

# The Legion Link

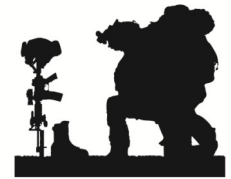
January 2013

Vol. 20 Issue 6



## AIMING HIGH FOR VETERANS

FALLEN SOLDIER



NEVER FORGOTTEN

Web Site: [www.floridalegion.org](http://www.floridalegion.org)

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### In this Issue...

#### Page 1

Dept. Commander  
Dept. Vice Commander

#### Page 2

Dept. Vice Commander  
Dept. Sgt-at-Arms  
Announcement

#### Page 3

Americanism  
School Medals  
FALPA

#### Page 4

ALR  
Legacy Run  
Wounded Warrior

#### Page 5

Membership

#### Page 6

Legislative

#### Page 7

Legislative  
Fall Conf. Banquet  
LEGION PRIDE, POST 235

#### Page 8

Children & Youth

#### Page 9

Dept. Judge Advocate  
FALPA

**Al 'Gunner' Dudley**  
**Department Commander**  
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"HAPPY NEW YEAR!" I hope everyone had a memorable and safe Christmas, and beginnings of a New Year!

Your hard work is making the Florida American Legion the #1 Legion in the world; keep it up! If you are not a 2013 card holder, your dues are delinquent. Don't let your membership lapse! Your dues not only assist the Post in helping them accomplish their mission, it also supports our many programs that assist our veterans, their families and the community. So, I encourage you to be current with your valued membership. Only 15% more and the Department of Florida will be 100%! I am confident we can accomplish this goal!

Belinda and I had a fantastic time visiting the 5th and 8th Districts in December. We visited many Posts.

5th District - a special kudos to Post 129 in Jacksonville Beach for their Christmas skit. It was entertaining! Also thanks to Mayport Naval Air Station, Post 316 and Fleet Reserve 290 for hosting Pearl Harbor Memorial Service. Your time and generous hospitality was greatly appreciated!

8th District - I visited the Southeastern Guide Dog Facility. That was quite a treat to see the process of grooming a canine to become a veterans best friend. Again, thank you all for your time and kind generosity! This month I will be visiting the 12th and 17th Districts. We'll

be coming to a Post near you so come on down and say hello!

Belinda and I would like to thank the Department staff for a wonderful Christmas family gathering. Also, I would also like to thank Department Staff, Officers & Chairmen for all your time, hard work and effort you give to the American Legion! Your generosity goes above and beyond the call of duty and in return I am totally convinced Florida is the premier Department because of you!

I look forward to the upcoming months as I continue to serve you. God Bless you, your families, our veterans and God Bless America! Have a great and outstanding day! For God and County

Art Schwabe  
Department Vice Commander  
[Vicecommander@floridalegion.org](mailto:Vicecommander@floridalegion.org)  
386.235.9990

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!!!!

I just spent a great December with Wreaths Across America at Post 5, a Luminary Service at Post 79 for fallen Florida Veterans and a few Christmas parties. With the New Year come new ideas and your membership renewal. Let's all rededicate ourselves to helping veterans and their families.

We all should be on page 49!!! PAGE "49"? Are you on page 49 in the 'Post Administration Manual'? Your Commander has the manual. Please read it and become informed.

Vice Commander's column, continued from page 1....

January 2013 is here. It's time to be picking the Eagle Scout of the Year. The forms must be in by March 1, 2013. Please take the extra step to make sure these scouts are recognized. They are our future. They need our support and encouragement to succeed for OUR "future and the future of this country".

CPR or "Consolidated Post Report" (Not CPR that you were thinking!!!) end of the year reports. If you fill them out monthly all you have to do is total each month. This report tells what each Post has done for the past year and should be brought up at the last meeting of the year. This is the Post Report Card!!! The reports are due May 1, 2013. Commanders please insure this is complete and turn in on time. Thanks!!

Now for some trivia....

