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Submit Articles at floridalegion.org/submit or legionlink@floridalegion.org

Questions? legionlink@floridalegion.org



A Message from the Department Commander

Michael "Gambler" Raymond, Commander

Commander@floridalegion.org



As our membership numbers continue to rise, we all should be very proud of what we are accomplishing this year. We are entering our final quarter and achieving numbers we haven't seen in many years.

We have now surpassed last year's numbers, and I'm asking you for that final push to continue the amazing year we are having. As I travel around the state, I see how hard you are working to achieve our goals this year. They are not only being recognized locally but nationally. As the second-largest membership Department, we are improving the overall numbers for the entire country. As of this writing, we are in fourth place nationally, with nowhere to go but up. We are also very close to our renewal goal of 90% but have a little more work to do. Please continue this final push by contacting members who have not yet renewed, not just last year but the previous years. Currently, we have approximately 10,000 members who have yet to renew. It could take just a quick phone call or email to remind them of all the great things we do. Again, thank you for all you do!

I am currently finishing up the District visits for the year. I've traveled the State with Past Department Commanders in previous years, but nothing can compare to what I'm seeing this year. There are so many hard working Legion family members that I see every day who deserve so much appreciation but never get it. I encourage you as leaders to show these folks the appreciation they deserve. One of the biggest complaints I see out there is the lack of volunteers. I believe we have plenty of volunteers. Our problem is getting these volunteers to continue. Many do not get the appreciation they deserve and do not return. So, let's recognize what our volunteers do and reward accordingly.

Keep up the great work, Legion Family. You are appreciated!

COMMANDER'S CHARITIES Disaster Relief and C.O.T.A.



Commander's Goal: \$50,000 (Current funds raised **\$74,481.95**)



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Training and Children & Youth

Chris Hamrick, 1st Vice Commander

1stvice@legionmail.org



Fellow Legionnaires,

April has arrived, and things are jumping off everywhere I look.

We're having a great year, and time is flying! Let's keep up the

great work and work with each other in bringing everything to completion. It looks as if we have potential RACE TO THE TOP Districts once again this year. Congratulations, and best of luck to them. Our membership numbers are rocking it, and our Department membership team stands ready to assist with any issues, membership drives, revitalizations, training, etc.. that you may need. Don't be afraid to reach out if you need help.

This month will be as busy as ever, and it's Children and Youth Month. The Department Children and

Youth Picnic will be held at Post 117 in Palm Bay on Saturday, April 6th. I look forward to seeing you there. This is a great event every year, and this year is shaping up to be even better. Remember that Children and Youth are one of our 4 Pillars.

Remember the words **MENTORSHIP, TRAINING, and CONTINUITY.**

Take somebody under your wing and show them the ropes. Start grooming upcoming Legionnaires and potential leaders. Train them and continue to attend training for yourselves. Conduct training. Then we will build the continuity to move our great organization forward into the future and meet the ever-changing needs of our Veterans, Communities, State, and Nation.

BE THE ONE... KEEP IT REAL. PEACE

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

- 1-30 Children & Youth Month
- 1-30 Month of the Military Child
- 1-30 Military Saves Month
- 1-30 ALR: Round Robin ✨
- 1 Jr. Shooting Sports 2dn Targets due to CMP ★
- 1 Medical/Nursing Scholarship Applications Due ✨
- 3 Chapter 136: ALR Meeting
- 6 Chapter 88: 16th Annual Fun Run
- 6 Chapter 316: ALR Monthly Meeting
- 6 Post 117: Children & Youth Picnic Poker Run
- 6 District 3: Meeting & Picnic
- 6 Department Children & Youth Picnic ✨
- 6 Post 117: Childs Military Table Ceremony
- 9-14 Dept Commander visits Panama City/Navarre 🗺️
- 10 Dept Membership Goal 95% ✨
- 10 ALR: Chapter 10 Meeting
- 12 Scholarship Winners Announced ✨
- 13 Thomas Jefferson's Birthday
- 13 District 12: Meeting & Candidates Call
- 13 Western Area Ball 🗺️
- 14 U.S. Air Force Reserve Birthday
- 14 Chapter 8: ALR Meeting
- 15 Legion Link Articles Due for May ✨
- 15 Purple Up! For Military Kids Day
- 15 Tax Day
- 17 End of the Year Nominations Due ✨
- 17 District 4: DCC
- 20 District 8: Meeting & Picnic
- 20 Post 118: Revitalization Open House
- 21-27 ALR In-State Unity Ride & Rally ✨
- 21 Post 69: Kids' Drive-In
- 22 Earth Day
- 23 U.S. Army Reserve Birthday
- 24 Administrative Professionals Day
- 26 Arbor Day
- 27 Chapter 10: ALR Bike Night
- 29 District 15: District Commander visits Post 108
- 30 Military Brats Day
- All Tue Chapter 117: ALR Corn Hole Tournament

🗺️ Commander attendance tentative.

✨ Department of Florida event.

★ National event.

Events are subject to change. More details at floridalegion.org.

April 7 is World Health Day

Jessica Moore, 2nd Vice Commander

2ndvice@legionmail.org



Part of World Health includes staying healthy and happy.

Veteran suicide prevention and safeguarding Veteran benefits are two priorities of The American

Legion's legislative agenda for the second session of the 118th Congress. Those

priorities and other concerns were addressed with members of the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Commission during a 2024 Washington Conference panel discussion that included Department of Veterans Affairs leadership.

The Be the One initiative continues to grow and expand. Would you know what to say to a suicidal friend? The best approach is to listen openly about

their feelings and why they are feeling that way. If you believe they may harm themselves, get more help to keep them safe. You can work through any anger or upset feelings they may have about you, getting help to keep them safe. Have you ever heard of a hope kit? It may be something to consider creating with a friend in need. The Hope Kit comprises items that serve as visual and tactile reminders of reasons for living. For example, patients often use shoe boxes to house pictures of loved ones, letters from friends, inspirational music or poems, and/or prayer cards.

My thought is if anything can save a life, it's worth trying. Be the one.

BE THE ONE



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Policy and Procedure

Jim Ramos, NEC

nec@legionmail.org



National Commander or National guests visit preparation:

- 1. Meeting Setting:** Meetings should be held in a more formal meeting space.

However, if in a lounge is the only available space, efforts should be made to minimize the appearance of a “bar” and smoking should be prohibited during the meeting.

- 2. Engagement with Members:** At meetings, National Commanders and Vice Commanders should be able to address members and discuss plans for the year. Members should be encouraged to ask questions and engage with the national guests respectfully.
- 3. Gifts and Donations:** While presentations and gifts can be given to visiting guests, a donation to their chosen charity is often appreciated the most. Arrange for a photo backdrop that does not include a bar-style setting.
- 4. Communication:** National leaders are interested in the Post’s membership status, programs, community interactions, and relationships with local leaders.

National Commander or National guests expectations:



The National Commander or National Vice Commander typically wants to gather information and insights on several key areas during their visit to a Post:

- 1. Membership and Post Programs:** They are interested in learning about the current status of membership within the Post, including any challenges or successes in recruitment and retention efforts. Additionally, they want to know about the various programs and activities the Post is involved in, such as community service projects, veteran support initiatives, and youth programs.
- 2. Post’s Performance and Interactions with the Community:** They want to understand what initiatives and strategies are working well for the Post, as well as any areas where improvement may be needed. This includes assessing the Post’s effectiveness in engaging with the local community, supporting veterans, and promoting the organization’s mission and values.
- 3. Relationships with Community Leaders:** They are interested in the Post’s relationships with key community stakeholders, such as City Council Members, Mayors, Senators, Representatives, and Congress Members. They want to know about any collaborations, partnerships, or advocacy efforts the Post is involved in, as well as opportunities for further engagement and support from these leaders.



Overall, the National Commander or National Vice Commander wants to see a thriving and active Post that is making a positive impact in its community, effectively supporting its members, and upholding the values of the organization. They value open communication, collaboration, and a commitment to the organization’s mission and objectives.

Department Level:

- 1. Issue Resolution:** Post-related issues should be addressed internally at the Post and, as a last resort, at the Department level rather than escalated to National Headquarters.
- 2. Understanding Policies:** Members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Post’s Constitution and ByLaws for clarity on procedures and regulations.
- 3. Educational Resources:** The 2024 Office’s Guide and Manual of Ceremonies and the Department of Florida Constitution and By-laws are recommended resources for further understanding and guidance.

Overall, these guidelines emphasize effective communication, respect for protocols, and a focus on community engagement and support. They aim to ensure smooth operations and cohesion within the organization at various levels.





Washington Conference and Membership Updates

Jerry Brandt, ANEC

anec@legionmail.org



Comrades,

I would like to thank everyone who attended the Washington Conference and visited with Florida's House Representatives and Senators. We

had a good turnout this year, and while the House was not in session, we did make our presence known. Thank you.

Some of the items we discussed with our House and Senate officials included:

1. Major Richard Star Act, in which Service Members who were medically retired have full access to both Military Retirement Pay and Disability Benefits
2. Update base housing and barracks. The military is still using temporary housing built in WWII as barracks and housing.

3. Pay the Coast Guard; we just missed the bullet again this year.
4. Cap lawyers pay to process claims for our Veterans, such as those stationed at Camp Lejeune.
5. Suicide Prevention

Reminder: July 1st will bring an increase in dues. However, you can now renew online at the current rate up to 2027. Go to www.legion.org, click on the Renew tab, and fill out the information.

Post's Florida Corporation Annual Report due May 1, 2024

Shirley Douglas, Finance Officer

financeofficer@legionmail.org



May 1, 2024, is rapidly approaching. The Post's Florida Corporation Annual Report should be submitted to <https://dos.fl.gov/sunbiz/> by 11:59 pm

Eastern time on Wednesday, May 1, 2024 (Non-Profit Corporations are not subject to the \$400 late fee). If the Annual Report is not filed by the third Friday in September, an administrative dissolution of the Post's Corporation will be processed by the State of Florida. The dissolution of the Post's Corporation means the Post

is no longer Incorporated, and the Post's Consumer's Certificate of Exception status is revoked. When the Certificate is revoked, the Post is no longer considered a tax-exempt entity.

As you file your Annual Report, you may notice a new Federal requirement effective January 1, 2024, for Reporting Beneficial Ownership Information. I researched this requirement at <https://www.fincen.gov/boi-faqs>. Tax-exempt corporations are exempt from this filing requirement per Frequently Asked Questions C.2 line 19 in the Table of Exempt Companies.

