



A Message from the Department Commander

Jessica Moore, Commander

commander@floridalegion.org



Each month, we pause to recognize the pillars of our American Legion family—those who give their time, heart, and heritage to serve our mission and strengthen our community.

In July, we celebrated our Past Department Commanders (PDCs), whose mentorship and experience continue to guide us. In August, we honored the American Legion Auxiliary, whose timeless support and passion reflect the love and sacrifice of their service members.

This September, we turn our appreciation to the Sons of the American Legion (SAL)—the sons and

grandsons of our brothers and sisters who have worn the uniform with pride. These men carry forward a legacy of service, not through military enlistment, but through unwavering dedication to the values of patriotism, remembrance, and community.

Legacy in Action

SAL members embody the spirit of their forebears, honoring the sacrifices of veterans by volunteering, fundraising, and supporting youth programs. Whether it's organizing flag retirement ceremonies, assisting with post events, or mentoring young leaders, their presence is felt in every corner of our mission.

Unity and Service

The SAL reminds us that service doesn't end with discharge—it

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Submit Articles at

floridalegion.org/submit or legionlink@floridalegion.org

Questions? legionlink@floridalegion.org

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COMMANDER'S CHARITY: *Special Olympics*

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\$150,000 GOAL



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UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2025

1-30	Disaster Preparedness Month
1-30	Suicide Prevention Month
1-30	Service Dog Month
1	BE THE ONE Day
1	Labor Day (Dept HQ Closed) ★
1	Post Program Chair Form Due ★
1	Jr. Shooting Sport Club Registration Open ★
3	ALR: Chapter 136 Monthly Meeting
4	Membership Department 50% Target ★
4	Membership Department Zoom Meeting ★
4	Membership Early Bird Kick-Off ★
6	ALR: Chapter 316 Monthly Meeting
6	District 6: Meeting
10	ALR: Chapter 10 Meeting
11	Patriot Day
13	District 4: Meeting
13	ALR: Chapter 90 Halfway to St. Patrick's Day
14	ALR: Chapter 8 Meeting
15	Legion Link Articles Due for October ★
16	American Legion Day
17	Constitution/Citizenship Day
17	Office of the Secretary of Defense Birthday
17-23	Constitution Week
18	Air Force Birthday (1947)
18	Air National Guard Birthday (1947)
19	National POW/MIA Recognition Day
20	ALR POW/MIA Ceremony & 7 Bridges Run ★★
20	District 12: Meeting
20	District 8: Meeting
21	District 13: Meeting
22	First Day of Fall
22	PROJECT: VetRelief Golf Tournament ★★
25	District 5: Meeting
26-28	National Combined Americanism Conference ★
27	District 16: Meeting
28	Gold Star Mother's Day
29	VFW Day
30	Membership Post Highest Percentage Award (Dept) ★
30	District 7: Meeting

★ Commander attendance tentative.

★ Department of Florida event.

★ National event.

Events are subject to change. More details at floridalegion.org.

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continues through generations. Their commitment bridges the gap between past and future, ensuring that the stories of valor and sacrifice are never forgotten.

A Living Tribute

To every SAL member: thank you for being a living tribute to your fathers, mothers, grandparents, and all who served. Your dedication uplifts our organization and inspires us to keep building a stronger, more united Legion family.

Conflict Resolution

Bob Matheson, 1st Vice Commander

1stvice@legionmail.org



Conflict Resolution? Why would we possibly need that in the American Legion? I mean, we all get along at every Post, and there are never any problems. I only wish that were true. Recently, both the Riders and the Legion have started to add Conflict Resolution as part of our training. This is being done with the hope of alleviating some of the issues that we face at some of our Posts.

So, what is Conflict Resolution? It is the process of resolving disagreements and coming up with solutions that are mutually agreeable to multiple parties. It can be a formal or informal

#SALcares: A Motto with Meaning

Our Detachment Commander's motto, #SALcares, is more than a hashtag—it's a mission. His chosen charity, C.O.T.A. (Children's Organ Transplant Association), reflects his deep commitment to making a difference in the lives of families facing unimaginable challenges. His dedication to this organization is shown through this motto and the compassionate leadership he brings to every initiative. Through #SALcares, he reminds us that service is not just about honoring the past—it's about uplifting the present and investing in the future.

process that two or more parties use to find a peaceful solution to their dispute.

What do we find as the reason for most conflict?

- A Lack of Common Understanding
- Poor Communication Skills
- Unclear or Unfair Expectations
- Power Plays and Manipulations
- Leadership Styles
- Resistance to Change
- Differences in Personalities
- Working Styles

Once we identify the problem, how do we find a peaceful resolution?

- Stay Calm and Just Take a Moment

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<< 1st Vice Commander continued from page 2

- Find a Private, Comfortable Place to Discuss the Conflict
- Acknowledge That a Problem Exists
- Agree to Find a Resolution
- Work to Understand the Perspective of Everyone Involved

What are the next steps?

- Schedule a Meeting – Address the Problem
- Set Ground Rules – Engage with Respect, Listen to Others' Perspectives
- Describe the Conflict – Each Person Articulates the Issue &

Desired Outcome

- Restate for Understanding – Demonstrate Active Listening
- Summarize the Conflict – Seek Agreement
- Brainstorm Solutions – Collaborative Atmosphere to Discuss Solutions Positively
- Rule Out Unworkable Options – Eliminate Solutions That Participants Cannot Agree Upon
- Agree on Next Steps – Make Sure Everyone Is on the Same Page
- Close on a Positive Note – Shake Hands, Apologize, and Thank One Another

Remember the Golden Rule:

In everything, do unto others as you would have them do unto you

With everything that we do within the American Legion, we should all remember that we are there for the veterans and their families. The only way that we can accomplish this is to work as a family and respect each other.

If you think that you would like Conflict Resolution Training to be conducted in your District or Area, please just contact your District Commander and ask them to set the training up!

How to Run a Post Legion Meeting

Bruce Carl, 2nd Vice Commander

2ndvice@legionmail.org



By the time this article is published, schools will be back in session, and we will have finished up the National Convention in Tampa. I hope everyone had a great time and took advantage of all the free trainings that were made available. Your Department Leadership also attended the National Membership Workshop in Indianapolis. What a great training and networking event that was!

Speaking of training, the 7th District held a myLegion.org training in August that was very well attended, with about 40 people there. It covered how to register, membership

processing, where to find Post 400 members, where to find members who have paid online, assigning permissions, and several other topics. It was very informative and well received.

I want to use this month's article to focus on running a post meeting properly. There is a guideline in the *Officers' Guide and Manual of Ceremonies* on pages 68–72. The opening and closing of the meeting should be followed verbatim; however, the other items are subject to modification. Many of our openings and closings of the meeting are not in compliance with the manual, and this is where most of the mistakes occur. Here is an example of how the meeting should be conducted:

Opening the Meeting

- 1 rap of gavel – Getting ready to open the meeting. Everyone should take their seats. If you have a canteen, the Sgt-at-Arms should check that all members are in the meeting or have left the premises. The Sgt-at-Arms reports to the Commander that everything is secure.
- 3 raps of gavel – All rise, hand salute to the colors. Post CDR announces the Chaplain will offer prayer. All members and guests will uncover and remain uncovered through the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Prayer, POW/MIA empty chair ceremony (per Resolution 288, no longer needs to be said). You can start with "A POW/MIA empty

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chair..."

- Pledge of Allegiance (do not salute if speaking, per our military backgrounds).
- One rap – Seats membership.
- Roll call to determine quorum.
- Reading of previous minutes (optional, based on Post).
- Introduction of Past Commanders/guests (always start with lowest to highest rank): Sgt-at-Arms, Service Officer, Historian, Judge Advocate, Chaplain, Finance Officer, Adjutant, Vice CDR, CDR.
 - The same order applies at all levels. The NEC and ANEC should be introduced before the Dept CDR.
- Draping of the Charter Ceremony, if needed.
- Financial Report.
- Committee Reports.
- Unfinished Business.
- New Business.
- Good of the Legion.
- Any further business to come before the membership? (No motion to adjourn needed.)
- If no: 3 raps of gavel – Uncover, Chaplain will offer prayer,

Recover. Retrieval of POW/MIA flag (slow hand salute in unison with whomever is recovering the flag). Salute flag. Adjourn.

It is important to always have an agenda for your meetings. This will eliminate the meeting getting out of hand, as well as forgetting anything that may need to be brought up.

If you would like this training or any other training in person at your Post or District, please contact me. If you are having any training events, please let me know, and if my schedule allows, I would be happy to be there.

Our 106th National Convention in Tampa, Florida

Jim Ramos, NEC

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Thank you to everyone who attended our 106th National Convention in Tampa, Florida. For those who couldn't make it, you missed a fantastic opportunity to connect with Legionnaires from around the world and all 55 Departments. The last time the National Convention was held in Florida was in Orlando, August 29–September 4, 1997. That feels like a long time ago, but mark your calendars now—the next one will be in Louisville, KY, August 28–September 3, 2026. Not only is Convention fun, it's also a chance to attend classes and meetings, expand your knowledge of the National American Legion,

and share what you've learned with fellow Legionnaires.

The experience begins with registration and hotel check-in. If you're attending meetings or classes, remember the dress code: Legion Cap, Legion shirt, and slacks. If you are representing in an official capacity, a Coat and Tie is required. For those exploring and learning, business casual is fine—but never forget your Legion Cap, as it is the official uniform of the American Legion.

One of the highlights is the Exhibit Hall, filled with booths offering everything you need—and plenty you didn't know you needed! You're bound to find something for yourself or a gift for someone else. Each booth showcases something unique from different Departments

of the American Legion, reflecting the diversity of our organization. Take the time to talk with fellow Legionnaires, exchange ideas, and make new friends. And, of course, explore Tampa while you're there—but always travel in groups if you're unfamiliar with the area.

Between the Exhibit Hall, exploring the city, and evenings with friends and family, there's no shortage of memorable experiences. But the heart of Convention is the General Session, held over three days. Each day introduces new updates and important discussions, including:

1. Legislative issues and what's happening in Washington, DC.
2. Updates to VA&R.
3. Developments on employment, homelessness, veterans, and

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national cemeteries.

4. POW/MIA updates.
5. National security updates
6. Membership updates.
7. News from American Legion Riders across the nation.

This year, we also welcomed our

new National Commander, Dan K. Wilky, from the Department of Kansas.

If you missed Tampa, don't miss Louisville in 2026. It's an incredible experience you'll never forget.

The map of Tampa, event dates, and full schedule are available online—

visit the National Legion website for details.

I am Jim Ramos, your NEC from Florida, here to serve you. If you have any questions, email me at NEC@legionmail.org or call 352-226-4370 (please leave a message). Thank you.

