Wonderful Recent Events

The summit was a great event in February. There were a lot of riders and family members that attended and brought back to their post great information to be carried forward. The challenge 22 event in Avon Park was another great event with numerous vendors from different areas to give a helping hand. Thank you family 69 for the hospitality.

Had a real nice visit in the 17th Dist. The hospitality and welcome were a treat and it was nice to see the comeback District as they are called now. Headed down to Marco Island to post 404 and the opening ceremonies on the wall that heals. Was a guest speaker and was well attended by the whole community. This is a ¾ replica of the wall in Washington D.C. and very well put together.

Attended the Mardi gras event in Dunedin and the family from post 275 did not disappoint as always. They did their float as a tank which surprised me very much and it was well done. Probably 40,000 people were at the parade. We have a very busy March coming up. DC visit, Lake Nona visit, Oratorical contest, 4th Dist. visit, Gainesville hospital visit, Northern area ball Welcome home Vietnam and the race to the top.

As you see we stay busy. I look forward to seeing you around the state and please be safe and THANK YOU all for what you do

Tank Out
Upcoming Resolutions
Jerry Brandt, 1st Vice Commander
1stvice@legionmail.org

What a month, to start with, the National Commander visited the 6th and 12th Districts, and was greeted by the Legion Family at every Posts he visited. A total of 12 Posts in the 6th District and 15 Post in the 12th District, not counting all the Posts whom were invited to meet at the designated Posts. The National Commander really was impressed with Florida, with several Posts having over 100 members show up to meet with the National Commander. I would like to take you for keeping the state of Florida in the forefront of the American Legion.

We also had the American Legion Riders Summit in Coco Beach this year. What a turn out, with a large number of new faces, visitors from Colorado, Georgia, and other states. What the Legion Riders are doing is spreading and yet again, National is looking at Florida in a positive light. Thank you, the Legion Riders, for leading the way.

As many of you know that we have a number of changes coming up at Convention. In the next couple of months the resolutions for changes to the Department Bylaws will be coming out to all Posts. Please read them, talk about them at your meetings. YOU will need to vote on them at the Department Convention. Vote wisely.

Speaking of the National Convention, because of the number of resolutions, expect to have full days on Friday and Saturday.

By now everyone should be working on their year-end reports. These reports are very important, they provide valuable evidence that we, as a Department of the American Legion, are doing our job supporting the 4 pillars. Take that extra time to fill out the CPR’s correctly and truthfully. We have been doing the programs, let us let everyone know how great we are.

Proud to be a Rider
Michael Raymond, 3rd Vice Commander
3rdvice@legionmail.org

Approximately 17 years ago my neighbor from across the street, after seeing my Air Force flag flying proudly in my front yard decided to do what we now know as a buddy check. After some conversation, mostly about our time in the military, and having noticed I ride a motorcycle, he informed me of a program that was about to take shape in our local American Legion Post. It was going to be called the American Legion Riders. After explaining what our mission would be, it piqued my interest. Our primary mission will be to honor our deceased Veterans and their families at funerals and to protect their honor from a certain church that was exercising their freedom of speech demonstrating at these events. This also was the birth of the Patriot Guard Riders. The rest is history. But how times have changed!

The American Legion Riders have grown to be one of the leading programs of the American Legion in membership and funds raised. Under the leadership of Bob Sussan, the Riders have raised close to 14 million dollars just during our annual Legacy Run. There is no limit to what the Riders can do as shown by the thousands they are currently raising for our Vet Relief and Suicide Prevention programs. But most importantly it is a great membership recruitment and retention

continued on page 3>><
Title: Addendum to American Legion Baseball Regional Tournament Sites for 2020

Origin: American Legion Baseball Committee

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 30 of the National Executive Committee, May 2018, established the sites and dates for the 2019 and 2020 American Legion Baseball Regional Tournaments; and

WHEREAS, At the conclusion of the 2019 Southeast Regional tournament, The American Legion Department of Florida and Tampa Post 248 notified National Headquarters, they would not be able to host the tournament in 2020; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Department of Alabama and its Baseball Youth Committee has graciously accepted to host the 2020 Southeast Regional tournament; and

WHEREAS, The American Legion Baseball Committee has reviewed the Department of Alabama’s tournament bid proposal and recommends its approval to the Americanism Commission; now, therefore, be

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion, by email vote pursuant to Rule 12 of the Rules of the National Executive Committee, That the Region 3 site for the 2020 Southeast Regional tournament of The American Legion Baseball program be awarded to Montgomery, Alabama.

This has the approval of the National Finance Commission, the National Americanism Commission and the National American Legion Baseball Committee.

Dear Fellow Legionnaires... My article is very brief this month. Many of you have asked what is going on with the National Media Association. I would like to share with you a letter I received before heading to the American Legion Riders Summit...

The priorities of the new group would be:

- Resources, tips and other materials to promote The American Legion, post events, etc.
- A press credential for members in good standing.
- Training, including but not limited to the annual media workshop at national convention.
- The annual contest.

The three-member task force began in early January and has made outstanding progress to date, including the new name of the organization: The American Legion Media Alliance or TALMA.

We are moving quickly to begin accepting memberships online, ideally by March 1. TALMA members in good standing will receive a press credential and lanyard, the electronic newsletter, access to the annual contest, along with all the resources, tips, tools and training from national.

The task force is also planning to launch the reformatted annual contest this spring. More details will be forthcoming. The timeline will also include an annual banquet at national convention when award winners will be recognized.

Please join me in thanking Holly, Dan and Dave for their work so far, and continued on page 4>>
their continued diligence in this very important objective.

Thank you for your continued patience.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter Ivie, Chairman, Media & Communications Commission

Dear American Legion Family media representatives and communicators:

I am pleased to bring you good news today.

As you are aware, The American Legion ceased involvement with the National American Legion Press Association (NALPA) after financial and trademark concerns were discovered last summer.

Following that decision, National Adjutant Dan Wheeler asked me to create a task force of members from the Media and Communications Commission that would create a successor to NALPA that would focus on the priorities for those producing media at the post, district and/or department level. I appointed M&C Commission members Holly Lewis, Dave Wallace and Dan Wiley on the task force.

The priorities of the new group would be:

• Resources, tips and other materials to promote The American Legion, post events, etc.
• A press credential for members in good standing.
• Training, including but not limited to the annual media workshop at national convention.
• The annual contest.

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Thank you for your continued patience.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter Ivie, Chairman, Media & Communications Commission

In Robert’s Rules of Order, you can find the emphasis on the rights of members before the manual of rules even begins. On page II Principles Underlying Parliamentary Procedure it states: “These rules are based on a regard for the rights:

• Of a majority
• Of the minority, especially a strong minority--greater than one-third
• Of individual members
• Of absentees, and
• Of all these together

Protecting these right is the reason parliamentary law exists. As a member of an organization you have these general rights:

• To choose to belong
• To be notified of all meetings
• To attend the meetings
• To help influence decision making by making motion, debating, and voting
• To serve on committees

• To have a copy of the society’s rules, especially the bylaws
• To help determine dues and how money is spent
• To be nominated, elected, and serve as an officer.
• In addition to rights, members also have responsibilities. General responsibilities of members include:
• To pay dues on time
• To attend and remain to the end of the meetings
• To know and obey the rules of the organization, including bylaws, special and standing rules
• To support and defend the purpose of the organization.
• To know your rights and learn how to use them
• To participate & express your opinions while you are in the meeting when it is in order
• To observe the rules of decorum in
Judge Advocate—continued from page 4 >>

meeting
• To carry out any duty or assigned task
or ask to be excused
• To support the decisions of the
majority without animosity and further
criticism

In addition to these general rules there are
many specific rules that greatly empower a
single member.