1. How many elements are there to the Legion emblem?

A 5 B 6 C 7

2. How many Departments are there in the American Legion?

A 55 B 57 C 60

3. What year did the Florida Boys State Program start?

A 1941 B 1942 C 1943

Ole's Corner!!!

Ole went to his Doctor for a physical, complaining about his sex life. The Doc told him to walk ten miles a day, then call him on the phone. A week later, Ole telephoned his Doctor. "How's your sex life," inquired the Doc.

"What sex?" blurted the Norwegian. "I'm seventy miles from home."

Answers to Above Questions

1. B 6 : 1 Ray of Sun 2 Wreath 3 Star 4 Outer Ring 5 Inner Ring 6 American Legion

2 A 55 Departments (one each for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico and the Philippines.

3 C 1943 For Florida

June 23, 1935 the first American Legion Boys State convenes in Springfield, Illinois to help youths gain an understanding of the structure and operation of the federal government. The first Boys Nation, bringing together youth leadership from all the Boys State programs, convenes in 1946. For God and Country

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

Hi Fellow Legionnaires;

Happy New Year my Fellow Legionnaires! I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas. With 2013 now upon us we need to think about those new officers as nominations are right around the corner. If you are SGT-AT- ARMS and are looking to move up the ladder, I hope you have been training your new replacement or start getting one in mind. The same goes for the District Officers. We need to keep training and my motto is "Train Yourself Out of A Job"!

Don't think that you are not good enough for a specific position within this great organization of ours. I recently heard someone state that "You are too YOUNG to run for that Office", you are NOT 65 years old or older yet! My Fellow Legionnaires, we all fought for our country, honorably and we are all eligible for any office we choose including, but not limited to, National Commander. So, don't let anyone hold you back. Go for it! I am as good as the other Legionnaires and you should feel that way as well! The Constitution & By Laws state that all members in good standing are eligible for any office within this organization.

If your Post or District need more SGT-AT-ARMS Books please let me know I will ensure to get them to you. the 2nd printing is now complete. To date well over 600 books have been given out and I have trained over 300 Legionnaires. That does NOT include all the Son's of The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary members who also attended the training sessions. When I attend your District or Post just ask me for a book and come to the training. You will be surprised what is NOT printed in the Officers guide and what American Legion Traditions have been disappearing from it as well.

I attended the 1st District Meeting and if you haven't seen the full page article on the Department website from the Destin Log "A LEGACY FOR ALL" please look at the store. The City of Destin, Local American Legion Post #296 dedicated a Veterans monument flag pole at Clement Taylor Park. Things like this getting positive Face Time in the news will get you new members and people want to belong. Remember what I have stated in my classes that you need to build your Post image within the Community and people will want to belong. It starts with the Post SGT-AT-ARMS as the welcoming Committee for the Post and all the officers and membership! BRAVO ZULU goes out to Destin Post #296 and Post Commander Larry Carpenter and 1st District Commander Verna Joyce! "For God and Country"



**Commanders and Chairpersons:** Please go to the Legion Web site [www.floridalegion.org](http://www.floridalegion.org) scroll down and click on Resumes and Job Descriptions. Please spread the word about this site. We are looking for everyone interested in becoming a Chair Person for 2013-2014. Please tell them to fill out the resume and turn it into Department by the 15th of January. The more applications, the better chairpersons we get to do the programs. We will also be considering Vice Chairs as well who will work with the Chairperson to promote the program and gain knowledge on what the chairperson does. This will be a learning experience for all and will improve consistency with our programs.

**Americanism**  
**Michael Clark, Department Chairman**  
**Americanism@floridalegion.org**

I hope that everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We are fast approaching convention and all the Americanism Programs should be well under way. Area chairmen, please report what is being done to promote Americanism Programs, remember this is one of the Four Pillars.

Next month, **February, is Americanism Month**. Please get out to the schools to promote the programs. You can order books to go along with the particular program that you want to focus on. Remember that the scholarships for General, ROTC Cadet of the year, and Eagle Scout of the year are due the first of March. The students should be working on the applications now as the applications must include their parent or grandparents discharge or DD-214's.

Please keep in mind that the Oratorical Contest has to be completed the month of January. And last, but not least, Teacher of the Year Awards should be started as soon as possible. For God and Country

**School Medals**

**John Gibbons, Department Chairman**  
**schoolmedals@floridalegion.org**

Greetings... I will be brief. Now is the time to order your School Medals. Emblem Sales will take orders over the phone – with a charge card. Remember to keep track of the number of legionnaires that are working the program, hours, and miles. The CPR also asks for the number of awards, trophies and the cost. For COURAGE order Valor – Silver. For HONOR order Medal of Merit - Bronze. For LEADERSHIP order Citizenship -Bronze. For PATRIOTISM order Americanism - Bronze. For SCHOLARSHIP order Scholarship – Bronze. For SERVICE order General - Gold. OR you could order General for each along with a certificate that lists the specific quality being recognized. Medals for ROTC are not counted in the School Medals program. For God and Country... 'till we meet again



**2012-2013 Annual FALPA 'Best Papers' Contest**

**CATEGORIES:**

1, For District-wide, Area-wide or Regional-wide publications:

A. Legion publications      B. All other district, area or regional publications (SAL, Auxiliary, 40&8, La Femmes, 20&4, etc.)

2. For all publications produced at the post level:

A. Posts over 750 members      B. Posts with 250 - 749 members

3. For all publications produced at the post level:

A. Posts up to 250 members      B. All other unit/squadron publications (SAL, Auxiliary, etc.)

4. Editorials

Must have appeared originally in an American Legion or member publication within the contest year.

A. George Hartley award -- Original effort of Editor      B. Guest editorial (by lined or author identified)

**Rules** (Please read and follow the rules carefully)

- Competition Year - Papers and editorials submitted must have been issued / published between May 1, 2012 and April 30, 2013.
- Basis Of Judging - Papers will be judged on: Content (Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, local, county, district, state and national news, as appropriate); clear, concise and balanced writing; make-up; design and appearance; use of photos and illustrations.
- Editorials will be judged on: Headline and lead arousal of interest; clear, concise and imaginative writing; Research and grasp of subject; timely and appropriate objectives suitable to publication.

**Entry Instructions**

- Must be a current member of the Florida American Legion Press Association
- For categories 1, 2, 3 and 4, submit three (3) papers, one each of three separate issues.
- For category 4, submit only one (1) editorial. Send entire paper, put on cover sheet name & page number of the editorial.
- For all entries, an identifying cover sheet must be submitted, to include the following information, typed or printed neatly:
  - a. Name & Number of Post, District, Unit, Squadron, etc.
  - b. Full address of Post, Unit, Squadron, etc.
  - c. Name of Publication title
  - d. Frequency of Publication
  - e. Average circulation number
  - f. Name mailing address, phone number of Editor
  - g. Name, mailing address, and phone number of entrant, if other than editor
  - h. Editorials, include author name, editorial

Entry Deadline: Entries must be postmarked no later than May 1, 2013 and mailed to:

Charlie Wing, 2912 Imperial Palm Dr, Largo, FL 33771, [captzap52@hotmail.com](mailto:captzap52@hotmail.com)

Please mark the lower left corner of your envelope: "CONTEST" and indicate the entry category for judging , e.g., 2-A; 4-B; etc.





### **Welcome Home a Wounded Marine for Christmas**

The 4th District Commander Chuck Ferguson and his Chaplain Garry Justice with Department SGT-AT-ARMS Jay Conti Sr. welcomed home Marine LCPL Josh White from Walter Reed Hospital presenting him with a Letter of Commendation from our Department Commander Al Dudley who couldn't attend on short notice.

In 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 \$50,000 in the account that will go to the many life changing needs when Josh gets home for good.

The entire American Legion Family of Post #155 was on hand including all 5 County Commissioners and over 350 people from the Citrus County Community. Dept SGT-AT-ARMS Jay Conti Sr. also presented American Legion Post #155 Commander Mike Klyap a Letter of Commendation to for their efforts of taking care of one of our own and for establishing the Fund!

Pictured is Department Sgt-AT-Arms Jay Conti Sr., 4th District Commander Chuck Ferguson and 4th District Chaplain Garry Justice with Marine LCPL Joshua White.



## **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 once the District  
Chairman provides the recommended hotel info.

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

**Scott Grabner**

**Dept. ALR Chairman**  
**alr@floridalegion.org**

Legion Riders, I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday Season. By the time this is printed, Christmas will have brought my wife Toni and I to Post 28 in Key West for Christmas with the District 14 Riders. Let me first start with Happy New Year to all of the District Legion Riders Chairmen. Now it is time to get busy on the New Year.

We have a lot going on with the first ever Department Of Florida Legion Riders Legacy Run from Panama City to Key West February 23<sup>rd</sup> thru March 2<sup>nd</sup> lead by Mike Kirchoff. Also, in May, we are planning a Department of Florida Legion Riders State Rally at Post 69 in Avon Park, FL. So we have a couple of great rides planned this year. I look forward to seeing everyone in February on the Legacy Run. First and foremost please remember that we are Legionnaires, Auxiliary and SAL members first and must support our Post, Units and Squadrons. Let's keep riding and having fun at what we do. Still Serving & Riding

## **January Fun Facts**

- 1, 1914 - First airline of scheduled passenger service;  
St. Petersburg—Tampa Airboat Line
- 2, 1888 - the drinking straw was patented
- 5, 1914 =Henry Ford, the automaker, gave his employees  
an unprecedented \$5.00 a day minimum wage
- 10, 1901 - Texas oil boom begins with the  
first oil well in Beaumont
- 12, 1971 - TV show 'All in the Family' debuts
- 16, 1920 - League of National is inaugurated
- 24, 1935 - First canned beer is sold in New Jersey
- 29, 1929 - first guide dog school in U.S.  
Nashville, Tennessee

# 80% Goal

## January 16, 2013

Membership Report as of December 27, 2012

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rec'd	% Goal
6	Robert Kiley	10,193	9,101	89.29
15	Eunice Butts	5,178	4,484	86.60
17	Michael Wolohan	4,135	3,544	85.71
11	Richard Smith	4,094	3,497	85.42
7	Nancy Thomas	3,863	3,298	85.37
4	Charles Ferguson	4,160	3,536	85.00
8	Debra Roush	8,218	6,823	83.03
12	Albert Diaz	8,424	6,963	82.66
9	William Johnson	4,342	3,581	82.47
1	Verna Joyce	6,256	5,150	82.32
2	Homer Frailey	1,365	1,123	82.27
5	Henry Combs	7,681	6,304	82.07
13	William Hauser	8,783	7,188	81.84
16	James Burgess	11,977	9,771	81.58
3	M.E Christians	1,712	1,373	80.20
14	Gary Decker	3,161	2,317	73.30
Eastern	Mark Johnson	18,617	16,064	86.29
Central	James Zipler	21,018	17,553	83.51
Northern	Robert Brewster	17,688	14,757	83.43
SW	Steven Slachta	17,001	14,011	82.41
Western	Charles Lecroy	7,621	6,273	82.31
Southern	George Rafajko	11,597	9,395	81.01
<b>Dept</b>			<b>78,053</b>	
<b>Post 400</b>		<b>11,977</b>	<b>10,430</b>	<b>87.08</b>
<b>Post 208</b>		<b>2,141</b>	<b>2,734</b>	<b>127.70</b>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>107,775</b>	<b>91,217</b>	<b>84.64</b>

**Jim Ramos**  
**Membership Chairman**  
[membership@floridalegion.org](mailto:membership@floridalegion.org)

Happy New Year! I want to wish you and yours a healthy and happy 2013. Congratulations to the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Districts for attaining 80% or better. We have all six Areas and 15 of the 16 Districts over 75%. In addition 228 posts are at 75% or better. We have 28 posts in the Department at 100% or better. Congratulations to all! As of December 12<sup>th</sup>, the Department is in 23<sup>rd</sup> place in the Southeast Region and in 4<sup>th</sup> place (81.326%) nationwide. Go Florida!

I want to congratulate Post 365, Sunrise for winning the December 11<sup>th</sup> 75% drawing of the \$1,000 cash award. The next drawing is January for the 80% goal and is a \$1,500 cash award for one lucky post.

We need to keep strong with membership. Please take a look at the membership plan in the Membership Information and Awards Manual (page 31). 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 their 100% goal. The "Race to the Top" award is still within our reach. 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's 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. At these and other celebrations and events, be sure to set up an information table with Legion family program brochures. GO FLORIDA!!

As 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 [jramos149@bellsouth.net](mailto:jramos149@bellsouth.net) or [membership@florida.org](mailto:membership@florida.org) 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.



**Legislative**  
**Stanley Gold, Department Chairman**  
**786.423.2458**

February 27<sup>th</sup> the Department of Florida will host our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Congressional Luncheon at the Cannon House Office Building in Washington, D.C. All our 27 members of the House and our two Senators will be invited. Thanks to Congressman Jeff Miller for securing the Cannon meeting room at no cost to us.

We will discuss our legislative goals and thank them for their support. We will also welcome our new seven (7) members of Congress. The vast majority of members have been showing up. Those who cannot make it will send one of their aides or we will make arrangements to meet with them at their office. We will see them all one way or another.

**LEGION-RELATED LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Conference on NDAA Completed

With less than two weeks left in the 112th Congress, the House and Senate Armed Services Committees completed their conference on the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Once the conference legislation is passed by both chambers, this will be the 52nd consecutive year Congress has passed a Defense authorization bill. The full conference report is expected to be filed this week. Some details were released by the committees and those that are important to The American Legion follow:

*TRICARE fee increases* – One issue that drew a veto threat from the President was his request Congress increase TRICARE premiums and other fees for retired service members. The conference report “rejects” those Administration proposals, and restates the “firmly held sense of Congress that access to quality health care services during retirement is a benefit earned through prior service to our nation.” This provision thus poses a problem if the President follows through with his veto threat as Congress clearly rejected fee increases.

*NOTE:* The conference report does include increases in TRICARE pharmacy copayments in 2013. There is also a cap on pharmacy copayments starting in 2014 that would allow fees to rise by no more than the annual retiree COLA. This is offset by a pilot program to require TRICARE for Life recipients to obtain maintenance drug refills through the TRICARE mail-order program. (See a more detailed breakdown at bottom of this report.)

*Suicide prevention* – The Department of Defense (DOD) must develop a comprehensive policy on the prevention of suicide among members of the military. In addition, a new position is to be created within the Office of the Secretary to oversee all suicide prevention and resilience programs within the Department and the Services.

*Sexual assault provisions* – Many of the provisions addressing sexual assault that were in the House and Senate versions of the bill made it into the conference agreement. New commanders must assess the climate of their organizations with regard to these matters shortly after assuming command and then annually thereafter. DOD must make information about resources available to report and respond to sexual assaults widely available throughout DOD. Each Service must also establish special capabilities for the investigation, prosecution, and victim support in connection with sexual assault and other offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

*Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission* – As proposed by the Administration and approved by the Senate, the members of this commission would all be appointed by the Administration, and its recommendations would have to be considered by Congress under expedited, BRAC-type rules that would have barred any amendments and required a “yes or no” Congressional vote, with only limited time for review and debate. The final law, however, protects against “packing” the panel with Administration “yes-people”, it allows the president to appoint one commissioner, with two each to be appointed by the Republican and Democratic leaders of the House and Senate, in consultation with the Armed Services Committee leaders. Most important, the final law drops any requirement for a congressional vote, let alone under BRAC-style rules.

*Concurrent Receipt* – The conference report fixes a long-standing glitch in the current statutory formula that now underpays (and in some cases eliminates any payment) of Combat-Related Special Compensation for combat-disabled military retirees. The affected people will see their proper CRSC payments effective January 1, 2013. Because the formula is so complicated and varies by service length and VA disability rating, it's impossible to tell in advance which specific people are getting paid correctly or incorrectly under current law. Most of the people affected are likely to be combat-disabled members forced into medical retirement with less than 20 years of service.

*The New Year, like an Infant Heir to the whole  
world, was waited for with welcomes,  
presents and rejoicing - Charles Dickens*



.....continued from previous page

#### Other personnel issues

The conference report includes a 1.7% pay increase and extends bonuses and special pays for those in uniform.

Caps are placed on the number of troops that can be separated from the Army and Marine Corps in a single year, as those forces draw down in authorized end strength over the next five years.

The Armed Forces must accommodate the moral principles and religious beliefs of servicemembers and chaplains. Adverse personnel actions because of those beliefs (such as an opposition to homosexuality) are restricted.

Under current law, DOD restricts funding for abortion more narrowly than general federal law, which exempts the prohibition in the case of rape, incest, or life of the mother. The conference agreement expands current DOD restrictions to include rape or incest for Departmental purposes.

#### Additional TRICARE Pharmacy information:

Brand-name retail medications: the bill caps the current co-pay at \$17 for 2013, and limits future annual increases to the percentage increase in military retired pay. For example, if the retiree COLA for 2014 is 3%, that would translate to a 51-cent co-pay increase. But the new law bars any co-pay hike until the accumulated COLA-based increase is at least \$1, so (assuming the COLA for 2015 is also 3%), the co-pay would stay at \$17 for 2014 and rise to \$18 in 2015.

Non-formulary retail medications: DOD proposed to eliminate these medications (currently available for \$25 co-pay) through retail pharmacy, but the new law still keeps them available through retail for a \$44 co-pay.

Generic retail medications: DOD proposed raising the current \$5 co-pay by \$1 a year, starting in 2014. The new law keeps it at \$5 for 2013, and applies the COLA cap for future annual adjustments.

Mail-order generic co-pays: Instead of the DOD proposal to reinstate a \$9 co-pay for generics in 2017, the new law retains the current zero co-pay.

Mail-order brand-name co-pays: Instead of the DOD plan to raise the current \$9 co-pay to \$26 for 2013 and to \$34 over the next four years, the new law caps the 2013 co-pay at \$13, and applies the COLA cap for future years (at 3% per year, it would stay at \$13 for 2014 and 2015, then rise to \$14 for 2016).

Mail-order non-formulary co-pays: Instead of the DOD plan to raise the current \$25 co-pay to \$51 for 2013 and to \$66 over the next four years, the new law caps the 2013 co-pay at \$44 and applies the COLA cap for future years (meaning an additional \$1 increase for 2014 if there's a 3% COLA).

Mail-order/military pharmacy refills: To make up the lost revenue from capping co-pays at lower rates, the conference report requires TRICARE-for-Life eligible beneficiaries to try using either military pharmacies or the mail-order system for refills of maintenance medications for at least one year. After a year, they can opt out and go back to using the retail system for all refills if they choose. This new requirement likely will take effect sometime in March 2013. The report establishes requirements to ensure no one is turned away at retail pharmacies without enough medication to last until a mail-order account is established for them. It also gives DOD authority to waive the requirement for selected medications (e.g., many generics likely will be exempted, because they cost no more in retail pharmacies) or beneficiaries (e.g., nursing home patients)

#### LEGISLATIVE DIVISION ACTIONS

##### Update on Flag Amendment Bills

Sen. Orrin Hatch's (UT) office continues to solicit additional cosponsors for Senate Joint Resolution (S.J. Res.) 19, a proposed constitutional amendment to protect the American flag from physical desecration. Its text states simply: *"The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States."* The cosponsor total for the Senate legislation stands at 37. To date, H.J. Res. 13 – the House companion bill to the Senate measure – has accumulated 91 cosponsors, with the recent addition of Rep. Doug Lamborn (CO). (66, 97, 272)

Please contact your representative's and senators' offices, and ask them to become cosponsors of the flag amendment in their respective chambers. If they are already cosponsors, be sure to thank them for their support.

##### Letters of Support

On December 19, The American Legion sent a letter of support to Sen. Susan Collins (ME), giving our support for the FOR VETS Act of 2012. This measure would enable Veteran Service Organization to gain increased opportunities for federal surplus property to educate, train and improve the quality of life for veterans.

*Be at war with your Vices; Be at Peace with your  
Neighbors; and let every New Year find you a  
better person - Ben Franklin*

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

Happy New Year – 2013 is going to be a festive year for the American Legion Children and Youth Program. The aims of this program is to strengthen families, provide services to young people and meet the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs of our nation's youth.

Effective 1 January 2013 per NEC Resolutions 12 & 16, adopted during the 2012 Fall Meetings in Indianapolis, Indiana *background check screening* is highly recommended for all staff and volunteers of youth programs within American Legion Departments and is mandatory for all coaches, managers, and volunteer staff of Legion Baseball teams. While The American Legion has the utmost trust and confidence in its staff and volunteers, the need to implement such measures as background checks is unfortunately reflective of today's social reality. Any organization entrusted with the safety and welfare of youth must first and foremost engage all reasonable means necessary to protect those youth, as well as mitigate its overall risk and liability by taking measures aimed at sustaining program integrity and safety.

The American Legion appreciates the decision of many high school graduates who choose to serve in the US Armed Forces immediately following high school. These young men and women who chose to protect our freedom deserve our respect, admiration and gratitude. In lieu of our appreciation, the Legion has created a *Military Commitment Certificate of Commendation* that is available through Emblem Sales to be awarded to those local students for enlisting or pursuing commissions upon graduation.

The Department of Florida Children & Youth Program's major fundraising effort is underway. The FAL CY Pin for 2012-2013 has been widely accepted and we have plenty. They are available for \$5 each.

Also, a special edition, first ever FAL Children & Youth Challenge Coin is now available for 2013. The coin represents the Fourth Pillar of The American Legion and represents the entire American Legion Family on the reverse side. They are \$10 each.

This special keepsake item is expected to become a hot commodity for those who collect, seeking a special gift, or just have a desire to support the Florida American Legion Children & Youth Programs. Funding generated, will be used to support Children and Youth activities during 2013.

I thank you for your generous support as it truly ensures "A Square Deal for Every Child"!

Monthly Program Reminders

Plan your C&Y activities at least two months ahead & order your resources early using the order forms in the current Post Administrative Manual.

Semi-Annual Reporting of Post/District/Area CY Program activities was due to Department HQ (Attn: CY) December 15, 2012. Forms online at Dept Website under Forms/Documents. (NOTE: If you miss the deadline, 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 Children & Youth Fund Grant applications due to Dept. HQ no later than May 1, 2013.

As we thrive to fulfill The American Legion's Fourth Pillar providing the "Whole Child" concept, let us all do our very best to ensure that every child has a home, health, education, character, and opportunity to be a productive, well-rounded citizen that will guide and lead us into the future.

**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.

**Program Reminders**

- ✔ **Boys State** - Registration Fees due; \$325.00 per boy.
- ✔ **Oratorical** - Post Contests must be held no later than January 13, 2013.
- ✔ **Blood Donor** - Holiday Drive begins Thanksgiving Day, ends New Year's Day.
- ✔ **JROTC/Shooting Sports** - Have you contacted your High School JROTC to find out if they are interested in participating in the Shooting Sports program?? Targets are due to National January 15th



## **Which Rules Are More Important? --- Members Rights**

**Dick Mondro**

**Department Judge Advocate**



I have often been asked, is there is a hierarchy to rules for organizations? There is and the following are the rules in order of importance. This list also shows what each type of rule is intended to cover.

1. Federal, state and local laws -- These are the highest authority for the organization.
2. Charters: State or Federal Governmental charters are articles of Incorporation - This document is the highest authority specific to your organization. The bylaws and rules cannot conflict with anything in this document. It should be prepared by an attorney and filed with the state. Other charters may be granted by a parent body. These charters may also set forth rules that may not be circumvented.
3. Constitution and Bylaws -- These documents contain the basic rules that state how the organization is organized and managed. A constitution is not necessary and most organizations have combined the two into one document. If you do have a constitution, it should be more difficult to amend than the bylaws. The bylaws contain the limitations on the powers and authority of the governing body and the members and spell out the rights of members.
4. Rules of Order - The written rules of parliamentary procedure adopted by the members. These rules are about the orderly transaction of business in a meeting and to the duties of officers. The purpose of these rules is to facilitate the smooth functioning of the assembly and provide a firm basis for resolving questions of procedure that may arise. These rules are found in the parliamentary authority you adopted and stated in your bylaws. The parliamentary authority will cover almost all procedural questions that arise.
5. Special rules of order. There may be particular situations though that your organization believes requires modification of the adopted rules of order or it may be that a specific new rule is required related to procedure. (For example, instead of each member speaking for ten minutes twice to each motion as provided in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), a special rule may be adopted that states each members can speak for three minutes.) Special rules of order supersede RONR.
6. Standing rules are the rules that cover the details of administration of the organization rather than procedure. Some organizations call these rules policies. These rules are easy to adopt and to change, usually only requiring a majority vote. These rules, once adopted, remain in effect until they are amended or rescinded.

**All this information can be found in RONR, pages 10-18**

### **Do Member's Have Specific Rights?**

Members have a right to receive notice of meetings, attend meetings, make and debate motions, vote, and to run for office, except as otherwise provided in the bylaws or special rules (Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), 10th ed., p.3, 5, 431, 255).

Members have the right to speak twice to each motion for 10 minutes each time. This right to debate can be changed only by a two-thirds vote.

*REMINDER...* On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, a new edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* was announced as the official parliamentary manual for those organizations that have adopted RONR in their bylaws as their official parliamentary authority. The new edition, the eleventh, includes many clarifications and easier-to-understand language throughout, along with a new section on electronic meetings and an extensively reworked chapter on discipline. In addition the companion book *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief* was also updated. *In Brief* is the best resource for volunteer leaders and members to use to help get them through meetings with handy reference to motions and how to conduct business.

## **ROTC/SHOOTING SPORTS**

**Loretta Young**

**Dept. of Florida ROTC/Shooting Sports Chair**

This is a reminder for the upcoming Junior Shooting Sports Postal Match for the deadline for the Target Order Sets which must be back to Legion National Headquarters by January 10, 2013 and all fired targets returned to National by February 1, 2013. All the details are on the National website and these time lines are very strict. I would like to hear from our posts out there as to what they are doing with the schools in your area. I know through my involvement with the schools, they are on a very busy and tight schedule but try to make some time to stop by and visit to see the cadets at their best.

The Commander's Cup Marksmanship Match in Titusville will be on January 12, 2013 and I hope that some of the Legionnaires in the area will make the time to stop by and observe this event. The match is for the duration of Saturday and trophies should be presented about 3:00 pm in the afternoon. Thanks to everyone who takes the time to support this fine program and the cadets who are our future leaders.

Hope everyone has had a very happy, healthy and safe holiday season and remember to always pray for our troops.

**For God and Country**