



# BE THE ONE

## IN THIS EDITION

### Department Officers

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Commander          | 4 NEC             |
| 2 1st Vice Commander | 5 Finance Officer |
| 3 2nd Vice Commander | 5 Historian       |

### Areas & Districts

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| 6 Central Area | 7 Northern Area |
| 7 Eastern Area | 8 District 13   |

### Membership

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### Programs / Committees

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| 10 JROTC/JSSP           | 16 Resolutions        |
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Submit Articles at

[floridalegion.org/submit](http://floridalegion.org/submit) or [legionlink@floridalegion.org](mailto:legionlink@floridalegion.org)

Questions? [legionlink@floridalegion.org](mailto:legionlink@floridalegion.org)

## Keep it Real

## A Message from the Department Commander

Chris Hamrick, Commander

[commander@floridalegion.org](mailto:commander@floridalegion.org)



We've just completed another busy month, and things will be getting even busier as we come into April, May, and June. A lot is going on everywhere in the Department every week. Our program deadlines and award submissions will be a subject we hear about constantly as we move forward. Teacher of the Year, Firefighter of the Year, EMT/Paramedic of the Year, and Law Enforcement Officer of the Year nominations are all due by April 16th. Please remember to pay close attention to deadline dates, as it's important to recognize our program participants, our posts, and our members for their efforts and accomplishments. We don't know about it if you don't let us know. Refer to the Program/Awards Manual on the Department site. There are

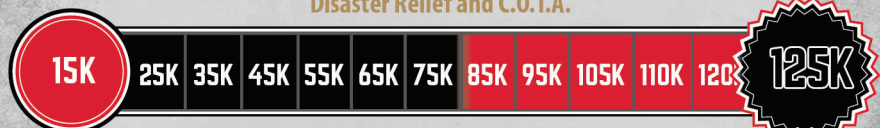
so many prestigious awards—such as the Wilson Timmons Award (Post of the Year), Legionnaire of the Year, Chaplain of the Year, and more. Contact Bekki Boarmann at Department Headquarters to find out anything you need to know. But remember: nominations must be written up at the post and submitted to the Department. Let's make the effort to allow the Department to hand out as many awards as possible at the Convention.

April will begin with our annual March on Tallahassee, where we will communicate our legislative priorities face-to-face with our state legislators. Stay tuned for a report on that after we return. The March on Tallahassee will be followed closely by the Annual Department Children and Youth Picnic on April 5th at Post 117 in Palm Bay. Last year's event was highly successful and raised over \$20,000; we hope to exceed that amount this year (Children and Youth is one of our four pillars, after all!). The following day will be the Meet-and-Greet

*Commander continued on page 2 >>*

## COMMANDER'S CHARITIES

Disaster Relief and C.O.T.A.



Commander's New Goal: \$125,000 (Current funds raised \$104,802.24)



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<< Commander continued from page 1

for the In-State Unity Ride, which runs all week and culminates at OCC Roadhouse in Clearwater on Saturday, April 12th. Meanwhile, we will be working toward our 95% membership goal and the renewal cutoff date throughout the month.

At our posts, nominations for officers and elections are underway. I ask that we be very thoughtful in this process. For far too long, elections have become nothing more than popularity contests—with no thought of The American Legion whatsoever. We still have a few posts where commanders or officers act

as though they own the establishment and refuse to relinquish control. These aren't leaders and should be replaced through the election process. Remember: the members own the post—not the commander. You, the membership, are whom they serve, and you are whom Department leadership—including myself—serves. Not the other way around. Let's always remember that.

It's a super busy time, and I'm still scheduling and conducting district visits—most likely through May. I'm looking forward to seeing you on the road. I love you all. Keep it real.

## Membership Card Reminder

Jessica Moore, 1st Vice Commander

[1stvice@legionmail.org](mailto:1stvice@legionmail.org)



As I travel throughout the state and visit posts in every district, I notice there are some canteens that ask every member to present their membership card. Likewise, there are some canteens

that don't ask anyone. Perhaps they've already seen their cards and know they are currently paid up, or they just assume they have paid their dues. Showing your card helps with membership. It keeps our rosters current and increases our state percentages. Every card holds a lifetime of memories of defending and supporting our country.

I'd like to remind every post that we are a

nonprofit 501(c) organization. Our liquor license is tied to that status. There isn't an American Legion canteen in the state that can afford to lose its liquor license. Even more, the loss or suspension of a charter—or a heavy fine—would hurt your post. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms conduct random checks often. Please don't put yourself at risk. Most importantly, encourage your members to have their card ready and sitting on the bar for all to see. I saw this saying, and it fits this conversation perfectly:

*"It's not the price you paid to be a member. It's the price you paid to be eligible."*

Be proud to show your card, and when asked every time you visit a Legion, wave it proudly for all to see.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### APRIL 2025