SOME SPECIFIC RIGHTS OF A SINGLE
MEMBER (Can be found in Robert’s Rules)

1. Demand a standing vote if you doubt
the chair’s announcement of a vote.
2. Require the chair to rule when you
think a parliamentary rule is broken.
3. Require the adopted agenda to be
followed.
4. Change your vote up to the time the
result is announced.
5. Interrupt pending business if you
cannot hear or if there is some other
problem related to the atmosphere of
the meeting.
6. Request a speaker to clarify a
statement through the chair.
7. Withdraw a motion you made before
it is stated by the chair.
8. If recognized to speak, the chair must
protect you from being interrupted,
except in
   a. cases where interruption of a
      speaker is permitted.
9. Ask for help from the chair to frame a
motion you wish to make or to ask a
b. parliamentary question on a non-
debatable motion.
10. If you are the maker of a motion, you
have preference in recognition to
speak first to
c. that motion.
11. May call another member to order
when that member repeatedly
questions motives
d. of other speakers or persists in
speaking on irrelevant matters.
12. May abstain from voting and cannot
be compelled to vote.

This should help you to
enjoy participating in the
business meetings of your
organization.

Northern Area News
Marie Conti, Northern Area Commander
northernarea@legionmail.org

Congratulations to everyone that has
met or exceeded the
90% goal. The next
membership goal is
95% before 01 APR
2020. I would like to
see the Northern Area
at 100% before 17 Mar
2020, as the deadline
for Race to The Top is 31 Mar 2020.

There is still work to be accomplished
for the 2019-2020 Legion Year. I suggest
that you look where your Post is at this
point of the year, see if you need to catch
up in membership. How many have not
renewed? How many have reported to Post
Everlasting? How many new members?
Are you getting the new members
involved?

Department Oratorical contest is 14 Mar
2020, at Department Headquarters (1912A
Lee RD, Orlando). Prepare your candidates.
Have practice sessions. Be at Department
Oratorical Competition to support your
candidate.

There will be a Northern Area Ball on 21
Mar 2020, at American Legion Post 155,
Crystal River. See flyer for details. Please
contact PDC Jay Conti Sr. at 352-287-
1400, for more information.

Now is the time get an early start on
the end of year CPR Reports. Also, don’t
forget Awards for Boy Scouts, JROTC
& Shooting Sports, School Medals,
Americanism, Children & Youth Month (C
& Y April) and many other Programs that
we have. With Post nominations coming
soon, let’s finish what we started last year
and go out with a BANG!

Upcoming Events
Paul Bosco, Southern Area Commander
southernarea@legionmail.org

March 1st is the
awards due date
for Eagle Scout of
the Year, JROTC
Cadet, and General
Scholarship due at
department. I hope
you have sent your
paper work in for
these Scholarships.

If you haven’t sent it in you’ve cheated
these young students out of scholarship
money they could use to further their
education.

March 3 U. S. Navy Reserve Birthday
March 5 Seabees Birthday
March 7 District 14 Meeting at Post 31
time 0900 registration 1000 start
March 8 Daylight Savings Time begins
(spring forward)
March 11 membership target 90 %
March 14 District 11 Meeting at Post 268
time 1000
March 14 Department’s Oratorical
Contest
March 15 American Legions 101st
Birthday
March 17 St Patrick’s Day
March 19 First day of spring
March 21 District 9 meeting at Post 157
time 1300

Note of Thanks
Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements
veteransbenefits@legionmail.org

I would like to start off
by thanking the Rick
Johnson, Department
Commander, for
allowing me to travel
with him to visit the
Bay Pines VA Hospital,
James Haley VA
Hospital and West
Palm VA Hospital. As
well as, allowing me to
give a class at the Legion College. I would
also like to thank Jim Winelands and the
Riders for allowing me to give class at the
Riders summit.
Western Area has done a great job with 5 of our Post at 100% membership already and working on even greater numbers. This can be the year that we all work hard on increasing membership, not just getting status quo. March should be your Post's big push for increasing memberships, so we can concentrate on the Post CPRs and Awards for our dedicated members in April.

This is also our year after the big Hurricane Michael. Most Post have fixed most damage, but we still have 2 Posts that are totally rebuilding. Get me the info, and I will attend and send out the flyers for the Fund Raisers for those 2 Posts. I attended the Post 375 Golf Fundraiser for their Post just two months ago.

April is Children & Youth month: Celebrate do some for our “Children & Youth” a perfect time of the year get Legionnaires to demonstrate that we are a Legion family and let the Community know who we are. Plan an event, activities and/or some project to help your community know who we are as the American Legion and what we do for our Veteran’s and their families. We care for our Children and Youth.

We still need to continue to work with our District and Post’s to see how we can make 103% goal

But whatever you do make it BIG.

Communication is the Key to Success and Recognized your Volunteer or just say Thank You

If you need ideas just ask me (call 352-226-4370 or email jramos149@bellsouth.net)
A Certificate of Appreciation is being sent out to all the Posts through the Membership Chairmen and District Commanders that have made their 100% mark before May 31st, as a thank you from PDC Ramos and myself. We currently have 45 of them. Thank you.

I want to take a minute to acknowledge all the Posts that have been making their monthly goals. As you know we should be at 85% as of February 5th and our March 4th goal is 90%. We always have to keep in mind that with larger Posts (Post memberships over 1,500 members) it is harder to get that one percentage point than the smaller Posts. I’ve learned a lot about our Posts in the Panhandle and in the South because geographically they so far from the rest of the District. Recruiting is quite the challenge. I think we’re all doing a great job but we can’t sit back and relax yet. There are 1,440 Post 400 members that have NOT renewed as of the February 13th report. I encourage Posts to continue to work the DMS lists and Buddy Checks. We’re two and half months away from the 100% goal; I know we can make 103%. As of today, Department of Florida is at 90.54% We are also making an initiative to participate in Yellow Ribbon events with our deploying and returning troops. This command is out of F. Jackson, SC and they will be contacting me with their schedule. The events take place in Orlando. For those of you that are not aware of this program, various vendors assemble much like at convention which gives the American Legion the opportunity to communicate one-on-one and speak during their general assemblies. Rob McGregor from Post 5 and I have conducted many of them. For some reason, the American Legion lost a seat at that table. We look forward to helping these troops and to recruit as many as we can. It would be great to form teams to work these events.

There is one last subject I want to pass on. Department will no longer send out the multi-copy Member Data Form, instead please use this link to download the form: https://www.floridalegion.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Member-Data-Form.pdf the same rule applies. Just fill out the portions that change on the member and mail one copy to department. The form is fillable by computer, no more pen and ink!

For assistance or training requests please contact me at blooddonor@legionmail.org or call 727-412-5356.

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For the Cause, not the Applause
Jim Wineland, American Legion Riders
legionriders@legionmail.org

Wow, what a great turn out for our Summit this year. Who would of thought that when the Day’s started this four years ago with 246 room nights and it has now grown to 562 room nights in just four years? The feedback we have received from the Survey Monkey has all been positive and you’ve included some great ideas that we will look at for next year. I would also like to thank our instructors who took time out of the Legion schedules to support the Summit! All of you received excellent feedback from the survey.

Next year, we are really wrestling with our location for the Summit. International Palms will be torn down in March of next year but will still be available for our Summit in February 2021. It’s going to be very hard to find another location like the Palms at the same rate on the beach. We know the Palms won’t put in any extra money to maintain it, but just try to make do. If any of you have any ideas. Please let us know, it’s going to be hard to replace.

Our next project will be putting together Iceman’s Hockey Team game on March 28th. This will be the last home game before the playoffs. As ticket sales increase, it will unlock added benefits to the event. This is all new to us, we thought it would be more of a local event, but the Iceman organization wants to reach out to Lady Lakes and include all veterans with a donation going to PVR/SPI.

