

The Legion Link

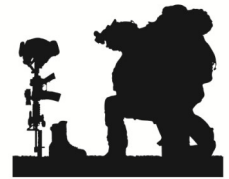
February 2013

Vol. 20 Issue 7



AIMING HIGH FOR VETERANS

FALLEN SOLDIER



NEVER FORGOTTEN

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Al 'Gunner' Dudley
Department Commander
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What a great January we had! NVC Jim Holland visited Florida, 3rd - 6th January. We were given a special tour of the Navy Seal Museum in Fort Pierce by Retired Navy Chief Jim "Patches" Watson. NVC Jim Holland was truly impressed with his visit. I want to thank all those involved - Posts 40, 39, 312, 358, District 12 and the American Legion Riders for a great escort!

Time for R&R (Retain & Recruit). We all must continue to pursue the recruitment of our Veterans. I appreciate & thank all of you who achieved your 80% goal in January. Keep it up! 85% goal is 6 February. I would like all Posts to attain this. We all need to promote the American Legion from the Commander down to the Individual Member! We, the State of Florida, are looking awesome.

The agenda coming up for February: we have the Boy Scouts Cracker Trail the 8th thru 10th of February; Southern Area Ball on 23rd February and the Washington Conference in D.C., the 24th thru 28th of February. Hope to see you in my travels. Log into our Department website for details. There is much info! Come visit and browse around!

Of course, have a happy Valentine's Day! Take your wife or significant other out for this special day! Thank you for all you do for the American Legion, our Veterans, their Families and our Country! God Bless America!

FLORIDA AMERICAN LEGION PROJECT: HOMEFRONT'S

BATTLEFIELD OF HONOR PAINTBALL EVENT

Our Inaugural Charity paintball event will be held on Feb.23.2013 at Xtreme Paintball Xperience (XPX) 1300 S. Poinciana Blvd. Kissimmee, FL. Participants will have the opportunity to compete side-by-side with Active Duty, Local Law Enforcement and Veterans from all branches of service. Cornhole, Volleyball, CookOut, Live Music, Horsehoes, Military Speakers and more!!! Proceeds from this event will go to Support Project: Homefront's upcoming PTS Retreat, Registration Barn, Events and Activities from 10am - 6pm.

\$50 covers all day play/ all day air, 500 rounds of paint (mask & marker available at no additional charge) • Limited Edition Event: T-shirt & lunch. Active Duty Military, Law Enforcement, Firefighters, EMTs \$5 off with Military ID!!! Military and Uniformed Service Personnel Team Rate - 6 Players - \$225.00!!!

\$15 spectator admission covers all day participation in activities (no paintball) • Limited Edition Event: T-shirt & lunch.

Register and RSVP at: projecthomefront.com or call 407.295.2631

Proudly Sponsored By:

- Xtreme Paintball Xperience
- HALO branded solutions Ben Johnson | 407-437-6382 | ben@halobrandedsolutions.com
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- AMERICAN LEGION
- RAKS SUNSHINE BICYCLES



95th Annual Department Convention
June 6-9, 2013
Renaissance Orlando by SeaWorld

800-380-7917 or local at 407-351-5555
to reserve your room in advance
Deluxe King Room \$129
Deluxe Queen-Queen Room \$129
Hospitality Parlors/Suite Upon Request
(Contact Mary at Headquarters-
407.295.2631 ext 232)

Art Schwabe
Department Vice Commander
Vicecommander@floridalegion.org
386.235.9990

February is the time for Groundhogs Day, Super Bowl, Valentine's Day and Four Chaplains!! I encourage everyone to attend a Four Chaplain Service. It's very impressive and it honors all chaplains for what they give to each and every one of us, not only in a time of need but also when we need guidance in life. If your Post does not have a Four Chaplains Service, please check with your District Commander for one in your area! You will not be disappointed if you attend. Thank You to all Chaplains for the great work that you do. At many times your work goes unnoticed but is greatly appreciated. You bring comfort to many veterans and families. We are so blessed to have you. Thank You Again. YOU make a difference!

The Departments Oratorical Contest will be held on March 9th at 9 AM at Department Headquarter 1912 Lee Rd Orlando, Florida. You get to see the top six contestants from all over Florida competing to go to the next level, National Oratorical Contest. These young men and woman represent Florida and do an outstanding job. If you have time please attend. The contestants speak on the Constitution of The United States. Show you care... Invite a POW as Guest of Honor to your next Post Dinner. For God and Country OLE'S WIFE, Lena: "There's trouble with the car, sweetheart! It has water in the carburetor.

