this before. For God and Country.

***Troy Horsley***

*School Medals Chairman*



**Deborah Wheeler**

*Women Veterans Chairman*

[womenveterans@legionmail.org](mailto:womenveterans@legionmail.org)

***Happy Fall and Happy Holidays to all Comrades!!***

Hoping all is well with the Department of Florida Legion Family. We are quickly approaching a very busy time of the year so I would be remiss in not mentioning our Homeless Veterans and near Homeless, many of which are female veterans with children. Our sisters are not going to ask for help or assistance unless the situation is extremely grave. Try to find them. When preparing for the holidays remember the sisters in our VA hospitals, their needs are different than that of our brothers.

Concerning membership, look to increase your totals by attracting new female members. Talk to your medical professionals at the VA, a lot of employees are veterans and have never been informed of the benefits of joining the American Legion, it never hurts to ask your nurse, lab tech, etc.

Lastly I was recently appointed as A Committee person for the National Committee for Veterans Affairs & Rehab. My passion is for our Women Veterans and I will do everything possible to help our sisters in arms by bringing awareness about a growing population of veterans, who need a voice.

***Deborah Wheeler***

*Women Veterans Chairman*



**Jesse Figueroa**  
*12th District Adjutant*  
[adjutant@fal12thdistrict.org](mailto:adjutant@fal12thdistrict.org)

This year's National Convention in Baltimore, Maryland from 28 August – 3 September 2015 was a huge success! Dale Barnett of Post 105 from Fayetteville, Georgia was elected National Commander of The American Legion. Congratulations

to the Department of Florida on achieving 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Nation in Membership and also in achieving Children & Youth Awards. The American Legion Riders donated \$100K+ in donations collected from the Legacy Run and other donations to the Children & Youth programs.

Ron Fashano, 12<sup>th</sup> District Commander, hosted an informal rap session at Post 189 in Sebastian on 18 August 2015, which is open to the Legion Family with a 92% attendance. We exchanged ideas and each other's contact info. Our next session is scheduled for 22 November 2015 at Post 22 in Cocoa from 3 – 5PM open, once again, to the Legion Family. These rap sessions talk about improvements in membership and programs.

Our membership standings are now at 9<sup>th</sup> Place at 68.28% and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in the Eastern Area at 68.89%. We need to push forward before the dues increase take effect on 1 January 2016. Congratulations to Post 406 (FIT Panther) in Melbourne for achieving 100% in membership and Post 181 in Vero Beach (Gifford) is now at 92%. Seven Posts have achieved 70% or better in membership. Keep it flowing!

The Fall Conference from 13 – 15 November 2015 was exciting and I learned new things in which I will share to the Posts in the 12th District. Our previous 12<sup>th</sup> District Meeting took place on 5 September 2015 at Post 189 in Sebastian. Great turnout. The next meeting is scheduled for 12 December 2015 at Post 1 in Titusville. Sign-in at 9AM; Meeting from 10AM – 12PM. I would like to wish you all a very happy and safe Holiday season.

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rcvd	% of Goal
2	W. Jackson	1,337	972	74.85
4	K. Deschamps	3,837	2872	72.70
9	J. Tewes	3,997	2865	71.68
16	J. Bell	12,007	8,635	71.89
6	D. Bass	12,137	8,787	72.40
1	C. Johann	6,149	4,375	71.15
15	G. Hamblin	5,378	3651	67.89
13	M. Adcock	9,774	7,028	71.89
8	D. Walsh	8,149	5,818	71.39
12	R. Fashano	9,203	6,604	71.76
14	G. Decker	2,963	1,933	65.24
17	B. Howe	4,076	2,935	72.01
5	L. Dukes	8,074	5,567	68.95
7	I. Anderson	3,973	2,724	68.56
11	A. Bruce	3,798	2,503	67.92
3	H. Perry	1,799	1,275	70.87
Western	M. Kirchoff	7,486	5,347	71.43
Eastern	T. Biddle	21,340	15,391	72.12
Central	E. Butts	21,358	15,007	70.26
SW	D. Deierlein	17,923	12,844	71.66
North- ern	J. Durden	17,786	12,649	71.12
South- ern	J. Motes	10,758	7,301	68.59



**Warren Post**  
*Finance Chairman*  
[finance@legionmail.org](mailto:finance@legionmail.org)

The Department of Florida American Legion financial report of the end of the fiscal year 2015 (June 30, 2015) showed a loss of \$53,391.98.