Here it is, the link to register for the Unity Ride, https://give.floridalegion.org/event/florida-legion-unity-ride/e270483. A lot of work has gone into this one. Jennifer Cooper has utilized a new product to assist in our sign up and fund raising for the Unity Ride. It even has an opportunity for someone to go on a virtual ride to help support PVR/SPI. Carrie has also done a great job setting up the Hotels and Maps for both routes. Once again, we are utilizing Laura at AAA to book our rooms. Our Chapter at Post 10 in Kissimmee have really done a great job getting this tied into the In-State Rally. Great teamwork putting this all together!

The actual Unity Ride will start on Monday, April 27th, and end on May 1st, followed by our Rally on Saturday May 2 at Orlando Harley South. Net proceeds will go to PVR as always, and the “Round Robin” will be extended to include May 2. FYI, hotel in Marathon for Sunday Night April 26th, Blackfin, call Chris at 407 314 7181, it’s $135 a night for any room. It’s the cheapest we could find.

Once again, Thank You for what you do, and I am proud to be the Chairman of such a great group!
At the 2019 American Legion national convention, the keynote speaker, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, spoke about the state of “Americanism” in this country. What I took away from that speech is that the word “Americanism” has come to be known, in a growing segment of our country, as a divisive word. This is unacceptable!

Americanism reflects the attitude and belief that this country is founded on principles that all men are created equal and have the right for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. But for some reason, politics has taken over almost all aspects of our society and transformed what used to be discussions that ended in compromise or at least a better understanding and have turned into ‘Contempt” for those who disagree with you.

One of the greatest things about our country is the ability to disagree without fear of persecution. Whether you’re on the left, the right, or in the center, it shouldn’t matter because at the end of the day we all are Americans. If we always maintain respect the other person, we can learn from the experience of an intense discussion. Respect is maintained when we are able keep contempt out of the picture. Because, at the end of the day, we are all Americans.

All of us have served our country and many have seen friends or family give the ultimate sacrifice in order that our system of government and freedoms are maintained. But the core and center of everything should be a belief in the principles that America was founded upon. As a result, it is our duty to once again stand up and remind everyone, especially during this highly political season, that though we may disagree, the fact that we have the ability to voice our opinions is only because of what America stands for.

In order to put a spotlight on the great things the American Legion does to promote Americanism, as your Department chairman for the Americanism Commission, I will be undertaking a 22-day “Walk for America”. It will start Memorial Day weekend on May 23 in Winter Garden, Florida. Heading west, I will proceed to walk up to 22 miles a day visiting over 50 American Legion posts in the 6th, 7th, 8th, 13th, 15th, and 16th districts over the 22-day period. I encourage anyone who wants to join me for some, a portion or all of the trip to do so. But the main idea is to have rally points within mile of each post, where members of the legion family, the community, or anyone else who wants to participate can walk with the last mile into the post with me. At each post, the goal is to have representatives from the community including elected officials, your Boys State delegates, Girl State delegates, Boy Scouts, JROTC/Sea Cadets, baseball, oratorical contestants, blood mobiles, school medal winners, Youth Law Cadets, etc in attendance, so they can be recognized by the local community and/ or press. We will also be inviting any other local organizations (like the Elks, Rotary, VFW, DAV etc) that want to help celebrate Americanism. We want to Celebrate America as much as we can during this 22-day period, which will be ending on Flag Day.

If you want to get involved or help please contact me at KurtGies@Gmail.com . Over the next few weeks my team will be calling each post to make arrangements to ensure that they can support us at the designated time and date along the path that we’ve preliminarily laid out.

In addition, along the way, we will be collecting those brass grommets from your flag retirements. So if your post is on the list to be visited (to be provided later), we ask that you collect the flag grommets and/or do your flag retirements while we are there. Note: We are currently working with a local artist to come up with some conceptual designs that respectfully honor what those retired flags flew for. More details to follow in the coming weeks.

The 2020 American Legion Baseball Season is only weeks away and I am receiving calls and messages daily from parents, coaches and teams wanting to know how to join and play in the Florida American Legion Baseball Program this summer.

We have been planting seeds over the last few seasons and focusing on the younger 12 to 17 years old players and families. This was the age group of kids that the program had not been developing and recruiting to play and get involved in what we do or the service we provide to the communities.

Three seasons ago, we created the Executive Baseball Committee which consists of all six areas through out the Department of Florida. Each area has an Area Baseball Commissioner with the charge to oversee, communicate and develop their areas.

This is a working plan and we are having success in growing teams, players and awareness of our program in communities all over our state.

Since being appointed as the Department Baseball Chairman about 45 days ago, I
have been diligently working very hard to gather information, ask questions, collect reports that I was not privy to in the past and hit the ground running to improve our program for the good of all.

I must tell you; we have cracks in our foundation, we are fractured due to not enough communications, financial donations or boots on the ground to accept the mission. We need your help.

Only about 25% of our posts help support this Americanism Program that is also tied with the Children and Youth program. If the rest of the Department Posts could commit to making a $250 - $500 donation to the baseball program weather you have a team or not, it would be a blessing to our kids and program.

The foundation teams that play Legion Baseball every season, the Posts that support their teams and the Coaches, Players and Parents are awesome. With new teams coming onboard our needs to operate increase. The Teams, Players and Parents are wonderful, please get out and meet them at a game sometime.

I am asking all Posts, Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons and Riders to help our program continue to provide service to the youth of our communities, with financial support and leaders to fill spots that have a passion for the kids and baseball to contact me.

My contact info is in the Department Baseball Manual and in the Department Roster / Directory

Blood Donor Program

Ray Perez, Blood Donor
blooddonor@legionmail.org

Please make that extra effort to help. Schedule a drive at your next event. OneBlood, the local not-for-profit blood center serving Florida and the majority of the Southeast, announced today that it will be sending blood to Puerto Rico following a series of earthquakes.

Widespread destruction and the lack of electricity on the island is preventing blood centers in Puerto Rico from being able to operate.

To ensure a ready blood supply locally and to be able to continue assisting Puerto Rico, OneBlood encourages all eligible donors to please donate. To find a donor center or Big Red Bus near you simply visit www.oneblood.org.

OneBlood has assisted Puerto Rico in the past, including during Hurricane Maria, Hurricane Irma and when the island was impacted by the Zika virus.

I have seen great work from the Blood Donor Chairmen scheduling blood drives. Thank you to the 15th District and Florida ALR at their Summit in Cocoa Beach. Please let me know of your blood drives, there are a lot of great efforts out there, I just need your input!!

Thank You! My number and email again are 727-412-5356 blooddonor@legionmail.org.

Immigration Committee

Gene Smith, Immigration
baseball@legionmail.org

This month’s Immigration column is contributed by Ms. Elizabeth Ricci, Esq., Immigration Attorney with the law firm of Rambana & Ricci, PLLC., Tallahassee. Ms. Ricci partnered with The American Legion, Department of Florida a few years ago to assist foreign-born U.S. veterans on Immigration issues. During my tenure as the Department’s Immigration Committee Chair, many of the cases I worked, the veteran states he/she believed citizenship came automatically for serving on active duty and receiving an Honorable Discharge when the military obligation was complete. As Ms. Ricci states in her article, completing service in the US Military does not make one a citizen. There are perhaps thousands across this country whose stay and family existence could be in jeopardy. Read Ms. Ricci’s article and pass on her suggested tips for obtaining citizenship by those foreign born who have served in the US military were honorably discharged.

Foreign Born Vets Face Surprises En Route to Citizenship: Tips for Success

By Elizabeth Ricci*, Esq.

What does it take to become a citizen of the United States? Despite what you might believe, not military service.

Many foreign-born veterans erroneously believed that their military service automatically made them citizens, either because they were promised by high-ranking officials that they would be made citizens or because both the oath of enlistment and the naturalization oath confusingly contain the same pledge to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; [to] bear true faith and allegiance to the same." In order to become a naturalized US citizen, however, continued on page 10 >>
an applicant must generally be a Lawful Permanent Resident ("Green Card" holder) then affirmatively apply for citizenship.

