



DECEMBER 2018

COMMANDER DIANNE BOLAND

VOL. 27 ISSUE 5

From Your Department Commander Dianne Boland

commander@floridalegion.org



Greetings.

What a great organization we have! Hurricane Michael hit the Panhandle in October with a mighty force. Soon after, we had

Legionnaires from all over the state begin to help and gather supplies, along with our Disaster Preparedness Chairman Bill Hoppner and PDC Steve Shuga. Together with a few others, they coordinated and delivered the supplies even when roads weren't passible. Thank you all for a job well done. To those whose lives were affected: the repair and rebuilding is just beginning. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of you.

While visiting the 8th District, I was greeted with a salute by the JROTC at Post 69. During all my travels I have been met with a lot of old friends and made some new ones. We talked about a lot - including membership, programs, and our 100th Anniversary. One Post you need visit during the month of October is Post 309. They have some great Halloween decorations. Also Post 138 (15th District) has a lot of scary

Halloween decorations. So much so, I was afraid to go near the buffet, but the great hospitality was in abundance.

Following my visit, I traveled to Indianapolis for National's Fall NEC Meetings. Before their meeting, the Department Commanders and Adjutants met. Some big news came out of the NEC meetings so be sure to read the NEC's article. All I want to mention is it involves the spouse of a female Legionnaire, as well as our open dates. Returning home, I stopped at Post 138 to attend the 15th District picnic.

Next came my visitation with the 15th District. I want to personally thank Posts 26, 111, 99, and Post 186 Riders for their contributions to my charities. I was actually escorted part of the way by the Riders. Thank you and maybe next time I can actually get a ride. While visiting, I was given a tour at the Veterans Memorial Park in Tampa. What a beautiful place to visit, a place I had never been before. If you are ever in the area, you have to check it out.

Our Department Fall Conference started the beginning of November

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with a lot of people attending classes. Some classes were so full they had to find bigger rooms to accommodate the crowds. Attending was the Leading Candidate for National, Bill Oxford of North Carolina. We will be in good hands with him leading us next year. A lot of information was passed on about our programs, membership, our finances, and much more.

A real big thanks goes out to District 4 Commander Cherie Korn. Congratulations on achieving your 65% goal – the only District to reach it. District 12 follows by 4%. Way to go

Commander Korn. Congratulations also go out to all the Posts who reached their goal as well as the few who reached 100%. GREAT JOB!!!

We all need to continue to connect with Legionnaires who have not paid their 2019 dues. Retention is the key word in membership. Put together a team of 4 – 6 members of the Legion family. Spend an hour or so at least 3 -4 times a month making visits, phone calls, etc. If you have a serious problem, ask your District Commander for help. He/she can work with the Area and Zone Commanders, our Membership Chairman, or our Post Revitalization Chairman. Help is just a phone call away.

Commander's Charities

Jennifer Cooper, Fundraising

jcooper@floridalegion.org



Commander Dianne Boland has chosen the Child Welfare Foundation and Final Salute as her charities of choice for this year. The first \$50,000 received earmarked for the Commander's Charity will be designated for the Child Welfare Foundation. Anything received after that will go towards Final Salute. However, it's possible to still donate to a specific charity, just be sure to indicate in the memo section of the check which organization you'd like the funds to be applied to.

Here is a little information on both organizations:

Child Welfare Foundation - Not all American children grow up within the comfortable definition of normal

childhood development. For thousands, each day is a challenge marked by pain, prayer, and perseverance. Many of these youngsters require specialized care. To overcome their obstacles, they need help from you and The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation.

CWF accepts funding proposals from nonprofit organizations for projects that contribute to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual welfare of children. Grants are only given to entities that help U.S. children in a large geographic area; they are not awarded for day-to-day operating expenses or special operating expenses.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.cwf-inc.org/>

Final Salute - Women have served and fought in every conflict since the American Revolution, yet despite their critical contributions to our military they continue to face barriers while in service and when accessing the

DECEMBER 2018	
1 - 31	Holiday Blood Drive ★
1	Civil Air Patrol (USAF) Birthday
2	Hanukkah Begins
5	Membership Goal 70%
6	St. Nicholas' Day
6-9	District 5 Commander's Visit ☆
7	Pearl Harbor Day
8	District 15 Meeting
8	District 17 Christmas Party
8	Turkey Shoot, Post 183
10	Hanukkah Ends
13	National Guard Birthday
13-15	District 1 Commander's Visit ☆
14	Homeless Vets Outreach Due
15	Legion Link Articles Due
15	National Wreaths Across America
15	Bill of Rights Day
17	Wright Brothers Day
19	Employment Awards Due
20-23	District 7 Commander's Visit ☆
20	Panama/Operation Just Cause
21	Winter Begins
25-1	Headquarters Closed
25	Christmas Day
26-1	Kwanzaa
28	Anniversary of the Chaplain Asst.
28-31	District 12 Commander's Visit ☆

☆ - Commander Dianne Boland's Attendance Tentative.

★ - National Event

Events are subject to change. Additional details can be found at www.floridalegion.org. We share the information we are provided, please contact Program, Area, District and Posts for additional details and events.

VA benefits upon their discharge. The mission of Final Salute Inc. is to provide homeless women veterans with safe and suitable housing. To do so, Final Salute Inc. has taken a three-pronged approach to address the issues associated with the homelessness

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<< *Fundraising- from page 2*

of women veterans by educating the American people, providing housing and supportive services, and instilling in women that their issues are temporary.

It is estimated that there are currently 55,000 homeless women veterans in the United States on any given day. For the sacrifices they and their families have made, this is an unacceptable state for any of them to be in. Final Salute Inc. believes in paying women veterans with the proper respects due to them for the

service they provided to our country. Final Salute also works with the veteran in establishing a plan towards independence.

To learn more information, visit: <https://www.finalsaluteinc.org/>.

Message from the 1st Vice Commander
Rick Johnson, 1st Vice Commander

1stvice@legionmail.org



Good day to all. As you read this, December is upon us and the little man in the red suit will be stopping by to drop off the perfect gift: MEMBERSHIP!!!!

We'll be talking more about that in the next issue.

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and is tuckered out by now. Christmas is a special time for us, our communities and the kids within them. It is a good time to give a little back to kids who don't have the support to enjoy a hot meal and some gifts.

It is a great time to let your community know that you are out there and help is

just a meeting away. New Years is also right around the corner and six months left in this year. The time is NOW to begin using the tools that you have and put them to use.

From my wife and I, have a great Christmas and New Years and we'll see you out there soon.

BE SAFE!

Message from the 2nd Vice Commander
Jerry Brandt, 2nd Vice Commander

2ndvice@legionmail.org



Comrades, Fall Conference is over and congratulations to Bruce Carl, 15th District, for winning the 1st quarter award for Zone II for membership. Now is the time for the other four Districts to surpass the 15th District. All five Districts in Zone II are within 5% of each other. Let the race begin.

As previously indicated, we are now taking applications for Legion College.

This class is open to all members of the Family. The application is at <https://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/florida-legion-college/>

Do not forget those deployed. Christmas is a sad time for many; let us not forget those on job and unable to even call their loves one. Assist the Auxiliary in sending out Christmas cards to our troops. If someone from your Post is deployed, send them and their unit a card. Get the local schools involved. When schools find out what you are doing at the local Posts with Christmas cards, as well as with veterans in school, Americanism, and other activities, they will be calling you.

Time to plan ahead: New Year's,

Presidents Day, etc. What are you going to do for the 15th of March? Now is the time for Legion Birthday preparation; let us celebrate our 100 year of service in style.

The Department Commander will be visiting the 7th District at the end of December. The District Commander is currently planning the visits with the Posts. If the Department Commander, Dianne Boland, comes in do not be shy, please visit with her; she is there for you. The Commander will be visiting 7th District during December 20 – 23rd. Hopefully she will be taking Christmas Day off.

As always, thank you for your service.