Note: Per the 2023-2024 Florida Department Training Guide, each Post in Florida is required to be incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida (Department Constitution, Article X, Section 18). This is required not only to protect the Post but also to protect its membership. If a Post is not incorporated and a lawsuit is brought against it, the Post, its officers, and its members may be held financially liable).

The same website, <https://dos.fl.gov/sunbiz>, provides information on how to incorporate, reinstate, or validate a corporation's status.

Veterans – Family - Friends

Bob Matheson, Central Area Commander

central@legionmail.org



When I am out in the Central Area with my Legion shirt on or driving in my truck with my Legion sign, I am often asked what the American Legion is. Well, the dictionary definition says, "a society,

organized in 1919, composed of Veterans of the armed forces of the U.S." For me, it is three words:

Veterans, Family, and Friends.

Veterans: That's easy; it is a Veteran's organization. But why do we join? Many of us join so we can be with the men and women who have served and understand the difficulties that we have faced. For many, it is a safe environment that allows them to know that the people at the Post are there for them. We also join to be part of an organization that works for the betterment of our Veterans. We can once again be part of a team.

Family: Many members join because they are the spouse of a Veteran, because their mom, Dad, or

a family member was in the service because they grew up going to the local American Legion as kids and now want to show their respect for that family member. But often, you find out you joined because of family, but your family has now grown. I often hear people say, when asked who someone is, they say, "They're part of my Legion family."

Friends: Much like our family, we often join the Post because of a friend. We often find that as we take our friends to the Post, they see what we

Central Area Commander continued on page 5 >>



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<< Central Area Commander continued from page 4

do, and decide to join. But how many times do we join a Post and immediately our number of friends grows!

So now, when I'm asked what the American Legion is, I tell them I could give them a long explanation,

but to me, it's just three simple words: **Veterans, Family, and Friends!**

So, how is membership doing in the Central Area? Membership within the Central Area and Department is moving at a great pace. The 7th District is currently at 95.91%. They have 9 of their 12 Posts

over 90%, with 5 Posts over 100%. The 15th District is at 94.43%, with 15 of their 17 Post over 85%, with 5 Post over 100%. The 16th District is currently at 91.76 1%, which, due to its size, is the largest District in the Department. It always starts slow but is gaining momentum. The 16th District has 12 of its 15 Posts over 85%, with 1 Post at 100%.

Eastern Area Information

Joe Marcheggiani, Eastern Area Commander

eastern@legionmail.org



Local American Legion Posts contribute to "Children and Youth" in various ways, often tailored to their community's specific needs and interests. Some common ways in which local Posts support children and youth include:

Many of our Posts offer scholarships to graduating high school seniors or provide financial assistance for educational programs. These scholarships can help alleviate the financial burden of higher education for deserving students. Some Posts sponsor or organize youth sports teams, leagues, or tournaments. These programs promote physical activity, teamwork, and sportsmanship among children and adolescents in the community. Often,

Posts sponsor Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, providing meeting space, equipment, and financial support. These scouting programs offer young people opportunities for personal growth, leadership development, and outdoor experiences.

Local Posts may organize leadership development programs, workshops, or conferences for young people, helping them develop essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, and decision-making. Posts frequently engage children and youth in community service projects, such as park clean-ups, food drives, or fundraisers for charitable causes. These activities instill a sense of civic responsibility and empathy in young participants.

Some Posts invite Veterans to share their experiences and knowledge with local youth through presentations, workshops, or mentorship programs.

These interactions foster intergenerational connections and promote understanding and appreciation for Veterans' contributions. Posts may collaborate with local schools, law enforcement agencies, or community organizations to provide educational programs on topics such as drug prevention, internet safety, and bullying prevention. American Legion Posts often recognize outstanding achievements and contributions of young people in the community through awards, scholarships, or certificates of appreciation.

By actively engaging with children and youth in their communities, your Post can play a vital role in fostering the next generation's well-being, development, and success. These efforts benefit individual young people and contribute to building stronger, more connected communities overall.

Information on Training New Officers

Lena Heredia-Perez, Northern Area Commander

northern@legionmail.org



Greetings Comrades!!

As nominations for various Post/District Officers come to a close and elections are right around the corner, we cannot stress enough

the importance of educating these potential new officers about their duties and responsibilities as an officer of The American Legion. It is unfortunate that throughout this past year, on several occasions,

I have stumbled across when a Post Commander position is vacated, the 1st Vice Commander is not prepared to take on the duties of the Commander. Please do The American Legion and your Post a favor, and do not pencil in a name just to fill a vacancy. Mentor each other; Mentor your replacement!

Remember, knowledge is power. There are various opportunities for us to educate these new officers. At a minimum, we must provide these new officers with a copy of the Post Constitution & Bylaws, which

should outline their job description. Does your District or neighboring District offer Post Officer Training? If so, please make plans to attend. Last but not least, if you haven't already made plans to attend the Department Convention June 13-15, 2024, and you have the desire to further educate yourself on how to be a better Legionnaire and/or Officer of The American Legion, I strongly encourage you to do so. During the Convention, The Department offers various classes throughout the entire weekend to ensure that we are prepared for the upcoming year.

Northern Area Commander continued on page 6 >>



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<< Northern Area Commander continued from page 5

Important Deadlines:

- End of the Year Awards
May 8, 2024
- Consolidated Post Report (CPR)
May 8, 2024
- Department Addendum
May 8, 2024
- 2024-2025 Post Information & Officer Report
June 1, 2024
- 2024 Certification of Service Record of Post Officers
June 1, 2024 Due June 1, 2024

If you need help filling out any of these documents, please contact your District Officers or myself so we

can ensure the Northern Area is at 100% reporting. Keep up the amazing work, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 17th District! Your hard work is not going unnoticed!

Race To The Top and Year-End Due Dates

Yesterday was the official cut-off for District Commanders' "Race to the Top," and I am proud to announce that (2) of the (4) Districts within the Northern Area have qualified for this prestigious award. Congratulations to District 3 (Category II) and District 17 (Category III)! Fingers crossed that your Districts are awarded this National Award! It is no secret that this has been a record year for membership throughout The American Legion as a whole. However, I am extremely proud of these

Districts. Why might you ask? Throughout these Districts, my conversations have led me to find out that this is not possible just because of the District leadership. It is because the Post leadership wanted to not only showcase their Post but they also wanted to showcase their District as well.

Please DO NOT stop pushing membership! The only way to Stop the Slide and grow is to push/process membership to the very last day possible. Therefore, I encourage each of you to continue to reach out to your current membership who has yet to renew their 2024 membership dues, including Post 400 and Post 400AD members in your surrounding Areas.

Quick Message

Stuart Scott, District 3 Commander

District3@legionmail.org



Happy April third District! First, I want to thank you for all of your hard work in getting our District to 100% +. Through

Buddy Checks, phone calls, mailings, and outstanding programs at your Post, we were the first District to reach 100% again this year! We will celebrate this accomplishment at our District Meeting/Picnic on April 6th at Post 83. **Be proud to Be Legion!**

Deadlines for Applications

Bruce Thurber, District 12 Commander

District12@legionmail.org



Well, silly season has begun.

Don't forget that on April 6th, we have the Children and Youth Picnic at Post 117.

Membership is going strong, and our goal is 95%. If everyone in the 6th and

12th Districts made 1% more, the Eastern Area would be 100%.

We are now looking for two candidates from the 12th District to go to the state police academy. If you have someone, please let me know. The cost to send them is \$450.00 each.

The District meeting/Candidates Call is on Saturday, April 13th. Saturday, the 27th District Training at Post 394 starts at 8:30 AM. Open to all District Legionnaires and Sons of the American Legion, the topics will be the duties of officers. Anyone interested in running for office should attend. Time to turn in your applications. Some of the cutoffs are below.

- Medical School Scholarship/Nursing School Scholarship Applications Due April 1, 2024
- Teacher of the Year Awards – April 17, 2024
- Law Officer of the Year Due April 17, 2024
- Fire Fighter of the Year Due April 17, 2024
- EMT/Paramedic of the Year Due April 17, 2024

Membership and Children & Youth Programs

Randy Holeyfield, District 15 Commander

District15@legionmail.org



Greetings,

The year is starting to close, but there is still plenty of time to get your membership to 100% and then 103+%. There are so many times that Posts are only

a few members from achieving their 100%. And every year, we are challenged with membership; why? Membership is not a "We are small or large" because the size of a Post is only a consolidation of individuals, whether 30 or 3,000 members; it is the single member who is the determining factor. Yes, if every single Legionnaire paid their dues (in a timely

manner), membership would be simple, which it is. It is all of these individuals who make it daunting, either putting off renewal or thinking they are going to stretch it out. But the fact is, membership starts on July 1st every year, so even if you pay it on December 31st, it is still due on July 1st; how much did you really stretch it out? None, not one extra

District 15 Commander continued on page 7 >>



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<< District 15 Commander continued from page 6

day. What all of this does is make it more difficult for their Post Membership Team.

The biggest misconception or perception is looking at it as "Dues" when, in fact, it boils down to it being a Donation to an organization focused on Veterans' rights, our Children & Youth, and their communities. You say "Donation", yes, it's because of what our core usage of those dues that makes it true. Most Posts are around \$50 a year; well, if you present dues as a donation perspective and show what their dues are doing, you can get past that view. One great example is "Agent Orange," where the government denied it was harmful; yep, that sounds like the government. Well, TAL paid for a university long-term health study on the effects of Agent Orange to prove it, and we did. While gathering the results, which were very damaging, we drafted legislation to get benefits for Vietnam Veterans, though in three separate phases, we did it.

Another example is when the government essentially shut down because of budget issues, the US Coast Guard still had to function without pay, though their mortgages, rent, electricity, food, etc... still went on. The American Legion paid out over \$2,000,000 to help them. Where do you think these millions of dollars come from? Yes, it's you and your dues, so they are essentially a donation. Quit looking at it as dues and see it as a donation to an organization focused on America and all that dwells within it. And not to mention all the many scholarships and programs we provide. Therefore, please pay your "Donation" at the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1st which also gives you access to the privileges as a TAL member.

Also, thank you to all the supporting segments that make TAL a Family. Together with the Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, and Legion Riders, we are a well-rounded organization for the betterment of our Veterans, youth, and communities. The various

approaches and programs these vital portions of TAL take are significant and robust, which completes our impact on our Nation.