1-30	Children & Youth Month
1-30	Month of the Military Child
1-30	Military Saves Month
1-30	ALR Round Robin *
1	Be The One Day ★
1	JSSP 2nd Targets Due to CMP ★
1	Scholarship Applications Due (Med) ★
2	Department Membership Goal 95% *
2	ALR: Chapter 136 Monthly Meeting
5	Gold Star Spouses Day
5	ALR: Chapter 316 Monthly Meeting
5	ALR: Chapter 142 Caribbean Event
5	Children & Youth Picnic * ★
6	US Entry to WWI (1917)
6	Legion Riders Meet & Greet *
7-11	Legion Riders Unity Ride *
9	Former POW Recognition Day
9	Baseball Recruiting Maps Due *
9	Membership Renewal Cut-Off Date
9	ALR: Chapter 10 Meeting
12	Legion Riders State Rally * ★
12	District 16: Children & Youth Picnic
13	Thomas Jefferson's Birthday
13	District 5: Meeting
13	ALR: Chapter 8 Meeting
13	District 5: Meeting
14	US Air Force Reserve Birthday (1948)
15	Legion Link Articles Due for May *
15	Purple Up! For Military Kids Day
15	Tax Day
16	End of the Year Nominations Due *
18	Good Friday

UPCOMING EVENTS CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 >>

## Department Convention

Hilton Orlando | Lake Buena Vista, FL

June 12-15, 2025



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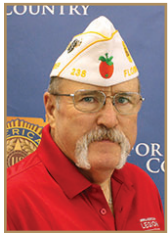
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## Red Star Foundation Information

Bob Matheson, 2nd Vice Commander

[2ndvice@legionmail.org](mailto:2ndvice@legionmail.org)



One of the most important issues that we as members of the American Legion strive to stop is veterans' suicide. Within the American Legion, we have many programs to help fight veteran suicide, with the national "Be

the One" program leading the way. Recently, a new foundation has started that works with veterans and first responders to assist families who have faced this tragic event. It is called the Red Star Foundation. Below is the foundation's initial press release from October 13, 2024.

### Red Star Foundation Launches to Support Families of Veteran and First Responder Suicides

#### Red Star Foundation Press Release

Clearwater, FL — The Red Star Foundation, a newly registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Clearwater, Florida, has officially launched with a mission dedicated to providing essential support to families impacted by the suicides of veterans and first responders. Founded with a vision to extend critical assistance to families coping with the unique emotional and financial hardships that follow such tragedies, the Red Star Foundation addresses a growing and urgent need within the community.

#### Addressing a National Crisis with Local Roots

The tragic rise in suicides among veterans and first responders has become a national crisis, affecting hundreds of thousands of families across the United States. These individuals have dedicated their lives to serving and protecting others, often facing intense situations and personal sacrifices. Unfortunately, many experience mental health challenges that can lead to tragic outcomes. The Red Star Foundation is committed to making a positive impact by providing resources, counseling, and financial assistance to

the families left behind, helping them navigate the difficult journey after such a loss.

*"We've seen an increasing number of families left without support after losing a loved one to suicide. These families not only experience intense grief but also face unexpected financial burdens," said Jerry Shaffer, co-founder of the Red Star Foundation. "We want them to know that they are not alone, and our organization stands ready to provide help, compassion, and resources."*

#### Supporting Families in Need

The Red Star Foundation's approach is centered on filling the gaps left by traditional support systems. The organization offers both short-term and long-term assistance to families, addressing needs such as bereavement and grief support, counseling, and ongoing mental health services. By collaborating with local organizations, mental health professionals, and support groups, the Red Star Foundation aims to create a strong network of resources that families can rely on during times of crisis.

#### Why Clearwater, Florida?

Clearwater serves as an ideal base for the foundation due to its proximity to several veteran and first responder communities. Additionally, being based in Florida allows the foundation to easily reach families across the southeastern United States—an area that has seen some of the highest numbers of veteran suicides in recent years. With its roots in Clearwater, the Red Star Foundation plans to expand its outreach nationwide, building partnerships with organizations across the country to ensure that families everywhere have access to the support they need.

#### A Call to Action

As the Red Star Foundation grows, it aims to raise awareness about veterans' and first responders'

## APRIL 2025 - CONTINUED

18	Dept Headquarters Closed *
18	Scholarship Winners Announced *
19	Northern Area Ball
20	Easter
22	Earth Day
23	US Army Reserve Birthday (1908)
23	Administrative Professionals Day
25	Arbor Day
26	Dept Commander's Homecoming *
26	District 12: DCC
27	District 14: Spring Picnic
27	District 4: DCC
30	Military Brats Day

**\*\*For more events and updates visit our website at [www.floridalegion.org](http://www.floridalegion.org) \*\***

★ Commander attendance anticipated.

✱ Department of Florida event.

★ National event.

Events are subject to change. More details at [floridalegion.org](http://floridalegion.org).

mental health struggles. By encouraging the community to participate—through donations, volunteering, or simply spreading the word—the Red Star Foundation hopes to create lasting change and honor the sacrifices made by veterans and first responders.