"Ole: "Water in the carburetor? That's ridiculous."

Lena: "Ole, I tell you the car has water in the carburetor.

"Ole: "You don't even know what a carburetor is. I'll check it out. Where's the car?"

Lena: "In the lake."

This month's quiz!!!!

Tomb of the unknown Soldier Questions:

1. "How many steps does the guard take during his walk across the tomb of the Unknowns?"

A. 25 B 20 C21

2. Why are his gloves wet?

A. To keep his hand warm. B. To show he is wearing gloves
C .To prevent him from losing his grip.

3. Does he carry his rifle on the same shoulder all the time?
Yes or No

1. C 21steps: It alludes to the twenty-one gun salute which is the highest honor given any military or foreign dignitary

2. C His gloves are moistened to prevent his losing his grip on the rifle.

3. No, He carries the rifle on the shoulder away from the tomb. After his march across the path, he executes an about face and moves the rifle to the outside shoulder.



Jay Conti, Sr.
Department Sgt.-at-Arms

Hi Fellow Legionnaires;

I hope everyone has had a great start to the New Year! Don't forget that we have Legion Programs we are working on that the SGT-at-ARMS should be a big part in helping out with Oratorical Contests, Boys State Interviews, Children & Youth programs, Dedications, Memorial services; etc.

Have an Honor Guard or Color Guard? If not let's get one started! Someone asked what is the proper procedure for a Color or Honor Guard for their Post. The proper procedure is outlined in the SGT-at-ARMS Manual for the basic color guard for meetings, etc. However, for Honor Guard we all use how we were trained when we were serving. The best guide I have found and is also recommended by National Headquarters is the United States Army's Guide to Drills & Ceremonies.

Everything in there is basically the same for ALL branches of the service. Some may have a different way for a command but it means the same thing. One thing you have to remember is on the ceremony part. If it's covered in the American Legion Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies (there is a certain section for American Legion Funerals) you would use that to get you through those ceremonies which are basically the same as in the Army guide and in the section in the Dept SGT-at-ARMS Manual but tailored to The American Legion. If your Post needs help in setting up a Color Guard or Honor Guard I am a phone call away in helping and would be very happy to come to your Post and assist in training.

BRAVO ZULU goes out to Crystal River Post #155 for starting a fund for a Wounded Marine I wrote about last month. On August 2012, LCPL White was on routine patrol in Afghanistan when he was struck by an IED losing both of his legs. If it weren't for a Navy FMC Corpsman stabilizing him and hand carrying him to a helicopter he would not had this welcome home for Christmas with his Family. When the news broke on what happened to LCPL White, American Legion Post #155 worked quickly to establish the LCPL Joshua White Fund and to date there is over \$55,000 in the account that will go to the many life changing needs when Josh gets home for good. "For God and Country"

POW/MIA Empty Chair

Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th American Legion National Convention, calls for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings of The American Legion as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States.

Americanism
Michael Clark, Department Chairman
Americanism@floridalegion.org

Ah, it is hard to believe we are already in the 2nd month of the year and fast approaching the Conference. That date happens to be June 6th. Before I go any further, don't forget this is the month for Valentine's Day; don't forget the spouse who has supported you. (smile)

The first upcoming event is the Cracker Trail Competition which is on February 8th thru the 10th. Please visit the Boy's Scouts link under programs for schedules, events and needs that they still have.

The next item is the fact that this month is Americanism Month. I need to know from all Americanism Chairmen what they are doing for this month. Remember that this is one of the Four Pillows of the American Legion. Plus this is a great way to reach out to the parents and veterans who see what the American Legion is all about.

Last but not least, many programs have deadlines next month and a couple of other Americanism Programs have already passed. Please keep up on the deadlines of the various programs which can be done on the web site under the Programs Button on the Home page. A big deadline will be March 1st as the General Scholarship is due at Department Headquarters. There is still time for Post to get in the Teacher of the Year but time is quickly passing.