For those of you that attended the Fall Conference you know that our Boys State Program is having financial problems because Florida State keeps increasing our cost per boy for housing and meals.

The Finance Committee has worked very hard to come up with the funds to help the Boys State Board of Directors continue the program. The Finance Committee, along with the Department Executive Committee approved funds of \$53,700.00 for one year to subsidize this program. This will allow the Post to pay \$350.00 per boy this year as they have in the past with no increase. Florida State also has informed the Boys State Board of Directors that they increased the housing from \$16.00 per night per boy to \$23.00 per night. This means approximately another \$25,000.00 s going to be added to the bill. As far as food cost per boy they have not told the Board what that cost is going to be.

We hope that with the dues increase that has been approved, effective January 1, 2016 will help offset our losses.

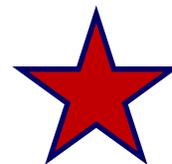
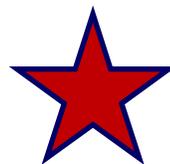
On another Financial note: The Officers and Chairmen that are on a budget, the Finance Committee agreed that when you have reached your full budget, additional funds will not be available. Spend wisely.

The Finance Committee is also requesting each Post have a fundraiser or dinner to support Project VetRelief. This program is just getting off the ground and we need each Post to support this program which supports our Veterans in Florida. Be aware that the American Legion National Organization has gone into the fund raising business and will be sending out mail trying to raise funds. It is suggested that any mail you get asking for donations reads: Department of Florida American Legion with the Florida Legion logo.

The Finance Committee works hard to insure that the Department of Florida American Legion stays financially strong now and for years to come.

Thank you for all that you do on behalf of the Finance Committee (Al Porter, Larry White, Arnold Makovsky, John Dollinger and myself)

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,





**James K. Roberts, III**  
*SAL Advisory Committee*  
*Chairman*  
**SAL@legionmail.org**



I hope that everyone enjoyed the Fall Conference, I know that I did.

During the Fall Conference we were able to conduct the first ever, S.A.L. Advisor's Training Session. This session covered a few things about the Sons of The American Legion including an overview of our history, the parallels between the Sons and the Legion and an opportunity to have a roundtable discussion about the Sons. I am counting this as a huge success as we had over 30 participants that attended the session including many of the Sons of The American Legion Detachment Leadership. My special thanks to Department Commander Jim Ramos and Detachment Commander Joe Eckenrode for offering comments to the attendees.

The Sons of The American Legion met on Saturday of the conference to conduct business and had many Squadrons attend. They got a lot of work done, including donations to the various programs including over \$19,000 for Project: Vet Relief. Your Sons are continuing to work hard this year and are ahead of last year's numbers in membership. The Detachment just missed the 50% target by about 1.5%, but they have met every National Membership Target to date.

On behalf of Anita, the girls, and myself, we wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. May you all have a blessed time with your family and friends.

Honoring those who serve and those who served with pride.

**James K. Roberts III (FL)**

**Chairman, S.A.L. Advisory Committee**

**The American Legion**

**Department of Florida**

**E-mail: [sal@legionmail.org](mailto:sal@legionmail.org)**

**Patriotic Coloring and Halloween Books Now Available!**

Department has Halloween and Patriotic coloring books available for purchase and distribution to the elementary classrooms in your area. An order form is located on page 11 of the Post Admin Manual. Supplies are limited - get them while they last! The cost is \$20 per 100 books. Send your orders to:

**American Legion, Department of FL**  
**ATTN: Allyson Capecea**  
**P.O. Box 547859**  
**Orlando, FL 32854-7859**

*or by email: [acapecca@floridalegion.org](mailto:acapecca@floridalegion.org)*



**Jim Day**  
*American Legion Riders Chairman*  
**Legion Riders@legionmail.org**



Wow. What a great past few months. Jennifer (ALR Adjutant) and I have been traveling all over the state visiting Chapter/District/Department functions and meetings.

