The
LEGION LINK
"Securing the Future for All Veterans"

Department of Florida

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From Your Department Commander Steve Shuga

commander@floridalegion.org

We are on track to exceed our membership goal of 100 + % prior to our Department Convention on July 5th. It's a dedicated team effort and Florida must break the membership retention curse. We can do this together and it's a necessity for what's to come.

Congratulations to the 11th District for the 2nd place national finish in the District Race to the Top. I am extremely proud of the District's membership retention accomplishments.

Completed visits to Districts 1, 2, and 6. Attended the 1st Southern Unity ALR Ride through Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana – marketing and branding our American Legion, The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Program, and supported this endeavor through ABC affiliate television news stations WDAM, WDHN, WLOX, and various southern newspapers.

Received the spirited merit award D1R West and East Patches from the 1st District for my Post visits and support of activities, promotion of ALR activities. Thank you for this prestigious recognition. Also qualified / received the Southern Unity Ride Patch for completing the entire 2018 Southern Unity Ride.

Remember that everyone must tell those willing to listen:

- ◊ Who you are?
- ◊ What you are?
- ◊ What you do well in your community?
- ◊ Why it is important for all Wartime Patriotic Veterans and their families to be a part of the American Legion?

Department Commander's (3 Amigo's) Homecoming is scheduled for May 26, 2018 at American Legion Post 347. Cost is $30 per person, starts at 3 pm Reception/Cocktails; 4 pm Dinner (Mediterranean Chicken or Beef Medallions, RSVP by May 20. Department presentations/raffles (proceeds go towards charities). Purchase tickets thru Bill Walsh, Post 347. Go to https://floridasons.org/3-amigos-homecoming/

Compiling the past year's activities, events, happenings, in preparation for the annual Department Commander's Report to the membership at the Department Convention.

Tackling a variety of issues, concerns, and problems plaguing posts around the Department of Florida. Never a dull moment!

Consolidate Post Reports are due NLT May 15th. Remember to add additional pages for those activities and events that the forms (Department & National) do not require or request. Report this information and take credit for all that you do. Florida needs to regain its edge on being 100% CPR reporting. Thank you for your support & sacrifice.

MAY 2018	
1	Silver Star Service Banner Day
1	Loyalty Day
2	Membership Goal 100%+1
3	National Day of Prayer
4	Children & Youth Charity Golf Tournament
5	Program Deadlines
5	15th District Executive Board Meeting
5	11th District Family Fun Day
6	National Nurse Day
11	Military Spouse Appreciation Day
12	12th District DCC, Post 117
12	3rd District DCC, Post 57
13	Deadline for Convention Book Ads
13	Mother's Day
13	Children of Fallen Patriots Day
13	5th District DCC, Post 137
15	Legion Link Articles Due (Last for Term)
19	Armed Forces Day
19	13th District DCC, Post 103
19	7th District DCC, Post 8
19	8th District DCC, Post 159
20	2nd Annual Veterans Fishing Trip
20	11th District DCC, Post 64
25	National Poppy Day
26	3 Amigos Dept Homecoming
27	17th District DCC, Post 120
27	Resolutions and Amendments Due
28	Memorial Day (HQ Closed)

- Commander Steve Shuga's Attendance Tentative.

Events are subject to change. Additional details can be found at www.floridalegion.org. We share the information we are provided, please contact Program, Area, District and Posts for additional details and events.

FINAL LEGION LINK FOR THE 2017-2018 TERM PUBLISHES JUNE 1ST. ARTICLE DEADLINE MAY 15TH.

Job is Done when Paperwork is Done

Dianne Boland, 1st Vice Commander
1stvice@legionmail.org

Greetings: The end of year is quickly coming upon us. May is here already and many End of Year Reports are due. By now you should have turned in paperwork for the Scholarships, Teacher of the Year, Law Enforcement Officer as well as Firefighter of the Year. Other programs have paperwork with deadlines for awards such as the "History Contest"'. It has winners for The History Yearbook Contest, History Narrative Contest, History Open Book Contest and ALR History Yearbook. These are due to Department Headquarters by June 4th. The deadline for Award Submissions is May 15th. Be diligent and know about the guidelines ahead of time. Remember: The job is not done till the paperwork gets done. Get your paperwork and award applications in on time!

National/Department CPR's and Department Addendum are due by May 5th; very important. They must be done or you will not be allowed to attend the department convention nor will you be able to pick up your cards. National needs this information when they speak to congress. The more information, the higher the numbers, the louder our voice.

Our District Constitutional Conferences (DCC) will start beginning this month. Try to attend. Make a difference. Speak up and let your voice be heard.

A special "Shout Out" to District 11 Commander Donna Wallace and her entire district for reaching 102.61% membership by March 29, 2018. I don't know how many more were turned in to reach the March 31st deadline making her eligible for National's "Race to the Top". Congratulations on a job well done.

As always - Don't forget your "Basic Training". It is still being taught at the Convention and Fall Conference plus you can still take it online thru National (www.legion.org). It is now FREE – no charge.

Be Heard, Be Counted

Rick Johnson, 2nd Vice Commander
2ndvice@legionmail.org

Well a very busy month in the state for sure. May is upon us and there will be many posts and districts having their elections this month. Now is the time for your voice to be heard and counted. Only you can make that change and step up and be heard.

May is also a sad month for all of us. Memorial Day, and lets not never forget those who gave their lives for us. Please have your post have some type of service and let the community know what you are doing. Two more months prior to the Department Convention and a lot will be going on those very few days. Our new election process will take place where every vote will count. Only you can make that difference.

I look forward to seeing a lot of you out there during May, but there will be some DCC's that we will not be able to make due to Districts having more than one on the same day. So with that being said, keep working that membership and start planning for the 2018-2019 year. We will have a great time with volunteers like you and the sacrifice a lot of us make every day.

See you out there soon.

Pre-order your 2018 Convention T-Shirt! See page 13.

Encouragement

Jerry Brandt, 3rd Vice Commander
3rdvice@legionmail.org

As of April 12th we have the following:
1st District is now 93.41% needing only 96 renewals for 100%.

2nd District is now at 89.04% needing only 86 renewals for 100%.

3rd District is now 85.48% needing only 75 renewals for 100%.

4th District is now at 97.99, needing only 1 renewal for 100%.

5th District is now at 93.25% needing only 250 renewals for 100%.

17th District is now at 91.05% needing only 175 renewals for 100%.

Total of 683 for the Zone. Keep up the good work.

Please continue to push Membership, as of April 12th, Florida is number 7 in the Nation. Please continue to reach out to our members who have not renewed, if nothing else, find out why they did not renew so we can work on a resolution for the future.