Lastly, I want to thank a couple of the Posts that have taken such a vigorous and active development to broaden their Posts. Post 418 and Post 108, which now have all four groups, have made an impression on their fellow Posts and the Department. Post 418 has worked hard to attain their Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and Riders. Likewise, Post 108 has attained all four of the Legion Family and an Honor Guard, but even more significant to, Post 108 now has a Legion Baseball team. Both of these Posts have worked hard to develop these in a relatively short period of time. They prove that most anything can be achieved with combined and vigorous efforts. Instead of looking at how difficult something might be, just grab the bull by the horns and steer it in the direction that will benefit your Post and The American Legion as a whole.

ALR Year-End Events

Jim Wineland, American Legion Riders Chair

alr@legionmail.org



Here is our final riding event for 2023/2024, the Round Robin, followed by our Rally. One thing to include in your planning is the delivery of the Children and Youth check on April 6th, Post 117.

We want to thank our three Road Captains, Jason, Joe, and Zane, for all their efforts in setting up the rides. I know from my own experience that it takes a lot of time and patience to do all the planning and legwork. It's not done until the last stop on the fifth day of the actual ride. Things have a way of changing from day to day.

PROJECT: VetRelief (PVR) - Suicide

Prevention Initiative (SPI):

The program's demands have grown over its ten years of operation. A few years ago, the Suicide Prevention Initiative was added, and your efforts have raised \$520,000 to support the SPI side of the operation. Those dollars go to support our strategic partners, who provide mental health support for SPI. Thank you for your continued support on behalf of the Leadership Team at PVR/SPI.

Do not forget those Bike Raffle Tickets, and have your Chapters purchase tickets. If you win the Bike, you could raffle it again to support your Chapter.

- You can enter online at: floridalegion.org/winbike
- All ticket stubs and checks are to be sent to Bekki Boarman at Department.

- Please mail your checks and ticket stubs no later than April 15th to:

ALR Bike Raffle,
Attn: Bekki Boarman
1912 A Lee Road
Orlando, FL 32810

- Do not send cash. The dollars you collect, please deposit the funds into your Chapter or Post's bank account and write a check.
- Make the check payable to the ALR Department of FL.
- On the memo line, write your Chapter Number/Bike Raffle. We want to be able to track sales back to the chapter and District. Do not forget that tickets sold and dollars raised

American Legion Riders Chair continued on page 8 >>



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<< American Legion Riders Chair continued from page 7

will be credited to your District towards trophy points for the "Round Robin" competition.

- The cutoff date to mail in checks and ticket stubs to the Department is April 15, 2024.
- If you sell tickets past that date, arrange for them to be picked up by one of the three In-State Unity Ride stops or bring them to the Rally at OCC in Clearwater for the drawing on April 27th at 5:30 PM.

Your 2023 – 2024 Schedule

- Round Robin, Month of April 2024
- Children and Youth Picnic, April 6, 2024

With the New Motorcycle Safety Program, we have additional reporting requirements to support it. The questionnaire is simple: it has about four or five questions, the name of the event, the number of participants, and safety material handed out. You can email it to me or the new Assistant Program Manager, Connie Koonce.

We have more committees coming on board to help us out. As I mentioned, we have grown into a professional riding organization, and we need to

- In-State Unity Ride
 - Meet & Greet, April 21, 2024

delegate more responsibilities to other individuals which should make a smooth

If you have any ideas, please share! Thank You for what you do. We are proud to be part of your Leadership Team of such an excellent group!

NOTE: Children & Youth Picnic scheduled Ride Safe. I am looking forward to seeing you soon!

"For the Cause, Not the Applause"

- Ride, April 22-26, 2024
- Rally, OCC in Clearwater, April 27, 2024

Blood Donor Year-End Report

Jamie Grinis, Blood Donor Chair

blooddonor@legionmail.org



By now, everyone has received the manila envelope from HQ. As each Post fills this out this year, don't forget to mark down the time spent and how many pints of blood your Post collected on the report. You

may contact them at the address below:

<http://pulse.oneblood.lan/ProjectsList/PID0100/ProjectDocuments/Host a drive form.docx>

We've created a fillable report on the Blood Donor pages of the Blood Donor Program in the pull-down menu. The data will go directly to the Blood Donor Chair for easier accountability and reporting needs.

Please submit a report each time your Post has a blood drive at the site provided: <https://www.Floridalegion.org/programs-services/blood-donor/donor-report/>

If your Post still lacks a program to save its charter, it's not too late to adopt Blood One and save lives while you do it.

Florida Employment Website

James "Dusty" Douglas, Employment Chair

central@legionmail.org



Are you an individual looking for a job or an employer looking for an employee? (Note: An American Legion Post is considered an employer if they have workers that receive an IRS Form W-2 every year.) A good place to start looking for information is <https://www.floridajobs.org>.

This website covers a wide range of employment subjects. If you click on the Office of Military and Defense, you will see links to the Department

of Veterans Affairs and the Florida Department of Military Affairs, just to name a couple of sites to review.

If you have lost your job and need Reemployment Assistance, there is a tab that will help you submit a claim, provide resources to help you find a new job, and give you access to Reconnect. Reconnect is Florida's Reemployment claims system, which claimants and employers can use to update account and contact information, review notices of determinations, and file an appeal.

There is also a tab for Small Business Assistance,

where you can research Loan Programs and minority Businesses, and a link to the FloridaDisaster.biz website. The FloridaDisaster.biz website has information on establishing a Disaster Tool Kit for your business and provides information on what to do if a disaster impacts your business.

The Employ Florida Tab has information for both the Employee and the Employer.

Employees can receive assistance in writing a resume, applying for jobs, and researching a new career. You can find a CareerSource Center near

Employment Chair continued on page 9 >>



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<< *Employment Chair continued from page 8*

you, search for and apply for a State of Florida job, research a National Job Center if you want to move out of Florida and find specific information on how to find employment and career resources if you are interested in careers in the Florida school system.

The Employer Resource Area has important information about the Reemployment Assistance program. This information ranges from how to file a Claim Response and file an Appeal, tax information that could impact your business and employer resources, to the Frequently Asked Question Area

that provides information about the Reemployment Assistance Program.

Service Officers, this is a good site to refer individuals to when they have Florida employment questions.

Women in the role of the First Responder

Daryl Bass, Law & Order Chair

laworder@legionmail.org



Gone are the days when emergency services were considered a man's world. More and more women are pursuing careers as Firefighters, Police Officers, Paramedics, and

other first responders. These brave and dedicated women are breaking stereotypes and shattering glass ceilings, proving that gender should never be a barrier to following one's passion for serving mankind.

Female first responders bring unique skills and qualities to the table. Strength, compassion, and resilience are just a few attributes that make them

invaluable assets in emergencies. Their ability to connect with individuals in distress and provide a sense of comfort is truly remarkable. By embracing their femininity and leveraging their strengths, female first responders are significantly impacting their communities.

One of the most incredible aspects of the rise of female first responders is the inspiration they provide to the next generation. Young girls now have role models to look up to and aspire to become. Seeing women in positions of authority and courage instills a belief that they, too, can pursue a career in emergency services. This newfound representation is empowering and encouraging diversity and inclusion within the field.

While progress has been made, it's important to acknowledge that there is still work to be done. Female first responders continue to face unique challenges and obstacles. However, many organizations are stepping up to support women in the role of emergency services.

Remember, whether you are a man or a woman, your dedication and commitment to helping others is what truly matters in this life.

Our service during our military service, continuing in our civilian service, to our service in the American Legion. Helping our Veterans and Veterans' families, serving our military across the world, and serving our communities at home are our missions.

Sine die

Stuart Scott, Legislative Chair

legislative@legionmail.org



Sine die - Latin for without day.
The motion to "adjourn sine die" is the last action of a session of the legislature. Each house may adjourn on its own motion.

With the adjournment of the 2024 Session, we now await the governor's signature on all the work completed by the members. Posts—If we contact you to host a bill signing or to attend one, please be amendable. Several wonderful Veteran bills were moved through the process, and it has been a

historical move for the Governor's office to use Post homes to host such signings.

So, what does the Legislative Chair do in the off-season? Well, this is when we begin the preparation for the next session (March 6, 2025). Where do many of the ideas come from? The short answer is you! If you have an idea for a new bill, please contact me. What will happen if you contact me? Well, here is the work portion. I might ask you about some research that will be needed. For example, we were approached (too late for this session) to consider tolls being waived for 100% service-connected disabled Veterans. While we like

the idea, it would require massive public records requests and data analytics to fully understand the fiscal impact that would occur. While great ideas are good speaking points, we in Tallahassee must fully understand its impact on the state and impact on our state budget. Please consider proposing some ideas, but also be willing to help when asked.

Lastly, thank you to all who made phone calls to your members of the legislature to help us get what we were able to this past year approved or postponed. Remember, as members, we must fully understand our role...and that is to help our Veterans and our community. I will leave you

Legislative Chair continued on page 10 >>



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<< *Legislative Chair continued from page 9*

with this bit of information: we are a nonpartisan organization, while being active in the political activities that involve Veteran issues and those issues that impact our Veteran families.

The Washington Conference was held in Washington DC., February 25 – 28, 2024. This was the 64th Annual conference, to which your representatives

from Florida attended meetings as well as conducted Hill Visitations with your State Senators and Congressperson(s).

National Commander Seehafer addressed the crowded meeting room and energized the group with our legislative priorities. We took that information with us as we made the journey to speak with those on the Hill.

On March 13th, Commander Seehafer addressed Congress, here is a link for you to follow to see and hear for yourself. Within the testimony, Commander Seehafer, included the important mission of Be The One initiative, and its ability to reduce Veteran suicide.

Moving forward to our 100% May 8th goal

Bruce Carl, Membership Chair

membership@legionmail.org



Hello, Team Florida! Spring is officially here, and the District Commanders Race to the Top is done for this year. As of this writing, District 3 was the only one that qualified, but there were still

two weeks left for more to get there. Hopefully, they did! It is hard to believe this year will be coming to a close soon.

Now that that contest is complete, it is time to move forward to the next deadline of May 8th. This is the deadline for a few membership items. It is the final day for your Post to hit 100% and earn 100% coins and pins. There were 61 Posts that made it, and 39 Posts were over 103% as of this article. We have a plethora of other Posts out there yet that are very close, and I expect to be giving out quite a few more! May 8th is also the date to get your forms in for membership awards for the gold and silver brigade. Please check the membership manual for the forms and get them into the Department on time so your members can get what they earned.