Some of the 645,000 foreign-born veterans of the US Armed Forces receive the surprise of a lifetime when they learn, usually upon application for benefits at Social Security, at their local DMV or passport office, they are not actually citizens.

Since knowingly holding oneself out as a citizen is a bar to naturalization, USCIS officers often erroneously deny vets’ Applications for Naturalization for having participated in our democracy by voting or having registered to vote over a misunderstanding about whether the voting was done “knowingly”. Such poor decisions cause vets to have to appeal.

Vets, including those who registered to vote or voted, may overcome the Green Card prerequisite if they served during a designated period of hostility (World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf and Enduring Freedom) or made "extraordinary contributions to national security". Without such, they may need to become Green Card holders (through US citizen or Permanent Resident family or as refugees, for example).

Austalian-born US Marine Corps veteran Paul Canton of Summerfield, Florida finds himself in a unique predicament. He was told by his recruiter in 1991 that his service would make him a US citizen. Upon his honorable discharge in 1995, he believed himself to be a US citizen and voted in several elections. Imagine his surprise when he went to renew his driver license and was told he was not eligible to do so. He quickly contacted USCIS where an agent told him to file for naturalization. When he appeared at the Orlando USCIS office, the interviewing officer told him, "I don't know how you got into the country, I don't know how you got into the military, and I don't know why you are still here" and denied his application claiming he had poor moral character for having voted. The case is now on appeal. Meanwhile, he is a man without a country as his US military service caused his Australian citizenship to be revoked, leaving him stateless.

It is important to note that the application process is not the same for veterans as other would-be citizens. Although foreign-born veterans still file Form N-400 they must also file Form N-426, Request for Certification of Military or Naval Service, (both forms are available at uscis.gov), and provide a copy of their DD-214 with two passport style photos. All vets’ applications are mailed to USCIS in Chicago. Vets are not required to pay naturalization application or biometrics fees. In some jurisdictions, eligible veterans may request a Green Card prerequisite if they served during a designated period of hostility (World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf and Enduring Freedom) or made "extraordinary contributions to national security". Without such, they may need to become Green Card holders (through US citizen or Permanent Resident family or as refugees, for example).

**Formal Inspections, 4 Chaplains Memorial Service and JSSP Competition Results**

Loretta Young, ROTC/JROTC/Shooting Sports
lrotc@legionmail.org

The Annual Formal Inspections for the JROTC Units are held during the beginning of the year to evaluate the Cadet Programs throughout the state. Here in Florida the Army Programs are conducted by the Army 6th Brigade and it's the largest component of the programs with Lee County and Broward County having the largest number of Units. The Air Force, Marine and Navy have their own teams that also conduct inspections. The Cadets give formal briefings of their overall program to the Interview Teams for their cadet progress and any special community service projects that they are conducting throughout the semester. The cadets are also graded on uniform inspection in ranks, drill exhibition, color guard performance and cadet records. These Inspections are well worth the time to visit the school JROTC Program that the post supports and see the overall picture that shows the Cadet Motto, “To Build Better Citizens”. I had the privilege of an invitation to the Stranahan MCJROTC Inspection and Instructor 1st Sgt. Wayne LaBeau, Ret. was presented the Army Cadet Command Silver Instructor Award by Broward Curriculum Director, LTC Kenneth Green, Ret. for his 23 years’ service to the cadet program and outstanding performance.

The 9th District 4 Chaplains Memorial Service was conducted at the Dania Beach continued on page 11 >>
Coast Guard Station and the Color Guard Units were well represented Entrepreneur & Leadership Military Academy, Dillard, AFJROTC, Northeast AFJROTC, Stranahan MCJROTC, & Fort Lauderdale NJROTC. It was a beautiful day on the Intercostal Waterway for the Ceremony, and we were honored to have both our Dept. Commander, Rick Johnson and our Dept. Auxiliary President, Ann King-Smith in attendance. It was a very moving ceremony and was well attended by the veterans, community and the local Coast Guard members. The Patriotic Music was performed by the Fort Lauderdale Symphonic Band and the participants for the 4 Chaplains and the program was represented by the 9th District Staff and Auxiliary Chaplain.

The Final Results for the 1st Round Qualifications for the JSSP Competition is listed on the website. The Dept. of Florida had 12 Precision Shooters and 81 Sporter Shooters. The 2nd Round Targets will be sent out by CMP on 15 February for the final qualifiers who will be competing for the National Competition at the USA Olympic Training Facility in Colorado Springs in July. Competition ends and all targets must be returned to CMP by 01 April to meet the deadline for the Finals. This was a difficult competition this year with the short time to register online and some of the new procedures. I want to thank all our teams and their instructors who made the effort to have a good showing for the Dept. of Florida with this many entries. There were many states that did not have any entries, so KUDO’s and good luck to all who participated.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen
Daryl Bass, Law & Order
laworder@legionmail.org

I read this on a website: theofficernextdoor.com. (author unknown) It’s referring mainly to Police Officers but reading it I could see many a Fire Fighter and Paramedic experiencing the same feelings. This is a prime example of First Responder PTSD.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would no longer see that person take their last breath who was caught in gang crossfire.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would forget the look on a parent’s face when I told them their child was dead and never coming home.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would no longer see the lifeless bodies of every homicide victim I’ve seen over the years.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, what a decomposed body looks like even worse, what one smells like.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would forget the look of fear and pain on every domestic violence victims face, who endured abuse from someone they loved.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would erase the imagines of child abuse, sex trafficking, and child porn, I was forced to see throughout my career.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, my heart would be softer, my trust more attainable, and my guard not always up.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I’d be less skeptical, less cynical, and remember that kindness in humanity still exist.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would no longer break down and cry unexpectedly, like a dam of emotion breaking for reasons unknown.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would sleep without issues, cold sweats, and repetitive dreams of being killed would be a thing of the past.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would not have to sit with my back against the wall when out in public, forever on the alert just in case evil were to show up.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I’d be forever free from the truth that evil is real. It’s out there. I know because I have looked into its eyes.

If I could forget what my eyes have seen, I would not be a Police Officer.

These are the burdens we carry, the price we pay to keep you safe.

This is the truth behind our badge.
Florida American Legion College Class of 2020!

Tom Gora, Florida Legion College
depthlegioncollege@legionmail.org

Congratulations to the 21 Legionnaires who graduated from The Department of Florida American Legion College on January 25, 2020! Graduates can go to the ‘photo gallery’ under the ‘News and Events’ tab on the Department web site to print your graduation photo with Commander Johnson. The Class of 2020 selected “Service, Honor, Sacrifice” as their class motto in recognition of Department Commander Rick Johnson.

One of the primary subjects covered in the college is an introduction to writing Resolutions as The American Legion (TAL) is a Resolution driven organization. All instructors contribute to this class which features Florida’s only Past National Commander, Clarence Hill, leading discussion. This year the participants divided into a ‘district’ each came up with a draft Resolution. One Resolution dealt with suggesting lower or honorary membership dues for members with 50 years continuous membership; another resolution promotes Post participation in the Florida Department of Transportation’s “Adopt a Highway Program.” That Resolution suggests that a Post’s visible involvement in local community service by participation in this environmental program is a good way to promote The American Legion in that community. The third Resolution dealt with the subject of districts recruiting outside the district boundaries defined in the Department C&BL. We may hear one or two of these as actual proposed Resolutions at the Annual Department Convention in June.

