



NOVEMBER 2020

THE LEGION LINK

VOLUME 29 ISSUE IV

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Submit Articles at

floridalegion.org/submit or legionlink@floridalegion.org

Questions? legionlink@floridalegion.org

From your Dept Commander Rick Johnson

Rick Johnson, Commander
commander@floridalegion.org



I hope this month finds you healthy and in good spirit. I am proud to announce that Tampa Bay, Florida has officially won the bid to host the Annual National Convention for 2025. I commend "Team Tampa" and

all those behind the scenes who worked hard to make this happen. This is a great opportunity for Florida to shine.

As we are slowly resuming, somewhat, normal operations, it's time to resume supporting and training our area Posts. Leadership training just wrapped up with your District, Area and Zone Commanders. They have received a lot of information they are eager to share with you.

National has implemented many changes during their Fall Meetings, shared with our NECs. Once the official documentation is received, we will filter information to all Areas, Districts and Posts.

I hope that everyone has a safe and fun Halloween and took advantage of our Halloween Safety Program.

A reminder that November 11th is

Veterans' Day, a time to thank all veterans and their families for their service in the greatest military in the world. Please take time to personally, thank our Veterans for their service and sacrifice. I would love to see Veteran functions held and support for veterans throughout our Posts. Let your community know you're there.

Hard to believe that "Turkey Day" is also just around the corner. Thank you to those who put together food baskets and supplies to care for Veterans in their areas. To our Veterans we say, "Thanks for Giving".

Port Charlotte is hosting a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans' Day on November 20th -21st, starring Lee Greenwood. Admittance for veterans is free, and all information is available on their website at: welcomehomevietnamvets2020.org.

Again, I encourage you to continue training and recruiting our Veterans to our cause. I wish you good health, safety and merriment as the holiday season approaches.

DEPARTMENT RAFFLE LIVE DRAWING

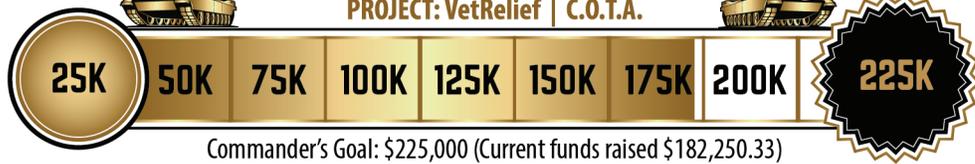
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2020
1:00PM**

facebook.com/floridalegion



COMMANDER'S CHARITIES

PROJECT: VetRelief | C.O.T.A.



Upcoming Holidays & Buddy Checks

Jerry Brandt, 1st Vice

1stvice@legionmail.org



Comrades, I hope everyone is viewing the classes online. They can be found at www.FloridaLegion.org/Department of Florida/Resources/Training Videos, there are several videos that

are designed to assist Districts and Posts – such as Commander, Finance Officer and Adjutant Classes. On www.legion.org, you can log in and attend Basic Training, which gives everyone background information on the American Legion. Plus there is a number of videos to assist in your duties. Please use all tools available to you to grow your Post.

The holidays are fast approaching and one of the most important holidays is Veterans Day, November 11, 2020. Every Post should have an event, hopefully involving your community, for this very important 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. But remember, it is not only for those who gave all, but it is also for all who answered the call. It is because of us, the veterans, that we are who we are now. Please, reach out to fellow veterans who have no one else around, this time of year, with Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas that we need to reach out and assist others in need.

It is also time for a Buddy Check during November/December time frame. Often, the veteran you are calling is not expecting a call, or even have friends that will call. Be friendly, check on their health and welfare, and invite them down to the Post for Thanksgiving and Christmas. You will find out that you do not need to remind them of their dues, not at this time. They will come down to the Post and pay their dues, but more important, they will appreciate your call.

As Always, please keep safe.

Glad Tidings & Buddy Check

Eunice Butts, 2nd Vice Commander

2ndvice@legionmail.org



Greetings Comrades, Post, District and Area Commanders, The American Legion Department of Florida officers and staff, and all Past Department Commanders to include Past National

Commander.

It is my prayer that all is well with you and your families during these trying times, if you should need help during the virus epidemic please contact your American Legion Post. They should be able to guide you to both community and Department of Florida American Legion resources.

November is here and it will be a very busy month. We celebrate The Great American Teach In, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, etc. Let us remember our homeless and less fortunate veterans and their families

NOVEMBER 2020

1	Daylight Savings Time Ends
1 - 30	Membership Retention Month
2 - 15	District 1 Commander's Visit 🌟
4	Paychecks for Patriots
5	PROJECT: VetRelief Advocate Training Webinar
5	Membership Goal 65%
5	Visitation - Post 147
7	Dept Raffle Drawing - LIVE
7	District 11 Meeting
7	Adopt-A-Hwy Cleanup Post 186
8	District 5 Meeting
10	Judge Advocate Training Webinar
10	Marine Corps Birthday (1775)
11	Veterans' Day
11	Department Headquarters Closed
12	Post Finance Training Webinar
13	Membership Renewal Date 🌟
14	Challenge 22
14	District 4 Meeting: Every Day is Veterans' Day
14	District 11 Meeting
15	Legion Link Articles Due
16-22	American Education Week 🌟
17	Visitation - Post 334
19	Visitation - Post 152
22 - 28	National Family Week 🌟
24	District 16 Meeting
26	Thanksgiving
26	Thanksgiving at Post 252 🌟
26 - 27	Department Headquarters Closed
28	District 15 E-Board Meeting

🌟 - Commander Rick Johnson's Attendance Tentative.

★ - National Event

Events are subject to change. Additional details can be found at www.floridalegion.org. We share the information we are provided.

during these celebrations.

Many have lost their jobs or are laid off due to the virus. Special thanks to those Posts in zone two and all other American Legion Posts of The Department of Florida who have worked diligently to see that veterans are being fed daily. From the bottom of my heart I love you for the love, compassion, helpfulness, etc. that you have displayed during this epidemic. I personally salute you.

Continued on page 3>>



<< 2nd Vice Continued from page 2

Let us continue to work on our membership. Do the Buddy Check, send emails, snail mail to those who do not use computers, and reminder letters. I have found that some Post Commanders do not use computers, but they rely on their adjutants to fill this gap. This is why zone two uses "working together as a team concept". That includes members of the Post, District, Area and Zone Commander. To those Posts who invited me to their activities, thank you. On November 11,

2020 I will be one of the guest speakers at Post 111 of Tampa, Fl. It starts at 10:30 AM. On November 14, 2020 I will be at The challenge 22 being held in Winter Garden, FL.

I close with a quote from Comrade Alejandro J. Kelly, a member of Post 167:

"The state of this nation is continuing to move into an All Lives Matter state, not just Black Lives Matter state. We must understand that collectively, we can do more together

than we can divided. No one group of people or organization is better than the other. Working together we can build a better nation and a better world for all of us."