Message from the 3rd Vice Commander

Eunice Butts, 3rd Vice Commander

3rdvice@legionmail.org



Greetings Legionnaires. I had a very busy and rewarding month since the last issue of the Legion Link. Delivered items to Post 57 for their Halloween party for the children. Attended an open house at

Post 96. Was a guest at Post 248 for a luncheon, pampering session, bingo, and gift cards handout for female veterans transitioning from homelessness to an apartment provided by James A. Haley Veterans Hospital HUD Bash. This was sponsored by the 15th District Auxiliary. On November 10th, Post 115 honored the veterans at Emory Bennett Veterans Nursing Home with a steak dinner and all the trimmings. The veterans thoroughly enjoyed the food and comradery, vets helping vets. It was an honor to be in the room with so many heroes from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, including a Medal of Honor winner born on the Marine Corps birthday. He celebrated both birthdays with a steak dinner. Thank you Legionnaires of Post 115 for the invitation and luncheon. Keep up the good work. I attended the 1st District meeting at Post 75. Participated in the Great American Teach-In at two elementary schools and was invited as special guest at DeSota

Elementary School's Veterans Day Program. I donated 280 flags so that each student would have a flag. This school has never had a Veterans Day Program or participated in the Great American Teach-In. I was honored to have them call and ask for my feedback and participation in these projects.

Special thanks to Michael McDaniel, Department Adjutant, for the well needed discussion to all District, Area, and Zone Commanders. Hopefully, we all have a better understanding of our goals and mission, and know that we are here for each other. I take this time to encourage all District Commanders to please read the Department Bylaws located in the back of the notebooks given to you by the Department at the first Incoming Executive Board Meeting. I call this my "American Legion Bible." You will also find the duties of District, Area, and Zone Commanders. Many of the answers to Post issues are there in your bylaws. The Department staff and Commander go through a lot to make sure you have the tools that you need.

Congratulations to the 4th District Commander for 1st place in District members; also to Post 57, 378, 100, 84, 96, 49, 314, 166, 284, 58, 102, 187, and 293 for having presently met your 70% goal for December.

My schedule for December is as follows: Dec. 1st – 4th District Meeting at Post 280; Dec. 9th – 5th District Meeting at Post 129; Dec. 13-16th - Commanders Western Area Visitation; Dec. 18-24th – I will be unavailable. Not scheduled are dates that I will be assisting some of my District and Area Commanders with issues and concerns. Membership and training is everyone's responsibility. No one knows it all. As a team, we can and will try to overcome any issues we are presented with. Together we stand as a team. Divided we fall.



We are now approaching the various festive holidays and ending the 2018 year.

I wish each of you a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and safe travels.

2018 FALL RAFFLE WINNERS

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Robert Hamilton - Titusville, FL | 8. James Peacock - Sanford, FL | 15. Terrence McDonald - Ellenton, FL |
| 2. Clarence Dunkle - Titusville, FL | 9. Frank Marchese - Kissimmee, FL | 16. Ronald Fashano - Melbourne, FL |
| 3. Albert Ravenna - St. Pete Beach, FL | 10. Mike Sutton - Overgaard, FL | 17. John O'Leary - St. Petersburg, FL |
| 4. Mark Schoenwald - Labelle, FL | 11. William Page - Orange Park, FL | 18. William Soule - Moore Haven, FL |
| 5. Anthony Raia - Rockledge, FL | 12. Ruis West - Port Orange, FL | 19. James Pugh - DeLand, FL |
| 6. Robert Loomis - Middleburg, FL | 13. Gerald Herndon - Jacksonville, FL | 20. Kenneth Hill - Merritt Island, FL |
| 7. Frederick Bowman - Satellite Beach, FL | 14. Robert Walters - Leesburg, FL | |

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YEARS OF SERVICE

Still Serving

Dennis Boland, NEC

nec@legionmail.org



At the National Executive Committee meeting in Indianapolis, IN, this past October, they passed two Resolutions pertaining to expand the possible membership eligibility dates into The American Legion.

Resolution 1 was six pages and Resolution 2 was four pages long. Instead of posting those Resolution here in the Legion Link, I thought I would share my letter to Martin W. Roewer, who had some concerns about our eligibility dates.

Membership eligibility in The American Legion is determined by the Congress of the United States of America through the establishment of specific dates of declared hostilities in which U. S. military personnel are activated for service.

The American Legion was created by Act of Congress under Public Law No. 47, 66th Congress approved on September 16, 1919, as a war-time period organization under declared hostilities dates declared by Congress. Congress has declared the following dates to fall under the declared hostilities which would make U.S. military personnel eligible to join The American Legion:

- **WWI**
April 6, 1917 to November 11, 1918
- **WW II**
December 7, 1941 to December 31, 1946
- **Korea**
June 25, 1950 to January 31, 1955
- **Vietnam**
February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975
- **Lebanon/Grenada**
August 24, 1982 to July 31, 1984
- **Panama**
December 20, 1989 to January 31, 1990
- **Gulf War/War on Terrorism**
August 2, 1990 – till cessation of hostilities

There are presently 12 combat operations since December 7, 1941, that are unrecognized by the U.S. government which occurred at the direction of the then current President of the United States, with full knowledge and consent of the then current U.S. Congress.

On October 17, 2018, at your National Executive Committee meeting in Indianapolis, IN, Resolution 1, Titled: Unrecognized Armed Hostilities Recognition was passed and approved to submit to the U.S. Congress for approval. If these dates are approved by Congress then it could lead to the eligible dates of December 7, 1941, through the cessation of armed hostilities at an as-of-yet undetermined future date.

Presently, our National staff in Washington D.C. is pursuing this Resolution and asking Congressmen and Senators to submit a Bill pertaining to this Resolution.

Be a Gift This Holiday Season

Barry Roberts, Chaplain

chaplain@legionmail.org



Let's help someone feel at home for the holidays. Our service to others can be the gift they need. Our lives are beautiful gifts from God, and how we live them out is in our prayer of gratitude for such a gift. God wants one thing from us

before anything else, and that is our love, for He is love, and those who abide in love abide in God and God in them.

God is a God of purpose and He gives us gifts and talents to fulfill our purpose in life and in serving others. There are individuals who will not be home for the holidays this year, because they are hospitalized or working, serving to protect us. For them, the holidays can be lonely and sad. It is important to pray for them and communicate with them if we can. It can also be lonely and sad for

the loved ones that miss them. Many have a difficult time during the holidays missing our loved ones that have passed away.

If you know someone that is struggling with the loss or loneliness from missing a loved one, I would encourage you to be that gift for them. Check on them often and spend time with them giving them comfort in their time of need. Let's share God's love with someone. I pray God's many blessings upon you this Holiday season!

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A Word on Legion Caps

Jeff Durden, Sgt-at-Arms
sgt-at-arms@legionmail.org



First, I would like to thank the Department Assistant Sgt-at Arms for the outstanding and professional job they did at the Department Fall Conference in November. Great job by all.

I have been tasked to update the Sergeant-At-Arms duties and responsibilities manual this year. This is

where you can help: please look it over and give your input on what you think can be changed or added. It can be found on the Department website <https://www.floridalegion.org/resources/legion-post-documents/post-program-manuals/>.

In chapter 2, The Wearing of the American Legion Cap, Uniform and Regalia, Paragraph 8, female members of The American Legion should wear their caps in the manner prescribed for female personnel of the armed services. Paragraph 11a, the left side (emblem side) of any American Legion cap cannot contain other than the official American Legion emblem and lettering

as set forth previously in this Resolution for Post, County, District, Department or National caps. When placing your Legion cap down on a flat surface like a table, it shall be placed with the Legion emblem facing up as a sign of respect as the left side (emblem side) is considered "HALLOWED GROUNDS" and should be given proper respect.

As the holidays are approaching, get with your Post Commander and/or Adjutant and reach out to your older members to see how they are doing. It can get lonely during this time of year. Invite them to your Post or visit them for a short while.

Fall Conference

James Burk, Eastern Area
easternarea@legionmail.org

We recently concluded the Fall Conference in Orlando. I sat in on a number of classes and was so impressed with the subject content

as well as the instructors. In particular, the service officers' class was full. There must have been 60 people or more taking this valuable class. Each of the attendees was there to learn and go back to their Post to help fellow veterans. That's true dedication. I found the Boys State class

very interesting. So many professional athletes, politicians, actors, and others are Boys State alumni. I would like to see more participation in classes from the rank and file. A tremendous amount of Legion business gets done in only three days.

Every Day is Veterans Day

Michael Raymond, Southwestern Area
southwesternarea@legionmail.org



Veterans Day has come and gone but like many of us in the Legion family, Veterans Day is every day! But somehow we seem to forget the veterans that got us to where we are today. In the Port

Charlotte metro area there are at least six assisted living facilities where many of our veterans reside. These veterans have served in WWII, Korea, Viet Nam,

the Cold War, and yes, even the War on Terrorism. It is sad, but many of these veterans get few, if any, visitors and are there basically to finish out their lives.