*"We owe a debt of gratitude to our veterans and first responders who risk their lives for us. Supporting their families in times of loss is the least we can do," added Co-Founder Sergeant Major Gene Overstreet, 12th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps. "With the community's support, we can bring hope and healing to those who have given so much."*

For more information about the Red Star Foundation, its mission, and how you can contribute, please visit [www.RedStarFoundation.org](http://www.RedStarFoundation.org).



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## Legislative, "Be the One," and April Children & Youth Month

Jim Ramos, NEC

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### Methods to Contact Your Assigned Representative (Legislative)

It is important to stay actively engaged with the representatives we've elected. Here are effective ways to communicate:

1. **Schedule a Meeting** - Congress is open to visitors, meaning legislators and their staff are available for in-person meetings. A 15–30-minute meeting at your legislator's office provides a valuable opportunity to discuss The American Legion's legislative agenda in greater detail.
2. **Call Your Legislator** - You may call your representative's office directly and ask to speak with the staff member responsible for veterans' and military affairs. If necessary, request an email address if a direct phone line is not available.
3. **Send an Email** - Congressional staff closely monitor office emails, noting the issues most prevalent among constituents in their district.
4. **How It Works** - Understand national efforts, testimonies, reports to Congress, and reporting procedures to stay informed and effective.
5. **Local and Department Efforts** - Effective legislative engagement requires involvement at the local level. Review The American Legion's legislative priorities through our Legislative

Agenda and point papers, which clearly outline our positions and recommended solutions.

For more information, visit [floridalegion.org/Legislative](http://floridalegion.org/Legislative) or contact Legislative Chair Stuart Scott at [legislative@legionmail.org](mailto:legislative@legionmail.org).

### What You Should Speak About to Help Our Veterans, Families, and Friends in Times of Need ("Be the One")

1. Visit the "Be the One" program resource at [legion.org](http://legion.org) for detailed information.
2. Emphasize that the program is actively "changing lives and saving lives."
3. Engage your leadership at the post, district, area, and department levels for further guidance.

Today, the number one issue facing the veteran community is suicide. The mission of The American Legion's "Be the One" initiative is to reduce veteran suicide rates. We aim to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health treatment and empower everyone to act promptly when a veteran or service member may be at risk—saving one life at a time.

Whether you are a veteran or a friend or family member of a veteran, you can "Be the One."

### Local Efforts and Legislative Actions: April is Children & Youth Month

Local community initiatives and legislative actions focusing on children and youth deserve continued attention:

- City programs affecting children and youth

- School appropriations and budget allocations
- Immunization efforts
- Child abuse and neglect statutes
- Juvenile justice (courts, probation, corrections)
- Local public welfare departments
- All other matters related to the health and welfare of children

For assistance, contact your Post's Children & Youth (C&Y) Chair or leadership at the post, district, area, or department levels.

### 100% Children and Youth Post Narrative Reporting Award:

Each post can achieve this award annually by submitting accurate reporting.

Publications are available for download and printing at [floridalegion.org](http://floridalegion.org) and [legion.org/publications](http://legion.org/publications).

### Need Help?

Please reach out to your leadership or to me directly. We accomplish more when we collaborate as **ONE TEAM**.

I am Jim Ramos, your NEC from Florida. I am here to assist you, Florida Legionnaires. If you have questions, email me at [NEC@legionmail.org](mailto:NEC@legionmail.org) or call me at 352-226-4370 and please leave a message—I may not have everyone's phone number.

Thank you!

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LEGION

Department of Florida

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## Annual Florida Inc. Filing and Annual Reviews That Are Easily Overlooked

Shirley Douglas, Finance Officer

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Now is a good time to perform an annual review of several important Post filing requirements and annual reviews to ensure your Post complies with often-overlooked requirements.

- **[sunbiz.org](http://sunbiz.org) State of Florida Incorporation Certificate** — The Post must be listed as an incorporated entity by the State of Florida for the calendar year January–December. You must renew the Post's incorporation papers with the state by May 1. If your Post is not incorporated, every member of your Post can be open to a lawsuit.
- **IRS Form 8822-B** — Change of Address or Responsible Party Form — Whenever there is a change of address or a change in the person in charge, a new IRS Form 8822-B must be filed with the IRS. This basic form resembles a "Change of Address" form. The "responsible party" can be the Post Commander, Adjutant, or Finance Officer.
- **Tax-Exempt Status** — This is also a good time to check your Post's tax-exempt status. You can verify the Post's status at [Tax Exempt Organization Search](#) | [Internal Revenue Service](#).
- **Post Insurance** — Review your Post's insurance coverage to ensure that the policy is sufficient to cover any potential loss. Every Post should have some form of liability insurance.
- **Review Your Liquor License** — For information, visit [Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco — MyFloridaLicense.com](#).
- **DR-5 R. 01-17 TC.pdf** — Check the expiration date on your Post's Consumer Certificate of

Exemption form. Sales tax exemption certificates expire after five years. The Department reviews each exemption certificate sixty (60) days before the current certificate expires. For nonprofit organizations located in Florida, the Department uses available public information to determine whether an organization continues to qualify for a sales tax exemption certificate. If an organization meets the statutory exemption criteria, a new exemption certificate is issued. If additional information is needed, a letter requesting documentation is mailed to the organization.

