



## A Message from the Department Commander

**Jessica Moore, Commander**

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



The holiday season is a time when generosity shines brightest. For the American Legion Family, December is more than lights, gatherings, and traditions—it's about sharing the gift of belonging.

Imagine this: if you could give one person the gift of membership, no matter their situation, would you do it?

Membership in the American Legion Family is more than a card—it's a connection. It's the chance to stand shoulder to shoulder with others who believe in service, community,

and support for veterans and their families. It's a way to say, you matter, you belong, and you are not alone.

- For a veteran who has never found their place, membership is a doorway to camaraderie.
- For a spouse or child of a service member, it's a reminder that their sacrifices are honored.
- For a friend or neighbor who simply wants to serve, it's an invitation to join a family rooted in purpose.

And sometimes, the greatest gift isn't just membership—it's a Buddy Check. A simple call, a quick visit, or a heartfelt message can mean the world to someone who may be struggling, feeling isolated, or just

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## COMMANDER'S CHARITY: *Special Olympics*

**\$17,154.50 RAISED**



Go to [www.floridalegion.org/donate](http://www.floridalegion.org/donate) and choose support Commander's Charity: Special Olympics **\$150,000 GOAL**



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**Special  
Olympics**

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2025-2026 COMMANDER JESSICA MOORE

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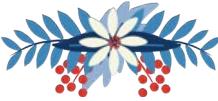
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Submit Articles at  
[floridalegion.org/submit](http://floridalegion.org/submit) or [legionlink@floridalegion.org](mailto:legionlink@floridalegion.org)

Questions? [legionlink@floridalegion.org](mailto:legionlink@floridalegion.org)

**#oneteamonedream**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### DECEMBER 2025

- 1-31 Holiday Donor Blood Drive ★
- 1 BE THE ONE Day
- 1 US Civil Air Patrol Birthday
- 1 District 13: ALR Winter Passport Tour
- 2 #GivingTuesday
- 3 Membership Department 75% Goal \*
- 3 Chapter 136: Monthly Meeting
- 4 Membership Department Zoom Meeting \*
- 4-7 District 5: Commander's Tour \*
- 5 Post 331: Charity Golf Tournament
- 6 Chapter 316: ALR Monthly Meeting
- 6 District 6: Meeting
- 6 District 16: Meeting
- 6 District 3: Meeting & Fish Fry
- 6 District 14: Meeting
- 6 District 17: Holiday Party
- 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 7 District 7: Meeting
- 10 Chapter 10: ALR Meeting
- 11-14 District 17: Commander's Tour \*
- 13 National Wreaths Across America
- 13 US National Guard Birthday (1636)
- 13 Army/Navy Game \*
- 13 Chapter 90: Santacon Pub Crawl
- 13 District 9: Meeting
- 13 District 11: Christmas Gala
- 14 District 13: Meeting
- 14-22 Hanukkah Begins
- 14 Chapter 8: ALR Meeting
- 14 District 4: Meeting
- 14 District 5: Meeting
- 15 Legion Link Articles Due \*
- 15 Bill of Rights Day
- 15 Homeless Veterans Outreach Noms Due \*
- 15 Employment Awards Noms Due \*
- 15 JSSP 1st Target Sales & Registration Closes \*
- 17 Wright Brothers Day
- 17-21 District 13: Commander's Tour \*
- 20 Space Force Birthday (2019)
- 20 Panama/Operation Just Cause (1989)

<< Commander continued from page 1

needing to hear a friendly voice. This December, let's make sharing more than a seasonal tradition. Let's make it a legacy. One membership can change a life, strengthen a community, and ensure that the values we hold dear continue to thrive. And one Buddy Check can remind someone that they are never

forgotten.

So ask yourself: if you could give one person the gift of membership—or one person the gift of a Buddy Check—would you? And if the answer is yes—why wait?

**#OneTeamOneDream**

### Holiday Message to the Department of Florida

**Bob Matheson, 1st Vice Commander**

[1stvice@legionmail.org](mailto:1stvice@legionmail.org)



As the year comes to an end, I want to wish all the American Legion Posts across the Department of Florida a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year. This is a special time of year, and I truly appreciate everything our Posts do for their communities, Veterans, and families.

With Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the whole holiday season upon us, I just want to remind everyone how important it is to reach out. There are families, Veterans, and neighbors who could really use a helping hand or even just someone checking in. A phone call, a meal, or a small act of kindness all **matter**, and it all makes a difference.

We also have to remember that not everyone feels the joy of the season. Unfortunately, this time of year can bring on a lot of stress, loneliness, and depression for many people. I want everyone to know—and for our Posts to help spread the message—that the American Legion is here for them. No one has to face the holidays alone. Our Posts are ready to support, listen, and be there in any way they can.

As we head into the New Year, I hope each of you finds time to celebrate, rest, and enjoy the moments that matter. Thank you for all you do throughout the year. Wishing you and your family peace, comfort, and a wonderful holiday season. Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and here's to a brighter New Year ahead!





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### NOVEMBER 2025 (Continued)

- 20 Chapter 38: Teddy Bear Run
- 20 District 8: Meeting
- 21 First Day of Winter
- 24-1 Headquarters Closed ★
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26-1 Kwanzaa
- 27 Post 148: ALR Monthly Dinner
- 31 National Membership Awards Deadline ★
- 31 New Year's Eve

★ Commander attendance tentative.

★ Department of Florida event.

★ National event.

Events are subject to change. More details at [floridalegion.org](http://floridalegion.org).

## Our Second Pillar

Bruce Carl, 2nd Vice Commander

[2ndvice@legionmail.org](mailto:2ndvice@legionmail.org)



Welcome to December, Legion Family! I hope everyone enjoyed Fall Conference and took advantage of all the classes that were offered.

Please take what you learned back to your Posts and disseminate it to your members.

I attended and instructed at two different District trainings this past month. The first was the 14th District in Miami, with about 20 members present. The second was the 4th District Leadership training. There are three more trainings scheduled for the Southern Area and one for the 5th District. There are quite a few Districts that have not scheduled one yet, so think about putting one together for your District.

This month we concentrate on our second pillar, National Security. Our main objectives are to make sure Congress provides enough funding to adequately support our military to defend our country, provide a quality of life for wounded or sick Veterans, support Homeland Security, support immigration enforcement, provide support during natural disasters, and ensure a full accounting of our

POW/MIAs.

Programs that fall under Pillar 2 include Heroes to Hometown, National Emergency Fund (NEF), Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA), and Project Vet Relief. We live in a disaster-prone state, so please make sure you are familiar with these programs and let your members know there is possible assistance available for them.

If you would like training in your District or at your Post, please contact me so we can arrange it for you.

Dec. 7th is Pearl Harbor Day, so let's all remember and reflect on what happened that day. December is typically the month with the highest rate of suicide, so make sure you are doing your "buddy checks."