We had a busy month, with visits to 1st and 2nd District and the Unity Ride that expands 5 states. But our Posts had a busy year as well.

Post 57, 129 and 155 provided sites for supplies coming from out of state, during Hurricane Irma often as far away as Maine and Indiana. And let us not forget how Post 6, moveed a lot of those supplies to the Posts in need. A large number of Posts assisted with hurricanes by supplying food and other needed supplies, in Texas and in Florida, such as Post 402, 392, 166 and many others, thank you.

Department Commander has visited every District and every Post, speaking with Mayors and City Managers, on the Radio and T.V. The Department Commander, Steve Shuga, and I greatly appreciate the time and effort you provided for the Commander's visit.

I would like to thank a few of the leaders, who provided so much assistance.

* 1st District, Raymond (Chuck) Olsen, Sonny Decker
* 2nd District, John Folsom, Roger Hewitt
* 3rd District, Frederick (Mike) Hutto, Stuart Scott, James Sutherland
* 4th District, Victoria (Vicky) VanBuren, Cherie Korn
* 5th District, Troy Horsley, Sonny Kirkwood
* 17th District, Michael Wolohan Sr.
* Area Commanders, James Brennan (Western Area) and Jeffrey Durden (Northern Area) and James Wineland (ALR Vice Commander)

Without these Leaders, Zone 3 would Not be the success that we are.

Commanders, as I previously stated, now is the time to start pushing awards, it is nice to be able to come up to the stage at the Convention to receive your awards. **Especially for 28 Posts**, who are at **100%**, they should be putting in for the **Post Excellence Award** and for **100% Post Award**. Some awards you should look for are the following:

- Post Excellence Award,
- 100% Post Award
- Employer of the year
- Firefighter and Policeman of the year award
- Color Guard Award
- Membership Awards, (Gold and Silver Brigade)

Please look up Awards and Recognition under www.legion.org for more details.

For Northern and Western Area, these are the following dates you need to be aware of for April:

- April 1st, Easter Sunday
- April 1st, Medical/Nursing School Scholarships Due
- April 1st, National Child Welfare Foundation Week
- April 1st, Child Welfare Month
- April 1st, Department Commander's visit to 1st District
- April 4th, Membership 100% Goal
- April 7th, Florida Riders Southern Unity Ride
- April 7th, Department Children and Youth Picnic, Post 117
- April 13th, National Oratorical Contest
- April 16th, Tax Day
- April 16th, Department Commanders visit to 2nd District
- April 18th, Vietnam Reunion

I will see you either at the DCC's or the Convention in July, again, thank you for what you do.

Healthcare for Women Veterans

Dennis Boland, NEC
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Women veterans are the fastest growing demographic population serving in the U.S. military. Since FY03, women veterans receiving health care from the VA have nearly doubled from 200,631 to 362,014. These numbers are projected to grow due to the increasing numbers of women veterans serving in the military.

Women veterans face remarkably different experiences than their male counterparts when they transition out of the military. While VA has made significant advancements in women veterans' health care, there is still room for improvements. When women walk through the doors of the VA it should look like it was designed with them in mind and no longer has the looks of a "For Male only" facility. The American Legion Resolution 147, is to ensure that all women veterans receive gender-specific quality health care.

Since 2013, The American Legion System Worth Saving Task Force has turned its attention to women veterans' health care. The American Legion wants to ensure that the needs of the current and future women veterans are met. In that vein, The American Legion is encouraging and supporting legislation like H.R. 93, Medical services for women veterans.

H.R. 93 would amend Title 38 to provide increased access to care for women veterans in the VA medical centers. H.R. 93 would require the VA to meet the healthcare needs of women veterans across the VA healthcare system. This bill currently has 18 cosponsors.

Furthermore, through Resolution No. 147, The American Legion has identified a number of challenges women veterans face.

- Many women vets do not identify themselves as veterans
- Many women vets do not know what benefits they are entitled to receive.
- A Medical facilities across the system do not have adequate baseline plans to close the gender gaps and improve use of facilities and services for women.
- Additional research is needed to determine the purpose, goals, and effectiveness of three VA women models of care on overall outreach, communication and coordination of women veteran's health services.
- Many VA facilities do not offer inpatient/ residential mental health care programs for women veterans.
- Many VA facilities do not offer child care services for women veterans seeking health care appointments.
- The excessive time it takes for women veterans to receive results from their mammogram screening.

As these challenges still exist for our nation's female veterans. The American Legion urges Congress to pass legislation to support the healthcare needs of women veterans at the VA medical centers.

State Action on Guns

Art Schwabe, NECA
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State Action on Guns:

• Raise the minimum age. The bill would change the minimum age for all gun purchases to 21 from 18 — a provision that would have prohibited the Parkland gunman, Nikolas Cruz, 19, from legally buying the rifle he used in his massacre. This is a divergence from federal law, under which people cannot buy handguns from licensed dealers until they are 21, but can buy shotguns and rifles — often much deadlier than handguns — at 18.

• Create a waiting period. Prospective gun buyers would have to wait three days, or until a background check is completed, whichever is longer. There would be some exceptions, including for police officers, members of the military, licensed hunters and licensed concealed carriers. (Members of the Military were not in the original bill). It was added thanks to the American Legion. This includes National Guard and Reservists. If you have a Guard or Reserve Unit near you let them know that we, The American Legion are looking out for them and members in the future .

GREEN ALERT!!!!

We are current working on a bill what I call: Green Alert!

This is when a veteran goes missing due to any number of reasons. An alert is put out to find and help the veteran. (like the Amber Alert or Silver Alert) We will be looking for sponsors and co-sponsors in the near future. This bill will not come to the house till after the November's elections. I will keep you informed as things start moving forward.

2017-2018
Dept Convention Books
Legion Members get 50% off.
Don't forget to advertise in this year's special edition, full color, 100th Florida Convention Book!
Deadline is May 13th!
see page 19

Memorial Day

Tom Gora, Sergeant-at-Arms
sgt-at-arms@legionmail.org

Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the United States for remembering those who died while serving in the country's armed forces. The holiday, which is currently observed every year on the last Monday of May, will be held on May 28, 2018. Memorial Day was officially proclaimed by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, on May 5, 1868. It was first observed on May 30, 1868 when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. After World War I, the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war. Posts will be involved in ceremonies all around the Department of Florida. Whether you participate in a parade, place flags on veteran graves at local cemeteries, conduct a civic ceremony or deliver a speech, be prepared. The American Legion provides a prepared speech suggested by National Headquarters which you can find on-line. The U.S. Flag Code can be found starting on page 157 of the Officer's Guide and Manual of Ceremonies as well as a simple ceremony for Memorial Day which can be found on page 80 of the same guide. **Please remember that the American Flag flies at half-staff from sunrise to noon, on Memorial Day.**

This year our Commander-in-Chief in his Memorial Day Proclamation also calls for a National Moment of Remembrance at 3 P.M. on Memorial Day.

