



# THE LEGION LINK

COMMUNICATION ★ DEDICATION ★ EDUCATION



NOVEMBER 2018

COMMANDER DIANNE BOLAND

VOL. 27 ISSUE 4

## From Your Department Commander Dianne Boland

[commander@floridalegion.org](mailto:commander@floridalegion.org)



### Greetings.

I started my District visitations in September. What an eye opener! I learned a lot and shared

a lot of knowledge. I want to thank everyone for their wonderful hospitality. The meals, desserts, and friendship were very rewarding. I even got flowers from Post 157. Also, a big THANK YOU goes out to Posts 57, 107, and 157 for donations to my charities Child Welfare Foundation and Final Salute. The District 13 Family held a golf tournament donating to both charities. Thank you all.

Does your Post put on an awards ceremony? I was invited to participate at the Youth Awards program for Post 115. Our future is in good hands with students of their caliber. Not only were the students invited but their entire family as well, and the police were awarded a Certificate of Appreciation. The community needs to know who The American Legion is.

Next, I moved on to visit with District 3, ending with their district meeting as well as training put on by our Membership Chairman, Bruce Thurber. By now everyone should know that in the next month or so we will start processing our membership the new electronic way, directly to National. But keep in mind, the old, paperwork way – sending it to Department – will continue working. There is no need to get nervous or upset. We are traveling the state giving classes where possible. If we haven't gotten to you yet about training, it will be available at the Fall Conference.

While doing my visitation in District 2, I got to visit Post 13 while they were doing their weekly Legal Services for Veterans. What an excellent program. Anywhere from 5 to 8 or 9 lawyers attended to take care of various legal issues to help the veterans. There was also someone to help with housing and jobs. Great work!!!

Post 5 held a program for the 100-year anniversary of the sinking of the USS Tampa. Did you know they are the only Post in the United States that

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has their own cemetery right on their premises? If you have never been there, stop by for a visit.

Dennis and I recently attended the golf tournament put on by Project VetRelief. RL James Inc, a Gold Sponsor of PVR, spearheaded the golf tournament raising \$50,000. Yes, that's right \$50,000!!! If you ever see RL James and his wife at one of our conferences or conventions be sure and thank them for all they do for our veterans.

I ended the month by visiting District 14 and District 9. I went to many, many

Posts as well as the Broward Clinic. They do something different at the clinic - right inside the main entrance they sell military hats. The money made from the sales is donated back to help the clinic in a variety of ways. The money was recently used to purchase some tables with cover, so people could wait out doors out of the sun.

Don't forget our Fall Conference is right around the corner – November 2 to November 4. We have a lot of classes being taught Friday. Check out the agenda and plan your day. Hope to see you there.

**Communication, Dedication, Education**

**Help Veterans Get Their Fair Share of Benefits**  
 We are a lifeline for thousands of Veterans who aren't getting benefits.  
 Join us to fight for them! [www.floridalegion.org/flveterans](http://www.floridalegion.org/flveterans)

**Social Media and Mobile Fundraising Campaign Kicks Off at Fall Conference**

Jennifer Cooper, [jcooper@floridalegion.org](mailto:jcooper@floridalegion.org)

Our new mobile fundraising initiative—Championing Our Veterans—officially kicked off at our November leadership conference, and we couldn't be more thrilled.

Many of you attended our pre-conference event on Friday, November 1, and met our team from Victory-360 Fundraising, and even began setting up your mobile fundraising page. We thank you for your participation!

We're off to a good start, but we need to keep up the momentum. You can help in several ways:

- Become a Team Captain, and build your own fundraising team
- Become part of someone else's team
- Make general donations to various fundraising teams
- Share our campaign with friends and family

Remember: Our goal for this campaign is threefold and includes:



NOVEMBER 2018	
2-4	Department Fall Conference ☆
4	Daylight Savings Time Ends
6	Election Day
7	Membership Goal 70%
7	Vietnam Traveling Wall
10	Marine Corps Birthday
11	Veterans Day
11	Remembrance Day
12	Headquarters Closed
12-16	American Education Week ★
15	Legion Link Articles Due
17	District 2 Meeting Post 100
17	District 3 Meeting Post 96
17	9th District Past Commander's and Presidents' Ball
19-23	National Family Week ★
22-31	Holiday Donor Blood Drive ★
22	Thanksgiving Day
22-23	Headquarters Closed
28-1	District 16-Commander's Visit ☆

☆ - Commander Dianne Boland's Attendance Tentative.

★ - National Event

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

- Broadening public awareness of American Legion, Department of Florida and the work we do
- Building our membership base by reaching out to our community and meeting younger veterans and their families
- Increasing financial contributions that support our programs, today and for the future

It's easy to get started. You can get more information by visiting [floridalegion.org/flveterans](http://floridalegion.org/flveterans), or you can reach out to me directly for assistance at [jcooper@floridalegion.org](mailto:jcooper@floridalegion.org).

I and our Victory-360 Fundraising team, hope you will join us in making this a successful campaign!

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## *Fla. Stat. § 205.055*

The Florida code and constitution are current through the 2018 Second Regular Session of the 25th Legislature.

*LexisNexis® Florida Annotated Statutes > Title XIV. Taxation and Finance. (Chs. 192 — 221) > Chapter 205. Local Business Taxes. (§§ 205.013 — 205.1975)*

### **§ 205.055. Exemptions; veterans, spouses of veterans and certain servicemembers, and low-income persons.—**

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(1) The following persons are entitled to an exemption from a business tax and any fees imposed under this chapter:

(a) A veteran of the United States Armed Forces who was honorably discharged upon separation from service, or the spouse or unremarried surviving spouse of such a veteran.

(b) The spouse of an active duty military servicemember who has relocated to the county or municipality pursuant to a permanent change of station order.

(c) A person who is receiving public assistance as defined in s. 409.2554.

(d) A person whose household income is below 130 percent of the federal poverty level based on the current year's federal poverty guidelines.

(2) A person must complete and sign, under penalty of perjury, a Request for Fee Exemption to be furnished by the local governing authority and provide written documentation in support of his or her request for an exemption under subsection (1).

(3) If a person who is exempt under subsection (1) owns a majority interest in a business with fewer than 100 employees, the business is exempt. Such person must complete and sign, under penalty of perjury, a Request for Fee Exemption to be furnished by the local governing authority and provide written documentation in support of his or her request for an exemption for the business under this subsection.

### **History**

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S. 24, [\*ch. 2018-118\*](#), eff. July 1, 2018.

LexisNexis® Florida Annotated Statutes

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*Message from the 1st Vice Commander***Rick Johnson, 1st Vice Commander**[1stvice@legionmail.org](mailto:1stvice@legionmail.org)

Good day to all. As you read this, we will be at our Fall Conference in Orlando. I hope all are attending the classes they need to better prepare

them for the volunteer jobs that they have assumed. With that being said, MEMBERSHIP. I have asked the District Commanders to plan on visiting Posts that were below 95% in June 2018 and the Posts that are below 55% now. You should already have been visited by the District Commanders to help you in any way that they can.

We need to get moving now before it is

too late to act. Training should have been held or planned for every District by now and the new ins and outs of MyLegion.org covered. Communication lines are still not well established as we need to know what good things are happening out there to pass the information forward for all to see.

The holidays are fast approaching and one of the most important ones is Veterans Day, November 11, 2018. Every Post should have an event, hopefully involving your community, for this very happy day. It is a time for all Americans to reflect on the sacrifice that our brothers and sisters made for us to remain free and be the country that we are today. It is because of us, the veterans, that we are who we are now. After that we have Thanksgiving. What does that mean to us all? There are a lot of families

out there that cannot celebrate that family day. We have numerous Posts that really get involved and help feed veterans and needy families within their communities and that is what we are about.

To our families in the Panhandle, what can I say? The devastation so far is unreal. There is going to be a lot of assistance from the whole country to help you all rebuild. With the aid of our strong Legion Family, we can get this done. Go to the Department website for information on how to help and thank you Bill Hoppner for what you are doing out there with your team.

So, everyone, have a great November and a great Fall Conference and I will see you out there in my travels. God speed and be safe.

*Message from the 2nd Vice Commander***Jerry Brandt, 2nd Vice Commander**[2ndvice@legionmail.org](mailto:2ndvice@legionmail.org)

Comrades, we are currently heading for the Department Fall Conference, a time to receive much needed training. Please attend as many training classes as possible. If you do

not see a class that you feel you need please let the Department know so we can request that class for the Summer Convention.

Plan ahead: we are now taking applications for Legion College. This class is open to all members of the Family. Download the application at [www.floridalegion.org/news-events/florida-legion-college/](http://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/florida-legion-college/)

Are you attending or taking part in a parade on Veterans Day? How about a picnic with our Legion Family? Or maybe a day with friends? Please remember, Veterans Day is your day, our day.

As always, do not forget those deployed. Christmas is a sad time for many; let us not forget those who are on job and unable to even call their loved ones. As you know, another hurricane has hit the great state of Florida. If your Post wishes to donate funds to the members who were hit hard by Hurricane Michael, please donate to Department of Florida Hurricane Fund, PROJECT: VetRelief, or to National Emergency Fund (NEF) to assist our members.