Filing IRS Form 990 and Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT) Form 990-T

Shirley Douglas, Finance Officer

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All Posts have an annual filing requirement to file a Form 990 by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of the

Post's annual accounting

period. For example, if a Post's tax period ends December 31, the form must be submitted by May 15 of the following year. If the Post's tax period ends June 30, the form must be submitted by November 15 of that year. The Post's gross receipts determine which style of the Form 990 the Post must submit. ([Charities and Nonprofits](#) | [Internal Revenue Service](#) (irs.gov))

Note: The IRS may impose a penalty for failure to file a return.

1. The IRS may impose penalties on Post Officers who do not comply with a written demand that the information be filed.
2. A Post that fails to file the required informational return (Form 990,

Form 990-EZ, or Form 990-N) for three consecutive years will result in revocation of its tax-exempt status as of the filing due date for the third return.

To check your Post's tax-exempt status, you can go to: Tax Exempt Organization Search | Internal Revenue Service (irs.gov).

Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT)

Form 990-T, *Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return*, must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the tax year ends. This form is used by the Post if it has employee trusts forming part of pension, profit-sharing, and stock bonus plans, individual retirement arrangements, or unrelated business income subject to UBIT.

Even though The American Legion is recognized as tax-exempt, the Post still may be liable for tax on its unrelated business income. For most organizations, unrelated business income is income from a trade or business, regularly carried on, that is not substantially related to the charitable, educational, or other

purpose that is the basis for the organization's exemption. A Post that has \$1,000 or more of gross income from an unrelated business must file Form 990-T. A Post must pay estimated tax if it expects its tax for the year to be \$500 or more.

The obligation to file Form 990-T is in addition to the obligation to file the annual information return (Form 990-N, Form 990-EZ, or Form 990). If your Post operates a bar, dining facility, or rents its facilities to non-members, you may be subject to UBIT.

Per Florida Statutes, The American Legion is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. The American Legion is exempt from income tax unless there is income subject to Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT). As of July 1, 2016, sales of food and drink by qualified veterans' organizations to members of such organizations are tax-exempt when sold in connection with customary veterans' organization activities. (Chapter 216-220, Laws of Florida; Section 212.08(7)(n), Florida

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Statutes).

For example, rental income from hotel rooms, storage units, or parking lots is not considered rent from real property. See Rev. Rul. 69-69, Rev. Rul. 80-287, and Rev. Rul. 80-298. Similarly, in Ocean Pines Association, Inc., the court held that the revenue

received from parking lots was not rent from real property and, therefore, the income was subject to UBIT.

References:

- Exclusion of rent from real property from unrelated business taxable income | Internal Revenue

Service

- IRS.gov – Instructions for Form 990-T Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return
- IRS.gov – Publication 598 (Rev. March 2021) Cat. No. 46598X **Tax on Unrelated Business Income of Exempt Organizations**

Florida Rules for Live Bingo at Veteran's Service Organizations

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Law Summary

Florida 501(c)(19) veteran's service organizations can conduct bingo games, but they must follow strict rules under Florida Statute 849.0931:

- **Eligibility:** The organization must be tax-exempt under 501(c), have confirmation of this status, and have existed and been active for at least three years before conducting bingo games.
- **Membership:** Only bona fide members (those paying dues and complying with all membership requirements) may conduct bingo games. All conductors must be members in good standing—no paid staff or non-members may run the games.
- **Volunteers:** Members conducting the games cannot be compensated in any way, including tips or wages from other employment.
- **Location:** The organization must be located in the county, or within 15 miles, of where the game is conducted.
- **Premises:** Bingo must be held on property owned or leased for at least one year by the organization, with leases at fair market rates and not based on a percentage of proceeds.
- **Proceeds:** The organization must have full control of all aspects and proceeds. "Pooling" of proceeds with other organizations is not allowed, nor is acting as a sponsor for a third party to conduct games.
- **Age Restriction:** No one under 18 may play or help conduct bingo games.
- **Public Admittance:** Organizations may refuse entry to anyone "objectionable," except for reasons of race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, or physical handicap.
- **Posting Notices:** At each session, a notice must be posted identifying the organization and the designated responsible member.
- **Special Places:** Veteran's

organizations conducting bingo in VA hospitals, domiciliaries, or nursing homes (for patients only) are exempt from some licensing/reporting, but excess funds must be donated to the host facility.

These rules ensure that only legitimate veteran, charitable, or nonprofit organizations benefit from bingo games and prevent for-profit or unauthorized groups from exploiting these activities.

Guest Play

Signed-in guests may play bingo at Florida 501(c)(19) veterans' service organizations as long as the bingo is conducted in compliance with Florida Statute 849.0931. The law does not restrict participation to just members—guests are allowed to play.

However, only bona fide members of the veterans' organization are permitted to conduct or manage the bingo games; guests or non-members cannot be involved in running the games.

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<< Asst. Judge Advocate continued from page 6

Key points under Florida law:

- The organization must control all aspects of the game and its proceeds.
- Bingo may be held on property owned or leased by the veterans' organization.
- No part of the proceeds may be used except for charitable purposes or as prizes to players.
- While guests can play, all operational and management roles must be fulfilled by members, not outsiders or guests.
- Local county or city ordinances may require permits for bingo

operation, so organizations should confirm compliance with local regulations.

In summary, guests can play; only organization members may run the games. The organization must ensure strict adherence to statutory requirements.

Together Toward a Successful Mission

Rick Orzechowski, Central Area Cmdr
central@legionmail.org



Honoring Leadership, Unity, and Service

Like a steadfast Commander guiding the ship, ensuring it remains

true to its course, our leadership steers us toward success. Meanwhile, the dedication and strength of our membership serve as the ship's crew, providing the vital support to keep us steady and balanced. It is through the harmony of these roles—leadership and membership working hand in hand—

that we achieve our shared mission.

Our purpose as a Post is clear: to support veterans, uphold our standing in the community, and extend help to our neighbors and fellow citizens. Over the past month, I have had the privilege of attending many installation ceremonies. Time and again, I witnessed Posts uniting to honor those individuals who stepped forward to lead, embracing the responsibility with courage and dedication.

What inspired me most was the camaraderie and unity present in each gathering. Every Post felt like

a family, with members pledging to support one another and striving together for a successful year. This spirit of cooperation and mutual respect is the foundation of our achievements, and it is what empowers us to continue making a positive difference—for veterans, for our Post, and for the community we serve.

I serve three Districts, and each District is unique in its own way, but I have seen how these Posts come together to help each other be successful. So let us work as a team to achieve our goals this year!
#OneTeamOneDream

Preparing for the Future

Doug Hockenberry, Northern Area Cmdr
northern@legionmail.org



Hello, Department of Florida American Legion Family. Let me start by thanking everyone for the warm receptions I received

at the Post Installations I was able to attend throughout the Northern Area. I have no doubt this will be a wonderful year as we carry out

our mission of taking care of our veterans, their families, our youth, and our communities. That being said, I wish all the new leadership teams throughout the Department of Florida the absolute best in the coming year.

Speaking of new leadership teams, I need you to start thinking about the future. Yes, I realize many of us are just getting comfortable with our new roles, but you do need to start planning for the future. We have all

heard that phrase, "gee, time flies." Well folks, now is the time for you to start thinking about the future of your Post.

Many Posts become comfortable with their command team. As we all know, many Post Commanders remain in the position for several years. I thank them for their commitment and dedication to The American Legion, their Posts, and their membership. However, there

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may be a downside to having the same leadership in place year after year. It makes me wonder if we are taking stock in the skills and abilities of our membership. Are we promoting growth in our membership? Are we providing our membership with the opportunity to advance? For some, these may be tough questions to answer—and that's why it is a subject that needs to be addressed.

I ask you to think back to when you were in uniform and as you matured within your respective service branch and career field. Your Squad Leader, Platoon Sergeant, Section Chief, or Department Chief had the responsibility to ensure you were proficient in your MOS, AFSC, or NEC. By doing so, they were preparing you for the next level, the next advancement, the next promotion.

So, how can we accomplish this task? Simple: "Coach – Mentor – Develop." We have all heard

various definitions of leadership, and I go back to an article that our Department Commander wrote in the August 2023 edition of the Legion Link. She spoke about leadership, and she shared a wonderful definition, and I QUOTE: **"Leadership is the creation of an environment in which others are able to self-actualize in the process of completing the job."** UNQUOTE. I think we can all agree that it is a wonderful definition. For me, coming from the U.S. Army, our definition of leadership was simple and straightforward: "Leadership is the process of influencing personnel to accomplish the mission effectively." Simple and straightforward—but as I look at both definitions, I can clearly see the similarity in their meanings. Regardless of which branch you served, our leaders had an awesome responsibility, and that was to ensure we were able to carry on into the future.

The same applies to our leaders and officers in The American Legion, for we are charged with

that same responsibility to ensure the successful future of our great organization, and it starts at the Post level.

So, to all Post Commanders and officers, I ask that you start taking a serious look within the ranks of your Post membership and identify those members who are always asking questions, those who want to know more, those who volunteer, and those who head up events. Those members may very well be your successor. Please provide them with resources, tools, training, encouragement, counsel, and motivation to excel. Our future, our continued growth, depends on it. **"Coach – Mentor – Develop."**

Again, congratulations to all the newly installed officers. May each of you have a successful and prosperous year. **"HANG TOUGH"**

#OneTeamOneDream

Building Momentum in the Southern Area

Geo Bograkos, Southern Area Cmdr
southern@legionmail.org



The 2025–2026 Legion year is off to a strong start under the leadership of Department Commander Jessica Moore.

By the time you read this, nearly every Post in the Southern Area

should have completed installations. On behalf of the Pro Tempore District 14 Commander, I traveled to the Keys, where we installed five Posts in just three days. Only a week earlier, we were at the opposite end of the Southern Area, attending the installation of Post 62 in Stuart—the largest Post in our Area.

Because it is so important for me to personally connect with our members

in Districts 9, 11, and 14, I have made it a point to attend almost every installation across the Southern Area.

Membership Goals

Our next membership milestone is 50% by September 4. As of this writing (August 15), the Southern Area average is 44.59%, so we are well on track to hit that goal. Currently, we rank 3rd place within

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2025-2026 COMMANDER JESSICA MOORE

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<< Southern Area Cmdr continued from page 8
the Department.

Our broader objective is for every Post in the Southern Area to reach at least 100% plus membership for 2025–2026. Each of our three capable District Commanders has membership plans in place and teams ready to assist Posts that need help. Additionally, Department Post Development Chair and Southern Area Membership Chair, Judith Richards, is standing by to provide support. Please reach out sooner rather than later to schedule assistance.

Training Opportunities

We have scheduled four Department-level training sessions in the Southern Area: one each in Districts 9 and 11, and two in District 14. Department 2nd Vice Commander Bruce Carl and others (TBA) will join us to help present these sessions.