APPLICATIONS FOR THE EDDIE HUMMER AWARD ARE DUE TO THE DEPARTMENT NO LATER THAN MAY 15, 2018. A NARRATIVE IS REQUIRED, AND THE POST MUST HAVE A CPR ON FILE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS AWARD!

Centennial Website

Gerry Kaufman, Historian
historian@legionmail.org

Hello everyone! I would like to congratulate the 15th District for hitting 100% on the Centennial Website. Job well done commander! The 1st district has post 44 left to make 100% and the 16th district only needs post 343 to reach 100% and the 12th district only needs post 328 to reach 100%. Come on guys and gals, I know we can do this. One picture of each post is all it takes to reach 100%.

The following districts need a boost:

- District 2- 42, 51, 84, 100, 106, 114, 116, 172, 217 and 272
- District 3 - 49, 59, 68, 83, 195, 215, 224, 234, 291 and 322
- District 4 -153, 166, 210, 225, 284, 314 and 354
- District 5 - 137 and 373
- District 6 - 6, 52, 76, 109, 112, 219, 357 and 409
- District 7 – 71, 95, 339 and 396
- District 8 - 254, 317 and 320
- District 9 - 157, 162, 170, 209, 220, 223, 287, 308, 321 and 365
- District 11-12, 47, 64, 188, 258, 268, 269, 277, 371, 390, 399 and 408
- District 13 - 123, 130, 299 and 405
- District 14 - 43, 98, 145, 165, 168, 182, 333 and 374
- District 17 - 115, 127, 187, 204, 255, 259 and 293

Commanders, if you have a post that does not have a post home then please take a picture of the post membership holding a sign with their post name and number and that will work. As usual I am posting the Centennial Website user name and password for ease of access. I have been getting a few calls asking for assistance and I welcome those calls. As I get them I am walking the post historians through the process and posts are starting to get their information on the sight. If you need help my phone number is 407-218-9139, please call me. Have a blessed month and keep snapping those pictures.

Centennial Website:
U/N: 100thannvdept@legionmail.org
P/W: melanie1969

Central Area

Jay Allen, Central Area Commander
centralarea@legionmail.org

The month of March started off with Post visitations with Department Commander Steve Shuga. The first week we traveled the 7th District and visited most of the Posts and had representation from all the Posts. The Second week kicked off with Central Area Sunset Celebration Ball and I would like to say to everyone that participated in making it such a success, and Thank You to everyone for attending. The Central Area raised a total donation of a $1,000 for Commander Shuga's charity of choice Project:VetRelief (PVR).

Then on Sunday, March 11th, started off very interesting with Commander Shuga touring District 16 followed by District 15 in Central Area until the 24th of March where he was able to reach out to all the Post homes and Posts without a home were invited to attend another Post. The Districts in the Central Area were able to take Commander Shuga to some very interesting sites such as the VA Hospital, Bay Pines for a tour, Hillsborough County Memorial Park and the Posts got to show off their Post home and show all the history which it encompasses.

Many thanks and Semper Fi to all for showing Commander Shuga such a wonderful time and how the Central Area works as a true Legion Family. Your hospitality was very much appreciated, your helpfulness and knowledge was tremendous and your generosity outstanding.

With Commander Shuga's charity PVR, the Central Area was able to put him over the top of his goal amount. I would like to Thank You, and all your Posts that made the donations to PVR. And a very Special Thank You to Post 158 for their generous donation of $11,505 to Project:VetRelief.
We all enjoyed having Commander Shuga here in our Districts/Area, where we all learned so much and received some great guidance and information to help the Post and District now and into the future.

I am looking forward to our next Central Area Roundtable, as the first one with the 16th District with the District and Post Officers at Post 104 on the 30th of March was very informative and a great exchange of knowledge. I received positive feedback from the attendees. The next Central Area Roundtable with the 15th District with District and Post Officers is in the scheduling process.

The Central Area Training will be in District 7 at Post 3, the 14th of April. This is open to all of the Legion Family that wishes to attend.
And in closing, I would like to thank the 22 Posts in the Central Area that have achieved 100% or better in membership. With the great job that you are doing, this places Central Area in first place for Department since January. Keep up the excellent work!

In the Home Stretch

Fred Matthews, Membership Chair
membership@legionmail.org

As we come to the home stretch of Florida March toward 100% in membership, every sign points toward success!

District 11 Commander Donna Artola and the Posts of the 11th District have shown brightly this year. With more than 105%, this district leads the pack in the state and is among the top 10 Posts in the nation. The accomplishments of the 11th District are even more so when it appears that each member of the 11th District Family- SAL and Auxiliary - all achieved 100% - plus in membership this year.

Although suffering the effects of a crippling storm at the beginning of this Legion year, more than half of the Posts in the 14th District hold the banner high with 90% or more in membership. At this writing Posts 168, 144,145 and 346 all are at 100% plus.

By the time of this writing, 4th District Commander Vickie Van Buren, whose district held the lead for the first 5 months of this legion year, will see the first 100% year in a decade.

16th District Commander Ray Perez is 1 point shy of 100% at this writing and with the momentum he has, he will make it. It's been a neck and neck battle for 3rd place between this District and David Tucker's 7th District for 3rd Place.

Central Area Commander Jay Allen has led the pack consistently throughout the year and now sits just 1 point shy of 100%. He's followed by Jim Brennan, Western Area Commander, just 2 points back.

As many of the Posts and Districts are conducting elections this month, we continue to urge everyone to not forget to send in any and all memberships collected. We still have a month to go in our march toward 100 and we must not take our feet off the gas! **Each One, Bring Five!**

Open house at Bert Hodge Post 45 in Palatka with Post Commander Ted Rodda.

Post 15 Adjutant Bruno Mayewski received 100% membership award from District Vice Commander Nancy Thomas.

Children & Youth

Bruce Carl, Children & Youth Chair
cy@legionmail.org

May is upon us, which means we are into the last quarter of this term. There is more deadlines to meet this month, and that is the best Post for Children and Youth programs. All paperwork must be in by May 5th, which does not leave you much time. Hopefully, you have already made your submissions. The winner will be announced at the Convention!

Other important dates this month include Armed Forces Day, Mother's Day, and Memorial Day. What a great time to open up your Post to the community, and let them know what we do as a Legion, and what we are all about.

