



THE LEGIONLINK

THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA PUBLICATION



MARCH 2022

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Submit Articles at

floridalegion.org/submit or legionlink@floridalegion.org

Questions? legionlink@floridalegion.org

A Message from the Department Commander

Jerry Brandt, Commander

commander@floridalegion.org



The Ides of March is approaching, and we have many things to consider, in example:

1. An in-person/ Zoom DEC meeting is to be held on April 2nd.
2. New

Constitution and By-Laws to be sent out in early March for the DEC to review.

3. MEMBERSHIP. We are closing in on our membership goals, let's make it happen!
4. Post, District, Area, and Department officers now is the time to campaign if you wish to run for a position.

Starting with membership, we are at an 82.9% goal, with only 18,000 members to go. That may seem like a large number, but we have over 25,000 who did not renew from last year. We have an additional 5,000 brand new members join in Florida this year, and this was in February. Please reach out to those who did not renew. Clear your roster, by doing *Buddy Checks*! If a member has moved, have them join a local post. If they are deceased, you can update your roster and remember them at your Post. If they're sick or unable to travel, you can reach out to help. Let's do our best to take care of our brothers and sisters when they're in need. If you have members you haven't seen in a while, check in to see if they're having

problems, maybe we can help. **I would love to see a statewide *Buddy Check* every third Saturday of each month.** Let's make it happen!

The Constitution and By-Laws are on schedule. The DEC received a Memorandum from National on what is expected. The Constitution and By-Laws Committee has ensured that they will follow that memorandum closely. We will wait for the DEC Meeting in April to confirm that the DEC agrees with the changes, before moving forward the Constitution and By-Laws to our Posts.

The DEC meeting will be the first Spring/Winter meeting of the DEC in years, in fact, I have never attended one. But, just like the ZOOM calls we had this year, we are attempting to re-establish communication within the Department of Florida. If you have time and are a member of the DEC, please attend in person at the Department, if unable or too far to travel, please join us on ZOOM for this DEC meeting.

Running for office? If you are, please start planning now, who is there to support you? Line up your chairs now. As a Post Commander, you should have a list a mile long on those who will assist you; Boys State, Baseball, Oratorical, Children & Youth, just to name a few. As a District Commander, look outside of your Post for your Chairs, to help

Department Commander continued on page 2 >>



<< Department Commander continued from page 1
bring the District Posts together for a great year.

I am glad that many of the District Commanders are stepping up in their responsibilities, some Districts are holding training on the Year-End Reports, ensuring that Posts are reporting all that they do. Others are training their Post's incoming officers, to help make certain that the Posts will have a better start next year with their New Officers. If your District Commander is not encouraging training, ask them why. Running a Post is not easy, and doing it correctly is even harder. Ask for the training.

As you know, the National Commander made a visit to the Department of Florida, February 2-9. A special thank you for the friendship and hospitality received from Post 347, the Riders attending the ALR Summit, the Central Area Commander, 7th, 15th, and 16th District Commanders and staff, Auxiliary Units, S.A.L. Squadrons, Riders Chapters within all thirty-three Central Area Posts.

The week we spent among our members of the Central Area will remain with us forever. We're proud to announce the National Commander's Charity, Veterans & Children's Foundation, raised almost \$20,000 that week. Thank you for what you do! I would be remiss for not sharing my thanks

to the 1st District, 7th District and the 9th District for allowing me to visit with you. A special thanks to Sonny Decker, John Edens, Burl Thomas, Bruce Carl, George Bograkos, Johnny Castro, Chris Hamrick, Michael Raymond, and Eunice Butts for escorting me to the Posts in these Districts. The visits are always great and informational. During the Round Table discussions, Eunice, Michael, Chris, and I learned a lot, heard a lot, and were inspired by what you're doing at the post level. Please keep up the good work you do within the community for our veterans and children.

Awards, Awards, Awards! Now is the time to speak out and received the Awards you deserve. Over the years Department receives fewer and fewer requests for Department Awards. Look under floridalegion.org/resources/Legion-post-documents/programs for the listing and applications for the available awards. You have an opportunity for up to seventeen awards, not counting: Post of the Year, Commander of the Year, Legionnaire of the Year, etc. Apply for them, you and your Post have earned them! Submit your paperwork to receive your acknowledgment.

I hope to see all of you on my travels. After all, we are brothers and sisters, in War and in Peace.



COMMANDER'S CHARITIES

PROJECT: VetRelief



5K	10K	15K	20K	25K	30K	35K	40K	45K	50K
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Commander's Goal: \$275,000 (Current funds raised \$22,834.59)

Keep Up the Great Work

Eunice Butts, 1st Vice Commander
1stvice@legionmail.org



I am very proud of Zone 2 and their many accomplishments achieved in membership and programs. However, our work is not done, and we still have room

for many more members. Please continue to do "Buddy Checks".