The Commander will be visiting the 16th District November 28th through

December 1st. The District Commander is currently planning the visits with the Posts. If the Department Commander, Dianne Boland, comes in do not be shy - please visit with her, she is there for you.

*Check Constitution & Bylaws***Larry Sheets, Judge Advocate**[judgeadvocate@legionmail.org](mailto:judgeadvocate@legionmail.org)

All Posts should check their Constitution & Bylaws against the Department Constitution & Bylaws, because the Department

Constitution & Bylaws were amended at the last convention.



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*Message from the 3rd Vice Commander***Eunice Butts, 3rd Vice Commander**[3rdvice@legionmail.org](mailto:3rdvice@legionmail.org)

I would like to thank all of the American Legion family for the support, prayers, and donations given to the victims of Hurricane Michael in Zone 3. On behalf of our members, veterans, military personnel, and

the communities, thank you. Due to the power outages, downed cell towers, etc., it is very difficult for them to communicate. Continue to pray for them.

On the 17th of October, I attended the training for the 4th District. It was nice to see that our comrades were very interested, asked questions, and no one left. It was a 6-hour training and luncheon. When individuals get tired of sitting or listening they start leaving. When individuals are interested and engaged, they stay and absorb more education and training. This was the best training that I have seen in a very long time. It would be nice to see this kind of approach to training again.

November is here. We should be at 70% on November 7, 2018. The Western Area and parts of the Northern Area were

seriously hit. I hope that we all recognize this while continuing to encourage membership. Wouldn't it be nice if all Posts in the state could increase their membership numbers with overages to help make Florida's membership goal? Just thinking out of the box.

This month we celebrate the Great American Teach In, Veterans Day, and Thanksgiving. Let us remember our homeless and less fortunate veterans and their families.

I wish each of you an increase in membership, a bountiful Thanksgiving, and a gracious Veterans Day.

*Still Serving***Dennis Boland, NEC**[nec@legionmail.org](mailto:nec@legionmail.org)

The American Legion is comprised of 55 state-level Departments in each of the 50 states as well as the District of Columbia, France, Mexico, Philippines, and Puerto Rico. There are almost 13,000 local Posts throughout the state level.

Our current national membership is roughly 2 million. The online renewals process was well received by the members and produced better than expected results. Over 245,000 members used this option.

The American Legion extended its service in communities across the country through the development and revitalization of nearly 2,500 Posts.

One of the fastest growing activities in The American Legion is the Legion Riders. They raised more than 1.2 million dollars for the 2017 Legacy Run, a fund which provides scholarships to the children of active duty troops who died while serving in the military since September 11, 2001. Scholarships are also available to children of veterans who are rated at 50% disabled or higher.

The American Legion attracts younger veterans. Active-duty members are eligible to join – and they are joining. In fact, The American Legion has over 500,000 members who joined under the War on Terrorism, Persian Gulf, Lebanon/Grenada, and Panama War periods of eligibility.

The American Legion is still serving America. This is only a part of what The American Legion Posts did “for God and Country” in a program year:

1. Donated more than 4 million hours of service to communities.

2. Post Service Officers handled 162,417 cases of veterans seeking benefits.
3. Devoted over 785,000 hours of volunteer service to Department of VA hospitals.
4. Donated 78,767 pints of blood to collection centers nationwide, making The American Legion the nation's single largest blood donor.
5. Annually contributes nearly \$40 million on programs benefiting children and youth.
6. Awarded more than 9,300 medals to Junior ROTC students.
7. Sponsored almost 19,000 American Legion Boys State delegates.
8. Sponsored more than 2,000 Scouting units serving more than 46,816 youngsters.
9. Sponsored more than 1,900 American Legion baseball teams and an additional 1,424 youth baseball squads.
10. Awarded more than \$4.4 million in college scholarships to deserving students.

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**Resources for Historians****Gerald Kaufman, Historian**[historian@legionmail.org](mailto:historian@legionmail.org)

This month let us look at the tools we have available. As a Post Historian there are manuals available through the Department website under the resources tab (select Forms & Documents and then Post & Program Manuals). The first manual is the Historian Manual which will give you information on the Florida American Legion Historians Association and the annual history book contest. The second manual will be the

Centennial Legacy and Vision Guide. This guide is jammed full of information and directions on how to put your 100th Anniversary program together. It is almost a step-by-step guide. The third guide is the Centennial Manual; again, it is full of directions and "How To" information. Lastly, the fourth manual is the Centennial Workbook. These tools, along with your Post's history books and the elders of your Post, will help you put together your 100th history book and the 100th celebration at your individual Post.

I would also like to remind you all that tickets are now available for the 100th Anniversary celebration event Vets Invade the Canyon. You can go to [www.vetsinvadethecanyon.com](http://www.vetsinvadethecanyon.com)

and find information on the event, hotels, camp grounds, and purchase your tickets. This is a two-day event featuring Sister Hazel, Aaron Tippen, Buddy Brown, Scooter Brown, and Letters From Home. Also, if you have not completed the Centennial website and need help in doing so please call me at 407-218-9139. The user name and password are as follows:

[100thannvdept@legionmail.org](mailto:100thannvdept@legionmail.org)  
Melanie1969

I will be teaching the Historians class at Fall Conference. Please come out and see me. The class is short but informative.

**Training, Membership, & Working as One****Jay Allen, Central Area**[centralarea@legionmail.org](mailto:centralarea@legionmail.org)

I attended the Celebration of Life for Kirk Miller at Post 275 saying good-bye to a comrade. I know he will truly be missed. I also attended the 16th

District General Meeting with 2nd Vice Commander Jerry Brandt, PDC Larry White, and Department Historian Gerald Kaufman. They did a good job in holding the meeting to a reasonable time length.

I went to the ceremony commemorating the sinking of the USS Tampa on September 26, 1918, which was the largest death to hit the city of Tampa and the US Navy at that time.

I had the privilege working with Operation Homefront in awarding a veteran a new house for him and his family.

Doing well in membership and I expect that with the northern members returning to Florida we will see a sharp increase in renewals. With the new myLegion it should speed up the count at a greater pace.

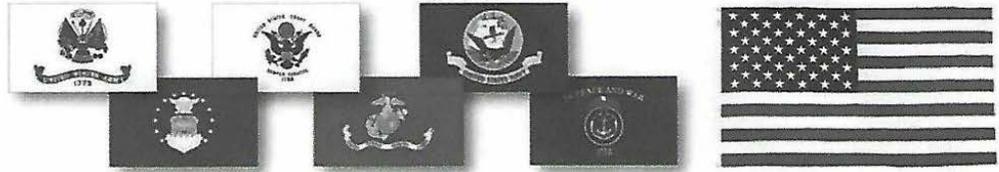
**Message from the Northern Area****Mike Hutto, Northern Area**[northernarea@legionmail.org](mailto:northernarea@legionmail.org)

Well, November is here and we have so much to be thankful for - our American Legion being one. 100 years and counting toward 200.

Our November 7th membership goal is 70%. Speaking of membership, remember that the end of the year is looming and all that have not renewed cannot take advantage of meetings or social events. Please renew now if you have not already done so.

The Northern Area Ball is scheduled for March 23, 2019, at Post 57 in Lake City. The Commander and his wife have

been a great help with organizing what I hope will be the event of the year. If you would like more information or to make reservations, call me at (352) 490 1756.



# 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Central Brevard Stand Down For Homeless Veterans Needs List

January 26, 2019

## Needs List:

- Men & women's socks
- Men & women's t-shirts
- Men & women's underwear
- Big bottles of shampoo & conditioner
- Towels & wash cloths
- Bar soap & body wash
- Hand sanitizer
- Feminine hygiene items
- Tents
- Sleeping bags
- Tarps
- Lanterns
- Batteries (AA, AAA, C & D)
- Eyeglasses

## Drop Off Locations:

- Veterans Memorial Center  
400 S Sykes Creek Pkwy  
Merritt Island, FL 32952
- American Legion Post 81  
2909 S Harbor City Blvd  
Melbourne, FL 32901



Learn more and support the event at:  
[www.veteransmemorialcenter.org](http://www.veteransmemorialcenter.org)

Supported By NVHS

Veteran's Memorial Center  
Donn Weaver: 321-613-2403

National Veterans Homeless Support  
info@nvhs.org or 321-208-7562

**Greetings from 6th and 12th Districts****James Burk, Eastern Area**[easternarea@legionmail.org](mailto:easternarea@legionmail.org)

I am going to go off script today. This message is directed to our brothers and sisters in the Panhandle: we are

coming.

There has been an incredible amount of supplies donated. Through the efforts of people like Bill Hoppner, Barry Roberts, Jim and Jennifer Day, House a Vet, and hundreds of others we are just waiting on

the authorities to give us permission to roll. When my Area experienced back to back hurricanes in 2004, it rocked us but in time we rebuilt. You will too. Just hang on.