College students also heard presentations from the Department Judge Advocate delivered by the two Assistant JA’s, Comrades John Dollinger and Bob Sussan. They spoke and fielded many questions about coming recommended Constitution and By Laws changes, standing rules, and many other proposed administrative changes to be discussed and implemented by the membership at the annual Department Convention in June. The college is not just lecturing and power point slides, we also enjoyed videos on the history of The American Legion, the 4 Pillars of TAL, and the Challenge 22 Marches and fundraisers in Florida to promote veteran suicide awareness. During Larry Roberts’ class we saw the video “The Wrong Side of Heaven” by a group named the ‘5 Finger Death Punch,’ a video that will bring tears to your eyes. If you have never seen this video it is a short story that depicts servicemen in the Middle East and follows them from their service back to civilian life. The video highlights some of the issue’s veterans deal with when returning to civilian life such as homelessness, suicidal thoughts, and substance abuse. You can find the video on U-tube.

The Department Events Coordinator, Michael Bratsch who was recently hired did a great job ensuring the hall and all A/V equipment was in working order, assembled the class work material, provided daily refreshments and an excellent dinner social Friday evening. Emily Church also had a nice display of products and shirts for sale, and several students made purchases which benefit programs of the Department. The class enjoyed the Friday evening social which was catered by Mission BBQ a company that does a great job serving veterans and promoting patriotism. Jennifer Cooper delivered a great presentation on how to raise funds, and Bekki Tibbs partnered with Eunice Butts informed all of the great awards that can be earned by being active in the programs of The American Legion. Coordination with Rachel, Mike, and Bruce is a huge benefit, and who does not appreciate having the “Midas” touch available for therapy for students who needed it. The Legion College could never be a success without the devoted assistance of all Department staff, THANK YOU!

I can’t say enough to thank an excellent group of instructors that gave the individual classes and responded to many questions and scenarios presented by the participants. By next month’s article I will be able to review all the graduate’s comments on the class and share their thoughts with you. This will begin the FALC preparations and planning for the Class of 2021!

Post Everlasting

Sid Damsgard, Central Area Commander
depthlegioncollege@legionmail.org

This past week we lost another excellent legionnaire I’m sad to report that Bill Hamblin has gone on to Post Everlasting. Bill was the driving force at Post 5 having been commander for many years. He was also president of the cemetery committee for the post. Many people do not know that Post 5 is the only American Legion that has a veteran’s cemetery. Our prayers go out to his wife Rosemary and his family. This past month the 16th district also lost a dedicated Legionnaire Jim Ostrander. Jim had been vice commander and every other job within the district He too will be very missed.

This past week the Legion Riders conducted their yearly summit. Training in all aspects of the legion were held and much good important information was presented. Next year will be the fifth year and I recommend any rider or legionnaire to attend. The setting is conducive to getting a better understanding of our programs.

If anyone wishes to attend the commander’s homecoming, please contact Ray Perez at post 273 for tickets. This year’s event promises to be a special party with several surprises. Let’s send Rick off on a high note.

www.floridalegion.org
mail@floridalegion.org
Hello Florida Legionnaires: We need to do some Post Training so we can continue to make our Legion Post the Best with our History and for the next Generation of Veterans.

Post Training:
1. Motivation for the Post members to know what is going on
2. Commitment is how we can help each other to accomplish the goal
3. Pride in what we do as Legionnaires to help our Veterans and their Families
4. Attain Success by our desire and determination will get the job done

How do you tell our History of The American Legion you have to know it first? We started in Paris by members of the American Expeditionary Force in March 16-17, 1919 and was chartered by Congress (September 16, 1919) as a patriotic Veterans Organization and our four Pillars:
1. Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
2. National Security
3. Americanism
4. Children and Youth

Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation's veterans, its servicemembers, their families, the youth of American and ordinary citizens. These programs make a difference in hundreds of thousands of lives each year.

A little bit of Legion History:
*September 19-21, 1942 the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion was changed for the first since it was written in 1919 The word "War" is changed to Wars" and Now in July 30, 2019 the Legion Act was signed into law by President Trump and also a memorandum dated Nov 5, 2019 "it was only fitting that The American Legion NEC amend the Preamble to The American Legion Constitution" to Changed take out “the Great Wars” and changed to “all wars”. Now we have only 2 wars eras WWI and Dec 7, 1941.

*Dec 15, 1943 PNC Harry W. Colmery wrote in longhand the 'GI Bill of Rights" and signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 22, 1944 and NOW is call "Forever GI Bill" and the name of PNC Harry W. Colmery is on also there Aug 2017 along with many other great addition to the legislation aimed at improving the lives of veterans and their families.

*March 28, 2000 The American Legion present a $1 million check to the Vietnam Veterans memorial Fund toward the construction of “The Wall” in Washington, D.C. and Now we all are Welcome Home our Vietnam Veterans and continuing to Celebrate until Nov 11, 2025.

Questions:
1. How does your Post works with youth programs?
2. How does your Post work with the Community?
3. How does the Post aids Veterans in need of help?
4. How does the Post make a sincere effort to make new members feel at home or welcome?

Tools and Resources:
Is your Post making a Difference in your Community?

See if you can answer the following Questions?
1. What is your Post doing for the Community and our Veterans?
2. What is your Post doing to get new members and is it work? Is your Post a truly a community asset?

Need help or ideas call Jim at 352-266-4370 or email at jramos149@bellsouth.net

Thank you

As we move forward into the new year, as your Resolution Chair I need inform everyone that the deadline to submit, a Resolution or Amendment to Department is May 17th 2020.

What is a resolution?
“A resolution has Two Major Parts

• Preamble (description of the problem)
• Resolving clause (how to correct or solve or support the issue).

Although it proceeds the resolving section in appearance, the preamble of a resolution should be prepared after the resolving section has been put into final form.

When submitting a resolution, it must be on the correct Department form, which you can found on the Department web page under documents and forms, or if you can’t find it, I can e-mail you a copy.

Also, on the Department Web site is a three pages document “How to write a resolution’. This document can be very helpful, it won’t answer all the questions but will get you started on a good foundation.

A PowerPoint presentation can be found on the National web site www.legion.org/training arrow down to Tools and Resources and click on District Training in a box. Once in Dropbox click on Training in a box – phase one, that will open

continued on page 14 >>
**Resolutions - continued form page 13**

another menu click on Resolutions.

When your Resolution is received by Department it is forwarded to the Resolutions committee, they will verify and research any issues as well grammatically correcting the document. The document will then be sent back to the Post to prepare the final document if needed. Once finalized the resolution will be returned to the Department for processing leading up to presentation to the membership at the Department Convention.

Any questions give me a call.
352-750-2099 Post 347

**UPDATES - CHANGES - TIPS - OPPORTUNITY**

**Chuck Weber, Scouting**
scouting@legionmail.org

This month we’re sending out bits and pieces on a variety of Scouting subjects.

Eagle Scout of the Year – The deadline for submission to Department is March first. The requirements are a little different this year. If you forgot and have a very worthy Eagle Scout for consideration, contact me quickly.

American Legion Scouter Square Knot Award – National HQ updated the requirements to reflect the changes in Scouting since the last update. This should not make the award any harder or easier to earn. Department has provided Guidelines for submission for this award. All the information is at the Department website under Scouting.

Guide for Post Scouting Chairs – An updated and abbreviated Guide was mailed to each Post and is also available at the Department website under Scouting Resources. This is primarily focused at the new Scouting Chair.

New Guidance – Both the BSA and TAL national offices collaborated on several topics and issued new guidance on several matters relevant in Legion Scouting. These are available at the Department website under Scouting Resources.

Are you running the best possible Scouting program imaginable on the face of the earth? If so, it is time to brag about yourself. Put it on paper and send it in for consideration for the Department’s annual award for the Outstanding Post Scouting Program. The awards will be made at June’s convention. Please get your submissions in soon.

Questions? – Problems? – Lessons learned? If you have any of these, please Contact the Department Scouting Chair for help or to share the wealth.

And finally – Opportunity. All good things must come to an end, so they say. I will be leaving the Department Scouting Chair position at the end of this Legion year. If you are interested, please feel free to contact me for info about the position.

As always, thank you for all that you do.