I'd like to tell you about one such vet, a personal friend of mine. Maurice is a paid up for life member of our great organization. He is a 90 years old WWII veteran. Maurice is one of many that lied about his age to join the military. He's one of the first people I met when I arrived here at Post 110 ten years ago and we've been great friends since. Maurice became ill a few years ago and underwent surgery which left him unable to swallow food

or liquids. Luckily, he had his wonderful wife Flora to help him through this ordeal. Things were going fine up until a few months ago when Flora had a stroke leaving her blind. Long story short, they are both now residing at a skilled nursing facility. That is when I found out they had only one living relative, a nephew, who resides in NJ. Our Post Chaplain and I visit them regularly, but it seems the rest of the world has forgotten about them.

We just don't realize how much happiness a simple visit brings to these heroes. Post

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<< *Southwestern Area - from page 6*

110 Honor Guard pinned over a hundred veterans this past Veterans Day at our local assisted living facilities. They went as far as going to the rooms of those who

couldn't make it out for the ceremony. But they don't want applause. A smile from an old, crusty WWII veteran is payment enough! Our Legion Riders also came up with this great idea: rather than a poker run with five stops at bars,

they made the five stops at assisted living facilities where 50+ bikers pinned all the veterans. It went over so well they will be making it an annual event. So please, visit a vet. You'll be glad you did.

Western Area Update

Ray Olsen, Western Area

westernarea@legionmail.org



First I want thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers while I was recovering from my heart attack. It was very difficult knowing that my Area was in distress

and there was nothing I could do for it. Fortunately, I have recovered to almost 100%, and while I was in the hospital, Jim Brennan, 2nd District Commander, and John Edens, 1st District Commander, led the way in their Districts. Of course, our Disaster Preparedness team of Steve Shuga, Bill Hoppner, and Chaplain Barry Roberts took charge of relief efforts and kept communication flowing.

For those that do not know, Post 375 in Southport was a total loss and will have to be rebuilt. Post 392 in Panama City has some roof damage and some trees that needed to be cleared. Post 66 on the Bay County Fairgrounds has roof damage to the Post home, but more severe damage to the fairgrounds itself. Post 402 in Panama City Beach is okay, and Post 356 in Lynn Haven has some damage to part of the Post home around the meeting room and kitchen and some outer building damage. In

District 2, Post 241 in Sneads suffered some outer building damage. Post 272 in Blountstown suffered some roof damage and damage to the A/C unit and fencing. Port St Joe Post 116 had some minor building damage, but the building is owned by VFW. There have been issues with our relief efforts for the area. The governmental agencies did not desire our support, so the focus switched to providing supplies to Post 402, Post 392, and Post 100 so that the Legionnaires could get them where they needed to be. Relief supplies are still coming in from up north and Post 392 still has supplies that are ready to be picked up by whoever needs them. If you have items to send, contact Steve Shuga or Bill Hoppner for instructions on what is needed and where to take them.

I drove through Panama City and saw the devastation. I can only imagine what it was like on the roads and back in areas that had not been cleared. It will be many months before things can be close to getting back to normal. The Department of Florida website has the forms needed for assistance from the National Emergency Fund, Dept of Florida Hurricane Relief, VetRelief, and the Auxiliary Emergency Relief Fund. <https://www.floridalegion.org/hurricane-relief/>.

Membership. The goal in November was 70%. District 1 had one Post at goal

and District 2 had three Posts. We are way behind where we were this time last year. Obviously, we have some explanations as to why we are down, but we need to work membership and reach our goals because this makes our job easier when all our programs start after year's end. Western Area Membership Chairman, John Everitt, from Post 78 (jgeve5231@gmail.com or 850-293-4957) can answer questions or get you help.

There is a Western Area Facebook page and as I see posts from the Area, I try to repost them on this page, so add this to your shortcuts or like it. If you have something you want to put out, make sure that I can share it or email it to me at WesternArea@legionmail.org and I will try and get it to as many folks as I can.

December has a couple of deadlines: Homeless Veteran Outreach Nominations and Employment Nominations are due. You should be in contact with your local High Schools for Boys State and Oratorical. The membership goal is 80%.

Let's keep serving our veterans, their families, our children and communities, and showing America why the American Legion is the biggest and best veteran service organization there is.

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Membership

Bruce Thurber, Membership

membership@legionmail.org



The Fall Conference is behind us and I would like to thank everyone for the large turnout for training. Several questions were brought up and I am waiting on replies from National on the issues discussed.

Links to my Power Point presentations have been placed on the Department website for everyone to use. As we continue with training and recruitment, the ability to let people know who we are and what we do is important. A great way to keep up-to-date is the American Legion Basic Training (<https://www.legion.org/alej>), a free self-paced online course.

As we reach for our December and January goals, we need to work with our membership teams early on to have revitalizations/membership drives. Using the tools in MyLegion.org we can find

those members both in our Post and the DMS Post 400 who have not renewed. Many times, a simple phone call or email letting them know that you want them at your Post will suffice. Letters inviting them to the Post are available on MyLegion. The letter is ready to go once you check the blocks and put in your Commander's name. The best tool to get people to the Post is an appointment with a Service Officer. Let them know that membership is not required, our service officers are there to help any veteran. Once they stop by, let them know what our Family has for their family. Young veterans and their families have tight budgets but still want to go out and do things together. Support the local youth programs that your potential members enjoy, i.e. Little League, Youth Soccer, Scouting, Sea Cadets, and Police or Fire Explorer programs.

Let the community know some things American Legion Posts did "for God and Country" last year.

1. Donated more than 3.9 million hours of service to communities.

2. Post Service Officers handled 170,000 cases of veterans seeking benefits and just compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs.
3. Devoted over 765,000 hours of volunteer service to Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals.
4. Donated 74,000 pints of blood to collection centers nationwide, making The American Legion the nation's single largest blood donor.
5. Annually contributes nearly \$40 million on programs benefiting children and youth.
6. Awarded more than 7,800 medals to Junior ROTC Students.
7. Sponsored almost 17,000 American Legion Boys State delegates.
8. Sponsored almost 2,000 Scouting units serving more than 44,000 youngsters.
9. Sponsored more than 1,800 American Legion Baseball teams and an additional 1,400 youth baseball squads
10. Awarded more than \$4.3 million in college scholarships to deserving students.

Florida Legion College

Florida Dept, Headquarters
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**January 31 - February 2
2019**



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BREAKING NEWS REGARDING MEMBERSHIP (SEE LETTER TO POSTS ON PAGE 10)

Department of Florida
info@floridalegion.org

National Commander Reistad created a couple of incentives that will reward departments and posts for their hard work. Here is a quick snapshot of those new incentives:

- Departments that hit 100% of their 2019 membership goal by the Armed Forces target date on May 8th will receive \$2,500.
- Departments that hit 105% of their 2019 membership goal by the delegate strength date will receive \$5,000.
- If a department does not hit 100% by the Armed Forces target date they are not excluded from being able to receive the \$5,000 for hitting 105%.
- **Post can earn \$5 for bringing back expired members from 2014, 2015 and 2016. (STARTS DECEMBER 6, 2018)**
- This will run until May 8th, 2019.
- **Brand new members do not count.**
- Renewing members into the headquarters post does not count.

- These expired members have to renew at a traditional post. It does not have to be at their previous post.
- These lists will include expired DMS members as well.
- These members will need to be transferred into a local post and then renewed for the post to receive credit.
- Keep in mind their membership ID will need to be used for tracking purposes and to receive credit.
- These lists can be downloaded through myLegion.
- Checks will be presented during the Spring National Executive Committee Meeting in Indianapolis.

This is very exciting news for all of the Posts in Florida and throughout The American Legion. One other topic we at Department wanted to clarify to Post Leadership is how payments/credits are being processed under the new electronic renewal system. As you know, when you process the transmittal at the Post level (electronic submission), you are only required to pay the per capita fees. Meaning you retain the Post's portion of the dues. However, each time a member renews online as an individual, they submit payment for the full dues amount to National which means the Post will not

receive their funds for a minimum or thirty (30) days.

Recently, several Posts have contacted Department requesting the release of credit funds because they are now processing online transmittals and no longer utilize Department credits. After the individual Legionnaire renews online, Department runs a weekly report that reflects these payments. This report also accounts for your membership numbers/percentages. Department then enters the payments into the system, which generates a credit to the Post; however, National only processes actual payments back to Department on a monthly basis. This means that even though you may see a credit at Department, those funds have not actually been sent to Department as of the day the credit is posted. In fact, **it takes a minimum of thirty (30) days** for National to write the check back to Department.

At the Post level, Department is asking that each of you realize that when members renew online, **it will be a minimum of thirty (30) days** before Department receives that payment from National. Please send your requests in writing and we will process the payments in a timely manner once those funds have been received from National.