**WE ARE COMING.**

**Post Drama and Chain of Command****Michael Raymond, Southwestern Area**[southwesternarea@legionmail.org](mailto:southwesternarea@legionmail.org)

I'd like to start out this month by thanking all the Posts we visited in the "Great 8th" with the Dept. Commander, Dianne Boland, for their outstanding hospitality and comradeship. Got to

talk to a lot of Legionnaires about their concerns with the upcoming changes to our membership reporting system. Several Posts have initiated the automated system already and have told me it's very simple to install and they really like it.

But my main objective this month has to do with a couple of issues that have arisen this past month. Number one is "What is the current policy concerning the inclusion of SAL and Auxiliary members

in the Post Honor Guard?" This question was posed to a Post Commander and he answered correctly by saying it was up to the local Post. This answer was not what the person wanted to hear so he bypassed all levels and went directly to Department for the answer. Rather than send it back down the chain, our Department Judge Advocate researched the question and found that the original answer was the correct one. It is the decision of the local Post whether to allow SAL and Auxiliary members to be a member of the Honor Guard. The only requirement is to be sure everyone is wearing the proper insignia designating their particular organization. This just makes good sense! We are a legion of volunteers which make our Posts a success or a failure. We should all be allowed to honor our veterans.

Finally, I'd like to emphasize something I talked about at the many Officer installations I attended at the beginning

of the year. Every successful organization needs a chain of command. Imagine if you will if every argument, disagreement, or misunderstanding at your local Post was sent directly to Department Headquarters. Thousands of incidents to be handled by our Department leadership every single day! It would be insane. That is why our organization and so many others are set up the way they are. A chain of command that you can utilize if you have a problem. Most issues can be handled at Post level. It starts with your Post Commander. If that doesn't prove satisfactory then bring it to your Executive Board. If all else fails, then you can contact your District Commander for advice. Most of the time when an issue bypasses the chain and is sent directly to Department, the District Commander is notified and asked to investigate. All I'm saying is to use good judgement. You want your Post to be in the spotlight for all the great things you do every day.

**17th On the Move****Rev. Willie Branch, District 17**[district17@legionmail.org](mailto:district17@legionmail.org)

October was a very busy month for District 17 and many Legionnaires answered the call of Post Everlasting. The 17th District

is preparing for the 100th celebration with more info to come next month. Thanks to all the Posts that attended the District meeting. Special thanks to 3rd Vice Commander Eunice Butts and Northern Area Commander Mike Hutto for their presence and shared wisdom. Extra Bravo Zulu to Post 120 in Holly Hill for their excellent hosting of the District meeting. Veteran's Day

is in November; let's not forget to celebrate all the sacrifices made by veterans over the years and presently. District 17 is planning a parade March 2, 2019, in Edgewater, Florida. Contact Eleanor Amato at 386-427-1168 or email [amatoellie@aol.com](mailto:amatoellie@aol.com) for more information.

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**New Transmittal****Bruce Thurber, Membership**[membership@legionmail.org](mailto:membership@legionmail.org)

On October 8, 2018, the new membership processing began in Florida. Set up and use is very easy.

The “Process Membership” feature in myLegion allows American Legion Post Officers to renew, add new members, and transfer in existing members from other Posts (NOTE: Posts can only transfer in members whose dues are being paid for). This feature utilizes electronic payment methods via myLegion and eliminates the need for Post Officers to send the National/Department portion of the 3-part membership cards and checks to Department Headquarters.

Electronic check (eCheck) is the only payment method available when using this feature. The account must be a valid business checking or savings account held with a U.S. bank. Credit card payments are only accepted for foreign

Posts outside of the U.S. that do not have a checking/savings account with a U.S. bank. Each dues payment charged for a member is the sum of the National Per Capita plus Department Per Capita in effect at the time of the transaction. National Headquarters will handle payment of the Department Per Capita back to the Department Headquarters office.

The processing time for eChecks is 5-8 business days. During the 5-8 business day period, a “Pending” charge will be placed on the funds in the checking/savings account designated by the American Legion Post. In addition, the batch status in myLegion will also show a “Pending” status for the 5-8 business day period. After a successful transfer of funds to the bank at National Headquarters, the transmittal status of the batch will change to “Closed” and the member information will be applied to the National Database.

If a Post submits payment for a batch of transactions and the eCheck is declined, the transmittal status of the batch in myLegion will be set to “Declined”.

Common reasons for declined eChecks are: 1) insufficient funds, 2) bank account has been closed, 3) invalid bank information. In the event a membership batch is declined, the Post Officer will be notified via email and the batch will NOT be applied to the National Database. Declined batches can be re-submitted within 14 days. If not re-submitted within the 14-day period, the batch will be deleted. The Post will be charged all penalty fees levied by the ACH (Automated Clearing House) processor for declined eChecks. The American Legion National Headquarters reserves the right to suspend the “Process Membership” feature for a Post at any time due to a high volume of declined transactions or malicious use of the myLegion site.

Another feature of myLegion.org has been changed. The “Find Members in My Area” has moved to the reports section. The program appearance has changed but the results are more workable. A lot of this was covered at the Fall Conference and as I travel with the Commander I will have information on both programs.

**ALR Central Area Ride In****Jim Wineland, Legion Riders**[legionriders@legionmail.org](mailto:legionriders@legionmail.org)

I want to share an experience that I had last weekend that defines what The American Legion Riders are all about. I was invited to the ALR Central Area Ride In in Tampa,

Florida. I took advantage of the

invite and rode. The following is just an example of what was witnessed, all good stuff.

Over the course of four years the ALR Central Area has developed an event that is trophy driven. To win the trophy, they must raise money by selling raffle tickets for a basket with a mix of different items. It rotates District to District each year. The hosting Chapter provides lunch for a donation, and can sell 50/50 tickets or other small raffles to offset their costs for hosting the event.

What I saw was a very simple, straight forward way to raise dollars for a predetermined charity. In this case it was suicide prevention which ties into the Department’s and ALR’s charity for 2018/2019.

There were no restrictions on where they sold the raffle tickets. I won’t give away some of their secrets, but a lot of thought went into everyone’s approach. Now for the end results. There seemed

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<< *Legion Riders - from page 9*

to be a yearly competition between Chapter 138 of Tampa and Chapter 252 Cross Bayou of Seminole, Florida. Chapter 138 was the winner last year and took the trophy off the lighted shelf at Chapter 148.

When all the money was counted, Chapter 252 won the trophy back by collecting over \$5,000, blowing the totals of other Chapters out of the water. I'm sure the trophy is back on the shelf under the lights. The total amount collected for suicide prevention was \$10,455, all done by just raffling off baskets.

This is a great example of what we are

planning for the In-State Ride in 2019. The ride is scheduled for April 2019, but we would like to see the Chapters/Districts start fundraising in February or March. You could use this format or develop your own competitions in each one of your Areas. Central Area has theirs done.

Speaking of the Ride, we are still finalizing the start/finish location and the Chapters that we will stop at in each District to pick up donations. This is a new approach to our In-State Ride and I hope one that everyone will want to participate in. We are trying to reduce the out-of-pocket costs with this approach.

Well, Fall Conference is right around

the corner. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you there. We will have our Chairman's Meeting on Friday and General Session on Saturday.

We have a lot to discuss; SOP should be completed, and a draft of the Summit will be ready for review.

Speaking of the Summit, the coin and shirt design have been completed and should be available on the website soon. We will let all the Area Chairmen know when pre-sales are ready.

**"For the cause, not the applause"**

**Introducing the New Blood Donor Chair**

**Nancy Thomas, Blood Donor**

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



As of the date of this article, I accepted the Department Blood Donor Chair and would like to let you know to contact me with questions and blood

donation drives.

There is so much I need to read and learn about this program, so bear with me. I knew some of the do's and don'ts but not all. I will, however, learn quickly.

Please let me know when you are having a drive in your area. If I can make it I will, though there will be times that I may not

be able to.

If you have questions, I will hopefully be able to answer them quickly even if I need to look it up and learn at the same time.

See you all at Fall Conference. I am looking forward to the rest of the year in this position.

**Employment Awards and Job Fairs**

**Dusty Douglas, Employment**

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

December 19, 2018 is just around the corner. Do you know why this date is important?

December 19, 2018 is the deadline for the following Employment Programs Awards packages to be submitted to the Florida Department Headquarters.

- NATIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSION'S EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AWARDS
- THE EMPLOYER OF THE VETERANS AWARD
  - Small (50 or fewer employees)
  - Medium (51 - 200 employees)
  - Large (201 or more employees)
- EMPLOYER OF OLDER WORKERS AWARD
- EMPLOYER OF THE DISABLED AWARD

Last year, the Florida Department's nominee for the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialist of the Year Award, Samuel L. Denson of Pensacola, Florida, was selected as the American Legion National winner. Recognizing a local employer or employment service office for these awards is a good way to promote your

*continued on page 11 >>*

<< *Employment - from page 10*

Post. Let the community know you recognize their support of veterans. Submit your awards packages by email to [edouglas@floridalegion.org](mailto:edouglas@floridalegion.org), fax 407-299-0901, or mail to P.O. Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32810 Attn: Programs. For information on the awards and the forms needed for the nomination packages go to [www.floridalegion.org](http://www.floridalegion.org). Click on PROGRAMS & SERVICES then click on EMPLOYER AWARD to find the required forms and information.