Training will be tailored to the specific needs of each District. Emails and flyers will be distributed soon—watch your inbox and mark your calendar.

**All sessions will be held on
Saturdays from 13:00–16:00 hours:**

- Sep 20: District 9 – Post 304, 41 SE 1st Ct., Dania Beach, FL 33004
- Oct 18: District 14 – Post 31, 7710 SW 59th Ave., South Miami, FL 33143
- Jan 10: District 14 – Post 154, 4115 Overseas Hwy., Marathon, FL 33050

- Feb 14: District 11 – Post 268, 1690 Avenue H W, Riviera Beach, FL 33404

Online Basic Training

Would you be willing to invest just two hours online to learn about the Four Pillars of the American Legion?

The American Legion's official training program—required for Legion College applicants and highly recommended for all officers and members—is available online for free. If you haven't completed it yet, take this opportunity now.

The American Legion Extension Institute (Basic Training) has been completely updated with videos, photos, clickable links, a historical timeline, and more. The course is divided into six sections with quizzes, ending with a final exam. Graduates receive a certificate and a pin for their Legion cap.

Topics include:

- History & Organization
- Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
- National Security
- Americanism
- Children & Youth
- Course Conclusion & Final Exam

Start your training here: <https://www.legion.org/alei>

District Meetings

District meetings are now underway—please attend! Ensure your Post is represented during the

Roll Call of Posts. These meetings provide valuable information and give your Post a voice in district matters.

- Aug 16 – 10:00 hrs – District 14 Meeting #1, Post 31, South Miami, FL
- Oct 4 – 13:00 hrs – District 9 Meeting #1, Post 222, Oakland Park, FL
- Nov 1 – 09:00 hrs – District 11 Meeting #1, Post 268, Riviera Beach, FL

Special Events

- **Southern Area Ball**
Sock Hop-themed, Saturday, January 31, 2026 @ 18:00 hrs, Post 222, Oakland Park, FL. Dress: 50's & 60's casual.
- **District 9 Four Chaplains Ceremony**
Sunday, February 1, 2026 @ 14:00 hrs, I.T. Parker Center, Dania Beach, FL.

Immediately following the ceremony, Post 304 Commander Kevin "Gunny" Savage invites you to the official Four Chaplains After Party and Dinner at Post 304, Dania Beach, FL.

Stay Connected

If you haven't already, please visit and like or follow the Southern Area Facebook page. There you can share your Post events with others in Districts 9, 11, 14, and beyond: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernAreaFL> or simply scan the QR code to be taken directly to the

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<< Southern Area Cmdr continued from page 9 page.

Trouble with QR codes? Ask the nearest teenager or Zoomer for help! In conclusion, I wish all Posts in the

Southern Area continued success in the 2025–2026 year. If you would like me to attend a Post or District event, please reach out. Remember, WE are here to support YOU.



#OneTeamOneDream

Buddy Checks and Recruiting

Eric Loyd, Southwestern Area Cmdr
southwestern@legionmail.org



Have you done any buddy checks recently? Your two-minute phone call to someone may make all the difference in their life. We are all okay on the surface, but inside, we have demands. Do our buddy checks.

RECRUITING is a very important part of The American Legion. We lose fellow veterans every day. We are all getting older, and it's our generation that has to recruit new members so that we keep The American Legion going. People don't know what The American Legion means to its members, but also to the community. Imagine there was no American Legion in your town. Where would the veterans socialize? Where would veterans get help? How many functions in your town depend on

your Post, Honor/Color Guard?

If everyone would just recruit one new member every year, that would ensure The American Legion will grow and be here for generations to come. I carry an application in my wallet, so if I meet someone who wants to join, I can sign them up immediately.

KEEP PUNCHING THE RENEWALS AT YOUR POST. EVERYONE COUNTS.

District 3 Update

Rick Cabrera, District 3 Cmdr
district3@legionmail.org



As we move into September, I want to thank you all for your continued service and dedication to our mission. From community

outreach to supporting veterans in need, District 3 continues to lead by example—and I couldn't be prouder.

Disaster Relief – Floridians Helping Floridians

September marks the peak of hurricane season here in Florida, and several communities in our district have already felt the impact of recent storms.

I want to recognize the incredible

work many of our Posts and members are doing—collecting supplies, providing shelter, and supporting recovery efforts. This is what the American Legion is all about: veterans serving veterans, and communities coming together when it matters most.

If your Post or members have been affected by storms or are in need of assistance, please reach out to the Department of Florida or contact me directly. Likewise, if your Post is able to provide resources or volunteers, we can connect you with areas in need. Disaster relief information and donation links can be found on the Department website.

Let's continue to stand strong, stay prepared, and help each other

through.

Membership – Strength in Numbers

As we begin the 2026 membership year, it's more important than ever to focus on growth and retention. Reach out to your fellow veterans, invite them to join, and ensure current members have renewed.

Our goal remains 100% renewal—and every phone call, email, or conversation makes a difference.

Remembering Patriot Day & POW/MIA Recognition

- **September 11 – Patriot Day:** Please take time to honor those we lost on 9/11 and the heroes who have defended our nation since.

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Flag ceremonies, moments of silence, and community gatherings are meaningful ways to reflect and educate.

- **September 19 – POW/MIA Recognition Day:** Let's remember those who never came home. A missing man table, candlelight vigil, or joint observance with other organizations helps reinforce our promise: You are not forgotten

Upcoming District 3 Events

- **District 3 Meeting:** October 4,

2025 – Registration at 9:00 a.m., Gavel at 10:00 a.m. at Post 49, Monticello, FL 32344

- **Youth Programs:** Begin reaching out to schools and JROTC units to promote Boys State and the Oratorical Contest. These programs depend on your outreach and support.
- **Veterans Day:** Planning starts now! Let's ensure our Posts are well-represented at local parades and ceremonies across the Panhandle.

What we do matters. Whether you're assisting disaster victims, mentoring youth, or simply being there for another veteran, your service continues to make a lasting impact.

If your Post is hosting an event, providing relief, or supporting a local cause, please send photos and updates so we can share your stories with the rest of the District.

Thank you for your commitment to the mission and values of the American Legion.

The Vital Role of American Legion Programs for Our Posts

Kalvin Thompson, District 7 Cmdr
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Strengthening Communities, Honoring Service, and Building Legacy

The American Legion has stood as a pillar of support for veterans, their families, and local communities for over a century. At the heart of its enduring impact are the numerous programs developed and championed by local American Legion Posts. These programs are more than initiatives—they are the very lifeblood that keeps the organization relevant, dynamic, and deeply connected to the people it serves. In this article, we shine a spotlight on the vital importance of American Legion programs and how they empower Posts to fulfill the organization's mission with spirit and purpose.

The Foundation of American Legion Posts

American Legion Posts are not merely meeting places; they are vibrant centers of civic engagement and community leadership. The programs they offer are essential tools that help Posts serve veterans, foster patriotism, and enrich local life. From youth engagement to veteran outreach, American Legion programs create enduring value, building bridges between generations and ensuring that the sacrifices of all who served are never forgotten.

Empowering Veterans and Their Families

Perhaps the most profound impact of the American Legion is seen in its unwavering support of veterans and their families. Posts across the nation run programs that connect veterans to vital resources, assist with benefit claims, provide mentorship, and offer a sense of belonging. For those transitioning out of the military, these

programs can make the difference between facing challenges alone and finding a welcoming community ready to help.

Through programs such as the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation initiative, Posts assist veterans in navigating the often complex federal and state systems to receive the benefits they have earned. The camaraderie fostered through social events, peer groups, and support networks can help veterans cope with the invisible wounds of war, from PTSD to social isolation. For the families of veterans, the American Legion offers scholarships, emergency funds, and a network of care and compassion.

Inspiring the Next Generation Through Youth Programs

One of the American Legion's most celebrated contributions is its commitment to shaping the

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leaders of tomorrow. Programs like Boys State and Boys Nation, Legion Baseball, and the Oratorical Contest offer young people unique opportunities to develop leadership skills, learn about civic responsibility, and build confidence. These initiatives introduce students—and their families—to the values of honor, duty, and service that are central to the American Legion's mission.

Legion Baseball, for example, has launched the careers of countless professional athletes while also teaching teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship. The Oratorical Contest encourages public speaking and critical thinking, empowering participants to voice their ideas and engage with complex topics. Boys State and Boys Nation immerse young men in the workings of government, fostering an early understanding of citizenship and the democratic process.

By sponsoring scholarships, hosting academic competitions, and investing in leadership development, American Legion Posts play a direct role in building a brighter future for their communities—one student at a time.

Honoring Patriotism and American Values

American Legion programs are powerful vehicles for the promotion of patriotism and respect for American values. Flag

education, ceremonies, and patriotic observances remind communities of the meaning behind the Stars and Stripes. Through programs such as American Legion Riders and patriotic parades, Posts unite local residents in acts of remembrance, especially on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Independence Day.

Moreover, the American Legion's commitment to upholding and defending the Constitution is made real through educational programs, essay contests, and events that encourage civic participation. These efforts help combat apathy and instill a sense of pride and responsibility in citizens of all ages.

Serving Communities in Times of Need

Beyond supporting veterans and youth, American Legion programs play a crucial role in local emergency response and community support. When disasters strike, Legion Posts mobilize to provide shelter, food, and assistance to those affected. They organize blood drives, vaccination clinics, and other vital services. Through partnerships with local government and other nonprofits, Posts amplify their positive impact, ensuring that no community member is left behind.

The American Legion's Child Welfare Foundation and Temporary Financial Assistance programs offer lifelines to families facing hardship, demonstrating the organization's broader commitment to community

well-being.

Fostering Connection and Membership Growth

American Legion programs are also essential for building strong, active Posts. Through engaging activities and visible community service, Posts attract new members and sustain the interest of current Legionnaires. Programs provide members with meaningful ways to contribute, network, and grow as leaders. This sense of shared purpose binds members together, strengthens Posts, and ensures the continued growth of the organization.

Active programming also enhances the visibility and reputation of the Legion in the community. As Posts become known for their youth scholarships, charity events, and veteran support, they draw in volunteers, donors, and supporters from all walks of life.

Leaving a Lasting Legacy

The true value of American Legion programs is measured not just in the number of events held, but in the lives transformed and traditions preserved. These initiatives ensure that each Post is more than a building—it is a living legacy of service, honor, and hope. From small towns to bustling cities, the American Legion's programs are a testament to what can be accomplished when ordinary citizens unite for the greater good.

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The Heartbeat of Every Post

For American Legion Posts across the country, programs are not optional—they are essential. They equip Posts to serve veterans, inspire youth, and strengthen communities. They nurture patriotism, foster

leadership, and provide hope in times of need. Most importantly, they carry forward the proud legacy of service that defines the American Legion.