CELEBRATING

The American Legion



OFFICE OF THE
NATIONAL COMMANDER

★ NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS ★ P.O. BOX 1055 ★ INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46206 ★
(317) 630-1200 ★ FAX (317) 630-1223 ★

December 6, 2018

Dear Commander,

Thank you for all of your hard work. I truly appreciate everything you do for this great organization. With dedicated leaders such as yourself, we can truly make a difference in our membership. Together we can accomplish our goal, but we must work together.

Let me tell you about a new incentive that starts now and ends with the 100% target date on May 8, 2019. Your post will receive five dollars for every expired 2014, 2015 or 2016 member that renews at your post for 2019. After this incentive ends on May 8th, a check will be disbursed to your department and they will send it to each post individually. As you can see, this is a great opportunity to earn some money for your programs while growing membership in your post and department. It is truly a win-win situation for your post and The American Legion.

The expired members can be found by signing into myLegion and choosing "Reports/Labels" on the left-menu.

1. Open (double-click) the "Post Reports" folder.
2. Open the "Revitalization" folder.
3. There you will find three reports where you can select expired members for letters, labels and rosters ("Unrenewed_Letters", "Unrenewed_Labels", "Unrenewed_Roster")

If your post does not have access to myLegion, go to www.mylegion.org and click on "[Authorization Form](#)" at the bottom of the page and complete the registration process. If you need assistance you can call 1.800.433.3318 or send an email to mylegion@legion.org.

Once you and your membership team have contacted expired members and are ready to renew them back into your post, there are a few things to keep in mind. To receive credit for renewing a 2014, 2015 or 2016 Legionnaire, they must renew in your post and you have to use their current membership ID number. The ID number will be on the expired listing downloaded through myLegion or provided by your department. If the expired Legionnaire was not a member of your post, please transfer them into your post and then process their dues payment. I encourage you to not only go after past post members, but also DMS and headquarters post members.

Again, thank you for everything that you do for The American Legion. Let's proudly "celebrate our legacy" as we work to reach 100% in membership during our 100th anniversary. Thank you for being a member of Team 100.

Sincerely,

Brett P. Reistad
National Commander

Copy to: National Officers
Department Commanders
Department Adjutants

100% Americanism for 100th Anniversary

Ray Olsen, Americanism

americanism@legionmail.org



First, I want to thank everyone who sent me thoughts, prayers, and get well notes after I had my heart attack at the end of September. While minor in damage, this one scared

me. After the insertion of a stent, I was over medicated and went back in to the hospital. Needless to say I missed the entire month of October.

I had just received my Americanism Package with all of the Post Americanism Chairmen listed right before the heart

attack. So, in the next few days I will be sending an email out to all of you talking about Americanism and what we can do in this 100th Anniversary year. I would like to reiterate my challenge of each Post in the state taking on an Americanism project that they have not done in the past. If we did that each year, in two more years Florida would be fostering 100% Americanism without a doubt.

I would like to receive emails from all Americanism Chairmen, both before you undertake an event or project, as well as after. I want to have a great report in June to deliver at the Convention and I want to have as much information as possible when we select Posts for Americanism awards.

November saw American Education Week and National Family week. If your Post had an event or activity let me know. December has nomination deadlines for Homeless Veteran Outreach Awards and Employment Award Nominations. Boys State and Oratory programs should be getting started. Americanism Month is February. When you have your programs open to the public, make sure that someone is there with Membership applications. We are way behind last year and our programs, especially those that fall under Americanism, are the best advertisements for “why you should belong” that there is.

I am getting back to work. Let’s make this a good year.

Blood Donor Programs Fit for Every Post

Nancy Thomas, Blood Donor

blooddonor@legionmail.org



With hurricane season still upon us we should really consider doing blood drives to assist in the needs of those who have been hit hard by the weather. Each

day, 15,000 donors are required to meet the ongoing need for blood and components.

During Fall Conference I had the pleasure of introducing myself to the Big Red Bus Phlebotomy Technician that was at the hotel on Thursday and we spoke about the members who were stationed in the European Area during the early 1980’s. She indicated that should you want to give blood,

please go and be questioned about when and where you were stationed as some may be able to give blood while others may not. It will have to be decided by the Phlebotomy Technician (Vampires) on duty.

On November the 10th my significant other (7th District Vice Commander) and I attended the Veterans Day Program and Blood Drive at Post 72, Mulberry, and after the service was over, I noted that there were several people lined up to give blood. That was a good feeling! Post Commander and 7th District Sgt-at-Arms Rick provided a nice meal for those who attended.

When considering a drive, the assets are: Community Service, Improved Public Relations, and Membership Growth. You could increase your membership by holding a drive.

There is a program to fit every Post.

The Group Donor Plan: this system calls for the development of a file of Legionnaires, Auxiliary members, and others who are willing and able to donate blood on a periodic basis.

The Walking Blood Bank: consists of registration and blood typing of eligible donors. In the event of an emergency the Blood Donor Chair need only call those with the needed blood type.

Blood donors may receive an American Legion Blood Donor pins and/or a Blood Donor Certificate. Awards for Posts with the best Blood Donor Program are in the Blood Donor Guide.



Donors as young as 17 weighing at

continued on page 12 >>

CELEBRATING

<< *Blood Donor - from page 11*

least 110 pounds are eligible to give blood, so your younger Son's and Jr. Auxiliary may participate if they meet those requirements. There is no top age limit as long as you are healthy. Other requirements are also listed in the Blood Donor Guide. There are a lot of excuses as to why a

person can't give blood and there are restrictions; however, those who are taking certain medications within that guideline may have a doctor's letter to give blood, so check those requirements.

One Blood has been a good source of support for the blood drives and can be identified by the Big Red Bus. Please contact them for further information and

to seek their assistance in holding a blood drive.

Do not forget to have your Year End Narrative into Department on time. The reporting period is from May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2019, along with your CPR and Addendum.

Planning for Children & Youth

Vickie Van Buren, Children & Youth

cy@legionmail.org



What a great Fall Conference this year! Plenty of training and very informative classes on new programs. Everyone is excited about our 100th Year Celebrations.

Thank you for coming by our Children and Youth booth at the conference. We had plenty of interest in our programs. Our Children and Youth pins and Rider patches were available for sale. The Auxiliary did a fantastic job selling pins and the Rider District Directors took the patches to sell to their Chapters throughout the state. The Sons of the American Legion also have pins to sell. All profits will be turned in to our Department Children and Youth Fund. Since this is a family program this year, the Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders will

receive credit for their sales.

As we head into the holiday season, remember those families that are homeless or in need this year. The American Legion has many programs that can help with housing, utilities, and other expenses for their children. If you're not sure what program can help, please feel free to contact your Post or District Children and Youth Chairman or myself for recommendations.

December is the time for celebration. Plan a family event at your Post. I know that many Posts have had family events since last summer. Please let your Post or District Children and Youth Chairman know what events you have hosted or have planned for the remainder of this year.

Its not too early to submit your team for our April 27th Children and Youth Golf Tournament. See the

flyer attached to this Link. We are also looking for sponsorships. In addition, our April 6th Children and Youth Picnic planning is coming along nicely. We are soliciting baskets or items to put into baskets to raffle at the picnic. The admission to the picnic is FREE this year. We will also have a Rider poker run. See the attached flyer for more information.



Have a safe holiday season and I'll see you next year!!



Hurricane Aid

Bill Hoppner, Disaster Preparedness

disasterprep@legionmail.org



I hope that all our fellow Legionnaires and family are safe following the aftermath of Hurricane Michael. We want you to be aware of The American Legion programs that are available to assist you during this time of recovery.

The American Legion's National Emergency Fund (NEF) provides immediate financial assistance to Legion Family members and Posts affected by Hurricane Michael. The fund provides up to \$3,000 for qualified members and up to \$10,000 for Posts.

NEF grants do not cover costs of items which should be covered by insurance. It is strictly for assisting Legionnaires with emergency travel, lodging and meals while under mandatory evacuation from their homes. These are considered emergency, out of pocket, living expenses.

In order to qualify for an NEF grant, an applicant must:

- Have been displaced from his or her primary residence due to a declared natural disaster.
- Must have sustained damage to their primary residence as a result of the declared natural disaster.
- Provide copies of receipts of items required to meet immediate needs, such as temporary housing, food, water, clothing, diapers, etc.
- Provide evidence of damage sustained to their residence.
- Membership must be active at time of disaster and the time of application.
- Post grants must derive from a declared natural disaster and substantiating documentation must provide that The American Legion Post will cease to perform the duties and activities in the community due to losses sustained.