Shortly after I took the appointment for ALR Chairman, I was tasked with coming up with an “event” that would bring the whole state in and incorporate membership and training. After participating in a Round Robin to raise money for a memorial in District 5 the idea for a state-wide Round Robin was born. Gary Lester (Northern Area Chairman) and Jennifer set out to pick a date and create the event. After many modifications and lots of growing pains the event took off and the results are amazing. Once again the ALR rose to the cause and responded as the riders always do when tasked with the impossible. The event was created to promote the Legion Family and our programs, membership drive, training for tracking miles, hours and donations, raise a little money for Project Vet Relief, tryout online registration for 2016 Legacy and finally just have some good ole competitive fun. Over 69,000 miles, 500+ hours, \$5,500+ (money still trickling in) and an amazing 215 new Legion Family members.

A little “housekeeping”; Jennifer Cooper has been a very valuable asset for getting our forms online and keeping us moving with the digital era. The officer submission form worked very well and we have information on 97 Chapters. Quarterly reports are trickling in.....PLEASE remember this will make the Chairman and Directors jobs very easy at the end of the year.

ALR Bike Days @ Department of Florida Headquarters are set for the weekend of Jan 15-18, 2016. Any Legion Family member that would like to set up a vendor booth please contact alradjutant@legionmail.org for a free spot. We will have more SOP and Road Captain training and hopefully some guest speakers. The National Vice Commander will be coming to town on the 14<sup>th</sup> and will be escorted to Lady Lake. More information will be coming as it is available. ScootinAmerica will also be escorted in during the ALR Bike Days.

2016 Florida In-State Legacy dates are set for April 10<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Hotel and route information is available online at floridalegion.org under Legion Riders. We will be visiting 50+ Posts and riding around 1400 miles. Registration will be online soon.

2015 Fall Conference updates: special thanks to Larry Sheet FAL Judge Advocate for helping with the revision and training for the ALR SOP. Mike Kirchoff ALR Vice Chairman and Northern Area Commander for stepping in and teaching a great Road Captain, ALR Class and SOP. Over all the response was positive and we had great participation in the classes. The rooms were full and the questions great. Going forward would like to keep the meetings to a “round table” style so everyone feels free to share information and

*Continued on Page 26*

ask questions. Class materials will be posted online under "Resources/Forms" on the Legion Riders page.

Stay tuned and check the webpage and Facebook page often for updates.

Thank you for all your support and hospitality as we travel around the state and visit Chapters and functions.

**Jim Day**

ALR Chairman

As always let's "Ride for the Cause, and not the Applause".



**Loretta Young**  
*ROTC/Shooting Sports Chairman*  
[JROTC@legionmail.org](mailto:JROTC@legionmail.org)

The First Annual Jr. Shooting Sports Conference was held in Indianapolis at the Children and Youth Conference in September. There was a very good turnout of Department Chairmen for the meeting. All Chairmen were given packets including manuals, handbooks and flyers on how to conduct the Jr. Shooting Sports competition and how to start a club. We were given a "Welcome and Greetings" Introduction by the Chief Range Officer, P/National Commander David Rehbein. The Review of the 2015 National Championships & JSSP Survey.

Results was given by the Assistant Director Shayne Abrahams Sr. We also heard from the Match Director, Loren Sperry on "How to start and sustain a program and the best practices. Also presenting was Michael Theimer from USA Shooting one of our program partners. We also had a briefing on the Orion Scoring System that is used for all postal and competition matches. The training was extensive and the knowledge gained will greatly help to improve our participation in the program. National is encouraging all Departments to initiate a State Competition.

The Postal Match is currently on line for registering the teams and the post sponsoring the team will reimburse the cost of the targets. The deadline is Jan. 7, 2016. The Affiliate Form must be on file with National and only has to be sent in one time. Targets for individual or team is only \$10 each and is for Precision or Sporter Category. Please let me know what teams you are supporting as we are updating our files. Thanks so much for all who are supporting our youth programs.



**Gunner Dudley**  
*Homeless Veterans Chairman*  
*Past Department Commander*  
[HomelessVets@legionmail.org](mailto:HomelessVets@legionmail.org)

First of all, thank you all for what you do for our Homeless Veterans! Only a few events coming up, Warm, Full, Safe over the Christmas holidays in Titusville and Palm Bay, if you would like to know more about it, give me a call. Still have some Blankets and Hygiene kits for the Veterans in the woods, make arrangements for pick up. If you have an event for our homeless, please let me know, I would like to attend if possible. Everyone have a safe and enjoyable Holiday season!