Remember what is needed is facts,

figures, and an interesting narrative that tells what makes this nominee special. What activities does this candidate do to develop employment opportunities for veterans? What is not needed are binders, report covers, page protectors, photographs, or logs of how many people are seen each day.

#### Upcoming Florida Job Fairs

- Nov 5, 2018: Veteran Hiring Conference, Marriott 4670 Jacksonville, FL 32256
- Nov 7, 2018: JobNewsUSA.com, Fort

Lauderdale Job Fair BB&T Center, One Panther, Sunrise, FL 33323

- Nov 7, 2018: Central Florida Job Fair, Central Florida Fair and Exposition Park 4603 W. Colonial Dr., Orlando, FL 32808

There are two job fair websites that list all the upcoming Florida job fairs and links to the various job fairs. [WWW.JOBFAIRSIN.COM/FLORIDA](http://WWW.JOBFAIRSIN.COM/FLORIDA) and [WWW.CFEC.ORG/JOB-FAIR](http://WWW.CFEC.ORG/JOB-FAIR). Please post these sites in your Post so job seekers can log onto the sites for job fairs in your area of Florida.

### Planning for Children & Youth

**Vickie Van Buren, Children & Youth**  
[cy@legionmail.org](mailto:cy@legionmail.org)



I hope this report finds you well and safe from Hurricane Michael's wrath. My prayers go out to everyone whose lives have been devastated

by this disaster. Please know that the American Legion is here to help. Our temporary Financial Assistance program can help those veterans on active duty or are a member of the American Legion and have minor children still living at home.

Otherwise, our Vet Relief program or the American Legion National Headquarters Emergency Relief Fund may be able to assist those veterans displaced by Hurricane Michael. If you were not impacted by the storm,

please consider donating to the American Legion Emergency Fund at <https://www.legion.org/emergency>.

The holiday season is coming soon. If your Post is planning activities for Veterans Day or Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, set up a booth and make sure you have plenty of flyers for your Children and Youth Programs. Its also the time of year to visit your local schools and advertise our programs. Leave applications for JROTC Cadet of the Year and Teacher of the Year awards.

The week of Thanksgiving is National Family Week. Get your local government to declare that week as National Family Week. A sample proclamation can be found in the National Family Week brochure that can be downloaded at [www.legion.org/publications](http://www.legion.org/publications). Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or any other celebration of your religion or culture, have events at your

Post for families with children. This is also the time of year that the Marines have their Toys for Tots campaign. Your American Legion Riders might want to have a toy run in December to support Toys for Tots.

I have met with the folks at Post 117, Palm Bay, to start our Children and Youth picnic planning for Saturday, April 6, 2019. Admission is FREE this year. Food will be sold for a moderate price. We are going to have a fantastic event this year. I'm looking for baskets to raffle or items like teddy bears to use in putting together baskets.

As I visit your Districts, please solicit support from your Posts in developing some baskets for this event. The flyer is available at our Department website under Children and Youth. In addition, our Golf Tournament is

*continued on page 12 >>*

<< *Children & Youth - from page 11*

also on track for Saturday, April 27, 2019 at Harbor Hills Country Club in Lady Lake. Team registration and sponsorship forms are available on the Department website.

Hopefully you had a chance to visit our booth at the Fall Conference. Our Children and Youth pins and Rider patches are in and available for sale. If you are planning any Children and Youth events, I would love to attend or help

in any way I can. Remember, our theme this year is “HUGS” (Help Us Give Smiles).



## **Citizenship Options for MAVNI Enlistees & Veterans**

**Gene Smith, Immigration**

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



### **Citizenship Options for MAVNI Enlistees and Veterans**

This month's Immigration column is submitted

by Elizabeth Ricci, attorney with Rambana & Ricci, LLC, Tallahassee. Ms. Ricci concentrates on complex immigration cases throughout the United States. She was named the “Go-to attorney for veterans” by the Philadelphia Enquirer. She was recently appointed by President Trump to serve as a Board Member of the Selective Service System. Ms. Ricci is a friend of veterans and has provided her service pro bono to those foreign-born veterans who have served our nation and did not seek citizenship for whatever reason. The following article appeared in the Veteran Voice – a weekly newspaper about veterans' issues, organizations, events, and our military heroes. Ms. Ricci has given me permission to use her article in this column.

**Elizabeth Ricci, Esq.,** “Military

*service has long been a mechanism for foreign-born individuals to serve their adoptive country and become American citizens.*

*But, as time passes, it seems pathways to U. S. citizenship become more difficult to navigate, especially for those who have not received Lawful Permanent Residency, known as the Green Card.*

*There is hope, however, for MAVNI enlistees (Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest) and foreign-born veterans who performed active military service.*

**The MAVNI program:** *The MAVNI program has offered expedited citizenship to immigrants with valuable medical, engineering, IT or foreign language skills.*

*However, the Army recently discharged about 50 foreign-born MAVNI reservists and 1,000 are in immigration limbo with no decision on their naturalizations in sight, while approximately 11,000 enlistees face uncertain futures due to the program's backlog and subsequent suspension.*

*The Army gave little explanation for the sudden discharges, aside from citing security concerns—despite the*

*fact that the enlistees have already passed several background checks.*

*Although the MAVNI discharges were halted following public backlash, the New York Times reported on September 19 that the Army might be searching for alternative reasons to terminate the recruits so as to avoid litigation.*

**Other citizenship avenue:** *MAVNI enlistees might fast track to the Green Card via the National Interest Waiver (NIW) through self-sponsorship even without a job offer. If approved, the applicant could naturalize five years after receiving residency.*

*Although NIW applicants are not eligible to pay a Premium Processing fee to expedite their Green Card, the NIW process does allow applicants to waive the requirements of a job offer and labor certification known as the PERM process, which not only ties a candidate to a specific employer but can take a year or two to complete.*

*MAVNI enlistees from China and India, however, find themselves in the additional predicament that their Green Cards could take an additional three to nine years, respectively, due*

*continued on page 13>>*

<< *Immigration - from page 12*

to government processing backlog.

*Having a pending naturalization case and a request for Permanent Residency are not in conflict, and may be a viable option for enlistees seeking an alternative immigration solution.*

*The NIW may be a Green Card option for those who can establish their work is in the national interest. To be eligible, applicants must also satisfy other merit-based requirements, such as having an advanced degree or equivalent and showing exceptional ability.*

*Considering that MAVNI, by definition, was for immigrants who were vital to the national interest, this means one might fulfill NIW requirements with proof of MAVNI acceptance, transcripts and support letters.*

*I made the connection between MAVNI and NIW through my work on dozens of NIW cases. The Common thread is their substantial merit-based components. Individuals who qualify for NIW—or who qualified for MAVNI—are highly-skilled professionals who bring critical knowledge to the U. S.*

*My NIW clients include a laser engineer from Korea who developed technology to cut smartphone glass, and a mechanical engineer from India with quality management and supply chain experience in the oil industry.*

**Active service:** *Many do not realize that military service does not confer*

*U. S. citizenship. It is unknown how many of the 640,000 foreign-born veterans alive today mistakenly believe they are citizens.*

*However, those who find themselves without Green Cards may be able to skip having to be Permanent Residents and go straight to citizenship if they served during a designated period of hostility such as the Vietnam Hostilities –February 28, 1961 to October 15, 1978, Persian Gulf Conflict – August 2, 1990 to April 11, 1991, and the War on Terror – September 11, 2001 until today.*

*USCIS (U. S. Customs and Immigration Service), the agency that handles immigration, does not charge a processing or biometrics fee to vets pursuing naturalization, but does require a DD-214 as well as Forms N-400 and N-426.*

*Applicants must be of good moral character and pass the civics test and be proficient in reading, writing and speaking English.*

*I have helped veterans from Germany, Greece, Cuba and Ireland pursue their citizenship via this route.*

**Conclusion:** *Despite the continued hurdles surrounding U. S. immigration, the NIW could provide a viable option to residency and ultimately citizenship for MAVNI reservists. Active Service veterans, regardless of residency, could naturalize if their service was during a designated period of hostility.*

*Either scenario could keep the American Dream alive for immigrants*

*who chose to wear the uniform of our nation to protect our freedom—the same freedom they seek for themselves and families.”*

I want to thank Ms. Ricci for allowing me to reprint her commentary on the MAVNI program. I hope it sheds new light on what the MAVNI program is about and how it has become an issue for many veterans. If you have additional questions on the MAVNI program or you are aware of a foreign-born veteran caught up in the legal process with MAVNI, you may contact me at [Immigration@legionmail.org](mailto:Immigration@legionmail.org).



*Proceeds benefit Veterans and their families in the State of Florida.*

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## Women in Policing

Taz Gehling, Law & Order

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



Hello my fellow Legionnaires and family,

This is the first time that the Department has had a Lady Legionnaire as Commander. I remind you of this because

of the strides that our society has made in equal treatment for women.