I would like to thank everyone who attended the Children and Youth picnic on April 7th at Post 117 in Palm Bay. Also, to all the volunteers, sponsors, and vendors, thank you!! A special, well-deserved thank you to the Post 117 family for hosting the picnic, and to Doc Holiday for providing the music all day. For those of you who did not make it, you missed a great time!! The poker run kicked off the event, and there were plenty of games, great food, and plenty of camaraderie. Even the weather co-operated for the most part, at least until the event was almost over.

My year is starting to wind down, but I am not done yet. I still have plenty of judging to do for awards and grants, and yes, I will still be pushing the Children and Youth coins. I am also looking forward to the Children and Youth Golf Tournament on May 4th at Harbor Hills CC, and the gathering at Post 347 in Lady Lake afterwards.

JROTC / JR Shooting Sports

Loretta Young, JROTC/Jr Shooting Sports Chair
jrotc@legionmail.org

The school semester has moved along very rapidly. We are now at the end of the semester and it's time for the Year End Award Ceremonies, Military Balls and Final event competitions. I attend to as many programs as time allows. There are many variations for the Year End Awards. The JROTC Military Excellence and Scholastic Excellence Award are the two awards that the Legion presents to these outstanding cadets. Some programs have an Awards Assembly at the school during the afternoon while others have Award Presentations in the evening or during the Military Balls. I attended the Entrepreneur and Leadership Military Academy Sixth Annual Military Ball at the Signature Grand in Davie. This was a very well attended event that was designed and conducted by the Cadets and included a "Pow MIA Table Ceremony" and a "Grog Ceremony". The vision of the Academy is equity for all cadets in the core areas of leadership, character development and citizenship. Utilizing innovative teaching practices and cutting-edge technology, along with service to the community to prepare cadets with the life skills necessary to achieve success in major universities, service academies and society.

Along with the Youth Programs I was still able to attend the Northern Area Ball in Jacksonville Beach, Eastern Area Ball in Titusville, Children and Youth Picnic in Palm Bay and the Broward County Drill Meet hosted by Boyd Anderson JROTC in Lauderdale Lakes for schools in Broward and one school in Miami. I also had the honor of serving on the Broward County Mini Board for the Cadet of the Year which will be held at Pompano H.S. along with the Pass in Review for the Superintendent of Schools for Broward County. On April 21st I will be attending the Army State Marksmanship Meet hosted by Island Coast H.S. for the top JROTC Qualifying Cadets for the State of Florida. The event will be hosted by the American Legion and organized by Post 90, Chairman, Don Teasley. The Department of Florida has sponsored some of the trophies and donated an 8' x 12' Banner that will be hanging in the gym during competition. I would hope that we have a very good turnout of Legionnaires and spectators from the Lee County area. Having an audience cheering you on, is half the battle. The National Postal Round 1 has been completed. There were two Florida Teams that were in the top 10 Teams to advance to the second round Postal Tournament and deadline for returned targets was March 31st. Results are still not in, however, kudos in the Sporter Category for Oviedo HS NJROTC and Summerlin Academy Team #1 who have advanced to the Second Round. We should have the results by the next month's article. Thanks to all who participated this year for all your hard work.

Coral Glades JROTC Award Ceremony, Graduating Seniors Battalion Staff

Florida American Legion College

Tom Gora, Legion College Chair
deptlegioncollege@legionmail.org

Attending the Florida American Legion College (FALC) is an investment you make in your personal development, the future of The American Legion, and the future of the Department of Florida. The class is offered one time a year on dates determined by the Department Commander. Watch for further details and scheduling to be announced after the 2018 Annual Department of Florida Convention. Graduates of the last class did not receive a pin when they graduated, and I am happy to inform them that a new supply has been received and those pins have been mailed to those graduates.

"I fear the boredom that comes with not learning and not taking chances."
- Quote by Robert Fulghum-

POW-MIA Logo Restrictions?

Kathryn Boyer, POW-MIA Chair
powmia@legionmail.org

Here is the answer to a question that I have been asked many times.

I WANT TO USE THE POW/MIA LOGO; IS THERE A COPYRIGHT RESTRICTION?

The POW/MIA logo has never been trademarked; anyone can use it on their products and DPAA does not manage or oversee its use. The National League of POW/MIA Families, who designed and developed the logo, made a conscious decision to not pursue a copyright so that the design--and the mission it stands for--would get the broadest possible dissemination and recognition.

If you want to learn more about the design and background, you can visit the National League of Families website

Special Olympics

Jamie Grinnis, Special Olympics
specialolympics@legionmail.org

It has been quite a lot of fun for all the members of the Legion Family that have attended the Special Olympics competitions around the state. I wish to thank all of you that took time out of your busy schedules to attend these sporting events. It means so much to our athletes when they see you at their competitions. Should you attend the Ceremonies this month in Orlando and around the state, remember to wear your covers and Post shirts to show a visible presence at the events.

June is our busiest month of the year as we prepare for the awards ceremony at our Convention starting July 5th in Orlando. The Legion Family has stepped up once again and shown that the American Legion Special Olympics Program is not forgotten. Your contributions help the athletes in your County right here in Florida. This year we will be presenting all awards from your contributions on the Convention Floor. Review your Convention schedule for time and place.

Post Families still have time to get their contributions into Department to be recognized. Send your Check and your Surveys to Department Headquarters today. Make sure you send your donations to the attention of Elizabeth Douglas our Department Program Director.

Spread The News

Bob Colbert, Social Media Chair
socialmedia@legionmail.org

Legion Link 18-05

Hello EVERYONE! We are coming up on Memorial Day, July 4th and the 2018 Department Convention! It is going to be a busy summer and there is so much that needs to be done. Am I preaching to the CHOIR? How about the rest of you? If you are planning events for the end of May, you need to start letting your members and the public know NOW!

Memorial Day is one of those events where the Veterans and Veterans groups can SHINE! Get those notices out to the local radio, TV stations and the press! A simple press release would be a one page (actually about ⅔ of page) with the basic details sent out NOW might get you on their calendars to show up at your event. It costs you nothing and it could really help your Legion Family and the event. And, put it out on **Facebook** NOW as a future event (you may even want to send an "invitation") and after event be sure to post some PIX of the event to show everyone what was there. Those that came will appreciate the photos and those that missed it will think better about coming to the next event.

It's not too soon to start spreading the word about any 4th of July activities that your Post Family has.

Finally, don't forget to look for us at the **Florida American Legion Press Association (FALPA)** both at the convention. We could use some assistance in staffing the booth, if you find that you have time and nothing to do. We do provide a seat.

