



The LEGION LINK

"Lil Leprechaun Fighting For Vets"



Department of Florida

Web Site: www.floridalegion.org

E-mail: mail@floridalegion.org

In This Edition....

- **Page 1**
Commander
- **Page 2**
1st Vice Commander, 2nd Vice Commander, 3rd Vice Commander
- **Page 3**
NEC, Sgt-at-Arms
- **Page 4**
Chaplain, Judge Advocate, Membership Chair
- **Page 5**
Northern Area Commander, Eastern Area Commander, 5th District Commander
- **Page 6**
12th District Commander, 14th District Commander
- **Page 7**
Blood Donor Chair, Children & Youth Chair, Law & Order Chair, Immigration Chair
- **Page 8**
Legion Riders, Post Development Chair
- **Page 9**
POW/MIA Chair, Public Relations Chair, Security Commission Chair
- **Page 10**
Social Media Chair
- **Page 11**
Legislative Chair, VA Entitlements Chair
- **Page 12**
VA&R Chair, Youth Law Cadet Program, Post 90
- **Page 14**
PROJECT: VetRelief
- **Page 15**
Children & Youth Charity Golf Tournament



Joe Magee
Department Commander
commander@floridalegion.org
407.247.5232

My Fellow Legionnaires,

Thank you so much for voting for me to become your Department Commander. I appreciate your confidence in me.

I hit the ground running. On Monday after Convention, I went to Punta Gorda to escort the first section of the replica of the Vietnam Wall in Lashley Park. It was such a moving experience. I also, attended the Installation at No-Vel Post 159 in Venice.

On my way to Tallahassee, I stopped by Cox Chevrolet for a presentation of keys to the "Leprechaun Limo". Post 24, Bradenton, Commander John Rauh, Adjutant Warner Weil and the Honor Guard, 8th District Commander Dennis Walsh, Southwestern Area SAL Commander Jim Brown, Cox Chevrolet Staff and many members were in attendance.

I finally arrived in Tallahassee for Boys State. What an experience that was. This year's class was reported by the councilors as being the most polite, intelligent group they have ever encountered. What a complement to the Parents, Schools and the Community of those 350 outstanding young men.

On my way back, I stopped by Bradenton, Post 24 for their installation. As well as the Post 24 for their installation July 4th weekend. Then I visited Post 162, Deerfield Beach, in Lake Placid for a retirement ceremony for the Sheriff, who was retiring after 43 years. Then I went to Safety Harbor for the Parade. The parade was very impressive. The streets were lined with people including many children. It was a great time. I finished with a visit to Dunedin Post 275.

The next weekend saw visits to Post 103, Punta Gorda, Post 32, Miami Springs, Lady Lake, Post 347, Post 275, Dunedin and Post 274, Ft. Myers Beach. Whew!!

We've also been invited to Post 1, Titusville for their installation with more to go.

Things are getting pretty busy with meetings at Department to make plans for the year, National Membership in Indy, Commanders Leadership Retreat at Cocoa Beach, and much more.

Remember, this will be a great year if we do our jobs and have fun while doing so. Your Department Vice Commanders and I are available if you need help.

AUGUST 2016	
1	Air Force Day
4	Coast Guard Day
5-7	Leadership Retreat 🍀
7	Purple Heart Day
14	VJ Day
15	Legion Link Articles Due
19	National Aviation Day
21-24	Legacy Run
21	Senior Citizen Day
25-2	National Convention 🍀

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





Steve Shuga
1st Vice Commander

Thank you for giving me the continued opportunity to serve and support our Florida American Legion. Besides other unrelated tasks as directed by the Department Commander and Executive Committee, I have membership oversight directly supporting our Department Membership Chairman.

Support the Membership Plan this year. There are incentives for submitting your membership renewals and new joins weekly. The Department Membership Chairman and I are available to answer your questions so you can maintain membership success this term. If a visit is warranted, we will make the necessary arrangements to be there to assist and support.

Weekly membership emails will be forthcoming from the Department Membership Chairman as a reminder and motivator to keep the Post Membership teams on track. Membership is a team effort and we can overcome the obstacles before us.



Dianne Boland
2nd Vice Commander

Greetings, I would like to thank everyone for a wonderful job done last year on all our programs! I also want to thank you for the support and hospitality I received as your 3rd Vice Commander, however, this is now the beginning of a new year. I wish to thank all of you who supported me as I campaigned and I look forward to working with our American Legion Family as your 2nd Vice Commander; overseeing and

coordinating our training. As I get more information I will be passing it on.

One important area of training that you should all be aware of is The American Legion Extension Institute (ALEI). ALEI has been rewritten, updated, streamlined and enhanced with videos, digital photos, clickable links, a historical timeline and additional features. To register and take the course, visit www.legion.org/alei. (Due to high traffic volume, you may experience some delays. If you experience delays, please try again later.) The program should take less than two hours to complete. It is divided into six sections, with a quiz at the end of each one, followed by a final exam.

The sections closely follow the Legion's Four Pillars of service. They include:

- History & Organization
- Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
- National Security
- Americanism
- Children & Youth

Upon completion, a participant must pass a final online exam to receive a digital certificate of recognition; a lapel/cap pin will also be delivered to those who successfully complete the course. The names of those who have passed will be recorded and indexed at The American Legion National Headquarters. Graduates will have the option to click a box upon completion to recognize their accomplishment on The American Legion national website: www.legion.org.

The online course is \$4.95 for members of The American Legion and Sons of the American Legion. The registration fee is \$9.95 for non-members. Payment can be accepted securely and conveniently on the course registration page. This is a wonderful course for all your new members as well as a great refresher course for those who have been around awhile. [This course is mandatory if you plan on attending the Department Legion College or National's Legion College.](#)

The Department of Florida's Legion College and National's Legion College both enhance knowledge and appreciation of The American Legion, and teach the core values and contributions of the organization, its Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and many subordinate programs. They both prepare young Legionnaires for leadership positions in Posts, Districts, Counties, and Departments through education, development, and motivation. The

curriculum challenges student leaders to think critically and creatively about issues confronting the Legion. Both take place in October. I will have more information on this next month.

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



William "Rick" Johnson
3rd Vice Commander

Hello Legionnaires, I hope this finds you well. We are starting a New Year and I want to thank you for electing me as your 3rd Vice Commander. You put your trust in me and I will work very hard for you, as I promised. My saying for the year is: remember the past, mentor the future. We need to get out there and start mentoring our replacements as we move up in this great organization.

I challenge all Department Chairman to communicate with your District Chairman in order to reach every Post with the purpose of becoming active in more of our great programs. These programs are our future, and by participating you will become a beacon within your communities. Working together will only make us stronger. Chairman, please contact Department to update your section of the website. I will be getting in touch with all the Chairman soon.