Congratulations to all posts that have reached their 100% plus membership. To the district and area commanders thank you for your goals & percentages in membership. Eastern Area Commander and 6th District Commander keep striving for

1st Vice Commander continued on page 3 >>



MARCH 2022

27 - 2	National: Washington Conference ★
1-31	Women's History Month
1	Scholarship Applications Due
1	Mardi Gras
2	Read Across America Day
2	Membership 90% Goal
2	Ash Wednesday
2-4	National: Dept Service Officer School ★
3	Navy Reserve Birthday
3	Area Commander Visitation: Post 5
4	Hug a GI Day
4	Employee Appreciation Day
4-5	Dept Commander's Visit: District 4 ☆
5	Seabee Birthday
5	District 2: Meeting
5	District 8: Meeting
5	Post 316: Oyster Roast and Shrimp Dinner
6	American Legion Night at Jacksonville Icemen
8	International Women's Day
11	Oratorical: Department Walk Thru
12	Oratorical: Department Competition ☆
12	District 15: Meeting
12	ALR Chapter 57: 7th Annual Chili Cookoff
13	K-9 Veterans Day
13	Daylight Savings Time Begins
14	Baseball: Rulebook Changes Due
15	Legion Link: Articles Due
15-19	Dept Commander's Visit: District 6 ☆
15	American Legion Birthday ★
15	Area Commander Visitation: Post 334
17	St. Patrick's Day
19	District 3: Meeting
19	Post 266: Birthday Celebration
19	Ed Linde Benefit & Poker Run
19	ALR Chapter 401: Poker Run for West Nassau
19	District 14: Meeting
19	Karen Rivers Memorial Poker Run
19	District 9: Spring Picnic
19	Central Area Ball ☆
20	First Day of Spring
20	District 1: Training
20	ALR Chapter 81: Monthly Meeting
21	Area Commander Visitation: Post 148
22	Area Commander Visitation: Post 79
23-26	Dept Commander's Visit: District 16 ☆
25	Medal of Honor Day
26	Post 394: ALR Poker Run
26	Challenge 22 Event & Walk
26	District 16: Family Meeting and Picnic
26	District 13: Family Veteran Suicide Awareness Event
26	District 15: PDC/PDP Dinner
29	National Vietnam War Veterans Day
31	Membership "Race to the Top" Goal
31	Baseball: Domicile Establishment Deadline

☆ Commander Jerry Brandt'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.

<< 1st Vice Commander continued from page 2

100% in membership. March 31, 2022 is the big day, keep working district commanders. Thank you for the warm welcome to the posts I visited in the 12th, 14th, 11th,

and 9th districts. Your kindness was very appreciated.

This month is the time to prepare for your post-elections. Please follow the procedures

for elections. Remember, you as members elect your post officers.

Have a very blessed and enjoyable month.

Florida Welcomes Texas

Michael Raymond, 2nd Vice Commander
2ndvice@legionmail.org



It was an honor to escort our National Commander, Paul Dillard around the Central Area during his visit. Bruce Carl did an amazing job with the scheduling of visits and meals. At my last weigh-in, I've

successfully gained about ten pounds. Bruce, however, didn't gain an ounce. I have no idea why that is.

We had a remarkable visit with the National Commander. He is just a regular guy; he knows what we've done and what we need to do. He needs 300,000 new members to make the goal but fell short of requiring us to get them. He sincerely complimented us on our hard work, and all that we are doing, encouraging us to keep going. Commander Dillard was very impressed that 4.7% of our membership were new members.

He reminded us that we must all put in even more effort in retaining our existing members. *And how do we do this you ask?*

Communication and Buddy Checks. He stressed the effectiveness of doing the

buddy checks, and it hit very close to home for me just this week. I lost one of my closest friends to suicide. John was a Vietnam-era veteran and past Post Commander, he was actually a drill sergeant when I went through basic. His health was poor, and because of his pride, he chose to do the unthinkable, rather than burden his friends.

Would a *Buddy Check* have helped? We'll never know. This isn't new, my friends. It happens 22 times a day to our Veterans. Just a phone call can save a life. If you need help with this, please contact me or any Department officer. We are here for you!

Keep Up The Momentum

Chris Hamrick, 3rd Vice Commander
3rdvice@legionmail.org



We are in March now, time is flying. Everyone's Post and District calendars are filled with activities. This time of year, there are so many events occurring that it's hard to decide where to

begin.

Recently, we finished The American Legion Riders Summit. The following week we visited District 1 with our Department Commander. We had an awesome visit. There are many good things happening all over. Hats off to Sonny Decker and his District staff and Posts for the great job they're doing up there. Keep it up!

In District 3, I would like to take a moment to extend a heartfelt thanks to District 3 Commander Stuart Scott, for a successful "March on Tallahassee". This is where our legislative priorities were discussed with our State Representatives and are being addressed.

Some of the things I hear over and over while traveling and visiting posts, seem to be a common theme. I hear the words... *Training ... Awards ... Mentor ... MyLegion.* I won't begin to weigh in on the last one. Many of the issues we deal with, at every level, are training issues. Much of this I addressed in February's article, but I'll reiterate: as our Mentors help guide us, we need to be working to mentor and train those that are coming up through the ranks behind us, as well as those that are at the

Post level. This will begin the continuity that we need to transition from year to year and carry us into the future.

Awards... write up awards for your people and your Posts. There are many Post and individual awards to be had and hardly any entries have been submitted. You don't have to be a large Post or from a large Post to get an award. If you don't submit for them, no one will know. It's ok to "*Toot your own horn*"; it inspires others. Find the awards manual at floridalegion.org under Resources.