It is with heartfelt and humble gratitude, I thank you for all that you have done, are doing and continue to do for our veterans children and youth and communities. Please do not be afraid to call on us to help you with your membership.

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Where do we start?

Michael Raymond, 3rd Vice Commander

3rdvice@legionmail.org



As I began my article this month many subjects came to mind that warrant our immediate attention. However, yesterday an e-mail was sent out to the membership by the National organization that supersedes most everything else.

Something that we started last year, and it took off like wildfire. It's called the "Buddy Check". Our National organization has lobbied Congress, and there is bipartisan support, to establish a "Buddy Check National Week of Calling" that is modeled after our successful initiative. Please follow this link and show your support for S.4657/H.R.2898. <https://votervoicenet/AmericanLegion/Campaigns/77447/>

[net/AmericanLegion/Campaigns/77447/](https://votervoicenet/AmericanLegion/Campaigns/77447/) respond. This program was immensely successful especially during these times of Covid-19. I've called so many people who were not only glad to hear from me, but surprised. They just weren't expecting a call from someone who didn't want anything in return.

I'd like to talk a little about something that none of us like to talk about, but it is reality, and that is loss prevention. Whether you know it or not, a large portion of our revenues are being siphoned out of our Legion coffers every day. There's a lot of reasons why people decide to do this but much of these losses can be prevented with a little attention to detail. All Post monies should be handled using extreme transparency. Opportunity is one of the biggest problems. By allowing only one person to collect, count or disperse funds gives a typical honest person the

opportunity to become dishonest. After years in Base Exchange Loss prevention I found that most people are basically honest but if given the opportunity that they won't get caught or they deserve these funds, they will seize the moment. Also, there must be consequences. I pray you never have to deal with this, and you won't if you just stay alert and involved.

Finally, please keep in mind "Welcome Home Viet Nam Veterans 2020" featuring Lee Greenwood is a go for Nov. 21st at the Charlotte Sports Park in Port Charlotte, FL. Tickets are free for all Veterans and \$20.00 for guests. Department will have a table set up during the event. Riders, there will be a ride-in to open the festivities at noon. Contact me for more details. For free tickets got to <http://www.welcomehome2020vietnamveterans.org>. We'll see you there!

National Emergency Fund

Dennis Boland, NEC

nec@legionmail.org



Disaster relief has been a part of The American Legion's identity since the early 1920s, when it entered a formalized agreement with the Red Cross to provide volunteer help and

raise money in times of catastrophe. Known as The American Legion's Disaster Relief Program, it worked in conjunction with the Red Cross for about 50 years. Over that time, The American Legion, through local posts, assisted disaster victims with housing, food, supplies and cleanup.

After Hurricane Camille struck the Gulf Coast in 1969, the National Executive Committee created the National Emergency Fund (NEF) as a one-time initiative to better assist American

Legion Family members and posts, with immediate funds of up to \$1,500 for individuals, and up to \$5,000 for posts. In 1989, when Hurricane Hugo pummeled South Carolina, the NEF was revived. It continues to assist Legion Family members recovering from natural disasters. Grants of up to \$3,000 each are awarded to eligible individuals, with up to \$10,000 for posts.

Since the NEF's inception, nearly over

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<< NEC Continued from page 3

\$9 million has been provided in direct financial assistance to American and SAL members as well as Posts. All contributions are deposited in a special account and used exclusively to meet a member's most urgent needs. Not one donated dollar is used for fundraising or administrative costs. The NEF has kept

damaged posts from closing and helped American Legion and SAL members rebuild their lives after disasters.

National has asked Departments to contribute to the NEF fund and has set goals for each Department. Florida's goal is usually between \$30,000 and \$35,000. The American Legion's National Emergency

Fund provided \$367,375 in grants to Legionnaires and posts in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico after Hurricane Harvey, Irma and Maria struck those areas, respectively. Any donations can be made out to the NEF and sent to P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

Celebrations and Prayers

Barry Roberts, Chaplain

chaplain@legionmail.org



It is hard to believe it is already November 2020. Many things going on as we celebrate Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. The upcoming elections will have a great impact as to the future of our nation so please be aware of what the candidates' views are. Your vote matters!

Let us continue to pray for our military and their families that are serving and are separated over the Holiday season. Let us

also continue to pray for all the veterans and their families that are still struggling with physical and emotional pain and the loss of loved ones that remain in our hearts but have gone to be with the Lord.

As part of our Challenge 22 efforts I have been in contact with the American Association of Christian Counselors and we are being offered a faith based Mental Health Life Coach Certificate through Legion Church. It is about 45 hours of online training and the \$2400 tuition has been waived, so the only cost is a \$54.00 admin fee. I already have several people from around the state enrolled in the program. If you would like to know more please email me at bwroberts@rocketmail.com or call me at 863-661-9999.

Let's be proactive together in preserving "For God and Country" and let's be proactive in reaching out into our communities and serving our veterans and their families. Let's be proactive together and go help somebody....

I am here for you, I encourage you to go to The American Legion Department of Florida Chaplains' Facebook page, feel free to like and share. www.facebook.com/floridalegionchaplains

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Membership, Upcoming Event Ideas, & Oratorical

Marie Conti, Northern Area Commander

northernarea@legionmail.org



Congratulations to Posts 166, 210, 215, and 259; all who have exceeded 100% Membership!

Congratulations to all Posts that have met or exceeded their 55%

goal! Our Next Membership goals are 65% goal before November 5, 2020, and 75% before December 2, 2020. Keep up the Great Work!

As a reminder, please remember to wear a mask and follow social distancing guidelines when attending or hosting events. Below are some event ideas to

consider over the next few months:

- An early bird dinner – give them an incentive to renew in advance.
- Veterans in the Classroom - contact the local schools to see if they are allowing visitors. Veterans in the Classroom is a great way to teach the children about Americanism and history. Plus, being around the children is very invigorating for everyone.
- Veterans Day is November 11th. Please remember to honor our Veterans. Is your Post having a Veterans Day event? Is your community having a Veterans Day Parade? This is a day for The American Legion to really shine.
- Thanksgiving and Christmas are just

around the corner. What events are being planned by your Post? Maybe a dinner? Maybe a party? Suggest inviting some of our Veterans who are living in the local Nursing Homes or maybe even the local homeless shelter.

- Now is the time to start planning for a Children's Christmas Party. Suggest inviting the children of those Veterans who are living in the homeless shelters.
- This is also the time to start planning for an Open House in January. This is a Fantastic way to let the community know who we are, what we do, and what we stand for and recruit new members for the entire Legion Family.

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<< Northern Area Continued from page 4

It is very important that when you schedule events to get the entire Legion Family onboard, so it is a success for all.

Remember that the Oratorical Competition dates will be here in a blink of an eye. Competitions must be completed no later than January 17, 2021 for Post Level; no later than February 7, 2021 for District Level; and no later than February 21, 2021

for Area Level. Department Oratorical Competition is scheduled for March 13, 2021, at Department Headquarters. Please check the Department website for any & all updates.