**Special Events**

**Fred Matthews, Special Events**
specialevents@legionmail.org

As we approach the home stretch for this Legion Year, most of our events have been planned out, taken place, or set within the next two months.

It is very encouraging to see the number of Posts with websites and calendars that are easy to access from the Google Search engine. If your Post is sought out often online, the ability to just type in the Post number is a good indicator of how many people know you exist.

The First day of the recent ALR Summit was Highlighted by the “Live” Facebook Broadcast of the opening Summit Ceremony by Rider Virna Keener. If you couldn’t be there for the presentations and the commentary, this broadcast was the next best thing.

The 4th Annual ALR Summit was an event that provided yet another opportunity for the Florida Legion Family to learn how things should go. How to conduct a meeting. How to conduct your Chapter Finances. What is the relationship between the Post and the Chapter? And the importance of reporting to the membership at-large on what you do at each meeting.

This is also the time in which Area Commanders and some Districts will be conducting Area and District Balls. These events tend to serve as an additional fundraiser for a Florida Legion Charity, but they are also another chance to socialize with members of the Legion Family outside of your normal circle.

Among those upcoming are the Northern Area Ball on March 21 at Post 155 and the Eastern Area Ball on April 4th at Post 347.

And no matter what part of the state you’re in there is always an opportunity to support Legion Programs that support Veterans and the communities they live in. Two events worth noting:

1) The Coral Head Festival in Marathon which takes place over several days. You can view the details at https://www.coralheadmusicfest.com/

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continued on page 15>>
2) The Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans 2020 event in Punta Gorda. Taking place on Saturday, March 28th, the event will feature a parade and music, music, music. Check out the details at https://welcomehomevietnamvets2020.org.

And of course, there is the Department Commander’s Homecoming event as funds are continuing to be raised for COTA. This event will take place on April 18 at Post 273 in Madeira Beach.

And if you haven’t seen them, several Posts around the Department are openly purchasing advertisements promoting their events to not just the Veteran Community, but to the public at large.

Now that the barriers that prevented many veterans from joining the Legion are down, each Post, Unit, or Chapter should consider allowing a portion of your yearly budget to promoting your organization's events to the public.

Legion Family Project

Diane Schmidt, Special Olympics
specialolympics@legionmail.org

This is feel-good opportunity for Legion Posts, Riders, SAL and Legion Auxiliary to come together for a great cause. These Special Olympics athletes are counting on you. Donate now to change a life. To compete, children (at least 8 years old) and adults (no upper age limit) with intellectual disabilities and physical disabilities are provided FREE training and there is NO COST for them to compete. Through the power of sports, those with disabilities discover new strengths, abilities, skills and success. These athletes find joy, confidence and fulfillment—on the playing file and in life. Your gift will change a life.

When you donate, all the money goes to Special Olympics Florida. Send your check to Special Olympics Florida, 1915 Don Wickham Drive, Clermont, FL 34711. Don’t forget to put your Post, Auxiliary Unit, SAL Squadron and Riders Chapter # clearly on memo line.

You also can receive Award Recognition at Department Convention:

- Diamond Plaque $5,000 +
- Special Plaque $1,000-$4,999
- Gold Plaque $700-$999
- Silver Plaque $500-$699
- Bronze Plaque $300-$499
- Certificate $100-$299

If you would like to receive award recognition, you must send the FL American Legion Special Olympics Report and Questionnaire with supporting documentation (copy of check, etc.) by MAY 1 to Department Headquarters. All plaques and certificates will be presented at Department Convention.

Department wants you to get credit for everything you do for Special Olympics whether it is donating your money or time volunteering (FLSpecialOlympics.org) so don’t forget to report as follows:

- Post and Rider Chapters: report all information to
  Diane Schmidt, Department Special Olympics Chairperson
  Text-321-217 6699
  Email: Specialolympics@legion.org
- SAL Squadrons: report all information to
  Detachment Special Olympics Chairman, Bernie Wildrick
  bwildrick@cfl.rr.com
- Auxiliary Units: report all information to
  Department Auxiliary Secretary
  407-293-7411

Greetings, fellow Legionnaires. The past couple of months certainly have been eventful. It was once again my honor to be part of the group that visited not only the Bay Pines and James A. Haley VA hospitals but we just completed another visit to the West Palm Beach hospital as well, having met with clinical and administrative staff as well as our fellow veteran-patients at those hospitals. I’m proud to tell you that our VAVS volunteers continue to go “above and beyond” every day. Well worth particular mention is Johnny Castro at West Palm. With the help of hospital staff, he created an outdoor vegetable garden area for hospitalized veterans to spend time in and plant veggies. At James A. Haley, our rep Carlos Gil working with the Community Living Center helped sponsor a special Valentine’s Day Luncheon and I was proud to help facilitate that event. Next on the schedule are visits to both the Lake Nona and Gainesville VA hospitals in March.

We need to take a moment and congratulate Marina Perez from Post 164 and American Legion’s 11th District Service Officer for receiving an award from Palm Beach County in recognition for her many contributions over the years not only to veterans but also to the community at large. Kudos, Marina. We’re continued on page 16 >>
In the continuing spirit of Veterans helping Veterans, Post 69 has sponsored a major event which included yet another Challenge 22 Walk, led by our own Dept VA Benefits Chair Larry Roberts. Please see his article here.

Looking down the road just a bit we’ll soon be gathering in Orlando for the Department Convention and we’ll once again be conducting a Post Service Officer training class, taught by our partners from the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs. As I travel to posts throughout the state, I encourage Posts to have someone attend the class. I recognize that there’s cost involved and one suggestion that’s been made is that perhaps 2 Posts can work together to send someone to the class, thus easing what might be any financial burden. Post Service Officers are significant contributors to our fellow veterans as well as the community.

In closing this month’s article I’m energized and look forward to once again being part of the team that will be visiting our Legislators in Washington, D.C to speak on behalf of the issues that affect us all.

Youth Law Cadet Program

Bob Brewster, Youth Law Cadet
youthlawcadet@legionmail.org

Our Florida Highway Patrol/American Legion Cadet Program is now accepting cadets for this year’s program. The cadets really enjoy this program, and I know this because we have not received a single complaint from any one of them or their families. I really hate it when a Post contacts me right after we close the registration for that year. All necessary paperwork that must be completed can be obtained from the Department of Florida’s website.

With us working with another organization, we must adhere to their rules. Space is limited, so please get your cadets entered as soon as possible. We have a little flexibility, but not a lot. I have met with the Florida Highway Patrol Major in her office, and she is totally committed to this program. She has made a couple personnel changes to make this program more efficient.

In the continuing spirit of Veterans helping Veterans, Post 69 has sponsored a major event which included yet another Challenge 22 Walk, led by our own Dept VA Benefits Chair Larry Roberts. Please see his article here.

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Spring is Here!

Debbie Wheeler, Women Veterans
womenveterans@legionmail.org

When we celebrate spring, we think of growth and new beginnings. Our purpose becomes clear, we must rededicate ourselves to helping all veterans and their families. By thinking outside the box don’t expect any veteran especially women to enter your post for our assistance. When we travel outside our posts all the Legion family must represent who we are and what we do. By wearing our shirts and breathing the American Legion we can all do our parts. For example, a member of the ALA from my post brought a young family with a 5 year to our Post. They were living in their car after moving to Florida and the living situation they had hoped for did not pan out. This all occurred 1 week before Christmas. I met with them quickly and because over the holidays any help would take some time. After some phone calls, they were temporarily given housing over the holidays by a veteran’s family because they were visiting out of town. The veteran was a female who had all documents in hand had been approved for HUD Vash. That is what we do! By just speaking to someone in line at a 7-11 we change lives. Reach out, educate and render assistance in the Legion Family on how to step forward and talk the talk. We have the knowledge and ask others if you can’t find a way to help!