I'm proud to represent Zone 3, which encompasses District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 17.

Again, this year is flying by, but we're not finished yet. Keep up the momentum. Keep it Real.



— SHOW YOUR —
SUPPORT

The American Legion official license plate.



The American Legion Riders

Dennis Boland, NEC
nec@legionmail.org



The American Legion Riders (ALR) program is a nationally recognized association of American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of The American Legion members who enjoy the sport and comradeship of motorcycling. It supports the aims and objectives of The American Legion along with local, state, and national programs and charities. ALR is one of the most visible of

American Legion activities, reminding the public of the honorable nature of military service.

Like so many other successful national programs, the American Legion Riders simply started with an idea at a local post. In 1993, members of Garden City, Mich., and Post 396 conducted a motorcycle activity to raise money and advance the post's causes. Word quickly spread. Within months, new ALR chapters were forming at posts nationwide. Chapters now exist in 54 departments of The American Legion, with many outside the United States. There are

now an estimated 121,000 Riders and 2,100 Chapters worldwide.

ALR annually conducts the American Legion Legacy Run, a cross-country multi-day motorcycle event. As many as 500 participants ride more than 1,000 miles from a predetermined starting point, ending at the national convention city. Since 2006, the Legacy Run has raised more than \$12 million for the American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund. These American Legion Family members truly are "Riding for America's Future."

Earn A Faith-Based Mental Health Life Coach Certificate

Barry Roberts, Chaplain
chaplain@legionmail.org



It was an honor and privilege to participate and witness several 4 Chaplains ceremonies in February. The 4 chaplains demonstrated a living example of *John 15:13*, "Greater love has no man than this than a man lay down his life for his friends". Their service and sacrifice demonstrated the condition of their hearts for loving God

and loving others with the most intimate sacrifice possible, their lives. Remember to acknowledge your Chaplain's service to your Post and community by submitting them for an award.

As part of our Challenge 22 efforts, I have been in contact with the American Association of Christian Counselors, and we are being offered a faith-based Mental Health Life Coach Certificate through Legion Church. It is about 45 hours of online training, and the \$2,400 tuition has been waived, so the only cost is a \$54.00 admin fee. I already have several people from

around the state enrolled in the program. If you would like to know more please email me at bwroberts@rocketmail.com or call me at 863-661-9999.

Let's be proactive together in preserving "For God and Country" and let's be proactive together in reaching out into our communities and serving our veterans and their families. Let's be proactive together and go help somebody....

I am here for you, feel free to join and participate on Facebook, www.facebook.com/floridalegionchaplains

Just Checking In

Historian, Philip Crouthamel
historian@legionmail.org



There isn't a lot of news to tell right now, but I'd like to share a quick lesson: When compiling your Narrative or Yearbook, If you use heavy bond

paper or heavier card stock, you do not have to use sheet protectors. This will allow you to print on both sides and make your book a little slimmer. When adding pictures MAKE SURE that they are labeled or identified. Points come off when judging all photos. Ensure photos are scaled appropriately. I find that if you use Microsoft Word or PowerPoint this is easily done. When you double-click a photo using these programs a sizer appears in the program. Just hit the

up or down arrow and the photo will either enlarge or shrink to the size you want. and lastly, make sure you use a 3-ring binder up to 3 inches thick.

Any other comments or questions please feel free to contact me by e-mail. Good Luck To All!

Sign up for TEXT ALERTS.  TEXT FAL to 74121

Quality Time

Bruce Thurber, Eastern Membership
membership@legionmail.org



As The American Legion turns 103 on March 15, 2022, we find ourselves in a constant struggle with membership. In an effort to build membership, we will be holding online meetings with the District

Membership Chairs. If you have ideas on how to increase membership, please share your thoughts with the. The first meeting will be held on March 1st at 6:00 pm.

We are the nation's largest veterans service organization, reflecting on a legacy of historic achievements and millions of lives

positively influenced. Now is the time to envision a future guided by 21st-century veterans, their families, communities, needs, and interests. More than 2.7 million Americans have served in the Iraq and Afghanistan war zones, many on multiple deployments. We need to be there for them. Many have young families and limited income, with rising costs, we need to fill the void.

In years past veteran's families were invited to the local post for a monthly or weekly family night. Family entertainment and a ridiculously low-cost meal were provided. Grandpa, Grandma, mom, dad, and kids all came and spent quality time. This created an opportunity for the veteran to meet with other veterans, and the Post had the opportunity to show how they could help

and benefit the whole family.

Another issue that can be partly blamed for a loss in membership is the Pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic creates stressors such as fear of getting sick, concern for loved ones, isolation, job loss, new childcare, and family demands. If you have been through traumatic events in the past, you may have learned to cope well in crisis situations. However, dealing with the pandemic is unique. Some ways people cope, like eating out or watching/playing sports, may not be an option for some. For those with PTSD, the pandemic may trigger or affect your PTSD symptoms. We can help by providing things that mean something and they enjoy. Make your Service Officers available for both the veteran and family members.

Membership Awards

Randy Holeyfield, Western Membership
membershipfal@legionmail.org



The clock is winding down and Department Convention is around the corner. But there's still much to finish. As far as membership, there are many awards on the horizon. So, let's talk Awards, I will summarize them from the Department Membership manual for the sake of space.

