



The LEGION LINK

“Lil Leprechaun Fighting For Vets”



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Joe Magee
Department Commander
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Greetings Everyone,

The National 90% deadline has passed and we missed it by less than a half of a percent. How frustrating is that! Looking back and analyzing this scenario it tells us, perhaps, there is a lack of emphasis on how incredibly important membership is starting at the Post level moving and up through the Area. If we worked renewals on a continuous basis that Goal would have been no problem. Now where does the problem lie? Well, it has to start at the top. I, as Department Commander, have not motivated the Vice Commanders, or at least gotten the message across of the importance of renewals. Don't get me wrong, I am not faulting the Vice Commanders, I believe we have a talented group that have traveled this state getting the message out.

If the word doesn't get make it to the Posts, it's a lost cause. To borrow a phrase from an older Legionnaire it appears the "Passion is not there like it used to be." The bottom line is, I am asking everyone involved in membership, check Post rosters and let's call those who have not renewed, or you form a committee to help you. It starts at the top, so if there is anything at all that I can do for you, please do not hesitate to call me and get me out to your Post or District. One bright spot to end this gloomy paragraph is that we lead the Nation in new members with over 4400, I would like to congratulate all members of the Department of Florida for that accomplishment.

The Legion College is now in the history book for

this year. We had a great turnout, 27 enrolled and 27 completed. All my thanks to Tom Gora and his staff for a great job done. Feedback to the man was 100% positive. It is gratifying to know the desire to learn is prevalent. I would also like to thank the Department Staff for all their help in making the College the success it was.

Following the Legion College, we were off to Washington D.C., also a great experience. I now know why I would never live up North again, wind, rain and cold, not to mention the prices, they can have it. I was able to relax at home for one day and then off to Dunedin for another Golf Tournament in aid of COTA, sponsored by the Sons of the American Legion. As always what more can one say about Post 275 and their amazing hospitality. Also, a huge thank you to Bill McDonald.

I also attended the State Oratorical Contest, a huge thanks goes out to Bill Walsh, his staff and the Department Staff for all they did to make this contest what I think was the best in years. After the Oratorical we headed down the road to Palm Bay Post 117 for the 12th District Picnic, however due to traffic, we were too late for the food, but still had a good time nonetheless. St Patrick's Day saw us at Lake Placid Post 25 for dinner, which I may say was a gourmet delicacy of corned beef and cabbage which would warm the heart of any Irishman but, everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day.

While on the Ridge, as we call it, we dropped by Avon Park Post 69. Post 254 North Port was next on the list for the 8th District meeting and following that on to LeHigh Acres Post 323 for the 13th District Picnic. The food was excellent, libations equally so and I raised over \$100.00 to get out of jail. It was a good day.

Despite my ranting and raving above, I am looking forward to a renewed push on membership, Post Commanders get your rosters out, help us, and let's that get elusive that 100%.





APRIL 2017

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | April Fool's Day |
| 1 | Medical & Nursing Scholarship Due |
| 1 | Children & Youth Picnic |
| 1-8 | ALR Legacy Ride |
| 4 | Gold Star Wives Day |
| 5 | Dept Membership Goal 100% |
| 6 | Cape Marksmanship Tournament |
| 8 | ALA President Kelli's Homecoming |
| 9 | Palm Sunday |
| 11 | Passover Starts |
| 13 | Thomas Jefferson Birthday |
| 14 | Good Friday |
| 14 | Dept Headquarters Closed |
| 14 | Air Force Reserve Birthday |
| 15 | Teacher of the Year Nominations Due |
| 15 | Legion Link Articles Due |
| 16 | Easter |
| 17 | Tax Day |
| 18 | Renewal Cut-Off |
| 18 | Passover Ends |
| 22 | Dept. and Det. Homecoming 🍀 |
| 22-23 | National Oratorical Finals |
| 22 | Earth Day |
| 23 | Army Reserves Birthday |
| 25 | Fire/Law of Year Nominations Due |
| 26 | Administrative Professionals Day |
| 27 | Renewal Notice Mailing |
| 28 | Arbor Day |
| May 1 | CPR & Addendum Due |
| May 1 | Children&Youth Fund Req. Due |

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



Steve Shuga
1st Vice Commander

April is membership cleanup time. We only have three months left before the 2018 cards are available for all renewals. Yes, if you haven't renewed for 2017 you have received the notices, reminders, and requests to renew your membership. Many Posts

(1st Vice - Continued)
are sliding backwards instead of moving forward. Florida can and must do better.

The membership hype is an annual occurrence. It is our sole commitment to pay our annual dues in advance of our membership card expiring. If you do not want pay every year, then consider paying up for life (PUFL). By doing that you won't be bothered with annual payments, no more renewal reminders, and your card is sent to you annually. You can pay your PUFL fees all at once or provide monthly installments until it is paid up. Call National Membership for assistance.

For a variety of reasons, Posts continue to struggle with their membership renewals. A Post membership team is necessary and should be actively calling, visiting, and asking their members to renew. Let's rapidly fulfill our membership commitments, attain our 100% and focus on other programs and activities. I hope when you are reading this article, your Post has achieved its membership goal. If not, do your very best to make it so.

We are all proud of our Posts and what they do for the community, but we are too proud to reach out and ask for help, assistance, or external support from those that are available to help us succeed with your membership woes.

A family that plays together - stays together.

Every one of our members is a very important team player. We need you to keep the family integrity in place. Each and every one of you has the ability to participate in programs, activities, and events that support your local communities, our state, and nation.

The Consolidated Post Reports and Addendums recently provided can only be completed and meaningful if each Post is healthy, happy, active, and supportive. It's time to tell your story. Let our state and nation hear what you have done to make a difference in our American Legion.

Thank you for your continued service and support. Remember, we are here to provide assistance – all you have to do is JUST ASK!



Dianne Boland
2nd Vice Commander

Greetings,

By now, this year's Florida American Legion College is over but wait! We have already

started planning for next year. It should be taking place September 7-9, 2017 so if you missed out, plan to attend the next one. Remember the ALEI Course (whether in person or online) is a prerequisite.

I have stated that the Florida Department Website www.floridalegion.org and National's Website www.legion.org have a wealth of knowledge about the American Legion, our programs, our history, our people and a whole lot more. Today as I was browsing the National website, I came across their booklet "Guide to Post Training." It's a thirty-page booklet packed full of good information. Every Post should have a copy of this and start training (if you haven't already). Below is the Table of Contents for the book. The Sample Lesson Plan they mention is about The American Legion Emblem. Within the booklet, they mention how and where to find the handouts and booklets.

- Introduction
- Objective
- Why Train
- Benefits
- Developing a Post Training Plan
- Training Topics
- Training Venues
- Basic Training
- The Fundamentals of Teaching
- Techniques to Use in Training
- The Physical Environment
- Develop a Plan





(2nd Vice - Continued)

- Sample Lesson Plan
- Legal Training
- Training Resources
- Current Training DVDs and PowerPoint Presentations
- Handouts/Booklets
- Biographical Resources on The American Legion
- Conclusion

New Training resource materials are continuously being produced by The American Legion National Headquarters. Each will be added to the electronic version of this guide on The American Legion Web site: www.legion.org/documents/legion/pdf/posttrainingguide.pdf.

If you have any comments, questions, concerns, or suggestions I would like to hear from you at 2ndvice@legionmail.org or call me at (561) 315-0679.



Dennis Boland
NEC

Protect the Best Care Anywhere

In 2016, The American Legion visited nine VA medical facilities that serve more than 500,000 enrolled veterans. The average patient load was 1,200 veterans, while the physician vacancy rate was just under 40 percent. All nine facilities listed staff vacancies as their No. 1 challenge with combined vacancies exceeding 3,000. Additionally, The American Legion discovered that many medical centers are extremely aged, including a number of buildings that are national historical sites with strict rules concerning architectural changes. Many of these aged facilities face significant expansion challenges because they have become landlocked over the years as the community that surrounds them has expanded.