While the NEF provides immediate assistance to Legion and SAL members, with qualified minor children of Legion-eligible veterans may receive assistance through the Legion's Temporary Financial

Assistance (TFA) program.

The TFA grants do not cover costs of items which should be covered by insurance. It is strictly for temporary food, shelter, utilities, and clothing.

Payout from the funds are currently capped at \$2,500 per veteran with minor children (17 years or younger) living at home. Legion membership is not required.

In addition, Department of Florida is also taking applications for the Department's Hurricane Relief Fund. This fund is similar to NEF; however, there is no need to have sustained damage to be eligible for funding. Also, the Department fund will support any veteran regardless of membership status. Legionnaires will have first consideration and the program will be active until funds are depleted.

For more information or to apply for NEF, TFA, or Department of Florida's Hurricane Relief Fund, contact Department Headquarters at 407-295-2631, or visit www.floridalegion.org.

Citizenship Options for MANVI Enlistees & Veterans

Gene Smith, Immigration

immigration@legionmail.org



I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. As citizens of the United States, we have so much to be thankful for, especially those of us that served this nation in the U. S. military.

Without our service to uphold and preserve the U. S. Constitution and defend our way of life, who knows where we would be? I am sure we would not enjoy the freedom to call out our leaders when warranted, we would not enjoy the freedom to move about without restrictions, we would not enjoy the sanctity of owning and defending our own home, nor the opportunity to serve our fellow veterans in an organization known as The American Legion.

Do you know approximately 511,000

foreign-born immigrants share those same thoughts and enjoy the same freedoms here in the United States? They came here legally from another country, adopted the United States, raised their right hand to uphold and defend this nation, and made the same sacrifices as a domestic-born soldier, sailor, marine or airman.

Who are these eligible immigrants for service in the U. S. military?

continued on page 14>>

<< *Immigration - from page 13*

They are naturalized citizens, lawful foreign-born permanent residents, certain nationals of three countries in free association with the United States—the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau. In addition, Congress can approve eligibility for foreign-born if a specific military service branch Secretary determines a need in the enlisted ranks is vital to the national interest.

Such a program was launched in 2009—Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI). In last month’s article, I stated that the promises made to these foreign-born enlisted personnel by the U. S. Army were being withdrawn and many soldiers discharged. Once discharged, their future is unclear and they may be subjected to deportation proceedings.

Most foreign-born who served in the U. S. military had an exceptional service period, many endured combat, performed without disciplinary incident, received an honorable discharge, and

tried to assimilate into civilian life. Unfortunately, they experience the same post-war mental health issues as their domestic-born counterparts. Issues such as PTSD and other mental and medical setbacks may lead to criminal activity. The chances of the foreign-born finding him or herself in the immigration court system is likely.

This is where life becomes different for them. They still have certain basic rights under the U. S. Constitution. The 14th Amendment guarantees due process and equal protection to all people in the United States—citizens and non-citizens alike. They are guaranteed to have their case heard. The immigration court system is civil rather than criminal. They have the right to retain counsel; however, they will not be provided counsel free if they cannot afford one. In 2016 data, only about 37 percent were able to secure counsel for their deportation process.

As fellow veterans, we owe it to them; especially those that served in a war zone and experienced the ravages of combat; to help. They stood up and wanted to serve their adoptive country. They paid the price as we

say. It is up to us to identify them not for deportation proceedings, but, for legal representation to determine their status and perhaps become a productive U. S. citizen. These veterans are not illegals who entered the country “under darkness of night.” These individuals were here legally and answered the call to serve and for whatever reason fell between the cracks since departing the military.

California and Florida are the states with the highest number of foreign-born veterans. I am asking the District Commanders, Area Commanders, and Zone Commanders as you travel, speak out about our fellow veterans who need our help to insure they get what was promised to them on entry into the U. S. military. Ask our Legionnaires in Posts in all corners of Florida to seek out our fellow veterans and get them the legal help necessary to assist them in their quest to become a U. S. citizen or at least, let them know their status. For questions or further information, you can email me at Immigration@legionmail.org.

New Award

Taz Gehling, Law & Order

laworder@legionmail.org



I am proud to announce that with the assistance of Elizabeth Douglas, Programs Director, and the Department Finance Committee, the Department of Florida will now be awarding a third (3rd) award under

Law & Order starting this year. The new

award is Paramedic/Emergency Medical Technician of the Year.

This is huge as it no longer restricts the award to just the fire departments. Now, many Paramedic and E.M.T.s working for private companies are eligible to be recognized. This will also allow for a larger community presence by American Legion Posts as well as the Department. This is a win-win situation.

The Department winner will receive a one-night stay at Convention, where the

award will be presented during the general assembly along with their counterparts.

A letter and the necessary paperwork should have already been sent out to each Post. If you have not received the paperwork, please let me know and I will make sure you get it.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me at 239-785-8282 or LawOrder@legionmail.org.

CELEBRATING



YEARS OF SERVICE

"Learning Never Exhausts the Mind"**Tom Gora, Legion College**deptlegioncollege@legionmail.org

The Florida American Legion College (FALC) will be in session January 31-February 2, 2019. Applications can be found on the Department website and they are due NLT

December 21, 2018.

The American Legion asks that Departments conduct a Legion College and provides a manual of suggested topics for the training. Only a limited number of people from around the country can attend the National College, usually only one person from each Department. In our Department there is an FALC Committee which I chair, that designs classes for FALC following National's recommended subjects and

works with the current Department Commander to present other subjects pertinent to the Department of Florida. One of the main subjects covered in both National and Florida Legion College is the writing of Resolutions. We are fortunate to have PDC Clarence Hill as our Department Resolution Chairman and as an FALC instructor on the subject. By the way, he writes excellent articles for the Legion Link on the subject every month - I hope you read them.

If you attended the recent Fall Conference you heard discussion on National Resolutions 1 and 2 from the National Executive Committee's October 2018 meeting. These Resolutions, if successful, will change The American Legion charter, Constitution and ByLaws, and membership eligibility dates to include all veterans discharged honorably that had at least one day of active duty since December 7, 1941. This would open the membership door for veterans

who served during periods that are not currently recognized for membership. So, you see, learning how to write Resolutions is very important if you want to implement change or create new programs and initiatives in The American Legion. Want change or something new in The American Legion? Come to class and learn how to write a Resolution. Resolutions are not just written nationally; the Resolution process applies to Posts, Districts, and Departments as well.

There are other subjects covered at the FALC by experienced and knowledgeable faculty. If you are thinking about a management position in the Department of Florida whether that be a Post, District or Department officer, this course is for you! If you just want to learn more about the history and functions of The American Legion, register to attend the Florida American Legion College, January 31-February 2, 2019.

It's Who We Are; It's What We Do**Tom Gora, Public Relations**publicrelations@legionmail.org

At the recent Fall Conference, I had a chance to speak with the Department Commander, Department Adjutant, and various program chairs about public relations initiatives and can share some of those discussions with you.

Our 4th District Commander Cherie Korn is working with others and

Orlando area media on a female veteran Public Service Announcement (PSA). We are looking at billboards across the state as another way to get the word out on The American Legion, using both electronic and old-fashioned billboards. The American Legion already designed a billboard ad, so that saves some set-up and initial art costs. In August 2019, the Department of Florida will host the SE Area American Legion baseball tournament in Tampa. I spoke with Baseball Chair Andy Burkett of plans to implement a six-month campaign to get the word out on the tournament seeking donations, volunteers, and fans. I hope to work with PDC Gene Smith on the

accelerated citizenship program for veterans and those still on active duty soon.

There is a new PSA - "Team 100." To view the PSA, visit The American Legion's Vimeo channel at <http://vimeo.com/americanlegion>. The videos housed on the Legion's Vimeo channel can be shared via mobile devices or downloaded onto a computer hard drive and shared without the need for Internet connection. They can also be shared with media outlets and movie cinemas to promote The American Legion. Remember "it's who we are, it's what we do!"

CELEBRATING

Membership Drives

Bob Brewster, Post Development

postdevelopment@legionmail.org



With the Fall Conference behind us and with all the holidays racing to get here, we need to spend time working on all Post membership. I know the snow birds are slow getting down here this year because of the elections, but we can't blame all our problems on the snow birds. Some Posts are still at one or two members

and some at zero members. How can this be? Your new officers are installed and are supposed to be paid up for the new year.