Every member, supporter, and volunteer who champions these

programs plays a part in something truly remarkable. As we look to the future, let us continue to invest in and celebrate American Legion programs, for they are the heartbeat of our Posts and the foundation of our promise to veterans, families, and communities everywhere.

Buddy Check for Veterans: A Call to Connection

Daniel Martin, District 12 Cmdr

district12@legionmail.org



Strengthening Bonds, Building Resilience

In the tapestry of service, camaraderie threads through every experience, every hardship, and every victory. When the uniform is hung and the civilian world takes over, that sense of brotherhood and sisterhood can feel distant, though its importance endures. This is why the practice of a “buddy check” among veterans is not just an act of kindness—it’s a lifeline.

What Is a Buddy Check?

A buddy check is a simple, intentional reach-out between veterans, aimed at reconnecting, offering support, and ensuring no one feels alone. Whether it’s a phone call, a text message, or a shared cup of coffee, this small gesture can carry enormous weight.

Why Buddy Checks Matter

- **Combatting Isolation:** Transitioning to civilian life can be isolating. Checking in helps

remind veterans that they are remembered and valued.

- **Mental Health Support:** Many veterans face challenges such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression. A friendly outreach can be the first step in breaking the silence and seeking help.
- **Strengthening Community:** The bond among veterans is unique. Regular contact maintains this connection, nurturing resilience and support.

How to Buddy Check

- **Pick up the phone or send a message:** “Hey, just checking in—how’re you doing?”
- **Set a regular reminder:** Make it a habit, whether monthly or around significant dates such as Veterans Day or anniversaries.
- **Invite them out:** Coffee, a walk, or a meal can open doors to conversation.
- **Listen without judgment:** Sometimes, all someone needs is a listening ear.
- **Share resources:** If your buddy is struggling, encourage them to reach out to support organizations, or offer to connect

them with professional help.

Signs Someone Might Need a Buddy Check

- Withdrawal from social interactions
- Major changes in mood or behavior
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or distress
- Loss of interest in hobbies or routines

If you notice these signs, don’t hesitate—your call could make a difference.

The Ripple Effect

One check-in can spark a chain reaction, inspiring others to look after their friends. In this way, we weave a safety net that supports all who have served.

Resources for Veterans

- Veterans Crisis Line: Call, text, or chat for immediate assistance
- Local VA centers and support groups
- Peer support organizations

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Let's honor the enduring bonds of service by looking out for one another—not just on special

occasions, but every day. A simple buddy check can be the bridge between struggle and hope. Reach out, reconnect, and remind your

fellow veterans that they are never alone.

Americanism Programs

Joe Marcheggiani, Americanism Chair
americanism@legionmail.org



By the time this posts, the school year will be well underway. Print several of the pamphlets you have been sent and hit the bricks

running. Programs that fall under the Americanism banner should have already been introduced to the schools. It's a battle for attention. You can bet that the Army, Navy, Air

Force, Marines, Space Force, Coast Guard, and Reserve recruiters have already visited those schools.

The information we possess is not automatically made available to counselors or students. All information must be entered into a database by a counselor so students and mentors can find it. If we don't ask the counselor to enter it, it won't be there for the student to see when they research for scholarships. In many instances, the data entry

pertaining to our scholarships can be done en masse by the county. However, we still have to instill in them what is available.

It is atrocious the amount of scholarship money that is not awarded because students do not apply. Many of our programs fall into this category; in many instances, if just one student applies, it will be awarded. It is our duty to make educators and students aware of what is available to them.

Blood Donors Wanted

Jamie Grinis, Blood Donor
blooddonor@legionmail.org



How many times have you heard that from some group or organization asking you to donate? Yeah, me too. This time, it's a little different. I am

asking you to set up a Blood Donor Donation Event. For those of you who are afraid of needles, you can help promote the program by working in the background for your Post.

Keep your Blood Drives on a regular schedule. This brings in people on a known schedule. Many times, a new Blood Donor is eligible for membership in the American Legion Family. It never hurts to ask. Enough said about getting busy with the program.

We are hearing of events and Blood Drives that are already underway. That's fantastic. Only one problem—we don't know about it at the Department. Please go to the Department website, scroll over to Programs, go down to Blood Donor, and click on that tab. On the left, you will see the Fill-In Form. Open that tab and type away. Keep a copy for your CPRs and your Blood Donor Chair for your Post. Don't forget to push the send button when you have finished your report.

January is National Blood Month. Let's get into gear and have our programs in place as the media promotes the need for all people in the community to donate blood. Next month, we will talk about programs I found interesting from National

Convention attendees who have had successful Blood Drive ideas and events.



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JROTC and JSSP Program Updates

Loretta Young, JROTC/JSSP Chair

jrotc@legionmail.org



The summer break has passed, and it's now back to school and the fast pace of the semester schedule. There was a tremendous amount of response for the National JROTC Color Guard Competition, with 23 teams scheduled to compete at the Tampa Convention Center on August 22nd. With such a large response, the competition will be scheduled to start earlier and conclude later at night than previous competitions. It has been a very busy summer with fundraising and donations for these teams to compete, and I want to personally thank all who gave donations to help these teams attend the National Convention. The 16th District had an outstanding number of teams registered; however, teams will be coming from the 9th, 13th, and 15th Districts as well. There will be an Awards Ceremony at the conclusion of the competition, and I will have the results in the next issue of the Link.

This year, there will be more focus on the Districts to provide a list of the schools in their area and the Legion Post that sponsors their program. I have already been advised by the 16th District Chairman of the JROTC Units and the Posts that sponsor each Unit in their area. We will be following up with all Districts to get a better understanding of all the programs that need to be supported by the Legion closest to their schools. The motto of the JROTC Cadet is to build better citizens, and these are our future leaders of the country, so LET'S all SUPPORT the program.

I would like to recognize Post 125, Gulfport, for the special WO Robert Edwin Woods Scholarship Award. This is given in honor of WO Woods, who attended Boca Ciega HS and was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. He gave his life for the country when his Huey's engine failed at low altitude and crashed, killing him and four other crew members on Dec. 26, 1967. This award is given annually to a Cadet attending the Boca Ciega JROTC Program. Please let me know of these special events and accomplishments of the program

so I am able to share them with our members and encourage more of our Legionnaires to support Youth Programs.

The 2025 National JSSP Postal Marksmanship Competition will be available to register online on the National Legion website on September 1. There are no changes this year, and all information will be in the Post Chairman packets. All teams must be sponsored by an American Legion Post, and the coach for the team must undergo the background clearance and Safe Sports Training as last year. Let's see if we're able to get a greater response in Florida this year for a valuable youth program. Please reach out to me if you have any problems, and may you all have a very successful year ahead.



JSSP 2025 National Final Competition Mariner AJROTC



WO Robert Edwin Woods Scholarship Award Presentation to Boca Ciega JROTC Cadet

Calling All Law & Order Chairs

Daryl Bass, Law & Order Chair

laworder@legionmail.org

Another year is upon us, brother and sister Legionnaires and Law & Order Chairs. With the violence and shootings, and Police Officers being killed as well as our Fire/Rescue people, it is more important

now that we stand behind these brave men and women. It is our duty to seek out the finest of these noble professionals and submit our choices for our Law & Order Awards during our Convention next year. The American Legion is the oldest and largest veterans organization in the world. It is our duty.

As your Department Law & Order Chairman this year, I am asking for your help in finding these Officers of the Law and Fire Services and submitting the required forms. Go to your local Police, Sheriff, Fire Departments, and Highway Patrol Barracks and ask to see their Public Relations Officer and explain to

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them what we are doing. Not only is this a great honor, but to them it is a good public relations tool. In the State of Florida, there are heroic deeds being done each day by these people.

Schools are back in session. In the past, serious violent crimes occurred at many schools, prompting a doubling of staffing of school resource officers this year. Go to the schools and talk to these officers. They have stories. We live in a world

where evil abounds and anything can happen.

Support our troops and support our Police and Fire personnel.

Kicking off an Incredible Membership Year!

Lena Heredia-Perez, Membership Chair

membership@legionmail.org



We're kicking off an incredible membership year—and it's all thanks to YOU!

Your commitment, perseverance, and passion are driving us toward our goal of 100% membership by May 6, 2026. Let's keep that momentum going!

Since our last *Legion Link* update, your District and Department leaders have been hard at work—attending the Leadership Retreat, the National Membership Workshop, our first Department Membership Zoom Meeting, all while doing Post Installations of Officers. These sessions were filled with collaboration, strategy, and a shared vision: ensuring every veteran in Florida finds their place in our American Legion Family.

Here are a few key takeaways to keep us moving forward:

Communication Is Key – Open, honest communication across all levels—Post, District, and

Department—is essential. It keeps our members engaged, informed, and connected to our mission.

Engage Your Legion Family – Invite your American Legion Family to participate in Post activities. Ask your members what drew them to the Legion, what they're passionate about, and how they envision our future. Meet them where they are—step outside your Post's four walls and discover the incredible potential waiting to be tapped.

Prioritize Training – Check in with your members about their training needs. What skills would they like to develop? Providing the right resources empowers them to succeed. Several Districts and Areas have already hosted training sessions this year—outstanding work! Let's keep going.

Membership Renewal Made Easy

- **3-Year Renewals:** Promote multi-year renewals to save members money and free up time for your membership teams to focus on other vital programs.
- **Auto-Renewals:** Encourage members to log into [MyLegion.org](https://www.floridalegion.org) and activate auto-renewal.

It's simple, secure, and ensures uninterrupted membership.

- **Renew Early:** Remind members to renew before December 31, 2025, to avoid the \$3 Department dues increase effective January 1, 2026

Transfer Opportunities

Great news! Transfers from Post 0400 and 0400AD now count toward your current membership numbers. Search for these members in your area and invite them to join your Post. Share what your Post stands for and highlight the programs you support—they may not be aware of all the incredible work you're doing. If you don't reach them right away, leave a message and follow up with a text. You'll be amazed at the response.

Save the Date: November 1, 2025 — A Historic Moment for Membership!

Start planning if you haven't done so already, and get ready to make history with our first-ever Department-wide Membership Drive in decades! This is more than just an event—it's a rallying call to unite, engage, and grow our American Legion Family like never before.

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Use this powerful moment to:

- Welcome new and returning members to your Post
- Showcase your commitment through Veterans Day celebrations
- Reignite enthusiasm for our mission and programs

And here's the challenge:

Posts that achieve the highest percentage growth across five key categories by November 15 will earn a \$150 reward from Department Headquarters. That's recognition,

resources, and bragging rights—all in one.

Let's turn this drive into a movement. Your leadership can make it unforgettable.

In closing, always remember that your Department and District Membership Team are here to help you in any way we can. All you have to do is reach out to us and let us know how we can assist you.