The March 7, 2024, Department report had us at 92.95% as a Department, which was about

4100 members more than last year. The National Report on March 11, 2024, had us in 5th place at 93.27%, and our renewal rate was 89.16%. This is outstanding as last year, we finished on June 30th with 93.29% and a renewal rate of just over 87%. We are about 7.5% of where we were last year for the same period.

We now need to concentrate on getting those remaining renewals and new members. There are many Posts that have no members remaining unrenewed. That means you need to find other means to reach 100%. One great way is to contact the DMS 400AD members in your Area. Remember, they count towards your membership goal for the year. Everyone also needs to get transmittals and transfer sheets in ASAP. Please do not hold them, as National is taking longer than normal to process them. Holding them could be detrimental to you reaching the deadline of May 8th!

Last month I spent a week sending out emails to almost every Post in the Department to the unrenewed members that were on the rosters. I received back about 20 pages worth of invalid emails, members advising me they had transferred, deceased members, and those who were no longer interested in being a member. Your

Post-membership team should be contacting these members (buddy checks), and I know some of them are. As you contact the members, make sure you update your phone number, address, and email info so that they are correct.

I have attended several District meetings and more to talk about membership and give out coins and pins. I have also attended several membership events, setting up displays and speaking to potential new members and transfers for the entire family.

The three-year renewal option is available to every member now, and everyone should take advantage of it. With National going up 5.00 per capita on July 1, it is a great way for your members and your Post to save some money. National will be absorbing the cost of the increase for those members who do the three-year renewal!

Thank you for the great job you are all doing, not only with membership but also with the programs. If you want or need help contacting members, conducting a membership drive, etc., please get in touch with me. Let's keep this train rolling and hit 103% by June 30th!



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NEWS, FORMS, VETERAN RESOURCES, UPCOMING EVENTS, AND MORE



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Political Points of Interference

Ray Olsen, National Security Chair

security@legionmail.org



I was looking for something to write about that I had not covered recently. I turned to the George Washington Farewell Address. He had three warnings about threats to democracy. The three primary warnings located in Washington’s Farewell Address are regarding the divisiveness of geographical sectionalism, political factionalism, and interference by foreign powers.

Political Factionalism focused on the two-party system. Even though the two-party system was in its infancy, Washington foresaw the day when alternating political parties would turn to revenge when the balance of power changed between the parties. The opposition party would take revenge

for all the perceived wrongdoings committed by the party in power when the roles changed. We are going through that now with impeachments during every Congress. There is a big “I told you so” out there somewhere!

Interference by foreign powers in domestic affairs was a second area of concern. We can have trade but should not have political relations with those trade partners to avoid their meddling in our affairs and dissuade us from meddling in theirs. Also, there could come a day when a party uses foreign influence to come to power, and then we are stuck with them behind the curtain like the Great and Powerful OZ. So, those reading this thought about China and TikTok and election influencing when they read this. We need to stop doing business with China and beef up our cyber defenses against all foreign powers that attempt to interfere in our elections.

Today, the day I write this is Friday, a RED shirt. Let us remember all our deployed troops and DOD civilians who are deployed with them doing their best to keep us safe here at home. And let us not forget about the families of those folks. Deployment is very hard for a young family with children, and their own issues here at home are something that they must fight without help from their spouses.

It’s not too late to hold a blood drive, participate in the Access Granted program, or form a new color guard group at your Post with ceremonial weapons from the American Legion. Lastly, check out the Legislative and National Security pages on www.legion.org for the official statements from the American Legion to Congress.

Re-engagement

Judith Richards, Post Revitalization

revitalization@legionmail.org



Revitalization or, in other words, Re-engagement. What does re-engagement mean?

To become involved, or have contact, with someone or something again, for a second, third, etc. time; to interest someone in something again for a second, third, etc. time, and keep them thinking about it

Please write a letter to your members letting

them know what is happening at the Post. What activities and events is the Post involved in at the Post, community, state, and national level? Let the members know that you are thinking of them. Let them know that the Post needs any amount of time they can assist or just that you want to see them. Buddy Check calls are mentioned in every Legion Link. Invite members to help make calls. Sometimes, asking for help is all it takes to have individuals become involved.

As the definition states, communication again, again and again!

Post 118 in District 7 will hold a Revitalization event on April 20th, 2024. Please see the attached flyer. This event is also on the Department Calendar. They are working with District 16 to re-engage one Post and revitalize another and with District 9 to re-engage several of their Posts.

I work closely with Bruce Carl, Department Membership Chair, as well as the Area Commanders, Area Membership Chairs, and District Commanders.

I look forward to working with you!

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TEXT ALERTS.



TEXT

FLCON to **41372**

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POW/MIA Memorial & Museum Update and Update on MIA's recovered

Denny Luke, POW/MIA Chair

powmia@legionmail.org



Phase 1 of the National POW/MIA Memorial & Museum <https://powmiamemorial.org/> is progressing nicely. Burlington Concrete Construction is providing cul-de-sac construction and flagpole

island construction. The Holman Inc. completed the flagpole raising and setting with Federal Flags of Georgia providing the 50' pole and flag, which looks terrific. Phase 1 lighting project is almost completed, along with the lighting of the aircraft. Runway lights have been added to the replica of the Cecil Field runway, and they look great.



Congressman Aaron Bean introduced the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum Act H.R. 3670 in May 2023. This bipartisan Bill will designate the POW/MIA Memorial and Museum at Cecil Field to serve as a national landmark to honor, connect, inspire, and educate the American people about members of the Armed Forces who were held as prisoners of war (POWs) and those who became missing in action (MIA) in our nation's conflicts. Please go to <https://powmiamemorial.org/>, scroll down the page until you see the "Help Us with Our National Designation" tab, and click the Sign Our Petition.

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency News

Did you know that more than 120,000 American military personnel served in China during WW II

when the two sides fought against Japan? It is believed there are about 690 unaccounted-for Americans within modern-day mainland China. During a meeting in Hawaii in August, DPAA director Kelly McKeague reportedly asked South Korean vice-defense minister Shin Beom-Chul for help to contact the Chinese side in trying to restart the recovery mission, according to South Korea's Yonhap News Agency.

Seoul has worked closely with Beijing on recovering the remains of soldiers killed during the 1950-1953 Korean War, and it has returned the remains of 938 Chinese troops since 2014. Because of this cooperation, Korea was instrumental in encouraging the Chinese to hold a video meeting with the US about cooperating to find the remains of American POW/MIA, or prisoners of war/missing-in-action). The US military has completed two site surveys to recover WW II remains in China. Recently, a team with the US Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) "spent several weeks surveying sites in southern China in order to provide vital information for future recovery missions".

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) <https://www.dpaa.mil/> has currently identified for FY 2024 27 personnel from WW II, four from the Korean War, and one from the Vietnam War.

The DPAA released the following 15 News Releases for the month of February.

- **Airman Accounted for from WWII (Colter, R.)**
PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 2, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3664609/airman-accounted-for-from-wwii-colter-r/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Air Force Pvt. 1st Class Robert L. Colter, 23, of Lakeland, Florida, who was captured and died as a prisoner of war during World War II, was accounted for Sept. 25, 2023.

- **Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Pitsor, R.)**
PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 2, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3665194/soldier-accounted-for-from-wwii-pitsor-r/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Pfc. Richard G. Pitsor, 18, of Ft. Bayard, New Mexico, who was captured and died as a prisoner of war during World War II, was accounted for on March 20, 2023.

- **Pilot Accounted For From WWII (Deeds, J.)**
PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 5, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3271798/pilot-accounted-for-from-wwii-deeds-j/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. James A. Deeds, 23, of Oakland, California, killed during World War II, was accounted for Jan. 3, 2023.

- **USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted for from WWII (Schleiter, W.)**
PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 5, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3666707/uss-oklahoma-sailor-accounted-for-from-wwii-schleiter-w/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that Fireman First Class (F1c) Walter F. Schleiter, 22, of Massillon, Ohio, killed during World War II, was accounted for on May 18, 2018.

- **Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Norris, A.)**
PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 6, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3667155/soldier-accounted-for-from-korean-war-norris-a/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army CPL Adin C. Norris Jr., 21, of Kansas City, Missouri, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on Dec. 5, 2022.

- **Airman Accounted for from WWII (Leukering, W.)**
PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 6, 2024 | <https://>

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www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3667486/airman-accounted-for-from-wwii-leukering-w/ |

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Air Forces Tech Sgt. William L. Leukering, 28, of Metropolis, Illinois, killed during World War II, was accounted for on March 20, 2023.

• **Airman Accounted for from WWII (Seifreid, H.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 6, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3667740/airman-accounted-for-from-wwii-seifreid-h/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that Army Air Forces Tech. Sgt. Harold L. Seifreid, 31, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, killed during World War II, was accounted for on Nov. 21, 2023.

• **Pilot Accounted for from WWII (Marrah, J.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 7, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3668786/pilot-accounted-for-from-wwii-marrah-j/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. James H. Marrah, 22, of London, Ohio, killed during World War II, was accounted for August 3, 2023

• **USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted for from WWII (Robertson, J.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 7, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3668879/uss-oklahoma-sailor-accounted-for-from-wwii-robertson-j/> |

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that Navy Seaman 2nd Class (S2c) Joseph M. Robertson, 18, of Cincinnati, Ohio, killed during World War II, was accounted for on June 18, 2020.

• **Pilot Accounted for from WWII (Corson, D.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 7, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3669165/pilot-accounted-for-from-wwii-corson-d/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Dan W. Corson, 27, of Middletown, Ohio, killed during World War II, was accounted for Sept. 22, 2023.

• **Marine Accounted for from WWII (Hammett, H.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 9, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3671973/marine-accounted-for-from-wwii-hammett-h/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that Marine Corps Sgt. Harold Hammett, 24, killed during World War II, was accounted for on Sept 25, 2023.

• **Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Patten, C.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 12, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3673190/soldier-accounted-for-from-korean-war-patten-c/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA)

announced today that U.S. Army Cpl. Charles R. Patten, 24, of Lebanon, Missouri, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for on June 7, 2023.

• **Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Hartwick, E.)**

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Tech. 4th Grade (TECH 4) Elmo F. Hartwick, 38, of Onaga, Kansas, killed during World War II, was accounted for Aug. 21, 2023.

• **Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Coy, J.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 12, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3673982/soldier-accounted-for-from-wwii-coy-j/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Air Force Staff Sgt. Jack W. Coy, 20, of Toledo, Ohio, killed during World War II, was accounted for Sept. 20, 2023.