All nine sites reported concerns with the Choice Program, including late payments and medical record documentation not being returned to VA.

The American Legion learned through System Worth Saving, visits that in many cases, due to VA's lengthy onboarding process, by the time VA is finally ready to hire an applicant, candidates have accepted job offers elsewhere. VA physicians also

(NEC - Continued)

continue to report low physician pay as a major disincentive that keeps clinicians from seeking VA employment.

Our National VA&R Chairman, Ralph Bozella has said that "We must continue to work with VA to improve all aspects of Veterans Health care, and the System Worth Saving program continues to be our primary means of evaluating progress, or lack thereof, to improve timeliness and quality of care for our nation's heroes."



Art Schwabe
NECA

Update on Flag Amendment Bill

The end of the 114th Congress signaled that House Joint Resolution (H.J. Res.) 9 and Senate Joint Resolution (S.J. Res.) 21 – proposed constitutional amendment to protect the American flag from physical desecration – expired. Though garnering some support in their respective chambers, neither measure emerged from the House or Senate Judiciary committees for an up-or-down vote in either chamber.

As a result, The American Legion is continuing its efforts to protect the American flag in the 115th Congress. As he did in the previous Congress, Rep. Steve Womack (AR) re-introduced a flag protection constitutional amendment, House Joint Resolution (H.J. Res.) 61, with 13 original co-sponsors. He is currently contacting other Members of the House seeking additional co-sponsors. With the House resolution now introduced, a member of the Senate will be sought to introduce a companion measure in that chamber.

"We, The People" still feel it is the right thing to do.



Tom Gora
Sgt-at-Arms

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

When I initially ran for this Department Office I pledged to improve the professionalism of those who serve in the role of Sgt.-at-Arms by providing education programs and improving the perception of the role they play, by promoting them as true ambassadors of The American Legion. I have strived to do this through my personal appearances, through the many training sessions I provide, and by my writings in this publication. I take pride in being a Sgt.-at-Arms, no matter how routine or simple some may feel the responsibilities are. I know many of you are just as proud of that Sgt.-at-Arms you know! Our Posts, Districts, or this Department could never be successful without truly dedicated professionals serving the role of Sgt.-at-Arms. Imagine the commotion on the floor at our Department Annual Convention without the services of those dedicated individuals who volunteer to serve as Department Assistant Sgt.-at-Arms!

Now is the time to recognize such performance! We are now approaching the time of the year when YOU can and YOU SHOULD recognize the performance of your Sgt.-at-Arms. Nominations for annual Sgt.-at-Arms Awards, Post and District, are due no later than May 1, 2017. There is no form to fill out, just write your award request and narrative on Post or District letterhead and write about your Sgt.-at-Arms from what is in your heart. However, there is an award nomination cover sheet that must accompany the narrative and Commanders receive that form in the annual awards mailing that is mailed out in March (end of the year packet). Nominations are mailed to the PROGRAMS DIRECTOR at Department Headquarters.

The Color Guard Competition, Post and Retrieve Colors, will be held on Thursday, June 29, 2017, from 5:00-7:00 P.M. in a designated room at the host hotel of the Department of Florida Annual Convention. The competition classes are Military Class (3 Legion members or 4 with commanding officer) and Military Open (maximum 7 members which can be mixed Legion, Auxiliary, Sons) per National Color Guard competition

APRIL PROGRAM DEADLINES

| | |
|--|----------|
| Medical & Nursing Scholarship Due | April 1 |
| Teacher of the Year Nominations Due | April 15 |
| Fire / Law of the Year Nominations Due | April 25 |
| Children & Youth Fund Request Due | May 1 |
| CPR & Addendum Due | May 1 |





(Sgt-at-Arms - Continued)

rules. Applications to participate at the Annual Convention in the Color Guard competition are due NLT June 1, 2017. Competing color guard units must have participated in events/or have been sponsored by its post within the current year, 2016–2017. The sponsoring post must have a registered delegation at the Annual Department Convention. Participating color guard members themselves do not have to be a registered convention delegate, however, they must be a member in good standing of an organization within The American Legion Family of the sponsoring post. Further instructions can be found on the Department web site under the Department Convention tab.



Steve Newman
Chaplain

A big hello and greetings my fellow veterans and families.

I hope this month is shining brightly on all of you. All I know is my time as Department Chaplain is getting shorter. As I have stated many times before I really appreciate your great support for the past four years during my tenure. I have met so many wonderful veterans and their families that I will always cherish the moments.

Easter is just around the corner and it's a special time of the year. Everybody should take a few minutes out of their busy schedules to thank and praise God for all that He has done for us and all that He will do for us. Remember, all you have to do is ask Him to help you along and He will in His way. You are never alone, God is with you always, no matter what the situation, time of day or night. Seek and you will be answered. Even with the good times and not so good ones, we can be assured that God will never leave us alone.

You can always communicate with God no matter when. He will always listen and answer when the time is right. Believing in Him is just one half of the equation, communicating with Him is the other half. So, remember to communicate whenever you can with God, believe me as I have stated so many times before, He loves to hear from you. Give Him your concerns, wants, and special requests. Ask God for help when you need it. Remember also that praying to God is talking to Him. As I have said so many times before God

(Chaplain - Continued)

loves it when you communicate and talk to Him. You can talk to Him about anything and He will listen. God is always and will ever be there for you.



Larry Sheets
Judge Advocate



I received a question from a Post Commander who wanted to know where he could find the time limits for the Post elections, and who the appointed officers were. I referred him to the Department Constitution Article X, section 13, which states: All officers of Posts, except the Post Adjutant, Post Service Officer, and Post Judge Advocate shall be elected and certified to the Department Adjutant, not more than ninety (90) days, nor less than Ten (10) days prior to the annual Department Convention, certification to be made on forms furnished or prescribed by the Department Adjutant.

Please pay special attention to the dates so your Post is in compliance with the above guidelines. I also spoke to a Post Commander who did not agree with what the Post's Constitution said regarding the suspension of a member of his Post. I explained the process outlined in the Department Constitution Article X, section 14. After he read that, he agreed to go forth in the proper manner.

All Posts need to get out their Post Constitution and By-Laws and make sure they are in compliance with Department and National. If they are not or they are old, (over three years since they were last updated) they need to be updated.



Jerry Brandt
Membership Chair

Commanders,

I would like to congratulate all Posts who made the 95% goal.

(Membership Chair - Continued)

1st District:

- Post 402, Panama City Bch
- Post 382, Navarre
- Post 66, Panama City
- Post 240, Pensacola

2nd District

- Post 172, Hosford
- Post 116, Port St Joe
- Post 272, Blountstown
- Post 51, Chattahoochee

3rd District

- Post 215, Jasper
- Post 68, Madison
- Post 234, Monticello

4th District

- Post 210, Ocala
- Post 237, Beverly Hills
- Post 236, Williston
- Post 58, Dunnellon

5th District

- Post 372, Jacksonville
- Post 202, Keystone Heights
- Post 102, Hastings
- Post 250, Middleburg

6th District

- Post 409, Avalon Park
- Post 76 Tavares
- Post 330, Leesburg
- Post 357, Clermont
- Post 101, Bushnell
- Post 347, Lady Lake

7th District

- Post 15, Dade City
- Post 71, Lake Wales

8th District

- Post 254, North Port
- Post 11, Arcadia
- Post 69, Avon Park

9th District

- Post 142, Pompano Beach
- Post 310, Hallandale

12th District

- 177, Cocoa
- Post 394, Palm Bay
- Post 200, Satellite Beach
- Post 1, Titusville
- Post 126, Jensen Beach





(Membership Chair - Continued)

13th District

397, Fort Myers
Post 404, Marco Island
Post 405, Punta Gorda
Post 336, N Ft Myers

14th District

Post 144, Miami Lakes
Post 374, Key Biscayne
Post 29, Miami
Post 145, Islamorada
Post 32, Hialeah

15th District

Post 108, Lutz
Post 389, Ruskin
Post 186, Spring Hill
Post 246, Sun City Center

16th District

Post 275, Dunedin
Post 273, Madeira Beach

17th District

Post 187, Deland
Post 45, Palatka

The next goal date is 100% by April 5th.