VA Launches New Claims Appeals Tool

Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements Chair
veteransbenefits@legionmail.org

The U.S. Department of Veterans of Affairs (VA) and the U.S. Digital Services have announced their launch of an improved Appeals Status tool to increase transparency and enable veterans to track the progress of their benefits claims appeals. The tool, which went live March 21 on VA's Vets.gov website, will allow Veterans to access detailed information about the status of their benefits appeals and will include alerts about needed actions, as well as estimates of how long each step of the process takes. Some Veterans who have previewed the new tool said it had given them hope and helped them understand that the process might take longer than expected.

Popular on Vets.gov

- Apply for Printed Veterans ID Card
- Apply for health care
- Apply for education benefits
- Track your claims
- Education benefits by school
- Refill prescriptions
- Download Your VA Letters

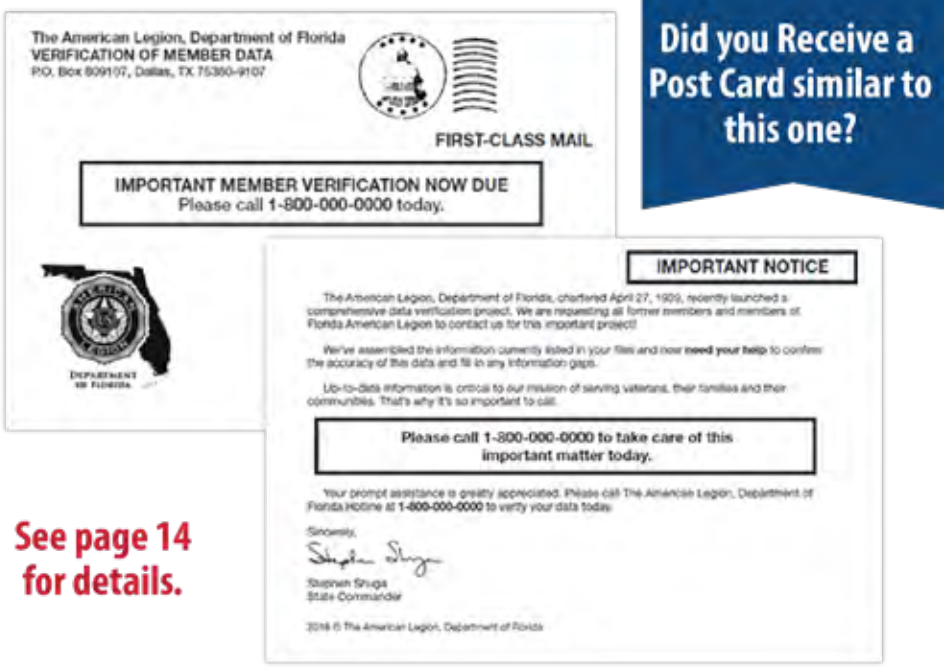
Source: Military.com

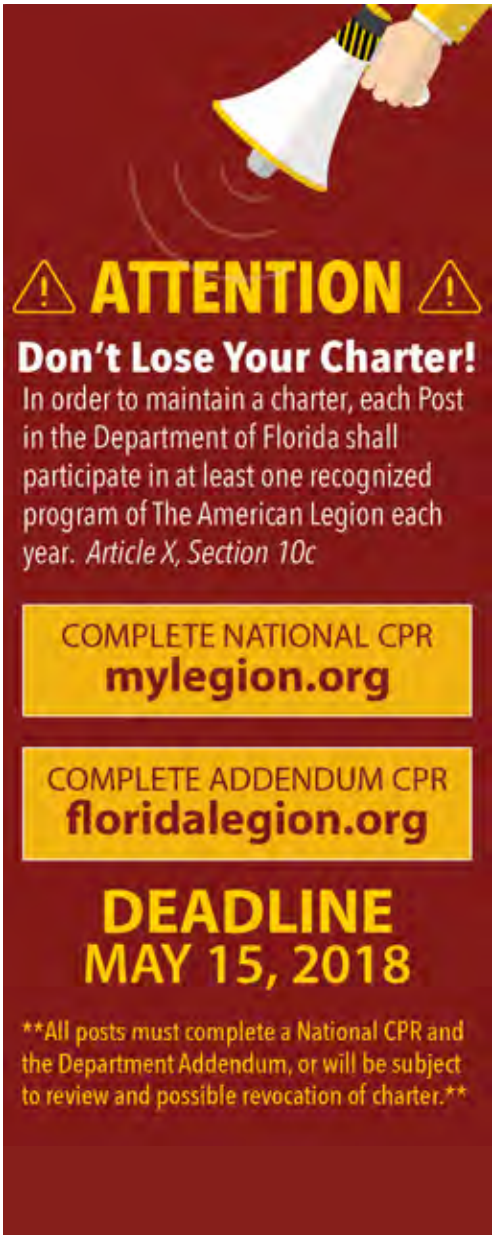
Youth Law Cadet Program

Bob Brewster, Youth Law Cadet Chair
youthlawcadet@legionmail.org

We have already received cadet applications from 3 different Posts. I have firm commitments from 2 other Posts, including my own Post. So please get your applications in as soon as possible. We have so many Districts in our state who have not submitted one single candidate for this program. My budget does not allow me to travel the state to visit everyone. This is a very unique and rewarding program. We have not had any complaints from any of the kids or their parents on this program. Many of our kids have asked to come back a second year, but we are trying not to do this because we want more kids to have the chance to experience this program.

If you have any questions whatsoever, please call me at my home number which is: 904-272-1619. I am more than happy to talk to you about this program.





PROJECT: VETRELIEF

MAY 2018

OFFICIAL PROGRAM OF: AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

"Your organization is so important because it provides a support network for people who feel abandoned."
- Elizabeth Ricci, Immigration Attorney (pictured above)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: *Upcoming Events*

MAY 11 — **Post 409 - Golf Tournament**
Orlando, FL
POSTPONED
[illegible] contests, raffles and prizes.
Sponsorship Opportunities Available!

MAY 17 — **Sqd 112 - "Dine to Donate"**
Perkins - Winter Park, FL
7:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Perkins on University Blvd in Winter Park will donate 10% of your bill when dining with them. Be sure to tell your server and cashier!

JULY 5-6 — **Advocate Training**
Department Convention
Orlando, FL

Don't forget to tell us about your PROJECT: VetRelief fundraising events!