We will also be enjoying the holiday season this month. No matter what your religion or belief, celebrate safely! Until next year, continue to work the mission!

## Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year 2026 for Everybody

Jim Ramos, NEC

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



May we all have a Merry Christmas as we begin the Holiday Season. Please let us be kind to ALL and come together as one BIG family. We say "Legion Family" all the time—now is the perfect time to live it.

As we move forward, let's

remember to make this Season joyful for all members and their families. It is difficult for many to feel truly happy when our United States of America is not united, and when our government is still not doing what is needed to return our Country to normal. Only then can we fully say it's going to be a truly happy holiday season.

As the American Legion Florida Family, we still have a duty to our

communities to promote peace and goodwill on earth. I remain hopeful that those we have elected will do the right thing and help bring our government back to normal.

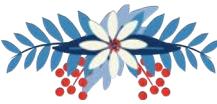
So, as I say "Happy Holidays," may we all enjoy this December. And when January arrives, may our New Year be fruitful as we begin again with our programs, membership

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<< NEC continued from page 3

goals, and our commitment to strengthening comradeship through our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

Happy New Year 2026 — may prosperity and happiness be with us throughout the year.

And yes, it's still just Jim. If you don't get answers, email me at [NEC@legionmail.org](mailto:NEC@legionmail.org) or call me at 352-226-4370.

## SAL and ALR Financial Documentation

**Shirley Douglas, Finance Officer**  
[finance@legionmail.org](mailto:finance@legionmail.org)



Happy Holidays everyone,

I have received questions from several Post Officers about:

1.) How should the Sons of the American Legion and the Legion Riders programs' financial operations be documented?

To answer the first question, the Sons of the American Legion (SAL) and Legion Riders (ALR) are programs of your Post. You must include all of their income and expenses in your Post's financial statements. They both should be operating with the Post's Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). They should never have their own FEIN.

At the end of each quarter, your Post

Finance Officer needs to receive both the SAL and ALR financial statements, to include the Balance Sheets, Profit and Loss statements, and at the end of the 4th quarter, all Fundraising Event Income/Expense reports, bank statements, inventory sheets, etc., need to be given to the Post Audit Committee for the Annual Audit Review to ensure Generally Accepted Accounting Principles are being followed.

The Post Balance Sheet should have two asset line items for Other Current Assets: Due to/from SAL and Due to/from ALR, and have two expense line items for Legion Riders Fund (list each event: Unity Ride, Summit, Legacy Run, etc.), and expense line items for Sons (Special Olympics, Children and Youth, etc.).

The Balance Sheet should also have SAL and ALR Restricted Donations listed under the Equity area of the

Balance Sheet.

2.) Is there a required fiscal year that all of the Legion Posts should be operating on?

Most Posts have a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. This aligns with National and the Florida Department's fiscal year. This fiscal year is best because it aligns with changes of Post Officers that result from the Post elections in April/May.

If your Post has a Jan 1 to Dec 31 fiscal year, you do not have to change the fiscal year. The best thing to do is go to IRS.gov (see below website) and search to see what your Post's fiscal year is. You can also see the last 990s that were filed for your Post.

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-exempt-organization-search>

## Ruminations from the Historian

**Edward Lewis, Historian**  
[historian@legionmail.org](mailto:historian@legionmail.org)



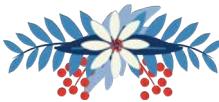
Author's note: This article was written before Department Conference.

Although I am not

supposed to write a travelogue, I wanted to thank every Post out there for their generosity and hospitality as I traveled with Commander Moore on her Commander's Tour to Districts near and far these last few weeks. As Commander Moore mentioned

in her talks with each of you, she preferred to call it a tour and not a visit. If I knew I was going on tour with the Commander, I would have preferred a tour bus, and I would have had bootleg t-shirts made.

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<< Historian continued from page 4

Some of you will understand that reference...

I also wanted to thank everyone for coming to the Historian's training at last month's Fall Conference. There were plenty of great questions, and hopefully I was able to answer all of them to make certain you had the best information for compiling your yearbooks.

As I had mentioned during training, the time is now to start compiling

and putting together your books. The Department Convention is only 7 months away. In the handouts you were given, it has most of the information you need to be a successful Post Historian. If you have questions that the handouts do not cover, I may be reached via email through the Department.

It has been an absolute pleasure working and meeting with all of you over the course of my time as your Department Historian (three times!) As you may or may not have noticed, I do not have an endorsement letter

on file for next year. I wanted to give everyone throughout our outstanding Department a heads-up. I will not be seeking the office of Department Historian for the '26-'27 year. I have had the privilege of working for three outstanding Department Commanders and the pleasure of visiting most Posts in our Department. I believe it is time to let someone else have a go at this position.

All the best to everyone.

## Let the Competition Begin

**Doug Hockenberry, Oratorical Chair**  
[oratorical@legionmail.org](mailto:oratorical@legionmail.org)



Hello, Department of Florida Legion Family. Let me start by wishing each of you a blessed Happy Holiday Season filled with joy, love, and happiness as we gather to celebrate Christmas, the holiday season, and the coming of the New Year.

November was a busy month, just as October, with more students submitting inquiries directly to National wanting information about the Oratorical Program. I am happy to see that we have so many students interested in this great scholarship opportunity. To that end, I have notified the respective District Commanders of these students and expect to see an increase in participation with more Posts hosting students. Now, keep in mind that

many of the students submitting inquiries were in 9th, 10th, and 11th grade, which means they are eligible to compete again next year or the year after.

This month is where all the preparation and practice from the past few months come together as our students take part in the Post-level contests. Based on the feedback from the judges, we can help our students refine their speeches to ensure success at future contests at the District, Area, and Department contests. As such, I am providing the contest dates (see below) for your reference.

Post Level Competition: December 1, 2025 - January 18, 2026

District Level Competition: January 19, 2026 - February 8, 2026

Area Level Competition: February 9, 2026 - February 22, 2026

**Department Competition: March 14, 2026**

A big thank you to those who attended the joint training session that Sonny Decker, the Boys State Chair, and I presented about Boys State and the Oratorical Program. As these are two amazing programs, it was our intent to provide you with the most current information for you to take back to your Posts and share.

Let me close by thanking everyone for their support. Keep up the excellent work, and best of luck with your upcoming Post-level contests. As always, if you have any questions or need assistance, please email me at [oratorical@legionmail.org](mailto:oratorical@legionmail.org) or call me at 727-514-3742. Again, Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year... "Hang Tough"

**#OneTeamOneDream**

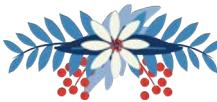


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## Looking Out for Our Brothers and Sisters: The Importance of Holiday Buddy Checks

**Geo Bograkos, Southern Area Cmdr**  
[southern@legionmail.org](mailto:southern@legionmail.org)



### Looking Out For Our Brothers and Sisters: The Importance of Holiday Buddy Checks

The power and the importance of reaching out cannot be overstated — particularly during the Holidays.