District 8 Oratorical Contest

Bekki Tibbs, Dept Programs Director
btibbs@floridalegion.org

On Saturday, February 1st, Dylan Cunard won the District 8 Oratorical Competition that took place at Post 24 in Bradenton. Dylan is currently a student at Bradenton Christian High School and will represent the District at the Southwestern Area Competition.

Pictured with Dylan, from Left-Right are, William ‘Bill’ Hiltgen, Dylan Cunard & Skip Felicita. Skip is the District 8 Commander.
SUICIDE PREVENTION · UPDATE

After much deliberation and research, we are excited to announce that we have created strategic partnerships with six organizations. The following organizations are focused on mental health for veterans and their families: 22Zero, K9 Line, Research & Recognition Project, SOF Missions, Veterans Counseling Veterans, and Warrior Beach Retreat. These organizations have received a donation from PROJECT: VetRelief’s Suicide Prevention Initiative (SPI) to sponsor a veteran through their program or assist with bettering their services.

In April, the Suicide Prevention Initiative Team will host it’s first of many Network Coalition meetings. During this time, several mental health organizations will get together to brainstorm how we can all work together to end veteran suicide.

Additionally, branding for this initiative has been revealed. Participants of the American Legion Riders Unity Ride will have a chance to earn the first versions of the official apparel. Anyone can join to raise funds and receive these items. Visit give.floridalegion.org to sign up today!

To learn more about SPI, visit: www.projectvetrelief.org/spi

ICEMEN HOCKEY GAME · PROCEEDS BENEFIT SUICIDE PREVENTION

MARCH 28TH | Jacksonville, FL

To purchase tickets, visit: www.jaxicemen.com/alriders

Purchase (10) ten or more tickets, by calling Trent Blair: 904.661.7241 or email trent@jacksonvilleicemen.com

SPOTLIGHT · AVON PARK AWARENESS EVENT

Thank you for everyone who attended the Challenge 22 Event at American Legion Post 69 in Avon Park on February 15th. What a successful event to raise awareness for veteran suicide!

There were approximately 400-500 people and over 40 vendors who attended this event. Vendors included Veteran Service Organizations and companies who provided Veteran benefits. After walking 1 mile to raise awareness for Veteran suicide, attendees heard from expert speakers explaining warning signs and symptoms of mental health, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Congratulations to Larry Roberts and his team for putting together such a wonderful day.

SUPPORT CASES

JULY 2019 - JAN 2020 94 families helped · $107,237.95 amount distributed

*Numbers reflect PVR Cases ONLY

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Join us at one of our next events, or hold your own fundraiser. Please contact 407-295-2631 or jcooper@floridalegion.org for more information.

MAR 28
ALR Night - Icemen Hockey Tailgate Party
Jacksonville, FL

APR 18
Department Commander Homecoming / Luau
Madeira Beach, FL

APR 26 - MAY 2
ALR Unity Ride & Rally
Two Routes (North & South)
Entire State of Florida

MAY 9
Post 69/74 Golf Tournament
Sebring, FL

MAY 8-9
Boots on the Ground Event
Jacksonville, FL

MAY 16
SAL Detachment Commander Homecoming
Crystal River, FL

JUNE 25-28
Dept Convention
Orlando, FL

*Numbers reflect PVR Cases ONLY

Official Program of:

AMERICAN

LEGION

DEPARTMENT

OF

FLORIDA
Well the donations from our Children & Youth canister drive are slowly coming in. Remember, we cannot continue with our Children & Youth programs without your help. Let's start collecting the money from the canisters and sending a check in.

This month has again been a busy one. Since my last writing for the Legion Link, I have visited many posts and events. All my visits were on the east coast in late January and February. I attended the Southern Area Ball at Post 142 and the 9th District Four Chaplains ceremony at U.S. Coast Guard Station Fort Lauderdale. What a wonderful time I had in District 9. I also visited Posts 157, 222, 268, 277, 304 and 321. In February, I attended the Riders Summit at International Palms Resort in Cocoa Beach. This event was very well attended and a whole lot of learning experiences were going on. I had a table set up in the exhibit area promoting our programs and the upcoming Golf Tournament at the IMG Academy in Bradenton on April 25th. My wife and I also sold the Children & Youth Pins. When I was attending a class, she was at the table, and when she was attending a class, I was at the table. We worked as a good team for the Children & Youth. While at the Summit, we visited Post 64 in Cape Canaveral and Post 1 in Titusville.

I also attended the Challenge 22 and Exposition at Post 69 in Avon Park. I again had a table set up with information about all of our C&Y Programs and brochures on the Warning Signs of Youth Suicide. We again had information on our other two fundraisers, the C&Y Picnic on April 4th at Post 1 in Titusville and the Golf Tournament.

April is Children & Youth month. Let us all start thinking on how we can assist our veteran’s children and other kids within the State of Florida. Remember our emphasis on family. This is one of the priorities of our Commission. Other Emphasis’s are Child Safety with Gateway to Drugs, Warning Signs on Youth Suicide, Halloween Safety and missing children. Let’s keep our children of Florida safe and healthy.

We are so excited that everyone likes our ‘Operation Buddy Check’ coins. These were sent out during our recent fundraising campaign to thank our major donors.

However, for a donation of $22, you can get yours today! https://buy.chip-in.us/?non-profitId=119003
### February 27, 2020
90% Target Report (Currently 92.01%)

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<td>91.23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southwestern</td>
<td>Jerry Faught</td>
<td>91.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Marie Conti</td>
<td>90.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Paul Bosco</td>
<td>89.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post 400</td>
<td></td>
<td>89.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post 208</td>
<td></td>
<td>81.34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**NEXT MEMBERSHIP GOAL**

90%  
3/4/2020

---

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

**LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST**

**DEPARTMENT TRUSTED.**  
**LEGIONNAIRE APPROVED.**

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

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

---

**Cancer Care Insurance Plan**

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

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

**POST EVERLASTING**

**Dennis Thompson**

We regret to inform you that Dennis Thompson passed away February 15th, 2020 in hospice. Dennis obtained his membership in The American Legion as a US Army Combat Engineer serving a year in Vietnam.

He served several years as American Legion Lakeshore Post 137 Service Officer, Post Adjutant for three years and was selected as Department of Florida Adjutant of the Year 2013. He was elected Post Commander 2006-2008 that included Lakeshore Post 137 being selected The Most Outstanding Post in the Department of Florida in 2008. At FL. 5th District Dennis was appointed District Adjutant several years. At The Department of Florida, he served several years as Chairman of the Resolutions Committee. Dennis was awarded an Honorary Life Member at American Legion Lakeshore Post 137. He was also a member and supporter of the Sons of The American Legion and the American Legion Riders at Post 137.

**George “Bill” Hamblin**

It is with deep regret that we report the passing of Past 15th District Commander, George “Bill” Hamblin, of Tampa, Florida on Monday, February 10, 2020 at the age of 73. Bill is survived by his wife, Rosemarie. 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.

Bill was a U.S. Air Force Vietnam War Era Veteran and a member of U.S.S. Tampa Post 5, Tampa, FL with 18 continuous years of membership. Bill served as Post Commander (2006-2020) and District Commander (2015-2016).

Please keep his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers in their time of grief. If you would like to send your condolences you may do so through his wife, Rosemarie, at 4405 W. Vasconia Street, Tampa, FL 33629.
DEPARTMENT COMMANDER HOME COMING AND LUAU

SATURDAY, APRIL 18

POST 273
MADEIRA BEACH

Social Hour 4-6 PM w/ Caladesi Steel Drum Band
Dinner 6-8 PM w/ Music by Both Worlds
Roasted Pig Plus Pork & Shrimp & Steaks and More!

$35.00 Per Person / Purchase Tickets at the Post!
Hawaiian Shirts & Shorts & Sandals & Mumus
DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S HOMECOMING
PROGRAM

PAGE ADVERTISEMENTS AND CORPORATE SPONSOR'S DONATION PRICES

Here is an opportunity for Candidates, Posts, Districts and businesses to advertise at a low rate. Each person that buys a ticket for the Homecoming will receive a free program.