To the Posts, PLEASE let us know what is going on within your community so we can come by, participate and help you with anything that you may need. (Continued on page 3)

55%
Membership Goal
September 7, 2016



("3rd Vice Commander" Continued from page 2)

Here are some dates coming up for the Florida Special Olympics:

August 27th 2016 9:00 am

State Stand-up Paddleboard Championships
Nathan Benderson Park
5851 Nathan Benderson Cir
Sarasota FL

September 2-3 2016 9:00 am

Golf Championships
Disney Palms Golf Course
1950 W Magnolia Palm Dr

September 17th 2016 10:00 am

State Surfing Championships
Alan Shepard Park
Cocoa Beach FL

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

Another event coming up is the Children and Youth Golf Tournament September 17th 2016 at Post 323. The flyer will be sent out with the August issue of the Legion Link.

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



Dennis Boland
National Executive Committeeman

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

The American Legion has continued to be concerned with the unprecedented number of veterans returning from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation New Dawn (OND) with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which have been called the "signature wounds" of these conflicts.

The American Legion convened a TBI and PTSD Committee in 2010 "to investigate existing science and procedures and alternative methods for

treating TBI and PTSD.

The TBI and PTSD committee found:

- Most of the existing research for the last several years has only validated the current evidence-based treatments
- Those treatments are defined by DoD/VA's Joint Clinical Practice Guidelines as cognitive processing therapy, prolonged exposure therapy and antidepressants.
- There seems to be no fast track mechanism within DoD/VA for employing innovative or novel therapies in a standardized way.
- While a number of VA Medical Centers offer some sort of Complementary and Alternative Medicine, it is not offered in any uniform or consistent manner within DoD or VA's 152 VA Medical Centers across the country.

The TBI and PTSD Committee recommended:

- Congress provide oversight and funding to DoD/VA for innovative TBI and PTSD research currently being used in the private sector, such as hyperbaric oxygen therapy, virtual reality exposure therapy and other non-pharmacological treatments.
- Congress increase the budgets for DoD/VA to improve the research, screening, diagnosis and treatment and direct DoD/VA to develop joint offices for collaboration between DoD/VA Research
- DoD/VA accelerate research efforts to properly diagnose and develop evidence-based treatments for TBI and PTSD.
- The American Legion believes that all possibilities should be considered in the attempt to find treatments and cures for these conditions affecting significant numbers of veterans, including alternative medicine. And, if shown to be effective, these treatments and cures should be made available to all veterans.
- The American Legion has created a permanent TBI and PTSD committee to continue to build upon our knowledge and understanding of TBI and PTSD and to provide Congress, DOD and VA with the data and recommendations they need to effectively treat veterans.



Tom Gora
Sergeant-at-Arms

"You will guard especially against the loss of one of The American Legion's greater possessions, our deep and abiding spirit of comradeship." (From the Sgt.-at-Arms Oath)

I wish to thank all for giving me the honor of serving you as the Department Sergeant-at-Arms for another year and I look forward to seeing you in my travels. This coming year I look forward to the addition of a new chapter to the Sgt.-at-Arms Manual dealing with Color Guard procedures; the new chapter was reviewed with those who attended my class at the Convention. As mentioned during the Convention, the revised manual should be out and be posted on-line on the Department web site by the Fall Conference, along with a few instructional Color Guard videos, links to which will be placed on the Department web site as well.

Congratulations to Joseph Beauchamp, American Legion Post 119 as the recipient of the 2016 Award for the best Sgt.-at-Arms Program, and to the runner-up Lemuel Alvarez of Post 398. Congratulations to the Color Guard, Sons of the Legion Squadron 238, for winning the 'Post and Retrieve' contest during the Color Guard Contest, and to the Color Guard Unit of Post 398 for winning a 'Special Category' Competition Award.

By the time this article comes out I will have attended the Department's first ever Youth Law Cadet Program conducted at the Florida Highway Patrol Academy where I was a counselor. Next up are the Department Leadership Conference and National Convention in August; and the Florida Legion College in October. I have already received information about the parade at the National Convention and I will be there to attend all the parade preparation meetings in Cincinnati. I will have more parade information available at the Florida Caucus in advance of the parade. Both the Florida Caucus and Parade are scheduled for Sunday, August 28th.

(Continued on page 4)



("Sgt-at-Arms" Continued from page 3)

Don't forget our "parade uniform" which consists of your cover, the Department of Florida orange parade shirt, white pants, and white shoes. Practice the tune "Mickey Mouse" and the good old chant "give me an F-L-O-R-I-D-A" which our delegation is noted for performing along the parade route.

I also want to thank the outstanding volunteers who worked the floor at the 98th Annual Department Convention as Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, those who assist me with classes, and the Color Guard who post and retrieve colors. Edward Manak, Larry Leubben, Robert Jaegers, and Kimberly Radie are those great Sgt.-at-Arms volunteers who did such an outstanding job looking sharp on a daily basis, keeping order on the floor, escorting guests to the podium, and collecting all those "donations" for cell phone and cover (when eating) violations. Additional thanks to Nancy Thomas for her help with the American Legion Extension Institute Class (ALEI), and to Post 331 for posting and retrieving the colors of our nation and department to open and close the general sessions. By the way, those donations you make for phone and cover violations go directly to the Department Commander's selected charity. It happens all the time, as humans we do forget, so here are a couple of simple reminders. When in any organized assembly silence your phone, and when wearing your Legion cover remove it when sitting down to eat, and when you lay your cover on a table it should always be placed down with the American Legion emblem up.



Steve Newman
Chaplain

Greetings and a big hello my fellow Legionnaires. First of all, I want to truly thank all of you who supported me in my endeavors to be your Department Chaplain for 2016-2017. It is a blessing and honor to be able to serve all of you in what I feel is the most important position you can hold in the Department of Florida. I want to express though, that all the officer positions in the Department are truly honorable and of the highest

caliber. As I stated before, GOD is my pilot as He is everybody's pilot. This year I want to continue providing my Chaplain's training to some of the Districts that I have not reached out to yet. If there is a District that would like me to provide training please don't hesitate, all you have to do is get in contact with me and let me know when you would like me to attend one of your District meetings and I would gladly do it. We have many new Chaplains at all levels including the Auxiliary, SAL, and Legion Riders. I have conducted training that included our entire Legion Family and would love to continue it.

As stated in Psalm 143:8, Let the morning bring me word of Your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in You. Show me the way I should go, for You lift up my soul.

Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me; for Thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day. Psalm 25:5 KJV. Remember always that God is with us throughout our lives, through the good and not so good times. He is there when we need Him. All you have to do is ask Him for His help and blessings. So once again, I thank you for letting have this wonderful opportunity to serve you as it is truly a blessing. May God's love and joy be with you.



Larry Sheets
Judge Advocate

I asked at the Department Convention about allowing politicians to speak at a Post meeting. I checked with a higher authority and the answer is this:

In order not to show favoritism, each politician must be invited at the same time, with the terms and conditions as the opponent.

Members of The American Legion cannot invite their favorite candidate months before the event and the un-favored candidate a day or so before when schedules are already set.