• **Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Strickland, C.)**

PRESS RELEASE | Feb. 28, 2024 | <https://www.dpaa.mil/News-Stories/News-Releases/PressReleaseArticleView/Article/3689332/soldier-accounted-for-from-wwii-strickland-c/> | The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Technician Fifth Grade Clifford H. Strickland, 25, of Fowler, Colorado, who was captured and died as a prisoner of war during World War II, was accounted for December 20, 2023.

The search will never end until all are accounted for.

Annual Public Relations Award

Kathryn Hockenberry, Public Relations Chair

pr@legionmail.org



How time flies! Commanders, it's almost time to submit your nominations for the Public Relations Award for Legion Year 2023-2024. The suspense date

is 8 May 2024. Let's not let all the hard work of these individuals go unrecognized and unappreciated. It only takes a few minutes of your time to write a narrative. All the information requested is outlined in the packet that was mailed to your Post's Public Relations Chair. Please include all the required information in your submission to ensure

the individual is considered equally to all other nominees. Again, I can't stress how important the letter from you, the Commander, is in the review of selecting the best candidate to receive this annual award. Again, the deadline is 8 May 2024.



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Voting Instructions

Clarence Hill, Resolutions Chair

resolutions@legionmail.org



The Internal Affairs Committee will meet in the afternoon on Thursday, June 13. Internal Affairs receives reports from Constitution and By-Laws, Credentials, Disaster Preparedness, POW-MIA,

Resolutions, Time & Place, and Special Rules. When it comes to the Resolutions report portion, only the **RESOLVED** clauses of each resolution will be read prior to a vote being taken, so it is important that the entire resolution be reviewed prior to the meeting. Each Post can have one delegate at this meeting to vote on all matters to be decided. All **voting members must have the appropriate black**

ribbon received by the delegation chair with the convention registration package. **Attendees without the black ribbon have no voice and no vote.** The results of any vote taken at this meeting become a recommendation to the General Assembly when the Internal Affairs Committee report is presented. **Every delegate to the Convention** has a vote on the floor for the final disposition of these resolutions.

Year End Events

Loretta Young, ROTC/JROTC/JSSP Chair

jrotc@legionmail.org



All school programs are coming up to year's end for events and Ceremonies. I was in attendance at the Broward County JROTC Meet at Monarch HS. There were 22 units participating in the event, including drills and Color Guards. I had the

opportunity to assist in the Awards Ceremony by giving out the trophies for the various categories. The State Drill Meet following the county is scheduled to be held in Lake City. All Posts should continue to email the JROTC Instructors to get the recipients' names for the Scholastic Excellence and Military Excellence Medals and Certificates. Please have someone available from the Post to make the awards ceremony. Some units will qualify to

move on to the National Competitions. More JROTC Programs are looking towards participating in the STEM Curriculum rather than all Drill and Ceremonies. Please keep me updated as to events and activities that any of you are involved. Have a very successful year's end for the programs that you are supporting.



Miramar HS AJROTC Drill Team



Trophies for presentation for the Broward County JROTC Drill Meet 3.



Flanagan NJROTC Military Ball

Preparation for School Medal Awards

Deveron Reaves, School Medals Chair

schoolmedals@legionmail.org



Here we are, winding down towards the end of the Legion year. Where has the time gone? Now is the time to do your preparations for your schools to go out and attend their annual award ceremonies. It is such an honor and privilege to present these

awards to the students and see their smiling faces when they receive the School Medal Award from The American Legion.

On that note, make sure you submit your end-of-year report for the School Medal program once you get the packet from the Department. This way, a Post and Post Chairman will be able to receive acknowledgment of having the Best School Medals

Program and Chairman. There will be a winner and a Runner-up School Medals Program and Chairman. These awards will be presented at the Department Convention in June. Notice: June is only two months away! Hope to see you there!

You can always reach me at schoolmedals@legionmail.org if you have any questions.



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PVR Board Members Bob James and Larry Roberts with a few representatives from our SPI Strategic Partners: K9 Line, Mothers of Veteran Suicide, IGY6, Liberty-OVE, Semper Motis, LLC

CRITICAL FUNDING NEEDED

PROJECT: VetRelief received some disappointing news last month. We were informed that the Florida Veteran Foundation (FVF) will not receive the grant from the state of Florida next fiscal year.

This means, we will lose 90% of our funding for the upcoming year for our emergency assistance program.

The good news is we have time to develop a plan of action to fill this major gap of funding we will experience next year. However, it will take us all working together to ensure our veterans still have this valuable resource.

The Florida Veteran Foundation has been a huge asset to our program for many years. You see, their funding gave us the opportunity to meet the increased demand of our veteran community. In turn, we provided our monthly case statistics which was used in a report to the state of Florida to showcase our veterans' needs.

As you can see by our figures below, our veterans and their families are still relying on us for a hand up. When dealing with a life emergency, PROJECT: VetRelief supports our service members and their families with immediate financial assistance. The funds we provide are not a loan, and are granted during a financial crisis, no strings attached. Our hope is to keep food on the table or the lights on while a

family works through a trying time in their lives.

As you start to plan next year's activities, we hope you will keep PVR in mind, as we will need the Legion Family's support more than ever!

RIDERS HIT THE ROAD

Another mission of PROJECT VetRelief is to end veteran suicide, and the Florida American Legion Riders dedicate the entire month of April to that cause. They will be riding all month long to raise funds and awareness on this tragic epidemic. Then, will combine forces for the In-State Unity Ride, which covers the entire state of Florida.

WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT

- **Join** - There's still time to register to ride in one of the routes, or virtually. Either way, you are sure to have a great time and make long-lasting memories!
- **Donate** - Your support will be applied towards the joint cause of ending veteran suicide.
- **Visit a Post** - Plan to welcome the Riders in from the road as they pull into their next pit stop along their journey. They would love to see your smiling faces!

Register, Donate, and Details:
<https://give.floridalegion.org/2024UnityRide>

Current Year: July 2023 - February 2024





Scouting Events

Chris Ragusa, Scouting Chair

scouting@legionmail.org



Outstanding Post Scouting Program Award Recognition:

Reminder that the Outstanding Post Scouting Program applications are due to the Department Programs Director NO LATER THAN

MAY 08, 2024! The Post must have submitted its Consolidated Post Report to be eligible for consideration. Up to three Florida Posts will be recognized with this distinction. That application and criteria can be found here:

<https://www.floridalegion.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Scouting-Award.pdf>



District 1 Post 296 Flag Etiquette Instruction: James Wood, Post Scouting Chair

for Destin Post 296 (District 1), instructs Cub Scouts from Pack 504 on proper flag etiquette and the preparation of unserviceable US flags for retirement. Wood serves as both the Post Scouting Chair and

a uniformed Key 3 leader of Cub Scout Pack 504, which is chartered to Post 296. As the Pack's Chartered Organization Representative, Wood ensures that the BSA and American Legion's shared values of patriotism and community service are an integral part of the program. By sharing his knowledge of the US Flag Code and the flag retirement resolution that the American Legion passed at our 19th National Convention in 1937, Wood helps the Scouts understand the importance of a dignified and respectful retirement ceremony for US flags that are no longer in serviceable condition, instilling in them a profound respect for these symbols of our Nation. James Wood's commitment to teaching the proper etiquette for flag retirements serves as a shining example of leadership and service within both the American Legion and the Scouting community.



District 15 Joint Unserviceable US Flag Retirement Ceremony: District 15's American Legion Post 138 (Port Tampa City), Post 139 (Tampa), and Scouts BSA Troop 53 jointly planned



and conducted an Unserviceable US Flag Retirement ceremony on March 5, 2024 at Post 138. Troop 53, chartered to Post 139, presented the opening colors, and their Scouts solemnly retired dozens of flags deemed no longer suitable to serve as symbols of our great Nation. Podium dignitaries consisted of American Legion Department of Florida Commander Michael "Gambler" Raymond, past American Legion Department of Florida Commander Eunice Butts, Post 138 Commander Drew Davis, Post 139 Commander Lee Weiss, the American Legion Department of Florida Scouting Chair, Hillsborough County Commission Harry Cohen, Tampa City Councilman Bill Carlson, and Major Alex Thiel of the City of Tampa Police Department. The ceremony was attended by Legionnaires from both Posts and representatives from a number of fraternal organizations.



National Commanders Visitation and Fundraisers

Larry Roberts, VA Entitlements

benefits@legionmail.org



I need to apologize for not doing a Legion Link last month. I have been very busy.

I want to thank Jim Wineland and the Riders for allowing me to teach VA, State, Project Vet Relief, and Local Benefits classes.

I want to say a good job to Southern Area

Commander Johnny Castro and his team for the outstanding job they did with the activities during the National Commander's visit and for allowing me to participate in the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center tour with the National Commander.

I want to thank American Legion Post 5 for hosting a system worth saving event. This event was a town hall meeting, an opportunity for Veterans and families to discuss their concerns and good things with the VA Staff and American Legion National VA&R Chairman.

I want to give a special shout-out to American Legion Post 252. One of their Junior Sons members planned and executed a Suicide Prevention Riders Unity Gathering fundraiser, Project Vet-Relief.



VA Entitlements Chair continued on page 17 >>



<< VA Entitlements Chair continued from page 16

Speaking of BE THE ONE - While I was in Washington, D.C., I couldn't say enough about Chapter 69 Riders and the rest of the Post 69 Family.

They hosted a fundraiser (Poker Run) for the Mothers of Veterans Suicide and raised \$14,500. In May, the Mothers of Veterans Suicide will be having a retreat in Avon Park, FL. The money raised in the fundraiser will help this retreat. We are expecting 25 to 30 Moms to attend.

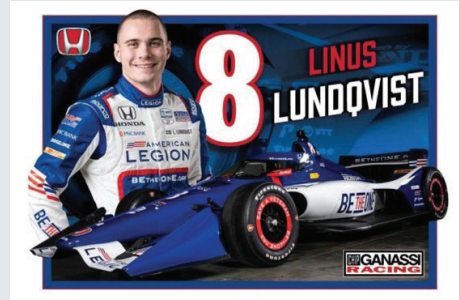


The Washington, D.C. trip was fun and rewarding. Gambler and I were inducted into the Anavicus Army, Navy, and Air Force Veterans in Canada Membership.

I also had the honor of attending a changing of the guard at the Tomb of The Unknown Soldier. Our main mission in Washington, DC, was to talk to our representatives about Veterans' benefits and issues. Congressman Bill Posey, Veterans Affairs Aid, is very knowledgeable and supportive of our concerns.