Southern Area News

Paul Bosco, Southern Area Commander

southernarea@legionmail.org



This month brings an end to daylight savings time. The third of this month is voting day, get out and vote. The eleventh is Veterans Day, we may need to get creative to celebrate. The last big

holiday is Thanksgiving Day on the twenty-sixth.

The membership goal is 65%, to be achieved on November 5th. Let's get out there and call those who are slow to pay. We need to get out there and get all the districts out of the red zone, and those who are in the yellow and orange zone into the green. December is rapidly sneaking up on us. Some of our Posts are less than four or five members away from 100%. Get on My Legion.org and go to the 0400's and

call those Legionnaires in your local area. Let's blow the top off membership in the Southern Area this year.

We have been working on the Southern Area Ball. We have the date, place, and time. It will be on January 30th again this year at Post 0142 in Pompano Beach. Flyers and additional information will be coming soon. It is hard to plan with so many unknowns. I hope to make this year's Ball as good as last years or even better.

Yellow Ribbon Support for Local Unit

Johnny Castro, District 11 Commander

11thdistrict@legionmail.org



During the Back to School Bash held in August at the Callaway National Guard Armory in West Palm Beach, I found out a local Army National Guard Unit, the 1218th Transportation

Company was in the process of deploying with just 120 days to prepare. This was the same Unit tasked in overseeing the testing COVID sites from Palm Beach down to Miami-Dade County since April.

We've also learned that they didn't have a location that would accommodate both the Soldiers and their families for their Yellow Ribbon event and adhering to the social distancing guidelines and to top it off, the State didn't have the funding to support the Yellow Ribbon to include the cost of the luncheon.

Long story short, the 11th District Judge Advocate Bob Jaegers was able to reach out to the National Croquet Center in

West Palm Beach in which they offered their venue for the event along with assisting with preparing the luncheon. Our incredible District came together to pay for the Yellow Ribbon event which included the cost of the food which was provided by Cheney Brothers at cost. The Palm Beach Zoo provided entry for free for the soldiers and their families.

The Unit buses were escorted the following day by the Patriot Guard, Nam Knights and Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO) to Palm Beach International airport. It does not end for the 11th District family, as we were appointed the Soldier and Family Readiness Group (SFRG) coordinator for the deployed unit, their families, and the rear detachment during their yearlong deployment.

Below is an observation from our newest Officer, Post 367 2nd Vice-Commander Seth Konigsberg:

As a longtime member of the American Legion as well as a newly elected 2nd Vice-Commander, I would like to share my observations of the recent Yellow Ribbon event honoring the 1218th

Transportation Company and how it impacted those involved. Amongst the more than 200 soldiers and their families in attendance, there was representation from several Posts within the 11th District. In addition, we heard from the unit's Commanding General who also spoke.

I think that the soldiers and their families felt at ease seeing all that was down for them on that day at the National Croquet Center. They all came together in honor of the soldiers who were about to be deployed and to be acknowledged, honored, and fed. I saw a few tears but for the most part, there was a lot of laughter, camaraderie, and even some friendly banter. Friends and families came together and while listening to the presentations and the speeches given, I was able to tell that all involved seemed to have a feeling of relief knowing that the entire day was all about them and to support them.

Continued on page 6>>



<< District 11 Continued from page 5

I believe the American Legion, led by our 11th District Commander, Johnny Castro, did an amazing job to help these soldiers and families know

that we are there for them, not just for the duration of their deployment, but always. The takeaway from these soldiers and families was that the American Legion is here to stay and

will always support them and, in my opinion, that is quite an impact.

Regards,
Seth D. Konigsberg



Increasing Post Membership

Jim Ramos, Northern Membership
teamramos@legionmail.org



Thanks to the 4th, 6th, 1st, 17th, 2nd and 5th Districts for making the 55% goal and the 3rd District just needs to catch up to make the next Goal of 65% which I know they can do. "We can do it together,"

call me if you need assistance. Please do not wait until it is too late. See the tips further down on the different types of recruiters and suggestions for you to interact with your community to increase membership.

We need to stay on top of membership because we must meet the Goals from Department. The membership timetable is to help each Post make their new goal. **Please Post Commander's send in your program's chairperson list to Department HQ, while not directly tied with Membership it will assist with Membership.**

Also, send in or use mylegion.org to submit membership every week to National, do not hold your membership.

First make a Membership Team at your Post for the following:

1. Reinstatements Team (3 Legionnaires who know membership minimum)
2. Renewal team (3 Legionnaires who know membership minimum)
3. Prospect team (3 Legionnaires who know membership minimum)
4. New Membership team (3 Legionnaires who know membership minimum)

A recruiter is a person whose job is to enlist or enroll people as employees, in the armed forces, or as members of an organization the American Legion.

We all are Active or Passive recruiter:

1. Recruit a friend, a neighbor or somebody who is a veteran
2. Just ask if they look like a Veteran
3. Show your pride by wearing your Legion gears (shirt, cap with the

Legion Logo)

4. Buddy Checks are working, please continue connecting with your members (Buddy Check FloridaLegion.org)

What is the Goal to get for November (65%) and your Post?

Setting the Goals: (specific dates and timetable) below:

1. Have a membership drive for renewal, new members and to reinstate members who have left.
2. Nov 3 is Election Day, do not forget to VOTE.
3. Nov 5 is the Department 65% goal, are you ready? Is your Post ready? Send in your membership before the deadline.
4. Nov 10 is the Marine Corps Birthday, celebrate your Marines members.
5. Nov 11 is Veterans Day, plan for all Veterans in your Post and Veterans in your community to visit.
6. Nov 16-22 is American Education week, organize volunteering at a local

Continued on page 7>>



<< Northern Membership Continued from page 7

- school.
- 7. Nov 22-28 is National Family week, help your Post families.
- 8. Nov 26 is Thanksgiving Day, plan a dinner for your members who do not have family.

- 9. December 7 is Pearl Harbor Day, see if you have some WWII Veterans and do something to say thank you.
- 10. Dec 25 is Christmas, do something for your members.
- 11. Dec 31 is New Year's Eve, 2020 cards are NO GOOD for 2021!

For more suggestions or if you have any questions, please contact me at phone number 352-226-4370 or email at jramos149@bellsouth.net I am here to help you and your Post be the best in the Department of Florida.

Membership, Buddy Checks, & Adopt-A-Highway

Ray Perez, Southern Membership
teamperez@legionmail.org



The 65% goal deadline is on the 5th of November. This is a great time to be holding membership drives during a Veteran's Day event at your Post. I am inserting a picture of the Gold Membership coin that each Post will receive if they reach 100% by December 31st, 2020. These will only be given out by the two Department membership Chairmen and the Department Commander and Area or Zone Commanders.

Coin Front



Coin Back



November is a great time to send out personalized renewal letters from the Post. Let them know what your plans are for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. Don't forget to include the measures the Post is taking to ensure their safety using the CDC guidelines.