As veterans, we often tell each other that we're "fine" or "okay," but it's our responsibility to check in with each other even when we don't think someone is struggling. We used the buddy system while serving proudly in the military; let's carry that legacy forward and make sure to do our buddy checks.

The buddy system is an important part of military life — it's designed with safety in mind. When you have a buddy, you look out for each other, both on and off the battlefield. You make sure your buddy has all their gear before taking a mission into enemy territory, and you keep an eye on them during firefights. Even when you're back at base, there's an unwritten rule that you always have someone looking after you. It's more than just a way to stay safe; it's about creating a sense of community and camaraderie among those of us who serve in the armed forces.

As Legion Family members in civilian life, the buddy system works similarly. It helps us create meaningful connections with those around us

by providing emotional support and guidance through difficult times — whether it's celebrating success or helping one another cope with tragedy. We can make sure our buddies are taken care of by checking in regularly and being available when they need us most... especially if they are going through tough times or facing personal struggles that they may not be comfortable talking about openly yet. Struggles that might otherwise not end well if not for their buddy "checking in" with them.

### Buddy Checks Are Not Just for the Holidays

Checking in on someone anytime can provide valuable insight into how they're doing emotionally, which could lead to further conversations about mental health issues or personal struggles that would benefit from additional support. So don't be afraid to reach out!

Remember to **#BETHEONE**

### Noteworthy events coming up in the Southern Area:

Remember our upcoming Southern Area Training Sessions. We are bringing in many of the same Legion Department-Level Instructors you find teaching at Convention and Conference. One training each will be held in Districts 9 & 11, and two in District 14. The first District 14 Training held on October 18 with Dept. Vice Commanders Bob Matheson, Bruce Carl, and myself was a success, with

many Legionnaires, Auxiliary, and S.A.L. members in attendance.

Upcoming Training sessions are set for District 14 (Florida Keys) at Post 154 on January 10th, District 9 at Post 304 on January 24th, and District 11 at Post 268 on February 14th. All sessions focus on: [MyLegion.org](http://MyLegion.org) – Conflict Resolution – How To Conduct a Post Meeting.

Department Convention Trainers traveling to the Southern Area to deliver this training will include, but are not limited to: Dept. of Florida 1st Vice Commander Bob Matheson, Dept. of Florida 2nd Vice Commander Bruce Carl, Dept. of Florida Southern Area Commander Geo Bograkos, Dept. of Florida Membership Chair Lena Heredia-Perez, and Dept. of Florida Membership Vice Chair Isaac White... and other guest trainers. See Southern Area Training flyer below.

The "Wicked Cool" 2026 Sock Hop Themed SOUTHERN AREA BALL will be held on Saturday, January 31st, 2026 @ Post 321, 9081 SW 51st St., Cooper City, FL 33328 – Tickets are \$40 – Cocktails (cash bar) @ 18:00 hrs, Dinner @ 19:00 hrs – Choice of Chicken Cordon Bleu or Shrimp Scampi with Penne Pasta – Music by Happy Daze Rock Band – Dress is 50's & 60's casual. Contact Geo for tickets: [southern@legionmail.org](mailto:southern@legionmail.org) Proceeds to Benefit Special Olympics

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<< Southern Area Cmdr continued from page 6

– See Southern Area Ball flyer below.

## The Award-Winning District 9 FOUR CHAPLAINS Commemoration

Ceremony will be held the very next day, February 1st, 2026 @ 14:00 hrs at the I.T. Parker Center, 901 NE 3rd St., Dania Beach, FL 33004.

Immediately following the Four Chaplains Ceremony, American Legion Post 304 Commander Kevin "Gunny" Savage cordially invites

you to join him at the OFFICIAL FOUR CHAPLAINS After Party and Dinner to be held at the Official Four Chaplains After Party Host: American Legion Post 304, 41 NE 1st Ct., Dania Beach, FL 33004.

If you have not already done so, please visit and "FOLLOW" the first-ever Southern Area Facebook page, where you may share all your Facebook posts of your events with everyone in Districts 9, 11, 14, and beyond: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernAreaFL>

Or just use this QR code to take you right to the page:



Wishing you and yours a joyous, wonderful, and safe Holiday Season.

## Congratulations and Welcome!

### Enrique Cabrera, District 3

[district3@legionmail.org](mailto:district3@legionmail.org)

The 3rd District of The American Legion proudly welcomes Post 423 on receiving their new charter and joining our strong and dedicated Legion family!

We also extend our heartfelt congratulations to all Posts in the 3rd District for their outstanding

participation in recent community events — from the fun and fellowship of Halloween activities to the patriotic pride shown in Veterans Day parades across the district.

In addition, we commend every Post for your continued efforts in retaining current members and recruiting new ones. Your dedication ensures that

our Legion remains strong, vibrant, and ready to serve veterans, their families, and our communities.

Your continued service, community involvement, and commitment to honoring our veterans truly reflect the spirit of The American Legion. Together, we make a difference!

## December Gratitude and District Updates

### Kalvin Thompson, District 7

[district 7@legionmail.org](mailto:district 7@legionmail.org)



As we welcome December, I want to express my sincere gratitude for the privilege of working with such a dedicated and inspiring

District. I am proud to announce that Post 201 has surpassed 100% membership, and several other Posts are making impressive progress toward their goals. Your collective

commitment is truly making a difference.

I am especially excited to see new Post Officers stepping up and embracing leadership roles within their Posts. You are helping to shape our future. Post 15 has shown remarkable dedication by making their Honor Guard operational, and their visible presence at multiple community events sets a wonderful example for all.

The 7th District is more active than ever, and our Posts are demonstrating their support for the community in meaningful ways. Many locations now have Toys For Tots donation boxes, offering everyone the opportunity to make a positive impact this season.

Please mark your calendars for our

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<< District 7 continued from page 7

next District meeting on December 7th at 10:00 AM. We will gather at Historic Zephyrhills Post 118. This meeting will include a special commemoration of Pearl Harbor, as well as important District business. All members are encouraged to attend and participate in the discussions that shape our path forward.

If you would like to support Toys For

Tots, please bring a new, unwrapped toy to the District meeting. The Zephyrhills Post has a donation box conveniently located in their entryway. Every contribution helps bring holiday cheer to children in need within our community.

As we approach the holidays, I wish every member of the American Legion Family a Merry Christmas and a safe, prosperous New Year. Your generosity, participation, and

dedication are what make our District strong.

I encourage each of you to get involved this season—whether by attending events, donating to Toys For Tots, or volunteering your time. Together, we can continue to serve, support one another, and strengthen the bonds that unite us. Let's make this holiday season a time of giving, unity, and pride for our District.