I encourage all Posts to take a look at the date their Post Constitution and By-Laws were last

updated and approved. If it is over three years, it's time to amend them, and update as necessary. The Rules Governing trials were amended at the Department Convention, so be sure to check the changes and incorporate those changes in your Constitution and By-Laws.

I also want to thank new department Commander Joe Magee for reappointing me to serve as your Department Judge Advocate, and I look forward to working with all of you.



Jerry Brandt
Membership Chair

I hope you enjoy the July 4th Weekend, a few days of rest and relaxation, now it is time to go to work. This year, as your Membership Chairman, I will be working close with the 1st Vice Commander, Steve Shuga and the Post Development and Revitalization Chairman, Eunice Butts. We will be working together to assist you in every way in obtaining 100% + 1. Please let us know what we can do to assist you.

As you know, you are already receiving the renewal notifications, the initial mailing when out on July 1st, and the next mailing will be on October 7th. The goal of 55% is September 7th, and I am sure you will make it.

Your Posts should already be planning an event, whether this is an Open House, Golf Tournament, Blood Drive, or a Bowling League event, this event should have a Membership Table and/or Membership Staff to assist in retaining membership.

Suggestions on how to increase membership:

1. Form a Membership Committee to plan events and to increase membership. We cannot depend on members to walk in to join.
2. Involve all parts of the Legion Family; Auxiliary, S.A.L. and Riders should be included in all events. If the Family increase in size, so will the Post.

(Continued on Page 5)





(Membership Chair Continued from page 4)

3. Ensure advertisement; put the information of your events into the newspaper, such as a Legion/Veteran Bowling League, Legion/Veterans Night at the Baseball Field or Football field. Veteran Stand Downs, etc.
4. Reach out to the local High School/ROTCJ Counselors or Military Recruiters in your area and find out who is joining the military. Many Posts already give the first year membership to new recruits, however here is another suggestion, when you have an Open House, invite the Parents of the new recruit down, present the Parents the recruit's new Membership Card, the parents 'THEIR' Blue Star Banner, and a Certificate of Appreciation from the Commander of the Post. You have a new member with the recruit, and, if the family is like most Veteran's families, the parents are eligible for membership and they will bring in their friends as well.

I will be providing other suggestions as we move through the year, but now is the time to get started with planning and action needed for this year. Let me know if there is anything I can do to assist.

YOU'RE INVITED
Dedication Ceremony
of American Legion Monument
Jacksonville National Cemetery
September 10, 2016



Fred Matthews
5th District Commander

This is a cordial and open invitation for all to attend the dedication ceremony of an American Legion Monument at the Jacksonville National Cemetery on September 10, 2016. The 5th District American Legion family raised donations for this beautiful monument over the past two years and we will have a short dedication ceremony at the cemetery starting at 10 AM.

We have guest speakers, including the cemetery Director and Past National Commander Clarence Hill, patriotic songs by a church choir, and the laying of a wreath at the monument by Department leadership, followed by a social reception at American Legion Post 283 in Jacksonville.

We will have chairs at the ceremony but suggest you may want to bring along a folding chair if the crowd is large. For further information please contact Tom Gora, Chairman of the 5th District JNC Monument Committee at sgt-at-arms@legionmail.org or 904-583-4597.

John W Rose
Northern Area Commander

Greetings from the Northern Area. I'll start with some membership highlights:

- Post 195 in Madison is already at 35%
- Post 225 in Floral City is at 21.05%
- Post 202 in Keystone Heights is at 25.34%
- Post 187 in Deland is at 56.52%

We are just getting started and the 3rd District is in 1st place, leading the way in membership. This is a fantastic start and congratulations to all of them. However, each and every Post is vital to our success with membership being the building block of our ability to support our veterans and our programs. Each Post member is the most important part of membership, remind them who we are and what we do, as well as seeking out new members. Remember to document/report our good work and also let everyone know what events we have going on so more people can be involved. Again, thank you for all you do and together we will have another great Legion year.



Felix Ayala
Eastern Area Commander

As this new American Legion year goes into action, I want to thank the 6th and 12th Districts for affording me the opportunity to serve you as your Eastern Area Commander. It is an honor that I do not take lightly. I have already attended several installations in both Districts, and plan on attending many more. I will also try to visit as many Posts as possible throughout my tenure as EAC. If there is a specific event that any Post in my Area would like me to attend, please do not hesitate contacting me, I will do my best to attend.

Now let us go out and continue the American Legion legacy by continuing to support the principles that, for almost a century, have guided our organization; The Four Pillars of the American Legion: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism and Children and Youth.





Bruce Thurber
12th District Commander

For over 200 years, world statesmen, literary giants, and legends of the silver screen have joined the millions of pilgrims climbing the steps to kiss the Blarney Stone and gain the gift of eloquence. I have never had the privilege of kissing the Blarney Stone, leaving me to write with non-eloquence.

It is an honor to have been chosen to Command the Mighty 12th District. This year I have selected the best of the best to be my staff. During our year in office we are going to focus on training and communication. As I transition in to this new roll I am following some of the greatest Legionnaires in the Department of Florida. The best part is they have all offered to assist me if I need it. I look forward to visits by our Department Commander, Sons of the American Legion Commander and the Department President as well as any other Dignitaries that may like to visit.

As the Lil Leprechaun fights for Vets his Kern is behind him. The 12th District will hold a picnic on September 24th, at Wickham Park in Melbourne to raise transportation funds for Boys and Girls State. The 12th District Riders Chairman is working on two runs, one from the North and one from the South ending at the picnic.

Also, if you would like to get a 2017 Mustang for \$20, take a chance with the 12th District Raffle, for tickets contact Ron and Shirley Fashano or any 12th District Post Commander.

Lastly, I would like to challenge all my Posts to Win the Pot of Gold, membership is our key to success.

ATTENTION:

The Legion Link will now publish on our website the 1st of each month. Articles are due the 15th of each month. Email articles and/or questions to acapecca@floridalegion.org



Gary Decker
14th District Commander

2016-2017 14th District Events Schedule *Updated as of July 12, 2016*

- **July 30, 2016** – 12:00 pm - Installation of Officers Post 43-Homestead by 14th District Commander Gary Decker
- **August 2, 2016** – 8:00 pm - Installation of Officers Post 346-Miami by 14th District Vice Commander Gary Cardenas
- **August 12, 2016** – 6:30 pm - Installation of Officers Post 154-Marathon by 14th District Commander Gary Decker
- **August 13, 2016** – 1:00 pm - Installation of Officers Posts 28 and 168 –Key West by 14th District Vice Commander Jerry Bryda
- **August 14, 2016** – 2:00 pm - Installation of Officers Post 145 and 333 Key Largo by 14th District Vice Commander Jerry Bryda
- **August 19, 2016** – 4:00 pm - Installation of Officers Post 31-South Miami by 14th District Commander Gary Decker
- **August 20, 2016** – 6:30 pm - Installation of Officers Post 133-Palmetto Bay by 14th District Commander Gary Decker
- **August 25, 2016** – 7:30 pm - Installation of Officers Post 182-Coconut Grove by 14th District Vice Commander Jerry Bryda
- **September 1, 2016** – 8:00 pm - Installation of Officers Post 374-Key Biscayne by 14th District Vice Commander Jerry Bryda
- **September 10, 2016** – 9:00 am - Installation of Officers Post 165 –Miami by 14th District Vice Commander Jerry Bryda