You all know how important our membership is, currently the Department of Florida ranks 25th in the American Legion, with 98,599 renewals for 88.41%, with an additional 570 on their way down. This would give us a total of 99,169 members with 88.94%. Not enough for the 90% goal. We need to do better.

During my travels, one of the questions that keep coming up is about the IRS needing the DD-214's for records. Google TEGE-04-1113-21, for more information.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me.



Sid Damsgard
Central Area Commander

This month saw an excellent golf tournament sponsored by The Sons of the American

Legion Post 275 Dunedin FL. A total of 36 teams

(Central Area Commander - Continued)

enjoyed a perfect day for golf and raised \$7900.00 for Commander Magee's charity COTA. Again, Team Magee did not finish first and many were amazed we finished at all. At 1 under par we were a distant 20th place. Every year Post 275 hosts 2 tournaments supporting local or Department charities.

Due to scheduling and circumstance beyond my control there will not be a Central Area Ball. With DCC meetings coming up and tight schedules by the Commander and candidates, finding a date to hold a ball became problematic. After attending the balls this year I found Area Balls are mostly attended by Department people at an extreme cost for those attending. I would rather anyone who would normally be in attendance to the Central Area Ball, please send a donation to the Commanders Charity COTA where it will go to better use.



John W Rose
Northern Area Commander

Congratulations to our Department of Florida Oratorical Winner, Ms. Madison Moore, who will represent us at National on April 22nd & 23rd. Madison is from Yule High School and was sponsored by Post 54 of the 5th District.

We are still in the fight for membership. I know it's been a process, but we need to make an all-out effort to make the 100% goal by April 5th. This is attainable but will require everyone's help. Each District Commander needs to be fully involved with each Post's team to get there. Thanks to those Posts that are at 100% or higher. In our District, there are many Posts that need only 1 or 2 members or renewals and many more Posts that need 10 or so to make the goal. Every member that has not renewed needs to be contacted. Again, this is not just a one-person effort but a mission for each of us. We all have been successful to get here so let's complete this mission.

There are many things going on or are due. April is Children & Youth Month. Get out to the many events and make contributions to the C&Y programs. The State Legacy Run is April 1st through 8th. The Department Commander's

(Northern Area Commander - Continued)

& Detachment Commander's Homecoming is April 22nd. Law Officer & Firefighter of the Year Nominations are due at Department April 25th. I hope you have a Post program to recognize first responders and have a candidate to submit for this higher recognition. CPRs and C&Y Fund requests deadline to Department is May 1st.

Thanks again for all you do.



Jim Brennan
2nd District Commander

American Legion John W. Shaw Post 84 along with McClellan Funeral and the Quincy

Chamber of Commerce will host the following event in Quincy, FL at the East Cemetery on 320 East Washington St. Big Bend Honor Guard will provide Military Honors. A Medal of Honor Stone will be place on his grave Mar 18, 2017 at 1 pm.

Medal of Honor
Cdr. William M Corry Jr.
Born 1889
Died 1920

For heroic service in attempting to rescue a brother officer from a flame-enveloped airplane. On the 2nd of October 1920, an airplane in which Lt. Comdr. Corry was a passenger, crashed and burst into flames. He was thrown 30 feet clear of the plane and, though injured, rushed back to the burning aircraft and endeavored to release the pilot. In so doing he sustained serious burns, from which he died 4 days later.



Fred Matthews
5th District Commander

It's that time of year for Legionnaires across the state to focus on our programs. Interviews for Boys State took place in February and March

for more than half the 19 Posts in the 5th District. Posts 54, 129, 316, 250, 372, 88, and 137 are among them.

The Riders of the 5th District were present and accounted for in the Annual State Legacy Ride.





(5th District Commander - Continued)

The 4 counties of the 5th District heard the rumbling motors of dozens of Harleys, Hondas and Yamahas in support of the fundraising effort for COTA. As always, the ride began at Post 283 where Director Rusty Crowdus and company led the charge.

A special salute is given this month to the new members and renewing members of the Post 372. Under the leadership of the Jowers and Jowers team, this Post- without-a-home has more than doubled its membership in 9 months. Percentage wise, Post 372 is number 4 in membership in the state. Where once there were barely 6 people attending a membership meeting, the room is now so packed that you need to arrive at least 30 minutes early to get a seat. Kudos to the team at Post 372 for taking our number one program to heart!

The month was capped for the 5th District and Post 54 with the winner of the State Oratorical Contest. Yulee High School Senior Madison Moore won the Contest amid a field of candidates from across Florida. This was the second year that Madison competed and the experience showed as she made her way from the Post to the District, the Area contest and finally State Champion! Next up: A new Post home and a restart for a small north Florida town. Post 401 is getting a new building. Stay tuned.



Post 372 Commander Myra Jowers and Adjutant/ Husband Carl have led a team of legionnaires to an all time high in membership in Jacksonville's Mandarin community. The Post meets at an Elks Lodge.

(5th District Commander - Continued)



Post 54 always conducts a well-organized meeting and its membership is stocked with great volunteers. Here Department Sgt-At-Arms Tom Gora presents a commemorative Plaque to Past Post Historian and photographer Ralph Spuhler for his work in chronicling Post 54 history in pictures.



Madison Moore is the winner of the Department of Florida Oratorical Contest. Here she poses with Post 54 Commander George Terwilliger and the Post 54 family.



Oratorical Winner Madison Moore is congratulated by District Commander Fred Matthews, Area Commander John Rose and Department Commander Joe Magee in Orlando.

(Centennial Chair - Continued)

be responsible for contacting Posts within their Districts that have not completed their entries on the Department and National Centennial website.

The state of Florida has many fine veteran's memorials in place. We even have one city that in of itself could be called a memorial, as a matter of fact, it could be called a living memorial. The city I speak of is Zephyrhills. Zephyrhills was founded in 1910 by Captain H. B. Jeffries. A Union Civil War Veteran. Captain H. B. Jeffries served in Pennsylvania's 28th Calvary during the War Between the States. He founded the city as a place for his fellow union civil war veterans to start a community and raise their families.

The VSO (Veteran Service Organization) at that time was the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). The GAR was a veteran fraternal organization composed of veterans who served during the Civil War for the Northern forces. It was founded in 1866 in Decatur, Illinois, and dissolved in 1956 when its last member Albert Woolson died in 1956. The GAR became among the first organized advocacy groups in American politics, supporting voting rights for black veterans, promoting patriotic education, helping to make Memorial Day a national holiday, and lobbying the United States Congress to establish regular veterans' pensions.

In 1868, GAR Commander-in-Chief John A. Logan, who admired the southern ladies' dedication in decorating their fallen soldiers' graves, issued General Order No. 11 calling for all Departments and Posts to set aside the 30th of May as a day for remembering the sacrifices of fallen comrades, thereby beginning the celebration of Decoration Day. They began by placing flowers on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.