Buddy Checks are essential during the Holiday Season, not all of us have family around us. Remember that when you're trying to decide whether the Post should

be open or not during the holidays. Many times, the Post is their home and a way of celebrating the holidays.

I have heard a few Posts that have developed the Adopt-A-Highway program with the Department of Transportation. They are back up and running. The clean-up is a lot easier during the winter months.

For your information I have also included the QR Code, on page 18, for members to renew online. The QR Code is also on the Department Membership Facebook Page. This code takes them directly to the website where all they have to do is enter their last name and member ID then follow the prompts on their phone along with their credit card.

Merry Go Round & ALR Summit

Jim Wineland, American Legion Riders
legionriders@legionmail.org



Well, we should find out today who won the Merry Go Round Trophy. Will Sonny have to go on another road trip again, we will know today. I hope everyone enjoyed the new program tracker that we have adopted, if not, please let us know your thoughts. We are planning on using the same rules and program for the Round Robin.

It is final, we will hold the Summit at Avanti Palms Resort and Conference Center, 6515 International Drive, Orlando, Florida 32819. This is the same hotel I

mentioned in last month's article, and yes, they will have fire pits. We have negotiated an \$87 per night rate which includes breakfast. You can start making your reservations on Monday November 2 through December 31st. AAA will be handling all the reservations for us through Laura Lyden at 904-543-6864. There will be two hospitality rooms on the main floor and four hospitality suites available to the group. One of the suites will be the ALR Department's sponsored by ALR District 15. They will receive the room at no cost because of their winning performance in the last Round Robin.

The summit format will mirror last years with and few more items to be confirmed. We will have the same topics with a few changes with instructors. We will add an active demonstration of the

current program we are using to track our performance with the Merry go Round and Round Robin. We will keep you posted on other changes we will be making as the Summit comes together.

As I have mentioned before, Bev and I are looking for a little help. We are a little ahead of the schedule because we moved unused plans from last year to this year, but we need more individuals to get involved and ready to step up as the needs of the program change.

Again, Thank You for all your Efforts!

We already have our schedule put together for next year. More info coming. Here is our tentative schedule for next year for your review and comments

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<<American Legion Riders Continued from page 7

- November 5-8, Fall Conference – Cancelled
- February 3, Summit - Meet & Greet 6P – 8P
- February 4, 5, & 6, Summit - Classroom, we may add AM Sunday for Road Captain Training
- April 3, Children & Youth Picnic at American Legion Post #1, Titusville, Florida, 12P to 6PM

- April, all month, Round Robin, PVR/ SPI
- April 18, Meet & Greet - Marathon & Pensacola FL
- April 19-23, North & South - In-State Unity Rides
- April 24, In-State-Rally - Harley South Kissimmee FL
- June 16-19, Department Convention

Beverly and I would like to thank each of you for the support we received this last year! Thank You for what you do, and we are proud to be part of your Leadership Team of such a great group!

Americanism Commission

Kurt Gies, Americanism

americanism@legionmail.org



Operation Warp Speed: If you, or anyone you know, has ever tested positive for the COVID-19, please consider donating your plasma to help others. Donations can be done via

appointment at the local blood mobiles you see around town or in front of your local American Legion Post.

Strategies to reduce the viral burden include Convalescent Plasma, as documented in a study published in Journal of the American Medical Association in August. The plasma comes from patients who have recovered from COVID-19 and who have produced antibodies in their blood that can fight the coronavirus.

The study showed that in those patients with severe cases of COVID-19 receiving convalescent plasma, 91.3% experienced clinical improvement — compared to 68.2% of patients not receiving Convalescent Plasma. The study also showed that Convalescent Plasma is the fastest way to clear the body of coronavirus infection. The coronavirus was undetectable within 72 hours in patients participating in the study who were treated with convalescent plasma.

Therefore, in cooperation with the Corona virus Task Force, the DOD/DHS agencies' Operation Warp Speed, along with our local One Blood donations centers, The American Legion in Florida has committed to helping wherever possible. By donating blood, you will automatically be screened to see if you have the virus antibodies. If so, we highly encourage you to set an appoint to donate your plasma. This could easily save a life, so please consider do so.

SIGN UP TODAY TO GIVE BACK TO THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLUNG TO RECOVER

FROM COVID-19!

Legacy Scholarships: The National Legacy Scholarship annual awards list recently was published for the 35 students who received over \$650,000 in scholarships from the Legacy scholarship fund. The awards were made students who had a veteran parent who was rated at least 50%. This year's winners were in just 19 of our 55 Departments. On that list, there were six Departments who had more than one winner. But what is more striking is the fact that Florida did not have a single winner.

So the question posed is WHY NOT? The most likely answer is that we are not doing our job to get the word out and advertising these scholarships are available to our Florida students. Contact your local high schools and let them know these scholarships are available to qualified students who have a Post 9/11 Veteran parent that is rate at 50% or greater. Let's make 2021 the year our Florida kids are duly honored.

Department	Number of scholarship winners	Total awarded within Dept
North Carolina	5	\$100,000
Georgia	3	\$60,000
Texas	3	\$60,000
Maryland	3	\$60,000
New York	3	\$60,000
Illinois	3	\$60,000
Washington	2	\$40,000
FLORIDA	0	\$0



Baseball Bulletin

Terry Phillips, Baseball
baseball@legionmail.org



Well the Holiday season is just around the corner and with the crazy year we've had we could all use some holiday festivities and cheer. As we try to get back on track with our lives and programs, one thing

to remember is this summer has been tough on our youth. They have been cloistered and inactive from most everything they are used to doing. I continually get calls from parents, players and coaches telling how much they missed playing Legion Baseball this past season and they are bouncing off the walls with all the lack of exercise and games.

We are preparing for the 2021 Legion season; the Executive Baseball Committee has met this past month and the whole state is itching to

get baseball up and running. I will be attended District Meetings and reaching out to the posts about new teams and returning teams in both the Jr. and Sr. Divisions for this upcoming 2021 season. In the meantime, if you want more information and have some questions about our program, please contact me or the Department Programs Director and I will get back to you quickly. January 1 team registration begins and that will be here very soon, so I am asking you all to get onboard and let's get these kids back active and on the field.

The Fight Is In Us

Ray Perez, Blood Donor
teamperez@legionmail.org



The US Government wants to team up with local civic organizations and businesses to maximize collection of COVID Convalescent Plasma (CCP) as part of

the national response to help fight the pandemic. CCP is being utilized for the development, testing and manufacture of vaccines, as well as for the development, testing and manufacture of therapeutics. CCP Coordinator's in several major U.S. cities Nationwide have partnered with local Blood Centers and local hospitals to work on eligible donor identification to

spread the word and encourage them to donate their plasma.