District Commanders, District Vice Commanders, and District Membership Chairmen should be visiting the Posts who are not achieving their goals. They should be contacting their members in person, by phone, and with letters. Don't wait for them to come into your bar.

As soon as I can get clearance to utilize National's records of members in your area, we will be able to work up membership drives with the Posts who need our help. You need to get

out of your Post homes and get into areas where vets are visible. That is anywhere you go. This past weekend, we signed up a baker's dozen members by setting up an information table at O'Charley's Restaurant here in Orange Park. When you approach a business to have a membership drive, never say it is a membership drive. Just say that you want to pass out valuable information about American Legion benefits to all veterans in your area. I also recommend that you do not accept any money at these events. We never do, but that is up to you. Let's all work together and make Florida's membership grow.

State Legislative Link

Art Schwabe, Legislative

statelegislative@legionmail.org



Minutes from the Legislative meeting as follows:

A meeting was held on November 2, 2018, at 3:30 pm at the Renaissance Hotel

in Orlando, FL. Bill Kelly, Sons of the Legion, State and National Commission member was in attendance. We had 22 people attend the meeting. If you know of someone who would like to be part of the legislative group have them email me so they can get on the email list.

Discussion regarding the Legislative App approved by the Finance Committee was discussed. More details will be given on the date it becomes operational. This app

will give us information on upcoming bills, who the bills will affect, who is on the committee, and who we need to contact.

We will have a March on Tallahassee! The date will be announced once the new State Legislators are in session, mid-January or later.

A discussion was held regarding veterans' spouses. No action taken but it was a good discussion.

Inaugural Turkey Shoot

Loretta Young, ROTC/JROTC/Shooting Sports

jrotc@legionmail.org

I would like to spread the word to our Legion Family on a new idea for gaining focus on our Shooting Sports Program by reaching out to our adult members by having a Post "Turkey Shoot." This idea was brought to me at the Department Conference and I agree it would be a great way to build more interest for our Posts to have

Legion Family teams to generate interest in the areas where the schools do not allow Marksmanship participation. We will have the first Turkey Shoot in the 6th District at Old Glory Post 183 in Fern Park on Saturday, Dec. 8th. The Turkey Shoot will be held at the Indoor Hall and will be open to anyone in the Legion, Auxiliary, Sons of the Legion, and Riders in the 6th, 12th, and 17th Districts or any other District wanting to participate. The Air Rifle will be the Department Crossman Sporter 177. There will be

prizes for the winners and a flyer with specifics is forthcoming. We already have some interest in participation and look forward to having a successful Shoot. In times when there is much discussion on the problems of gun violence throughout the country, this is a starting point for our Legion Family to focus more on gun education and safety. If there are any questions, please get back to me by email, phone or text. Thanks to everyone who supports our Legion Programs and interest in our country's youth.

CELEBRATING



YEARS OF SERVICE



FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Due to the increased demand to our program, we are already on track to surpass the total number of cases we funded from last year. Additionally, in October 2017, PROJECT: VetRelief received a large grant from the Florida Veterans Foundation that we will not be receiving again this year.

Therefore, the program growth and absence of funding will cause PROJECT: VetRelief to experience a significant strain due to the financial gap.

We are asking that you help ensure that we are able to continue our mission by **making a year-end contribution**. As you make your final 2018 tax-deductible donations, please consider the immediate, and in some cases life altering, impact you can make on Florida's veterans, active duty military members, and their families.

Your year-end gift will move us one step closer to reaching our goal of helping one veteran or military family for every work day - that's 260 families. Best wishes for a bright and beautiful holiday season, from our family here at PROJECT: VetRelief.

P.S. You will make a difference with your tax-deductible donation of any amount.

2018 FALL CONFERENCE:

Thank you to everyone who took advantage of the many PROJECT: VetRelief opportunities during The American Legion, Department of Florida Fall Conference. Take a look at all of the exciting things that happened!

- Trained nearly 40 NEW VetRelief Advocates
- Hosted Networking Event for trained Advocates with key topics of discussion
- Board of Directors voted to establish a suicide prevention program and brought on a new member, Jim Wineland
- Presented during Service Officer School and Legion's General Session
- Distributed marketing materials at the PVR Booth

MISSION MOMENT: *Community Impact*

"The funding allowed me to keep my apartment. I am so at ease now...I received lots of encouragement and I felt that they really care about me and my future!"

- Navy Veteran

ADVOCATE CORNER: *New Resource Tool*

As a part of our efforts to grow and meet the needs of our services members, we are developing a centralized phonebook of veteran organizations or resources. This list of organizations can help PROJECT: VetRelief in two very important ways:

- **create state-wide relationships** to assist veterans in a larger capacity
- **develop a web-based platform** for anyone to use to identify resources within their local area; whether it be a veteran looking for help, or a new Advocate looking to network

You can help us develop this tool by providing a list of organizations and/or any contact representatives you are already working with. We've created an easy online form that you can use to send in your point of contacts.

Here is the link:

<https://www.projectvetrelief.org/vso-resource-entries/>

Thank you for always stepping up to the plate and assisting veterans in whatever capacity needed!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: *Upcoming Events*

All of PROJECT: VetRelief's financial support comes from the generosity of individuals and corporations who believe in what we do. Join us for one of our next events, or hold your own fundraiser.

If you are interested, please contact Jennifer Cooper at 407-295-2631 or jcooper@floridalegion.org.

- **Vets Invade Canyon** - Jan 18-19, 2019
Crystal River, FL
- **Coral Head Music Fest** - Feb 16-17, 2019
Marathon, FL
- **Legion Riders In-State Unity Ride / Concert** - Apr 2019
Tampa or Daytona, FL
- **6th Annual Golf Tournament** - Sept 2019
Bella Collina, FL
- **Coral Head Music Fest** - Nov 2020
Pinellas Park, FL



SUPPORT CASES
JULY - OCT 2018 STATS

*Numbers reflect PROJECT: VetRelief Cases ONLY

families helped

44

amount distributed

\$49,884.02

The Importance of Resolutions

Clarence Hill, Resolutions

resolutions@legionmail.org



Resolutions are vital to the Legion's mission and is serious business. Without the resolution process, the Legion would have no guidance in developing programs, allocating funds to help veterans, or targeting Congress concerning issues that affect you, me, our families, and the rest of this great country.

Resolutions tell those in leadership roles what the members want. As adopted by your membership, a resolution represents a formal expression of the official opinion of your Post, District, Area, Department, or the National organization. When approved by the local membership, resolutions could proceed to the next step—either District, Area, or the Department level. At the Department level, resolutions are dealt with at a Department Executive Committee (DEC) Meeting or a Department Convention.

With formal authorization at the Department level, the resolution may be sent to National Headquarters where it

is registered for either the Resolutions Subcommittee for the National Executive Committee (NEC) or the Resolutions Assignment Committee of the National Convention. The resolutions are then forwarded by the National Adjutant to the appropriate national-level commission or committee for study. Finally, either the National Executive Committee or the National Convention delegates vote upon the recommended action.

Upon adoption at the national level by either the NEC or the National Convention, the resolution becomes the position of The American Legion.

Recognition

Chuck Weber, Scouting

scouting@legionmail.org



Just like running a good Post, a Scout unit requires good adult volunteer leaders to make its mission a success. However, the requirements and characteristics of a Scout leader are much more stringent. This difference comes mostly because of the involvement with children.

Most often, leaders for Scout units come from the parents of the youth involved. Sometimes they come from Legion family members who were Scouts themselves as youth. Occasionally, they come from outside both those worlds. Regardless of where the leaders are found, the Post alone is responsible for the vetting and selection

of leaders for its Scout units.

When a leader prospect is identified and fills out the BSA registration form, it starts an investigative process of the individual. BSA will perform a credit check of the individual, an FBI criminal background investigation, a name match against several lists of prohibited persons, a driving record check, and other safeguards to protect the youth in its programs. But those checks will not tell the Post if it has selected good leaders.

Each year in the Fall Scout units start back up and recruit new members, both youth and adult. Not just anybody who wants to be an adult leader should be. Your Scout unit's Committee Chair may recommend adults for Scouting positions, but the Post Charter Organization Rep (COR) is the only individual who decides whether or not to accept them. It is the COR's signature on the registration application that seals the deal. The Post's

COR must be involved with all the adult selections.