I have been in and around the criminal justice system for a majority of my life. I remember, as I am sure many of you can, when women couldn't even respond to a call without back-up or they had to have a partner. I am sure some of you can remember when women weren't even allowed to be law enforcement officers.

I am proud to see that the culture in a predominantly male profession has

changed its ideology. I have spoken with several female law enforcement officers and they felt that they are treated equal to their male counterparts. This doesn't mean that ALL departments have changed in this manner, just that it is slowly disappearing. I am sure that we can continue to work with our local agencies to help cultivate this continuing change.

I know a female Deputy Chief of Police in my local area and have met several over the years. To show how women have excelled in law enforcement, I would like to present just a few examples:

1. August 2017, Portland Police Bureau hired their first black female Chief of Police, Danielle Outlaw, where she is still serving; article [Portland selects first African American woman to be next chief of police, policeone.com](#)
2. Guadalupe "Lupe" Valdez — the State of Texas' first openly gay and first Latina Sheriff, Dallas County 2005-2017; January 8, 2018 article [Sheriff to run for Texas governor, policeone.com](#)

3. Major L.J. Roscoe, Field Services Division Commander - DeKalb County Sheriff's Office; May 9, 2018 article [Axon Accelerate highlight: How Major LJ Roscoe navigated the path to success, policeone.com](#)
4. Chief Carla L. Provost, U.S. Border Patrol; August 11, 2018 article [Carla Provost is named Border Patrol's first female chief, policeone.com](#)

As you can see, we have made strides in changing and becoming better in treating all citizens equally in this area. These women risk their lives for us regardless of our issues. This is something that we should all be proud of.

Remember we have a great program to honor Law Enforcement Officers, so please, look at honoring these brave men and women this year. The cost to your Post can be minimal.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 239-785-8282 or [LawOrder@legionmail.org](mailto:LawOrder@legionmail.org).

## In Session January 31 - February 2, 2019

Tom Gora, Legion College

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



Florida Legion College in session January 31-February 2, 2019

**Where?** Department Headquarters in Orlando, with hotel accommodations at the Altamonte

Springs-Orlando Hilton Hotel.

**Who Can Attend?** Any current member of The American Legion Family!

- Must complete American Legion

Basic Training Course prior to the College. This is a free online course offered by The American Legion.

- Complete an application which you can find at <https://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/florida-legion-college>. The application has been revised and now needs the signature of Post or District Commander, a change from requiring the Area Commander's signature.
- There is a \$200 fee to attend to offset hotel, meal, and refreshment expenses. Continental breakfast will be served at the hotel, with lunch provided Friday and Saturday, and refreshments and snacks available during breaks. Your Post can pay this for you or you can pay your own way.

## What subjects are Covered?

Team building exercises; History of The American Legion; Introduction to Resolution Writing; The Department Commander's 10 Point Success Plan; Relationship between National, Department, and Post; State Legislative Priorities; Membership; Programs and Public Relations; Fund Raising for a Non-Profit Organization; Internal Affairs and Department Complaint Process; Post/District Meetings and Elections; Department Program Awards; Veteran's Entitlement Programs; Consolidated Post Reports

**SPACE IS LIMITED, GET YOUR APPLICATION IN EARLY!**

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### Access Granted Program

**Jim Ramos, Military Liaison**

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



How do The American Legion Posts, the Military Base Commander, designated Base Liaisons and other duties help grow membership in the Department of Florida Legion? The Military Liaison Chairman provides enhanced quality of life services for those serving in the United States Armed Forces Active, Guard, and Reserve.

The program is designed to work with Military Liaison as representative between Base Liaison and a Post who is willing to work with a military base, and between Department and military installations to help them know who we are and what we do for our veterans. Military Liaison also provides a list of programs that will assist our military

service men and women and their families.

Some Suggestions:

1. We are in our 100th year of Service to our Community, State and National; let's tell everybody the American Legion story (history) and about your Post.
2. What does your Post do for our Veterans and their Families?
3. What programs your Post does for the Children and Youth?
4. How can I help you and your Post Succeed?
5. Key point of information to our Veterans and their families:
  - A. VA disability claims
  - B. Benefits
  - C. Operation Comfort Warriors program
  - D. TFA (Temporary Financial Assistance)
  - E. Reconnecting program
  - F. Information on the American Legion programs
  - G. Families Outreach

How does it work:

Just check it out for yourself.

Download "Access Granted: Assisting Troops with Transition Benefits" at <https://www.legion.org/publications/229409/access-granted> and for other online resources, visit [www.legion.org/security/resources](http://www.legion.org/security/resources)

With Access Granted: We need to get a request of access to work or do anything on base.

We have a check list to obtaining access and a sample letter to get access.

Please contact me at [MilitaryLiaison@legionmail.org](mailto:MilitaryLiaison@legionmail.org) or [jramos149@bellsouth.net](mailto:jramos149@bellsouth.net).

Please let the Zone Leadership, Area and District Commanders know what your Post wants to do first, so they know first-hand. Thank you and lets make this year a great one.

### The Crisis

**Meri West & Sheri Rodriguez, Oratorical**

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



"THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is

not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." **Thomas Paine December 23, 1776.**

This was the start of one of 16 pamphlets Paine wrote during the Revolutionary War. These pamphlets were released during a time when the revolution was still seen as being on unsteady footing. This pamphlet was read to the Continental Army three days before the Battle of Trenton, aiming to shore up and bolster moral among the patriots. Even though the Revolutionary War is long in our past, I think it's fair to say that.... **"these are the times that try men's**

**souls."**

During a time of national political divide, it's worth noting that the Constitution remains a solid bulwark against tyranny and for liberty. Our forefathers had our back all along. Maybe. It's not a cakewalk.

Take the shooting at Sandyhook Elementary School. In the five years since the shooting, conspiracy theorist Alex Jones has used his Infowars media operation to spread false theories

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<< *Oratorical - from page 15*

that the massacre was a hoax staged by the government in an effort to tighten restrictions over firearms. That is not in dispute. Nine Sandyhook victims have filed defamation lawsuits against Jones. In the Texas court's first hearings, they are addressing the thorny issue of "does speaking publicly about your child's death make you a public figure?" Jones's lawyer argued that the parents of the murdered children are public figures and they must prove "actual malice" to show Jones has demonstrated disregard about his own statements.

It's a much harder row to hoe if the parents are considered "public figures."

What's that got to do with the Constitution? Jones's lawyer says that his client's incendiary claims are exactly the type of fringe speech that the First Amendment protects. Attorneys for the families argue that

defending yourself against false claims does not transform you into a public figure.

As of August 2018, the cases have not been decided yet but a few weeks ago YouTube removed four of Alex Jones videos. Facebook removed his personal page for 30 days. Spotify has removed a number of episodes of Mr. Jones's podcast "The Alex Jones Show: Infowars" for violating its policy against speech or content that incites hatred or violence.

Next meet Cody Wilson, a self proclaimed crypto-anarchist, free market anarchist, and gun rights activist. Wilson owns a website called Defense Distributed that has made blueprints for assault rifles, 1911 pistols and more available for 3D printing. Wilson is an adversary of intellectual property rights. He believes information should not be held by just a few people or companies but more centralized. Wilson's attempts to make 3D gun blueprints readily available to the public call into question if he is a firearms dealer or distributor or a

purveyor of digital data.

Looking for clever ways to market firearms that evade federal restrictions could prove to be a dicey issue for the Trump administration, who so far, supports Wilson's initiatives stating that it's protected First Amendment rights that allow Wilson to make this information available online.

Some attorneys say that the First Amendment is being weaponized in issues from union and labor laws, access to birth control, campaign spending, opponents of nicotine addiction, protests at military funerals, videos of animal cruelty and plenty more. Stay tuned...this story isn't over yet!

But know this...the more you know about your Constitution, the better patriot and citizen you will be. With voters heading to the polls next month, an informed and engaged citizenry is essential!

### **Developing a Successful Post**

**Bob Brewster, Post Development**

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



I am hoping to see many of you at the Fall Conference. Friday morning, November 2nd at 8:00 AM, I will be teaching the Post Administration

class, then that afternoon at 1:00 PM, I will be teaching the Commander's Class. Stop in and we can probably

solve your problems right there. At this Conference, I will be talking to every District Commander possible about what Posts might need my help. I will not be there to do your job, but I will be there to help you.

We must get our Posts to follow the rules of The American Legion. You all have an Officer's Guide and an Administration Manual along with your Post By-Laws. These documents dictate just how your Post should be operated. You must get your officers to do their jobs and that includes your Program Chairmen.

No one person can do it all. Post Commanders must delegate all matters to whoever oversees each particular program. You should not be doing their work, but you should be there to help them be successful. Communication is the main ingredient to make your Post successful.

Please attempt to get together with me while attending Fall Conference. I will be available at all times and look forward to conversing with you. The success of your Post this year will be your number one main priority.