- **September 17, 2016** – 14th District General Meeting: Registration at 9:00 am, Meeting Starts at 10:00 am – at Post 31-South Miami
- **November 18-20, 2016** - Department Fall Conference at Hilton Orlando, Walt Disney World, at Lake Buena Vista
- **November 6, 2016** – Veterans Day Parade, Town of Miami Lakes. Post 144 will participate
- **November 11, 2016** – Veterans Day Ceremony, City of Hialeah. Post 144 will participate
- **January 7, 2017** - 14th District General Meeting Registration at 9:00 am, Meeting Starts at 10:00 am – at Post 31-South Miami
- **March 18, 2017** - 14th District General Meeting Registration at 9:00 am, Meeting Starts at 10:00 am – at Post 31-South Miami
- **May 28, 2017** – Flag Placement Ceremony at Vista Memorial Gardens; Post 144-Miami Lakes, Boy Scouts Pack 484 and Boy Scouts Troop 584.
- **May 29, 2017** – Memorial Day Observed. Post 144 will participate at City of Hialeah Ceremony. Also, Post 346 will participate at local venue – TBD
- **June 10, 2017** – 14th District Constitutional Conference, Registration at 9:00 am, Meeting Starts at 10:00 am – at Post 31-South Miami
- **June 28, July 2, 2017** - Department Convention – Marriott Orlando World Center (NEW LOCATION)

**In addition, the District Commander will be conducting Post Visitations every other week throughout the year beginning in September. These visitations will be used to ensure that our Posts are operating properly, to reinforce the need for increased membership, participation in Legion Programs, and to provide support and leadership training to Post Commanders and Post Officers.

NOTE: *Schedule subject to change. Additional dates may be added*





Donna Artola
Blood Donor Chair

Fellow Legionnaires, as we start a new Legion year, it is time to get your chairman in line for this year. The Blood Chair is very easy to fill; there is not a lot of work for this chair. All you need to do is contact your local blood bank when your Post has a scheduled event. The blood bank will provide you with posters, tables and tents for the Post.

When you give a pint of blood, you will be saving the life of 3 people. With what is happening today in the world blood is needed all over. Take 20 minutes of your time to save the life of 3.

This year I have visited in the following posts: District 9, posts 162 and 142; District 14 Post 333 and 154 District 11 Posts 141, 164, 65, 199, 398, and 64.

When I visited American Legion Post 64 in Okeechobee, an Air Force veteran came up to me and was asking me some questions about donating blood after I had spoken to the Post members. Come to find out Veteran Don Freas who is an Air Force veteran had told me that he went to donate blood and the blood bank had asked him if he was willing to donate red blood cells –vs- whole blood. Veteran Don said yes I guess so why do you ask. They then told him that there was a young adult who was in a bad motorcycle accident who was in need of red blood cells. So needless to say veteran Don donated the red blood cells. I give Veteran Don a high 5 on helping out a local person who was in need. Thank you Don for doing what you do. Don donates blood every 6 weeks. Veteran Don is a local HERO!!!!



Sid Damsgard
Children & Youth Chair

Greetings Legionnaires, I would like to first thank Commander Magee for the appointment to this important program. Children and Youth is one of our Four Pillars and is crucial to the development of youth in this country. We, as legionnaires, have since the beginning of the Legion recognized this as an essential component of a vibrant society. It is up to us to give our children a chance to grow up in a country where freedom and the right to freedom has been defended for so long. It is our mission to keep up the fight for them.

At the beginning of this new year we are off to a great start. On the calendar so far is the Children and Youth Golf Tournament to be held at Lehigh Acres Post 323 on September 17th. Cost per golfer is \$40.00 with hole sponsorships available. Silver sponsorship going for \$100.00, Gold sponsorship is \$250.00, which includes 4 golfers and a sign on one hole. Any gift donations will be greatly appreciated. Cut-off date for sponsorships and gift donations will be September 15th. For further details, please contact me @ (727) 642-0246 or Mike Mason @ (744) 578-1161. Fliers for this event will be emailed to your Post.

September 24th is the date for another golf tournament being held by Palm Bay Post 117. I am waiting for further details and will post them on the Department web site as I get them. This event will be in support of COTA with all monies to remain in Florida. Post 117 will also be the site of the Children and Youth picnic to be held April 1st. Keep your calendar open for this event. Last year's success was just the start of a tradition we hope to continue into the future.

Lastly, if there is a Children and Youth event in your area please contact me. We want to make everyone aware of what you are doing out there. Getting the word out increases the chances of success for your event. If you need anything from the Department we will do anything in our power to help. I will try to attend any event where my schedule will allow.

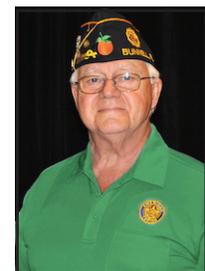
Bill McIntyre
Law & Order Chair

I am proud to be able to serve you this year as your Law and Order Chairman for 2016-2017.

I am encouraging every District and Post Commander to appoint a Law and Order Chairman. There are many Police and Fireman who deserve to be recognized. Go out into your community, check with your local Police Departments and Fire Stations to find a candidate for this great program. I know that if you do this, you will find the candidate you are looking for. The Police and Fireman are there for us every day, putting their lives on the line to protect us. Let us recognize their dedicated work and bravery. When they leave their house to go to work, they go not knowing whether they will be coming home.

I know out of over 300 American Legion Posts we can get more reports than were previously turned in. We see every day what these Police Officers and Firefighters do and the danger they face. Please help us this year to say thank you to them by recognizing them.

If you have any questions, or if I can be of any help, you can reach me at 954-232-4119 or by email at hobobill3@hotmail.com. Thank You for all you do.



Omer "Gene" Smith
Immigration Chair

Legionnaires of Florida, I need your help. Department Commander Magee has asked me to chair a committee to identify and locate foreign-born veterans of the US Armed Forces and for one reason or another are not Naturalized Citizens. I believe it is our responsibility and of utmost importance to identify and locate these individuals and assist them in beginning the Naturalization process. To wait could result in adverse action for our fellow veterans since we do not know the full scope of the legislative action pending in the US Congress on the national immigration issue.