WE'RE ON facebook

SUPPORT CASES
JULY 2017-MAR 2018 TOTALS

families helped	*amount distributed*
96	**$93,048.57**

Numbers reflect PROJECT: VetRelief Cases ONLY

ADVOCATE *Trainings:*

Convention is *two months away*, and the PROJECT: VetRelief Team has already started planning the details to learn more aabout the program and become an Advocate. This year's Convention will be held from Thursday, July 5th through Sunday, July 8th at The Orlando World Center Marriott in Orlando.

Classes will focus on a more in-depth look of the VetRelief Advocate roll and how the Legion Family can best support the program. Class details have been finalized and are below. *Space is limited*, so be sure to register ahead of time to reserve your seat. You can do so by visiting the link below.

Thursday, July 5th | 9:00am - 10:00am | Crystal E*

Friday, July 6th | 3:30pm - 4:30pm | Crystal E*

Registration Link:
http://www.projectvetrelief.org/classregistration/

We look forward to seeing you there!

**Class day, time and location are subject to change.*

LEADERBOARD: *Update on Commander's Charity and Challenge*

Last month Commander Steve Shuga reached his fundraising goal of raising $50,000 for PROJECT: VetRelief! The Commander has decided to **raise his goal to $75,000** to continue his efforts in providing funds for our Legion programs. He knows that with the generosity of the Legion Family and the passion they have for the Florida Legion programs, this goal is very attainable! We *know you can help* him reach his secondary goal, and ultimately help veterans and their families through our various programs!

Addtional monies collected for his project will now go towards ALL Florida Legion programs. ***Donations can still be made to PROJECT: VetRelief, just be sure to indicate where you'd like the funds to be applied to when submitting your donation.***

We'd like to **thank the following Posts, Units, Squadrons and Chapters** who have already submitted their donations *(order is listed by date received, not by amount given)*:

Commander's Charity Donations = **$58,469.00**

328	378	270	172	107	58	74	66	16	155	SQ 183	119	389
69	252	230	129	243	157	222	79	366	6	CH 43	267	103
325	62	385	3	34	SQ 323	SQ 266	SQ DET	111	5	26	7	125
158	104	Central Area	224	13	272	SAL 392	382	116	AUX 402	Eastern Area		

PVR Challenge Donations = **$20,040.00**

283	67	309	63	AUX 72	158	CH 28
6	SQ 112	152	273			

"If they are remembered, they are not gone truly, they simply change duty assignments and are amongst the best."

POST EVERLASTING

Lawrence "Larry" E. Carpenter
Past 1st District Commander

It is with deep regret that we report the passing of Past 1st District Commander, Lawrence "Larry" E. Carpenter, of Ft. Walton Beach, FL on Friday, April 6, 2018 at the age of 70. Larry is survived by his wife, Patricia. 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.
Larry was a U.S. Army Vietnam Veteran and a member of Post 221, with 33 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, Patricia, at 31G Alder Ave., SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548.

April 19, 2018
100% Target Report (Currently 95.39%)

11	Donna Artola	104.58%
4	Victoria VanBuren	100.32%
16	Raymond Perez	99.30%
1	Raymond Olsen	99.24%
7	David Tucker	98.86%
15	Richard Little	97.82%
6	Michael Seidel	97.09%
5	Troy Horsley	97.07%
3	Frederick Hutto	96.54%
12	Bruce Thurber	95.67%
17	Michael Wolohan	95.23%
8	Jerry Faught	95.10%
13	Michael Raymond	94.30%
2		93.80%
9	Donald Schwiesow	92.47%
14	Gary Decker	84.43%
Central	Jay Allen	98.86%
Western	James Brennan	98.24%
Northern	Jeffrey Durden	97.28%
Eastern	Daryl Bass	96.48%
Southwestern	Dennis Walsh	94.66%
Southern	James Tewes	94.02%
Post 400		93.61%
Post 208		88.01%

MEMBERSHIP GOAL
100% +1 5/2/2018

LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST

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

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.

www.thelit.com

2018 DEPARTMENT CONVENTION T-SHIRT PRE-ORDER FORM

Name:
Address:
City:
State: Zip:
Phone:
Email:

BACK

Back includes names of all 2017-2018 Department Officers, Area & District Commanders, and Chairmen

FRONT

Shirts are lightweight, unisex, soft blend.

PRE-ORDER MUST BE RETURNED BY JUNE 1, 2018 TO:
Florida Legion Emblem Sales
PO Box 547859; Orlando, FL 32854

Please choose your method of delivery:

☐ I will pickup my T-Shirt order at the Florida Department Convention July 5-7.
Headquarters will be closed, Sunday, July 8th. Pickup at World Center Marriott Orlando, room Crystal G2.

☐ Please ship my T-Shirt order to the address above.
Please add an additional $5 for shipping. Orders will be shipped in late June, we will notify you when shirts are shipped.

T-SHIRTS S-2X $15 3X-5X $18

REGULAR SIZES					EXTENDED SIZES			TOTAL QUANTITY
S	M	L	XL	2X	3X	4X	5X	
QTY	QTY	QTY	QTY	QTY	QTY	QTY	QTY	QTY

ORDER ONLINE:
www.floridalegion.org

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

Limited quanities and sizes available at event.

SUB TOTAL	$
SALES TOTAL *Add 6.5% Sales Tax. (Multiply Sub Total X 1.065) for total.*	$
SHIPPING *Add $5 if shipping, per order NOT shirt. No charge for pickup at event.*	$
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	$

Make checks payable to The American Legion, Department of Florida
Include "Emblem Sales" in the memo

The American Legion Department of Florida 100th Anniversary Member Directory Project is about to begin!

The American legion Department of Florida has contracted with Publishing Concepts (PCI), a trusted partner, to create this special member publication.

Watch for postcards and emails from PCI with instructions to update your information so we can take advantage of this great opportunity to celebrate our rich history and heritage!

The American Legion, Department of Florida has contracted Publishing Concepts (PCI), a trusted partner, to create a special **Florida 100th Anniversary Member Directory Publication**. This project was approved by Florida Membership at our 2017 Department Convention and has been approved by the National Headquarters office.

As member privacy is a concern to everyone, it is important to note that member's information will **ONLY be used or printed with their consent**. PCI has entered into a List Protection Agreement with National and as such PCI will only provide your information back to Department Headquarters. The publisher works under a very strict confidentiality agreement and will only use the information provided for the purpose of contacting members to gather data and to sell the directory.