I want to give a huge shout-out to the Florida American Legion family members who volunteered at the St. Petersburg Indy Race.

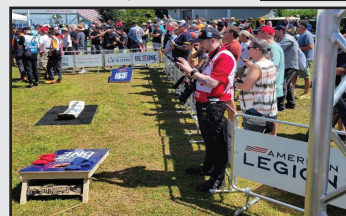
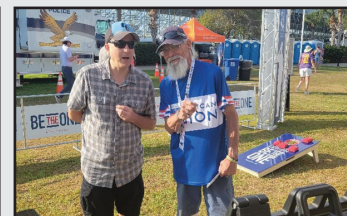


Larry Roberts: American Legion Department of Florida VA Entitlements Chair, Project VetRelief Chair, Project VetRelief Advocate, and Post 69 Commander
Donna Roberts: 8th District Auxiliary Constitutional By-Laws Chair, Children and Youth Chair, and Unit 69 Secretary.



Judy Casey: American Legion Department of Florida Vice Women's Chair, 8th District Service Officer, Post 69 Service Officer, and the Mothers of Veterans Suicide Vice President, Project Vet Relief Advocate.
Ellsworth "Tony" Williams: Central Area Service Officer and the CEO of Veterans Counseling Veterans, Project VetRelief Advocate

Edward Padilla: 8th District Service Officer, Post 24



Service Officer, and Project Vet Relief Advocate.
Richard "Tony" Marconi: Post 238 Service Officer and FDVA Claims Adjuster.

Here are just some of the results that the team was able to provide:

- Over a hundred disability claims were started.
- Over two hundred people made an oath to BE THE ONE.
- Over five hundred people were advised about their benefits. (ie, Being an American Legion Family Member, VA, State, and Local Benefits) And Be The One.

But the best thing that happened was that a Veteran joined the American Legion and then asked what BE THE ONE was all about.

We explained to him, and he started to cry. We asked him what was wrong, and he said he lost four of his battle buddies to suicide in the past two months.

We told him that we were going to take care of him. We have him already going to a Veterans Retreat for PTSD with one of Project VetRelief Strategic Partners (Erick Anderson), and he has an appointment with the FDVA to file a claim.





Women Veteran Events

Joan Suelter, Women Veterans Chair

scouting@legionmail.org



March was an exciting time as we celebrated Women's History Month. It was a wonderful time to highlight a few activities celebrating our women who served.

March 11, 2024, I attended, along with 150 plus sister Veterans, a luncheon at American Legion Auxiliary Unit 347, Lady Lake, which hosted its annual women Veteran's luncheon to honor their service. This unit has been celebrating our women Veterans for nearly 20 years. What started back then, a dozen women Veterans taken to lunch has grown to over 300 invitations to now catered event at American Legion Post 347. I wish to **Thank Unit 347** for your unwavering support of our female

Veterans. Bravo Zulu to all.

Post 273, under the leadership of Legionnaire Susan Kohler, has continued to reach out to our female Veterans with open houses, forums, and "sip and write" events, where our female Veterans sip a beverage of their choice and write cards to our active duty members abroad.

Jean Ware, a Legionnaire from Post 418, Spring Hill, has also been a driving force for our female Veteran. She has met with the Tri-County Women Command staff, and with their help, she has been working behind the scenes nonstop to set up Hernando County Female Veteran. I'm delighted to say she has established a Facebook page for this newly formed group. Congratulations to Jean Ware and Post 418 and to Tri-County Women for your support and

comradery to our sisters outside our Area.

Ashley House Construction is moving forward. The foundation work has been completed, and the outer walls are being worked on. Ashley Cottage is up and running.

We have moved the needle somewhat.

However, we have so much more work to do. I will continue to contact our Post and outside advocates who support our female Veterans.

I have seen firsthand the power of our sister Veterans. They are strong, dedicated warriors. It's a pleasure to be part of this sisterhood. Til we meet again...

Youth Law Cadet Program Update

Bud Boyer, Youth Law Cadet Chair

youthlawcadet@legionmail.org



Our last correspondence with the Florida Highway Patrol was on February 15th. We sent the lieutenant the same letter we sent to the Department Area/District Commanders and program

Chairs for this program. His response was that he was still waiting to hear from his legal department regarding our application paperwork. We're hoping the Florida Highway Patrol will succeed and have an outstanding program for us.

The total cost per cadet is **\$500.00** (this is NON-REFUNDABLE). This includes: lodging, meals, two neon orange performance polo shirts, three dri-fit sport-tek t-shirts, one port authority cotton cinch pack, one tan hat, one water bottle & one patch. Cost per chaperon: **\$400.00** (also NON-REFUNDABLE). This includes: lodging and meals.

The cadets are responsible for the following:

- Three pairs of black BDU's pants
- Two pairs of black athletic shorts
- One pair of black athletic shoes
- One pair of black dress shoes/boots
- Personal toiletry items
- Care of clothing

Transportation to/from the academy is the responsibility of the District, Post, and parents. cadets cannot drive or park a personal vehicle on academy grounds.

Please keep in mind the cost for this program is the responsibility of the District or the Post or the cadet/student, not the Department.

Please keep in mind that if we are able to send 32 cadets, the Florida Highway Patrol wants us to have eight chaperones. I am sure we will have females

attending, so we will need female chaperones. Please keep in mind that this obligation will be for one week. We have yet to receive a confirmed date for the start of the academy from Florida Highway Patrol. YES, I still have hope.

In April, I am going to ask the Lieutenant for an appointment to meet with him and hopefully, his supervisors will nail down the program and a date for the start of the program.

Registration and checking-in and out information will be supplied as soon as Florida Highway Patrol verifies the date and times for the program.

Please refer to your Youth Law Cadet brochure for further information or contact the Department of Florida Youth Cadet Program Chair at (609)846-4221 / koba2414@gmail.com.



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Scholarship and American Legion Baseball Updates

Dennis Boland, Child Welfare Foundation

pdcboland@legionmail.org



Scholarships & Civics

Due to staff departures, no national staff is currently assigned to the Youth Scholarships and Civics section of the Americanism Division. Please direct all inquiries to the

Division Director, Ron Neff.

A reminder that applications are being considered for

The American Legion Legacy Scholarship.

The American Legion's Legacy Scholarship provides college funding to children of Post-9/11 Veterans who died on active duty or those who have a combined VA disability rating of 50 percent or greater. Applications will be considered from January 1 to Wednesday, March 27, 2024.

American Legion Baseball (ALB)

Americanism Chairman Mark Avis (MA), ALB

Committee Chairman Gary Stone (MO), and National Staff will be attending spring planning meetings with the local Cleveland County, ALWS Baseball Committee in Shelby, North Carolina, on March 4th - 6th in preparation for the 2024 American Legion World Series tournament.

As of February 28, a total of 355 teams from 48 Departments (220 Senior teams and 135 junior teams) have paid registration fees thus far for the 2023 ALB season.

March on the Capitol

William D. Kelly, SAL NEC

Sons of The American Legion, Detachment of Florida, Legislative Commission Chairman & NEC

William D Kelly, 2023 George B Evans Grassroot Veterans Advocate of The Year

The Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Florida, Legislative Commission has had a busy month of February. Your Legislative Commission participated in the **March on the State Capital** for Veterans Legislation in Tallahassee on February 21st. The Department of Florida Legislative Chairman Stuart Scott coordinated with our Florida American Legion Family to meet with legislators.

We attended the House Judicial Committee who were debating House Bill 189 to amend the state gaming laws. These laws could affect the way our TAL FL Posts operate our bingo pull tab machines.

A strong turnout by The American Legion received recognition from the House Judiciary Committee Chairman and various other members of the committee resulting in amending the bill that is more suitable to our Post operations. This is why we encourage all members of the Florida American Legion Family to get in touch with your state representative and senator and simply let them know you are a member of the Florida American

Legion Family and you support Veterans legislation. We have strength in numbers. Join us.

The next stop for your Sons of The American Legion Legislative Commission was Washington, DC, for The American Legion Washington Conference from February 24th through the 28th. We arrived Saturday evening and started early Sunday morning, the 25th, with the Sons of The American Legion National Legislative Commission bus trip to memorialize our fallen heroes. We started around 9AM at the Washington Hilton with three buses and over 150 American Legion Family members.

The Florida American Legion Family had a strong representation on the bus trip this year including Department Commander Raymond, Department 1st Vice Commander Hamrick, Department Legislative Chair Scott, Department Northern Area Commander, Heredia-Perez, Department Eastern Area Commander Marcheggiani, Department PVR Chairman Roberts, National VA&R Committeeman Bowers, Past TAL 5th District, F.O.Perez, ALA Unit Member Pierce and myself.

The National SAL Legislative bus trip starts out with its first stop at Arlington National Cemetery(ANC). We deboard our buses, and all board trams to the top of the hills where The Tomb of the Unknown is located.

The 3rd Infantry Regiment (Old Guard), who guard the tomb 24-7, enacted the changing of the guard. After that, The Sons of The American Legion National Commander Donald (JR) Hall, his aide Tom Deal, and their wives presented a wreath on behalf of The Sons of The American Legion. We completed the tram tour of ANC and returned to the buses.

The next stops where the Florida American Legion Family would be memorialized with a wreath were the Korean War Memorial, Vietnam Memorial Wall, and the National Mall. Chair Scott and I presented the wreath on behalf of The American Legion Department and Detachment of Florida. Then, instead of walking back to the bus, we continued on and walked up to The World War II Memorial, stopping at the Vietnam Nurses Women Memorial to present a wreath before finishing at The Florida Monument of the WWII Memorial. I would like to take this time to thank all the members of the Florida Legion Family who wanted to go and all that did go on this Sons of The American Legion National Legislative Commission Memorial Bus Trip. Well done.

On Monday the 26th, all The American Legion Commissions met, with my meeting being the National Legislative Commission from 9AM to noon

SAL NEC continued on page 20 >>



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<< SAL NEC continued from page 19

and then at 3 PM TAL Commanders Call, where our American Legion Family is introduced. The guest speaker was Denis R. McDonough, Secretary of Veteran Affairs, who spoke on the modernization of the VA, America's largest healthcare system.

On Tuesday the 27th, we participated at 8 AM in The National Commanders Rally. Commander Dan Seefeart entered the rally to the music of Eye of the Tiger from the rear of the room, high-fiving everyone he could. He was pumping everyone up for their trip to the capital offices later in the day. Guest speaker Senator Jon Tester from Montana sits on the Appropriations Committee and is subcommittee Chairman of the Defense and Veteran Affairs Committees. He wanted to let us know that he and his committee are there for our Veterans. With another rousing sendoff from our National Commander, we adjourned for our appointments with our legislators on Capitol Hill.