Recruiter Pins

Many have submitted requests to JoAnn at Department Headquarters for their recruiter pins. However, your membership chairs have taken over this distribution this year. If you qualify for a pin, please notify your District Commander. Your pin will be presented at your next District Meeting, for signing up three or more new members.

Active Membership Team Award (70" TV)
 Awarded to a post that meets these prerequisites:

1. At least one Post Membership Team

- Member to attend all District meetings
2. Membership Team conducts a revitalization
3. Post achieves 100% by March 31st
4. Post maintains 2-Way communication with their District Commander and District Membership Chair
5. Participates in Department-sponsored membership programs whether successful or not, i.e., District or Area Revitalizations or Membership Drives.
6. Team utilizing MyLegion for membership and renewals.
7. Participate in at least one Open House, Community Event, or have a membership table at a fair.

Verified by their District Commander to the Department, attesting the results and/or activity to Department The post will receive a Plaque and be entered in a drawing according to the size of their post, one per category.

Post Award Categories

- I 15 to 199 Membership
- II 200 – 499
- III 500 – 999
- IV 1000 – 1499
- V 1500 or more

New Member Recruiter, deadline May 31st, need three or more, list as many as you recruit.

Membership Pin Award, by the number of members you receive the various pins below, also due by May 31st.
 10 – 24 Gold Pin
 25 – 49 Gold w/ Sapphire stone
 50 – 75 Gold w/ Ruby stone
 76 & up Gold w/ Diamond stone

Recruiter of the Year, both Department & National, due May 5th.

Department Recruiter of the Year, by May target date.

National Recruiter of the Year, by May target date.

The **Quick Draw** and the **100%**

Western Membership continued on page 6 >>



<< *Western Membership continued from page 5*

Membership (Gold & Silver) have been awarded as already delivered.

But there is another award with a coin issued to the **Post's Membership Team, achieving 103% or more.** Your Team will

receive a Gold coin (for the Team) and Plaque (for the post), the deadline is May 11th.

No form is needed, Department will verify it.

There are many other Awards, Ribbons & Certificates listed in this year's Membership

Manual. So keep up the hard work, and both the individual and Post's Membership Team is recognized for their efforts.

No work with great labor (Non-opus sine magna labor)

Northern Area Ball New Date

Troy Horsley, Northern Area
northernarea@legionmail.org



Attention! Attention! The Northern Area Ball has been changed to April 9, 2022. Please see the flyer included.

Happy March to you all. I hope you are doing well. Posts elections are coming up and

require your immediate attention. Elections at posts can sometimes become very controversial and cause issues that can hurt your post. Please take this time to prepare for a good and fair election. Review your Constitution and Bylaws, as well as your post's rules. You can appoint an election/nomination committee to review and clarify any ambiguous differences, if necessary, then get membership to vote on their recommendations. Publicize your specified dates and times for your election. Streamline and define what the process is going to be if you are having early or absentee voting.

These are just a few things to take into consideration.

The Northern Area has been very busy. District 3 facilitated an awesome visitation with the Department Commander. While visiting each of the posts, the commander received great insights on post concerns. He listened to the information provided and has been working with Department Headquarters to try and fix as many issues as possible. Another consistent question was on the Constitution and Bylaws. A designated committee is working on revising the Constitution and Bylaws for Department. We are hoping to get the recommended replacement out soon. As was evident from most of the posts, there are problems identified with processing membership and issues with MyLegion.org. I hope that we can also get this resolved soon. Department has been working with National to help this along.

Thanks to all who went to the *March on Tallahassee*. They got the message loud and clear that the Legion is going to be behind

legislation that serve the needs of our veterans. Your support made a difference to our members in Congress. The 4th, 5th and 17th District completed their Oratorical competitions and produced great candidates for the area competition that was held on the 19th. I'm looking forward to introducing our winning Northern Area competitor to compete at Department March 12, 2022.

Finally, but most importantly are our March events. March is **Women's History Month**, let's celebrate them and especially our women veterans. District 4 will be hosting the Department Commander. District 5 has an American Legion night scheduled for the sixth Jacksonville Iceman Game. There are due dates coming for your programs, at your posts that support your community, to be aware of: *JROTC Cadet of the Year Scholarship, General Scholarship, Eagle Scout of the Year, and Boys State Registration.*

Do not forget to work membership as our 90% goal is on the ninth. Hope to catch you at one of our events.

Western Area

John Edens, Western Area
westernarea@legionmail.org



Western Area continues to shine in the great state of Florida. Our Posts are moving forward in programs and membership. I can't thank you enough for all the community events you have excelled in the past eight months.

Now, in January and February, we have

prepped for our **Oratorical** candidate to go to the Department competition in March. Our selected candidate has been practicing diligently and we wish him the best at the Department competition.

Our **visit by the Department Commander** (in 1st District) in February went extremely well. Commander Brandt was quite impressed with the thirteen Posts he visited for all their hard work on programs and for the community. He emphasized that our Posts need to submit for Department awards in March.

Boys State Program is coming along well

with potential record candidates for our area. It looks like Western Area will have 40 – 45 candidates this year, so do a great job of selecting the best. Hopefully, we will have a National Oratorical candidate out of our area again this year.