(Continued on page 8)





("Immigration Chair" Continued from page 7)

There are over 645,000 foreign-born veterans in our Nation who have served in the United States Armed forces and many do not realize they are not actual US Citizens until they apply for benefits at Social Security or apply for a driver's license. Many may believe it is too late to apply for citizenship and fear being deported if discovered. Some shy away from seeking assistance because of a perceived application fee. The process requires legal assistance from an experienced immigration attorney and in many cases, the assistance is provided pro bono. My objective as Chairman of the Department's Immigration Committee is two-fold – 1) together, identify these individuals and 2) put them in touch with an experienced immigration attorney who cares about their future. I have been working with the services of Elizabeth Ricci, Managing Partner of Rambana and Ricci, PLLC Immigration Attorneys in Tallahassee. Ms. Ricci has successfully represented several foreign-born veterans, pro bono, identified by the Department of Florida. She has been described by the Philadelphia Inquirer as a "go-to lawyer for veterans".

I suggest Posts place a Public Service Announcement in the local newsprint, electronic media and spread by word of mouth at civic and social functions that The American Legion, Department of Florida is offering information and limited assistance to any individual who meets the requirements for naturalized citizenship under Sections 328 and 329 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.



Jim Day
Legion Riders



Legion Riders

I look forward to another year of continued growth for the Florida American Legion Riders. We had a great year last year solidifying our foundation and strengthening communication. Now it's time to focus on the details and build the ALR to new levels.

Welcome to 2016-2017 year. The following is the ALR Leadership Team:

Department ALR Leadership

- Jim Day ALR Chairman
- Manny Ayala ALR Vice Chairman
- Jennifer Day ALR Adjutant
- Diane Tucker ALR Chaplain

Area ALR Leadership

- Jim Bowers Western Area
- Jim Wineland Northern Area
- John Makal Central Area
- George Becker SW Area
- Victor Rizzi Southern Area
- Eastern Area TBA

District ALR Leadership

- Steve Davidson District 1
- TBA District 2
- TBA District 3
- Tom Voelz District 4
- Rusty Crowdus District 5
- Ed Falkowski District 6
- David Tucker District 7
- John Robinson III District 8
- Sean Tobin District 9
- Frank Maitland District 11
- Ed Parker District 12
- Rodney Hollingsworth District 13
- Dan Dedeo District 14
- Tom Cobb District 15
- TBA District 16
- Loren King District 17

NEWS

Very exciting things are planned for this year and one of those is our very own 1st Florida ALR Summit. We are calling it a "summit" so we don't confuse the meetings with the annual Convention and Conference. The focus should always be on serving our Legion Family first. That being said, the demand was great for time away from the annual meetings to focus on how the ALR can work to build and support our Legion Family. A flyer and registration will be up for the ALR Summit beginning 1 Aug 2016.

Project Vet Relief will once again be the recipient of funds raised from the 2nd Florida ALR Round Robin, to be held the entire month of October. That means there is an opportunity for another District to steal the trophy away from District 1. Rules will be the same and registration, flyers and forms will be online beginning 1 Sept 2016.

DREADED RULES AND REGULATIONS

Just a quick reminder; In order to be a member of The American Legion Riders persons MUST be a member of The American Legion, The American Legion Auxiliary or The Sons of the American Legion. There are no exceptions to this rule and it is clearly outlined in Resolution 35. Honorary, Support and Volunteer status is for members of The American Legion Family that do not own/operate a motorcycle and do not meet on of the 2 exceptions set forth in Resolution 32. No person outside of The American Legion Family has the permission to represent American Legion Riders.

The Department of Florida only recognizes the title of Chapter Director and Chapter Vice Director. The titles of President and Vice President are not acceptable.

SAFETY

Many of you saw that recently our Past ALR Chairman and current Southern Area National ALR Committee member Mike "Goat" Kirchoff was in a low speed accident. If he had not been wearing his DOT helmet, full gloves, pants, boots and long sleeve shirt, he would have had much more than aches and pains. Heads up out there on other drivers and the importance of safety gear. Goat's accident happened just miles from home on a quick trip in town.

The Legion Link will be monthly going forward, so stay tuned for more information.

I look forward to having another great year with another great team of Legion Riders.



Eunice Butts
Revitalization & Post Development Chair

Thank you to the Department of Florida for selecting me as your Revitalization and Post Development Chairman.

This year it would be nice to see all Districts and Posts create a uniformed model for our

(Continued on page 9)

(“Post Development Chair” Continued from page 8)

revitalization program as a family. Our uniformed plan of action for the year will be “Getting Back to the Basics” where we remember the purpose and importance of the American Legion and all the contributions the Legion has presented to the State of Florida and the Nation, while re-establishing the fraternity of brother/sisterhood for our brave Veterans. Details on how to go about collecting information and beginning the new program will be in the September 2016 LINK.

The purpose of the Post Development Chairman is to aid in the running of all Posts by assisting with programs, membership, and provide support as needed; to promote the ideals of the Florida American Legion. It is my responsibility to communicate regularly with the Department Commander, Department Adjutant, Executive Assistant, and District Commanders regarding individual Post problems or needs; as well as communicating with the Internal Affairs Commission Chairman.

Hopefully this will give you a better understanding of the task that I have accepted. I ask for your cooperation to make the State of Florida American Legion revitalization as productive as possible. Please feel free to contact me any time (813) 247-4262 or (813) 928-2357.

David C Miller
POW/MIA Chair

First of all, I would like to thank Department Commander Joe Magee for entrusting me with this most important job.

Most of you who know me know I have been involved in the Pow-Mia issues and programs since back in 1984 when the first formal ceremony was done in Washington D.C. on the White House mall. I had the honor of being involved and attended that great event. So we need to continue all the important work to keep this program and all the families up to date on the most recent information.

Also this year I plan on holding six Area Formal Pow-Mia dinner programs, to include the special table ceremony that goes with the program. I will be coordinating these dates with the Department Commander, as well as the Area Commanders so they can be well attended. If any of the Posts in your area would like to host the event, please contact me on my cell phone or by email. Also, if anyone or any Posts need help setting up a Pow-Mia table in your Post or is having a formal

Pow-Mia flag dedication, please contact me.

I hope to continue the work that I have been doing for years in this program, so do not hesitate to contact me if you need assistance. Most importantly, never forget we still have POWS and MIAS from many wars and conflicts. We must always exhaust all means to bring them home to their families.

I am looking forward on a great year for the Department of Florida with this program and with your involvement.



Diane Schmidt
Public Relations Chair

I want to share very good information from NALPA (National American Legion Press Association) on “**Know the Difference between Public Service and Paid Ads:**”

Fact: Television and radio can get your post’s message to a large audience in a short time.

Fact: If you don’t understand the difference between public service time and paid advertising, you’re apt to become frustrated, and the misunderstanding could have a dampening effect on your relationship with the electronic media serving your area.

Broadcasters make public service time available, but public service time is not given to airing the announcements of the weekly dance or the annual fish fry. Sure, many stations have community bulletin board programs that will air such announcements for nonprofit organizations, but this isn’t true public service time.

Public service time publicizes blood drives, clothing drives, Special Olympic programs, and other events and services that benefit the community as a whole. Public service time won’t be given if the benefit is primarily for the organization.