There are 3 parts to the "Member Verification" process:

1. **Update and verify your information** for our records. During this portion, PCI will ask additional questions such as alternate addresses (for snow birds), date of birth, spouse name, etc. This will assist Department in maintaining accuracy in our records.
2. **Opportunity to OPT-IN to the Florida 100th Anniversary Member Directory Publication.** Here PCI will ask the member if they would like to have any or all of the following information printed in our directory: NAME, CITY, STATE, EMAIL, MILITARY STATUS, RANK, BRANCH OF SERVICE, LEGION POST, and WAR ERA. Members must OPT IN and may choose which information is printed in the directory.
3. **Ability to Purchase Directory and Florida Legion Merchandise.** PCI will attempt to sell the member a copy of the book and Department branded merchandise. Purchase is not necessary to be listed.

Every current member will receive a post card over the next few months. PCI will also be reaching out to expired members for the same information and will try to renew their membership, as a part of this call since they must be a member in order to purchase or be a part of the membership directory.

Watch for postcards, like the image below, and similar emails with instructions on membership verification so we can take advantage of this great opportunity to celebrate our rich history and heritage!

For any additional information, please visit our website, floridalegion.org, OR call 1-800-982-1590

2018 CONVENTION VOTING GUIDE

During the 2017 Department Convention, the membership voted to adopt a new method for voting for Department Officers. All voting for Department Officers will now take place via ballots and scanned with electronic tabulation machines. This will provide a private setting in which to cast secret ballots and expedite the voting process. This guide will provide some pertinent information for the voting process at your 2018 Department Convention.

The annual election of Department officers shall be by special order of business, the results of which should be announced at 1:00 P.M., or as soon as practical thereafter, on the day set for adjournment of the Convention or at the call of the Chair.

Voting for all elected Department Officers shall be by official ballot provided upon registration to any Posts so registered based on paid delegate strength. All official ballots are the responsibility of the acting chairman of each delegation and shall not be replaced for any reason under any circumstances.

How does Department come up with delegate strength? Each Post shall be entitled to two (2) delegates and two (2) alternates and to one (1) additional delegate and alternate for each additional (100) one hundred members provided that the per capita tax is paid fifteen (15) days prior to the Department Convention.

Additionally, according to Section 6, Article 5 of the Department Constitution, a member of the Department Executive Committee shall be a delegate Therefore, the Post that they are a member of will receive one additional vote.

Each Post will receive one (1) official ballot for every paid delegate at the time of registration with the exception of the Past Department Commander's ballot, which will be provided on the floor at the time of voting as detailed in Section 6, Article V of the Department Constitution. Ballots may either be voted collectively by the acting chairman of each delegation or individually by Post delegates to the Convention. The vote of any delegate absent and not represented by an alternate shall be cast by the majority of the delegates present from the Post.

Those candidates having an endorsement on file at Department by May 30, 2018, will be pre-printed on the ballot. The ballots shall provide for a write-in candidate for each office, should one be nominated off the Convention floor without prior endorsement by their respective Post.

Nominations for Department Officers shall be from the floor of the Convention. Nominating speeches shall be limited to five (5) minutes each. No more than two (2) seconding speeches shall be made for each candidate, each of which shall not exceed two (2) minutes.

Immediately following nominations, ballot voting shall begin on electronic scanning equipment provided by the Orange County Supervisor of Elections. All ballot voting shall be completed by 1:00 p.m. except Posts still in line to vote at that time. Once all the votes have been scanned the election is closed and tally begins.

A team of election officials will oversee the election process. These officials shall consist of an employee of the Orange County Supervisor of Elections Office, the Assistant Department Adjutant, and the Department Assistant Judge Advocate or a representative appointed by the Department Commander in his/her absence.

The election officials will examine any ballot rejections to determine the intent of the ballot. If a ballot reflects votes for two (2) candidates for the same office that ballot will have that one (1) office's vote cancelled and the balance of the ballot cast as presented. Should duplicate ballots be presented, the scanners will reject the votes from both ballots.

The election officials will supervise the vote tally collected by the scanners. The candidate for each office that receives the most votes shall be declared the winner. The results will be placed in an envelope which will be presented to the Secretary of the Convention (Department Adjutant) on the Convention stage to be announced.

In cases of a tie vote, a roll call of Posts for the purpose of casting their votes for the tied candidates shall continue until one candidate receives the majority of votes cast, the roll call is complete or until there shall be only one candidate for a particular Department office.

All official ballots will be retained as permanent record of the Department for a period of two (2) years.

Find us on: facebook
facebook.com/floridalegion

American Legion Post 6 &
Halifax Health- Hospice
Invites the Community to Join Us in a

Challenge 22 Walk / 5K

&

Flag Retirement Ceremony
Along With Free BBQ

May26TH

Registration 8am-9am
American Legion Post 6
1087 Biscayne Blvd, Deland, FL 32724
For more Info. Please call Serena Fisher 386-872-1850

AMERICAN LEGION
US
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

HALIFAX HEALTH
HOSPICE
Licensed since 1979

IT'S OFFICIAL
THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY CRUISE
September 13-16TH 2018
CALL MAUREEN WILLIAMS PVP@ 1-800-819-3902 EXT 85931
MENTION AMERICAN LEGION GROUP CODE 1KNQ25

If you're looking to vacation on one of the most amazing ships at sea, feel free… it's Carnival Liberty! And Carnival Liberty just so happens to be packed with some of the latest, greatest features you'll find anywhere. For instance, guess which was the first ship to serve up gourmet Guy Fieri burgers daily. And which one debuted what is perhaps the world's greatest sports bar, which combines live sports on TV, lively competition through the latest EA SPORTS titles… not to mention great drinks. It's the same ship with tacos and burritos on Lido deck, made fresh while you wait, plus two great bars — one rum-slinging, one tequila-wielding — dueling for your heart. This, however, is just the beginning of what to expect from the ship you'd call one great vacation spot. We'd agree — we just happen to call it Carnival Liberty.

• 110,000 GROSS TONNAGE • 2974 GUEST CAPACITY • 952 LENGTH IN FEET

Carnival Liberty - Nassau 09/13/2018

Date	Day	Port	Arrive	Depart
09/13/2018	THU	PORT CANAVERAL (ORLANDO), FL		4:00 PM
09/14/2018	FRI	NASSAU, THE BAHAMAS	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
09/15/2018	SAT	FUN DAY AT SEA		
09/16/2018	SUN	PORT CANAVERAL (ORLANDO), FL	8:00 AM	

Pricing for an interior cabin based on 2 guest in the cabin.
Pricing starts at: $229.00 per person cruise fare and $83.50 per person taxes fees and port expenses.

Pricing for an ocean view cabin based on 2 guest in the cabin.
Pricing starts at: $259.00 per person cruise fare and $83.50 per person taxes fees and port expenses.

Pricing for a balcony cabin based on 2 guest in the cabin.
Pricing starts at: $324.00 per person cruise fare and $83.50 per person taxes fees and port expenses.