Lastly, our **membership drive** is coming along well, but now is the time to really push for recruiting new members. Please use the help of the 400 and 208 sign-ups in your area. Put these Department members (Post 400) and Virtual members (Post 208) in your monthly emails and invite them in. **Thanks again for everyone's hard work and dedication to Legion's causes.**



Baseball Is In The Air

Terry Phillips, Baseball
baseball@legionmail.org



March is a great time of year as we transition into springtime activities.

Team registration for Senior and Junior Teams is open and we continue to trend up as we are

positioned to add another 10+ teams to the Department of Florida Baseball Program.

Any post that is wanting to start a Legion team this season, please contact your Area Commissioner or me directly and we will be available to help you get started.

You can go to the floridaamericanlegion.sportngin.com website (our Department Baseball website) where you can find

the contact list for myself and your Area commissioners, also you will see all of the upcoming important dates and information for our baseball program.

Thank you for your support of this vital Americanism Program.

Golf Tournament and Picnic Coming Up

Les Martin, Children & Youth
cy@legionmail.org



The time is running out. Our Children & Youth Golf Tournament and Picnic is fast approaching. (April 9, 2022) This will be the last newsletter before the events. The cut-off for hole sponsorships

is March 25, 2022. A Gold Sponsor is \$325 and you get 4 golfers and a hole sign. The Silver Sponsor is \$100 for a hole sign and golfers only are \$70 per golfer (\$280 for a foursome). Come on Folks, we can't have a Golf Tournament without golfers.

Register soon! Remember, send your checks, registration, and sponsorship forms to SAL Squadron 325, 3412 HWY 301N – Unit 103, Ellenton, Florida 34222. Checks should be made payable to Squadron 325 and don't forget to put "C&Y Golf" in the memo.

The Children & Youth Picnic is also on April 9th. We need raffle baskets. We are asking all Posts, Units, Squadrons, and Chapters to provide a basket. Last year we had over 50 baskets thanks to our Auxiliary Department Officers who brought a trailer load that they had collected from Units around the state. If you are going to Titusville for the Picnic and there is a Post near that is not going, please ask them if you can pick up a basket from

them and bring it over.

We already have a commitment from the Riders in the Jacksonville area to do a ride-in for the Picnic. I would like to see Riders from other areas of the state also do a ride-in. Folks love to see (and hear) the motorcycles arrive. I will be attending as many District meetings as possible in March to promote our activities and let you know what the Children & Youth is all about.

I know this article is short, but I am putting all my efforts into these upcoming events. We need to make them a success for the kids of Florida.

Baltimore Firefighters KIA

Daryl Bass, Law & Order
laworder@legionmail.org



I noticed that several of my Legion Link articles in the past have been about Law Enforcement Officers. I guess this is mainly due to the fact that I am a retired Deputy Sheriff. I don't mean to show them

injustice in their profession which is like Law Enforcement more of a calling than a job. Both occupations are extremely dangerous. I came across this article on the internet and I felt I should write about it as an example of just how dangerous being a Firefighter can be.

January 25, 2022
 Three Baltimore, Maryland firefighters were killed on Monday after part of a vacant Baltimore rowhouse collapsed, trapping them inside as they battled a blaze, the authorities said.

A fourth firefighter, in critical condition after the fire, was upgraded to fair condition on Tuesday, they said.

The Baltimore Fire Department responded to a call just before 6 a.m. at a three-story home about two miles west of downtown Baltimore, Chief Niles Ford said at a news conference on Monday afternoon.

After the firefighters became trapped, crews had to remove piles of debris to extricate

them, officials said. One was immediately pulled from the fire and transported to the hospital, where he remained in critical condition on Monday afternoon. Two other firefighters were removed from the fire and taken to the hospital, where they were pronounced dead. A third fire fighter was found dead at the scene.

"From this moment, we will honor those who lost their lives today for their bravery, for their courage for their love and compassion for this great city, and for the Fire Department as well," Chief Ford said.

He said in a statement on Thursday that he visited the fourth firefighter, John McMaster, in the hospital and that his condition had

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<< Law & Order continued from page 7

been upgraded to fair. But "he has a long way to go," he said.

The three firefighters who died were Lt. Paul Butrim, who had been with the Department for 16 years; Kelsey Sadler, a 15 year department veteran; and Kenny Lacayo, who had been with the Department for seven years. All of which leave behind families and

loved ones.

I researched the following: Firefighters Killed in the line of duty in 2021 62 fatalities in the U.S. 37 related emergency incidents. 33 died from heart attacks. 18 from activities. 12 non fire scenes. 8 while responding or returning from emergency incidents.

Reporting: U.S. Fire Administration Annual

Report.

In conclusion my brother as sister Legionnaires (Law & Order Chairs) it is imperative that we honor these hero's. Time is short please send your applications in to the Department (care of Bekki Tibbs) for Law Officer, Firefighter. Paramedic of the year.

Homelessness On The Increase

Deb Wheeler, Women Veterans

womenveterans@legionmail.org



Spring!! March indicates the beginning of spring, daylight savings, sun and growth. Flowers and new life begins after winter.