Don't be trapped in the notion that it is better to have someone than no one. It's not. Each applicant for adult leadership should go through at least one personal interview with the COR before they are accepted. You may want to have them additionally interviewed by the Committee Chair as well. Here are some considerations for the interviews:

- Does the applicant have a positive attitude about their role or are they just caving in to pressure to help out?
- Does the applicant present as a role model in appearance and demeanor for the youth?
- Did the applicant complete mandatory BSA Youth Protection

continued on page 19>>

CELEBRATING

<< *Scouting - from page 18*

Training beforehand?

- Did the applicant complete mandatory BSA Position Specific Training beforehand?
- Does the applicant have sufficient time in their personal schedule to perform the job?

- Does the applicant refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, and drugs in their personal life? (All are prohibited everywhere, all the time in Scouting.)
- Does the applicant refrain from using coarse, vulgar, and discriminatory language? (Never tolerated.)
- Does the applicant have any Scouting background?

Your Scout unit is a reflection of your Post and its leaders are a reflection of you. Be sure to take time and care in selecting them. The best question to always ask your self is this: Would I trust this person to take my children or grandchildren on a camping trip out in the woods?

Thoughts For Those Affected

Nancy Thomas, Security

security@legionmail.org



It is getting busy! After speaking with Loretta Young, JROTC/ Shooting Sports Chair, at Fall Conference, she is starting to get busy with Shooting Sports as she goes into the

competitions, etc.

Speaking with Taz Gehling, Law and Order, please read his Link Article this month as there is a good change to the awards for this program.

The Blood Donor Chair (me) arrived at the Fall Conference to find the Big Red Bus on the hotel property. I went to introduce myself and got some valuable information, which I put in the Blood

Donor Link article. My Legionnaire spouse and I went to Mulberry Post 72 on November 10th as they had a blood donation event in conjunction with their Veterans Day program. Great attendance! Please do not forget these programs are important to the Security Commission and to every one of us. Please support these programs.

Spreading Some Holiday Cheer

Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements

veteransbenefits@legionmail.org



The VA has deployed Mobile Facilities to assist veterans in areas where clinics remained closed.

The following hotlines are managed by the VA Health Resource Center. The call center will connect veterans and employees in real-time with the resources they need in a disaster.

- Veterans Disaster Hotline: 1-800-507-4571

- Employee Disaster Hotline: 1-866-233-0152
- Veterans Crisis Line/Mental Health Hotline: 800-273-TALK
- VA Services for Homeless: 877-4 AID VET
- VBA Hotline: 1-800-827-1000
- Pharmacy Customer Care: 1-855-574-7288
- Vet Center/Counseling: 1-877-WAR-VETS

The National Pharmacy Disaster Network Plan has been activated. Veterans who require emergency supplies of medications can access retail pharmacies. Contact 1-855-574-7288 for more information.



Proceeds benefit Veterans and their families in the State of Florida.

CELEBRATING



Vets Continue to Serve

Alan Cohen, VA&R

var@legionmail.org



Greetings once again, fellow Legionnaires. With the holiday season upon us, I want to take this opportunity to express my wishes to all for a healthy and happy holiday

season and new year. As with all others, this past year has brought us both the expected and unexpected, and each time our veteran community has risen to any challenge placed before us. Particularly, our Disaster Preparedness Chairman, Bill Hoppner. Thanks for your dedication and tireless efforts, Bill.

I'd also like to extend a hearty thanks to Gary Cardenas from Post 144, Miami Lakes. I attended the 2018 Meals with Memories event that he and the Post had a major role in putting together. The event was attended by over 1,500 of our fellow veterans, all availing themselves of the many services extended to them such as job opportunities, government outreach, and benefits for veterans and their spouses.

In early November we once again held our Fall Conference and along with all else, I'm proud to announce that we graduated a class of 66 Post Service Officers, almost half of whom were first-time attendees. Their combined efforts will, in the coming year, once again be reflected by having great impact

on Florida's veteran population. They work hard and are truly unsung heroes. I'm also proud to announce that during the Fall Conference it was my great pleasure to transfer a dozen boxes of comfort-related items to Al Gunderson, our Department Homeless Veterans Chairman. These hundreds of items were collected primarily by the 9th District Legion Auxiliary.

Lastly, I once again am appealing to those of you in and around the Orlando and Miami areas. The VA hospitals there continue to have opportunities for those who want to become part of the VA volunteer service. If you have as little as one or two days a week you'd like to devote to this fulfilling endeavor, all you need to get the ball rolling is contact me.

Update on Upcoming Cadet Program

Bob Brewster, Youth Law Cadet

youthlawcadet@legionmail.org



We have our Youth Law Cadet Program brochures available at Department. Contact Department and they will send you some. There have been no changes in our dates for 2019, which are July 7-July 12, 2019. Due to the storm that struck the Panhandle, the Highway

Patrol is spread very thin throughout our state. I have not been able to contact anyone over at the academy for the last four weeks.

Those of you who know me know that I am very persistent, and I will keep trying to contact the officers in charge. As soon as I know something, I will share the information with you. Let's all work together to keep moving this program forward. If you have any questions, please contact me at 904-272-1619.

The True Meaning of Christmas

Jesse Figueroa

Post 163 & NALPA & FALPA Member



The true meaning of Christmas is not about Santa Claus, reindeers, the North Pole, or trees with presents and decorations. It is about the time of love, caring, and the gathering of family and friends. Christmas is celebrated around the world as witness to the birth of Jesus Christ. On behalf of myself and my family, I would like to wish you all a happy and safe holiday season.

Sign up for TEXT ALERTS.  TEXT FAL TO 74121

November 26, 2018 75% Target Report (Currently 65.67%)		
4	Cherie Korn	71.83%
12	Stephen Hamrick	69.85%
6	Timothy Tierney	69.20%
11	Paul Bosco	68.66%
15	Bruce Carl	67.09%
16	Raymond Perez	66.39%
17	Willie Branch	66.36%
13	Brian Taz Gehling	65.09%
2	James Brennan	64.94%
14	Gary Decker	64.66%
8	Jerry Faught	64.39%
5	Troy Horsley	61.86%
7	David Tucker	61.73%
1	John Edens	60.43%
9	Teddy Pomerantz	60.32%
3	Stuart Scott	56.19%
Eastern	James Burk	69.48%
Central	Jay Allen	65.74%
Southwestern	Michael Raymond	64.77%
Southern	James Tewes	64.61%
Northern	Frederick Hutto	64.35%
Western	Raymond Olsen	61.23%
Post 400		64.52%
Post 208		65.98%



LEGIONNAIRE INSURANCE TRUST

Call Now: 1-800-235-6943
Monday - Friday 8AM - 7PM (EST)




**DEPARTMENT TRUSTED.
LEGIONNAIRE APPROVED.**

We provide a wide range of benefits designed to protect you, your family and your health.

From Your American Legion Department

We are committed to serving the unique insurance needs of LIT members and their families.



Emergency and Accident

A crisis can strike at any moment. Learn how we can help you prepare for the unexpected and get assistance when you need it most.



Insurance Coverage

From health to auto, we offer valuable insurance products designed to fit the specific needs of Legionnaires.



No Cost Protection

Your valued status as a Legionnaire makes you eligible for LegionCare, up to \$5,000.00 in NO COST to you benefits.




Cancer Care Insurance Plan

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust products and services are there when you them most. Listen to how others have benefited from services like our Cancer Care Insurance Plan.

- Cash benefits sent to Legionnaire members diagnosed with cancer
- We send you money – even if you don't have cancer

MEMBERSHIP GOAL
70% 11/7/2018

www.thelit.com



THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA FAMILY

★ CHILDREN & YOUTH ★ HELP US GIVE SMILES ★

PICNIC

**SATURDAY
APRIL 6, 2019**

12:00pm – 6:00pm

**AMERICAN LEGION
POST 117**

189 Veterans Dr.
Palm Bay, FL 32909

Admission: FREE!



QUESTIONS?

Gene Baker
ERBaker1957@gmail.com
Ph: 321-693-5178

Department C&Y Chairman:
Vickie Van Buren
Vickie.vanburen@yahoo.com
Ph: 352-562-9963

Activities

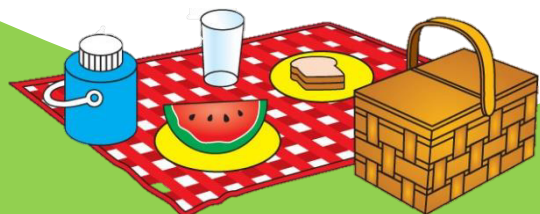
Carnival Games
Safety Finger Printing
Bounce House
Vendors
Chinese Auction
50/50 Raffle
Dunk Tank

Food

Cotton Candy
Candy Apples
BBQ Chicken
Hot Dogs
Hamburgers

Poker Run

Registration starts at 9 AM
Kick stands up at 10 AM
\$10 per Rider
\$10 per Passenger





THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA FAMILY PRESENTS

CHILDREN & YOUTH
★ HELP US GIVE SMILES ★



GOLF TOURNAMENT

We are excited to announce we will be hosting a golf tournament at:

Harbor Hills Country Club
6538 Lake Griffin Rd. Lady Lake, FL
32159 on **Saturday, April 27, 2019**

To raise money for our Department's
Children & Youth Programs

Shotgun – 1:00pm
Longest Drive Contest
Hole-in-one Contest
Closest to Pin Contest
Prizes & Raffle!