The deposit is $100.00 per person and final payment is due 7/15/2018.

PLEASE NOTE THAT PRICING AND AVAILABILITY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

We have not done this in about eight years. Its time to do it again. This will be first come first serve, so make your reservations asap as cabin space might fill up quickly. Im trying to plan some events for us on ship and also in Nassau and as we get closer, will keep everyone informed. My wife works for Carnival, so we will be taken care of. At least put your deposit down quickly and she will try to have us as close together as possible. Remember, this will be a FUN cruise and time to enjoy each other's company and to recharge for the year. Everyone have a great time and will see you aboard. ~ William R Johnson

100TH ANNUAL
DEPARTMENT CONVENTION
WORLD CENTER MARRIOTT
ORLANDO, FL

2018 Kick-Off Party

ENTERTAINMENT BY

DJ PATRICK GIBSON

07.05.2018
07:00 PM

CANARY BALL ROOM

FREE ADMISSION. FREE BEER AND REFRESHMENT, WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. CASH BAR AVAILABLE. EVENTS ENDS AT 8:30 PM.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY

THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

For God and Country

Greetings Legion Family,

The American Legion Department of Florida will be hosting its **100th Annual Statewide Convention** July 5-8, 2018 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 Book. 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!

This year's Convention Program Book will be a ***special full color edition***, in celebration of our 100th Convention and the upcoming 100th Birthday of The American Legion. It is sure to be a keepsake that any Legion Family member will be proud to have for years to come.

There are three different advertisement layouts to choose from: full page, half page or quarter page. The following rates are exclusive to our Legion Family Members, Posts, Units and Squadrons:

Full Page Color Advertisement (7.5" x 10")	~~$400~~ Legion Member Discount: $200
Half Page Color Advertisement (7.5" x 5")	~~$250~~ Legion Member Discount: $125
Quarter Page Color Advertisement (3.75" x 5")	~~$150~~ Legion Member Discount: $75
Custom Design Fee (Any Size)	*Only offered to Legion Family*: $25

ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE: MAY 13, 2018
No late submissions will be accepted.

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 Scowden, Event Coordinator at 407-295-2631 ext. 232 or via email at events@floridalegion.org.

Sincerely,

Michael McDaniel
Department Adjutant

P.S. Submit and pay for your ad online, with a credit card, at **www.floridalegion.org/book**!

P.O. BOX 547859
ORLANDO, FL 32854-7859

www.floridalegion.org

TOLL FREE (800) 393-3378
FAX (407) 299-0901

THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

CONVENTION ADVERTISING
LEGION FAMILY

100TH Annual Department Convention, July 5-8, 2018
The Orlando World Center Marriott, 8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32821

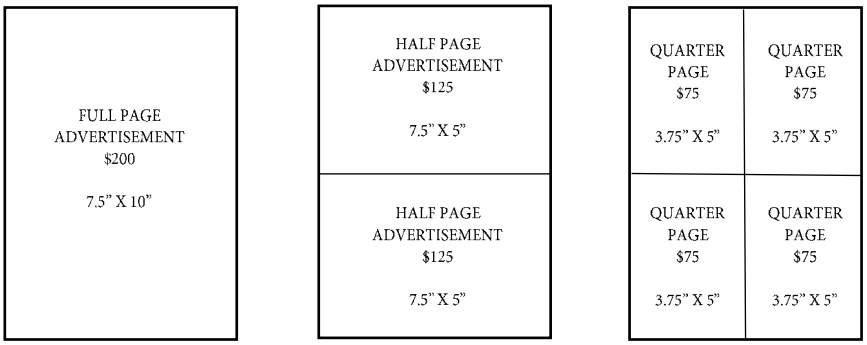
CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Member, Post, Unit or Squadron

Contact Person | Title

Phone | Email

PROGRAM ADVERTISEMENT FOR LEGION FAMILY MEMBERS, POSTS, UNITS, AND SQUADRONS ONLY



❑ Full Page Ad (7.5"x10") - **$200**
❑ Half Page Ad (7.5"x5") - **$125**
❑ Quarter Page Ad (3.75"x5") - **$75**
❑ Custom Design Fee - **$25**

Advertisements must be submitted no later than May 13, 2018 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 full color. All imagery must be 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: *events@floridalegion.org*

PAYMENT METHOD

❑ Credit Card ❑ Check #_____ *Please make checks payable to American Legion, Department of Florida*

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard ❑ American Express ❑ Discover Total to Charge: $_____

Credit Card #

Cardholder Name | Expiration Date | CVV Code

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

Submit to: *The American Legion, Dept of Florida, Attn: Event Coordinator; PO Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32854-7859*

THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

·PRESENTS·

2018

COMMANDER & PRESIDENT

Banquet

FRIDAY 6TH JULY

6:00PM COCKTAIL HOUR

ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED

TICKETS: $40 · BANQUET: 7:00PM - 10:00PM

CANARY BALLROOM · BUSINESS CASUAL DRESS

FOR MENU AND COMPLETE DETAILS VISIT FLORIDALEGION.ORG

PURCHASE ONLINE
www.floridalegion.org

Join us, July 6, 2018, Department Convention at the World Marriott Center.

Yes, I would like to attend the Commander's & President's Banquet!

Name: _____ Phone: _____

# of Tickets _____ X **$40** each = **Total Due $** _____

Payment Type: ❑ Check ❑ Money Order ❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard ❑ Discover ❑ American Express

❑ Yes, I authorize my card to be charged for the total amount above.

Credit Card #: _____

Expiration: _____ CVV: _____ Signature: _____

All tickets must be purchased in advance, quantities are limited. Tickets will be available for pickup during Convention located in the Headquarters Office.

Please mail to: The American Legion, Department of Florida, Attention: Event Coordinator, P.O. Box 547859; Orlando, FL 32854

THE AMERICAN LEGION

DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
·PRESENTS·
2018

COMMANDER & PRESIDENT *Banquet*

THE MENU

SPANISH BUFFET

- **FIXINGS**
  Grape Tomatoes, Charred Corn, Cucumber, Shredded Cheddar Cheese, Garbanzo Beans, Cilantro Lime Vinaigrette, Tortilla
- **ASSORTED ROLLS**
- **PICKLED JALAPEÑO & LIME SLAW**
- **MEATS**
  Ropa Vieja, Tinga De Pollo
- **SPANISH STYLE RICE AND BEANS**
- **SPICED SWEET POTATOES**

DESSERT

CHEF'S CHOICE OF DESSERTS
Various chef choices

**Menu is subject to change without notice.*

• • •