The GAR started in Zephyrhills in 1910. The building is on the Zephyrhills Historical District Registry. When the post was dissolved, it was put in their will that the first veteran organization to form would get the building. In 1938 The American

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Andrew Nagy
Centennial Chair

We are gradually building up the Centennial committee, and now have 4 members. They will





(Centennial Chair - Continued)

Legion Zephyrhills Post was chartered. In our Post hallway, we have a plaque honoring all 17 members of Zephyrhills who lost their lives in service to our country during WWI.

Towards the back of Zephyr Park is the veteran's area. Benches in memory of numerous veterans are in place, as are bricks on the walkways. Many non-veteran organizations, such as the Rotary, Elks, Kwanis Clubs also put up memorials. The MOPH's have a very nice marble memorial there. In 2001 the city put up a Flag Pole and dedicated Veterans Park off of 3rd St. In memory of marine Aaron Guynn, and Every Arbor Day they plant a tree in memorial of a deceased veteran.

Oakside Cemetery, owned and maintained by the City of Zephyrhills, was deeded to the Oakside Cemetery Association in 1911. Later, the association passed the property to the city. This cemetery is the burying ground of veterans of six wars in which the United States of America has been involved: The Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. With approximately 2,500 burial plots, cremains section and a mausoleum, Oakside serves as the resting place for hundreds of the community's deceased residents and many prominent and historic family members.



Donna Artola
Blood Donor Chair

As we spring into the spring, I hope everyone is springing into donating blood. When you do this it will help other veterans and friends that are in need. As we did in the military we worked as a team, this is the time to work together to donate the one pint of blood that saves the lives of 3 people. If that is not team work, I don't know what it is.

(Blood Donor Chair - Continued)

There are just a few months before it is time to get your CPR of your Post completed. Make sure you get them in on time. Also, I look forward to reading your narrative from your blood chair. If you need my help I am only an e-mail or a phone call away.



Sid Damsgard
Children & Youth Chair

At this writing the Children and Youth picnic is in the final stages of planning and appears to be ready for an exciting time. I want to thank all those who supported this event with sponsorships and prizes for our raffles. For those who attend I hope you have a good time with all the activities. The success of last year has made the event one of the best all-around fund raisers the Department supports, and this year will be the same. Post 117 Palm Bay should be commended for all their hard work in making this happen.

The 1st District will be holding a golf tournament supporting transportation to Boys State on April 23rd. This event is sponsored by American Legion Post 240, located at 8666 Golf Beach Hwy Pensacola FL 32507. Tournament Director Commander John Edens can be contacted by phone at H (850)-492-7082 or Cell (229)444-3534. Email snakeb52@gmail.com. Entry deadline is April 15th. Anyone wishing to sponsor a hole, the levels are \$50.00/\$100.00/\$200.00 this is a scramble format at \$55.00 per player. Checks can be mailed to John at 5471 Keel Dr Pensacola FL 32507. Let's get out and support this important event.



Tom Gora
Legion College Chair

Get in on the training and experience, don't be left behind! The next Florida American Legion College Class is scheduled for September 7-9, 2017. The most recent FALC Class was conducted February 16-18, 2017. The class participants were divided into five imaginary 'districts' and each district was asked for a "theme or motto" the class could be remembered by. The FALC Committee reviewed

(Legion College Chair - Continued)

the submissions and selected "Blazing Trails for Veterans" as the theme of this class. This was the 1st graduated class under the leadership of the FALC, hence they have "blazed" the trail for all classes to follow.



FALC Class of 2 "Blazing Trails for Veterans"

Designs were also considered for an FALC emblem, and a design submitted by a Department staffer, Carrie Kolze, has been selected. The color of the FALC shirt will be a sand color and this is what the emblem will look like (this is a black & white version).



And, as the old 60's song goes, "See you in September!" Next FALC Class September 7-9, 2017!



Jim Day
American Legion Riders Chair

The Legion Riders have been busy the past month, planning for the 2017 Florida Legacy Run and starting the planning for the 2018 Florida ALR Summit. Special thank you to District 5 for a phenomenal job hosting the 2017 Florida ALR Rally. Outstanding job done by Cheryl and her crew. The rides they organized



(American Legion Riders Chair - Continued)

were great, the food delicious and the entertainment rocked the house. All proceeds will go to the Department Commander Joe Magee's charity of choice COTA.

The Legacy information has been posted online and the route has been completed. We will be riding 200-250 miles a day and stopping at 2 Posts per day. We have added some memorial and event visits as well this year. Come out for a day, a stop, or the entire run. Everyone is welcome to join in the CAUSE and help raise money for the National Legacy Scholarship Fund.

The Merry-go-Round will be running for the entire month of April (C&Y month). The custom trophy will be up for grabs to the District with the most points. Since this month-long event is designed to be a fundraiser, membership drive and Legion Family awareness, we need to focus on getting out there and having fun. Take 3 or more people (by car or motorcycles) and visit 5 Posts or 1 special event with Post stops on the way and promote the ideas and programs of The American Legion. Talk to people at events about the American Legion Family and hand out applications for membership. Visit other Posts that you haven't been to before and promote the Legion Riders. Get together and RIDE, enjoy each other's company and have FUN. And PLEASE can someone steal that Trophy from District 5. The BRAGGING is out of CONTROL! Forms and registration is online. Remember every ride/event requires a new registration and form (it's only \$5) and every online registration counts as 55 points. Convention is coming the end of June 2017. Please make every effort to attend some of the Legion Family sessions. Wear something that shows you are a member of the ALR. This year we have booked one of the hospitality suites and we will be looking for help and supplies from Chapters/Individuals attending. Several Chapters have chipped in and we have one night covered already. We will have the projector running and showing pictures and videos, so send Jennifer anything you want added to the show. Bring your flyers to share.

Remember we are here for the CAUSE and we need to focus on our Veterans and their families. Don't bring your personal drama to the business of helping our CAUSE.

Dave Miller
POW - MIA Chair

First of all, I hope everyone had a great St. Patrick's Day as I know our Department Commander Joe did as well as the rest of us with Irish heritage. Time is passing as we are getting into the month of April, so I hope everyone is keeping the Pow-Mia issues on the top of their list of things to do. As I continue to communicate to let everyone know that our Country continues to try to get all former service

men and women back to our Country no matter where they were deployed to. We all need to realize how important these issues are to the family members of these missing comrades in arms. Many covert operations have left many soldiers missing all over the world. We must continue to contact our Congressional representatives and Senators to keep investigations going to bring them all home from ALL wars and conflicts. The National League of Families has their own website to get all the current Pow-Mia statistics, as well as the DOD website.

I hope all your Post homes have a Pow-Mia table set up in either your main hall or highly visible area for everyone to see. If not, and you need help setting one up, contact me by email or phone and I will help you. My home number is in the Department roster. (727-393-0548) home (727-331-1652) cell.

Just sit back and imagine if you were captured or missing and think about what it would do to your family and loved ones. Sometimes this goes on for days, months, years and decades. We need a full accounting to get them all home. Get involved at your Post or in your community with a family who has a missing serviceman or woman. I am sure they will welcome any assistance and compassion you can bring to them.

Please keep our Pow-Mia program going strong in the Department of Florida, and remember you could be captive or missing somewhere and your family would be devastated. Help bring all these HEROES home! God bless our missing heroes and God bless our great nation. Please bring them all home, their families are waiting for them.



Diane Schmidt
Public Relations Chair

"...on Authentic Leadership as it relates to Membership."

Toastmasters, a magazine for communicators and leaders, had an excellent article on the subject of Authentic Leadership as it relates to Membership. One has to reflect that if our membership in the Legion is dwindling, what is the reason? We can come up with all kinds of excuses; though the real reason might be this: times have changed and what worked in the past may not work today. This leaves leaders to ponder these questions: What do we do as leaders to relate to our members? Do we make them feel special or just assume they will always renew? Are we aware of the needs of our members? Do we care? Do we have the courage to be ourselves? Do we come across as human and are we accessible? Are we open or are we self-absorbed?