Remember,
#OneTeamOneDream

Teamwork Drives Results

2025–2026 Department of Florida Membership Goal Dates:

Target Date	Percentage
September 4, 2025	50%
October 1, 2025	55%
November 5, 2025	65%
December 3, 2025	75%
January 7, 2026	80%
February 4, 2026	85%
March 4, 2026	90%
April 1, 2026	95%
May 6, 2026	100%
May 31, 2026	100%+1

Get into the Schools

Doug Hockenberry, Oratorical Chair
oratorical@legionmail.org



Hello, Department of Florida Legion Family. I hope that everyone is doing well. September is here, and that means school has been in session for a couple of weeks. Last month I spoke about Marketing and the use of Social Media, and I hope you are taking advantage of those tools. So, what's next? Well, this month you should place emphasis on getting into the schools and establishing a rapport with the key players. Speak with those Guidance & Career Counselors. Talk with History, Civics, and Government teachers. As for potential candidates, start looking within the JROTC, the Honor Society, Debate Club, the Key Club, the FBLA, and of course let's not forget about the home-schooled students.

We have an amazing opportunity for students to earn scholarships, so let's take every opportunity to promote this program. Let them know their students can receive scholarships ranging from 25K to 20K for the top three contestants. Now that's an attention-getter in my book, and the key to promoting this program is YOU—the Post and District Oratorical Program Chair. Your enthusiasm can and will make a difference as you share the news about the Oratorical Scholarship Program.

Below are the completion dates for your Post, District, and Area Oratorical Contests, including the Department and National Contest dates:

- Post Level contest must be completed by January 18, 2026
- District Level contest must be completed by February 8, 2026
- Area Level contest must be completed by February 22, 2026

- Department Contest is March 14, 2026
- National Contest is May 15–17, 2026, at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan

The Oratorical Program information, brochures, and literature are available online at floridalegion.org. From the homepage, look for Programs and Services and scroll down to Oratorical. Click on that, and then go to Resources and click on that. This will provide you with the current information you need for the 2025–2026 Oratorical Program.

As always, I am standing by and ready to assist you as we implement this program throughout the state of Florida for both our traditional and non-traditional high school students. Thank you for all you do and everything you will do in the future.

Hang Tough!
#OneTeamOneDream



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Never Forgotten

Denny Luke, POW/MIA Chair

powmia@legionmail.org



In 1979, President Jimmy Carter issued a proclamation commemorating the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day. Every American president since has issued the same proclamation. September 19, 2025, is POW/MIA Recognition Day. We pause to honor the extraordinary sacrifice of America's Prisoners of War and those who are still Missing in Action. This solemn day reminds us that freedom is not free—it has been paid for with courage, resilience, and, in many cases, heartbreaking uncertainty.

The black-and-white POW/MIA flag remains a symbol of our unwavering commitment to bring every service member home. It is a promise—that they are not forgotten.

We remember the families who continue to wait. We recognize the veterans who endured captivity. We honor their strength, their dignity, and their service to our nation.

Let this day be more than a date on the calendar. Let it be a call to remember—and a commitment to never forget.

#YouAreNotForgotten

How You Can Observe the Day

One great way would be to attend the 5th Annual Seven Bridges POW/MIA Remembrance Day Ride on

Saturday, September 20. Hosted by the American Legion Riders Department of Florida, this annual ride begins at Adamec Harley-Davidson on Baymeadows Road. Riders traverse all seven major bridges of Jacksonville, crossing the St. Johns River before concluding at the National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum for the ceremony, displays, food, a band, and a lot of camaraderie.

If any Posts, Units, Squadrons, or ALR Chapters want to bring a donation check to the Memorial, please make the check payable to: **Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial, INC.**

On April 29, 2025, Representative Aaron Bean (R-FL, 4th District) introduced House Resolution 3057 (H.R. 3057) to the 119th Congress. This resolution seeks to designate the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial and Museum in Jacksonville, Florida, as the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum. This is Representative Bean's second time sponsoring such a bill. The proposed resolution has been referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Natural Resources.

Your support is crucial. We encourage everyone to visit the POW/MIA Memorial & Museum website to sign and send a petition to Congress requesting the passage of H.R. 3057: <https://powmiamemorial.org/>

. Your involvement will help build momentum for this designation.

For reference, Rep. Bean previously introduced H.R. 3670 to the 118th Congress on May 25, 2023. That bill began with 13 cosponsors and ultimately gained 22 by August 2023. Increasing the number of cosponsors is now a top priority to get this resolution passed this year.

Stay Connected with POW/MIA Updates

- Follow the Department of Florida's POW/MIA Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/falpowmia/>
- Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA): <https://www.dpaa.mil/>

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) has identified the following number of missing personnel as of August 1, 2025, for FY 2025:

- WWII – 123
Korean War – 47
- Cold War – 0
- Vietnam War – 7

During May through July 2025, a press release was issued for the following 107 personnel previously accounted for:

May 6, 2025
WWII (Sepsey, G.), WWII (Hightower, N.),

May 9, 2025
Korean (O'Brien, T.), WWII (Benthien, C.), WWII (Goldwater, J.), WWII (Kramer, E.), WWII (Hartman, N.), WWII (McMichael, W.)

May 13, 2025

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WWII (Gibson, S.), WWII (Homer, M.), Korean (Martin, E.)

May 14, 2025
WWII (Richey, J.)

May 16, 2025
WWII (Wilson, G.), WWII (Leslie, B.), WWII (Rowland, R.)

May 20, 2025
WWII (McLaughlin, H.), WWII (Sheppick, D.), WWII (Governale, N.), Korean (Estrada, A.), Korean (Brock, J.), WWII (Danneker, J.)

May 22, 2025
Vietnam (Gervais, D.)

May 23, 2025
Korean (Fields, R.), WWII (Shelton, J.), WWII (Wyatt, D.), WWII (Kutnock, W.)

May 27, 2025
Vietnam (Scheurich, T.)

May 29, 2025
WWII (Garcia, R.), WWII (Milam, C.)

June 2, 2025
Korean (Grissom, D.), WWII (McCook, C.)

June 5, 2025
WWII (Hymes, M.), WWII (Gibbs, C.), Korean (Konze, A.), WWII (Hasselkus, H.), Korean (Faust, A.), WWII (Deitman, T.), WWII (Linsenhardt, W.)

June 18, 2025
WWII (Keeney, C.), WWII (Atteberry, C.)

June 24, 2025
WWII (Van Kleeck, A.), Korean (O'Dell, H.), WWII (Bradbury, G.)

June 25, 2025
Vietnam (Gervais, D.), Korean (Sprague, O.), Korean (Trannon, E.), Vietnam (Renelt, W.), Vietnam (Gish, H.), Vietnam (Hall, W.), Vietnam (Springsteadah, D.), WWII (Kaudelky, R.)

June 27, 2025
WWII (Sher, M.)

July 2, 2025
Korean (Cash, J.), WWII (Moore, J.), WWII (Thomas, N.), WWII (Clendenning, L.), WWII (Karwacki, L.), Korean (Troup, H.), WWII (Hightower, N.), Korean (Nordyke, E.), Korean (Hoots, P.), WWII (Schopp, E.)

July 9, 2025
WWII (Burns, W.), WWII (Kramer, K.), WWII (Warren, I.), Korean (Stovall, J.), WWII (Waters, B.), WWII (Larkins, J.), Korean (Dulyea, H.), WWII (Libolt, L.), WWII (Holmes, D.)

July 11, 2025
WWII (Leverett, W.), WWII (Johnstone, F.), WWII (Pearson, P.), Korean (Johnson, R.), Korean (Hagie, G.), Korean (Nickel, D.)

July 14, 2025
WWII (Smith, H.), Korean (Wheeler, W.)

July 15, 2025
WWII (Bucey, W.)

July 16, 2025
WWII (Kramer, E.)

July 21, 2025
Vietnam (Hall, W.)

July 24, 2025
WWII (Pruitt, B.), WWII (Goldwater, J.), WWII (Milam, C.), WWII (Causey, T.)

July 25, 2025
WWII (Carlin, H.), WWII (Mann, J.), WWII (Hartman, N.), Korean (Daniels, T.), Korean (Fields, L.), WWII (Dewberry, C.), WWII (Hennessey, H.)

July 29, 2025
WWII (Martin, D.), WWII (Holding, H.), Korean (Hott, W.), Korean (Martin, E.)

July 30, 2025
WWII (Jackson, L.), WWII (Gregg, P.), WWII (Beard, L.), Korean (Hill, G.), WWII (Diekmann, W.), WWII (Keuchel, R.), WWII (Owen, W.)

July 31, 2025
Vietnam (Gish, H.), WWII (Dupont, R.), Korean (Sprague, O.)

Resolution Drafting Guide

Clarence Hill, Resolutions Chair

resolutions@legionmail.org



While the Preamble section (the WHEREAS clause(s) that describe the problem) precedes the Resolving section (the RESOLVED clause(s) that detail suggestions on how the problem should be dealt with), the Resolving section should be written first. Once the intent of the

resolution is clearly stated, it is much easier to decide what statements need to be in the preamble to make clear and support the reasons for the resolution. During committee discussions or floor debates, the Resolving section is always amended first and the Preamble section last, as changes in the Resolving section may require changes in the Preamble section.

The entire Resolving section text is

in bold lettering. Each clause in the Resolving section begins with the word "RESOLVED," printed in capital letters and followed by a comma. Between the opening word and the statement of the intent of the resolution, there should be the following information: the identification of the resolving authority, the circumstances and place of the action, and the date of the action.

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<< Resolutions Chair continued from page 19

An example of a resolution initiated by a Post: "RESOLVED, By Post No. ____, The American Legion, Department of _____, in regular (or special) meeting assembled in (place and date), That ..."

The word "That" (with a capital "T") is the first word that immediately follows the resolving clause and introduces the clause, which is the object of the verb "RESOLVED." It aids the reader to find the point at which the meat of the resolution begins, and it aids the drafter of the resolution to launch a strong and unmistakable statement of intent. Some examples:

RESOLVED, ...That The American Legion shall sponsor and support legislation to ..."

RESOLVED, ...That The American Legion is opposed to the repeal or weakening of..."

Although each resolution should deal with only one subject, it is often necessary to attach additional clauses to a resolution's Resolving section to cover matters that are closely related to the main intent. This is especially useful for detailing how and by whom the intent of the resolution is to be accomplished.

Examples:

"RESOLVED, ... That ...; and, be it further

RESOLVED, (as many as are

required) That ...; and, be it finally RESOLVED, That ..."

Note, the identifying information is stated only once in the first RESOLVED clause and is not repeated in subsequent clauses.

A period is used only once—at the close of the last clause in the Resolving section. Remember, the entire resolution is one continuous sentence.

The resolving section clause(s) should be able to stand on its/their own, even without the Preamble section WHEREAS clause(s) preceding it/them.