It is recommended that the Post Commander, Adjutant, and Finance Officer review the above requirements together, as they are most likely responsible for filing the forms and addressing questions about the Post's status.

## Embracing April with Unity and Purpose

Elbert Ziegler, Historian

[historian@legionmail.org](mailto:historian@legionmail.org)



April is upon us, bringing with it a host of significant events that celebrate our commitment to veterans, families, and communities. As we step into this vibrant month, let us take a moment to reflect on the opportunities ahead and the spirit of camaraderie that defines The American Legion.

April 1st marks a special day for us—it is Be the One Day, a nationwide initiative dedicated to combating veteran suicide by raising awareness and fostering support within our communities. It also happens to be April Fools' Day, a reminder that laughter and joy are essential to maintaining

resilience and well-being. Let us take this time to spread positivity and reinforce our mission of supporting those who have served.



Legion Rider as Post 90 at Stomping Tour Party and Drawing. Thank you for all you give!

The American Legion Riders Round Robin kicks off on April 1st and runs through April 30th. This annual tradition embodies the dedication and adventurous spirit of our Riders as they travel across the state,

raising awareness and funds for veteran causes. Adding to the excitement, the American Legion Riders Unity Ride will take place from April 7th to 12th, reinforcing the sense of brotherhood and shared purpose among our Riders.

April is also recognized as the Month of the Military Child, a time to honor the strength and sacrifices of children in military families. These young heroes stand beside our servicemembers, demonstrating resilience and courage in the face of challenges. In celebration, the Children and Youth Picnic on April 12th offers a wonderful opportunity to come together in appreciation of their unwavering support.

As we journey through the month, we will also

*Historian continued on page 6 >>*



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<< Historian continued from page 5

observe Good Friday on April 18th and Easter Sunday on April 20th, moments of reflection and renewal. Whether through faith, family gatherings, or community events, these days remind us of the values of hope and perseverance that unite us all.

Do not forget the Department Commanders' Hillbilly

Hoedown on April 26th at Post 117. I will be there to get my Hillbilly going on. See you there.

Finally, I encourage all Post Historians to remain diligent in their efforts. June is fast approaching, and now is the time to continue compiling and finalizing your Post History Books. These records serve as a testament to our legacy, ensuring that future

generations recognize and appreciate the hard work, dedication, and service of our members.

April is a month of action, remembrance, and celebration. Let us move forward together, strengthening our bonds and fulfilling our mission with pride and dedication.

## Overview of Washington, DC Conference

Rick Orzechowski, Central Area Commander

[central@legionmail.org](mailto:central@legionmail.org)



I was honored to attend the Washington, DC Conference in February, and I am excited to share the wealth of knowledge I gained. The experience was so enriching that it will take two papers to fully explain

everything I learned and to emphasize why attending this event is so beneficial.

### Veterans Employment and Education Meeting

One of the most enlightening sessions I attended was the Veterans Employment and Education Meeting. I spent the entire day learning about the extensive efforts The American Legion is making to support veterans. The focus areas included mental health wellness, programs to aid PTSD and other mental health issues, and various initiatives available to homeless veterans.

### Mental Health and Wellness Programs

The conference highlighted the critical importance of mental health wellness for veterans. Programs designed to assist with PTSD and other mental health conditions were discussed in detail. It is heartening to see that there are dedicated efforts to support veterans' mental well-being, ensuring they receive the necessary care and resources to lead fulfilling lives.

### Programs for Homeless Veterans

The session also delved into the various programs available to homeless veterans, such as Hearts for Homeless, The Dole Act, and Section 1241. These initiatives provide different types of housing solutions, including emergency, transitional, and permanent housing. Over the past decade, the homeless veteran population has been reduced by 65%, yet there are still over 32,000 homeless veterans. The goal is to continue these efforts until every veteran has a safe place to call home.

### Educational Programs for Veterans and Their Dependents

Veterans and their dependents have access to several educational programs that can help them pursue higher education. Programs like 38 USC Ch. 34 are designed for members who served on active duty for more than 180 days, while Chapter 35 offers financial assistance to students attending college, even if they are part-time. These programs have specific eligibility requirements, and veterans can apply for benefits through the VA or obtain a Certificate of Eligibility online via the eBenefits portal.

### Programs for Incarcerated Veterans

There are numerous programs to support incarcerated veterans, offering second-chance help and assistance from arrest through sentencing, corrections, and re-entry into society. These programs aim to provide a seamless transition for veterans, helping them

reintegrate into civilian life and become productive members of the community.

### Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is designed to help service members transition from military to civilian life. Unfortunately, only 30% of service members utilize this program. TAP offers access to resources at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure a successful transition. This session underscored the importance of raising awareness about TAP to increase its utilization among service members.

### Conclusion

The Veterans Employment and Education Meeting was packed with invaluable information from experts who are leaders in their respective fields. The insights I gained truly blew my mind, and I am eager to share even more in the second part of this conference overview, which will be written next month. Prepare to have your mind blown a second time!