There is plenty of information that shows those leaders who open up about who they are, helps others to feel connected to them. Thus, being more self-reliant about our own experiences enables us to become more authentic and lead from the inside out. Inside out? Interesting thought indeed.

Authentic leadership requires matching our words with our actions. We leaders need to be consistent with who we are. The challenge is to understand our own weaknesses and our strengths so that we are able to connect when there is a conflict in our groups.

Toastmasters, an organization that is highly rated for what it offers its members, is an excellent workshop type venue where members can improve their speaking skills in a positive environment. They focus on the problems: "In Talk #1, John used 10 "ahs" and 3 "you knows" and did not start any sentence with "And." They protect the self esteem: "Wow, John, what an improvement. BRAVO!" Be positive when engaging with members. Remember that people talk about what is important to them. Leaders have to pause and listen. In a book about success such as Steven Covey's 7 Habits of Successful People, we read: "Most of us spend too much time on what is urgent and not enough time on what is important." Yes, we as leaders are concerned about membership as we should be; though are



President Kelli's Homecoming Dinner
Saturday, April 8, 2017 ~ 5:00pm - 10:00pm
Post 7, Clearwater, FL



(Public Relations Chair - Continued)

we just as concerned about each member and what each of them brings to the success of our organization? Common bonds can go beyond one's initial interest. One bond may be family events. An event for families wouldn't be urgent however it would be one of importance. Keep in mind that people are different so family events may not be for everyone. Give some thought to having several events through the year that focus on different interests: Boating 101, Make-up for photo ops, fun stuff. Leaders need to talk to their members to get to know them, and more importantly, pause to listen.

We are leaders, and as leaders, we know that we should not address issues alone. There is a Japanese Proverb: "A single arrow is easily broken but not ten in a bundle." Working as a team allows each person to do what they are skilled at; working as a team where everybody participates is vital for reaching goals. Ken Blanchard said: "None of us is as smart as all of us."

So, Legionnaires, let us be ourselves, be authentic and work together. Work with both fellow leaders and our members to share ideas on maintaining and growing membership. Plan ahead by scheduling interesting and fun meetings/events. We want to hear about what you are doing. Share your ideas that have had positive results so that we can all be successful.



Roy Havekost
Social Media Chair

Greetings Legionnaires; Last month I asked that the District Social Media Chairman in the State of Florida review the Posts Facebook pages and groups in their respective districts. After reviewing the pages, you need to determine which Post(s) are showing activities that promote the programs of the American Legion in your District and recommend that site for an award consideration to be presented at the June Convention. Only a few Posts have been recommended at this point. This will be the last request made in the Legion Link newsletter this term, as the cutoff will be May 15th 2017.

To all District Commanders, each District in the state should have a Social Media Chairman appointed in accordance with the guidelines

(Social Media Chair - Continued)

outlined in the National District/County Commanders publication. The National website also has a vast library of training and programs videos that can easily be shared to your Post or District Facebook page or group. Utilizing these videos helps to educate your community, as well as your members, with respect to what the American Legion is all about.

If you are the administrator for your Post and your District does not have a Social Media Chairman, by all means, submit your Posts' page or group for consideration. Email the Facebook URL with group name and Post # to me at SocialMedia@Legionmail.org . Again, the deadline is May 15th. American Legion program videos shared on your site will increase your chances to receive an award.



Larry Roberts
VA Entitlements Chair

Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements Chairman,
All Information from:
Veterans Benefits Administration

There are numerous ways to apply for VA benefits depending on the type of benefit you are seeking.

Before Leaving Military Service – Pre-Discharge Program for Servicemembers

If you are a member of the armed forces serving on either active duty or full-time National Guard duty, you should apply through the VA Pre-Discharge Program before leaving service.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits for Servicemembers and Veterans

The best way to file for vocational rehabilitation and employment services is to apply online at eBenefits.va.gov. If you don't have an eBenefits account, register today. In eBenefits, apply using the Veterans On-line Application (VONAPP) to complete and submit your application online. The form to use is called VA Form 28-1900, "Disabled Veterans Application for Vocational Rehabilitation." Download VA Form 28-1900

You can also mail the VA Form 28-1900, "Disabled Veterans Application for Vocational Rehabilitation" to your local regional benefit office. You can

(VA Entitlements Chair - Continued)

locate your local regional benefit office using the VA Facility Locator. You may also visit your local regional benefit office and turn in your application for processing.

Visit Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment for more information on vocational rehabilitation and employment services.

Disability Compensation Benefits for Veterans

The best way to file for disability compensation is to apply online at eBenefits.va.gov. If you don't have an eBenefits account, register today. Once you log into your eBenefits account, use Apply for Disability Compensation. VA recommends you appoint an accredited Veterans Service Officer to help you initiate your claim, gather the required medical records and evidence, and submit your claim. You can appoint a Veteran Service Officer while you apply online.

If you prefer to file your claim by paper, complete VA Form 21-526EZ, "Application for Disability Compensation and Related Compensation Benefits" and mail the application to your local regional benefit office. You can find your local regional benefit office in the VA Facility Locator. You can also visit your local regional office and turn in your application for processing. While there, you can appoint an accredited Veterans Service Officer to help you prepare and submit your claim. You can find an accredited Veteran Service Officer using eBenefits.

Download VA Form 21-526EZ

Visit Applying for Compensation for more information on how to apply for compensation.

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Benefits for Survivors and Dependents

Download and complete VA Form 21-534EZ, "Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits" and mail it to your local regional benefit office. You can locate your local regional benefit office using the VA Facility Locator. You may also visit your local regional benefit office and turn in your application for processing.

We recommend that you appoint an accredited Veterans Service Officer to help you initiate your claim and gather any required medical records or evidence. You can find an accredited Veteran Service Officer using eBenefits. Download VA Form 21-534EZ

If the death was in service, your Military Casualty Assistance Officer will assist you in completing



(VA Entitlements Chair - Continued)

VA Form 21-534a, "Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation, Death Pension and Accrued Benefits by a Surviving Spouse or Child" and in mailing the application to the Philadelphia Regional Benefit Office.

Download VA Form 21-534a

Visit Dependency and Indemnity Compensation for more information on compensation benefits for survivors and dependents.

Pension Benefits for Veterans

The best way to apply for your pension benefits is using Veterans On-Line Application (VONAPP). If you have never used VONAPP before you can create an account.

You may also download and complete VA Form 21-527EZ, "Application for Pension." You can mail your application to your local regional benefit office. You can locate your local regional benefit office using the VA Facility Locator. You may also visit your local regional benefit office and turn in your application for processing.

Download VA Form 21-527EZ

VA recommends you appoint an accredited Veterans Service Officer to help you initiate your claim and gather any required medical records or evidence. You can find an accredited Veteran Service Officer using eBenefits.

Visit Veterans Pension or more information on Veterans Pension benefits.

Pension Benefits for Survivors

Download and complete VA Form 21-534EZ, "Application for DIC, Death Pension, and/or Accrued Benefits" and mail it to your local regional benefit office. You can locate your local regional benefit office using the VA Facility Locator. You may also visit your local regional benefit office and turn in your application for processing.

Download VA Form 21-534EZ

VA recommends you appoint an accredited Veterans Service Officer to help you initiate your claim and gather any required medical records or evidence. You can find an accredited Veteran Service Officer using eBenefits.

For more information on Survivors Pension benefits, visit the Survivors Pension web page.

Education Benefits for Veterans

(VA Entitlements Chair - Continued)

The best way to apply for your education benefits is online at Vets.gov.