My first appointment was in the Longworth Building with the legislative aide Richard LaMura for

Representative Arron Bean (FL-4), Who is my representative in Congress. I was accompanied by TAL PNC Clarence Hill.

My next appointment was in the same building but was without PNC Hill who had another appointment. This appointment was with Legislative Assistant Ryan Donnelly for Congressman Byron Donalds (FL-19). The reason for only meeting with the legislative aides in adjournment and most of the Representatives and the Senators were out of the office. We usually speak with the legislative aides, the Representatives, and the Senators, but unfortunately, they were not available.

With The American Legion Legislative agenda in hand we went over with the legislative aides the key points outlined by The Legislative Division of The American Legion. Some of the key points are military quality of life, pay for the Coast Guard in time of shutdown, Improvement of the Military Transition Assistance Program, Flag Protection, Suicide Prevention & Mental

Health, VA Healthcare modernization, PACT Act Implementation and oversight, and safeguarding Veteran benefits. We have included the legislative agenda so you may contact your representatives and senators and let them know you are a member of the Florida American Legion Family and support Veteran legislation. All your national legislators may be found at legion.org/legislative Get involved by supporting Veterans legislation and contacting your legislators and encourage everyone in your Post Family too.

With all of our work finished The Department of Florida hosted by Department of Florida Commander Raymond and Department Adjutant Comer takes the Florida Delegation out for a sumptuous dinner. The next day we returned to our homes in Florida. I would like to thank the entire Florida American Legion Family leadership, especially those members who believe in supporting Veterans legislation so much they took it upon themselves to pay their own way and for everyone's hard work and supporting our Veterans. Thank you.



Recruit to the task, not to the position.

Edward Hood, Post 13 Adjutant

As a volunteer organization, we are all familiar with the struggles of recruiting and retaining leaders. The trick to getting your members to serve at the Post is to break it down by tasks. Don't ask someone if they want to be an officer or even serve on a committee; ask them if they could spare an hour or two once a month to (fill in the blank).

Each Post typically knows how many Legionnaires are required to deliver the programs of the American

Legion each year. This should make breaking the tasks down much easier.

Don't say, "I need an awards committee chairperson." Instead, say, "Could anyone spare an hour to review some award applications next month?" Don't say, "We need Legionnaires on duty to supervise the Post when the bar is open." Say, "Does anyone have free time to socialize with people for a few hours each week?"

By eliminating the position in your pitch, you remove the barriers and reservations in a person's mind to serving in a responsible capacity. Once the unknown becomes known, the fear is gone in the volunteer's mind and is replaced by comfort and routine.

As Veterans, we are all responsible and have demonstrated this in our military service. The desire to volunteer is a deep well in the heart of vets; with the right communication, you can draw it out.



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Post Everlasting

"If they are remembered, they are not gone truly, they simply change duty assignments and are amongst the best."



Robert "Bob" S. Jaegers

It is with a heavy heart that we inform you of the passing of Past Department Judge Advocate Robert "Bob" S. Jaegers of Jupiter, Florida. Bob passed

away on Monday, March 25, 2024, at the age of 71. He is survived by his wife, Denise, and their children: daughters Heidi and Kathryn, and sons Robert and Charles.

As of now, details regarding services for Bob have not been finalized. Any updates regarding arrangements will be communicated to you via email and will also be posted on the Department's

website.

Bob dedicated 31 years of service as a Palm Beach County Assistant State Attorney before retiring in 2019. He also served his country proudly for 28 years in the United States Air Force, spanning from 1977 through 2005.

Bob, a member of Tequesta Post 271, served as a dedicated member of the American Legion for 34 continuous years. Throughout his membership, he held various leadership positions, including Post Commander from 1993-94, 2004-06, and 2020-23, as well as Post Judge Advocate from 1990-93, 2010-20, and 2023 until the present. Additionally, he served as District Judge Advocate from 2006-17 and 2018-2021, and later as Department Judge

Advocate from 2021-2022, followed by Department Assistant Judge Advocate from 2022-2023.

If you wish to extend your condolences, you may do so through his wife, Denise Jaegers, at 12600 189th Ct. N, Jupiter, FL 33478-3787.

Please keep Bob's family and loved ones in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. His memory will live on in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him, and he will be dearly missed.



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MEMBERSHIP TARGET REPORT

March 28, 2024 (95.37%)

District 3	Stuart Scott	105.45%
District 17	Jim Bowers	100.83%
District 7	Rick Orzechowski	97.56%
District 15	Randy Holeyfield	96.84%
District 2	Doyle Combs Jr.	96.42%
District 1	Shelby Windham	96.37%
District 11	Toni Sutherland	96.24%
District 8	John Rauh	95.99%
District 12	Bruce Thurber	95.48%
District 13	Eric Loyd	95.25%
District 6	Peter Gregory	94.81%
District 5	Miguel Garcia	94.31%
District 9	Rico Thomas	94.13%
District 4	Doug Hockenberry	93.15%
District 16	Eric Nestler	93.13%
District 14	Thomas Frank	91.77%
Northern	Lena Heredia-Perez	96.67%
Western	Sonny Decker	96.38%
Southwestern	Harold "Bud" Boyer	95.58%
Eastern	Joe Marcheggiani	95.10%
Central	Bob Matheson	94.76%
Southern	Johnny Castro	94.44%
Post 400		94.55%
Post 208		97.27%

NEXT GOAL: April 3, 2024

95%

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THE AMERICAN LEGION

For God and Country

Memo

DATE: March 11, 2024
TO: Post Commanders & Post Adjutants
FROM: Bruce E. Comer, Department Adjutant
SUBJECT: Department Finance Committee

Each year the Department Commander appoints a member to the Finance Committee to serve a five (5) year term. We are currently taking resumes for the 2024-2029 appointment.

In accordance with Article XI, Section 13 of the Department Constitution, a three-person panel consisting of the Department Adjutant, Department Finance Officer, and the current Department Finance Committee Chairperson will identify Legionnaires best suited for this appointment and submit selected candidates to the Department Commander for final approval.

Individuals appointed to said committee shall have professional experience and qualifications commensurate with the appointment to this important committee, such as a Corporate Chief Executive Officer or Chief Finance Officer, Accounting or Finance, Entrepreneur or Senior Management.

Please have qualified members interested in this position submit their resumes to Department Headquarters, P.O. Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32810, Attn: Department Adjutant, or email to rcastleberry@floridalegion.org by May 1, 2024. Interviews will be held in the month of May. Qualified candidates will be contacted by phone or email to schedule an interview.

YOUTH LAW CADET

PROGRAM



WE NEED
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NO PROGRAM

DEADLINE JUNE 1, 2024

ACT NOW!



PARTNERSHIP

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YOUTH

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POSTS

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YLC Chair, Bud Boyer
609-846-4221

YouthLawCadet@legionmail.org

www.floridalegion.org/ylc





Department of Florida

PROGRAM ADVERTISING
LEGION FAMILY

*** Deadline May 15, 2024 ***

105th Annual Department Convention, June 13-16, 2024

Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista – Disney Springs Area, 1751 Hotel Plaza Blvd; Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Member, Post, Unit, or Squadron

Contact Person

Title

Email

Phone

PROGRAM ADVERTISEMENT OPTIONS FOR LEGION FAMILY MEMBERS, POSTS, UNITS, AND SQUADRONS ONLY

FULL PAGE
\$175

7.5" X 10"

HALF PAGE
\$100

7.5" X 5"

HALF PAGE
\$100

7.5" X 5"

QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5"	QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5"
QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5"	QUARTER PAGE \$50 3.75" X 5"

- Full Page (7.5" x 10") \$175 Half Page (7.5" x 5") \$100 Quarter Page (3.75" x 5") \$50 Custom Design Fee \$25

Program advertisements must be submitted no later than May 15, 2024 to be included in the program. Please submit your advertisement artwork via email in one of the following image file types: .ai, .eps, .psd, .pdf, .tif, .jpeg, .jpg, .png. All artwork must be digital: no scanned or printed artwork will be accepted. All advertisements are printed in grayscale. All imagery must be legally licensed. For an additional \$25 Custom Design Fee, we will design your advertisement for you. You'll be contacted for details at the email provided. Please email artwork to: events@floridalegion.org.

PAYMENT METHOD

- Credit Card Check # _____ Make checks payable to *The American Legion, Dept of FL*

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

- Visa Mastercard American Express Discover Total to Charge: \$ _____

Credit Card #

Cardholder Name

Expiration Date

Security Code

I authorize The American Legion, Department of Florida to charge the amount listed above to the credit card provided herein. I agree to pay for this purchase in accordance with the issuing bank cardholder agreement.

Signature

Date

Submit to: The American Legion, Department of Florida, Attention: Event Coordinator; PO Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32854-7859.



LIVE BAND • DANCING

POST 103

2101 Taylor Rd; Punta Gorda FL 33950
(941) 639-6337

\$40 EA
MAIL CHECKS
TO POST 103

MAY
18 2024

5:00 PM

COCKTAILS THEN
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YOUR CHOICE OF

PRIME RIB • FISH • SHRIMP

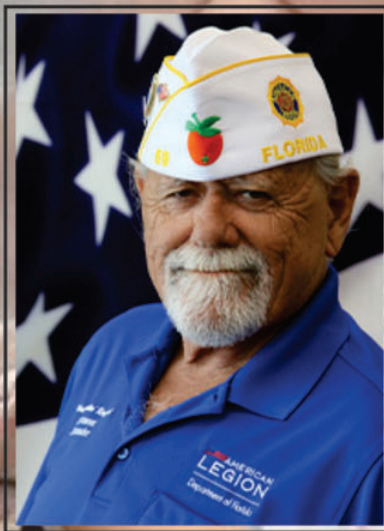
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Proceeds to benefit Disaster Relief fund and C.O.T.A.