## The Importance of District Meetings in the American Legion

**Daniel Martin, District 12**  
[district12@legionmail.org](mailto:district12@legionmail.org)



Why District Meetings Are Important for the American Legion  
Understanding the Role and Value of District Meetings in Supporting Veterans and Communities

### Introduction

The American Legion is a vital organization dedicated to serving veterans, their families, and local communities. District meetings play an essential role in ensuring the Legion's mission is carried out effectively across the country. These meetings provide a platform for collaboration, decision-making, and sharing best practices among local posts.

### Strengthening Communication and Collaboration

District meetings offer members a chance to communicate directly with leadership and fellow Legionnaires.

This open exchange of ideas helps clarify goals, address challenges, and foster collaboration. By bringing together representatives from multiple posts, district meetings ensure that everyone is informed and aligned with the organization's objectives.

### Training and Leadership Development

One of the key functions of district meetings is to provide training and development opportunities. Sessions often cover leadership skills, membership recruitment strategies, and updates on policies or legislative priorities. These resources empower members to lead local posts more effectively and advocate for veterans' interests.

### Decision-Making and Policy Updates

District meetings are a forum for discussing and deciding on matters that affect the entire district. Members can voice concerns, propose new initiatives, and vote on

important issues. This democratic process ensures transparency and inclusiveness within the organization.

### Recognizing Achievements and Building Morale

District meetings often include recognition of outstanding members and posts. Awards and acknowledgments help build morale, encourage volunteerism, and highlight the positive impact of the American Legion in local communities.

### Community Engagement and Outreach

Through district meetings, the Legion can coordinate community service projects, fundraising events, and outreach programs. These collaborative efforts amplify the organization's ability to support veterans, promote patriotism, and strengthen civic involvement.

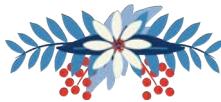
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## Conclusion

District meetings are a cornerstone of the American Legion's operations. They help unify members, develop

leaders, facilitate decision-making, and enhance community impact. By attending and actively participating in these meetings, Legionnaires uphold the values and mission of the

organization, ensuring continued support for veterans and their families.

## Holiday Greetings and Important Safety Updates

**Jim Wineland, ALR Chair**

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



Merry Christmas to all, and may the New Year bring you prosperity and good health!

Safety continues to be a top priority. While we

have seen about a 5% improvement in fatal motorcycle accidents, the overall number of motorcycle accidents has not decreased. Your continued interest, involvement, and commitment to our Safety Program are deeply appreciated.

We have a few significant changes coming as we close out the year, so I will keep this article brief.

## A Quick Look at What's Ahead The Summit is moving back to the beach!

We secured a beautiful venue for the next two years. This opportunity came through relationships built during our Safety Program efforts in Daytona. We were introduced to the City Coordinator for Bike Week, and through his contacts, we were connected to the Hilton on the beach, an ideal setting for our Summit.

## A New Location for the Rally

Thanks again to the contacts developed in Daytona, our initial

plan was to hold the Rally at Teddy Morris Harley (formerly Destination Harley). Unfortunately, after a lukewarm response and extraordinarily little communication, it became clear we needed another option.

While getting my bike serviced at Seminole Harley, I struck up a conversation with their GM. He asked about the ALR, our mission, and the work we do. I mentioned the challenges we faced with Teddy's, and he excused himself, briefly returning with the owner. After hearing about the ALR, she immediately opened her doors to us at no charge.

They offered burgers and dogs with all the fixings, a band, and even a share of merchandise and motorcycle sales during our event. That level of support made the decision to change locations an easy one.

## Safety

We are available to support your upcoming events and promote motorcycle safety throughout the year.

To schedule participation or request safety materials and brochures, please contact us so we can add

your event to the calendar and ensure all resources are prepared in advance.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please share them!

## Your 2025–2026 Schedule

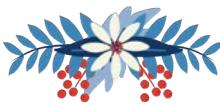
- **Summit, Meet & Greet**  
February 18, 2026
- **Summit Classes**  
February 19–21, 2026
- **Round Robin**  
April 2026
- **Children & Youth Picnic**  
April 5, 2026
- **State Unity Ride**  
April 20–24, 2026
- **Rally**  
April 25, 2026

Thank you for all that you do. Bev and I are proud to be part of such an outstanding leadership team!



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## December Reflections and Remembrances

**Joe Marcheggiani, Americanism**

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



As we roll into December, keep in mind that most of the major religions have observances in this month. It is also one of our busiest months. The Florida American Legion's year is half over. With that, it is time to get ahead of things and start, if you have not already, gathering ideas for awards, nominees for Oratorical, Boys State, and school medals, to name a few.

December is more than just a season of celebration; it is also a time of remembrance and reflection. Across the country, we pause to honor those who have served and to pay tribute to the enduring legacy of America's armed forces.

One of the most meaningful observances this month is Wreaths Across America Day, held each year on the third Saturday in December. On this day, volunteers and veterans' organizations join together at national, state, and local cemeteries to place wreaths on the graves of fallen service members. Each wreath represents gratitude and remembrance, a simple yet powerful act that reminds us that no veteran's sacrifice will ever be forgotten.

In addition to Wreaths Across America, December also marks several other important dates in military history. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, observed on December 7, honors the men and women who lost their lives in the 1941 attack that changed the course

of history and called a generation to arms. Later in the month, we celebrate the founding anniversaries of three vital organizations that continue to play key roles in our nation's defense: the Civil Air Patrol (December 1, 1941), the National Guard (December 13, 1636), and the U.S. Space Force (December 20, 2019).

Together, these observances remind us that service takes many forms, from defending the skies and seas to safeguarding new frontiers in space. They also highlight the bonds of brotherhood, sisterhood, and shared purpose that unite all who have worn the uniform.

## Supporting Foreign-Born U.S. Veterans: A Call for Fairness and Reform

**Gene Smith, Immigration**

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

I want to start this month's article by wishing all The American Legion Family in the Department of Florida a very happy holiday, and I hope 2026 brings you good health, abundant prosperity, and lots of inner peace and love. I pray we have a better year for those foreign-born U.S. veterans awaiting results of their appeals, naturalization applications, or legal filings.

Update on foreign-born U.S. Marine Paul. It has been nearly six years I have been covering his

ordeal with Immigration (USCIS). To my knowledge, four petitions were filed on Paul's behalf by Immigration attorney Elizabeth Ricci, Ricci and Rambana, PLLC, Tallahassee, with the Immigration Court. Three petitions were dismissed and one is still pending. If you remember his story, Paul and his family lived in one of our Central Florida counties. At the time, Florida was going to the new driver's license which indicates citizenship. Paul had gone to the driver's license office in his county of residence. To obtain a new license, Paul had to provide proof of citizenship. Paul thought citizenship

was automatic on discharge from the Marine Corps and showed them a DD-214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty). The discharge certificate did not work this time. The staff advised him to contact USCIS. Apparently, no one told him during out-processing from the Marine Corps he had to stop by USCIS and initiate a Naturalization application. Paul left the driver's license office without a permit to drive.