Program Advertisement Prices: Adds are due NLT March 15 2020

¼ Page $20.00; ½ Page $30.00; ¾ Page $40.00; Full Page: $50.00

Corporate Sponsors: Red: $400.00 (Incl a full page add); White: $300.00 (Incl a half page add); Blue: $200.00 (Incl a ¼ page add)

Photo proof copies for ads are required i.e. JPG, BMP, PDF format, preferred PDF format.

Make checks payable to Post 273, ATTN: Ray Perez and send to 600 American Legion Drive, Madeira Beach, FL 33708

Program Cover
Win a New Cadillac XT5

Longest Drive Contest
Hole-in-One Contest
Closest to Pin Contest

$75.00 per golfer, includes box lunch, 2 drinks on course and early dinner.

9:00 AM Shotgun Start
Scramble Play

BENEFITTING The Programs and Charities of the Florida American Legion
Children & Youth Commission

Early dinner, awards, raffles, 50/50 at American Legion Post 24
2000 75th St. W., Bradenton, Fl. 34209

CHILDMREN & YOUTH CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

APRIL 25, 2020
IMG ACADEMY GOLF CLUB
4350 El Conquistador Pkwy
Bradenton, Florida

Sponsorship Opportunities

HOLE or TEE (Silver): $100
HOLE or TEE (Gold): $250
BEVERAGE CART: $500
LUNCH: $500
DINNER: $1,000
TOURNAMENT: $2,000
DONATE A RAFFLE GIFT

Cut-off date for sponsorships & gift submission April 15, 2020

Checks made payable to:
Sons of The American Legion Squadron 24
2000 75th St. W., Bradenton, Florida 34209
Attn: C&Y Golf Tournament

Hotel: Lantern Inn & Suites, 7251 N. Tamiami Trail (14th St. W)
Sarasota, Fl. 34243  941-355-7747
$89 King, $99 - 2 Queen - Ask for American Legion Rate
Reservation Cut-off - 4-10-2020
# CHILDREN & YOUTH GOLF TOURNAMENT

**REGISTRATION & SPONSORSHIP FORM**

Tournament Date: April 25, 2020  
Cur-off Date for registration: April 15, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Golfer Name</th>
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<tr>
<th>Silver Hole Sponsor</th>
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<td>$100</td>
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<th>Closest to Pin</th>
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<td>$300</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beverage Cart Sponsor</th>
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<tr>
<th>Lunch Sponsor</th>
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<td>$500</td>
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<tr>
<th>Dinner Sponsor</th>
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<td>$1,000</td>
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<tr>
<th>Primary Sponsor</th>
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<td>$1,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tournament Sponsor</th>
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<tr>
<td>$2,000</td>
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</table>

Please make checks payable to:  
Sons of the American Legion  
Squadron 24  
2000 75th St. W., Bradenton, Fl. 34209  
Attn: C&Y Golf Tournament

Questions?  
Dept. Children & Youth Chairman:  
Les Martin;  941-201-7293  
CY@legionmail.com
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA CHILDREN AND YOUTH PICNIC
APRIL 4, 2020 - NOON - 6 P.M.

TITUSVILLE POLICE DOG DEMONSTRATION

SOUTHERN ROCK 1P.M.-?

Military History Timeline & Reenactment Camp

Italian Ice
Pop Corn
Pulled Pork & Hot Dogs

Titusville American Legion Post 1
1281 N US Hwy 1
Titusville, FL
321 269-9959

Special American Legion Room Rate
Best Western Hotel – Titusville
Address: 3455 Cheney Hwy, Titusville, FL 32780
Phone: (321) 269-9100
(book before March 15)
102ND Annual Department Convention, June 25-28, 2020
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 CNLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Page Advertisement</th>
<th>Half Page Advertisement</th>
<th>Quarter Page</th>
<th>Quarter Page</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$175</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5” x 10”</td>
<td>7.5” x 5”</td>
<td>3.75” x 3”</td>
<td>3.75” x 3”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Full Page Ad (7.5”x10”) - $175
- Quarter Page Ad (3.75”x5”) - $50
- Half Page Ad (7.5”x5”) - $100
- Custom Design Fee - $25

Advertisements must be submitted no later than May 13, 2020 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 grayscale. 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

P.O. BOX 547859
ORLANDO, FL 32854-7859
www.floridalegion.org
TOLL FREE: 888-999-3378
FAX 407-555-9001
Welcome from 1st Vice Commander

Last years cruise was a great success. We had 22 cabins booked and everyone had a great time.

This will be first come first serve, so make your reservations ASAP as cabin space might fill up quickly. Please call to reserve your room as prices change all the time.

It's time to do it again. This will be first come first serve, so make your reservations ASAP as cabin space might fill up quickly. 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. I will have hotel information as we get closer for the night before the cruise.

Everyone have a great time and will see you aboard.

William R Johnson
1st Vice Commander
American Legion
Department Of Florida
954-242-4496
ricktank@hotmail.com

Questions?

Maureen Williams, Vacation Planner
Carnival Cruise Line
800-819-3902 EXT 85931 OFFICE
305-406-6183 FAX
MON - THU 11:00 AM - 8:00PM EST
FRI 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM
mwilliams2@carnival.com

*Please call for ticket costs. Earlier you book, the better the savings.
SAVE THE DATE

VETERAN'S APPRECIATION NIGHT

28th MARCH

VETERANS MEMORIAL ARENA
JACKSONVILLE

7:00PM Game Time

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS HERE:
WWW.JAXICEMEN.COM/ALRIDERS

PROCEDS WILL BENEFIT PROJECT: VETRELIEF'S SUICIDE PREVENTION INITIATIVE
#EndVeteranSuicide #SuicidePrevention #RaiseAwareness
The American Legion
High School Oratorical
Scholarship Program

Support Your Area’s Competitor
at State Finals

March 14, 2020
Competition begins at 9:00 am

Dept. of Florida HQ
Orlando, FL
Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

More lives are lost every year to home fires than to all major disasters.

Through our Home Fire Campaign, volunteers and other community partners canvass neighborhoods, installing free smoke alarms and providing fire prevention and safety education.

If you need a smoke alarm installed, or want to get involved in this campaign, please call 352-415-4636.

Visit SoundTheAlarm.org/NorthFlorida or call 352-415-4636.
VIETNAM WAR VETERANS
COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY
March 28th, 2020
11:00 am

Please join us as we honor, remember and Welcome Home our Vietnam Veterans

Florida National Cemetery
6502 SW 102nd Avenue, Bushnell

Keynote Speaker Maj. General Richard S. Colt
Vietnam and all Veterans of Brevard

Present:

Florida’s 33rd Annual All Veterans Reunion

The Nation’s Largest Veterans Reunion

PUBLIC INVITED TO ATTEND

May 7th – 10th, 2020

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall on display May 3-10, 2020

LIVE MUSIC

FOOD & DRINKS

MILITARY VENDORS

MILITARY DISPLAYS

THE SOMETHING GAVE ALL MOVING TRIBUTE

Wall Escort May 3, 2020 Leaves at 10am
Eastern Florida State College Cocoa Campus
Reunion Web Page at:
floridaveteransreunion.com

Wickham Park
321-255-4307 - 2500 Parkway Dr
Melbourne, FL

No Coolers, Glass or Pets allowed in the Reunion Area

Per Wickham Park: Golf Carts Permitted
For the Handicapped Only And Must Abide By FL Highway Laws

Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall
http://travelingwall.us

Call For Info
321-408-2698
321-652-4185

Vendor call 321-652-4184
Vet.reunion.vendor@gmail.com
R Russo1962@gmail.com
Candy1549@yahoo.com
Club Escort Lineup Info
vvbreunionesort@gmail.com