Also please fill out the Consolidated Post Report correctly. This determines the number one post for the Americanism Program. For God and Country

Cracker Trail Competition

The 2013, 2nd Annual Cracker Trail is rapidly approaching - February 8-10, 2013. It has taken a lot of very hard work from a lot of very busy, dedicated Legionnaires and Scouters to put the handbook and logistics together to build this program for our future, the kids.

I would like to thank everyone for all the hard work in making this a great program. An impossible task of course, but, to name a few as follows: Pietera Siegler, Evan Reif, Eric Irwin, Carol Polk, Richard Smith, Frank and Joanne Maitland, Mike Tessler, Ed Manak, JJ Farrington Joe Pierro, Paul Bosco, and Gulf Stream Council, Kelsey Cupples, and the Huls.

I would like to remind everyone that our youth is our future and the programs of both organizations go back to 1919 when U.S Congress issued the Charter for the Boy Scouts Of America to be the 1st program of the American Legion. This relationship has slipped in recent years in some areas of the country, but, still very strong in MANY, so, let's work together to bring this PROGRAM, back on a top burner in Florida, AND WATCH OUR MEMBERSHIP GROW in both organizations.

The registrations are rolling in. If you are a Troop, we hope you hurry since the camp sites are rapidly filling. We still need adults to come out and assist the 15 Mayors as scorers.

Jorge L Montes
Dept. Boy Scout Chairman

Fellow Legionnaires and friends,

As your Boy Scout Chair for the Department of Florida I would like to report on the status to date. Last year's American Legion Cracker Trail Competition for Scouts was great but this year were ready willing for the event on February 8-10, 2013. Registration is now picking up at the last minute, so you're not too late. All are welcome to enjoy, see and learn what it's all about. More events like this can happen around the state with other area support next year. You will be doing a great community service for scouts and us. My goal this year is well in progress, it could not be any better. Even with current economic times we have received donation funding to keep cost down, and ensure a great experience.

I was able to help and mentor 17 eagle scouts this past year. Our service to our country puts us in a unique spot as veteran mentors and role models which these young men look up to. Two great success stories of returning active military men that remember me, visited my home during the holidays; I was deeply honored. These are the future leaders and need to live and feel American Patriotism. We must share of our time. Another Eagle Scout, who also visited just to say hello, is now in California working on his Doctorate in Research and Science. I was impressed with the knowledge on the Economy that he commands. These are the seeds we must be planted and it gives me great hope.

It is never too late get information about the Cracker Trail Jamboree 2013 it is an experience that scouts and adults will not forget. Plus this is a great Public Relation event so people get to see what we are all about, and get to know what the American Legion stands for. We need to continue community events, and teach by example. Make sure to visit and sign up for the event. Do not let your scouts down....see it for yourself.

I have used several others means to inform you of this great event. For more information please contact me (cell (305) 992-2140) or Carol Polk at the Legion main office (407) 295-2631. Anyone of us will help you out. Also available for help is Ken Nichols, (561) 906-6469 Director or Pietera Siegler pietera241@gmail.com Program Chair for the Cracker Trail Competition 2013. They are ones making this happen. Thank You, yours in Scouting - For God and Country

Ron Musselwhite
Department Oratorical Chairman

The Oratorical program is in full swing. All Area's will be having a contestant. The District contests are being held now. We have had good participation this year. If you haven't been to an Oratorical contest, you are missing a great program. Make plans to come to the Department finals on March 9th, 9 AM at Department Headquarters. You will hear some fantastic speeches on the Constitution by high school students.

Mike (Goat) Kirchoff
Department ALR Chairman


It is with great sadness that we announce the American Legion Riders Family lost our Department ALR Chairman Scott Grabner. Scott spent countless hours working for the Legion and Legion Riders and made some great improvements during his tenure as Department of Florida ALR Chairman. I would like to thank everyone that showed up for Scott's Memorial on 27 January. Post 1 did an outstanding job hosting the memorial with well over 200 Legion Riders and Legion Family members attending. Keep Scott and his family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Commander 'Gunner' Dudley asked that I take over as the Department ALR Chairman for the remaining year, which I consider an honor to be asked. I will do my best to represent all the Florida Legion Riders.

There are two major ALR events happening before our June Convention. The first is the Florida In State Legacy Ride, which starts in Panama City on February 23rd and travels down the west coast to Key West then back up the east coast of Florida. There will be stops at American Legion Posts every day for lunch and dinner plus stops at Posts just to visit. The route and schedule will be posted on the Department web site and on a face book page called 2013 Florida In-State Legacy Run. Registration is \$15.00 for the rider and \$10.00 for passengers. With the registration each person will receive a very unique Florida Legacy Ride Pin set. T Shirts will also be available for purchase. Riders do not have to ride the complete route to participate in the ride. Pick and choose what will fit your schedule along the route. Registration forms will be at every stop.

The second event is the First Florida State ALR Rally, which will be held at Post 69 in Avon Park on 17 and 18 May. Post 69 is putting together a great event that will include food, music and vendors. A flyer will be coming out in the next couple of weeks. This will also be a great opportunity for the District ALR Chairmen to meet as well as have a Legion Riders meeting. Look for more information to be posted.

In closing I would like to thank Commander 'Gunner' for allowing me to serve as the Department ALR Chairman and I'm looking forward to a very successful next 6 months. Ride Safe



TAPS

It is with great sadness that we must share the news of the passing of Scott Grabner, Department Legion Riders Chairman. He was a 13 year member of Titusville Post 1. His memorial service was held January 27th at Post 1. Scott's kindness and heart felt work will be remembered.

1st ANNUAL
Florida Legacy Ride

February 23 - March 2, 2013

For more information contact Mike (Goat) Kirchoff
goat392@gmail.com 850.624.2503

Registration - \$15.00 per rider/\$10.00 per passenger
(A Florida State Legacy Run Pin is included)

All monies raised, after being recorded, will go
directly to the Legacy Scholarship fund.

All riders make their own reservations .

Proposed Route - Panama City to Crystal River to Fort
Myers to Key West (two nights) to W.Palm Beach to
Titusville to Jacksonville to Panama City.



Winter Haven Names Deric C. Feacher City Manager

WINTER HAVEN, FL – Congratulations to Deric C. Feacher, who takes leadership as Winter Haven City Manager, effective February 1, 2013. In the City's 102-year history, the 36-year-old Winter Haven native will be the first minority and one of the youngest, if not the youngest, men to be named City Manager of Winter Haven.

Feacher graduated in 2000 from Bethune-Cookman (College) University, Daytona Beach, FL, with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, with a minor in Public Administration. He is also a 1995 graduate of Winter Haven High School.

He was chosen to participate in the 1994 class at the Florida American Legion Boys State program, where he was elected Governor by his peers. He has remained active in the Boys State organization for the past several years including serving as director. He and his wife, Keshia, are the parents of one son, Jay.

February Fun Facts

- 1 - National Freedom Day
- 2 - Ground Hog Day
- 3 - Four Chaplain's Sunday
- 7, 1935 - Monopoly Board game goes on sale
- 8, 1910 - Boy Scouts of America founded
- 9, 1864 - Pres. Lincoln poses for the picture that is now on the \$5 bill.
- 25, 1836 - Samuel Colt patents his revolver
- 29 - Leap Day (a.k.a. Bachelors Day) In 1288, Scotland enacted a law allowing women to propose marriage on Leap Day; the man was fined if he refused.

85% Goal

February 13, 2013

Membership Report as of January 31, 2013

Jim Ramos
Membership Chairman
membership@floridalegion.org

Florida Legionnaires we are doing well on membership but we have to do a little more now. Started in Jan 26 – March 15, 2013 do a Membership Drive or an Open House in your Post to let the Veterans and the Community know what we are doing for our Veterans and their family. Congratulations to the 6th District who is at 93% already. We have all six Areas and 15 of the 16 Districts over 80% or better. In addition 242 posts are at 80% or better. We have 52 posts in the Department at 100% or better. Congratulations to all! As of Jan 17th, the Department is in 21st place in the Nation out of 55 Department and Southeast Region we are in 4th place out of 12 Department with (86.387%) nationwide.

I want to congratulate Post 230, in Hawthorne for winning the \$1,500 cash drawing on Jan 8, 2013 at Department HQ for 80% goal. The next drawing is March for the 90% goal and is a \$2,000 cash award for one lucky post.

We need to keep going strong with membership. Please take a look at the membership plan in the Membership Information and Awards Manual (please out pages 6 -- 40). Also check out page 51 for all goals to make at 100% plus. Start with a membership drive or Open House in January, February, or March. Make the final push to achieve 100% and also help your District to make the 100% goal. We can make it happen Florida Legionnaire by help your District make 100% or better by March 31, 2013. The “Race to the Top” award is still within our reach. Florida we are not the Standard when it come to membership we are above the best in the National. Let’s GO Florida!

When planning for your next goal and event, invite the community and your Legion family too. Choose a theme for example, February is Americanism month; celebrate with a patriotic event using our country flags. The Four Chaplain Service is an excellent “easy to do” program that will entice the citizens to visit your post home. Of course the big event is The American Legion’s birthday over the weekend of March 15 – 17, 2013 but use the whole month to let your community and Veterans know what we do for our Veterans and family. At these and other celebrations and events, be sure to set up an information table with Legion family program brochures. GO FLORIDA!!

The American Legion continues its drive to protect and preserve veteran benefit programs –especially in the area of medical care—the numerical strength of the organization is very important. Make sure your Post is doing its part in the nationwide drive to increase the Legion’s position of power. I am here to assist you in your recruitment and retention efforts, please contact me at your convenience by e-mail or at 352-226-4370.

Membership in The American Legion is a matter of PRIDE-
 PRIDE in Tradition

PRIDE in Heritage

PRIDE in Accomplishment

PRIDE in Serving

PRIDE in Belonging

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rec'd	% Goal
6	Robert Kiley	10,193	9,707	95.23
15	Eunice Butts	5,178	4,835	93.38
17	Michael Wolohan	4,135	3,758	90.88
7	Nancy Thomas	3,863	3,505	90.73
12	Albert Diaz	8,424	7,588	90.08
5	Henry Combs	7,681	6,912	89.99
8	Debra Roush	8,218	7,366	89.63
16	James Burgess	11,977	10,735	89.63
11	Richard Smith	4,094	3,665	89.52
1	Verna Joyce	6,256	5,561	88.89
13	William Hauser	8,783	7,796	88.76
9	William Johnson	4,342	3,827	88.14
4	Charles Ferguson	4,160	3,656	87.89
2	Homer Frailey	1,365	1,180	86.45
3	M.E Christians	1,712	1,478	86.33
14	Gary Decker	3,021	2,526	83.61
Eastern	Mark Johnson	18,617	17,295	92.90
Central	James Zipler	21,018	19,075	90.76
Northern	Robert Brewster	17,688	15,804	89.35
SW	Steven Slachta	17,001	15,162	89.18
Western	Charles Lecroy	7,621	6,741	88.45
Southern	George Rafajko	11,457	10,018	87.44
Dept			84,095	
Post 400		11,977	11,063	92.37
Post 208		2,141	2,863	133.72
Totals		107,775	98,021	90.95

Legislative
Stanley Gold, Department Chairman
786.423.2458

LEGISLATIVE DIVISION UPDATE

The First Session of the 113th Congress opened on January 3, 2013. There are 84 freshmen members of the House, and 13 new members of the Senate. There are also 2 current vacancies (the 2nd District of Illinois and the 1st District of South Carolina). The House was not in session this past week, while the Senate was.

LEGISLATIVE DIVISION ACTIONS

President Signs Veterans Bill

On January 10 President Obama signed into law H.R. 4057, the *Improving Transparency of Education Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2012*. This legislation will improve the ability of GI Bill users to choose the school that best meets their educational needs. It would:

- Require the VA to create a comprehensive policy that would meet this goal by informing veterans about their eligibility for educational counseling by creating a centralized complaint database on schools,
- Require State approving agencies to better communicate with accrediting agencies,
- Require VA to link to certain performance-related data points on the College Navigator and other appropriate Web sites,
- Identify commercially off-the-shelf available software that would assist students in choosing a school and software that would evaluate their readiness to attend postsecondary education.

The measure would also require states to take military training into account in awarding licenses to work as medical technicians and other trades, thus speeding up service members' transition to civilian life. It would also require per diem payment recipients under VA's Homeless Grant and Per Diem Program to certify compliance with the Life Safety Code or the International Fire Code and other relevant fire safety and building codes. It would also require VA to include an accounting and evaluation of the safety and accessibility of facilities used to provide programs for homeless veterans in the annual report on assistance to homeless veterans.

Finally, H.R. 4057 would direct the VA to establish and maintain an open burn pit registry for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who may have been exposed to toxic chemicals and fumes caused by open burn pits during deployment. It would require VA to develop a public information campaign to inform eligible veterans of the registry and periodically notify them of significant developments in the study and treatment of conditions associated with burn pit exposure. It would also direct the VA to contract with an independent scientific organization to develop a report on the effectiveness of actions taken to collect and maintain information on the health effects of burn pit exposure and submit the completed report to Congress.

Legislation Addressing Clark Veterans Cemetery Enacted

The President on January 10 signed S. 2320, a bill entitled *Remembering America's Forgotten Veterans Cemetery Act of 2012*. This measure treats Clark Veterans Cemetery in the Republic of the Philippines as a permanent military cemetery in a foreign country. It is associated with the former Clark Air Base, which closed in 1991. The cemetery will be administered by the American Battle Monuments Commission. The bill further directs the Commission to restore, operate, and maintain the cemetery in cooperation with the government of the Republic of the Philippines.

Update on Flag Amendment Bills

With the beginning of the 113th Congress, Senate Joint Resolution (S.J. Res.) 19 and House Joint Resolution (H.J. Res.) 13 have expired, due to lack of action by either chamber. This legislation, a proposed constitutional amendment to protect the American flag from physical desecration, will need to be re-introduced. Its text states simply: "*The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.*" (66, 97, 272)

The Legislative Division will begin the task of find new sponsors and cosponsors for this legislation. Please contact your representative's and senators' offices, and ask them to become cosponsors of the flag amendment in their respective chambers.

Letters of Support

On January 7, The American Legion sent a letter of support to Sens. Patrick Leahy (VT) and Charles Grassley (IA), as well as Reps. Lamar Smith (TX) and John Conyers (MI), giving our support for the *Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act*, draft legislation introduced by Sen. Al Franken (MN) and Rep. Richard Nugent (FL). This measure would reauthorize and improve the critical programs of the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (Public Law-108-414). This law supported collaborative approaches to address the needs of individuals with mental health conditions in the criminal justice system. (119)

*All you need is love, but a little chocolate now
and then wouldn't hurt! -
Charles M. Schulz*

ROSTER CHANGES

Post

1 Post email:
Post 90 Mailing/Billing Address
14 Adjutant, Karl Greengos
305 Commander, John Bell
237 Adjutant, Thomas Schenck
108 Adjutant Position Vacant
26 Adjutant Position Vacant
138 Adjutant, Bill Sizemore
138 Commander, Jose Romeu
21 Meeting Time
9th Dist. Baseball Chr, Ronald LaDuke
170 Email address
113 Commander- Leroy Furman
11- Commander- Joseph McKenney
11- Adjutant- Ronald York
200- Adjutant- Lionel Morais
6- Commander- Peter Bluto
24- Commander Vacant
51- Commander Jerry Wynn
51 Post Dues/email
133 mailing/billing Zip code
395 Mailing/Billing Address
119 Mailing/Billing Address
303 email address
374 Post Updates

Change

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amleg170@att.net
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3010 NW C.R. 661, Arcadia, 34266 (h) 863.993.0275 wa4kug@embarqmail.com
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Got Tagline?

Part of every company's identity is its tagline. What company do you think of when you read: "Semper Fidelis"; "Where's The Beef?"; "Don't Leave Home Without It"; "No One Does More For Veterans" (yes, even VFW has a tagline); "We've Got Your Back"; or "The UnCola"?

None do as much for active-duty military, veterans, military retirees and their families as does The American Legion. And, yet, we have no consistent tagline that readily tells people who we are, what we do, or who we do it for. Each national commander has a slogan and they are well thought out and well themed, but they don't lend a permanent identity to the Legion.

One task of the Membership and Post Activities Committee is to suggest a corporate tagline, which after approval by the NEC, will be used for the foreseeable future in all of our advertisements, letterheads, publications, press releases, and so forth as a description of who we are and what we do.

The goal is to adopt a tagline which is so significant that all of the public will recognize it, associate it with The American Legion, and know what is our "reason for being." Even though it must be short and pithy, it must be filled with content and phrased in a memorable and catchy way.

You can help us craft an American Legion tagline by submitting your ideas by email to tagline@legion.org. Submissions may be submitted by individuals (membership is not required), posts, districts, counties or departments; there is no limit to the number that may be submitted but each submission must be contained in a single email. We encourage Departments and Posts to give this information the widest dissemination, as we will do in your national publications. All submissions must be received no later than April 19, 2013, in order to be considered.

The Internal Affairs Commission will be the final reviewer of submissions, and will draft a resolution recommending a permanent tagline. The decision of the National Executive Committee is final.

If your tagline is the one recommended to the NEC, and adopted exactly as submitted, you will receive a \$500 check, and a Certificate of Appreciation plaque signed by the National Commander in recognition of your winning entry. The winning entry will be posted on www.Legion.org after the NEC meets in mid-May 2013. In the event of duplicate winning entries, the earliest received will be declared the winner.

Remember: April 19, 2013, is the deadline, and the email address is: tagline@legion.org. Please include your name and phone number on each entry. Only one entry per email submission. All entries will be acknowledged by a return email. Save that return receipt as proof of your submission.

Children & Youth
Steve Shuga, Department Chairman
C&Y@floridalegion.org

Welcome to a new year, new horizons and another era of young leaders for our country. The cycle is endless as we continue to provide the threads necessary for our children, tomorrow's leaders – can use to mend their life that will provide them the means to be vibrant, healthy, and educated giving them an occasional boost of support from various groups and organizations ensuring that “Every Child Gets a Square Deal”.

The various Children and Youth products expressed over the past 6 months can be used as often as you believe they are beneficial to your specific communities based on events and planned activities. Americanism brochures are now in need to be sought, ordered, stocked and passed out to all children and youth as we prepare for a variety of planned activities that accentuate those honored events that are instilled in our youth and adults.

One of the many preparations that all American Legion Posts, Units, Squadrons, and Chapters should be planning and preparing for is “April – Children & Youth Month”. As April draws near, your encouraged to use and support the program's national theme – “Children...Our Most Precious National Resource”, in the promotion of all Children & Youth activities.

The Legion family is encouraged to partake in and support youth activities within their community to reflect to others that The American Legion is committed to our Fourth Pillar – Children and Youth in a variety of ways that ensures that no child will be left behind. For ideas on how to support youth in your community during the month of April, download a copy of The American Legion's “April is Children & Youth Month” brochure. Your Post, District, Area, and Department CY Chairman are available to ensure that you have your questions answered, support to ensure that your event or activities are successful.

Remember, we have two current Department CY Fundraisers that need your support. We have a special 2012-2013 FAL CY Pin for \$5 and a 2013 FAL CY Challenge Coin representing The American Legion Family for \$10. Contact Steve Shuga at C&Y@floridalegion.org to inquire about these unique keepsakes.

The 2013 Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) is in full swing. Forms are available through your designated CY Chairman or by direct contact with Cliff Collins at the Department Headquarters.

Monthly Program Reminders

Plan your C&Y activities at least two months ahead & order your resources early.

Monthly Reporting of Post CY Program activities due to Department HQ (Attn: CY) between December 15 thru December 31, 2012.

(NOTE: If you missed the deadline, please send it in regardless!)

Important C&Y Program Dates

Posts are encouraged to seek out Florida's Senior High School candidates to apply for the *American Legion General Scholarship*. See your Post Administrative Manual for application. Candidate applications are due at Dept. HQ no later than March 1, 2013.

Florida's *Children & Youth Fund Grant* applications due to Dept. HQ no later than May 1, 2013. Grant requirements are located under Programs Link – Children and Youth Fund on Department website.



ROTC/SHOOTING SPORTS

Loretta Young

Dept. of Florida ROTC/Shooting Sports Chair

The next big program deadline is the Cadet of the Year. Applications were all sent out by Department and the deadline is March 1st. Please contact all your schools and give them a reminder not to wait until the last minute as time passes quickly and it would be a shame for a qualified cadet to miss out on winning one of the scholarship awards. First Place Award is \$2,500, 2nd Place is \$1,500 and 3rd Place is \$500. The First Place Winner will be presented at the Department Convention to our membership.

Shooting Sports had a very successful event at the Commander's Cup Marksmanship Meet in Titusville last month. There were 4 schools that traveled from Broward to attend the All Around Event. Monarch H.S. JROTC placed first in the Marksmanship Tournament. Team member, Nic Vallone, had the highest individual score in the entire contest. Kudos to the Knight Battalion. We are still awaiting the results of the team entries for the National Postal Match that was due last month. All fired targets are due to National Headquarter by Feb. 1st. The deadline is strict so please make sure your schools do not wait until the last minute. First Round Qualifications will be posted on the National website to advise who will advance to the Second Round Finals.