Promoting Awareness:

You can help by communicating our need for plasma donations through your established networks. The official campaign is "The Fight Is In Us." We have digital files available to share promoting the campaign and website thefightisus.org. Potential avenues for distributing the

campaign information include:

- Newsletters
- Brochures
- Social Media
- Websites
- Events
- Community Signs

Hosting a Blood/Plasma Drive:

You can help by opening your facility and hosting a blood/plasma drive. Hosting a blood/plasma drive is completely safe during the pandemic. The blood center you partner with will still exercise all the same precautions they do at their own fixed sites. The mobile drives appeal to more donors by eliminating most of the travel.



Employment Awards Deadline

Dusty Douglas, Employment
employment@legionmail.org

December 19, 2020 is just around the corner. Do you know why this date is important?

December 19, 2020 is the deadline for the below Employment Programs Awards.

- **National Employer of The Disabled Award**
- **Employer of Veterans Award**
 - o Small (50 or fewer employees)
 - o Medium (51 – 200 employees)
 - o Large (201 or more employees)
- **Employer of Older Workers Award**

• **Employment Service Awards**

Recognizing a local employer or employment service office for these awards is a good way to promote your Post and let the community know you recognize your community's support of Veterans.

Submit your awards packages by mail to:

American Legion Dept. of Florida
Attn: Programs Director
PO Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32854

Or fax to 407-299-0901

For information on the awards and the forms needed for the nomination packages go to www.floridalegion.org. Click on PROGRAMS & SERVICES – click on EMPLOYER AWARDS – SELECT DESIRED AWARD – CLICK ON DOWNLOAD APPLICATION to find the required nomination forms and information.

Remember what is NEEDED are 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.



*Covid-19 Line of Duty Deaths***Darryl Bass, Law & Order**laworder@legionmail.org

Facebook's "The Officer Down Memorial Page" had a recent article about First Responders who have died during the Corona Virus Pandemic. A report predicts Covid-19 could double the overall line of duty deaths among first responders this year. Our Firefighters, Paramedics, and Law Enforcement Officers are risking their lives by continuing to perform their duties in our communities. Contact with the people they have sworn to protect are leading them to line of duty deaths. If you could ask them if knowing how

contagious the virus is if they would continue to risk their lives the answer would be a resounding, "YES!"

The report stated that so far during the pandemic just over one hundred Law Enforcement Officers have made the ultimate sacrifice at the hands of this deadly virus. Reported deaths of Paramedics and other First Responders (Firefighters, Paramedics, Nurses, etc..) are as follows to date: paramedics thirty-eight, firefighters forty-five and there isn't a report for nurses but I remember from Television News coverage from New York City during the first months of the

pandemic that many hospital workers had lost their lives in their battle to care for their patients. Considering these statistics, remember we are not over this pandemic. If your Law & Order Chairman is planning a First Responder of the Year ceremony, please continue to follow CDC guidelines. Or for that matter at any of our American Legion functions we should maintain safety standards. Salute to All, For God and Country.

I recently lost access to my e-mail account. I am completely unaware of how that happens. So please use this e-mail to contact me. cmbass43@hotmail.com.

*ROTC/JROTC/JSSP Bulletin***Loretta Young, ROTC/JROTC/JSSP**jrotc@legionmail.org

The Annual JSSP Conference was held virtually on September 26th alongside with the Americanism Conference. The JSSP Conference was held prior to the Joint Conference for the National Staff and Department Chairmen.

We also had an afternoon meeting to further discuss program details. The main discussion was on the 2020-2021

National Competition Postal Match which went online September 1st. The focus was on the registration of the teams and the response throughout the country due to the COVID19 pandemic.

The general understanding throughout the country has been slow due to the closing of many schools and the restrictions in place due to the virus. There was much discussion on the online application registration along with the required background check and Safe Sport Training. The Team Coach must have this completed prior to the signing off on the Post Affiliation Form by the Sponsoring Post. The teams that have a coach from the schools or a private club would be

responsible for this training and process, however, in the case of a post that has a team, the online application will have a link to complete the background check and the Risk Management Training.

The suggestion was to form private clubs to fill the gap that has resulted from the disruption due to our current conditions. As of this writing, Florida does not have any teams registered. Emails were sent out to all District Chairmen to follow up with the posts in their Districts to get teams involved. Let's all work together to build our youth and keep them moving forward. Thanks to all who are supporting our youth programs.

*Did you know The Department of Florida has 2 Medical Scholarships?***Shirley Douglas, Scholarships**scholarships@legionmail.org

I need your help in promoting The American Legion Department of Florida's Medical and Nursing School Scholarships.

1. Medical School

- a. One scholarship award of \$2,750 is awarded every year.
- a. A candidate must be:
 - i. A U.S. Citizen or permanent Florida resident
 - ii. A student in an accredited

Florida Medical School/Program

2. Nursing School

- a. One scholarship award of \$2,750 is awarded every year.
- b. A candidate must be:
 - i. A U.S. Citizen or permanent Florida resident
 - ii. A student in an accredited Florida Nursing School/Program

For information on the scholarships and the forms needed for the application packages go to www.floridalegion.org. Click on SCHOLARSHIPS -- SELECT DESIRED SCHOLARSHIP -- CLICK ON DOWNLOAD APPLICATION to find

the required Application forms and information.

Deadline to submit the scholarship applications is April 1, 2021. Submit the application packages by mail to:

American Legion Dept. of Florida
Attn: Programs Director
PO Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32854
Or fax to 407-299-0901

Thank you for your assistance in getting the word out about these two scholarships.

PROJECT: VETRELIEF BULLETIN

AN OFFICIAL PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

HELP US RAISE AWARENESS FOR VETERAN SUICIDE

We encourage you to get involved with our upcoming Challenge 22 Events through our Suicide Prevention Initiative. These events are geared towards raising money and identifying solutions to end veteran suicide.

In addition to the walk itself, Veteran Service Organizations will also be in attendance to promote how they are impacting the veteran community with mental health programs and services. We firmly believe there are multiple forms of successful treatments for mental health. From K9 companion organizations to representatives from various counseling or therapy facilities, we know that it will take us all working together towards ending this staggering statistic.

We hope that you will be able to show your support for our veterans by attending our Challenge 22 events. **We got their six, do you?**

NOVEMBER

14 4th Annual Post 63 Challenge 22 Event

Winter Garden, FL

For **more information or to become a sponsor**, please visit www.WGAL63.org.

To **register to walk**, visit <https://bit.ly/2GhziSt>.

22 13th District Challenge 22 Event

Port Charlotte, FL

All day event starting at 10:00AM with the National Anthem and followed by 2.2 mile walk, live music, raffles, giveaways, and cookout. Bring your Legion Banners to show your support during the walk!

JANUARY

09 Post 69 Challenge 22 Event

Avon Park, FL

Details coming soon!

VIRTUAL CLASS



PROJECT: VetRelief is please to offer an online Advocate Training course on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 10:00AM. The class will be held via Zoom and led by the PROJECT: VetRelief Team.