To start I am proud to announce our 1st regional Women Veterans

Summit to be held on March 5th at Post 273, Madeira Beach. The event will be held at 2 pm and involves the 15 and 16th Districts but all Women Veterans are welcome. This will be the 1st of more to come. This will be a casual brainstorming and sharing event with a guest speaker. Looking forward to seeing a lot of our sisters together.

The increasing number of homeless female veterans is increasing due to rental increases. A lot of younger female vets are giving their

children away to family members in order to find shelters. As you all know family shelters are few and far between. They are the last to ask for help due to pride, embarrassment. Put flyers in soup kitchens, churches, etc. We are the American Legion and together to can assist these women with the programs in the VA, the American Legion, and other sister Veterans Organizations. No veteran should ever be left behind male and female, without our intervention the 22 a day will continue.

Veterans Expo Results

Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements

veteransbenefits@legionmail.org



I want to thank Jim Wineland and the Legion Riders for allowing me to teach two classes at the Riders Summit and give a presentation on the results of Post 69's Veterans Expo. I can't thank the Riders enough for their hospitality. On behalf of the PVR Board, I'd like to

also express my thanks, as they collected just under \$50,000 for PROJECT: VetRelief during the Summit.

veteran suicides a day that happens throughout our nation. We feel that there is no one cure in fighting this epidemic, whether it be counseling, group activities, service animals, or just being in the right place at the right time.

In fact, there are already organizations that are providing their service for mental health to veterans and their families. Using a vetting process to identify credible sources, Florida programs are invited to join us by coming together to serve our veteran community better. Organizations will need a track record working with veterans, have result-based references, and have values aligned with our mission.

PROJECT: VetRelief will not only work towards establishing a statewide network but also provide financial support to our strategic partners by sponsoring veterans through their existing programs or allowing them to expand their services.

Below is a list of our current strategic partners.

- 22Zero

- First Counseling Orlando
- The Grey Team
- I Got Your 6 (IGY6) Foundation
- K9 Line
- Liberty-OVE
- Paint 22
- SOF Missions
- Veterans Counseling Veterans
- Norman Bissel, LMHC

Through various Challenge 22 events, PROJECT: VetRelief's goal is to raise awareness on the staggering statistic on veteran suicide. Whether it's a ruck walk, educational seminar, or speaking engagement, there's no shortage of opportunities to alert our communities on the importance of mental health within our veteran communities and understanding the severity of Post-Traumatic Stress.

Please reach out to me if your post would like to host an event. I would be more than glad to assist you and post in planning an event like this.



As a reminder, the Suicide Prevention Initiative (SPI) under PVR, was formed to do our

part in making a dent in the tragic statistic of 22



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

floridalegion.org

NEWS, FORMS, VETERAN RESOURCES
UPCOMING EVENTS, AND MORE





WELCOME TO THE TEAM... PATTY & LOIS

We are extremely excited to officially announce that we recently welcomed Patty Halliday and Lois Halliday to the PROJECT: VetRelief Board of Directors!

Patty has been involved with American Legion Auxiliary since she was very young, but has been a continuous member for twelve years under her father, Donald Halliday. She has also been the Department's Secretary for the past five years and is a proud Navy veteran spouse. Lois served honorably in the United States Navy for four years, and has held dual membership in the Legion and Auxiliary for seven years. She's been on many Auxiliary committees from the Unity, District and Department level and is currently the Department's Assistant Sergeant at Arms. Both ladies have expressed that they are honored to be on the PVR Board and looking forward to further helping Florida's veterans.



Patty Halliday
Board Member

In October, PVR issued an invitation to the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Florida Executive Committee (DEC) to invite 1-2 representatives to join our Board of Directors. Their DEC entertained nominations, held a vote and elected Patty Halliday, their Department Secretary, and Lois Halliday. As an official program to The American Legion, Department of Florida, it was important to have the voice and influence of the *entire* Florida Legion Family, which includes the Auxiliary.



Lois Halliday
Board Member

We are extremely grateful that the current Auxiliary Department President, Wanda Brandt, chose to support our program for her year. She pioneered the Auxiliary's involvement from the Department level and opened the door of opportunity to engage their membership. However, Auxiliary members have always been welcomed to attend our classes and engage in our program.

Please help us welcome both Patty and Lois to our team!

UPCOMING SUICIDE PREVENTION EVENTS

Whether it's a ruck walk, educational seminar or speaking engagement, there's no shortage of opportunities to alert our communities through our PVR/SPI Challenge 22 events on this serious issue our veterans are facing. These events are designed to encompass fundraising, creating awareness and educating our communities on the importance of mental health within our veteran communities and understanding the severity of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

MARCH

26 Jax Challenge 22 Event
Jacksonville Beach, FL
Registration: \$22/walker \$35 Walk+TShirt
Registration Link:
<https://give.floridalegion.org/Challenge22Jax>

26 District 13 Veteran Resource Fair
Post 110 in Port Charlotte, FL
Walk: 10:15AM Ceremony: 11:30AM

APRIL

24 ALR In-State Unity Ride
Entire State of Florida
↓
29 Week long event with two Ride Routes (Gulf & Atlantic) travelling to raise awareness for veteran suicides. Anyone can participate, even if it's virtually!