Misunderstandings are apt to arise when those representing nonprofit organizations ask stations to run as public service something that doesn’t fit

the mold. When the station balks, there is a feeling that the station doesn’t like the organization.

That isn’t the case. Stations-just as any other business-are trying to make a profit. When you ask them to run something as a public service announcement that rightfully should be paid advertisement, they have every right to refuse.

Planners and leaders of American Legion Post activities and promotion efforts should take into consideration the difference between what constitute public service time and paid time when planning their various programs.

Your endeavors will pay big dividends for your post and The American Legion when local broadcasters support your efforts. Keep in mind that public service time generally will be given for programs that help the community and not primarily benefit the organization. Naturally, when you want to publicize the big fundraiser of the year you must be prepared to pay for the time just as any advertiser.

Proper planning will assure your success year after year ... and make relationships with the radio and TV stations much less frustrating.



Gerald A. Kaufman
Security Commission Chair

During this year’s National Legion College one (1) resolution was passed and that resolution was the Flag Resolution. It calls for Posts to work with their local cemeteries to allow for a designated area to spread the ashes from unserviceable US flags. The idea originated from the Idaho State Veteran’s Cemetery, which has an approved area for the ashes of the U.S. flag and military branch service flags to be spread in a dignified manner.

November 13, 2015 will be remembered as the French 9/11. Well over 100 people were killed in six coordinated attacks by Muslim extremists in and around Paris, France. Since Paris, we have witnessed attacks around Europe including the airport attack in Brussels, Belgium which took the

(Continued on page 10)



("Security Commission Chair" Continued from page 9)

lives of 4 Americans. It is said that the population of France and Britain has reached 20 to 30 percent of the respective countries populations. I don't think I need to remind anyone in this room that ISIS is in our country and continue to plan attacks on American soil. We must be diligent in our observations and reporting of suspicious activity. We need to take extra precautions around our Posts and our activities outside of our Posts. We need to consider having Post security details at all of our functions. Remember we took an oath of enlistment to protect our country from enemies both foreign and domestic. The fight is coming to our shores. In May of this year a total of 48 Apache helicopters from National Guard units across the country were reassigned to Regular Army units. Five of these helicopters came from the Johnstown National Guard unit in Johnstown PA. The remaining 11 helicopters are scheduled to be reassigned by the end of the year. With the budget cuts and reassignment of critical military hardware removing hardware from the National Guard to regular Army units is leaving our country with a very thin line of defense here on American soil. It will not be long before we, as veterans will need to stand the line here at home. Be diligent comrades, in everything you do and everywhere you go. If you see something that seems out of line or gives you that funny little gut feeling don't just shake it off, report it. It may be nothing, or it may be something that saves lives because you noticed that moving truck and suspicious vehicles coming and going late at night.

Remember the current administration is allowing more refugees into our country and there is little to no vetting process in place that will ensure we are not allowing more radical Muslims into our country. Pay attention to what your children and grandchildren are doing on the internet. Facebook and social media sites are the hot new recruiting grounds for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) is taking the proceeds from drug sales, human trafficking and other crimes and using it to fund terrorist's organizations across the globe. They use violence in part of their activities to intimidate or make threats to use violence to get what they want.

Trafficking in persons (TIP) or human trafficking refers to activities involved when one person obtains or holds another person in compelled service, such as involuntary servitude, slavery, debt bondage, and forced labor. TIP specifically targets the trafficked person as an object of criminal exploitation- often for labor exploitation or sexual exploitation purposes and trafficking

victims are frequently physically and emotionally abused. TIP victims can often be trafficked within the borders of their own country and moved from location to location, county to county, state to state.

These are just a few of the things our country faces today. The threats are real. The threats are coming from within our borders and they are on a constant bearing, decreasing range with the shores of our country. Be ever watchful of your neighborhoods, your communities, and do not hesitate to contact the authorities if you see something out of the ordinary. Remember, these people try to blend in but not be to sociable with their neighbors.



Roy Havekost
Social Media Chair

Greetings Legionnaires,
Welcome to the 2016-17 term of office, congratulations to our newly elected Officers and appointed Chairs. Thank you in advance to the Department office staff in anticipation of a continued job well done.

This month I viewed a sampling of Facebook pages/groups from Districts 1 through 9. Congratulations are in order for Post 378, Gulf Breeze; Post 57, Lake City; Post 91, Trenton; Post 233, Palm Valley; Post 372, Mandarin; Post 183, Altamonte Pk.; Post 71, Lake Wales; Post 266, Sarasota; Post 142, Pompano Beach; and Post 365, Sunrise, FL. These Posts are making good use of Facebook for advertising their events and promoting their Post activities. Extra kudos go out to those Posts who are incorporating video clips in their presentations. Next month I'll be reviewing Posts in Districts 11 through 17.

Have you been using your presence on Facebook to seek out new members? Try posting an ad to attract the newer and younger veterans. Place an ad monthly on your page/group similar to the one shown here. Be sure to include the contact information for the membership officer or chairman and the Post phone number with each posting.

Remember, your ad doesn't have to be limited to just the Legion, include the rest of the family: Auxiliary, Sons and Riders.

Department of Florida  **Social Media Ad Campaign**

Have YOU served in the U.S. Military? If you served at any time since August 2, 1990 to date, you may be eligible to join the largest Veterans Service Organization in America today! The American Legion is looking for younger veterans to join our ranks and become the Legion Leaders of tomorrow. Help us to carry on our proud legacy of our four pillars of service:

- Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
- National Security
- Americanism
- Care for our Children and Youth

You are invited to come and network with other veterans like yourself, from your community, at the Legion Post listed above. Please contact us today for more information on how to join.

After all, we are the largest Veterans Service Organization of veterans helping veterans

This year I would like to expand on the training program for Social Media. In order to do this, I need to know from everyone, what they would like to see and learn about when it comes to Facebook. We still have some Posts that do not have a Facebook presence, as well as Posts that do, but do not take full advantage of this media outlet. Please send your suggestions-comments to me via email at socialmedia@legionmail.org or roy@havekost.net or via USPS to me at 450-106 State Rd.13N St. Johns, FL 32259. I will be happy to try and accommodate all requests received.

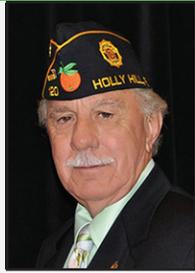
One last point, I have noticed that there are some who are utilizing their Legion page/group and are giving the appearance of promoting/supporting activities within a particular political party. I would make reference to Article II Sect. 3 of the Department of Florida American Legion Constitution which states in part: "...the organization shall be non-partisan in politics." Postings of this nature should be removed, this is not who we are!



FOLLOW US

facebook.com/floridalegion





Paul Martel
Legislative Chair

Good day to all of the Legionnaires in our great state. First off, I would like to thank our Commander Joe Magee for appointing me as your Legislative Chairman, it is an honor and a pleasure.