Attending the Washington, DC Conference was an eye-opening experience that provided deep insights into the numerous programs and initiatives available to support veterans. From mental health wellness to educational opportunities and housing solutions, the efforts being made are commendable and inspiring. I hope this overview encourages more people to attend future conferences and engage with the important work being done to support our veterans.



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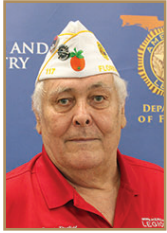
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## Awards and Special Occasions

**Bruce Thurber, Eastern Area Commander**

[eastern@legionmail.org](mailto:eastern@legionmail.org)



Applications for the following National Awards are available on the Department website ([floridalegion.org](http://floridalegion.org)):

- Gold Brigade
- Silver Brigade Recruiter

- Department Recruiter of the Year
- National Recruiter of the Year
- 100% District Commander Pin

Post and District Award applications are also available at [floridalegion.org](http://floridalegion.org). Navigate to **Resources**, then select **Forms & Documents**.

This month brings many special occasions, including

the Children and Youth Picnic, the Riders State Rally at OCC, the Department Commander's Homecoming, DCCs, and more.

I also want to sincerely thank everyone for the kind wishes following my stroke. I am doing well with rehabilitation and look forward to seeing you all soon.

## Officer Training: The Key to the Future of the American Legion

**Jim Bowers, Northern Area Commander**

[northern@legionmail.org](mailto:northern@legionmail.org)



The American Legion is the largest veterans' service organization in the United States and plays a pivotal role in supporting veterans, their families, and communities.

To maintain its effectiveness and uphold its mission, the organization relies on well-trained officers who lead with confidence, knowledge, and dedication. Officer training is not just a formality; it is a necessity for the continued success and growth of the American Legion

- 1. Enhancing Leadership Skills:** Effective leadership is the backbone of any organization, and the American Legion is no exception. Officer training programs equip leaders with the skills needed to manage posts, organize events, and address members' needs. Training fosters decision-making abilities, conflict resolution skills, and the capacity to inspire and motivate others.
- 2. Ensuring Compliance and Accountability:** The American Legion operates under a set of

bylaws and regulations that ensure its activities align with its mission and values. Officer training provides a comprehensive understanding of these guidelines, ensuring that leaders can navigate legal and administrative responsibilities with confidence. This knowledge helps maintain transparency and accountability within the organization.

- 3. Strengthening Community Impact:** Trained officers are better equipped to identify and address the unique needs of their communities. Whether it's organizing outreach programs, advocating for veterans' rights, or providing support during emergencies, well-trained leaders make a significant difference. Their expertise ensures that the American Legion remains a trusted and effective resource for veterans and their families.
- 4. Promoting Growth and Sustainability:** As the American Legion continues to evolve, it faces new challenges and opportunities. Officer training prepares leaders to adapt to changing circumstances, embrace innovation, and implement strategies for growth. By investing in training, the organization ensures that its

leadership remains dynamic and forward-thinking.

- 5. Building a Stronger Network:** Training programs foster camaraderie and collaboration among officers. By connecting leaders from different posts and departments, these programs create a network of support and shared knowledge. This sense of unity strengthens the American Legion as a whole and enhances its ability to serve members and communities.

In conclusion, officer training is not just an investment in individuals; it is an investment in the future of the American Legion. By prioritizing training, the organization empowers its leaders to uphold its mission, adapt to new challenges, and continue making a positive impact on the lives of veterans and their families. The benefits of comprehensive officer training are far-reaching, ensuring that the American Legion remains a beacon of support and service for generations to come.

## WANT TO VOLUNTEER FOR NATIONAL CONVENTION?

## SEE PAGE 24



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## District Meeting Overview and Upcoming Elections

Keith Berres, District 13 Commander

[district13@legionmail.org](mailto:district13@legionmail.org)



As we completed our District meeting today, I was encouraged by the posts that were highlighted and proud to discuss their membership stories. We currently have 10 posts that have reached the 90%

goal, with the rest over 80%. Many of the posts in District 13 have been actively working to meet the marks set by the Department and return to pre-lan days when members no longer in the area were not included on the books. Keep up the great work.

We are at that time of the year when nominations for officers are being posted, and elections for next year's Post, District, and Department officers

are going to take place. Posts do not exist on membership alone but need members who are willing to step up and be active in the Post. Volunteering and taking on leadership roles are important steps to strengthen a Post. Also, it is the time of the year when Post Consolidated Reports are due by May 7. They are available online on the Department website.

Congratulations to Kris Wydysh on winning the District 13 Southwestern Area award and placing second in the Department of Florida Oratorical Contest. Kris is a spectacular person who has worked hard competing in his second year of the Oratorical Contest. He has aspirations of becoming the Governor of the State of Florida and is well on his way to reaching the top.