"EVERY DAY IS VETERAN'S DAY"



**Christopher Emmert**  
*Scholarship Chairman*  
[Scholarships@legionmail.org](mailto:Scholarships@legionmail.org)

The Scholarships Committee has been mainly inactive so far this year. No applications have been received for review at this time. I expect we will begin receiving applications for Eagle Scout of the Year, General Scholarship, JROTC Cadet of the Year and Teacher of the Year applications to begin to trickle in after the first of the year.

I plan to touch base with Florida's six medical schools financial aid office to remind them of our three scholarships for third year medical students. Last year we had no applicants.

I have made post visits to Post 90, 103, 110, 123, 254, 323 and 274 in conjunction with Legion Riders events and have introduced myself with the leadership teams at each post. I also attended the District 13 Fall Conference meeting for the American Legion, Legion Riders and Sons of the American Legion. Lastly I attend the Department Fall Conference and completed the Post Services Officer training.

**Attention to all Dept. Legislative Council Members,**

The Legislative Department of the American Legion need help getting the Home Joint Resolution passed in Congress.

This was introduced by Rep. Steve Womack (AR) and is a proposed Constitutional Amendment to protect the American flag from physical desecration. Its text states simply: *"Congress shall have power to prohibit they physical desecration of the flag of the United States."*

Staff from the Legislative Division has met with the staff of Sen. Orrin Hatch (UT) to discuss the re-introduction of the flag protection amendment in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. Sen. Hatch has long been the champion of the amendment. Our efforts finally came to fruition on July 30<sup>th</sup>, when Sen David Vitter (LA) introduced Senate Joint Resolution 21, prior to the August district work period.

In addition to Rep. Womack and the five original co-sponsors of the House Joint Resolution, there are now a total of 36 co-sponsors. Additional co-sponsors continue to be sought for both measures. Of these co-sponsors, only one is from Florida, Jeff Miller.

A few years ago this amendment lost by only one vote.

All Council Members are urged to call their assigned members of Congress to co-sponsor HJR9. This is one amendment that does not cost anything out of the budget. You should also ask members of your Post and of any Post that is in your area to call their Congressmen as well.

I will be sending letters to all of our 29 members of Congress for their support. Please feel free to call me for any helpful hints as to what to tell them. 786-423-2458

**Stanley Gold**

**Vice Chairman of the National Legislative Council**





# Flu Shots for Veterans

More Options, More Access, Seamless Records



**VA HEALTH CARE** | Defining **EXCELLENCE** in the 21st Century

*Walgreens* AT THE CORNER OF **HAPPY & HEALTHY**<sup>™</sup>

VA Retail Immunization Care Coordination Program  
To find your closest Walgreens location, go to [Walgreens.com/FindAStore](http://Walgreens.com/FindAStore). To learn more, go to [www.publichealth.va.gov/vaccines.asp](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/vaccines.asp).

# NO-COST FLU SHOTS

If you're enrolled in the VA Health Care System, getting your flu shot at Walgreens or Duane Reade is easy:\*

1. Just fill out the flu form below. 2. Bring the completed form, your VA ID card and a photo ID to your neighborhood Walgreens or Duane Reade location 3. Walgreens or Duane Reade will automatically update your VA Electronic Health Record in the VA Health Care System

## Nearby locations | Walk in anytime

A wellness benefit brought to you by Walgreens and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

Information below must be completed prior to receiving your flu shot.

Name:

Date of birth:

Home ZIP code:

Plan ID IMZ Recipient # (Social Security Number):

Group #: 5933XBAYV

### Walgreens pharmacist:

- Only veterans enrolled in the VA Health Care System are eligible.
- Family members and TRICARE members are NOT eligible.
- Verify information by checking VA ID card and a photo ID.
- Use the Social Security Number in the Recipient # field.

To find a location near you, call 800-WALGREENS (800-925-4733) or visit [Walgreens.com/FindAStore](http://Walgreens.com/FindAStore)

For questions or more information about the program, call **866-964-1812** or go to [www.eHealth.va.gov/immunization.asp](http://www.eHealth.va.gov/immunization.asp).



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\*Vaccine subject to availability. State-, age- and health-related restrictions may apply. This does not constitute an endorsement of Walgreens or Walgreens products.