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## DPAA Accounts for 203 Missing Personnel in FY 2018

David Klug, POW/MIA

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



The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) accounted for 203 formerly missing persons from past conflicts, the highest yearly total reached by the agency or its

predecessor organizations. The agency also individually identified the remains of three additional personnel who were previously accounted for as part of group

burials, reaching another milestone of 206 identifications for the fiscal year. Broken down by conflict, 10 were accounted for from the Vietnam War, 37 from the Korean War, and 156 were from World War II. The agency is focused on the research, investigation, recovery, and identification of approximately 34,000 (out of approximately 83,000) missing personnel believed to be recoverable, who were lost in conflicts from World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

And for some more local news.... With the help of our Department Creative Services Manager Carrie Kolze, I have been able to design and procure

POW/MIA Challenge coins for the Department of Florida. The coins will also commemorate the American Legion's Centennial. I plan to have them available at Fall/Winter Conference so please look me up if I don't find you first! Coins will sell for \$10.00 each and all profits will go to the National League of POW/MIA Families. See you at Fall/Winter Conference!



## It's Who We Are; It's What We Do

Tom Gora, Public Relations

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



In previous articles I have spoken about the many resources The American Legion makes available for public relations. "It's who we are, it's what we do"

is my theme this year for a successful public relations program. The image of The American Legion is promoted and protected by the many things we do to help veterans, children and youth, and our local communities. This month we have one of our best PR opportunities all year due to the celebration of Veterans Day on November 11. This is the link to The American Legion Public Relations Handbook:

<https://www.legion.org/documents/>

[pdf/prhandbook1\\_08.pdf](#)

There's plenty of good information contained in this handbook to promote membership and support of The American Legion. Near the beginning of this handbook; I believe on pages 12-13; you can find a list of accomplishments by The American Legion since its founding - a great tool to use for public relations! In the nearly 300 Florida communities blessed with an American Legion Post, you "own" the town on November 11th, Veterans Day. I know many say every day is veteran's day, but November 11th is the official Veterans Day. Take the time and make an effort to get information out to your community about The American Legion and your Post. IT'S WHO WE ARE; IT'S WHAT WE DO!

A key element in conducting an effective American Legion Post public relations program is establishing your Post as

an authoritative news resource for media. Sure, there will always be an ongoing need to publicize programs and events conducted by the Post, but much more can be done to enhance the image of The American Legion in your town. Public relations is not hard, but it does take some work. For the best possible public relations program, all you need to do is promote your Post and all the great things you do! Yes, we have social media, television, radio, and all those things but we can probably agree you can get no better PR than what is passed along from one person to another about that great American Legion event or program they experienced and remember.

**"There is only one thing worse in the world than being talked about, and that is NOT being talked about"**  
(Oscar Wilde)



## YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED: *We Are Growing*

As we continue to grow and the word spreads, so does the demand and workload on our team. In fact, *each month*, we receive over 1,500 phone calls from Florida veterans who are needing some type of assistance.

**What does PROJECT: VetRelief do each month to accommodate these calls?** Our caseworkers provide guidance and direction regardless of their inquiry; whether we are providing financial assistance through our emergency fund or guiding them through a VA sponsored program. Additionally, we are supported by and rely on our advocates to conduct field interviews and help us determine the qualifications and merits of each financial case. It takes the collaborative efforts from our entire PROJECT: VetRelief Team, hired part-time caseworkers and volunteered advocates, to meet the demands of the veterans and their families who need us.

## 2018 FALL CONFERENCE: *Come visit us!*

This month is The American Legion, Department of Florida Fall Conference. The event will be held at the Renaissance at Sea World in Orlando, FL from November 2-4, 2018. Check out the different activities we have going on:

### ACTIVITIES:

- **Pick up marketing materials** (Vendor Area)  
November 2-3 from 8:00AM - 5:00PM
- **Service Officer Presentation** (Palini)  
Friday, November 2 at 8:00 AM
- **EXCLUSIVE Networking Event**  
Friday, November 2 at 5:30PM  
*\*MUST be a trained VetRelief Advocate.*
- **Legion Presentation** (Crystal DE)  
Saturday, November 3 around 12:00PM
- **Advocate Training** (Palini)  
Saturday, November 3 at 2:15-4:30 PM



We are looking forward to seeing you all there!  
*\*Times and room locations are subject to change.*

## SUICIDE PREVENTION... *Update*

Over the past few months, we've had a significant amount of interest in supporting a new suicide prevention initiative, especially from the Auxiliary and the Legion Riders. Our Board of Directors has been working diligently to establish how PROJECT: VetRelief can evolve to make a dent in the tragic statistic of 22 veteran suicides a day that happen throughout the nation.

### ADVOCATE SPOTLIGHT: *Larry Roberts*

Larry Roberts has been much more than a VetRelief Advocate for not only PVR, but for the American Legion and other veteran service organizations. He is a trained Post Service Officer and has also served as the Legion's Entitlement Chairman. We are fortunate that he will help guide us as we establish our action plans moving forward.



It will take the entire Legion Family working together to help bring awareness to this devastating epidemic our veteran community faces. Be on the lookout for fundraising events, such as the upcoming Winter Garden Post 63 Challenge 22 Ruck Walk on November 17th.

## MISSION MOMENT: *Community Impact*

*"Not many organizations would do what you have done. When I was homeless, the VA and my church did nothing to help me."*

- Army Veteran

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS: *Upcoming Events*

- NOV 17: Challenge 22 Ruck Walk (Winter Garden, FL)
- JAN 18-19: Vets Invade Canyon (Crystal River, FL)
- FEB 16-17: Coral Head Music Fest (Marathon, FL)



**SUPPORT CASES**  
JULY - SEPT 2018 STATS

families helped

**36**

amount distributed

**\$42,618.37**

\*Numbers reflect PROJECT: VetRelief Cases ONLY

**Preamble****Clarence Hill, Resolutions**[resolutions@legionmail.org](mailto:resolutions@legionmail.org)

Last month's article addressed in detail the Resolving section. Once the intent of the resolution has been clearly stated in the Resolving section, it is much easier to

decide what statements need to be in the Preamble section to make clear the reasons for the resolution. The Preamble should be a clear description of the situation or problem being addressed.

The Preamble section is made up of one or more clauses (paragraphs), each of which begins with "WHEREAS." Two or more of these clauses are joined together by a semicolon followed by "and."

Example:

"WHEREAS, The American Legion is an organization of war veterans who have dedicated themselves to the service of

community, state and nation; and "WHEREAS, This service is performed through The American Legion's basic programs; and (etc.)"

Each clause in the Preamble should contain a statement of fact that is logically related to the intent of the resolution and explains and justifies the need for the resolution. Accuracy of each statement in the Preamble is critical because the intent must be based on fact not misinformation. Sources should be clearly identified, such as "WHEREAS, Public Law 101-22 prohibits..." or "WHEREAS, Title 38 United States Code, authorizes..." or "WHEREAS, in Texas v. Johnson, 1989, the United States Supreme Court ruled..."

Double-check facts and attempt to document the source as much as possible. Providing supporting materials along with the resolution would be helpful to respective reviewing commissions or committees. Each clause would stand alone as a complete sentence if the "WHEREAS" were removed and a period

were used in place of the semicolon at the end.

The final clause of the Preamble is joined to the resolving section of the resolution by a semicolon, followed usually by the phrase "now, therefore be it..." leading to the Resolving section.

There is no formula for deciding how many "WHEREAS" clauses a resolution should have. In general, the fewer the better, provided the reason(s) for the resolution are adequately stated. It is not necessary to refer in the Preamble to every fact or circumstance that has a bearing on the intent of a resolution.

Study the Resolving section and get the exact purpose of the resolution firmly in mind. Then start writing down the statement of fact which relate to this purpose. Organize them in a logical sequence (throwing out the weak or unnecessary ones).

Remember: *do not use a period in the Preamble.*

**Annual JR Shooting Sports Conference****Loretta Young, ROTC/JROTC/Shooting Sports**[jrotc@legionmail.org](mailto:jrotc@legionmail.org)

The 4th Annual Junior Shooting Sports (JSSP) Conference was held at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in conjunction with the Children and Youth Conference in Indianapolis, September 21st-23rd. The Conference registration was conducted Friday in the hotel lobby, where packets and credentials were given out. There was a meet and greet in the hospitality suite

that evening. The Conference officially kicked off Saturday morning with a Joint Opening Session in the Panorama Ballroom on the 21st floor. Welcome and Opening Remarks were given by Herbert J. Petit, Jr. (LA), Chairman for the American Legion Children & Youth Commission. Distinguished guests included: Richard Anderson (CT), Chairman American Legion Americanism Commission; Vickie Koutz (IN), Auxiliary Children & Youth Chairman; Joseph Korba (NJ), Sons of the Legion Children & Youth Chairman; and Loren Sperry (WA), Chairman Junior

Shooting Sports Program Conference.