Ponytail cutting to support Commander Raymond's Charity Children's Organ Transplant Association.
\$25,000 raised at the event for the hair cutting to take place
Bring your Donations to the Commander's Homecoming
on May 18, 2024 at American Legion Post 103
Punta Gorda



Commander
Mike "Gambler" Raymond



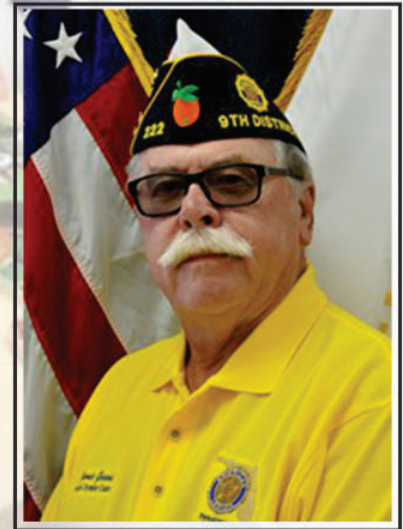
Look who's getting their hair cut



Sgt-at-Arms
Les Martin



Eastern Area Comm.
Joe Marcheggiani



Blood Doner Chair
Jamie Grinis

BE THE ONE

TO PUT VETERANS 1ST



★ ★ ★ ★ ★
DETACHMENT OF FLORIDA COMMANDER

GERARD SAMBETS HOMECOMING

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2024

LOCATION

AMERICAN LEGION POST 275
360 WILSON ST
DUNEDIN, FL 34698

ATTIRE

"BE THE ONE"
OR
LEGION CASUAL

TIMES

START TIME: 5PM
DINNER SERVED
6PM TO 8PM

TICKETS

GERARD SAMBETS
29250 US HWY 19 LOT 142
CLEARWATER FL 33761
MEMO: HOMECOMING
VENMO: @ERIN-CROSS-10

\$30
SINGLE
\$50
DOUBLE

YOU MAY PAY AT THE DOOR.. PLEASE EMAIL ERIN YOUR **RSVP BY APRIL 28** IN ORDER SO WE HAVE AN ACCURATE HEAD COUNT

IF PAYING BY CHECK, PLEASE PROVIDE THE NAMES OF THE GUESTS THAT YOU ARE PAYING FOR.

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DUNEDIN, FL 34698

CAILAN MASON
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MENTION GERARD'S HOMECOMING



SCAN THE QR CODE
TO BOOK ROOM ON
HOTEL WEBSITE

ANY QUESTIONS OR TO RSVP, CONTACT ERIN SAMBETS AT
ERINLCROSS@AOL.COM

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ZEPHYR POST 118

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REFRESHMENTS

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beverages

**SATURDAY,
APRIL 20TH**

12 - 5PM

**RAFFLES &
ENTERTAINMENT**

**MEET AMERICAN LEGION LEADERSHIP
FROM DISTRICT AND DEPARTMENT**

**MEET & GREET WITH YOUR LOCAL POST
LEADERS**

americanlegionpost118@yahoo.com



CONVENTION T-SHIRT ORDER FORM 2024



Name: _____ Post: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

DELIVERY METHOD

Pick Up at HQ Orlando Pick Up at Dept Convention Delivery*

**An additional shipping flat fee of \$10 is required for delivery.*

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. You will be notified before shipment.

Shipping Address: _____

City: _____ State: FL Zip: _____

SHIRT OPTIONS *Enter Quantity for each style/size.*

Style	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Cost
Men's	S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$ 0.00
Ladies V-neck	S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$ 0.00

TOTAL

Shirts are **\$15 each**. If tax-exempt, please include a copy of the exemption form, if not already on file.

Delivery is a flat rate of \$10. Pickups at headquarters or Department Convention are free, however, please wait until you receive notification your order is ready before picking up.

Subtotal	\$ 0.00
Tax (6.5%)	\$ 0.00
Shipping	\$ 0.00
Grand Total	\$ 0.00

PAYMENT

Please return form and payment to Department Headquarters: **Email** (emblemsales@floridalegion.org) | **Fax** (407-299-0901)
Mail (The American Legion, Dept of FL; Attn: Emblem Sales, PO Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32854)

Cash Check # _____ Credit Card

Card Type: Visa Mastercard Discover American Express

Card Holder Name: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Security Code: _____ Billing Zip Code: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



R.E.D. FRIDAY T-SHIRT ORDER FORM 2024



Name: _____ Post: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

DELIVERY METHOD

Pick Up at HQ Orlando Pick Up at Dept Convention Delivery*

**An additional shipping flat fee of \$10 is required for delivery.*

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. You will be notified before shipment.

Shipping Address: _____

City: _____ State: FL Zip: _____

SHIRT OPTIONS *Enter Quantity for each style/size.*

Style	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Cost
Men's	S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$ 0.00
Ladies V-neck	S		M		L		XL		2X		3X				\$ 0.00

TOTAL

Shirts are **\$20 each**. If tax-exempt, please include a copy of the exemption form, if not already on file.

Delivery is a flat rate of \$10. Pickups at headquarters or Department Convention are free, however, please wait until you receive notification your order is ready before picking up.

Subtotal	\$ 0.00
Tax (6.5%)	\$ 0.00
Shipping	\$ 0.00
Grand Total	\$ 0.00

PAYMENT

Please return form and payment to Department Headquarters: **Email** (emblemsales@floridalegion.org) | **Fax** (407-299-0901)
Mail (The American Legion, Dept of FL; Attn: Emblem Sales, PO Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32854)

Cash Check # _____ Credit Card

Card Type: Visa Mastercard Discover American Express

Card Holder Name: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Security Code: _____ Billing Zip Code: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



COMMANDER SHIRT ORDER FORM 2024-2025



Name: _____ Post: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

DELIVERY METHOD

Pick Up at HQ Orlando Pick Up at Dept Convention Pick Up at Fall Conference Delivery*

**An additional shipping flat fee of \$10 is required for delivery.
Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. You will be notified before shipment.*

Shipping Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

SHIRT OPTIONS *Enter Quantity for each style/size.*

Style	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Size	Qty	Cost
Men's Pocket	XS	0	S	0	M	0	L	0	XL	0	2X	0	3X	0	4X	0	\$ 0.00
Men's No Pocket	XS	0	S	0	M	0	L	0	XL	0	2X	0	3X	0	4X	0	\$ 0.00
Ladies	XS	0	S	0	M	0	L	0	XL	0	2X	0	3X	0	4X	0	\$ 0.00

TOTAL

Shirts are **\$40 each**, add **\$2 each for Men's w/Pocket**, price includes personalization. Please see the next page for personalization options. If tax-exempt, please include a copy of the exemption form, if not already on file.

Delivery is a flat rate of \$10. Pickups at headquarters, convention, and conference are free, however, please wait until you receive notification your order is ready before picking up.

Subtotal	\$ 0.00
Tax (6.5%)	\$ 0.00
Shipping	\$ 0.00
Grand Total	\$ 0.00

PAYMENT

Please return form and payment to Department Headquarters: **Email** (emblemsales@floridalegion.org) | **Fax** (407-299-0901)
Mail (The American Legion, Dept of FL; Attn: Emblem Sales, PO Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32854)

Cash Check # _____ Credit Card

Card Type: Visa Mastercard Discover American Express

Card Holder Name: _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Security Code: _____ Billing Zip Code: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



COMMANDER SHIRT ORDER FORM

2024-2025

PERSONALIZATION You are allowed up to **two lines** of personalization, with up to **20 characters** on each line, including spaces and special characters. (Line 1 example: First Name Last Name. Line 2 example: Post # Title)

Style: Men's Pocket Polo Line 1: _____

Qty: 1 Size: XS Line 2: _____

Style: ---select style--- Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

Style: ---select style--- Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

Style: ---select style--- Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

Style: ---select style--- Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

Style: ---select style--- Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

Style: ---select style--- Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

Style: Ladies' Polo Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

Style: ---select style--- Line 1: _____

Qty: 0 Size: ---size--- Line 2: _____

By signing below, I agree that I have verified the information provided as correct and free of errors. I acknowledge that The American Legion, Department of Florida is NOT responsible for incorrect information provided.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



EVENT INFORMATION

**Location: Stonecrest Golf Club
11560 SE 176th Place Rd
Summerfield, FL 34491**

- Shotgun Scramble Start-8:15
- Cost per Golfer-\$85.00
- Coffee & Donuts before golf
- Longest Drive Contests
 - Men&Women
- Hole-in Ones-Men & Women
- Hole-in-One (Golf Cart) #15
- Closest to Pin-Men&Women
- Prizes & surprises
- Mulligans

****After golf please join us
at Post 347, 699 W.Lady Lake
Blvd in Lady Lake for lunch,
raffles, 50/50, auction and
more**

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ Bronze Hole Sponsor-\$100
- ◆ Silver Hole Sponsor - \$200
- ◆ Gold Hole Sponsor - \$300
- ◆ *Platinum Sponsor - \$500-\$999

***Includes Table Space**

- ◆ ***Major Sponsor - \$1,000 & Up**

***Includes Table Space &
4 Golfers**

- ◆ **Donate a gift to be used as a**
 - ◆ **raffle prize**

**Cut-off date for sponsorships and
gift submissions:**

April 26, 2024

Make all checks payable to:

Squadron 347

P.O. Box 1534 Lady Lake, FL 32158

ATTN: C&Y Golf Tournament

**The American Legion Family is Donating
All Proceeds to Benefit Children & Youth**



**AMERICAN LEGION POST 347
CHILDREN & YOUTH CHARITY
GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Deadline for signups April 26,2024

Golfer _____

Golfer _____

Golfer _____

Golfer _____

Contact for the Team _____

Contact Phone# _____

Contact Email _____

Hole Sponsor:

Bronze_____ Silver_____ Gold_____ Platinum_____ Major_____

Additional Guests for Dinner at Post 347 are \$10.00_____

Please make checks payable to: Squadron 347

PO Box 1534, Lady Lake, FL 32158

Attn: Children & Youth Golf Tournament

If you have any questions, please contact:

Danny Roe (317)508-6465

George Worton – (410)382-0473



2024 STATE ORATORICAL WINNERS

30 March 2024

Congratulations to all of our State Oratorical Contestants!

1st Place - \$2,500

Represents Florida at National Oratorical Contest

William Kiker

Western Area, Post 296

\$500 Winners:

Nicholas Welsh

Eastern Area, Post 394

2nd Place - \$1,500

Emily Peake

Central Area, Post 5

Nurfat Ishaque

Southern Area, Post 321

3rd Place - \$1,000

Kristian Wydysh

Southwestern Area, Post 90

Hagen Kadlec

Northern Area, Post 56

Special Thank You To:

All the Posts, Districts,
and Area Chairs that
helped support these
students with their
journey to the State
Contest.

Department
Oratorical Chair Meri
West for her
dedication and
support for the
Oratorical Program.

The Judges,
Tabulators, Time
Keepers and staff for
your help and
support at the State
Contest.