The District 13 Riders completed their second annual Stamping Tour with a party at Post 103, DN McQueen, this past month. Thank you to Mike and Laurene Flower for heading this project. Their hard work, along with the support of all the Riders in the District and Area, resulted in raising \$9,000 for the Vet Relief – Suicide Project.

With Children and Youth Month coming up in April, the District will be holding a picnic on April 27 at Post 110 in Charlotte. We have entertainment by the Hot Rod Hearts, raffles, and more. There is even a rumor that a dunk tank will be at the picnic, with plans to get the District Commander soaked. Monies raised will go toward Children and Youth causes. Please put it on your calendar and plan on attending.

## Award Packages and Goal Setting

Wayne Mulligan, Americanism Chair

[americanism@legionmail.org](mailto:americanism@legionmail.org)



As you complete your award packages, start to set your goals for the year in the area that you choose. After all, setting measurable objectives will let you know what you have accomplished at year-end. Remember: be realistic, make them measurable, listen, formulate a plan of action, and

promote a special project (all these are in the book for you to expand).

"At the 1st National Convention in 1919, the charge for the establishment of the Americanism Commission was made for our basic ideal that we recite in the preamble at every meeting:

- Combat all anti-American tendencies, activities, and propaganda;
- Work on the education of immigrants and

prospective American citizens;

- Inculcate the ideals in the citizen population;
- Spread among the people the information about the real nature and principles of the American government;
- Foster the teaching of Americanism in all schools."

It is up to us to get back to these statements from 1919... Are we up to the task?

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## Attention All District Commanders

Jamie Grinis, Blood Donor Chair

[blooddonor@legionmail.org](mailto:blooddonor@legionmail.org)



Last year was a true disaster trying to get the districts involved in the Blood Donor Program. I visited many posts, and few would commit to sponsoring a program. The only way I found out that your post had a blood drive was from the CPRs.

The department created a fill-in form on the department website. Below is the fastest way to get a blood drive started.

To get the Big Red Bus, contact Blood One via email or call your local Blood One office by telephone to schedule the event. They do all the work, and they post it on their local calendar.

All posts that have a blood drive must report the occasion on the Department website. They simply have to go to Programs, scroll down to Blood Donor, and click on the site. Once they open the site, have them report their activity by clicking on the fill-in form and filling in the blanks.

Commanders, please have each post report their activities each time they hold a blood drive. At the end of May, Blood One will report back to the department. The total number of pints collected will be reflected in a running total for the year.

Use the department's easy-to-follow report on the Blood Donor page. The data goes directly to Blood One and the Blood Donor Chair for easier accountability and reporting needs. It is very important to have your post submit a report each time you have a blood drive.

Report the event to the department by email:  
<https://www.floridalegion.org/programs-services/blood-donor/donor-report>

One thing I have learned this year is that it is easier to get blood out of a turnip than it is to get a Big Red Bus at a post. Thank you for getting involved with this life-saving program and helping our fellow veterans and neighbors in need.

Many posts had blood drives, but only 8 posts filled out the department forms to receive credit for their labors. It would be nice for the entire state to get involved and report each month, as Blood One suggests for scheduling the event.

## The Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program: Mission and Advancement

Rico Thomas, Civil Air Patrol Chair

[civilairpatrol@legionmail.org](mailto:civilairpatrol@legionmail.org)



The mission of the Civil Air Patrol is to transform youth into dynamic Americans and aerospace leaders. The Cadets at School program brings the benefits of CAP's character education,

fitness, leadership, and aerospace curriculum into middle and high schools as a weekly after-school program.

### Cadet Advancement

The Cadet Program is a self-paced program of sixteen achievements. Cadets complete one task in each element of cadet life—leadership, aerospace, fitness, and character—during each achievement. There is a degree of academic rigor to the program;

cadets study their textbooks and must pass written tests to advance. Along the way, cadets earn promotions, acquire new leadership responsibilities, and collect awards.

### Q. How does Civil Air Patrol select and promote members?

A. Since its inception, Civil Air Patrol has been a merit-based organization. This includes our volunteer management, as well as our scholarships and awards.

### Q. How can your Post support a Civil Air Patrol Squadron?

A. Your Post can support a local squadron by volunteering, assisting with scholarships, and awards.

Find a Florida CAP Cadet Squadron to Support:

<https://flwg.cap.gov/join/unit-locator>

Interested in supporting or locating a CAP Cadet Squadron? Contact me, and let's make it happen!



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## Congratulations on a Remarkable Achievement!

Sonny Decker, Florida Boys State Chair

[boystate@legionmail.org](mailto:boystate@legionmail.org)

WOW, what a great effort on everyone's part within the American Legion Department of Florida. You did it—500 paid delegates are going to Boys State this year. I am totally beside myself at this amazing achievement. Please give yourself a big round of applause—you deserve it. What a team effort, with all that we have endured this year.

Now, we have to complete the process and get the paperwork signed and submitted to the department. District Chairs, make sure that you are in contact with your post and helping them complete this in a timely manner. Also, ensure that your delegates know the date and time of the district orientation.

If you would like me or the Darcy, to attend, please let us know.