The JSSP Conference then separated to another room to continue the Conference conducted by Loren (Bud) Sperry, Conference Chairman. There was an in-depth review of the 2018 3PAR National Championship Book followed by the 2019 Postal and National Finals Planning. The attendees were given reviews of the CMP Rules Book, Staff Handbook, Legal Status Eligibility Resolutions, and Risk Management. It is encouraged

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<< ROTC/JROTC Shooting Sports -  
from page 19

that all Departments review the Risk Management Policies of the American Legion for the Enhanced Protection of Children and Youth. Prevention is key to being proactive in mitigating abuse in youth programs. A comprehensive child protection program will incorporate: (1) screening; (2) establishing policies and safeguards; and (3) awareness and oversight. The afternoon session concluded with remarks from the individual Departments in attendance and their "best practices" with what works in their individual areas. The Conferences concluded Sunday morning with a Joint Patriotic Religious Service conducted by Peggy Moon (MN). The JSSP Conference then resumed

under the direction of Loren Sperry and concluded with Conference Action Items and Staff Follow-up. Some points to note are: Coaches must be certified; Posts sponsoring and starting a new club should have a committee set up and have by-laws for the club; get affiliated with CMP, USA Shooting, and other clubs that can assist with setup, rules, and equipment. All District and Post Chairmen should check with the schools and clubs in your area to sponsor the National Postal Marksmanship Targets for 2019. Online registration starts on November 01. Have the club register the shooters and the Post will be the affiliate and reimburse them for the cost of the targets (\$10.50 each).

The First Broward County JROTC Golf Tournament Fundraiser was held at the Jacaranda Country Club in Plantation on September 15th. The Tournament was

sponsored by the Broward County JROTC Support Association and was a fundraiser for the Year End Scholarship Awards for the graduating cadets.



The event was coordinated by the Broward County JROTC Curriculum Director along with two retired instructors and one Senior JROTC cadet representative. There were hole sponsorships, door prizes, gifts, etc., all followed by a great luncheon. The event was a great success with entries, donations, and a combined effort in planning. We're now looking forward to a bigger and even better event next year. Thanks to all who contributed to this success for the benefit of our youth programs.

### Promote Dept of Florida Scholarships

**Shirley Douglas, Scholarship**  
[scholarships@legionmail.org](mailto:scholarships@legionmail.org)



The Department of Florida has two scholarship programs that need promoting by Florida American Legion members: the Medical College Scholarship and the Nursing College

Scholarship.

If you know a person in a Florida medical or nursing school, let them know about the scholarships. Give them the link

where they can find the information about the scholarships: [www.floridalegion.org](http://www.floridalegion.org) - click on Programs & Services then click on Scholarships.

Each scholarship awards one scholarship of \$2,750. Deadline for both scholarships is April 1, 2019.

A candidate for the scholarship must be:

- A U.S. citizen or permanent Florida resident.
- A student in an accredited Florida Nursing School/Program for the Nursing College Scholarship.
- A student in an accredited Florida Medical School/Program for the

Medical College Scholarship.

The nomination packet requires the candidate to reach out to their school's dean for a nomination letter and a letter of recommendation from a faculty member, so it is important they have time to completed and submit the application by April 1, 2019.

The General Scholarship deadline is March 1, 2019. The Scholarship Committee will meet the third week of March 2019 to review the General Scholarship applications. If you are interested in being on the Scholarship Committee, please send an email to [scholarships@legionmail.com](mailto:scholarships@legionmail.com).



[facebook.com/floridalegion](https://www.facebook.com/floridalegion)

CELEBRATING



YEARS OF SERVICE

## Recognition

### Chuck Weber, Scouting

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



Payday comes for most of us as either a check or an auto-deposit to our bank account. But for volunteers, payday almost never comes.

There are several ways that a Post Commander can thank and reward his/her Scouting volunteers, some at little or no financial cost.

The **William D. Boyce New Unit Organizer Award** recognizes the individual whose actions are primarily responsible for starting a new Scout Unit. While many people may be involved in organizing, only one may be so recognized with this award for each new unit. Coordination between the Post and its local Scout District Executive will best help to identify this person.

The **New Unit Founders Bar Award** may be awarded to all adult leaders and youth participants in a new unit who have joined before the unit's first re-charter.

### The James E. West Fellowship Award

is available if a Post wishes to recognize a particular individual for significant contributions to Scouting. The Post may make an endowment donation in that person's name to the local Scout Council. This may be made either on behalf of an individual still serving in Scouting or in memory of someone.

Information and applications for the three awards above can be found at: [www.scouting.org/awards](http://www.scouting.org/awards).

Individual adult Scout leaders who have committed to a long-term relationship with Scouting may wish to apply for the **American Legion Scouting Square Knot Award**. The requirements for this award include a comprehensive set of accomplishments, completions, and tenure. Information and application for this award can be found at: <https://www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/publications/66ACY0618-Square-Knot-Brochure.pdf>. A letter of recommendation from the Post Commander must accompany the application.

Application submission for all the awards listed above can be made at any time.

In addition, the Florida American

Legion recognizes Posts with its **Best Post Scouting Program Award** annually at Department Convention. A District may nominate a Post, or a Post may self-nominate by submitting a one to two-page printed narrative describing its Scouting accomplishments over the past year. This must be submitted to Department no later than May 15th. Finally, outstanding youth who have achieved Eagle rank may be nominated for the annual **Eagle Scout of the Year Scholarship**. Information and application are available at the Florida Legion website under the Scouting tab. Applications must be received at Department between October 15th and the following March 1st.

REMINDER – We have a Scouting Workshop scheduled from 2:15 to 4:15 on Saturday, November 3rd, at the Fall Conference. There's a lot of new info to share, so hope to see you and your Scouting team there.

As always, thank you and thanks to all your Scout leaders for all you do for our youth. If you have any questions, please feel free to write me at [scouting@legionmail.org](mailto:scouting@legionmail.org).

## Thoughts For Those Affected

### Nancy Thomas, Security

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



First, for all of those who were affected by the hurricane I hope you will recover quickly; those who marked themselves safe on Facebook,

that is wonderful. There are ways to assist in the efforts of recovery: PROJECT: VetRelief, National Emergency Fund, and of course, the American Red Cross to name a few. It was noted that the District effected is asking for donations, so if you can assist, please do so.

In the recovery effort please remember all those who not only sustained damage but those who are traveling from their homes

to aide those in this area.

We are saddened to hear of Tyndall Air Force Base being leveled. My significant other, Burl's dad served there in the Army/Air Corps in 1941. Always complained about the bugs! Then when he got out, he

*continued on page 22>>*

CELEBRATING



YEARS OF SERVICE

<< Security - from page 21

went back to Utah and later Wyoming. (Too cold for bugs!)

While doing a job description for this position, it was noted that National has Disaster Preparedness

and Immigration under the job title. Department does not.

Thanksgiving is coming up and I am thankful for being able to serve other veterans as a Legionnaire, my health and that of my son, my 10 grandchildren, and a husband that I have been with over

45 years now. Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

Please work with your Department Blood Donor Chair, ROTC/Shooting Sports Chair, and the Law and Order Chair this year and let's make the Department of Florida greater!

**Communication is Key**

**Deb Wheeler, Social Media**

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



Hello, Deb Wheeler again, preaching about social media. I was not too happy to check our Districts for Facebook pages; we have some great ones, but others are nonexistent! I am not here to judge, but

this is why your District meetings are

always the same with no new people coming in to fill Committee Chairs. We need more communication between the Districts and the Posts. Encourage your Post to advertise the District meetings and send reminders to the Post Adjutant as well as the Commander giving them the guidance to get more members at your District meetings. Department Commander Dianne has made communications a major priority. In this day and age, without communication we will lose the interest of the next generation of Legionaries to

be mentored by our seasoned members. It is imperative to keep our Legion's legacy going! It is up to all of us to communicate better via whatever means necessary!

**Special Olympics**

**Jamie Grinis, Special Olympics**

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



Mother nature hit the northern area of Florida causing much destruction and interrupting the lives of millions of people in our state. Let's not forget that some of the lives that

were shattered were Special Olympic athletes. Each Post is scurrying to help those in need that were in the path of the storm, which is greatly appreciated. For much of the rest of the state it is business as normal.

Many Posts are actively supporting the various Programs of the American Legion. Please include Special Olympics as one of your Programs. By the time this article is published in the Links, I will have notified your District Commander with updated information for the Post of each county, with contact information for Special Olympics for every county in the state. Should you need more information feel free to contact me by email [jamiegrinis@gmail.com](mailto:jamiegrinis@gmail.com) or call/text me at 754-264-4353. After the Fall Conference I will send out a mailing to each Post with more information. We pray that everyone affected by Hurricane Michael is safe and recovering well.

**Veterans Day**

**Jesse Figueroa  
Post 163 & NALPA Member**



Veterans Day is a commemoration of Armistice Day, when World War I ended in 1918, on "the eleventh hour on the eleventh day." It is a day when veterans of

all wars and conflicts involving the United States of America and its allies get together and is marked by having parades and services to honor our Nation's heroes past and present.

**VA Resources for Areas Affected**

**Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements**

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



The VA has deployed Mobile Facilities to assist veterans in areas where clinics remained closed.

The following hotlines are managed by the VA Health Resource

Center. The call center will connect veterans and employees in real-time with the resources they need in a disaster.