I know that all of the Posts that have a lounge and serve food and beverage has received from the Department of Revenue the information on how you will or not pay any taxes on those items. I have not seen the information but from what I have heard there is a section that you can drop your tax certificate, (I am not an accountant) I would say do not drop the certificate, contact your accountant, see what is the best way for your Post to handle this. Don't fret, this is a good thing for all of the Posts; you will save money so that you can do more for your programs, help our veterans in many more ways and the list goes on. A side note, please send a letter, e-mail, or stop in his or her office and thank them for what they did for our organization, let them know how the extra money will help your programs.

I did not get the chance to speak to the members at our state Convention this past month, but what I need is almost all of the representatives to send out a newsletter once a month. I would love to receive such, so I can pass on what is going on in all of the areas of our state.

Our National Executive Committeeman Alternate, Art Schwabe, is also the National Legislate Vice Chairman and he will be sending out information, when I receive any information you will too. If you get duplicates, just delete, but not before you have shared that information with your list, friends, and Post members (take it upon yourself to be that person), remember, LEGISLATION is not a one-person job, it will take all of us doing what we can for the right reason to inform everyone.

As I always say, if you would like information sent to you, send me your e-mail and name and it will be done. Speaking on e-mails, if your address

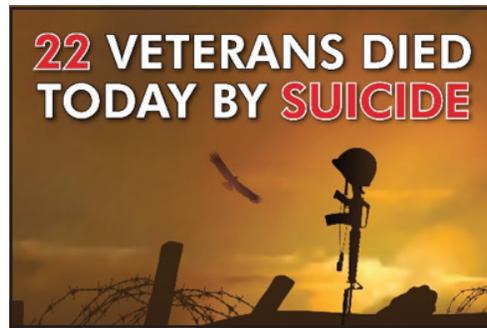
changes let me know, a person wants the info. I put him on my list and it comes back to me, you may have to tell your computer I am not spam. I am not a computer geek, I need all the help I can get.

One last thing, please use my e-mail address, not the one in the listed in the roster.



Larry Roberts
VA Entitlements Chair

As the VA Entitlement Chairman, my job is to let the veterans, and their family members know what entitlements they may qualify for. One of the worst problems that veterans are fighting is the suicide with an average of 22 per day. As Legionnaires we need to know the signs and help our fellow comrades.



This information is from SuicidePreventionLifeline.org

Recognize the Signs:

Many veterans may not show any signs of intent to harm themselves before doing so, but some actions can be a sign that a veteran needs help. Veterans in crisis may show behaviors that indicate a risk of harming themselves.

Veterans who are considering suicide often show signs of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and/or hopelessness, such as:

- Appearing sad or depressed most of the time.
- Clinical depression: deep sadness, loss of interest, trouble sleeping and eating-that doesn't go away or continues to get worse.

- Feeling anxious, agitated, or unable to sleep.
- Neglecting personal welfare, deteriorating physical appearance.
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society, or sleeping all the time.
- Losing interest in hobbies, work, school, or other thing one used to care about.
- Frequent and dramatic mood changes.
- Expressing feeling of excessive guilt or shame.
- Feelings of failure or decreased performance.
- Feeling that life is not worth living, having no sense of purpose in life.
- Talk about feeling trapped-like there is no way out of a situation.
- Having feeling of desperation, and saying that there's no solution to their problems.

Their behavior may be dramatically different from their normal behavior, or they may appear to be actively contemplating or preparing for a suicidal act through behaviors such as:

- Performing poorly at work or school.
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities-seemingly without thinking.
- Showing violent behavior such as punching holes in walls, getting into fights or self-destructive violence; feeling rage or uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge.
- Looking as though one has a "death wish," tempting fate by taking risks that could lead to death, such as driving fast or running red lights.
- Giving away prized possessions.
- Putting affairs in order, tying up loose ends, and/or making out a will.
- Seeking access to firearms, pills, or other means of harming oneself.

If you are a Veteran or know someone who is showing any of the above warning signs, please call the Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 Press 1 to talk to someone.

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1



Alan Cohen
VA&R Chair

Greetings, my fellow Legionnaires. This is my first article for Legion Link since being appointed as Department VA&R Chairman, since Kelton Sweet's official retirement. I'd like to start with heartfelt thanks to everyone for the confidence that's been placed in me, and say that it's an honor to serve in this position.

At our recent Department Convention, I'd like to point to the fact that Wally Hopkins, former Director at Bay Pines VAMC was presented with the National Recognition Award for his contributions during many years of service to our fellow veterans.

I have also recently filled what has been a long-time vacancy at the West Palm Beach VA hospital with a full time VAVS rep, Bob Markin. He immediately stepped up and led a food drive that has resulted in donations of over 1000lbs of non-perishable items, that through the Volunteer Service will ultimately find its way to homeless veterans in Palm Beach county. Kudos, Bob.

I will be sharing contributions of this nature as well as any and all significant information we can use to better serve our brother and sister veterans and their families.

Bob Brewster
Youth Law Cadet Program

THE DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA conducted our first ever Youth Law Cadet Program July 10-15, 2016, at the Florida Highway Patrol Academy in Havana, Florida. The Youth Law Cadet Program comes under The American Legion's Americanism Commission. All training was provided by certified FHP Troopers/Instructors. In addition to myself, Tom Gora, Department Sgt.-at-Arms and Ed Krass of Post 54 served as the counselors for the program. Upon arrival on Sunday July 10, the cadets received their uniforms, orientation for the week, learned basic military style marching, and dined with their Florida State Trooper instructors.

The academy, located just outside Tallahassee is on 1,400 acres of land with a modern dormitory, several classroom buildings, a gymnasium and defensive tactics training center, seven firing ranges, a defensive driving course, and a modern dining facility.

Every day began with physical fitness for the cadets at 6 AM, then it was marching off in formation to a hearty breakfast followed by an intense daily schedule of classes and demonstrations. The cadets were also fitted with police belts complete with handcuffs and a simulated weapon, and were required to wear the belts all week during classes, at meals, and they were allowed to keep the belts in their dorm rooms overnight. Among the classes and demonstrations these cadets attended during the week included: an auto rollover simulator, traffic crash investigations, directing traffic, a TASER demonstration, vehicle operations, traffic stop scenarios, K9 demos, firearms training using a simulated Glock 45 with each cadet firing 50 rounds on the range; baton training, defensive tactics (self-defense), and use of the driving simulator. Cadets actually drove FHP training cruisers on the figure 8 and serpentine driving courses, and rode as passengers on a high speed pursuit including a 'J' turn, and then spent an afternoon making vehicle pursuits by using the vehicle simulator. After dinner every night, it was "lights out" in the dormitory at 10 PM. On Tuesday the Legion counselors treated the cadets to dinner in Tallahassee and on Thursday FHP provided the cadets with a picnic.

This is a great opportunity for those aged 16-18, male or female, those that may be interested in a future law enforcement career. Next year's class is tentatively scheduled for the week of July 9-14, 2017. Please talk this program up at your posts and districts so we can enroll a full class of 15-25 cadets for the 2017 class. Like anything else new, we learned much this year and we have some ideas to improve the program such as an orientation package for cadets and their sponsoring posts and parents. In closing, we came away from the week, remember, our first ever experience with this program, believing that this program is a great opportunity for the youth of Florida and The American Legion.