We have more Legionnaires signed up to help at Boys State than last year. Don't be afraid to talk about your time of service, what it means to you to live in America, and what Old Glory means to you. Thank you for answering the call once again.

### SAVE THIS DATE

It has been set for May 10th, 2025. It will be held at Department Headquarters, with a meet-and-greet at 5 pm (1700 hours) and dinner served at 6 pm (1800 hours). This is a statewide fundraiser and an opportunity for Boys State Alumni and Sponsors to

get together. This is a fundraiser—hint, hint—bring cash, checks, or cards. All proceeds will go to support Boys State programs, scholarships, equipment, and rentals.

We will also be introducing more information about the Alumni Foundation. You really don't want to miss this opportunity to get in on the ground floor of this new endeavor.

Thank you for your support of the Boys State program. From me and Darcy Bockman Wright, thank you for this awesome year. Now, let's finish it strong, and see you at the Florida American Legion Boys State.

## JROTC Performance Accreditation, Tournament, and Marksmanship Service

Loretta Young, JROTC/JSSP Chair

[jrotc@legionmail.org](mailto:jrotc@legionmail.org)



The JROTC Performance Accreditation for the Army is typically done every three years by the 6th Brigade that I spoke of in an earlier Link article. I had the opportunity to also review a JPA at

Cypress Bay JROTC that was held in preparation for the formal inspection next year. The format was the same as if it were a formal inspection by the Brigade Team. They did an outstanding Continuous Improvement Brief; this is of particular interest since this is a JROTC unit that is now being revived because the number of cadets has declined over the past few years. These programs are cadet-based, and success or failure depends on the cadet-led Battalion Staff. Each staff member gives a self-introduction, including GPA, accomplishments, participation in the unit and the school, future goals, and ambitions. They are very

diverse and show why the Cadet Motto: "to build better citizens" is so important to this program. There is a wide variety of personalities: some are very outgoing and have a commanding presence,



Cypress Bay JROTC-JPA Trial

while others are still somewhat shy and build their confidence by speaking before a group. The Cadet Battalion Commander opens the Continuous Improvement Brief and introduces each of the staff members to speak. Questions are encouraged by the review team and sometimes by others in the audience. This was followed by the Service-Learning Project, which was in support of "Big Sisters/Big Brothers" in assisting the feeder middle school to

build up its enrollment numbers. To make this more meaningful, they invited two of the middle school students to speak on their experiences with the program and what it meant to them. This review shows that this program is on the rise again to its former state.

The JSSP Postal Marksmanship first round has been completed, and the top competitors in each category will be announced shortly; they will be competing in the second round postal tournament. Targets were mailed by CMP to the winners on Feb. 15 and must be fired and returned to CMP by the April 1 deadline. They will be posted on the National website as soon as results are released. The top 15 winners in each category will advance to the finals, which will be held in July at Hillsdale College in Michigan.

The 2025 JUNIOR AIRNATS NATIONAL MATCH was held at Camp Perry, Ohio. There were 10 Sporter

*JROTC/JSSP continued on page 11 >>*



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teams and 20 Precision Teams invited to the second annual match from Jan. 20 to Feb. 1. Five teams from Florida competed: Mariner-1, Mariner-2, Mulberry, Ida S. Baker, and Sarasota Military Academy. Mariner-1 was the national champion, and Mulberry took second place. The Army Marksmanship Service Championship was also held in Anniston, AL, with eight Florida Sporter teams

qualifying: Mulberry, Mariner, Palmetto, Newsome, Summerlin, Mulberry-2, Astronaut, and Sarasota Military. MAJ Williams, Senior Instructor for Mariner AJROTC, served as one of the unofficial coaches for the Army Marksmanship Service Championship and has been very instrumental in promoting the JSSP and the national Army Marksmanship events in the Cape Coral and Lee County area, along with the AMU Coaching Clinic at Mariner HS in July. There is

much focus on scholarships and post-high school opportunities. There's much to learn through the Marksmanship Program: life skills, character, and leadership lessons that produce leaders. Thanks so much to all who support our youth programs and the future of our country. Please let me know of any events that you may have in your area to share so we can continue to build this program.

## Firefighter's Creed

Daryl Bass, Law & Order Chair

[laworder@legionmail.org](mailto:laworder@legionmail.org)



I am proud to be a firefighter. I revere the long line of expert firefighters who, by their devotion to duty and self-sacrifice, have made it possible for me to be a member of a

service that is honored and respected, in good times and bad, throughout the world. I never, by word or deed, will bring reproach upon the fair name of the fire service or permit others to do so unchallenged. I will cheerfully and willingly obey all lawful orders. I will always be on time to relieve and shall endeavor to do more, rather than less, than my share. I will always be at my station, alert and attending to my

duties. I shall, as far as I am able, bring solutions—not problems—to my seniors. I shall live joyously, but always with due regard for the rights and privileges of others. I shall endeavor to be a model citizen in the community in which I live.