We encourage you to tell friends and family to join us!

- Cost - \$75.00 per golfer
- Silver Hole Sponsor - \$100.00
- Gold Hole Sponsor - \$250.00
Includes sign on hole
- Donate a gift to be a raffle prize

Cut-off date for sponsorships and gift submissions is April 18, 2019

Send all checks to Sons of The American
Legion Squadron 347
PO Box 1534 Lady Lake, FL 32158
Attn: Children & Youth Golf Tournament

After the Tournament, Join us for an Italian dinner, raffles, 50/50 and family fun at American Legion Post 347!

(699 W. Lady Lake Blvd. Lady Lake, FL 32159)

Hotel: The Waterfront Inn
1105 Lakeshore Drive, The Villages, FL 32162
To make a reservation call the hotel directly at 800-592-0774
Ask for the American Legion Group Rate!

ROCK CRUSHER CANYON PAVILION 275 S ROCK CRUSHER RD CRYSTAL RIVER

Vets Invade The Canyon



JANUARY 18th 2019

AMERICAN LEGION PROUDLY PRESENTS



SISTER HAZEL

9:30pm



Scooter Brown Band

7:30pm



A PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

They Fought for Us. We Fight for Them.



Letters From Home

6:45pm

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO PROJECT VET RELIEF

Celebrating 100 years of service to our Veterans

CALL 352-322-0459 FOR INFORMATION & TICKET LOCATIONS

TICKETS WWW.VETSINVADETHECANYON.COM

ADVANCE TICKETS \$25 * \$30 AT THE GATE (IF AVAILABLE)

GATES OPEN AT 5:00 LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE

RAIN OR SHINE CONCERT HELD IN THE COVERED PAVILION



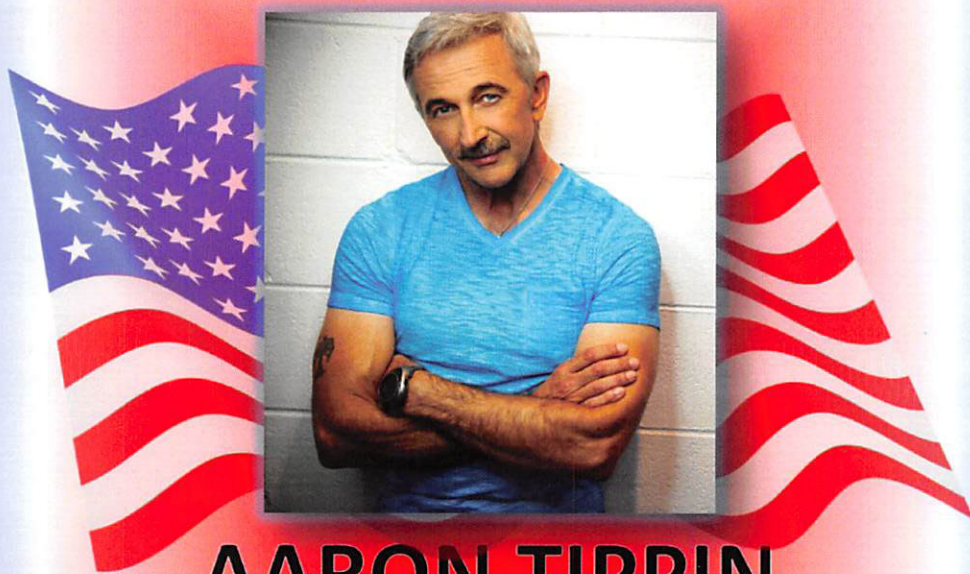
ROCK CRUSHER CANYON PAVILION 275 S ROCK CRUSHER RD CRYSTAL RIVER

Vets Invade The Canyon



JANUARY 19th 2019

AMERICAN LEGION PROUDLY PRESENTS



AARON TIPPIN

9:30pm



Buddy Brown
7:30pm



They Fought for Us. We Fight for Them.



Letters From Home
6:45pm

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO PROJECT VET RELIEF

Celebrating 100 years of service to our Veterans

CALL 352-322-0459 FOR INFORMATION & TICKET LOCATIONS

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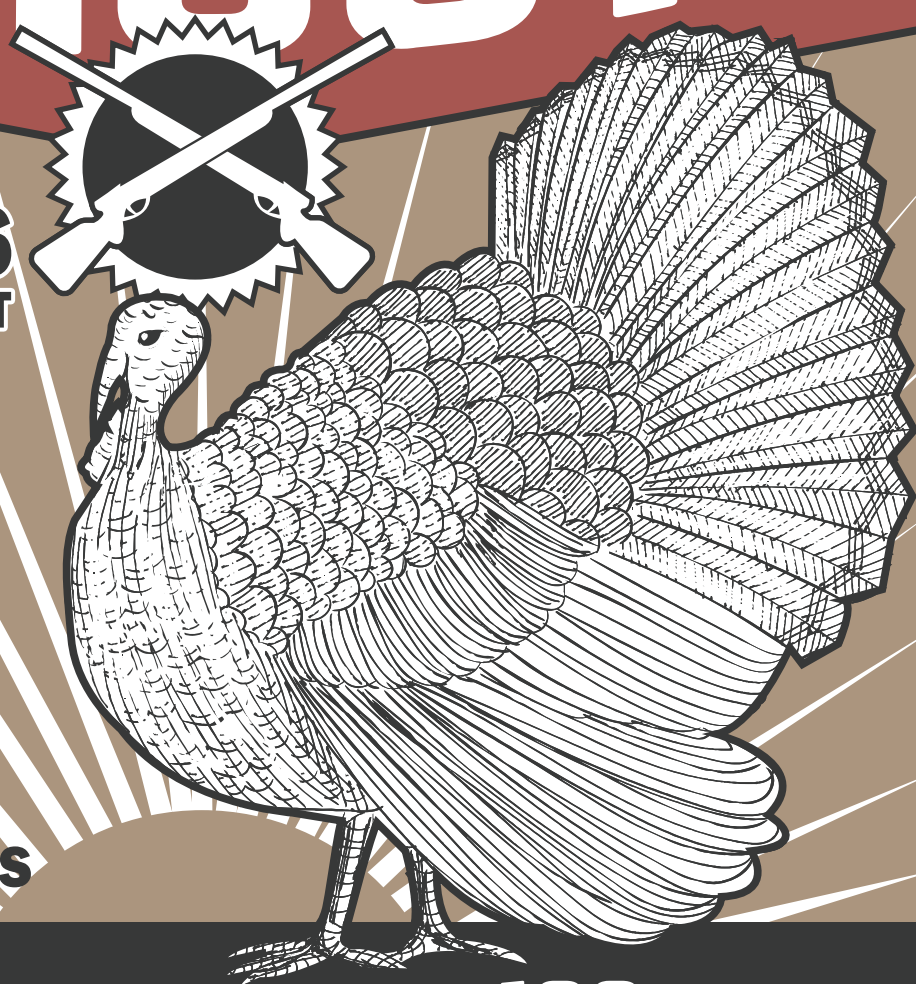


AIR RIFLE TURKEY SHOOT

\$3 for **3 SHOTS**
AT TARGET

DEC 8
2018
11:00AM

IN SUPPORT OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
SHOOTING SPORTS



OLD GLORY POST 183

2706 WELLS AVE
FERN PARK, FL 32730

Prizes will be presented to winners. Cost. \$ 3.00 for 3 shots at target best of ten shooters wins a prize, multiple runs of shooting. Individual. Shooters, Post against Post, Branch against Branch, District against District, some of the possibilities. Challenges that can be at time of shooting.

GOOD SHOTS, BRING A COOLER!



YOUR DEPARTMENT
Wishes You a
Merry Christmas

— AND —
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Willie

Elizabeth

And.

Ann

Jeremy

Bobbi

Jennifer C.

Bekki

Carrie

Nicholas

Bruce

Rachel

Shianne

John

Michael