You can also submit a paper application. To do this, download and complete VA Form 22-1990, "Application for VA Education Benefits" and mail it to a VA Regional Processing Office. You can mail the form to the region of your home address or to the VA Regional Processing Office for the region of your school's physical address, if you know what school you want to attend. Also, you can call a VA Education Case Manager (1-888-GIBill1) to ask for help.

Download VA Form 22-1990

For more information on how to apply online, visit the Applying for Education Benefits web page.

Home Loan Benefits for Servicemembers and Veterans

You can apply for a home loan certificate of eligibility online using ebenefits.va.gov. You may also apply for a home loan certificate of eligibility through your lender. To apply by mail, use VA Form 26-1880, "Request for Certificate of Eligibility."

Download VA Form 26-1880

You can mail the application to:
VA Loan Eligibility Center
Attn: COE (262)
PO Box 100034
Decatur, GA 30031

For more information on eligibility, evidence, and how to apply, visit the Certificate of Eligibility web page.

Home Loan Benefits for Survivors

The surviving spouse of a Servicemember or Veteran must apply by mail. The form to complete is the VA Form 26-1817, "Request for Determination of Loan Guaranty Eligibility - Unmarried Surviving Spouses." Or, you can call 1-877-827-3702 and follow the prompts for Eligibility and we will mail the form to you.

Download VA Form 26-1817

Mail your application to this address:
VA Loan Eligibility Center
Attn: COE (262)
PO Box 100034
Decatur, GA 30031

(VA Entitlements Chair - Continued)

For more information on eligibility, evidence, and how to apply, visit the Certificate of Eligibility web page.

Life Insurance Benefits for Servicemembers, Veterans, and Survivors

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI): SGLI coverage is automatic. You do not need to apply. To designate beneficiaries, or reduce, decline or restore SGLI coverage, complete and submit SGLV 8286, "Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Election and Certificate" to your branch of service personnel clerk.

Download Form SGLV 8286

Visit Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance for more information on Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI): To file for VGLI, you can apply online using eBenefits.va.gov. If you don't have an eBenefits account, register today. You may also download and complete SGLV 8714, "Application for Veterans' Group Life Insurance."

Download Form SGLV 8714

Mail your application to this address:
OSGLI
PO Box 41618
Philadelphia, PA 19176-9913

Visit Veterans' Group Life Insurance for more information on Veterans' Group Life Insurance.

Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI): To decline, reduce, or restore FSGLI coverage, complete and file form SGLV 8286A, "Spouse Coverage Election and Certificate" with your branch of service.

Download Form SGLV 8286A

Visit Family Servicemembers' Life Group Insurance for more information on Family Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program (TSGLI): To file a claim for TSGLI, complete and file SGLV 8600, "Application for TSGLI Benefits" with your branch of service. Coverage for this benefit is automatic for all Servicemembers covered by SGLI.

Download Form SGLV 8600





(VA Entitlements Chair - Continued)

Visit the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program for more information on the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Traumatic Injury Protection Program, Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance (S-DVI): To file for S-DVI, apply online using the online policy access page or complete VA Form 29-4364, "Application for Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance."

Download VA Form 29-4364

Mail your application to this address:
Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office and Insurance Center (RH)
P.O. Box 7208
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Visit Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance for more information on Service-Disabled Veterans' Insurance.

Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance (VMLI): To file for VMLI, complete and submit VA Form 29-8636, "Application for Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance" to your Specially Adapted Housing Agent. The agent will help you complete your application. Also, you must provide information about your current mortgage.

Download VA Form 29-8636

Visit Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance for more information on Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance.



Alan Cohen
VA&R Chair

Greetings, fellow Legionnaires. I'm proud to start this month's article by announcing that one of our own, David Miller, who is a VAVS volunteer and more at the Bay Pines VA hospital has been selected to be honored as VAVS male volunteer of the year. He was chosen out of a field of outstanding candidates from all over the country and will have this honor bestowed on him on April 20th at the NAC annual conference in Tampa. Way to go, Dave. You're an example to us all.

On another note, I'd like to speak to each of you regarding an issue close to all our hearts. I recently was given the opportunity to go to

(VA & R Chair - Continued)

Washington, D.C to attend the American Legion's Legislative conference and spent time speaking one-on-one with three of Florida's Congress people. While there are several veteran-related items on the agenda, the one I'm addressing now is a proposed amendment to protect the American flag from desecration. As you may or may not know, the Supreme Court had ruled that this type of behavior is acceptable as expression of 1st Amendment protections. I, for one, respectfully and vigorously disagree with that ruling and would at least like to think that most of you would as well. With that said, I encourage you to contact your local Representatives and urge them to support HJ 61, the Amendment to Protect the Flag. This is not by any measure a partisan issue but rather one that represents protection of the symbol of the country that we all served so proudly.

Thank you for attention and what I hope will be your support in the form of speaking out.



Bob Brewster
Youth Law Cadet Chair

This week I spent some time with the Clay County Sheriff's Department, and we picked up some membership there for our

Post. If your police department or sheriff's department has an Explorer Program, this is where you will get your best candidates for our program. If not, check your schools, churches, and boy scouts for candidates. We have 2 cadets slated to attend this year

As you know, we have brochures detailing this whole program. You can get some of these from Department or from me. The paperwork that must be filled out for each candidate is on-line on Department's web site. Only with your help, can this program be a huge success.

If you need help from me, just ask. I am here to help you with any problems or questions that may arise. This is our second year, and we would like to have a full class.

The week of this year's program will start on Sunday, July 9, 2017, at 4:00 PM. Again, I will be on the Florida Highway Patrol campus by 3:00 PM. Graduation will be at 10:00 AM on Friday, July 14, 2017.

(Youth Law Cadet Chair - Continued)

If you have any questions, please contact me at 904-272-1619 (home), 904-635-4492 (cell), or email: brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net.

LegionTown

Post 374 hosts a decade of VA picnics



Post 374 holds picnics twice a year (the next one in April) for PTSD and severely handicapped vets from the Miami VA. The event includes cookout, singing, relaxed discussions and even fishing off the nearby pier. Local Fire Department and Police members join in. Burger King regularly contributes the burgers. The post is active, but nothing would occur without our outstanding Auxiliary taking the lead.





(LegionTown - Continued)



Department Headquarters
Flag donated to Hollywood Hills High School

Hollywood Hills Highschool teacher, Kevin Perry, recently reached out to The American Legion to request an American Flag to be donated for the school weight room.

Hollywood Hills High School in Hollywood, FL is a Military Magnet School. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of students attending are on free and reduced lunches, funding for the school is already stretched thin.

National Headquarters reached out to the Department of Florida with this request, and we were more than happy to accomodate.

Mr. Perry expressed his immense gratitude of our willingness to donate a flag to the school's weight room. He was proud to tell us that many of the staff at the school were veterans and often utilized the weight room themselves.

When Mr. Perry recieved the huge flag, he was so excited to get it up, that he signed up for a course to get certified to use the genie lift, and hung it himself.



WE'VE MADE SOME EXCITING CHANGES TO
EMBLEM SALES
BE SURE TO VISIT US AT CONVENTION

NEW **DEPT CONVENTION T-SHIRTS**

Available in Men's or Women's styles. Front features eagle with Legion emblem. Back features Convention artwork, sponsor logos, and a roster of your 2016-2017 Department Officers.

ORDER ONLINE BY MAY 1ST AND SAVE \$5

- MEN'S
- Antique Royal
 - Dark Heather
 - Heathered Navy
 - Black
 - Red
 - Navy



- WOMEN'S
- Sapphire
 - Safety Pink
 - Royal
 - Dark Heather
 - Navy
 - Red

ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.FLORIDALEGION.ORG



PROJECT: VETRELIEF



CONVENTION IS AROUND THE CORNER!