Commending Our Youth Through Awards

Randy Holeyfield, School Medals

schoolmedals@legionmail.org



Greetings, over several years, I have noticed limited acknowledgment of our youth for their endeavors, and though the various medals do

have expenses, what value do we place on acknowledging them? I've mentioned it before, and we continue to remind everyone to seek sponsorship from local businesses or corporations to support our Posts' programs—not just Boys State, but Oratorical, School Medals, and other Children & Youth programs.

As I mentioned in last month's article, I will be expanding on what is out

there to commend our youth at schools through medals over the next few months. First of all, we need to get out and go into the schools for the exposure and show how we, The American Legion, are dedicated to our youths' accomplishments. Staff and teachers are extremely busy, so keeping everything as brief as possible is essential; they have enough work. Most of the medals are issued at three levels: Gold, Silver, and Bronze. Please refer to the specific details as outlined by the National Organization.

Citizenship Medal – Reinforces the core values that are expected of the Good Citizen in today's society. Awarded at the three levels, as recommended by school staff, teachers, or youth/team leaders.

Americanism Medal – The American Legion's Service to God and Country program is basic Americanism, which is focused on preventing the spiritual decay of America and inculcating a sense of individual obligation to community, state, and nation. Awarded at the three levels, recommended by school staff, teachers, coaches, or youth/team leaders.

Scholastic Medals – These are issued in two types (717.320 High School, 717.312 Middle/Elementary) at the three levels. This medal is self-explanatory; it's based on academic achievement (grade point level). With very little effort needed by the school, the student's grade makes the case. Determined by school counselors and/or teachers. A high

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<< School Medals Chair continued from page 20

school could request providing this at six levels, where both styles are issued at Gold, Silver, and Bronze, totaling six medals.

Scholarship Medal – Awarded at the three levels for high school students receiving significant scholarships. While many students receive scholarships in various amounts, some receive “Full Rides,” and not necessarily for sports teams but for personal excellence.

Music Medal – Recognizes and motivates students to excel to the highest levels of their abilities in the fine arts of music, for both their talents and leadership in band, choir, or orchestra. Gold might be awarded to a top student mastering several instruments with proof of superior performance, with other levels for achievers. Recommended by the appropriate music instructor.

Essay Medal – Recognizes and motivates youth to compete at the highest level of thought process, requiring a written essay for their cognitive and reasoning abilities. Awarded at the three levels, reflective of their superior and successful essay, by the appropriate teacher.

Oratory Medals – There are three different Oratorical medals, one being for the Oratorical Contest (Patrick Henry Medal), which is outside of the school awards. Here we will be looking at the two other types: one for Debate Teams & School Oratorical Contests, and the other for Drama & Speech Clubs. Both are available at the three levels (Gold, Silver, and Bronze), and though different in principle, they are much the same at the core. Public speaking is not for most people, and these awards commend youth for just that. Recommended by appropriate teachers who know their students and their abilities.

Athletic Medal – Recognizes youth who excel in sports, developing a competitive spirit and teamwork attributes in their chosen sport. Recommended by the specific sports coach, who knows them best. This award is available at the three levels, but could be given per sport type (Baseball, Football, Soccer, etc.), depending on what a Post may bear.

Next month, we will look at other medals. I do not want to overwhelm the School Medal Chairs, but want them fully informed. So let's get out there into our schools and make those initial contacts to get the year started on the best foot. Good luck.

I am an email or phone call away—don't hesitate. No question is a small one, just one you did not ask.

Thank you for your commitment to recognizing our youth.

Scouters in the Spotlight

Chris Ragusa, Scouting Chair

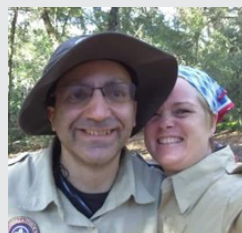
scouting@legionmail.org



I once again have the distinct pleasure of turning a spotlight on a Legionnaire and Scouter...two of them, actually...whose service to our great nation and contributions to the Scouting movement deserve recognition.

In the relatively short period of time that District 17 Legionnaires

CJ and Ashley Myers have been members of the American Legion, they have successfully consolidated and expanded Scouting in Interlachen with the dedicated support of American Legion Post 293. Post 293 currently serves as the Charter Organization for four Scouting America units: Scouts BSA Troop 493 (Boy), Scouts BSA Troop 394 (Girl), Cub Scout Pack 764 (Family), and Venturing Crew 4. With strong



leadership from CJ and Ashley, they provide hundreds of Florida youth an opportunity to learn how to live their lives based on the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Post 293 was recognized as a 2025 Outstanding Post Scouting Program recipient at the annual convention in June.

CJ and Ashley are both Army veterans, having earned their commissions through the Army ROTC program at St. Bonaventure University in 1997 and 1998, respectively. After four years of

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<< Scouting Chair continued from page 21

European deployments in Bosnia and Germany, the Myers transferred into the Florida Army National Guard and served with the 146th Signal Battalion. Recalled to active duty in 2003 in support of the Global War on Terror, they were tasked with guarding Florida's Air Force bases while many of the active-duty Air Force security forces were deployed to combat theatres.



Their life in Scouting began when their oldest son joined Cub Scouts in 2007. Active in the Scouting careers of all four of their children, CJ and Ashley served as Den Leaders, Charter

Organization Representatives, Merit Badge Counselors, and Assistant Scoutmasters before taking on much more challenging and time-consuming leadership positions. In 2019 (the year Scouting America opened its membership to girls in the Scouts BSA program), Ashley founded Scouts BSA Troop 394—the first female Scouts BSA troop in Putnam County. She spent the next two years making certain that all ten girls had the opportunity to join the first class of female Eagle Scouts. Eight of those ten earned the Eagle Scout rank, with daughter Kelly being the second girl to achieve that rank in the entire state of Florida in 2021.

In 2020, CJ took over as Scoutmaster of Troop 493 and was instrumental in the decision by Post 293 to also

charter Troop 394, Pack 764, and found Venturing Crew 4. Three of their four children are Eagle Scouts, with their youngest only two merit badges away from earning that rank. In his spare time, CJ serves as Adjutant and 2nd Vice of Post 293. Ashley has taken over as Committee Chair of all these units recently and remains active in assisting and mentoring the troop she founded.

CJ and Ashley... thank you for your service to our nation, and for your enormous investment in our future by mentoring our youth.



Sea Cadets Summer Training

Jeff Hawk, Sea Cadets Chair

seacadets@legionmail.org

Every summer, the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps opens the door to extraordinary experiences for America's youth. Across the nation, cadets trade in their summer vacations for early mornings, long days, and challenging coursework designed to build discipline, teamwork, and leadership.

From the East Coast to the Pacific, this year's summer training season was nothing short of inspiring. Cadets participated in hands-on seamanship training, learned the intricacies of maritime navigation, stood watch on Navy and Coast Guard vessels,

trained in cybersecurity operations, advanced aviation techniques, medical response, and leadership courses. Others took on physically demanding field exercises that pushed them to their limits—and proved their resilience.

For many cadets, these trainings are transformative experiences. They not only walk away with new skills but also a deepened sense of pride, self-confidence, and commitment to serving something larger than themselves. They make friendships that span across the country and gain mentors who will help guide them through the challenges of life.

Florida Cadets Stepping Up

Florida was well-represented in

this year's summer training. Cadets from across the state took part in both local and national programs, with some traveling hundreds or even thousands of miles to attend advanced training opportunities. Whether in the heat of a Florida summer or the brisk air of the Pacific Northwest, Florida cadets proved they could adapt and excel.

They returned home with new certifications, leadership skills, and, in many cases, stories of personal breakthroughs—overcoming fears, mastering complex skills, and proving to themselves just how much they could accomplish with discipline and teamwork.

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<< Sea Cadets Chair continued from page 22

The Hidden Challenge: Rising Costs

But behind the scenes of this success lies a growing challenge that cannot be ignored. The cost of training, uniforms, and travel has steadily risen, and those increases are beginning to weigh heavily on families and local units.

Just a decade ago, a cadet could attend a week of specialized training for around \$150. Today, depending on the program, that cost can easily be \$300 or more—and that's before factoring in travel expenses. For families with more than one cadet, these costs multiply quickly.

Uniforms, a core part of the Sea Cadet identity, have also seen significant price jumps. While the program provides some items, much of the uniform gear must be purchased by cadets and their families. For a young cadet starting out, a full set of required uniforms can cost several hundred dollars.

For many families, these expenses are manageable only through the support of sponsors, fundraising, and the generosity of community organizations like the American Legion. But with inflation and budget cuts affecting so many, the gap between what cadets need and what they can afford is widening.

A Shortage of Volunteers

The challenges are not just financial. There is also an urgent need for more adult volunteers. Every training, drill

weekend, and event depends on a team of dedicated adults—officers, instructors, chaperones, and support staff—who give their time freely to mentor cadets.

These volunteers not only teach and supervise but also serve as role models, showing cadets what service, integrity, and leadership look like in action. Without enough volunteers, units are forced to limit activities, cancel trainings, or stretch their existing staff thin.

It's a reality that could impact the quality and quantity of opportunities available to cadets in the coming years.

How the American Legion Fits In

The American Legion has been a steadfast supporter of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps for decades. Posts across the country sponsor local units, provide meeting space, assist with fundraising, and help connect cadets with veterans who can share their stories and experiences.

This partnership is particularly strong in Florida, where many American Legion Posts actively engage with their local divisions—offering logistical support, sponsorship, and volunteer hours. These connections not only strengthen the Sea Cadets but also bring younger generations into contact with veterans, creating a bridge between past and future service members.

However, local units cannot rely solely on national or state-level

support. Individual units face unique challenges and expenses, and they need the help of their communities to thrive.

Why Post Chairmen Should Consider Becoming Auxiliary Members

One of the best ways for American Legion Post Chairmen to truly understand the needs of the Sea Cadets is to become involved directly. If you are a Post Chairman, I highly recommend joining the program as an Auxiliary Member.

By taking part as an Auxiliary Member, you'll see firsthand how trainings are run, what cadets go through, and where the greatest needs are. You'll gain insight into how much dedication is required from both cadets and volunteers, and you'll be better equipped to advocate for them within your Post and your community.

How You Can Help

There are many ways individuals and organizations can step up to support the Sea Cadets:

- **Sponsor a Cadet:** Help cover the cost of training, uniforms, or travel for a cadet who might otherwise miss out.
- **Donate Gear:** New or gently used uniforms and equipment can go a long way.
- **Volunteer:** Whether you have military experience, a background in education, or simply a willingness to help, your time is

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<< Sea Cadets Chair continued from page 23

invaluable.

- **Fundraise:** Organize events or campaigns to raise awareness and funds for your local division.
- **Mentor:** Share your skills, experiences, and life lessons with cadets who are eager to learn.