SIGN UP:
<https://give.floridalegion.org/2022UnityRide>

30 ALR State Rally
OCC Roadhouse, Clearwater
Celebrate with the Legion Riders after their week-long journey raising funds and awareness for veteran suicide. Enjoy food, entertainment and camaraderie!
FREE ADMISSION!

SUPPORT CASES

JULY 2021 - JAN 2022

*Reflect PVR Cases ONLY



114 FAMILIES ASSISTED



\$118,201.78
AMOUNT DISTRIBUTED

Florida Districts Send Care To Servicemembers Serving In Ukraine

The American Legion, 02/03/22

[legion.org](https://www.legion.org)

When the American Legion Family is called into action, they respond. This response was visible in the American Legion Department of Florida when members from three districts sent care packages to U.S. servicemembers serving in Ukraine to bring them the comfort of home.

"My heart is really into this because I was deployed multiple times, so I understand what it means to be connected back home. One of the great ways is to receive a package from folks back home," said Johnny Castro, Florida's southern area district commander, who retired from the U.S. Army in 2016 with deployments to Iraq, Qatar and Kuwait, and lead the care package project.

Castro was recently contacted by the commander of a Florida National Guard unit that is serving in Ukraine to see if The American Legion could support his unit of 165 servicemembers. Castro responded, "Absolutely."

Castro reached out to the three district commanders (Districts 9, 11 and 14) in his area about collecting supplies for the care packages. He had everyone send out messages to the

posts within their districts about the request for donations. "When we get the call to help out, we step up and do it," he said. "The servicemembers don't have a whole lot of provisions that makes their day-to-day living a little more bearable."

From his experience of deployments, Castro identified the items needed for the care packages. Items collected included hygiene products (deodorant, bar soap, toothbrush/toothpaste, lip balm, shampoo/conditioner, foot powder), food (protein bars, jerky, trail mix, individually wrapped crackers and cheese or peanut butter, meat in foil packets) energy drink mixes, hand warmers, candy, gum, playing cards, puzzles and games.

Donations were brought to District 11's meeting at Post 268 in Riviera Beach on Jan. 22, where they were packaged by members of the Legion, Sons of The American Legion, Auxiliary and Riders. Enough donations were collected to package 65 care boxes. "It was incredible. Really impactful," Castro said. "One of the reasons why I joined The American Legion was because it's a great organization that creates more impact than the other organizations that I also belong to. It's the different programs in The American Legion and the way that it creates outreach within the community to support not only our

veterans and their families, but also the active-duty component."

The National Guard unit commander said he was going to separate the items in the packages when they arrived. So instead of addressing care packages to individual servicemembers, items were packaged separately to allow servicemembers to take what they needed. In each care package, Castro left his business card and a copy of The American Legion Magazine. He also wrote a letter on behalf of the American Legion Department of Florida that included the website address of the department and national.

The care packages were shipped at no cost by Project Holiday of Delray Beach, Fla., which ships care packages to deployed servicemembers. Even though they normally ship over the holidays, Castro said, "They thought this was another opportunity to help out our deployed personnel. So they are funding the cost of shipping."

Castro is a recipient of a care package from Project Holiday. While deployed, they shipped 250 care packages to his until of about 195. "It really didn't matter what was in the box," he said. "All that mattered was that we knew it was coming from home. And that's all we needed."



February 24, 2022 Membership Target Report (85%)		
6	Joe Marcheggiani	90.72%
1	Sonny Decker	87.67%
16	Robert Matheson	87.58%
9	George Bograkos	87.39%
13	Harold Boyer	86.97%
7	Burl Thomas	86.01%
8	Skip Felicita	85.57%
14	Thomas Frank	84.98%
12	Dennis Mallon	84.61%
5	Lena Heredia-Perez	84.34%
3	Stuart Scott	83.66%
17	Jim Bowers	83.16%
4	John Bennett	81.99%
2	Steve Mears	80.88%
11	Harry Malecki	78.03%
15	Stephen Tyler	77.12%
Eastern	Daryl Bass	87.92%
Western	John Edens	86.62%
Southwestern	Jessica Moore	86.33%
Central	Bruce Carl	84.28%
Northern	Troy Horsley	83.48%
Southern	Johnny Castro	82.61%
Post 400		78.57%
Post 208		78.80%



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.



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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.



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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



Next Membership Goal:
March 2, 2022

90%

www.thelit.com



Central Area Ball

March 19th 4 - 9 pm

Post 252

**11433 Park Blvd
Seminole, FL**

**Tickets \$35 per person
Couples \$65
Contact Steve Tyler for tickets
tylersf@hotmail.com
813-857-3671**

- * Raffles**
- * 50 / 50**
- * Cocktail Hour 4 pm**
- * Dinner 5 pm**
- * Specialty Drinks**

~ Menu ~

Hawaiian Chicken
Hawaiian BBQ Pork
Rice
Vegetable
Green Salad
Fruit Salad
Pineapple Upside Down Cake
Hawaiian Delight



**Entertainment
7 - 9 pm
Billy "Elvis" Lindsey**



All proceeds to benefit Project Vet Relief and My Warriors Place



EASTERN AREA BALL

COUNTRY & WESTERN STYLE

APRIL 30 @ 1 PM

FEATURING

PULLED PORK & CHICKEN & ALL THE

FIXIN'S \$30 PER PERSON

RSVP BY APRIL 15

LIVE MUSIC ! RAFFLES ! LAKESIDE @ AMERICAN

LEGION OLD GLORY POST 183 - 2706 WELLS

AVENUE FERN PARK, FL 32730

THE FINE PRINT DETAILS:

RSVP TO DARYL BASS: 407-738-3357-

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: DARYL BASS EASTERN AREA COMMANDER

-3014 DIAMOND LN ST CLOUD FL 34772

PLEASE INCLUDE NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS AND NUMBER OF GUESTS ATTENDING

HOTEL ROOM BLOCK: HILTON ALTAMONTE SPRINGS - \$119 PER NIGHT AVAILABLE

APRIL 29-MAY 1 MENTION ALA22 OR ONLINE AT :

[HTTPS://WWW.HILTON.COM/EN/ATTEND-MY-EVENT-ALA22-04292022-0502202](https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event-ala22-04292022-0502202)

CUT OFF DATE MARCH 30 2022



EASTERN AREA BALL
April 30th, 2022
At
American Legion Post 183 Fern Park
2706 Wells Ave
Fern Park, FL 32730

PROGRAM ADS

FULL PAGE	\$50.00
½ PAGE	\$35.00
BUSINESS CARD	\$25.00

COMMENTS

Send pictures and comments by e-mail to: cmariebass27@outlook.com

CUT OFF DATE FOR AD IS: March 30, 2022

PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECKS TO:

Daryl Bass
Eastern Area Commander
3014 Diamond Lane
St. Cloud, FL 34772

(407) 738-3357

CHILDREN & YOUTH GOLF TOURNAMENT



PICNIC

Sat. April 9, 2022

Golf - Shotgun Start at 8:00am, Indian River Preserve Golf Club

3950 Clubhouse Drive, Mims, Fl

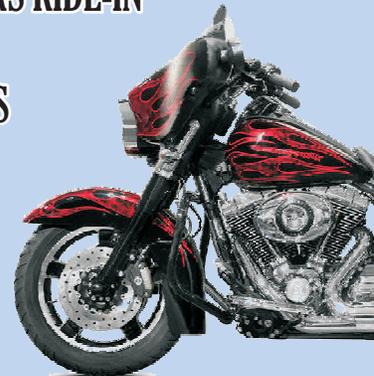
Picnic at Noon, Post 1

1281 N Washington Ave. Titusville, Fl

- FOOD
- FUN
- ENTERTAINMENT
- FUN
- AUCTION
- FUN
- LEGION RIDERS RIDE-IN
- FUN
- GOLF AWARDS
- FUN



Silent Auction



Golfers, dinner is available on Friday the 8th, at Post 1. Call ahead at least one week to let them know you are going to dinner, so they can have enough food for the night. (321) 269-9959

Hotel reservations for the 8th and/or 9th, Best Western Space Shuttle Inn, \$59 per night - (321) 269-9100

THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
CHILDREN & YOUTH GOLF TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2022

Team Registration Form

GOLFERS

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

SPONSORSHIPS & FEES

GOLD SPONSOR (4 GOLFERS & HOLE SPONSOR SIGN) \$325 _____

SILVER SPONSOR (HOLE SPONSORSHIP ONLY) \$100 _____

GOLFERS ONLY (\$70 PER GOLFER) \$280 _____

SPONSORSHIP CUT-OFF DATE: MARCH 25, 2022

TOTAL SUBMITTED _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

CONTACT PERSON FOR THE TEAM _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: S.A.L. Squadron 325. Put "C&Y Golf" in memo
and mail to Squadron 325, 3412 HWY 301N - Unit 103, Ellenton, FL 34222

ANY QUESTIONS - CALL LES MARTIN (941) 201-7293

American Legion Department of Florida

Northern Area Ball

Commander

Troy Horsley

Invites you to attend on

Saturday April 9th

Red White and Blue Theme

American Legion Ocean Post 129

Tickets: \$25 per person

Dress: Formal/Semi-Formal/ Military

Social hour 5-6 pm followed by dinner and
entertainment

**All proceeds to go to Boy's State*

Menu: Roasted pork with a green peppercorn demi glaze served over mash potatoes, side salad, rolls and dessert.

_____ \$25.00 per person (seating limited to 120)

**American Legion Post 129
1151 4th Street S
Jacksonville Beach, Fl 32250
Ph# 904 249-2266**

Program ads: _____ ½ page \$30.00 _____ Full page \$50.00

Due Date for ads is April 1 in Jpeg or Word format. Email to Horsley.Troy@yahoo.com. Send form/make Checks payable to

Troy Horsley 1322 Clements Rd, Jacksonville, Florida 32211

Hotel Hampton Inn - Jax/ Ponte Vedra Beach 1220 Marsh Landing Pkwy Jax Fl 32250. Room rate is \$154.00 per night. Call hotel directly for reservations at (904)280-9101 and mention American Legion Group rate.

****All proceeds to go to Boy's State***



The American Legion
High School Oratorical
Scholarship Program

Support Your Area's Competitor
at State Finals

March 12, 2022
Competition begins at 9:00 am

Dept. of Florida HQ
Orlando, FL





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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ OPEN TO ALL | FREE FOR VIETNAM VETERANS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