Want to be a part of the PROJECT: VetRelief Team? Seize the opportunity at The American Legion, Department of Florida Annual Convention, June 29th-July 2nd at Marriott's Orlando World Center. We would love to have you join us for a class!

Class details are being finalized, so days and times have not been confirmed. However, if you are interested, fill out the "Become a VetRelief Advocate" form on the website, the link is below. The official class registration link will be sent to those who have signed up. Class space is limited, so be sure to register ahead of time.

Become a VetRelief Advocate Link:

<http://bit.ly/PVRAdvocateForm>

Calling all trained Advocates - Would you like to have another Advocate Round Table Discussion during this year's Convention? The Round Table is a networking opportunity to get to know other Advocates and meet our new Case Worker, Michael Beaven. We also have a few new items to share and discussion topics to talk about. Let Jennifer Cooper know today if you're interested.

Also, volunteers are needed to answer questions, spark the interest of the Legion Family, and pass out marketing materials at our booth in the vendor area. Let Jennifer Cooper know if this is something you'd like to do, as we'd love to have your help!

We look forward to seeing you there!

DONATE NOW - PVR CHALLENGE

By now, you should have heard about the PVR Challenge. If not, you're missing out!

The Challenge was initiated by Department Commander Joe Magee and the PVR Board President John Dollinger to help us reach our goal of providing financial assistance to a service member or veteran every work day, or 260 families in one year.

The Legion Family can help us reach this goal! - If your Post has not gotten involved or sent in a donation to meet your PVR Challenge goal, do so today! Your challenge goal is pretty simple, donate \$1 for every member of your Post. We need **all** Posts and Squadrons to participate in this challenge so we can continue to provide the necessary help to Florida's veterans and their families!

As a veteran service organization, helping veterans is what YOU do! By donating to PROJECT: VetRelief, you give our program the ability to reach more families who need us to keep their lights on, or a roof over their head.

All Posts and Squadrons who have made a contribution before May 31, 2017 will be eligible for awards and prizes. **Don't miss out!**

Upcoming Events

4/9/17 - 6th Annual Charity Ride
West Volusia County, FL

Time: Registration – 9:30AM
Kick Stands Up – 10:30AM

Starting Location:

Foxhead Lounge
280 State Rte 415
Osteen, FL 32764

Host: West Volusia Regional Chamber of Commerce

Cost: \$15/person

*Additional Playing Cards for \$1.00 each

All vehicles are welcome: Bikes, Cars, Trucks, Buses, etc.

Visit our website for more details!

| | Year 2 <small>(July 2015-June 2016)</small> | Year 3 <small>(July 2016-Feb 2017)</small> |
|---|--|---|
|  Number of Families | 57 | 76 |
| Amount Given | \$37,812.34 | \$64,667.45 |

The results are in...

Our Board Vice President, Bob James, travelled to Post 154 in Marathon, FL for the check presentation from the ALR Coral Head Music Fest. Little did we know that the check was for \$16,200!!

Thank you to all members who dedicated their time and energy into throwing a successful inaugural event; especially Rich Anderson, the mastermind behind the entire event. They have already set a date for next year, Saturday, February 17, 2018. You won't want to miss it!



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

PROJECT: VETRELIEF



Each month a leader board will be posted of all donations that has been turned in.

★ Donations can be sent to: PROJECT: VetRelief, 1912A Lee Road, Orlando, FL 32810

★ Donations must be turned in by May 31, 2017 to count towards recognition awards

By now, your Post should have received your Challenge packet from your Area or District Commander. If you have not received it, please contact them or Jennifer Cooper at the Department Headquarters.

Thank you to the following Posts and Squadrons for participating during our Challenge!

CHALLENGE CENTRAL

CHALLENGE CENTRAL

| | POST | DISTRICT | AREA | CITY | DONATION | PVR GOAL | GOAL % |
|-----|------|----------|--------------|-----------------|----------|----------|--------|
| SAL | 148 | 15 | Central | Riverview | \$1,000 | 142 | 704% |
| | 29 | 14 | Southern | Miami | \$3,000 | 476 | 658% |
| | 308 | 9 | Hollywood | Hollywood | \$100 | 22 | 455% |
| | 158 | 16 | Central | Treasure Island | \$1,000 | 292 | 342% |
| | 67 | 14 | Southern | North Miami | \$600 | 179 | 335% |
| | 221 | 1 | Western | Niceville | \$1,000 | 333 | 300% |
| | 382 | 1 | Western | Navarre | \$1,000 | 406 | 259% |
| SAL | 117 | 12 | Eastern | Palm Bay | \$476 | 196 | 243% |
| | 131 | 3 | Northern | Greenville | \$50 | 22 | 227% |
| | 310 | 9 | Southern | Hallandale | \$118 | 58 | 203% |
| | 170 | 9 | Southern | Coconut Creek | \$108 | 54 | 200% |
| | 59 | 3 | Northern | Branford | \$70 | 41 | 171% |
| | 57 | 3 | Northern | Lake City | \$1,121 | 728 | 154% |
| | 47 | 11 | Southern | Lake Worth | \$300 | 228 | 132% |
| | 340 | 1 | Western | Pensacola | \$1,000 | 799 | 125% |
| | 224 | 3 | Northern | Cherry Lake | \$123 | 102 | 121% |
| | 92 | 9 | Southern | Hollywood | \$300 | 254 | 118% |
| | 142 | 9 | Southern | Pompano Beach | \$516 | 600 | 116% |
| SAL | 321 | 9 | Southern | Cooper City | \$131 | 150 | 115% |
| | 133 | 14 | South | Palmetto Bay | \$300 | 273 | 110% |
| SAL | 113 | 8 | Southwestern | Rotonda West | \$225 | 209 | 108% |
| SAL | 375 | 1 | Western | Southport | \$140 | 134 | 104% |
| SAL | 81 | 12 | Eastern | Melbourne | \$120 | 119 | 101% |
| | 385 | 9 | Southern | Pembroke Pines | \$233 | 233 | 100% |
| SAL | 80 | 6 | Eastern | St. Cloud | \$101 | 101 | 100% |
| SAL | 24 | 8 | Southwestern | Bradenton | \$141 | 141 | 100% |
| | 243 | 6 | Eastern | Oviedo | \$150 | 155 | 97% |
| SAL | 379 | 1 | Western | Pensacola Beach | \$50 | 56 | 89% |

For more information and Challenge materials:
Jennifer Cooper at jcooper@floridalegion.org



THE AMERICAN LEGION

For God and Country

Greetings Legionnaires,

The American Legion Department of Florida will be hosting its 99th Annual Statewide Convention June 29th - July 2nd 2017 at the Orlando World Center Marriott, 8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32821.

We wanted to give each Post the unique opportunity to be recognized by advertising in our Convention Program. This is your chance to send well wishes for a successful convention; announce outstanding membership goals; inform of special projects; thank your officers for a great year; announce new officers or pay tribute to a special member of your post!