Looking Ahead

The U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps is one of the most impactful youth programs in the nation, instilling discipline, leadership, and a love of country in young Americans. But it is also a program that depends on community involvement to survive and grow.

As we look ahead to the next training season, the need for support is greater than ever. Rising costs and the shortage of volunteers threaten to limit opportunities for cadets, but with the right support, these challenges can be overcome.

This is not just about funding or manpower—it's about investing in the future of our nation's youth. Every dollar donated, every hour volunteered, and every connection made helps shape the next generation of leaders, sailors, aviators, and citizens.

If you believe in service, leadership,

and giving young people the tools to succeed, the Sea Cadets need you.

To support your local Sea Cadet unit or learn more, contact Sea Cadets American Legion Chairman and Sea Cadets volunteer Jeff Hawk.

For info on supporting your local division, email:

seacadet@legionmail.org



Improving Our Social Media Space One Post at a Time!

Dana Jackson, Social Media Chair

socialmedia@legionmail.org



As your Department Social Media Chair, I am here to help you move forward with your Social Media Program at the Post

and District level. To end 2024 and start the year 2025, we began with Social Media Training at the June Convention. Thank you to those who were in attendance, and hopefully, you found it informative.

To continue moving forward, I have already sent a mass email to all the District Commanders (check your spam folder) with the results from the Consolidated Post Report, which provided those Posts that reported they have/don't have social media

or a website. Once the Installation of Officers is complete for your District, please forward the information to the new Post Commander. Let's work together to find resources to improve their social media space. As I stated in my training, social media is our means to let members, potential new members, and the community know that we are ALIVE and WELL. We must tell the American Legion story and what we provide as an organization for our veterans and their families to bring in new members and retain the ones we have.

Another way to increase our social media space was to create a Facebook Group called Florida Legion Social. The purpose of it is to connect with Social Media Chairs from either the District or Post level so that we can provide training on learning about social media. Please go onto the site, join, and share it! I

would like everyone to share their expertise, as I believe we can learn from one another.

Do you know when to use the Brandmark vs. the Emblem? Please go to [Branding & Guidelines | The American Legion](#) to ensure you are using the correct one for social media. You will also need to request permission to use these for external uses. These permissions are a one-and-done deal. You must get permission to use the Brandmark or Emblem each time you want to use it—for example, when putting the Brandmark on shirts, etc.

Does your Post have a website? If not, go to <https://legionsites.com/faq> to find out more about how to start a website. Legionsites is a subscription-based service where you self-maintain the website

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<< Social Media Chair continued from page 24

through their content management system. They can set up a website within a day, and then you are given access to add and maintain your content. There is an initial \$249.00 fee, then renewal every year is \$199.00. Once you have purchased an initial subscription, they will obtain your domain of choice. If you go to the website and to the top where it says "sites," this is where you will see other Posts that use their services. Some of the Florida Posts that use them are Post 53 Sanford, Post 28 Key West, Post 26 Plant City, and Post 347 Lady Lake, in case you want to call them with questions before purchasing. You can also get ideas from these websites on what to have on them.

VA Benefits / BE THE ONE Training

As we all know, social media is used to GET THE WORD OUT about an event, training, what's for Friday night dinner, calendars, and so much more. So please bear with me as I take this time to push out some BE THE ONE / VA Benefits Training.

Not sure if you know, but as a Legion Family, we have lost some members due to suicide. We all

know one is too many, and we need to prevent suicide as much as we can. The way to do that is by being engaged at the Post level. Talking to members or strangers that walk through the door is of the utmost importance. If you have a hardship or a death in the family, please contact your Post Commander, Service Officer, and/or Chaplain.

Larry Roberts, American Legion Department of Florida VA Entitlements Chair and Project: Vet Relief Board Member, and Tiffany Theen, Unit 266 V&R Chair, have been teaming up to teach and provide role-play scenarios when someone needs assistance at the Post—whether it be for benefit assistance, homelessness, death in the family, suicidal tendencies, childhood trauma/behavioral issues, etc. They also provide local community resources for families in need.

If you are in a situation where you cannot calm a veteran down from suicidal ideation or feel they are a threat to themselves or others, PLEASE call **2-1-1**, **9-8-8**, or **9-1-1**!

Call Larry Roberts at 850-718-7773 to book your VA Benefits / Be The

One Training today!

Upcoming training:

- Sep 27 – Post 113 Rotonda West (Benefits)
- Sep 28 – Be The One Suicide Awareness Prevention
- Nov 8 – Post 266 Fruitville (Veterans Benefits Fair)
- Nov 1 – District 13 Post 90 (Benefits & Suicide Awareness)

Be The One, Be The One Training | The American Legion. The next training is on **Sept 9 from 2:30–4:00 pm**.

Training Tip

Courtesy of D5 Social Media Chair Virna Luke: **Don't Just Post—Create an Event Flyer!**

Share your training tip and just maybe it will get shared here!

Submit articles to [Legiontown U.S.A.](https://legiontown.usa)

Once again, it is an honor to serve as your 2025–2026 Social Media Chair, and I look forward to working with you!

#OneTeamOneDream

Save The Date

Joan Suelter, Women Veterans Chair
womenvets@legionmail.org

Hello, September. Just mentioning September brings a sense of excitement, cooler temperatures, and 60 days 'til what will be a first for the Department of Florida...a Women

Veterans Benefits Fair and Expo in the Southern Area. This groundbreaking event will be conducted at American Legion Post 142, Pompano Beach.

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to Rosa Cordes, Post Commander, as well as the entire

Legion Family of Post 142, for hosting this great event.

As much is still in the planning stages, please check October's Legion Link for the complete information on this event.



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FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

SEPTEMBER 2025 EDITION

CURRENT YEAR FIGURES : 2025-2026



13

VETS
RECEIVED
FUNDS



\$23,769

PROVIDED AS
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE



13

SPI PARTNERS



\$52,000

GIVEN TOWARDS
SUICIDE PREVENTION

ONE PROGRAM: TWO MISSIONS

PROJECT: VetRelief was established in 2014 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit program under The American Legion, Department of Florida. While our Department has been serving veterans since 1919, our 501(c)(3) designation allows us to secure funding from corporations and foundations, which is essential to operate our programs and services.

Through PROJECT: VetRelief, we provide two vital services to the veteran community: **emergency assistance** and **suicide prevention**.

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

When veterans or their families face a life emergency, PROJECT: VetRelief provides immediate financial support. These funds are not loans. They are granted with no strings attached to help cover urgent needs, such as keeping a roof over their heads or ensuring essential utilities remain on.



NEXT TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Join us for our next training during Fall Conference! Our team has revamped the materials and will provide an in-depth look at financial assistance eligibility, SPI Strategic Partners, the application process, and how to become a valuable resource for your community. Plus, you can meet our new caseworker, Shenicia. *Hope to see you there!*

SUICIDE PREVENTION INITIATIVE (SPI)

SPI focuses on supporting veterans through existing mental health treatments and preventive programs to reduce suicide risk. Working alongside our Strategic Partners, we provide funding to expand programs and mentor veterans in crisis. With the current veteran suicide rate at 22 per day, our mission is to reduce this number as much as possible.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION MATTERS

Donations to PROJECT: VetRelief are divided into two separate funds: one for emergency assistance and one for suicide prevention. If you'd like your donation applied to a specific area, please note that in the memo section.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure veterans can always rely on us during their most challenging times. Continued support from the Florida Legion **Family is crucial, and we are deeply grateful to have YOU helping us make a lasting impact.**



STEP UP FOR PROJECT: VETRELIEF!

Want to make an even greater impact with PROJECT: VetRelief? Contact PVR Chairman Stan Brown at projectvetrelief@legionmail.org to let him know. There will be a special gathering at Fall Conference to learn how you can help advance this life-changing program!

EVENTS HAPPENING THIS MONTH

SEPT
13

VETFEST
PUBLIX FIELD (LAKELAND)
HOSTED BY: CONGRESSMAN
SCOTT FRANKLIN

SEPT
22

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT
GOLDEN BEAR CLUB AT KEENE'S POINTE
HOSTED BY: RL JAMES, INC (BOB JAMES)

SEPT
27

TRAINING: VA AND BENEFITS
LEGION POST 113 (ROTONDA WEST)
CONTACT: LARRY ROBERTS



Eligible American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance Grants

Dennis Boland, Child Well Being Fdn Pres
pdcboland@legionmail.org



The American Legion National Executive Committee passed Resolution #14 during the May Spring meeting in Indianapolis, which increased the American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) grants from \$1,500 to \$2,500. These one-time, non-repayable grants help American Legion members and active-duty service members with minor children at home cover their basic needs when hardship arises.

TFA helps pay for:

- Shelter (mortgage or rent)
- Utilities (electric, gas, propane, water, trash, and sewer)
- Essentials (food, personal hygiene items, and cleaning supplies)
- Clothing for children
- Medical or dental care for the child or children
- Education expenses and more

Note: TFA does not cover expenses such as car payments, transportation fees, car repairs, home or cell phone bills, taxes, or cable TV.

TFA eligibility:

1. A veteran must be a member of The American Legion or on active

duty serving on federal orders under Title 10 with minor children living in the home.

2. The minor child or children must be unmarried and under the age of 18 and still in high school. A TFA grant will be considered if the child or children are under the age of 21, unmarried, and still in high school. The minor child or children must be the biological child, stepchild, legally adopted, or in the legal custody of a qualifying veteran or active-duty service member.

A TFA originates at an American Legion Post or Department.
<https://www.legion.org/tfa>
– For the TFA form

Finances, 'Mind' Matters, and I.T. Careers

Darrell Gray, Post 331

The Doris "Dorie" Miller Memorial Post 331 Inc. hosted a Community Forum presented by Heart of Florida United Way – Mission United.

Mission United champions veteran services by mobilizing community partners to serve thousands of veterans with educational, employment, and legal assistance.

Orange County, FL, Veteran of the Year 2025 Norris Henderson facilitated the forum along with

presenters for Financial Literacy, Brain Functioning Research, and I.T. Security Career Training.

Log onto hfuw.org/contact for more information about Heart of Florida – Mission United services.

There will be more Community Forums hosted by Post 331.



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Air Force Veteran from Leavenworth, Kan., Elected National Commander of The American Legion

John Raughter, Dep. Dir. of Media Relations
jraughter@legion.org

TAMPA, Fla. (Aug. 28, 2025)—A retired Kansas district court judge was elected national commander of the nation's largest veterans organization during The American Legion's 106th national convention today.

Dan K. Wiley, an Air Force veteran, served 28 years on the bench in Leavenworth, Kan., and is a past department (state) commander of the Kansas American Legion. Wiley, who owns a cattle farm in Leavenworth, is a paid-up-for-life member of Byron

H. Mehl American Legion Post 23. He has served in numerous offices at every level of The American Legion, including terms on the organization's National Executive Committee (board of directors).

