

Bob Matheson
Department Commander
The American Legion, Department of Florida
2026-2027



Bob Matheson, a Legionnaire from Safety Harbor Post 238 in Safety Harbor, Florida, was elected Department Commander on June 12, 2026, during the 107th Department Convention in Orlando, Florida. Commander Matheson has been a member of The American Legion for sixteen years, earning his eligibility through his honorable service in the U.S. Air Force from 1972 to 1999.

Commander Matheson was born on August 17, 1954, in Worcester, Massachusetts, and graduated from David Prouty High School in Spencer, Massachusetts, in 1972. After signing up through delayed enlistment, he began active duty in the U.S. Air Force 10 days after graduation. This continued a proud family tradition of service, as his father and both brothers also served in the U.S. Air Force. Upon completing basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas, he attended training at Sheppard AFB as an Outside Plant Cable Splicer. His military service in that specialty included assignments at Norton AFB, California; Griffis AFB, New York; Yokota AFB, Japan; Sheppard AFB, Texas; Kadena AFB, Okinawa; Kelly AFB, Texas; a return assignment to Yokota AFB, Japan; and a final assignment to MacDill AFB, Florida, where, after 27 Years of

Active Duty, he retired as a Chief Master Sergeant.

Commander Matheson went on to work with General Dynamics, assisting with the installation and maintenance of broadband SONET rings. He then served as Director of Security for malls in Clearwater and Citrus Park, before concluding his professional career with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs as a Service Officer.

Commander Matheson joined The American Legion in 2010. Since then, he has devoted nearly all of his time to leadership within the organization at every level. At the **Post level**, he served as Service Officer, 1st Vice Commander, and Commander. At the **District and Area levels**, he was 16th District Vice Commander, 16th District Commander, and Central Area Commander. At the **Department level**, he served as 2nd Vice Commander and 1st Vice Commander.

His Mission Statement, "**The Florida American Legion proudly serves all who served and their families—ensuring every veteran feels one thing above all: Welcome Home,**" reflects his deep and genuine commitment to veterans and their loved ones. It speaks to the belief that service does not end with enlistment, and that every veteran and family member deserves steady support, understanding, and a true sense of belonging. Through programs focused on veteran care, family assistance, and community leadership, members carry forward a simple, meaningful promise: **Welcome Home.**

Commander Matheson's slogan, "**Veterans – Family – Friends**", embodies the deep connections that define every Post and the American Legion as a whole, bonds built through shared service, mutual respect, and the quiet strength we find in one another. Within our halls and across our organization, we stand together as an extended family, supporting, uplifting, and honoring the ties that make the Legion a true home for all who walk through its doors.

Commander Matheson's charities for the coming year will focus on two critical missions: **Project VetRelief**, which provides direct support and stability for Florida's veterans and their families, and **Florida Disaster Relief**, which ensures our communities receive immediate assistance and recovery resources when disaster strikes. Together, these efforts reflect our unwavering commitment to service, resilience, and the well-being of those who have sacrificed for our nation.

The American Legion, Department of Florida, boasts over 107,000 veterans still serving their country and the State of Florida. With 1.5 million members at the National level, The American Legion is the Nation's Largest Veterans' Service Organization. The American Legion was founded in 1919 on the four pillars of National Security, Veterans Affairs, Americanism, and Youth Programs. For more information on how you can be involved with The American Legion, or to request an interview with Commander Matheson, please contact The American Legion, Department of Florida, at 407-295-2631, ext. 239, or by email at rcastleberry@floridalegion.org.