Remember when we introduced Paul to our membership six years

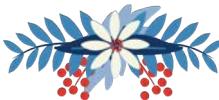
*continued on page 11 >>*



HONOR SERVICE INSPIRE FUTURE

2025-2026 COMMANDER JESSICA MOORE

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



<< Immigration continued from page 10

ago? Up until the license renewal event, Paul was a model "citizen"; he paid taxes, married an American citizen, fathered two children, was gainfully employed, and living the American Dream—or so he thought. Unfortunately, things went south for this Marine quickly. Here we are in the year 2025, and Paul is still waiting for an Immigration Court Judge to make a decision as to his future. Did I forget to say, at some time before I met Paul, an employee at the Voter County Registration Office allowed him to register to vote?

After the driver's license refusal, Paul went to USCIS to resolve the matter. During the visit, his American Dream shattered. Unfortunately, Paul voted in state and national elections. Consequently, USCIS stated he was not of "good moral character." The rest is history. Paul is not alone. It is estimated several thousand are having similar experiences with USCIS. I have read many are waiting in places like Baja California or border towns along our Southwest. Many are like Paul, here in the United States, living in fear, not knowing when ICE will come knocking. I am not talking about the flood of illegals who crossed the Rio Grande over the years and entered illegally from all parts of the world; I am referring to foreign-born immigrants who most likely came here legally, raised their

right hand and accepted the terms of the military swearing-in ceremony, and served honorably in the U.S. military. For whatever reason, their legal status expired and they did not request Naturalization.

On Veterans Day eve night this year, Ms. Elizabeth Ricci, Rambana and Ricci, PLLC, Complex Immigration Law, Tallahassee, was contacted by a Vietnam veteran who took the Naturalization oath at a U.S. District Court over 50 years ago while serving in the U.S. Army. Unfortunately for the soldier, he was not given his Naturalization Certificate when honorably discharged from the Army. Recently he attempted to get the Naturalization Certificate. He thought by filing with the USCIS, they would give him a new Naturalization Certificate. However, according to Ms. Ricci's article, there was an issue where the wrong form was filed. The foreign-born soldier claims the USCIS adjudicator berated him and denied his case and offered no solution for the soldier to prove citizenship from the country he long ago served.

In my opinion, the USCIS and their ICE law enforcement arm must be held accountable for conduct when enforcing immigration law and policy. Perhaps it is time for the agency to regroup, streamline immigration procedures, and offer expedited citizenship for those foreign-born U.S. military veterans who sit day after day waiting

to be returned into the fold of the country they so honorably served. I am sure the USCIS can vet these foreign-born U.S. veterans by reviewing documented criminal history records and/or anti-American activity incidents. Technically, foreign-born U.S. veterans are "illegals." In my opinion, they should not be lumped into the group who infiltrated our Southwest borders "en masse." As stated earlier, most foreign-born U.S. veterans entered the country legally. However, for whatever reason, they allowed their status to change and did not begin or complete the Naturalization process.

A number of years ago, President George Bush signed an Executive Order as authorized by Section 329 of the Immigration and Nationality Act allowing the President to designate periods of armed conflict for immediate naturalization eligibility. Veterans should encourage President Donald Trump to execute an Executive Order to allow non-citizen U.S. military service members and honorably discharged veterans, whether present in the U.S. or not, to expedite the naturalization process whether they were on active duty during a declared hostile period or not. Let's bring those foreign-born U.S. veterans home and give them the welcome they deserve for stepping up and honorably serving in the United States military.



## JROTC County Raider Event and Veterans Day Activities

**Loretta Young, JROTC/JSSP Chair**  
[jrotc@legionmail.org](mailto:jrotc@legionmail.org)



November is one of the busiest months of the year for our Veterans and the JROTC Cadet Program. In addition to the many activities that go on within the program, we also have the opportunity to attend many events that involve our Cadets, who are able to assist with Color Guard participation within the many programs that are held in our cities, communities, nursing homes, and American Legion Posts. The 9th District was fortunate to have Department Cmdr. Jessica Moore on the District Visitation, during which she was able to attend the Broward County Raiders Meet held at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas HS. There were 15 JROTC Units participating in the full-day Meet, which demonstrated physical fitness, teamwork, and leadership skills in the

Rope Bridge, RX Rescue, Gauntlet, 5K Run, and strength activities. At the end of the day's events, our Department Commander was able to assist with the Trophy and Award Ceremony, and the exhilarated and motivated Cadets still had not slowed down to accept from the busy day's activities. There were First, Second, and Third Place winners, along with the overall team winners in both male, female, and mixed team events. The qualifiers from the County Meets advance to the State Raider Meets and then the National Raider Competition.

During the Department Commander's visit to the 9th District, we were given the opportunity to have the Women Veterans Benefits and Resource Fair, which was held at Post 142, Pompano Beach, and was very well presented for our female veterans, with a full day of opportunities, resources, and camaraderie. The

assistance of the Nova NJROTC Cadets was available for the entire day, serving snacks at the disposal of the veterans and passing out door prizes at the end of the day. Kudos to the team and their willingness to serve.

The JSSP Postal Match First Round will have been completed by December 14th, as stated in the last issue of the Legion LINK, and results should be on the National website for teams that qualified and will be advancing to the 2nd Round. Congratulations to all the winners, and thanks to all the coaches and the posts that have supported this event, which leads up to our National Tournament Championship Meet in July 2026. May everyone have a very successful year-end, and many thanks for all you do to support our Youth Programs.



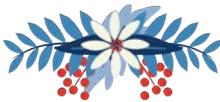
NJROTC Nova Cadets at the Women Veterans Resource Fair



Western JROTC Color Guard for Veterans Day at Mission BBQ



JROTC County Raiders



## Stay Connected and Engaged

Stuart Scott, Legislative Chair

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



We are now one month away from the start of the **2026 Legislative Session on January 13th**. As we approach session, we will be closely monitoring several key areas of legislation that directly impact our Posts, our members, and the veterans we serve.

### This includes:

- Charitable Gaming Legislation:** We are continuing to watch for any proposed changes that could affect fundraising tools and operational flexibility for veteran organizations. Preserving the ability of Posts to conduct lawful charitable gaming activities

remains a priority.

- Tax Exemption Policy:** We are tracking legislation related to property tax exemptions for veteran organizations and surviving spouses, as well as tax relief measures for disabled veterans and those transitioning from service. Ensuring clarity and accessibility in these exemptions is essential.
- Veteran Treatment Courts:** We will also be placing special focus on expanding Veteran Treatment Courts to all judicial circuits. These courts have proven to be effective in diverting veterans struggling with mental health or substance-related challenges into treatment rather than incarceration. Our goal is

## Caring for Our Legion Family During the Holiday Season

Lena Heredia-Perez, Membership Chair

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



We are well into the holiday season—a time filled with joy, reflection, and community. For many, this is a season of family gatherings and celebrations. However, some of our members may not have loved ones nearby, and this can make the holidays feel lonely.

Please consider checking in on your fellow members who do not have family close by. A simple phone call, visit, or invitation to a post event can make a world of difference. Let's ensure that every member feels the

warmth and support of our Legion family during this special time of year.

While our work renewing memberships is never done, it's important to remember that this season is also about balance. Take time to recharge your batteries. Enjoy the festivities, spend time with loved ones, and care for yourself so you can continue serving others with energy and passion.

Together, we can make this holiday season brighter for everyone in our community. Thank you for all you do to uphold the values of The American Legion.

statewide access—no veteran left behind based on geography.

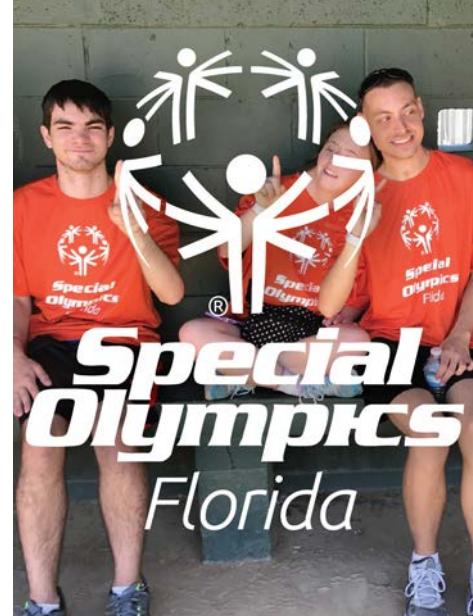
To stay informed as these bills move through committee and onto the floor, **don't forget to subscribe to our Legislative Updates**.

### To subscribe:

1. Visit the Department of Florida [homepage](#)
2. Select **News & Events**
3. Click **Legislative News**
4. Then choose **Subscribe**

By subscribing, you will receive timely updates on bills we are tracking, action alerts, and opportunities to support our advocacy efforts. When our members speak with one voice, our impact is unmistakable.

### Commander's Charity:



[floridalegion.org/donate](http://floridalegion.org/donate)



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# FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

## DECEMBER 2025 EDITION

CURRENT YEAR FIGURES : 2025-2026



**58**

VETS  
RECEIVED  
FUNDS



**\$95,577**  
PROVIDED AS  
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE



**14**  
SPI PARTNERS



**\$101,500**  
GIVEN TOWARDS  
SUICIDE PREVENTION

## REMEMBER PROJECT: VETRELIEF THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

This season, we are especially grateful to share a story that reflects the true impact of your generosity. Recently, PROJECT: VetRelief assisted a disabled female veteran, a single mother of two, who was facing eviction. Through emergency financial support, we ensured she and her children could remain safe in their home. Today, they are warm, secure, and continuing their journey toward self-sufficiency.

*Stories like hers are made possible because of the unwavering commitment of our Legion Family. Your compassion changes lives every day!*

As we look ahead to 2026, we ask for you to continue supporting our program to ensure we can meet the

growing needs of Florida's veterans, active-duty service members, and their families. Whether through a donation or by organizing a fundraising event, *your* involvement creates immediate, and often life-changing, results.

Donations can be made online at [www.projectvetrelief.org/donate](http://www.projectvetrelief.org/donate) or mailed directly to Department Headquarters. We simply cannot provide this level of assistance without you.

From our family here at PROJECT: VetRelief to yours, we send our warmest wishes for a bright, joyful, and meaningful holiday season.



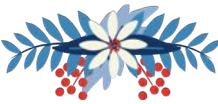
## COMING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT VETERANS

At the Legion's Fall Conference, PROJECT: VetRelief hosted our annual networking event with VetRelief Advocates, Board members, and SPI Strategic Partners. After opening remarks from Board President Bob James and Vice President Jim Wineland, guests participated in a special unity activity: each attendee received a bag of four unique puzzle pieces.

*The catch?* No one could complete their puzzle alone. As everyone teamed up and exchanged pieces, the room transformed into a fun, fast-paced challenge to see which

group could assemble the final picture first. What started as a friendly competition quickly became a powerful reminder that our greatest impact comes from working together.

The theme of the night, *Collaboration vs. Competition*, radiated through every conversation and every completed puzzle. We are proud to partner with this incredible group as we continue supporting Florida's veterans and their families.



## Upholding Standards

**Doug Hockenberry, Northern Area Cmdr**  
[northern@legionmail.org](mailto:northern@legionmail.org)



Hello, Department of Florida American Legion Family. With December upon us, Kathy and I send our best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a blessed and joyous Holiday Season. As we celebrate, I encourage everyone to reach out to our fellow Veterans, their families, and those Legion Family members who may be alone or have lost a spouse or significant other. The holidays can be a challenging time, often accompanied by an increase in suicides, but together, we have the power to make a difference. A simple phone call, an invitation to join your family for a holiday meal, meeting up at the Post for a drink, or having lunch together—these small gestures of kindness can truly make a difference in someone's life. Individually, you can make a meaningful impact, and together, our

efforts can be even more significant.

### The Importance of Standards

Since July, I've had the privilege to travel throughout the Department, attend a variety of events, and several District and Post Meetings. At these meetings, I emphasize the significance of Standards and the necessity of adhering to those established standards. Whether in the military or the civilian sector, rules and regulations guide how we conduct business, operate, and accomplish tasks. These are our Standards. For Legionnaires in the Department of Florida, our standards are found in our Constitution and By-Laws, both at the Department and Post levels—and in the policies and rules established and approved at these levels.

### Consequences of Not Following Standards

When we disregard established standards and create our own rules,

we set ourselves up for failure. Ignoring the rules and policies not only creates a new precedent but also sends the message to others that it is acceptable to neglect the standards. Many of us have experienced this at some point, and inevitably, it can come back to cause problems. It only takes one member to say, "remember when you did that" or "remember when you allowed that," and suddenly, you have a self-inflicted issue. While it may be challenging at times to do the right thing, my best advice is simple: adhere to the standards and follow the rules and policies in place.

Once again, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holiday Season. If I can be of assistance, feel free to email me at [northern@legionmail.org](mailto:northern@legionmail.org) or call me at 727-514-3742. "Hang Tough."  
**#OneTeamOneDream**

## Guidelines for Writing Resolutions

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



Legal issues: A resolution is a device by which a corporation formally grants authority to act in its name or to function. Hence, it needs to be absolutely clear and precise in the authority that is granted.

A resolution should not use the words "partner" or "partnership." All those

in a "partnership," whether individuals or entities, are liable for each other. The American Legion has no desire to become liable with anyone or any organization that might be associated in a common interest or program. Use the word "relationship" instead.

The facts upon which a resolution is based should be very thoroughly researched and verified. A resolution should NOT defame or cast aspersions. This can lead to significant liability

for defamation of character, libel, or slander. It is always appropriate to add documentation. This is especially true if the facts or the issue might be unfamiliar to commission members, a resolution subcommittee of the NEC, or the members of the NEC. This becomes even more appropriate at a National Convention.

Should I write a resolution or not?

*continued on page 16 >>*



<< Resolutions continued from page 15

Subjects for resolutions should be carefully considered. What are the facts? Are you just angry at a situation and later the "mountain" becomes a "molehill?" Or are others upset and wondering what to do to change the situation? Does the issue affect the whole community? Is the situation based on hearsay or fact? There doesn't have to be a controversy for a resolution to be written. Before writing a resolution, a number of fundamental questions should be asked about the subject matter. The importance of good writing technique and proper attention to grammar and spelling is essential. It may mean the difference between an easy passage of the resolution at your Post meeting or needing to stand up in

front of your Post members to attempt to clear up misunderstandings as to what it is that you are presenting.

The preamble to the constitution of The American Legion can be used as a guide as to the boundary within which subject matter should be kept. One should be wary of becoming a channel through which non-Legion organizations seek to achieve their own goals. Some things to consider:

- Ensure that the subject matter is relevant to the principles of our organization before submitting it.
- Does The American Legion consider such a position within the mandates as outlined in its preamble, i.e., is it germane?

- Does The American Legion already have a current position on the subject?
- Can the subject matter be taken care of administratively without a resolution?
- Does the resolution involve a local issue?
- Is legislation involved?
- Is it reasonable that the intent of the resolution can be realistically attained?
- Does the resolution deal with a politically sensitive issue?
- Should The American Legion be involved in this issue?

## American Legion Child Well-Being Foundation Update

Dennis Boland, Child Well Being Fdn Pres  
[pdcboland@legionmail.org](mailto:pdcboland@legionmail.org)



The Foundation Board of Directors met on Sunday, October 5, 2025, at our National Headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Foundation received 260 grant applications seeking consideration for a 2026 CWF grant by the board. Following a review with the screening committee, the board approves awarding thirteen (13) to nonprofit organizations for \$581,542 for the 2026 calendar year.

### The following received grants:

**Children's Flight of Hope of Raleigh, NC.** This grant seeks to bring children

in need one step closer to the specialized medical care they need by providing first flights to meet their specialists.

**Cleveland County ALWS Baseball, Inc., Shelby, NC.** This grant will help provide youth-centric activities during the week-long event. The American Legion Auxiliary supported this grant.

**Comfort Crew for Military Kids of Austin, TX.** This grant will create and distribute toolkits containing resources and strategies for military families facing deployments, reconnecting, injury, and loss. The SAL and Auxiliary support this grant.

**Family Reach of Boston, MA. Pediatric Financial Assistance Fund.** Removing Barriers to Cancer Care, providing emergency assistance grants to help families meet their basic needs while their child receives life-saving treatment.

**Heartland Equine Therapeutic Riding Academy of Gretna, NE.** for the "Veterans Children's Scholarship Program." This grant will provide horseback riding as part of therapy, improving physical, cognitive, and social skills. The Auxiliary supports this program.

**Mercy Medical Angels of Norfolk, VA.** This grant aims to cover

*continued on page 17 >>*



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2025-2026 COMMANDER JESSICA MOORE

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*continued on page 19 >>*

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<< CWF Foundation President continued from page 16

transportation costs for critically ill children seeking medical treatment outside their immediate area. The SAL supports this grant.

**National Braille Press of Boston, MA.** This grant seeks to produce educational materials for blind and low-vision youth to encourage them to read. Each child will receive a braille book, a tactile graphic of the Statue of Liberty, and a braille version of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. The SAL and Auxiliary support this grant.

**The American Legion National Headquarters in Indianapolis, IN.** This grant will cover the American Legion Oratorical Contest, Boys Nation, Junior Shooting Sports

Program National Championship, and American Legion Baseball. The Auxiliary supports this grant.

**Young Marines, Inc. of Dumfries, VA.** This grant will fund a week-long program focused on the nation's founding, offering a "walk-through history" that details struggles, civic and patriotic engagement, and responsibility. The Auxiliary supports this grant.

#### Department of Florida donations as of 10/31/25

8/40 - \$70.00  
Auxiliary - \$100.00  
Individuals - \$75.00  
SAL - \$16,930.00  
Legion - \$9,762.00  
Total - \$25,937.00

#### Donations ranked by Departments

1st. Ohio - \$42,909.00  
2nd. Florida - \$25,937.00  
3rd. New York - \$25,181.18

Total Donations Nationwide - \$232,547.96

The donations year runs from June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026.

The Child Well-being Foundation has given out over \$21 million in donations since our inception in 1954.

I wish to thank the Department of Florida for their dedication in helping the Child Well-being Foundation.

**4<sup>th</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT CHAPLAINS**

**NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED COMMEMORATION CEREMONY**

**FEBRUARY 1, 2026**  
**2:00 PM**

**I.T. PARKER CENTER**  
901 NE 3RD ST.  
DANIA BEACH, FL 33004  
(BEHIND HARBOURTOWN MARINA)

**DINNER & AFTER PARTY**  
**4:00 PM**

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 304**  
41 NE 1ST CT.  
DANIA BEACH, FL 33004



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## Post Everlasting



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

### In Memoriam: Past Department Commander Thomas C. "Tom" Seitzinger, Jr.



It is with profound sorrow that we announce the passing of Past Department Commander Thomas C. "Tom" Seitzinger, Jr., of

Winter Haven, Florida. Tom passed away on November 10, 2025, at the age of 82.

He is survived by his three children: sons Steven and Robert, and daughter Janet. He was preceded in death by his longtime companion, Bonnie Willard.

Service details are not available at this time. Updates will be shared via email and posted on our website as soon as they are received.

Tom was a proud U.S. Army and Vietnam War veteran, as well as a devoted member of Winter Haven Post 8. He faithfully served The American Legion for 36 continuous years.

Throughout his decades of dedication, Tom held numerous leadership roles at every level of the organization. At the Post level, he served in multiple capacities, including Post Adjutant (1998–1999, 2001–2004, and 2005–2012), earning the Best Overall Post Adjutant Award at the 2002 Department Convention, and Post Commander (1999–2000). At the District level, he served as District Executive Committeeman (now District Vice Commander) (1997–

1999) and 7th District Commander (2000–2001).

At the Department level, Tom served as Department Information Technology & Management Chair (2001–2003), Department Membership Chair (2001–2002), where he surpassed 104% membership and achieved an all-time high, Central Area Commander (2002–2003), Department Vice Commander (2003–2004), and Department Commander (2004–2005). At the National level, he served as Vice Chair of the Foreign Relations Council (2002–2009).