## The American Legion: Advocating for Veterans at the 65th Washington Conference

Stuart Scott, Legislative Chair

[legislative@legionmail.org](mailto:legislative@legionmail.org)



From February 22 to 26, 2025, The American Legion held its 65th Washington Conference in the heart of the nation's capital. This annual event brought together Legionnaires, lawmakers,

and key stakeholders to champion the needs of veterans, service members, and their families. The conference served as a powerful platform for advancing The American Legion's legislative priorities for the 119th Congress.

### A Unified Voice on Capitol Hill

The highlight of the conference was the testimony of National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr. before a joint session of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs. On February 26,

Commander LaCoursiere presented The American Legion's legislative agenda, emphasizing critical issues such as suicide prevention, mental healthcare access, and the implementation of the PACT Act. His testimony underscored the organization's commitment to improving the quality of life for veterans and their families.

### Key Legislative Priorities

During the conference, The American Legion outlined its top legislative priorities, which included:

- Ensuring robust funding for VA suicide-prevention programs and mental health services.
- Strengthening the VA's Office of Community Care to improve access to healthcare for rural veterans.
- Advocating for comprehensive support to end veteran homelessness.

- Enhancing military pay, benefits, and quality-of-life programs.
- Addressing border security and national defense concerns.

### Grassroots Advocacy in Action

The conference also featured the Commander's Call, where Legionnaires engaged directly with lawmakers to discuss these priorities. Attendees were encouraged to participate in the Grassroots Advocacy Center, enabling them to make direct contact with their representatives and amplify The American Legion's voice on Capitol Hill.

### Looking Ahead

The 65th Washington Conference reaffirmed The American Legion's role as a leading advocate for veterans' rights and well-being. By fostering collaboration between Legionnaires and

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policymakers, the organization continues to drive meaningful change for those who have served our nation. For more details on The American Legion's legislative agenda and ongoing efforts, visit their official website: <https://www.legion.org/get-involved/meetings/washington-conference>.

## What's Happening on the Home Front

The 2025 Florida Legislative Session began on March 4 and will run until May 2. Key topics include property tax reforms, government spending, and addressing affordability for Floridians. Additionally, there are discussions around bills that

could impact veterans, such as housing support and healthcare improvements.

For veterans, 2025 has brought forward several significant legislative efforts:

- **CHIP IN for Veterans Act:** Aims to enhance healthcare facilities through community contributions.
- **Dental Care for Veterans Act:** Seeks to make dental care a standard VA service.
- **Disabled Veterans Housing Support Act:** Proposes changes to make housing assistance more accessible for disabled veterans.

For a full list of bills that we are tracking, please visit Legislative Bill Tracking, which I will update weekly.

## What Is Needed from You During the Florida Legislative Session

Please see the additional flyers at the end of The Legion Link for our White Papers, which provide specific information about our appropriation requests this session. Please take some time out of your busy schedule to call your local legislator and ask them to vote on the proposals.

## \$250,000 American Legion National Convention Transportation Senate form 1475 Collins, House form 1794 Salzman

*Tampa Bay, Florida will Host 2025 National Convention of The American Legion*  
The American Legion was chartered by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization. Focusing on service to veterans, servicemembers and communities, the Legion evolved from a group of war-weary veterans of World War I into one of the most influential nonprofit groups in the United States. Membership swiftly grew to over 1 million, and local posts sprang up across the country. Today, membership stands at nearly 2 million in more than 13,000 posts worldwide. The posts are organized into 55 departments: one each for the 50 states, along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Latin America and the Philippines.

Over the years, the Legion has influenced considerable social change in America, won hundreds of benefits for veterans and produced many important programs for children and youth.

The American Legion conducts annual summer National Conventions. In 2025, The American Legion will host its 106th National Convention in Tampa Bay, August 22-28. Approximately 8,000 attendees of the National Convention will gather to help further their cause to patriotism in support of our service men and women, past and present. Convention activities include the Annual Business Sessions of The American Legion, including two other simultaneous conventions: American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion, whose combined membership exceeds three (3) million worldwide.

Elements of the National Convention include opening ceremony reception, patriotic memorial service, exhibit/tradeshow, internal sales merchandise, general sessions with nationally acclaimed keynote speakers, awards ceremonies, color guard and band contests, continuing education, training, resources for PTSD, benefits/claims, community day event, several food and beverage functions, including two banquets.

Thirteen hotels in the downtown and surrounding areas will accommodate attendees. Motorcoach services are essential for serving the majority of the hotels' demographic needs, especially those with mobility challenges. The cost to provide said services is exorbitant. The Local Organizing Committee, in consultation with the Department of Florida of The American Legion, oversees this financial convention component. The Department of Florida of The American Legion graciously requests funding of \$250,000.00 to assist in this cost to provide the service needed for a successful event.

We thank you for allowing us to not only serve our country but to provide an opportunity, like our National Convention, to come together to assist all veterans in many facets.

The American Legion is here to serve. We thank you in advance for your support

## Florida American Legion Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Florida Girls State

*\$200,000 In Non-Recurring Funding in Higher Education Budget, House Request Form 2132 Salzman / