



THE LEGION LINK

Full Speed Ahead for Veterans

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In this issue...

Page 1

- Dept. Commander Report

Page 2

- Dept. Cdr. Report Cont.
- Dept. 1st Vice Cdr. Report
- Ball/Homecoming Schedule

Page 3

- Dept. 2nd Vice Cdr. Report
- Bravo Zulu Awards Corner

Page 4

- Dept. 3rd Vice Cdr. Report
- Natl. Exec. Committeeman Report

Page 5

- Dept. Historian Report
- Dept. Sgt-At-Arms Report
- Dept. Judge Advocate Report

Page 6

- C&Y Chairman Report
- Blood Donor Chair. Report

Page 7

- Natl. Legislative Chair. Report
- Dept. Chaplain Report
- Natl. Cmd. 4x4 Program

Page 8

- Post Excellence Award
- Veterans' Appreciation Day

Page 9

- Post Development Report
- POW/MIA Chair. Report

Page 10

- Dept. Membership Report

Page 11

- 12th Dist. Adj. Report
- Northern Area Cmd. Report

Page 12

- Southwestern Area Report
- Social Media Chair. Report

Page 13

- In-State Legacy Ride Report
- Top 10 Military Phrases

Page 14

- Legion 96th Birthday
- Nat. Cmd. Visit Itinerary

Page 15

- Dept. Cmd. Travel Photos

Page 16-17

- Homecoming Flyer

Page 18

- Dept. Roster Updates

Page 19

- Veterans' Appreciation Day Flyer



JAY CONTI, SR.
 Department Commander
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MEMBERSHIP MADNESS!!! MEMBERSHIP MADNESS!!!

The NCAA has March MADNESS Basketball Tournament. In The American Legion, we have **March MEMBERSHIP MADNESS!!!**

Here in The Department of Florida we are sitting at 17th Place in the Nation (we slipped from 14th Place); We need to ensure that we send in the cards right away as your members renew. On March 5th (9AM-3PM) we will be having a **Membership Calling Party** at Department. All District and Area Commanders are encouraged to attend as well as any Legionnaire wishing to help us call about 3,000 members who have yet to renew for 2015. There will be a BBQ for all those who attend. Please contact your **Membership Chairman "Little Stevie" Shuga** so we know how many are attending. You can take what you learn and do it in your Post and District.

Don't forget about **RACE-TO-THE-TOP** Competition. For **RACE-TO-THE-TOP** your District needs to be **100% by March 31st**, so keep pushing. Renew, Reinstate, Recruit and lets hold Open Houses and tell your community know who we are.

Last month we had our National Vice Commander Richard "Dick" Neville from North Carolina visit the great state of Florida. He enjoyed his time in sunny Florida and gave a big compliment to the entire Florida Legion Family. Then we attended the 4-Chaplains Services at the Coast Guard Station in Fort Lauderdale and your Department Chaplain and the 9th District Staff did a wonderful job in telling the story of The 4-Chaplains. On February 13th we attended a Breast Cancer Awareness Fundraiser at Post 155 where we raised over \$1,400 for **Breast Cancer Awareness**. We also received donations from many Posts, Units, Squadrons and Chapters across the state this month! I thank all of you for your help in finding the Cure for this terrible Cancer!

We attended Old Glory Post #183 Fern Park where they initiated **6 NEW "YOUNG" Members** into their Post. They have partnered up with their local college and they have recruited over 50 new Legionnaires just this year. It's an honor to be Initiated as it gives the new Legionnaire a sense of purpose and a reminder of why they joined The American Legion and why they are **Still Serving America**. **I urge each and every Post to hold initiations of your new members.**

We are set to host our National Commander Mike Helm March 29-April 2nd. A schedule will be on the Department Website and in this Newsletter, please come out and meet and greet them.



Ball/Homecoming Schedule

Eastern Area Ball
April 4, 2015
Post 1

Northern Area Ball
March 7, 2015
Location TBD

Legion Family Homecoming
April 25, 2015
Post 103



Patriotic Coloring Books Now Available!

Department has Halloween and Patriotic coloring books available for purchase and distribution to the elementary classrooms in your area. An order form is located on page 11 of the Post Admin Manual. Supplies are limited - get them while they last! The cost is \$20 per 100 books. Send your orders to:

American Legion, Dept of FL
ATTN: Elizabeth Inherst
P.O. Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32854-7859

or by email:

Linherst@floridalegion.org



The American Legion 96th Birthday on March 15, 2015, The Department Oratorical Contest is on March 14, 2015, The American Legion Riders "In-State" Legacy Run will be held on March 23-28, 2015.

**"BRAVO-ZULU"
"FOR GOD AND COUNTRY"**
Jay Conti Sr.
Department Commander
"FULL SPEED AHEAD FOR VETERANS"



JIM RAMOS
Department 1st Vice Commander
1stvicecommander@legionmail.org
(352) 226-4370

Florida Legionnaires now is the time to get back to Membership (Retain, Reinstate, Recruit and Renew) lets get our members to renew today and not tomorrow. We need to get some new members "female and younger" one too. The Department of Florida Legionnaires understand, we can do it be number 1 in the Nation. We have some Districts that have a chance to win the "Race to the Top" we can make a difference all together. The Post who have made 100% already thank you and the Post who have not

made 100% just ask for help. We are here to support you and your Post and lets make a Difference. Some Suggestion follows:
How can we do this?

1. Working as a family (Legion, Auxiliary, Sons and Rider) to help and get the word out to their members.
 2. How about an OPEN HOUSE using the Post for:
 - a) All programs that you do have a table for each one
 - b) Plus a membership table for your Legion family
 - c) Us the community (Blood Mobile, Local Fire truck and County Emergency Agency)
 - d) Have a Veterans Lunch in at the Post (open to their families to)
 3. Call members who have not renew (sometimes a letter will not do)
- How good is your Post? (Can you and your Post answer the following questions?)

1. In Membership is it growing?
2. Youth activities do you have some?
3. Working with the Community?
4. Servicing our Troops, Veterans and their Family ?

Some more Suggestion:

1. Get a good Public Relation Office to work all levels
2. Start NOW, Be Creative, Be Different, Be Flexible
3. Reward your works
4. Keep your members info (newsletter, what your Post is planning and what is your Post doing?)

If you or your Post needs help just call (352-226-4370) or email me at 1stvicecommander@legionmail.org

Jim Ramos
1st Vice Commander





JOE MAGEE
 Department 2nd Vice Commander
 2ndViceCommander@legionmail.org

I would like to apologize for dropping the ball and missing the due date for last months edition, resulting in no article from me. I would like to give you a short synopsis of my January activities.

I attended two (2) District Meetings,, two (2) Memorials for departed comrades, conducted one(1) training session at a post meeting, attended Southwestern Area Ball at Post 103 in

Punta Gorda, attended the wedding of Dennis and Diane (Congrats!!), visited Department H.Q. on two (2) separate occasions, one for a planning meeting with Department Commander and the second was to participate in the PDC Think Tank, which I might say was extremely enlightening and informative. Represented the Department at the National Black Nurses Conference/ VITAS in Orlando and was invited to the Nationally publicized Four Chaplains Program at Post 129 in Jacksonville Beach, which was all it was written up to be.

February started out by returning home from Jax Beach on the 1st, I turned on the.TV. to see the part of the Super Bowl that was unbelievable, The Interception! (go Pats). Attended the Southern Area Ball, which was well attended, and, of course, highlighted by the presence of the Southeastern National Vice Commander, Richard Neville. While in the area, I visited a couple of Posts, as time allowed. Attended Post 254 meeting and after observing several protocol violations, I conducted an impromptu lesson in proper meeting procedure and protocol. Received an invite to Veterans Memorial Dedication in Hawthorne, Post 230. This may turn out to be the highlight of my year, the keynote speaker was an Iwo Jima survivor, Bob

Gasche and Duane Dewey, a Medal of Honor Recipient. I do have to add, however, all information on my invite letter was correct (name,title,etc.), but when I was introduced, I not only received a name change (Joe to John), but was also demoted (2nd to 3rd Vice), so for various reasons Post 230 is forever imprinted in what's left of the Irish Brain. At the end of the month the Central Area Ball is being held at Post 8 in Winter Haven..I do not doubt we will have a good time.

On the way home from Hawthorne, I visited Lady Lake Post 347 and received a grand tour which I appreciated. What a beautiful building/post. Then it was on down I-75 to stop in Post 99 in Brooksville and would, also, like to thank those members for their hospitality.

Please remember, as Dept.2nd Vice and Dept. Training Officer, I am only a phone call away for assistance.

For God and Country
Joseph Magee
 2nd Vice Commander
 Department of Florida



AWARDS CORNER

The "BRAVO ZULU" award is the Department Commanders Version of the "Billy Award" and is awarded to a Legion Family member for Outstanding Service of Excellence!

In the United States Navy, it is a common practice for the Commodore or Fleet Admiral to signal ships that have performed exceptionally well with the **"BRAVO and ZULU"** flags. These two flags displayed together mean **"Well Done"!**

BRAVO ZULU AWARDS to Date:

Larry Sheets, Jim Ramos, Steve Newman, Mike Seidel, Ruth Burgess, Mike McDaniel, Richard Izzy, Tom Gora, Post 238 Family, Bill Hamblin, Rene Stachelrodt Jr., John Dollinger, Dusty Douglas, Shirley Douglas, Jim "Radar" Henry, Karen Henry, Sherry Hayes-Luzader, SAL PNC Jim Roberts, Doug Deierlein, Larry Roberts, Sandy White, Eunice Butts, MaryLou Hamblin, Andy Anderson and the entire Department of Florida American Legion College Class of 2014, Larry White, Jimmy Roberts, Kirk Miller, Squadron 72 CDR & JJ Jennings, Roy Havekost, Post 54 Family,, Tim Teirney, Bob Johnson, Terry Briggs, Dennis Storey and Johnny Gibbons, Ann King Smith, Rick Johnson, Dorothy Walsh, Jimmie Stewart, Karen Cole, Steve Shuga, Gerald Kaufman, Eric Hench. Elbert "EZ" Zigliar, Larry White, Arnold Makovsky, Ray "Bouncer" Leventhal, Steve Gordon, Andrew Burkett and Steven Slachta.





BOB BREWSTER
 Department 3rd Vice Commander
3rdViceCommander@legionmail.org
 (904) 635-4492

First up, Thursday, March 5, 2015, starting at 9:00 AM at Department headquarters, we are looking for volunteers to come in with their cell phones and chargers and do a phone bank call system. There will be a list of members to contact and lunch will be served. We will end mid afternoon so we can beat the traffic out of town.

On Saturday, March 14th, we have the Department Oratorical Contest starting at 9:00 AM. This is a Children & Youth Program, one of our 4 Pillars that every one of us say we believe in. Now is the time to prove it. Let's fill the hall.

Please stay in touch with all your school contacts and talk about our Children & Youth Programs. By doing this, we can improve our relationship with the schools. Every year we lose contact with our favorite teacher or administrator because of changes in staff. So we must cultivate the new replacements as soon as possible. This way we will continue to have good relationships to support our Children & Youth Programs. Your ROTC leaders can be a big help in keeping you in touch with the right people. They also have some great kids as candidates for your Boy's State, Girl's State, and Oratorical Programs.

We should all be working on finding people who we can recommend for Teacher Of The Year, Firefighter Of The Year, and Policeman Of The Year. These are the people you can recommend for your Post awards, District awards, and Department awards. In our daily lives, we come across some very great people doing some very great things. We should recognize them for their efforts.

At Post level, it is getting that time of year where we will be nominating officers and leaders of our Post for the new fiscal year. Let's all use our heads and elect those members who will do the job, not someone who happened to buy us a beer that week. It's simple, if we don't have good leadership at Post level, why should we promote these people to District, Area, and Department level positions. The Posts are the basic foundation of our organization. If leadership is not succeeding at Post level, they will not succeed at the higher levels of leadership.

Thanking you for all you have done and will do.

For God and Country,
 Bob Brewster, Department 3rd Vice Commander



DENNIS R. BOLAND
 National Executive Committeeman
NEC@Legionmail.org
 239-963-8383

SUPPORT FOR LEGISLATION PROHIBITING HATE SPEECH AT MILITARY FUNERALS

Since its creation, the United States has honored its ward dead by a sacred tradition of military funerals, and continues to treat its ward dead with sanctity, dignity and honor, and recognizes the ultimate sacrifice made to protect, defend, and preserve the freedoms and way of life in the United States.

The American Legion finds the targeted protest of service member funerals to be a vile and despicable act and not worthy of American citizens who enjoy the freedoms only made possible through the sacrifice and death of military heroes. The American Legion urges Congress to designate political protests planned and conducted at targeted service member funerals as hate speech prohibited by law.

Congress needs to define the official mourning period for service members killed in combat to be at least one week. Congress needs to prohibit the planning for, or conduct of, protests aimed at a specific member of the military or the related family within the one mile radius of activity pertaining to funeral services, procession, and internment for a period of one day before and one day after the official mourning period.

Dennis R. Boland
 National Executive Committeeman



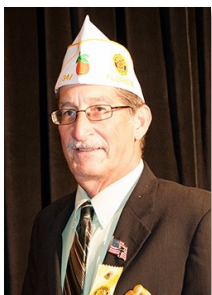
SHELLI ROMEU
 Department Historian
 Historian@legionmail.org

History Book Contest Reminder for both American Legion Riders (ALR) and American Legion Posts: Please make note that your 1 Year Narrative or Yearbooks are due to Dept. Headquarters (Orlando) NLT the deadline of June 1, 2015.

All Florida Posts are on the 100th Anniversary Centennial Website now with at least their Post Number and Charter date (except for the very few that I do not have editor rights to - please get with me if one of these is your Post so we can get yours updated!) Check us out at: <http://centennial.legion.org/histories/florida>

I am able to provide training to Districts on Historian Yearbooks/Narratives and/or Centennial History/Site updating - please get with your District Commander so that he/she can contact me to schedule a training session in your area.

Shelli Romeu
 Department Historian



WILLIAM C. HOPPNER
 Department Sgt-At-Arms
 Sgt-At-Arms@legionmail.org
 305-968-7979

Greetings to All, As promised in last month's Legion Link arrangements have been made for color guard training.

The training will take place at department on April 18, 2015 at 11:00 A.M. It is a pleasure to have Mr. Tracy Bullard National Assistant Chief Judge to teach the class and also answer any questions. There have been some changes in the national competition rules so this would be a good time to go over changes and to train new units.

Those who are interested in the training please contact me at one of the following emails or by phone number Sgt-At-Arms@legionmail.org, Gonepost1@aol.com or (305)968-7979. This information is being sent out in advance so everyone wanting to attend has the opportunity to do so.

I am looking forward to hear from everyone interested and also the number of people who wish to attend the class. I would also like to have individuals who have judged completion in the past to attend.

God bless you, your families, our veterans and God bless America!

For God and Country,
 William C. Hoppner, Sgt-At-Arms



LARRY SHEETS
 Department Judge Advocate
 Judgeadvocate@legionmail.org
 305-467-7713

Going through proposed Post Constitution and By-Laws I have noticed that many Post are making the same mistake regarding how Post meetings are conducted. Most Posts Constitution and By-

Laws say that all proceedings of this Post shall be in accordance with Robert's Rules Of Order.

The Department Constitution in Article X, Section 18 states, "Each Post shall use and follow The American Legion Post Officers Guide in conducting its meetings, initiation of new members and other ceremonies prescribed therein."

it is important to note that should there be a question on procedure, the steps to follow would be to refer to (1) Post Constitution and By-Laws, (2) Department Constitution and By-Laws, (3) National Constitution and By-Laws, and as a last resort refer to Robert's Rules Of Order.

Another thing I have noticed is that most Posts do not have any reference to those who have access to and handle funds of the Post being bonded. Any Post officer, member, or employee who has access to and handles money should be bonded.

This is a no brainer, it protects the Post in case someone gets "sticky fingers." Most insurance policies have coverage available for the bonding of those with access to Post funds. A Post should check with their Insurance Agent before they go to a Bonding Company to obtain bonding of those individuals.

One more problem that I have noticed lately is that some Posts believe that the Post Executive Committee can suspend, or sanction a member for various reasons, I would remind you that the Department Constitution in Article X, Section 14 specifically states: "Members or Post Officers may be reprimanded, suspended or expelled from the American Legion only upon proper showing or cause. Charges shall be based upon disloyalty, neglect of duty, dishonesty and conduct unbecoming a member of The American Legion. Charges must be made under oath and in writing by the accusers, and no member or officer shall lose his membership or office until given a fair trial."

Larry Sheets
 Department Judge Advocate





Jerry Brandt
Children & Youth Program Chairman
CY@Floridalegion.org
(904) 910-5201

Commanders, there will be a Department of Florida Children & Youth Golf Tournament on April 18th, 2015. This will be hosted by American Legion Post 129, in Jacksonville Beach, FL. All proceeds will go to the Department of Florida Children & Youth Fund.

March is here, The Department of Florida Oratorical Contest will be on March 14th, starting at 9 AM. Boys State candidates should have been selected, School Medals and ROTC Certificates have been order and ROTC Banquets have been planned. Spring is here, Easter in April, **School Graduations** in May.

Good News, American Legion Baseball is a go. Get your teams together and let's play Baseball. Good luck to Eric Owens the new Baseball Program Chairman.

Important Dates in March

- 3rd - National Anthem Day
- 12th - Girl Scout Day
- 17th - St Patrick's Day
- 19th - Palm Sunday
- 15th - 17th - Legion Birthday
- 24th - Arbor Day

Important Dates in April

- 4th - Passover
- 5th - Easter
- 12th - Orthodox Easter
- 15th - Tax Day

Please let me know if you have any Ideals or suggestions to make this year a great year for our program.

Yours in Service
Jerry Brandt
Department of Florida
Children & Youth Chairman 2014 - 2015



JOHN DOLLINGER
Department Blood Donor Chairman
BloodDonor@legionmail.org
(941) 661-8086 Blood Donor Committee

The numbers are still coming in because some held there blood drives the week or 2 after the schedule. I expect the report will be out in the middle of March. I know we had a good turnout but how many were able to donate is always the question. I want to thank everyone for the time and effort they put into making this happen. From the District Blood Donor Chairman, Auxiliary Support and the Sons of the American Legion workers, it was great to see

the support for our veterans from the Legion Family. I also want to thank the Department Staff for all their efforts, answering calls and directing people where to find information, it truly takes everyone to make things happen. My April report will have the final results and I will have the Post breakdown completed.

John Dollinger
Department Blood Donor Chairman

**Legionnaires
Insurance Trust**

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**Good news! Online enrollment
is now available.**

Any Legion member can go to
the LIT website to enroll. To
sign up online, go to:
<http://www.thelit.com> and
follow the links.



STANLEY GOLD
National Legislative Chairman
NatLegislative@legionmail.org
(786) 423-2458

Report while in Washington for our National Commander giving testimony to the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. Our top goals he brought up, "Boy its cold outside".

1. Fully fund a superior national defense as the global war on terrorism rages on.
2. Continue efforts to reform VA
3. Support more efficient VA claims
4. Provide help for veterans struggling with mental health issues and brain injuries
5. Ensure transition programs are not adversely affected by sequestration
6. Create opportunities for veterans in the private sector
7. Provide top education through Post 9/11 GI Bill
8. End veteran homelessness
9. Oppose further increases in Tricare fees, including prescription drugs fees
10. Repeal unfair offsets that penalize disabled veterans and widows
11. Protect the American Flag

I would like to thank all the Florida Legion that has helped in seeing that all Florida members of congress was given copies of our goals. Further report will be given next month.

Stanley Gold
National Legislative Chairman



STEVEN NEWMAN
Department Chaplain
Chaplain@legionmail.org
(954) 865-1026

Greetings my fellow Legionnaires. I hope all is well with you. It seems that time is passing by us so fast. You often have to wonder just how fast time goes by in our daily lives. Every once in a while its probably a good idea to slow things down a bit if possible. Before you know it, our year in the Legion will pass and it will be time for reports,

elections and the Department Convention. As we gather let GOD be with us, let the beauty and the wisdom of His holy presence guide our every thought, word, and action. Let GOD give us the bounties of His wisdom and understanding. Grant that we may hallow these days to His service and find in Him peace, wisdom, and strength. Grant that we may serve Him in spirit and in truth and build our work on the good foundation of justice and charity. Remember O eternal light, shine into our hearts; O eternal goodness, deliver us from evil, O eternal power, be our support. Deepen and quicken within us, O GOD the sense of your presence and refresh us with your power. Bless everyone in your midst and pass on Your love and strength. For this we always ask in Your name. As we continue on with our daily lives lets ask GOD to help us and guide us down the service road. To be with us, lead us and grant us His everlasting love. So with this little food for thought I want to bless each and everyone of you and may your forthcoming days be full of love, joy, and happiness. For "GOD and Country" Department Chaplain Steve Newman.

Steven Newman
Department Chaplain

National Commander Helm's 4x4 Program

American Legion National Commander Mike Helm's fundraising goal during his year-long tenure as national commander is to raise \$4 million in Legion Family charity program donations.

Donations will support The American Legion's six charities: Operation Comfort Warriors, Legacy Scholarship Fund, National Emergency Fund, Child Welfare Foundation, Endowment Fund and Soldier's Wish. Several Auxiliary charities are also a part of Helm's \$4 million fundraising goal, including the Emergency Fund, Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund, Children of Warriors National President's Workshop and American Legion Auxiliary Foundation.

Helm is rewarding those who make a donation to American Legion Charities with his "Stay On Course" fundraising pin. Any individual who donates \$100 or more to the funds will receive a pin. Three pins will be awarded to any Legion post, Auxiliary unit, Sons of The American Legion squadron or Legion Riders chapter that donates \$500 or more. Below is a image of the pin that will awarded.

To support Helm's 4x4 program, the Legion recently launched the web page www.legion.org/4x4

POST EXCELLENCE AWARD



To qualify for the Post Excellence Award, a post is required to achieve excellence in four areas: membership, youth activities, community service and support to currently serving troops or veterans.

The purposes of this award are membership growth, exposure of American Legion values to the youth of the community, and increased visibility of the American Legion Family through service projects. A post achieving this qualification will have had numerous post members involved in planning and achieving these goals.

Many posts are most likely already active in these areas and will qualify without extra effort. Others, however, will need to increase their efforts in one or more areas to qualify for the award.

The standard to be achieved in each area:

- **Membership.** Must be at least one member greater than the previous year. At least one post officer attends district meetings.
- **Youth activities.** Must sponsor and actively participate in at least one primary youth program: Boys State, American Legion Baseball, Oratorical, Boy Scouts or Junior Shooting Sports.
- **Community service.** Must accomplish a community service project with members of the Legion Family actively working in the community outside the post home. A wide range of potential projects exists, such as a project centered on one of Children & Youth's emphasis areas to fulfilling a strictly local need. A monetary donation may be part of the project but may not constitute the entire project.
- **Service to troops/veterans.** Must accomplish a project supporting troops or veterans in the community with Legion Family members outside the post home. Potential projects include the Family Support Network, Heroes to Hometowns, or simply helping a local veteran with necessary updates to his or her home. Again, a monetary donation may be part of the project but may not constitute the entire project.

The district commander responsible for the post will certify a post as having achieved the four specified criteria. The district commander will submit a list of posts meeting the criteria to the department headquarters. That list should include the post name, post number, post address and post commander's name. Ideally, the last two criteria are accompanied by copies of press releases submitted to the local media about the projects. That method ensures the projects were not only accomplished but that an attempt was made to enhance the image of The American Legion through local media. The copy submitted should include a date and time stamp showing receipt by the media outlet.

All Posts that Submit for this award will also receive a Department Commanders **"BRAVO-ZULU"** Streamer. The department adjutant will transmit information as posts qualify to:

The American Legion National Headquarters
ATTN: Membership
P.O. Box 105
Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055

VETERANS' APPRECIATION DAY

A Fun Day for a Great Cause

Orlando Harley – Davidson and the **Florida American Legion, Legion Riders** are kicking off Daytona's Bike Week by having a Veterans Appreciation Day Event with all proceeds benefitting PROJECT: VetRelief.

Join Us on Saturday, March 7th

For just \$10, enjoy a scenic ride to East Orlando Harley-Davidson, a special commemorative gift, snacks and games. Then cruise over to Orlando Harley-Davidson's Bike Week Swamp Stomp for a special ceremony honoring our Veterans and a party that lasts all day!

For more information contact PROJECT: VetRelief
 407-270-9204 | www.ProjectVetRelief.org





NANCY L. THOMAS
Department Post Development and Revitalization Chairman
PostDevelopment@legionmail.org
(863) 618-6738

Happy, Happy Birthday to the American Legion.

This month is packed with all kinds of good events to include the Department Oratorical Contest on March 14th, the ALR Legacy Run on starting on March 21st , The National Commander, Mike Helm is visiting with us, the Birthday of the American Legion, Saint Patrick’s Day for those of us who have Irish ancestry and even if you don’t, a Revitalization is scheduled for the 15th District on March 25th to the 28th at Post 138 in Tampa, (we need volunteers to make phone calls).

Let’s not forget that March 4th is the goal for 95%. Let’s get busy and get er done! Make calls to your members who have not paid their dues for 2015 at this time.

Please don’t forget that Wednesday’s are Pink Shirt Day and Fridays are Red Shirt Day, so let’s not only support Breast Cancer Awareness on Wednesday’s, and our Troops on Friday.

Happy Saint Patrick’s Day and Happy Birthday to the American Legion.

Should you need to contact me, my mailing address is 122 Alvina Ave., Lake Wales, FL 33853-4605, my e-mail address is: geldsprechens@gmail.com, and my phone number is 863-978-7720. Please leave me a message if I am unable to answer the phone right away. Nancy Thomas
 Dept Post Development and Revitalization Chairman

For God and Country
 Nancy Thomas
 Post Development/Revitalization Chairperson



JOHN DOLLINGER
POW/MIA Chairman
SouthwesternArea@legionmail.org
(941) 661-8086

POW/MIA Important Update

Forever many of us have dealt with Acronyms JPAC (Joint Prisoner of War Accounting Command) or DPMO (Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office). You can forget those, in fact if you go to those websites, they no longer exist and you are not directed on where to find a new place to get the information. We have a new one organization “dpaa”, so new in fact, their website is still not up. Below is the information dated January 30 ,2015.

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency Becomes Operational

The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) and the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) officially merge today into the newly established **Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency** (dpaa) in ceremonies at both locations.

In March 2014, Secretary of Defense Hagel directed the department to reorganize efforts into a single, accountable organization with comprehensive oversight of the past conflict personnel accounting resources, research, and operations. The new agency combines DPMO, JPAC, and select functions of the U.S. Air Force’s Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL). On Jan. 9 the secretary announced Rear Adm. Mike Franken as the interim director of the agency, Maj. Gen. Kelly McKeague as the interim deputy, and Lt. Gen. Mike Linnington as the senior advisor. They will lead the agency into this phase of the consolidation process and are committed to fulfilling our obligation to the families who have lost a loved one and providing the answers they deserve, while increasing identification capacity. There have no reports of remains identified to share.

John Dollinger
 Department POW/MIA Chairman



STEPHEN SHUGA
 Dept. Membership Chairman
 membership@Legionmail.org
 407-394-5534

Rise-n-Shine with Membership!

Membership renewals across the state have been steady and our Post and District goals are within our grasp. Remember to seek out the Membership Incentives and Awards Manual to determine those incentives and awards that

your Post rate from the Department and National levels.

There are also several National Membership Awards and Points Manual that Florida may qualify for. Our state must meet or exceed goals previously set to win these contests. Your total effort will result in our state being recognized.

We have several Membership events occurring that will keep us busy during March. **March 4th Department goal is 95% & BZ goal of 100%**. We lose an hour of attaining membership by setting our clocks ahead on March 8th. The **ALR State Legacy Run** and a **Pony Express/Membership Rally** occurs March 21st thru 27th. Completed Post Membership will be collected around the state and passed to designated Department personnel during this effort. Every worked card with payment must be turned in.

National Membership Representative Sean Sparks will be supporting the **15th District Membership Revitalization** effort March 24th thru March 29th.

Race-to-the-Top is a target for those Districts who are or will be 100% plus before or by March 31st. Florida has several Districts in contention against the nation to be based on their individual categories.

Those Posts with Units and Squadrons who achieve 100% by March 31st will receive the 2015 Family Membership Pendant and additional BZ Tickets.

Our statewide goal during March is to gain as many Posts at 100% or higher. Will your Post be counted amongst those that have met or exceeded their membership goal? Remember, a healthy Post promotes program activity that draws in veterans and their families. If they like what they see, **Just Ask!** or **Ask Again!** Invite them to the Post, show them around, tell them what programs the Post does well and how it plays an important part in your community. It actually begins with you!

Stephen Shuga
 Department Membership Chairman

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rcvd	% of Goal
13	A. Burkett	9372	8940	95.39
6	T. Biddle	11734	11097	94.57
12	R. Saxby	8938	8386	93.82
7	I. Anderson	3848	3532	91.79
16	16th District	12099	11096	91.71
17	M. Wolohan	4111	371	91.24
8	D. Deierlein	8266	7527	91.06
4	C. Ferguson	3924	3514	89.80
5	T. Gora	8127	7298	89.80
2	W. Jackson	1416	1251	88.35
9	J. Tewes	4111	3625	88.18
15	J. Romeu	5509	4852	88.07
11	A. Bruce	4011	3471	86.54
3	R. White	1797	1079	84.98
1	L. Carpenter	6417	5440	84.78
14	G. Decker	3139	2529	80.57
Eastern	A. Diaz	20672	19483	94.25
South-western	J. Dollinger	17638	16467	93.36
Central	E. Butts	21456	19480	90.79
Northern	J. Brandt	17961	16090	89.59
Southern	W. Johnson	11261	9625	85.47
Western	V. Joyce	7833	6691	85.42

JESSE FIGUEROA
District Adjutant
adjutant@fal12thdistrict.org

Fellow Legionnaires, the month of February has been very busy in the 12th District. I will start off with a ceremony that took place on Sunday, February 1st, 2015 from 4-5PM at Post 117 to honor Four Chaplains Day. The ceremony was given by Barry Roberts, Chaplain of the American Legion Post 117. The Honor Guard gave a 21-gun salute and the bugler played Taps. The best part about being busy this month is the 12th District Visitation of Department Commander Jay Conti Sr. from February 17th-19th. He stopped by Project Suds in Melbourne and 13 Posts, including the Brevard Veterans Center and the Navy Seal Museum. Four dignitaries along with 12th District Commander Ron Saxby and Eastern Area Commander Al Diaz accompanied the Department Commander. Also, membership is doing well. Please never give up. Congratulations to Posts 177,200,318 and 394 for achieving 100% and above in membership. They were awarded the "Cement Shoes" and Wise guy" awards. There will be a Department Headquarters Membership Call-Up on Thursday March 5th, 2015 from 8:30AM-3:30PM by Department Membership Steve Shuga. He is asking for assistance from the entire State of Florida. The 12th District Meeting will take place on Saturday, February 28th, 2015 at Post 318 in Port St. Lucie at 10AM. Finally, I like to wish those Legionnaires Happy Birthday during the month of February (yours truly on March 2nd!) God Bless America and the American Legion.

For God and Country
Jesse Figueroa
12th District Adjutant

JERRY BRANDT
Northern Area Commander
northernarea@legionmail.org
904-910-5201

Fellow Legionnaires,

I would like to let everyone know that the Northern Area Homecoming will be on March 7th, at American Legion Post 129, in Jacksonville Beach Fl.

Upcoming Events:

- March 5 – 8, Department Commanders visitation to the 4th District
- March 7th, 4th District Meeting, Post #58
- March 7th, 17th, District Meeting, Post #6
- March 7th, Northern Area Ball
- March 8th, 5th District Meeting, Post 194
- March 14th, Department Oratorical Contest, Orlando, 9 AM

Team; Congratulations to the following for achieving the 95% Goal

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 3rd District | 4th District |
| Post 59, Branford, 118.75% | Post 210, Ocala, 100% |
| Post 83, MacClenny 115.789% | Post 230, Hawthorne 100% |
| Post 234, Monticello 104.348% | Post 237, Beverly Hills 95.536% |
| Post 68, Madison 96.774% | |
| Post 107, Live Oak 95.570 | |
| 5th District | 17th District |
| Post 373, Orange Park 103.143% | Post 255, Deltona 110.909% |
| Post 401, Hilliard 101.818% | Post 293, Interlachen 100% |
| Post 194, St Augustine 99.315% | Post 120, Holly Hill 99.478% |
| Post 233, Ponte Vedra Beach 95.972% | Post 285, Edgewater 96.145% |

We also have 16 Posts with 90% or higher in the Area that are not listed above. So we are moving up on the number of Posts goal, congratulations.

3rd District now has a Face Book Page; please reach out to them at <https://www.facebook.com/floridadistrict3>

Jerry Brandt
Northern Area Commander

**Florida American Legion
Specialty License Plate**

Don't forget to purchase your Florida American Legion specialty license plate. We need your support to reach our goal of 1,000 pre-sales by July 1, 2015.



Visit <http://members.floridalegion.org/> for more information.

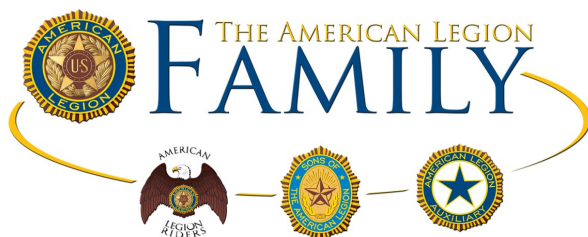
Southwestern Area

District 13 - I wish to open this message with a personal thank you to all of you who have worked so hard to keep our membership drive going so well. As of this date, District 13 is still in first place with the highest membership percentage in the State of Florida. Good Work! Let's keep the effort going and win the race for number one. We only have 600 more to go! Get those renewals and applications in. Don't hold them, mail them as soon as you get them. Together, we can make District 13 number one in 2015.

I also want to remind everyone to mark your calendars on the 15th of March for the District 13 picnic held at Post 110 in Port Charlotte. Come and enjoy a day with your fellow legionnaires and the Legion Family. It promises to be a fun-filled time for all.

On the 31st of March and the first of April, our National Commander will be in District 13 visiting various posts. Any member interested in personally meeting him should contact your local post commander to set up a time and place. Let's show our National Commander what a great collection of American Legion posts make up District 13. This is our chance to show off how good we are! Until next month, keep up the good work and thanks again. Go District 13!

Andy Burkett – 13th District Commander



Southwestern Area – Membership, Membership, Membership – You're tired of hearing about it and I'm tired of talking about it. Southwestern Area, there is an easy solution, get to 100% quickly and we can quit having this discussion. 8th District you need 811 renewals, paying transfers or new members and 13th District you need 545 of the same to shut me up. Let's get it done. **Programs, Programs, Programs** - March 14 is an important date. The Department **Oratorical** Contest is held that day in Orlando. 1 representative from each Department Area will compete.

Our Southwestern Area representative is out of Post 74 in Sebring and I look forward to presentations in Orlando. ALSO on March 14 each Post sending **Boys State** Students must have the names either registered electronically or physically into Department. It is one of those dates you can't miss. **Post Consolidated Reports** are coming, let's start collecting the data, Southwestern Area will be 100% again this year. **District Constitutional Conferences** are coming up, both on May 23rd, 8th District is at Post 159 beginning at 9:00 am and the 13th District is at Post 103 at 1:00 pm.

*John Dollinger,
Southwestern Area Commander*

ROY HAVEKOST
Social Media Chairman
socialmedia@legionmail.org

As of this writing, American Legion **Posts** in the Department of Florida now have a **82.35%** presence on *Facebook*. This percentage increases to **84.08%** when the Department of Florida pages are included.

There is still time to have your *Facebook*™ presence recognized and receive the official social media registration stamp for your page or group. All registered groups and pages are being entered into a drawing for special recognition at this years' Department Convention.

District Commanders were emailed a Social Media Survey form to be distributed throughout the districts and completed by Post Commanders. The information needs to be emailed back to socialmedia@legionmail.org to be entered into the drawing. If you did not receive your form a copy can be printed from the link on the 5th District *Facebook*™ page at:
<https://www.facebook.com/5thDistrictDeptOfFlorida>
The deadline to register for the drawing is May 15, 2015.

*Roy Havekost
Social Media Chairman*





MIKE KIRCHOFF
In-State Legacy Ride Chairman

FLORIDA IN STATE LEGACY RIDE March 23- 28, 2015

We are only 22 days from starting the 3rd Annual Florida In State Legacy Ride. We are receiving registrations daily. This years ride will start in Lake City Post 57, all Riders will meet at Post 57 on Sunday 22 March for a pre ride party and food. Monday morning 23 March is the official start of the ride. Day one will take us to Post 107 in Live Oak, Post 224 Cherry Lake for a lunch break, Post 49 Monticello and end at Post 84 in Havana for dinner and our first overnight stop. Day 2 will take

us to Post 241 in Sneads, Post 75 in Crestview for lunch, Post 78 in Milton then end the day at Post 340 in Pensacola for dinner. Day 3 we visit Post 193 in Pensacola, Post 240 in Pensacola for lunch, Post 378 in Gulf Breeze, end at Post 382 in Navarre for dinner. Day 4 takes us east stopping at Post 235 in Ft Walton Beach, Post 296 in Destin, Post 402 in Panama City Beach for lunch, Post 375 in Southport, Post 356 in Lynn Haven and end at Post 392 in Panama City. Day 5 takes us to Post 116 in Port St Joe, Post 82 in Lanark Village, our lunch stop will be at a gas station in Perry, then end the day in Steinhatchee for dinner. Day 6 is the last day of the ride we stop at Post 383 Old Town, Post 237 Beverly Hills and end at Post 155 Crystal River. At the end of the ride we will meet fellow riders from the Northern and Southern Areas. Riders from other Chapters are also meeting in Crystal River for their Annual Charity Ride on 28 March. Plans are for everyone to meet and greet after the Poker Run and Legacy Ride. Riders can join the In State Legacy Ride at any time during the ride at any stop. Come and visit with the Riders as they stop at each of the Posts and help raise donations for the Legacy Scholarship Fund and the Vet Relief Program.

Mike (Goat) Kirchoff
In State Legacy Ride Chairman

Top 10 Military Slang Phrases That work at Home!

This list was compiled by **MANY Military spouses across the country** and I thought I would share it with everyone! Ref: <http://spousebuzz.com>

- 1. High and tight.** One day I was sitting in the base barber shop as my husband and our son got haircuts. I looked at the men sitting in the chairs around me, clutching their numbered tickets as they waited their turn to be called. And you know what I noticed? Not a single one of them needed a haircut! The stubble on the sides of their heads barely covered their scalps. **That's the high and tight.**
- 2. Bravo Zulu or "BZ."** Doesn't that sound so much cooler than saying "well done?"
- 3. Hit the head** "I'm gonna hit the head." I guess this phrase is better than some of the alternatives to announcing your intention to use the restroom. It's just really strange hearing your 8-year-old son saying it.
- 4. Soup sandwich.** I actually used this phrase when I taught kindergarten. My students thought it was hysterical to imagine trying to eat a sandwich filled with soup. Yes, things are really messed up if you have a soup sandwich on your hands.
- 5. Mandatory fun.** Who hasn't gone to that command picnic or holiday party because their husband was invi-told to attend? That's mandatory fun. Just remember, this term is fine to use in the privacy of your own home, but it's probably best not to use it while you're at the event itself.
- 6. ...and a wake-up** "My husband will be home in 4 days and a wake-up!" That sounds so much more doable than 5 more days, doesn't it?
- 7. Hooah.** I haven't quite pinpointed its exact meaning, but it seems to be the comprehensive response to just about anything requiring abundant enthusiasm.
- 8. Got your 6.** I got your back. A phrase all MilSpouses should be saying to each other.
- 9. Zero dark thirty.** This is my daughter's favorite time of day. Really, really, really early in the morning.
- 10. Rog/Roger/Roger that.** My favorite, constant fixtures in my emails/phone calls/text messages. Message received. I understand. Roger that.



"Incoming."

The American Legions 96th Birthday

The American Legions 96th Birthday on March 15, 2015, Hold a Ceremony and/or dedication at your Post - Community and let your members and your community know how old we are and that we are **Still Strong as ever!**

March 15, the designated birthday of The American Legion, is the day in 1919 when the first American Legion caucus, held by members of the American Expeditionary Force, convened in Paris. Much as the birthday of the United States is celebrated on July 4 – for the day in 1776 when rebelling patriots declared the independence of the British colonies and the spirit of America was born – March 15 is the day on which the Legion came to life. Each year, Legion posts across the country hold events – public, private or both – to commemorate this anniversary.



NATIONAL COMMANDER'S VISIT TO DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA MARCH 29 - APRIL 2, 2015 (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Sunday, March 29th

4:00 p.m.
5:30 p.m.
6:30 p.m.

National CDR Arrives 2:27 p.m. Orlando Airport - Picked up by NEC
Check in Waterfront Inn, The Villages, FL
Arrive Post 347
Dinner – Coat & Tie

Monday, March 30th

9:00 a.m.
9:30 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
1:00 p.m.
3:00 p.m.
6:00 p.m.

(Dress Casual - Dept. Shirt)
Depart Hotel
Tour Ritz Veterans Homeless Center in Ocala
Post 284 – Lunch
Visit Post 237 new & old buildings
Check-in Hampton Inn Crystal River
Post 155 Dinner

Tuesday, March 31st

7:30 a.m.
9-9:30a.m.
10:30 a.m.
11:45 a.m.
1:30 p.m.
4:00 p.m.
5:30 p.m.

(Dress Casual - Project VetRelief Shirt)
Leave Hotel
Bay Pines VA Hospital
Arrive Post 325 – Ellenton
Arrive Post 266 for Lunch – Sarasota
Arrive Sarasota National Cemetery
Arrive Fairfield Inn Suites, Venice, FL
Post 159 Dinner

Wednesday, April 1st

7:30 a.m.
8:00 a.m.
9:30 a.m.
10:45 a.m.
12:30 p.m.
2:15 p.m.
4:00 p.m.
5:15 p.m.
6:15 p.m.

(Dress Casual - Dept. Pink Shirt)
Leave Hotel
Post 110 for breakfast – Port Charlotte
Post 103 – Punta Gorda
Arrive Post 405 – Charlotte Correctional Institute
Post 336 Lunch – North Fort Myers
Post 303 – Bonita Springs
Arrive Hyatt Place, Ft. Meyers, FL
Post 397 @ Hodges University – present Charter
Post 323 Dinner – Lehigh Acres

Thursday, April 2nd

8:15 a.m.
9:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
1:00 p.m.

(Dress Casual - National Membership Shirt)
Leave Hotel
Arrive Lee County VA Healthcare Center Cape Coral
Post 90 Lunch - Cape Coral
Arrive Southwest Regional International Airport



Department Commander Travel Photos



HOMECOMING 2015



For God and Country

The American Legion Department of Florida Commander, Jay Conti Sr.
The American Legion Auxiliary Department of Florida President, Erna Schwabe
The American Legion Detachment of Florida Commander, Kirk Miller
Present

Homecoming 2015

April 25, 2015

Post 103 – Punta Gorda

2101 Taylor Road, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Cocktails: 5:00 pm Dinner: 6:00 pm

Tickets: \$25.00

Theme is Red, White and Blue—Theme casual attire

(Additional Information on back page)

Name: (please print) _____ Phone: _____

Your Meal Choices: (includes salad, meat choice, mashed potatoes, vegetable, roll and dessert)

			How Many
(Tickets \$25.00)	Prime Rib	(# meals)	_____
	Chicken	(# meals)	_____
	Fish(Basa)	(# meals)	_____

Pick up tickets at the door

Please make checks payable and send to:
Mark checks "Dinner"

Mrs. Noel Makovsky
18626 Ashcroft Circle
Port Charlotte, Florida 33948
Phone: (941) 391-4968

Tear off here.....

Accomodations: (for Saturday Night)

Sheraton Four Points, Punta Gorda Harborside P (941) 637-6770
33 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda 33950 (cutoff 4/06/2015)

Mention American Legion Rate \$ 99.00 per room

Souvenir Booklet Advertising Rates:(all B/W)

Business Card	\$ 15.00
¼ Page	\$ 25.00
½ Page	\$ 35.00
Full Page	\$ 50.00

All information submittals must be received by April 6, 2015

Please send checks and information made payable to:

Mrs. Noel Makovsky
18626 Ashcroft Circle
Port Charlotte, Florida 33948
Phone: (941) 391-4968

Mark checks for "Booklet"

Send pictures Submittals and comments by email to: jdolly@comcast.net

Cutoff date for Ad is April 6, 2015

Thank you for your support of Homecoming 2015

The American Legion Dept. of FL

Post #	Last Name	First Name	Member #	Change Made	Additional Information Provided
15	Smith	Willard	203284356	Post Commander	11825 Munbury Dr. Dade City FL 33525 Home: 352-567-0763 Cell: 352-424-5436 Email: wesmith5142@gmail.com
19	Foster	Wade	204813302	Post Commander	Home: 321-352-7780 Cell: 617-347-7780 Email: wadefoster70@yahoo.com
35	Felicita	Nicholas		Commander Passing	
82	Moran	James	100906387	Post Commander	2626 Oak Street Carrabelle FL 32322 Home: 407-923-2500 Email: moran1313@aol.com
137	Reaves	Deveron	202992259	Post Adjutant	8462 Buttercup Street Jacksonville FL 32210 Home: 904-200-8688 Business: 904-387-3373 Fax: 904-387-3233 Email: adjutant@post137.com
137	LaFrance	Gary	203705565	Post Commander	4631 Riverdale Road Jacksonville FL 32210 Home: 904-307-1968 Bus: 904-387-3373 Fax: 904-387-3233 Email: commander@post137.com
138				Post Info	Phone: 813-839-5119 Website: www.facebook.com/americanlegionpost138 Service Officer Dan Carter at 813-839-5119
138	Fullen	Arthur	100947773	Post Adjutant	6522 S. Himes Ave. 33611-5124 Home: 813-831-3388 Email: gerie.fullen@gmail.com
138	Carter	Daniel		Post Cmdr Info Changes	2912 W. Bay View Ave. 33611 Work: 813-839-5119
183	Hench	Erick		Post Commander	Note: Changes provided by 6th Dist. Cmdr
331	Rollins	Al		Post Commander	Note: Changes provided by 6th Dist. Cmdr
331	Tillman	Denis		Post Adjutant	Note: Changes provided by 6th Dist. Cmdr.
6th Dist. Membership	Kausman	Gerald		Membership Chair	Note: Changes provided by 6th Dist. Cmdr Chairman Info: 649 Wheeling Ave. Altamonte Springs, FL 32714 Phone 407-218-9139 Email: soal183@yahoo.com
323	Fraday	Jacqueline	202626814	Post Adjutant	1124 Ashlar Ave Lehigh Acres FL 33971 Home: 239-369-3178 Fax: 239-369-3438 Email: amlegion323@hotmail.com
322	Perry	Harold		Email	Haroldperrypost322@outlook.com
336				Post email	commander@americanlegionpost336.org
336				Post website	www.americanlegionpost336.org
382				Post Address	1850 Luneta St. Navarre, FL 32566
399	Maitland	Frank		Post Adjutant	
404	Horton	William	201997104	Post Adjutant	1103 Edington Place Marco Island, FL 34145-2000 Home: 239-642-8928 Cell: 239-206-0856 Email: bhorton1103@gmail.com
12th District	Newland	Wayne	203718400	Boy Scout Chair	Phone: 772-584-2450 Email: post189sf@comcast.net
12th District	Vilgats	Vello	203378319	Boy State Chair	Phone: 321-480-9063 Email: v v ilgats@cfl.rr.com
12th District	Bowie	Daryl	201642919	Baseball Chair	Phone: 772-201-5393 Email: dbowie@angpools.com
12th District	Muniz	Jose	201941660	ROTC/Shooting Sports Chair	Phone: 321-223-3074 Email: infanteroe7@gmail.com
12th District	Rac	Tracy	100913167	Blood Donor Chair	Phone: 321-684-1805 Email: trac66@cfl.rr.com
12th District	Roberts	Barry	204820764	Law & order Chair	Phone: 863-661-9999 Email: bwroberts@rocketmail.com
12th District	Johnson	Mark	202018898	SAL Advisory Chair	Phone: 321-749-1118 Email: msj_military@msn.com
12th District	Smith	Wayne	100914814	Disaster Preparedness Chair	Phone: 321-698-6989 Email: waynesmith608@cfl.rr.com
12th District	Figueroa	Jesse		Removal as National Security Commission for the Eastern Area	Requested received by Mr. Jesse Figueroa
Dept. Chair	Smith	O. Gene		5 year Term Boys State Board Member	Mr. O. Gene Smith replacing Mr. Larry White
Dept. Chair	Burroughs	John		Dept. Children & Youth Fund Chairman	12031 Antibes St. Jacksonville FL, 32224-6701 Phone: 904-641-7358 Email: johnabd08@aol.com
Dept. Chair	Dollinger	John		Dept. Blood Donor Chair	10181 Winding River Rd. Punta Gorda FL, 33950-1306 Phone: 941-661-8086 Email: SouthwesternArea@legionmail.org
Dept.				Correction to Membership Goal Dates	Corrections noted in roster
Dept.				Staff Changes	Corrections and additions noted in roster

PROCEEDS BENEFIT



PROJECT: VETRELIEF

A PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA



VETERANS

FIRST DAY OF BIKE WEEK!

APPRECIATION DAY

RIDE & PARTY

MARCH 7TH

\$10 (PER PERSON) REGISTRATION INCLUDES CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST, SCENIC RIDE AND SNACKS AT EAST BETWEEN RIDES TO THE PARTY.

REGISTRATION: 8:30AM KICKSTANDS UP: 10:30AM
Enjoy a scenic ride to East Orlando Harley-Davidson to pick up a special commemorative gift and enjoy some snacks and games, then cruise over to Orlando Harley's Bike Week Swamp Stomp for a special ceremony honoring our Vets and a party that lasts all day!

Orlando HARLEY-DAVIDSON®



ORLANDO HARLEY SOUTH

7786 West Irlo Bronson Hwy
Kissimmee, FL 34747



EAST ORLANDO HARLEY-DAVIDSON

11898 Lake Underhill Rd
Orlando, FL 32825



ORLANDO HARLEY-DAVIDSON HISTORIC FACTORY DEALERSHIP

3770 37th St.
Orlando, FL 32805

orlandoharley.com/bikeweek