Please help us share this information with anyone who might be interested in learning about PROJECT: VetRelief or becoming an Advocate within your Post. **REMEMBER** - ANY Legion Family Member may attend (*this includes Auxiliary and SAL members*).

To attend, **you must pre-register**, no later than Wednesday, November 4th. The course has limited availability, and attendance is FREE of charge. Please note, attendees will need to have a Zoom account to attend the webinar.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

REGISTER USING THE LINK BELOW:
<https://bit.ly/3kFvr0U>

COVID-19 CASES CONTINUE TO RISE

Since the end of March, PROJECT: VetRelief has seen a tremendous increase of financial assistance cases for veterans and their families due to the coronavirus pandemic.

PROJECT: VetRelief has provided support to **210 veterans** who experienced temporary or permanent layoffs due to the coronavirus by giving out **\$167,305.03**.

Check out the table on the right, as it breaks down what type of assistance has been given out to these veterans who need our help.

COVID-19 TOTALS		
Shelter	125	\$133,338.99
Food	47	\$10,300.00
Utilities	38	\$23,666.04
TOTAL	210	\$167,305.03

It is very apparent that our veteran community still needs us to get them through these difficult times! However, our funding is quickly going away and many of our fundraising events have been canceled in order to remain compliant to safety orders from local and state governments.

Our program will not be able to keep up with the necessary demand of providing support if we do not secure future funding!

Now, more than ever, we are relying on the entire Legion Family to do what they can to support our program. Whether you are able to hold a socially-distanced fundraiser or make a personal donation, **it will take us all working together to provide the help our veterans need!**

Donate now:
www.projectvetrelief.org/donate



SUPPORT CASES
*Numbers reflect PVR Cases ONLY

JULY 2020 - SEPT 2020

98 families helped

\$89,396.94 amount distributed

Refuting BSA Bankruptcy Filing & Camporee

Chris Ragusa, Scouting
scouting@legionmail.org



Hopefully your Post Scouting units are getting back to program activities on a more normal basis. I know that in the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council, we've had to limit the size

and scope of our events, but they have all been well attended by Scouts and their families. Everyone wants to safely resume camping, hiking, and enjoying the outdoor educational program that Scouting offers.

Two items for this month.

1. Bankruptcy Protection/Class

Action Lawsuit. As American Legion Scouting leaders, you need to be able to address the false narrative about the BSA bankruptcy filing, and the class action lawsuit filed on behalf of victims of abuse while participating in the Scouting program. With the November 16 deadline to join the lawsuit, it will be a news topic until then. Here is a series of "elevator speeches" that can be used to refute false information.

The BSA is going bankrupt. False. BSA National is a separate legal entity from the local BSA councils. BSA National assets are not the local BSA council assets and vice versa. BSA National filed for bankruptcy protection in order to ensure that all claims by victims of abuse while members of the BSA movement are compensated, and that the Scouting movement can continue. The bankruptcy court approved a structured settlement for those found to have been abused by leaders or adults while members of the Boy Scouts.

The American Legion posts that charter Scout units can be held financially liable in the class action lawsuit. False. American Legion posts sign a charter... basically an agreement to conduct the program based upon the BSA mission statement... with the local BSA council. Since the local councils are not part of the lawsuit, the American Legion posts are not part of the lawsuit.

It happened once; it can happen again. False. Most of the abuse claims date back to the 1960s, '70s and '80s, before the Boy Scouts adopted youth protection policies such as mandatory criminal background checks for all leaders, mandatory reporting and required training in youth protection. Changes to how the Boy Scouts now protect our youth ensure that these incidents can no longer occur. All of the volunteer leaders are now trained in Youth Protection, instructed on the reporting requirements (including law enforcement), and have had a national background check before having direct contact with our Scouts. Two Deep Leadership is enforced, and no one-on-one contact between non-related adults and Scouts is permitted.

The BSA is trying to hide from their responsibility to the victims. False. BSA National ran a nearly \$7 million awareness campaign encouraging victims of abuse to come forward. The campaign included mail and email to those who have filed complaints, as well as national television and print advertisements. The notification program is expected to reach more than 100 million people, including more than 95% of the primary target audience of men 50 and older.

2. Proposed Cub Scout Camporee for American Legion or SAL-chartered

packs. Cub Scout Pack 1381, chartered to American Legion Post 138 in Port Tampa City, FL, will host a Cub Scout Camporee for Florida American Legion or SAL-chartered Cub Scout packs on MacDill AFB in Tampa, FL from Friday, February 5 – Sunday, February 7, 2021. The cost per participant for this event is only \$20, which includes a beachfront cookout for lunch and a catered barbeque dinner on Saturday. Activities will include a tour of the MacDill AFB Control Tower and ATC training simulator, a four-station rotation at the Flightline Fire and Rescue station, a tour of the Maritime Patrol hanger and their patrol craft, a visit by the 6th Security Forces armory for a weapons orientation, and a demonstration by the 6th SFS K9 section on dog handling. We will also turn part of the base range into a BB gun and archery range for Shooting Sports qualifications. I am the COR for Pack 1381, and the POC for this event, so please contact me for more information about this opportunity. Yours in Scouting...





Benefits and Health Care Contacts

Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements
veteransbenefits@legionmail.org

This list of was taken from the Florida Veterans' Benefits Guide 2020 Page 28

BENEFITS AND HEALTH CARE CONTACTS

REFERENCE	PHONE	WEBSITE
US Dept of Veterans Affairs (VA)	(800)827-1000	www.va.gov/www.vba.va.gov
Veterans Health Care	(877)222-8387	www.va.gov/healthbenefits
St. Petersburg VA Regional	(800)827-1000	www.benefits.va.gov/stpetersburg
Florida National Guard	(904)823-0319	https://state.nationalguard.com/florida
Military Funeral Honors	(800)342-9647	https://mfh.dmdc.osd.mil/mfh
Barrancas National Cemetery, Pensacola	(850)453-4846	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/barrancas.asp
Bay Pines National Cemetery	(727)319-6479	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/baypines.asp
Cape Canaveral National Cemetery	(321)383-2638	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/capecanaveral.asp
Florida National Cemetery Bushnell	(352)793-7740	www.cem.va.gov/CEMs/nchp/florida.asp
Jacksonville National Cemetery	(904)766-5222	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/jacksonville.asp
Sarasota National Cemetery	(877)861-9840	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/sarasota.asp
South Florida National Cemetery, Lake Worth	(561)649-6489	www.cems/nchp/southflorida.asp
St Augustine National Cemetery	(904)766-5222	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/staugustine.asp
Tallahassee National Cemetery	(850)402-8941	www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/tallahassee.asp
Returning Veterans	(800)827-1000	www.oefoif.va.gov
TRICARE	(800)444-5445	www.tricare.mil
Gulf War Veterans	(800)749-8387	www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar
Women Veterans	(855)829-6636	www.va.gov/womenvet
Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve	(800)336-4590	www.esgr.mil
National VA Homeless Hotline	(877)424-3838	www.va.gov/homeless/nationalcallcenter.asp
VA eBenefits Portal	(800)827-1000	www.ebenefits.va.gov
VA Home Loan Guaranty	(877)827-3702	www.benefits.va.gov/homeloans
National Veteran Crisis Hotline	(800)273-8255	www.mentalhealth.va.gov
White House VA Hotline	(855)948-2311	https://www.va.gov/ve/whvaHotline.asp
Florida Relay Services	Dial 7-1-1	www.ftri.org/floridarelay



VA C&P Meetings

Alan Cohen, VA&R
var@legionmail.org



I sincerely hope this finds everyone well and continuing to safeguard their health in the face of the pandemic. There's no substitute for good health.