- Veterans Disaster Hotline: 1-800-507-4571
- Employee Disaster Hotline: 1-866-233-0152
- Veterans Crisis Line/Mental Health Hotline: 800-273-TALK
- VA Services for Homeless: 877-4 AID VET
- VBA Hotline: 1-800-827-1000

- Pharmacy Customer Care: 1-855-574-7288
- Vet Center/Counseling: 1-877-WAR-VETS

The National Pharmacy Disaster Network Plan has been activated. Veterans who require emergency supplies of medications can access retail pharmacies. Contact 1-855-574-7288 for more information.

**Program Updates Completed**

**Bob Brewster, Youth Law Cadet**

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



We have completed the changes in our Florida Highway Patrol/American Legion Cadet Program. We will send it to Department this week, so they

can print out approximately 500 brochures. It will be available at the Fall Conference and one will be mailed to every Post in the state. Very few

changes were made, but each year we find something to improve on. Last year we made the mistake of mailing everything to the Cadet to share with their parents. Believe me, this did not work. This year all information will be mailed to the parents.

Our counselor crew last year worked out perfectly and so, right now, I see no reason to make any changes. Both Kathie and Tom do a fantastic job and we all get along quite well.

It is not too early to start looking for Cadets for the program. This is our 4th year and each year we improve the

program. Last year the Cadets were thrilled driving the Highway Patrol cars and striking up the lights and sirens. My ears have not recovered. They also had a chance to do a lot of target shooting, and Tom and I had a little fun with this part of the program too. I am hell on watermelons. Another exercise which shook up many drivers on the highway was our Cadets practicing with the radar. We also took the Cadets into Tallahassee with a police escort and toured the Highway Patrol communication center and from there had a great tour of the state capitol. These are some of the activities we do.

**Hurricane Relief Drop Off Location**

**Patty MacDonald, Florida Auxiliary**

[secretary@alafl.org](mailto:secretary@alafl.org)



American Legion Auxiliary and American Legion Department Headquarters are collecting items for hurricane relief victims in the Panhandle.

Below is a list of items that are needed at this time. If any Unit/Post or District

has collected items, but does not have a place to store them, **please contact Patty MacDonald, Department Secretary to make arrangements to drop items off at Department Headquarters.**

**Items needed:**

Tarps, Batteries all sizes, Flashlights, Baby diapers, Adult diapers, Powder infant formula, Wet wipes, Hand sanitizer, Toothpaste, Toothbrush, Deodorant, Water, Can foods, Toilet paper, Garbage bags, Feminine products, Soap, Mosquito

repellent

Please make sure items donated are not expired.

The hurricane relief for the Panhandle will be needed for months as they start to try to rebuild. The items will be updated as needed. If you have any questions, please contact Patty at [secretary@alafl.org](mailto:secretary@alafl.org) or 407-451-0410. Thank you all and God bless.

**Message From Your SAL Advisor**

**Chuck Rousseau, S.A.L. Advisor**

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

WOW WOW WOW ... What a great year our S.A.L. had in the 2017-2018 year. They went over 19,000 members

and attained their 23rd consecutive ALL TIME HIGH!

They were not only increasing their membership ... look at their donations of money and hours volunteered in each program listed on the Annual

Accomplishments report shown with this article.

If your Post does not have an S.A.L. Squadron, you are missing out on their energy and ways they can help your Post.

**Membership**

Detachment Membership Total	19,001	105.46%
23rd Consecutive All-Time-High		

**Americanism Programs Highlights**

Contributions to the National Emergency Fund		\$4,980.00
Boys State	78 Boys Sponsored	Cost \$23, 291.00
Education Programs / Scholarships		\$39,972.00
Legion Baseball \$19,146.00	Scouting \$13,138.00	
Total Americanism Contributions	\$588,248.40	Hours 36,753

**Children & Youth Program Highlights**

Child Welfare Foundation \$47,263.00		Children & Youth Fund \$13,598.00
Florida Special Olympics \$82,113.00		CMN/ACH \$13,575.00
Total Children & Youth Contributions	\$263,500.31	Hours 58,775

**Veterans Affairs Programs Highlights**

PROJECT: VetRelief \$4,975.00		
Visit to VA Hospitals / Homes 691	Hours to VA&R 20,695	
Community Service Hours 349,154		Contributions \$447,924.40

**Totals**

<b>Total Sons Contributions</b>	<b>\$1,307,453.11</b>
<b>Total Sons Program Hours</b>	<b>465,376</b>

\* Squadrons Reporting - 120



**October 25, 2018**  
**65% Target Report (Currently 56.91%)**

4	Cherie Korn	64.85%
12	Stephen Hamrick	60.76%
11	Paul Bosco	60.23%
6	Timothy Tierney	60.20%
15	Bruce Carl	59.34%
17	Willie Branch	58.42%
14	Gary Decker	57.26%
2	James Brennan	57.01%
16	Raymond Perez	55.83%
1	John Edens	54.06%
8	Jerry Faught	53.86%
7	David Tucker	53.81%
13	Brian Taz Gehling	53.75%
5	Troy Horsley	53.04%
9	Teddy Pomerantz	52.76%
3	Stuart Scott	49.83%
Eastern	James Burk	60.44%
Southern	James Tewes	56.77%
Northern	Frederick Hutto	56.37%
Central	Jay Allen	56.33%
Western	Raymond Olsen	54.59%
Southwestern	Michael Raymond	53.80%
Post 400		57.11%
Post 208		57.91%



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**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

**MEMBERSHIP GOAL**  
**70%** 11/7/2018

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CELEBRATING



YEARS OF SERVICE

ROCK CRUSHER CANYON PAVILION 275 S ROCK CRUSHER RD CRYSTAL RIVER

# Vets Invade The Canyon



## JANUARY 18th 2019

AMERICAN LEGION PROUDLY PRESENTS



## SISTER HAZEL

9:30pm



Scooter Brown Band  
7:30pm



They Fought for Us. We Fight for Them.



Letters From Home  
6:45pm

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO PROJECT VET RELIEF

### Celebrating 100 years of service to our Veterans

CALL 352-322-0459 FOR INFORMATION & TICKET LOCATIONS

TICKETS [WWW.VETSINVADETHECANYON.COM](http://WWW.VETSINVADETHECANYON.COM)

ADVANCE TICKETS \$25 \* \$30 AT THE GATE (IF AVAILABLE)

GATES OPEN AT 5:00 LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE

RAIN OR SHINE CONCERT HELD IN THE COVERED PAVILION



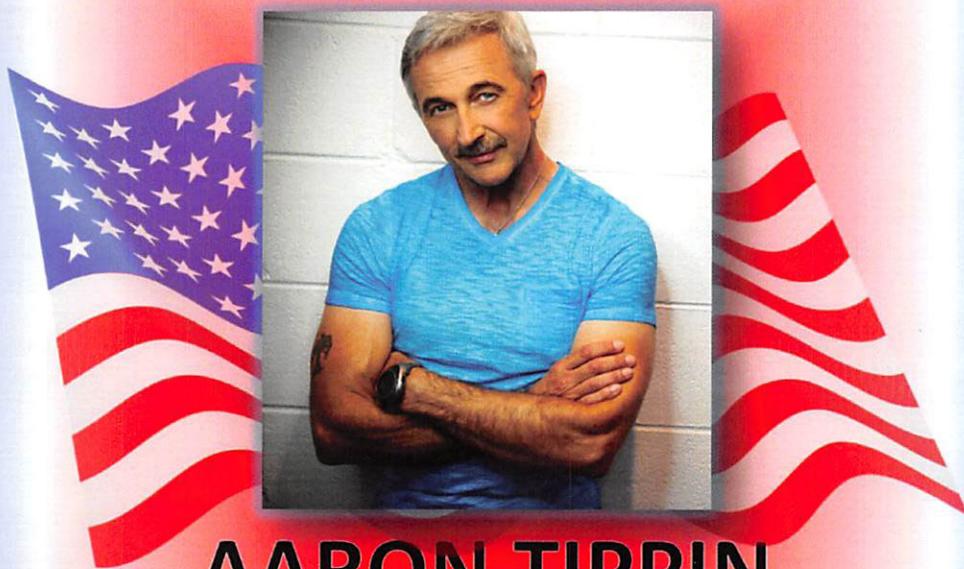
ROCK CRUSHER CANYON PAVILION 275 S ROCK CRUSHER RD CRYSTAL RIVER

# Vets Invade The Canyon



## JANUARY 19th 2019

AMERICAN LEGION PROUDLY PRESENTS



### AARON TIPPIN

9:30pm



**Buddy Brown**  
7:30pm



### PROJECT: VETRELIEF

A PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

They Fought for Us. We Fight for Them.



**Letters From Home**  
6:45pm

**ALL PROCEEDS GO TO PROJECT VET RELIEF**

## Celebrating 100 years of service to our Veterans

**CALL 352-322-0459 FOR INFORMATION & TICKET LOCATIONS**

**TICKETS [WWW.VETSINVADETHECANYON.COM](http://WWW.VETSINVADETHECANYON.COM)**

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