After being appointed by the Kansas governor as a district court judge in 2008, Wiley helped establish and preside over the Leavenworth County Veterans Treatment Court. He has been active in his community and is a past president of the Leavenworth / Lansing Chamber of Commerce, a past chairman of the Leavenworth County Veterans Day Parade Committee and a member of the Unified School District 453 School Board.

Following an enlisted tour in the U.S.

Air Force, Wiley earned a business degree at the College of Great Falls in Montana, and a law degree at the University of Kansas.

As national commander, Wiley is a strong advocate for The American Legion's "Be the One" outreach mission to prevent veteran suicide. He emphasizes inclusivity in The American Legion Family through the theme, "better together!"

Wiley and his wife, Sonia, have two children, Austin and Christy, and one grandson. The national commander and his son, Austin Wiley, are charter members of Sons of The American Legion Squadron 36 in Oskaloosa, Kan. Sonia and Christy are members of the American Legion Auxiliary.



Sacred Heart Donation



Children & Youth Fund presentation from Post 36 to Barbara Markley, Co-Chair of the Gun Safety Committee of the League of Women Voters of Broward County.

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MEMBERSHIP TARGET REPORT

August 28, 2025 (50% Target)

District 2	Roxann Dressel	56.82%
District 4	Darcy Bockman-Wright	54.12%
District 9	Jim Tewes	49.98%
District 1	Robert Osmon	49.92%
District 15	Drew Davis	48.65%
District 6	David Musser	48.50%
District 11	Stanley Brown, Jr.	48.10%
District 5	Miguel Garcia	47.68%
District 7	Kalvin Thompson	46.92%
District 12	Daniel Martin	46.80%
District 17	Jim Bowers	46.69%
District 13	Laurene Allen-Flower	46.29%
District 3	Rick Cabrera	45.36%
District 14	Angela Glover	44.88%
District 8	Charlie Magnus	44.85%
District 16	Michael Harley	44.64%
Western	Shelby Windham	50.89%
Northern	Doug Hockenberry	48.57%
Southern	Geo Bograkovs	47.81%
Eastern	Joan Suelter	47.73%
Central	Rick Orzechowski	46.10%
Southwestern	Eric Loyd	45.65%
Post 400		53.81%
Post 208		42.90%

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AMERICAN LEGION Department of Florida

ONE OF DEPARTMENT'S LARGEST FUNDRAISERS!

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SUPPORT

The American Legion official license plate.



PLEASE SUPPORT
**Special
Olympics**

HONOR SERVICE INSPIRE FUTURE

www.floridalegion.org
legionlink@floridalegion.org

AMERICAN LEGION POST 8

CAR & MOTORCYCLE SHOW

PRESENTED BY
SONS OF THE
 **AMERICAN
LEGION**

SATURDAY, SEPT. 27

9:30 AM - 3 PM

REGISTRATION STARTS
AT 8:00 AM

GREAT FOOD BY
LEGIONARY GRILL

TROPHIES PRESENTED
AT 3:00 PM



\$25
ENTRY DONATION

TROPHIES INCLUDE:
1ST PLACE
2ND PLACE
3RD PLACE
COMMANDERS CHOICE

CONTACT DAN HEIER FOR MORE INFO
heierh@aol.com | 863-212-6327

FRIERSON-NICHOLS AMERICAN LEGION POST 8
300 AVE. M NW, WINTER HAVEN, FL 33881

District 13 Benefits and Be the One Training

For the whole
Legion Family



AMERICAN
LEGION

BE =THE= ONE

TO ASK
TO LISTEN
TO REACH OUT

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

SATURDAY
November 1st
9am to 1pm

**At American
Legion Post
90**

Benefits

Why there is a need to help Vets
Basic eligibility for VA benefits
Enrollment to VA Healthcare
Important Documents for VA
benefits
Tips to maneuver the VA
Military and Veteran Discounts
and much more

What do you do?

What protocols do you follow
when a Veteran visits your Post
seeking benefits assistance?
How do you respond to a
homeless Veteran seeking aid?
What steps do you take when a
Vet, 1st Responder or child
exhibits suicidal tendencies?

For more info, contact Larry Roberts, American Legion
Department of Florida, VA Entitlements Chair, (850)718-7773
VeteransBenefits@legionmail.org



What do you do?

Training for the entire Legion family.

What protocols do you follow when a veteran visits your post seeking benefits assistance?

How do you respond to a homeless veteran requesting aid?

What steps do you take when a veteran, first responder, or child exhibits suicidal tendencies?

Sunday September 28, 2025.

10:00 a.m.

American Legion Post 113

3436 Indiana Rd, Rotonda West, FL 33947

Point of Contact :

Larry Roberts

American Legion

Department of Florida

VA Entitlements (Benefits) Chair

(850)718-7773



Training:

How To Maneuver the VA, State and Local Benefits

**Why there's a need to help
veterans.**

Basic Eligibility for VA Benefits.

Enrollment into VA health care.

Important Documents for VA Benefits.

Four Tips to Maneuver the VA

What is a "Well-grounded Claim" for Disability Compensation

**Doctors supporting letter
(Nexus).**

Family and Friends supporting letter (Buddy Letters).

(PTSD) Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, (TBI) Traumatic Brain Injury,

(MST) Military Sexual Trauma.

Suicide Awareness.

Agent Orange Symptoms.

Death and Burial Benefits

Florida Veteran's Benefits.

Veterans Preference.

Project Vet Relief.

Military and Veterans Discounts.

This Class is most affective If the whole Legion Family is there.

Saturday September 27, 2025. 10:00 a.m.

American Legion Post 113

3436 Indiana Rd, Rotonda West, FL 33947

For more Info Contact: Larry Roberts

American Legion

Department of Florida

VA Entitlements (Benefits) Chair

(850)718-7773 E-mail: VeteransBenefits@legionmail.org

AMERICAN
LEGION
AUXILIARY

AMERICAN
LEGION

SONS OF THE
AMERICAN
LEGION

THE CENTRAL AREA LEADERSHIP PRESENTS:

2026 CENTRAL AREA Mangunitaville Casino Party!

MARCH 7, 2026

AT CLEARWATER AMERICAN LEGION POST 7

5 PM - COCKTAILS/GAMES

6 PM - JIMMY BUFFETT INSPIRED BUFFET

LIVE DJ - CASINO GAMES - RAFFLES - BASKETS

**PUT ON YOUR BEST JIMMY BUFFETT OUTFIT
AND ENJOY A FUN NIGHT IN PARADISE!**

PROCEEDS BENEFIT: SPECIAL OLYMPICS,
C.O.T.A., & ALA DISASTER RELIEF

**\$45 PER PERSON
\$80 PER COUPLE**

RSVP/MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: MICHAEL SHERMAN
(813) 541-3452 | VCCENTRAL@FLORIDASONS.ORG
MAIL TO: 7519 WINGING WAY DR, TAMPA, FL 33615

**MIAMI
VICE**

Themed Party

American Legion and Auxiliary

VICE'S Event



Date - Jan 17th, 2026

Time - 1-5 pm

Location - Post 8

300 Ave M NW

Winter Haven, FL

Food, Raffle Baskets, Auction Items

Donation - \$20.00 per person

pay at the door

To RSVP contact

Bruce Carl at brucel1955@yahoo.com

Proceeds to benefit the Department Commander
and Department President charities



Address: 171 SW 2nd St. Pompano Beach, FL 33060

SAVE THE DATE

November 1, 2025

Celebrating Women Veterans



POST SERVICE OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL

Dept. Fall Conference Registration Form 2025

This course is filled based off first come, first served interest. REGISTRATION IS MANDATORY!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: FL Zip Code: _____

Email (required): _____

Phone number: _____

Post number: _____ District: _____ Member ID number: _____

By signing this document, you are stating that you have been appointed as the Post Service Officer by the Post Commander to attend this course as stated in the Department Constitution and By-Laws Article X, Section

**** A Post can only send THREE PEOPLE to attend the course
due to the limited seating! ****

REGISTRATION DEADLINE 07 November 2025

Service Officer Signature

Date

Commander Signature

Date

Return this form to:

Florida American Legion, ATTN: Programs, PO BOX 547859, Orlando, FL, 32854-7859

OR

Email: bboarman@floridalegion.org

This form **MUST** be submitted and received by Department to reserve a place in the class. A confirmation email will be sent to the email address provided once you have been added to the class roster.

****Registration by phone will NOT be accepted****



Class Name: FL American Legion Post Service Officer Course, Dept. Fall Conference 2025

Dates (Must Attend Both Days): Friday, 21 November; 8AM – 4PM
Saturday, 22 November; 8AM – 1PM

Note: Training by The American Legion is **valid for one year**

Room Name: Grand Sierra B

Hotel Reservations: Caribe Royale Orlando – (800) 823-8300
8101 World Center Dr. Orlando, FL 32821

****Be sure to tell them you are with The American Legion to receive our special rate****

SAVE THE DATE!



Office of
Department Commander

The American Legion

Department of Florida

Dear Legion Family,

Florida has faced more than its fair share of devastating hurricanes over the past several years, which have destroyed homes, damaged our Posts, and disrupted countless lives. In the face of every disaster, our Legion Family has shown its strength by coming together to provide food, water, and immediate relief for those in need. However, this year, our need is greater than ever!

Since the creation of our Disaster Relief Fund in 2017, our Department has been able to quickly deliver critical aid. Last year alone, in response to the destruction caused by Hurricanes Milton and Helene, we provided **\$133,103 in emergency support** to 76 Legion and SAL members and 8 Posts, helping them begin the long process of rebuilding their homes and their lives. But these efforts have nearly depleted our funds.

Adding to this challenge, **The American Legion National Emergency Fund no longer allows Sons of The American Legion members to apply for assistance.** Despite this change, the Department of Florida remains fully committed to supporting our SAL family. We are now the *only* Legion source of financial relief for these members, and we need your help to ensure we can fill the gap.

Will you help us ensure no one from The Florida Legion Family is left behind when the next storm hits?

Your donation to Florida's Disaster Relief Fund helps us provide *immediate, on-the-ground assistance* when it's needed most. With your support, we can continue to be there for our entire Legion Family—Legionnaires, SAL members, Auxiliary, and Posts—without delay, and without having to say, "*We have nothing left to give.*"

Here's how you can submit your donation:

- Give online: www.floridalegion.org/aid
- Mail a check to:
The American Legion, Department of Florida
Attn: Disaster Relief
1912 Lee Road
Orlando, FL 32810

(Make checks payable to *The American Legion, Department of Florida* with "Disaster Relief" in the memo.)

Together, we can ensure Florida's Legion Family is never left behind in any storm.

Thank you for your continued generosity, compassion, and commitment.

For God and Country,

Jessica Moore
Department Commander