By the time you read this we will have completed our Post Service Officer one-day webinar, led by our partners at the FDVA. Our deepest gratitude for what they do and congratulations to all who attended. As always, Post Service Officers are a priceless asset to the Post and the veteran community.

I remain in contact with the VA hospitals as well as our reps - the hospitals are continuing with their plan to phase volunteers back into service. Slowly. At the appropriate time there will be some additional training and reassignments as

volunteers once again return to service. As of now no date has been pinpointed on when that will be.

During these times it's more important than ever to be aware that if a veteran needs to make or reschedule an appointment for healthcare he or she can do so. As long as the veteran is registered for VA healthcare, he or she can either call their provider or schedule that appointment online at www.va.gov. Virtual as well as in-person appointments are accepted in either case. Virtual appointments for routine issues or follow-ups that are conducted confidentially and having them at home is convenient.

As to be expected there's been an unusually high rate of "no shows" for veterans who have scheduled C&P exams as part of their claim process. This is due to the current COVID19 crisis as well as that veterans often need to travel some distance to complete this exam. In line with those concerns the VA has opened up more locations at which these exams are being conducted in person. Many locations can be found at www.benefits.va.gov/

benefits/offices.asp.

Also, discussions are being held which examine the possibility of the VA arranging these important C&P exams at select American Legion Posts. This is in the spirit of bringing the examiners closer to veterans. I've reached out to the VA for detailed information.

Lastly, veterans should be aware that the VA has been working to make it easier for veterans to view and/or manage personal information by migrating much of it to VA.gov. As of now veterans can use that website to check claims status, direct deposit information and even order hearing aid batteries. In the coming months, they will be able to manage education benefits, add or remove dependents, get a certificate of eligibility for home-buying and access applications for adapted housing grants.

As always I will pass along information as it becomes available and in closing, I once again wish you all well.

Ideology of a Female Veteran

Deb Wheeler, Women Veterans
womenveterans@legionmail.org



I have been a member of this wonderful organization for 25 years! For a long time, I have been told by other veterans that all veterans are the same and should be treated the same. And yes,

for the most part, we all proudly served, took our oath of enlistment, swore to support and defend the constitution of the United States of America, attended basic training, etc.

However, we are not the same physically for sure! Women veterans are twice as likely to commit suicide, more likely to be homeless, more prone to rape, harassment, and PTSD due to MST than that of our male veterans. Reports of sexually based issues, against women on

active duty, continues to rise daily. Chain of command continues to ignore and/or dismiss allegations. Some are discharged with inaccurate or made up diagnoses just to get them out of their hair. This coincides with less than honorable discharge, medical discharge which could deny them access to VA resources, health care, counseling, and possible VA compensation. The incidents in Ft Hood did uncover coverups, problems with reporting of sexual reporting, chain of command issues, etc. Imagine the numbers on of all our military worldwide. We may have a BIG problem when supervisors, senior NCOs and officers want to ignore the problems and just want the issues to just go away.

So, I beg to differ that all veterans are the same - female veterans are mothers, daughters, granddaughters, wives, aunts, nieces, and great grandmothers. What would your life be like if your mother, daughter, granddaughter, wife, aunt, niece,

or great grandmother was a victim? You can figure that out yourself.

FLORIDA SAMPL
 THE AMERICAN LEGION
 FLORIDALEGION.ORG

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

The American Legion
 official license plate.

Now available at your local tag office!



Department Historian Wins Contest

Department of Florida
mail@floridalegion.org

Dept Historian Wins 1st in 2020 Contest of The American Legion Media Alliance

Congratulations to Department Historian, Edward Lewis, for winning first place in the 2020 contest of The American Media Alliance, in the "Visual Media Campaign-Department" category.

Lewis was selected out of nearly 100 entries in this year's contest. Judging was initially set to take place at the National Spring Meetings, National Convention or Fall Meetings, but with the current pandemic, National Headquarters staff served as judges, approved by a three-member TALMA task force and by the full commission at the last virtual commission meet.

Again, Congratulations on a job well done!



Dave Miller Recognized for Neighborhood Watch

Department of Florida
mail@floridalegion.org

Congratulations to Dave Miller on his special recognition from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office on October 3, 2020. Sheriff Bob Gualtieri presented Miller with a certificate in recognition of outstanding service and dedication to his Neighborhood Watch Community.

Miller was very concerned about the youth and elderly in his community, especially with recent storms, the COVID pandemic and rising crime rates. Being a man of action, Miller enlisted a few veterans to start patrolling the neighborhood, exchanging contact

information among them, and partnering with the local Sheriff's Department to perform safety checks during the night.

Miller went a step further by also setting up protocols for those who may need medical assistance or help obtaining food and supplies or even getting to stores. Miller says, "it's almost like our buddy system in the military when I served in the United States Marine Corps."

Miller and residents of his neighborhood can now relax with more confidence that they are prepared for any disastrous events, emergencies, or social injustices.

Miller has been helping veterans at the VA

and in his community for more than thirty years. "I took an OATH in the military to protect my Country from ALL ENEMIES both FOREIGN and DOMESTIC as long as I live. God Bless our Country and ALL Americans", states Miller.

Congratulations, Dave Miller, we thank you for your continued service and dedication. You are a shining example among us.



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

POST EVERLASTING



Ernie A. Florig

It is with great sadness as we mourn the loss of our brother and friend, Ernie Florig. Ernie played a vital role in The America Legion, Department of Florida 5th District for many years and for that we are forever grateful and will never forget his faithful service and sacrifice.



EASTERN AREA



Country Hoedown

FEBRUARY 20TH 2021

POST 117

NOON TILL???

Country Vittles



Live Music



Tickets \$20
Couples \$30

Proceeds to benefit COTA

Local Hotels

Holiday Inn
Express & Suites Palm Bay
1206 MALABAR ROAD SE
PALM BAY, FLORIDA 32907
321-220-2003

\$ 99.00 plus tax

Per night

Mention: Eastern Area Ball

AL Post 117

*Change is good. Or is it?***Meri West, Oratorical**oratorical@legionmail.org

In September I attended the Oratorical part of the National Americanism Conference via Zoom. One Department had put forth an amendment asking that the Oratorical eliminate the Assigned Topic portion of the contest. They felt it made the contest too difficult and harder to get higher rates of student participation.