There are three different advertisement layouts to choose from: full page, half page or quarter page. The following rates are exclusive to our Legionnaires:

Full Page Advertisement (7.5" x 10")

\$350 Legion Member Discount: \$175

Half Page Advertisement (7.5" x 5")

\$200 Legion Member Discount: \$100

Quarter Page Advertisement (3.75" x 5")

\$100 Legion Member Discount: \$50

***NEW* Design Fee (Any Size)**

Only offered to Legion Members: \$25

ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2017

The American Legion appreciates your support of our veterans that have served and continue to serve our great country. We extend our ever-lasting gratitude to our men and women in uniform. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Schneidau, Event Coordinator at 407-295-2631 ext. 232 or via email at jschneidau@floridalegion.org.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Schneidau
Event Coordinator

The American Legion – Department of Florida 99th Annual Department Convention

Name/Post/Business: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone No: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| FULL PAGE ADVERTISEMENT \$175 7.5" X 10" | HALF PAGE ADVERTISEMENT \$100 7.5" X 5" | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" </td> </tr> </table> | QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" | QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" | QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" | QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5" |
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LEGION MEMBER PRICING ONLY

Full Page Ad \$175
 Half Page Ad \$100
 ¼ Page Ad \$50
 Design Fee \$25
 Send Proof \$0

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Advertisements must be submitted no later than May 15, 2017 to be included in the program. Please submit your advertisement artwork via email in one of the following image file types: .ai, .eps, .psd, .pdf, .tif, .jpeg, .jpg, .png. All artwork must be digital; no scanned or printed artwork will be accepted. All advertisements will be in grayscale, no color.

Designing not your day job? No worries, we can help. We are now offering our design services for an **additional fee of \$25**. You must provide the content of the ad, any images, logos, etc and we'll take care of the rest. We'll even send you a proof upon request.

All imagery must be original or legally licensed. The American Legion, Department of Florida reserves the right to redesign any advertisement due to required formatting or licensing issues.

Please email artwork to: jschneidau@floridalegion.org

Send Payment to:

American Legion, Department of Florida
ATTN: Jennifer Schneidau
1912 A Lee Road
Orlando, FL 32810

Checks payable to: American Legion, Dept of Florida

We also accept Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover.

Visa
 MasterCard
 American Express
 Discover
 Please charge my card in the amount of \$ _____

Credit Card # _____ Expiration Date: _____ CVV Code: _____

Cardholder Name: _____

I authorize The American Legion, Department of Florida to charge the amount listed above to the credit card provided herein. I agree to pay for this purchase in accordance with the issuing bank cardholder agreement.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

HOMECOMING

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
JOE MAGEE

DETACHMENT COMMANDER
STEVE GORDON



APRIL
22ND

WHERE: American Legion Post 347
699 W Lady Lake Blvd
Lady Lake, FL 32159

TIME: Cocktails 5:00 pm, Dinner 6:30 pm

TICKETS: \$30 each

DRESS: Business Formal (Suit & Tie)

MEAL CHOICES

Tilapia and Margarita Shrimp
Milk flaky fillet sauteed with butter and tender gulf shrimp seasoned with lime zest and tequilla.

OR

Tender Beef Medallions
Simmered in bourban gravy, with baby Portobello mushrooms

HOTEL INFORMATION

Waterfront Inn

1105 Lakeshore Dr
The Villages, FL 32162
(800) 592-0774

\$119 Standard
\$129 Waterview
\$139 Waterview w/Balcony

Deadline March 18, 2017

Holiday Inn Express

1205 Avenida Central
Lady Lake, FL 32159
(352) 750-3888

\$120 Includes Breakfast
Deadline April 7, 2017

Hampton Inn & Suites

11727 NE 63rd Dr
The Villages, FL 32162
(352) 259-8246

\$109 Standard
Deadline March 21, 2017

All rates are nightly and do not include tax.
Group Name "**American Legion Homecoming**"

PLEASE PRINT

HOMECOMING R.S.V.P.

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

MEAL CHOICES

Tilapia and Margarita Shrimp
Tender Beef Medallions

HOW MANY?

TOTAL TICKETS _____ X \$30 = _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED

Pickup tickets at the door

CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

American Legion Post 347
Write "Homecoming Dinner" in memo

MAIL TO:

American Legion Post 347
Attn: Bill Walsh
P.O. Box 1534
Lady Lake, FL 32158-1534

CUT HERE



CUT HERE

SOUVENIR BOOKLET ADVERTISING

RATES:

1/4 Page (2.25" x 3.75") **** \$25 _____

1/2 Page (5" x 3.75") ***** \$35 _____

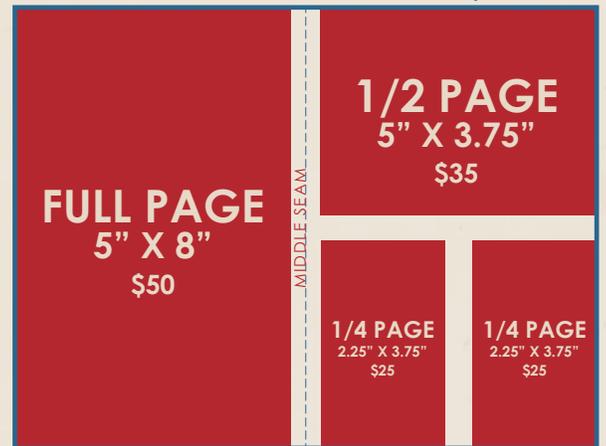
Full Page (5" x 8") ***** \$50 _____

2 Page Spread (10" x 8")** \$100 _____

QTY:

TOTAL DUE: _____

2 PAGE SPREAD - 10" X 8" - \$100



Extended to April 9, 2017

Deadline for all advertisements is March 31, 2017. Please submit your advertisement artwork via email in one of the following image file types: .ai, .eps, .psd, .pdf, .tif, .jpeg, .jpg, .png. All artwork must be digital; no scanned or printed artwork will be accepted. Advertisements may be in color.

All imagery must be original or legally licensed. We reserve the right to redesign any advertisement due to required formatting and licensing issues.

CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

The American Legion, Dept of Fl
Write "Homecoming Booklet" in memo

MAIL TO:

The American Legion, Dept of Fl
Attn: Carrie Kolze
P.O. Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32854



2017 The American Legion Department of Florida 100% Target Report

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|--------|
| 16 | John Sloat | 94.31% |
| 14 | Gary Decker | 93.18% |
| 6 | Daryl Bass | 93.01% |
| 12 | Bruce Thurber | 92.73% |
| 15 | Jay Allen | 92.26% |
| 1 | Raymond Olsen | 92.19% |
| 5 | Fred Matthews | 91.39% |
| 17 | Paul Alexander | 90.12% |
| 7 | Stephen Anthony | 89.62% |
| 8 | Dennis Walsh | 89.62% |
| 13 | Chuck Weinberg | 89.53% |
| 2 | James Brennan | 88.74% |
| 9 | Donald Schwiesow | 88.03% |
| 3 | Frederick Hutto | 87.24% |
| 11 | Robert Miller | 87.19% |
| 4 | Victoria VanBuren | 86.75% |
| Central | Sidney Damsgard | 92.97% |
| Eastern | Felix Ayala | 92.89% |
| Western | Jimmy Martin | 91.56% |
| Northern | John Rose | 89.67% |
| Southwestern | Andrew Burkett | 89.57% |
| Southern | Joseph Motes | 89.24% |

as of 03/24/2017



Call Now: 1-800-235-6943
Monday - Friday 8AM - 7PM (EST)

**DEPARTMENT TRUSTED.
LEGIONNAIRE APPROVED.**

We provide a wide range of benefits designed to protect you, your family and your health.



From Your American Legion Department

We are committed to serving the unique insurance needs of LIT members and their families.



Emergency and Accident

A crisis can strike at any moment. Learn how we can help you prepare for the unexpected and get assistance when you need it most.



Insurance Coverage

From health to auto, we offer valuable insurance products designed to fit the specific needs of Legionnaires.



No Cost Protection

Your valued status as a Legionnaire makes you eligible for LegionCare, up to \$5,000.00 in NO COST to you benefits.

Cancer Care Insurance Plan

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust products and services are there when you them most. Listen to how others have benefited from services like our Cancer Care Insurance Plan.

- Cash benefits sent to Legionnaire members diagnosed with cancer
- We send you money – even if you don't have cancer

www.thelit.com