Tom's legacy of leadership, service, and unwavering commitment to The American Legion will be remembered with gratitude.



## MEMBERSHIP TARGET REPORT

November 20, 2025 (65% Target)

District 4	Darcy Bockman-Wright	74.72
District 2	Roxann Dressel	73.66%
District 3	Rick Cabrera	72.07%
District 9	Jim Tewes	70.13%
District 5	Miguel Garcia	68.55%
District 11	Stanley Brown, Jr.	68.41%
District 1	Robert Osmon	66.87%
District 13	Laurene Allen-Flower	66.69%
District 6	David Musser	66.27%
District 12	Daniel Martin	65.76%
District 17	Jim Bowers	65.49%
District 15	Drew Davis	65.25%
District 7	Kalvin Thompson	64.18%
District 13	Michael Harley	63.67%
District 8	Charlie Magnus	62.18%
District 14	Angela Glover	61.20%
Northern	Doug Hockenberry	69.65%
Western	Shelby Windham	67.82%
Southern	Geo Bograkos	66.98%
Eastern	Joan Suelter	66.04%
Southwestern	Eric Loyd	64.68%
Central	Rick Orzechowski	64.19%
Post 400		63.73%

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Membership Target: 65% Complete  
Product by Legion and our  
Bank and pay auto orders  
with 2 1/2% college savings account  
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HAVE WHAT  
IT TAKES?**

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DEPARTMENT  
CHAIR!**

**MAKE AN**

**2026**

**IMPACT**

**2027**



YEARS IN LEGION



Department  
of Florida

DISTRICT

POST

AREA

NAME

POSITION INTERESTED IN

EXPLAIN YOUR QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIR

LEGION SCHOOLS ATTENDED:  ALEI  Florida Legion College  National Legion College  Sgt-at-Arms  Chaplain  
 National LEAD Classes  \_\_\_\_\_

POSITIONS HELD	YEARS AT <u>POST</u> LEVEL	YEARS AT <u>DISTRICT</u> LEVEL	YEARS AT <u>AREA</u> LEVEL	YEARS AT <u>DEPT</u> LEVEL
Commander				
Vice Commander				
Adjutant				
Sgt-at-Arms				
Historian				
Chaplain				
Membership				
Americanism				
Baseball				
Blood Donor				
Boy Scouts				

POSITIONS HELD	YEARS AT <u>POST</u> LEVEL	YEARS AT <u>DISTRICT</u> LEVEL	YEARS AT <u>AREA</u> LEVEL	YEARS AT <u>DEPT</u> LEVEL
Boys State				
Children & Youth				
JROTC				
Shooting Sports				
Law & Order				
Oratorical				
POW/MIA				
School Medals				
Women Veterans Advocate				
Youth Law Cadet				
Other				

PLEASE RETURN TO: The American Legion, Dept of Florida, Attention: Bob Matheson, P.O. Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32854



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](mailto:brucel1955@yahoo.com)

Proceeds to benefit the Department Commander  
and Department President charities



THE CENTRAL AREA LEADERSHIP PRESENTS:

# 2026 CENTRAL AREA *Margaritaville* *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](mailto:VCCENTRAL@FLORIDASONS.ORG)  
MAIL TO: 7519 WINGING WAY DR, TAMPA, FL 33615

# 2026 SOUTHERN AREA BALL

## BACK TO THE 50'S & 60'S

# SOCK HOP

SAT. JAN. 31, 2026

6:00PM TILL ???

**LIVE MUSIC BY**  
**HAPPY DAZE ROCK BAND**



AMERICAN LEGION POST 321  
9081 SW 51<sup>ST</sup> ST - COOPER CITY, FL 33328

***Silent Auctions - 50/50 - Raffles***

**\$40. Per Person - Table Of 10: \$360.**

***Pickup Wristbands At Will Call***

**Cash Bar ~ Roving Hors DeOuvres**

**Choice of Chicken Cordon Bleu' or**

**Shrimp Scampi with Penne Pasta**

***(Make Selection When Reserving)***

***Please Make Checks Out To: American Legion Post 304  
With Southern Area Ball In Memo***

***Please Mail Checks To: American Legion Post 304  
41 NE 1<sup>st</sup> Ct., Dania Beach, FL 33004***

***More Information: southern@legionmail.org or (954) 868-2990***

**Proceeds To Benefit Special Olympics**

# American Legion Department Of Florida

Presents

## SOUTHERN AREA TRAINING

### **TOPICS TO INCLUDE:**

**MYLEGION.ORG ~ CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

**HOW TO CONDUCT A POST MEETING**

**ALL LEGION FAMILY MEMBERS WELCOME!**

**ATTEND ONE OR ALL SESSIONS! ~ BRING LAPTOPS & NOTEPADS**

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND? ALL POST, UNIT & SQUADRON OFFICERS**

### ***Meet Your Dept. of Florida Convention Training Team:***

Dept. of Florida 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander: Bob Matheson

Dept. of Florida 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander: Bruce Carl

Dept. of Florida Southern Area Commander: Geo Bograkos

Dept. of Florida Membership Chair: Lena Heredia-Perez

Dept. of Florida Membership Vice Chair: Isaac White

*And Other Guest Trainers*

### **DISTRICT 14 ~ (MAINLAND)**

**SATURDAY OCT. 18, 2025 - 13:00 HOURS**

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 31**

**7710 SW 59TH AVE., S. MIAMI, FL 33143**

### **DISTRICT 14 ~ (FLORIDA KEYS)**

**SATURDAY JAN. 10, 2026 - 13:00 HOURS**

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 154**

**4115 OVERSEAS HWY., MARATHON, FL 33050**

### **DISTRICT 9**

**SATURDAY JAN. 24, 2026 - 13:00 HOURS**

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 304**

**41 NE 1<sup>ST</sup> CT., DANIA BEACH, FL 33004**

### **DISTRICT 11**

**SATURDAY FEB. 14, 2026 - 13:00 HOURS**

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 268**

**1690 AVENUE H W, RIVIERA BEACH, FL 33404**

**Kindly RSVP Via Email: [southern@legionmail.org](mailto:southern@legionmail.org)**



# Celebrate America

with the

# USA250 CHALLENGE!



**What:** The American Legion's USA 250 Challenge is a yearlong celebration of the nation's 250th birthday. It offers participants three challenge categories — community service, physical activities and mental health awareness — to pursue goals such as 250 hours, miles, Buddy Checks or other measurables.

**When:** Through July 4, 2026.

**Who:** American Legion Family members and anyone else. Participants may pursue their goals individually or as part of a team.

**Why:** In addition to celebrating America, proceeds from the \$30 registration fee and all donations go to the Legion's Veterans & Children Foundation, which supports disabled veterans and military families in need.

**How:** Scan the QR code to learn more and register. Or visit [legion.org/usa250/challenge](https://legion.org/usa250/challenge)

Scan to  
register