I voted in favor of keeping the Assigned Topic as I believe it was the intent of William Kitchen, who founded the program, to make the contest challenging. Part of the prestige of having competed and possibly won, is that the contest is so very challenging. Every year at the National Contest there are very qualified students vying for the top prize and that is proof to me that they are stepping up to meet the challenge. In a year when the National office increased the awards, I am opposed to lowering the standards. At the end of the vote, the overwhelming majority expressed similar sentiments.

This got me thinking...when is change a good thing and when is it not? Certainly it's inevitable. For example, changing the amount of the award for the Oratorical is a good thing. But eliminating the Assigned Topic, I did not think was a good thing. Rick Newman of Yahoo Finance wrote that change can teach you to adapt and be resilient but it can also be stressful, costly and destructive. If you tire of your car every 3 years, that could be costly. But, changing your shoes and underwear is a good thing. Your feet and your partner will appreciate it. Change for the sake of change, without understanding the cause and effect of it, is questionable at best.

Whether we like it or not, as we grow and age, we are forced to change and adapt. Technology forces us to change how we communicate and do business. I used to be fascinated that we could FAX a document to another country over the phone lines. My sister and I were using

a pulley on a clothes line to send hand written messages back and forth to our houses when we lived across the street from each other. But I did learn to FAX and email and Instant Message people as the technology advanced with my age. I even learned to "date" using America Online's Match.com back in the 1990s! That is the subject of a very bad (okay, pathetic) short story. The relentless pursuit of changing to be better or best can be exhausting. But, never changing is equally daunting.

As Legionnaires, we should adapt to the changing world a little, even if we feel inclined to resist. It's important for our membership that we attract younger people and more of them to carry on the legacy of the American Legion. As Oratorical chairmen, you must adapt to use social media and technology to find new ways to reach the students who can make our programs successful. That means you have to learn to use email or if you don't, delegate to someone who does. We cannot succeed in our mission to support youth who need this scholarship money to fund college if we resist change.

Remember getting instant cameras for every worthy occasion and running to drop off the film to get developed. Kodak failed to adapt to the digital world in film and photo processing and has struggled ever since to keep a relevant and sustainable business. They simply could not envision a world without 35mm film and it has cost them dearly. At its peak, Blockbuster owned 9000 stores and raked in a cool 3 billion dollars a year in profits, 800 million was just in late fees! Now, Blockbuster has closed every store but one and it is renting itself out on Airbnb for \$4.00 a night. My how things change. Let's not be Kodak or Blockbuster.

While I was researching the Oratorical awards back in its early days, I found this—the first national Oratorical winner was in 1938. The contest was held at the University of Oklahoma in Norman. John Janson, of Phoenix, Arizona won by just a fraction of a point, taking home an

engraved wristwatch, getting a four-day trip to Washington, DC and an invitation to appear at the American Legion National Convention.

In his winning oration, Janson said, in part: "This is the great challenge to American democracy today: To make democracy work; to keep a democratic, efficient, workable government that can cope with all the old and new problems and responsibilities forced upon us by the mechanization and industrialization of the Twentieth Century, and to keep in step with the boundless technological and scientific progress that is yet to come."

"It is our responsibility and must be our destiny to prove to ourselves and to a suffering and disillusioned world that democracy can exist, can grow, and can flourish in this modern age."

"This is not a responsibility that can be shouldered merely by fine words, and inspiring orations, but must be solved by hard work, by intelligent citizenship, by widespread public education, by constant vigilance, by rejection of old prejudices and outworn ideas, by a determination on the part of all the people to make democracy work so that their faith in democracy will be justified."

"It is too much to ask that we, in 1938, meet our problems as fearlessly, with as much determination and foresight, as those founding fathers met theirs?"



FLORIDA FLAG & EMBLEM
ONLINE STORE
floridalegionstore.org

Children & Youth

Les Martin, Children & Youth

cy@legionmail.org



I hope everyone took advantage of our Halloween Safety program with our newly designed coloring books. Thank you Carrie Kolze for the excellent work on the book.

Now that we are getting ready to enter the new year, let's look head at what is coming up for our Children & Youth. In January, registration for American Legion Baseball opens, January is also the deadline for Boys State registration fees, and the online registration opens for Delegates and Alternates. Don't forget that the Target Deadline for Shooting Sports in January 15th. All Posts should have completed their Oratorical competitions by the 17th. In February, the application and

fees open for the Florida Youth Law Cadet Program and the Area Competitions for Oratorical should be completed. Check the Department calendar for more information on specific dates and other information.

On March 1st, many of our applications are due. General Scholarships, ROTC Cadet of the Year Scholarship and Eagle Scout of the Year. Also, on March 13th, the Department Oratorical competition will be held at Department Headquarters. Our Post and District Children & Youth Chairman should be planning their events for Children & Youth Month in April. The Department Children & Youth is holding a Picnic on April 3rd, at Post 1 in Titusville. Each Post and District should look ahead at what they will be doing during April.

I have attended several District meetings this past month and will be attending many more this month. The big push for our Posts in each of the Districts is to get out and approach your local school

districts and seek out your candidate for the American Legion Teacher of the Year. With close to 300 Posts in Florida, we shouldn't have only a small handful of applications. Come on, make our job difficult and get your applications in. I know there are many qualified teaches in your local school districts that can earn this award. We also need more of our Posts submitting applications for "Best Post Children & Youth Program". Again, with nearly 300 Posts in Florida, we should be receiving more than a few applications. Otherwise, it tells us that not many Posts are doing a Children & Youth program. So come on, flaunt what your Post is doing for the kids. Be proud of your accomplishments.

Our Children & Youth coins are now available. They are available through the Department Emblem Sales or you can purchase them from me when I visit your District meeting or other events I plan on attending.



Order your 2020-2021 Children & Youth program coin today!

Support the Children & Youth Program with your purchase of 10 or more 2020-2021 Children & Youth Coins and take \$10 off your online order at floridalegionstore.org. Use the code CYSUPPORT at checkout, to save.

Coins are 1.5" in diameter and are nickel with gold and silver metal coating, with blue enamel fill.

Profits from the Children & Youth coins go directly in support of the Department of Florida, Children & Youth program. Coins

are now in-stock will begin shipping out immediately. They are also available for purchase from your Department Children & Youth Program Chair, Les Martin and will be on hand at the Children & Youth Picnic and Golf Tournament.



October 29, 2020
65% Target Report (Currently 64%)

4	Cherie Korn	70.47%
11	Johnny Castro	68.03%
6	Kurt Gies	66.59%
12	Dennis Mallon	65.89%
15	Bruce Carl	65.31%
1	Lamar Carroll	63.99%
9	Arthur Barber	61.72%
17	Jim Bowers	61.28%
8	Skip Felicita	61.20%
2	Roger Hewitt	60.92%
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