In my next Legion Link article I hope to have some feedback from the cadets who participated in this year's program to share with you, and a few pictures of the cadets "in action."

Post 90
Cape Coral, FL



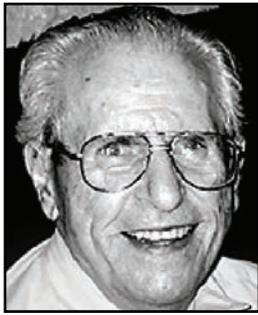
The American Legion of Southwest Florida Post 90 in Cape Coral donated a total of \$7,542 equally divided to the following charities: The Fisher House Foundation in Tampa Bay (serves Cape Coral area), the American Legion Child Welfare Fund and the Independence Fund. Fifty-One volunteers from Post 90 staffed a concession stand on behalf of Aramark Sports and Entertainment Services at JetBlue Park during the Boston Red Sox spring training season this past March. Post 90 raised funds for these worthy charities that assist in aiding wounded military personnel and children of veterans.

SNAPSHOT

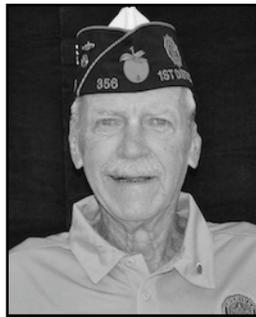


Post 286 Color Guard
Universal Studios





J.G. "Tracy" Taylor, Jr.
September 19, 1920 - July 14, 2016



Charles L. Johann
December 2, 1932 - July 1, 2016

JANUARY 20 - 23, 2017
1st FLORIDA
ALR SUMMIT

Visit floridalegion.org for details.



It is with deep regret that we report the passing of Past Department Legislative Chairman and Department Rehabilitation Chairman, J.G. "Tracy" Taylor, Jr., of Tampa, FL on Thursday,

July 14, 2016 at the age of 95. A service will be held on August 6, 2016. Information of the service are not yet finalized, but will be communicated to you through email as well as posted on the website.

Tracy was a WWII Army Veteran and a member of Seminole Post 111, with 73 continuous years of membership. Please keep his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers in this time of grief. Condolences may be sent to: Tracy Taylor Family, 17302 Stetson Lane, Odessa, FL 33556.



It is with deep regret that we report the passing of Past 1st District Commander, Charles L. Johann, of Youngstown, FL at the age of 74. Charles is survived by his wife, Deborah. There

are no details regarding services at this time, but any new information will be communicated to you through email as well as posted on the website.

Charles was a Vietnam US NAVY Veteran and a member of Douglas Munro Post 356, with 10 continuous years of membership. Please keep his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers in this time of grief. Condolences may be sent to his wife, Deborah, at 13118 Scotts Ferry Rd., Youngstown, FL 32466.

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL?

The American Legion has a great opportunity to share with you, inviting all our legionnaires, veteran's, employees, families and friends to enjoy a Miami Dolphins vs Atlanta Falcons pre-season game!

The game will be held at the Camping World Stadium on Thursday, August 25, 2016.

Visit <http://www.floridalegion.org/are-you-ready-for-some-football/> and receive an exclusive discounted ticket opportunity to watch live NFL football in Orlando for the first time in over 20 years! If you're interested in group tickets or block seating (10+), please contact Thomas Eugene (305) 943-6633 or teugene@dolphins.com.

PROMO CODE: ORLANDO7



Special Olympics
Florida

We would love to have attendees from the Legion family attend in support of these events and athletes. Here is what's coming up, more details to come later:

August 27, 2016
State Stand-Up Paddleboard Championships
Nathan Benderson Park, Sarasota, FL

September 2-3, 2016
Golf Championships
Disney Palms Golf Course, Orlando, FL

September 17, 2016
State Surfing Championships
Alan Shepard Park, Cocoa Beach, FL





PROJECT: VETRELIEF

A PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA



2016 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION RECAP

Here are a few highlights from the Convention:

- Received **\$34,310** in donations from the Legion Family
- Held our **first ever** Advocate Round Table Discussion - 13 attended
- Trained **31** new Vet Relief Advocates
- **35** attendees learned the Keys to Fundraising
- **100% positive feedback** from class attendees
- Awarded **six** Meritorious Service Awards to Florida American Legion Riders, Post 29, Post 69, Squadron 283, Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Florida, and American Legion Department of Florida



July 2015- June 2016 PROJECT: VetRelief Snapshot:

- Assisted **57 families** in their time of need through PROJECT: VetRelief funds
- To date, **173 VetRelief Advocates** have been trained to help facilitate emergency assistance around the state
- The American Legion continues to support **48 families** through National's Temporary Financial Assistance Program

If you missed the chance to participate in training, don't worry! Additional classes will be offered at the Fall Conference in November. **Stay tuned for more details.**

You are cordially invited to...

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



Event Details:

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

Sign up today:

www.projectvetrelief.org/get-involved/fundraising-events/

"[Without the help from PROJECT: VetRelief], my husband and I would be out on the street. I thank God for you and the help you were able to give me and my husband"

- Wife, WWII Army Veteran



For more information visit our website: www.ProjectVetRelief.org





CHILDREN & YOUTH CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

September 17, 2016



EVENT INFORMATION

Copperhead Golf Course
20910 Copperhead Dr
Lehigh Acres, FL 33936

- Shotgun - 8:00 AM
- Cost per Golfer - \$40
- 50/50 Drawing
- Longest Drive Contest
- Holl-in-One Contest
- Putting Contest

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Silver Hole Sponsor - \$100
- Gold Hole Sponsor - \$250
Includes 4 Golfers & Sign on Hole
- Donate a gift to be used as a raffle prize

Cut-off date for sponsorships and gift submissions:
September 15, 2016

Send all checks to: Post 323
1124 Ashlar Ave
Lehigh Acres, FL 33936

After the tournament, please join us at Post 323, in Lehigh Acres for lunch, raffles, and gift handouts.

Hotel Information:

Microtel
1320 Business Way
Lehigh Acres, FL 33936

Room Rate:

\$59 for 10 or more rooms

If we do not have 10 rooms booked then it will be \$79 per night

To make a reservation call the hotel directly, **(239) 369-2121**
Don't forget to mention "**American Legion Golf**"!



CHILDREN & YOUTH CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION

Golfer _____

Golfer _____

Golfer _____

Golfer _____

Hole Sponsor Silver _____

Hole Sponsor Gold _____

POC for the Team _____

POC Phone # _____

POC Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Post 232

Attn: Children & Youth Golf Tournament

1124 Ashlar Avenue

Lehigh Acres, FL 33936

If you have any questions, please contact:

Sid Damsgard - (727) 642-0246

Mike Mason - (774) 578-1161