Thanks to all who are working your programs and please let me know of any outstanding event or individual that you may have in your area so that we can make mention in the Legion Link and bring more awareness to our programs. For God and Country



**Can a Member Really Talk Forever?
Make a motion to close debate.**

Dick Mondro

Department Judge Advocate

How many times have you attended a meeting where one person drones on forever? Or the assembly keeps rehashing the issue? Or we might say "beating the dead horse"? (No disrespect to horses, of course.) Well, there is something that you can do. You can make the motion to close debate. It called "the previous question". All you need to do is to make the motion to close debate or previous question. Just say "I move the previous question". Or "I move to close debate". This motion is not debatable. That means once another member seconds the motion, the president calls for a rising vote. The chairman states, "All those in favor of closing debate, please rise". (The members need to rise because this vote requires a two thirds vote. This the only way the presiding officer can tell how many have voted on each side.) Then he states "be seated. All those opposed please rise. Be seated". The chair then announces the vote. Either the affirmative has it and debate is closed (that means no more discussing the issue) or the negative has it and the debate continues. (Let's hope not.) Once debate is closed the chair immediately takes the vote on the motion under discussion.

Another option is in discussing an issue, the first thing the presiding officer should do is alternate debate. Ask for those who are in favor and then someone who is opposed. When it looks like people are just repeating themselves. The chair could ask: "Is there anything new to say about this issue?" Or "Are you ready to take the vote?" When asking the latter question, usually those in the assembly will shake their heads yes. The chair should then take the vote.

The other thing that the members can do is make the motion to "limit debate". Like the motion to "close debate", this motion is not debatable as a subsidiary motion and takes a two thirds vote to adopt. This motion can either set a limit to the total number of minutes to discuss the topic or to the number minutes each member can speak. The time is amendable but not debatable.

Warning point. Often when someone makes the motion to close debate, the chairman thinks debate is closed and begins to take the vote. This is not correct. The members must first adopt the motion to close debate and then the members can vote on the motion.

Answer: No, members can't talk forever. But someone must stop it by making the motion to close debate. RROR 11th Edition Art. VII. Debate. 42. Debate, 43. Decorum in Debate, 44. Closing and Preventing Debate, 45. Principles of Debate and Undebatable Motions.



You Didn't Have To Be There

Dick Mondro

Department Judge Advocate



When you are invited to approve the minutes of a previous meeting, you may do so, even if you didn't attend the meeting in question. When you vote to approve the minutes, you are expressing your confidence in the veracity of the secretary, the actions of your colleagues, and the correctness of the minutes preparation process. You are not making a personal eyewitness statement that "you were there."

The body needs an official record of its actions, and all members may approve that record. This means that a member should not abstain from voting to approve minutes on the grounds that he was absent at that meeting.

Having Trouble Getting Attendance At Meetings?

I maintain that decorum and Robert's Rules of Order, which to some people symbolize boredom, formality and obfuscation, when properly used will create an atmosphere that is delightful, resulting in meetings that are fair, effective and a pleasure to attend.

Is this too strong a claim? Here are the benefits that I see in meetings that use Robert well:

A structured agenda is prepared that provides suggested times for each topic, so the group uses its time efficiently.

Everyone gets a chance to speak in turn, so no one dominates the conversation.

All views are welcomed, so the group considers options outside its ordinary range of thought.

Everyone speaks with courtesy and respect, even when laboring under heartfelt emotion.

Members may argue their views strongly during discussion, but once a decision is made, the minority accepts the majority decision as the decision of the body.

The chair of the meeting functions as the servant of the group, takes his cue from the group, and turns to the group when tough decisions need to be made.

In my experience, this kind of meeting is one that people enjoy and value. Most folks have a basic commitment to fairness, and if the meeting is fair, they are willing to subordinate their individual view to the group's wisdom as a whole. What they don't enjoy is a meeting where a few people dominate the discussion, where the chair tries to act as the boss, where some members waste time arguing about one topic and neglect others that are more important, or where rudeness and discourtesy create bad feeling among the participants.

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY,
YOU SWEET, SWEET VALENTINE,
YOU!**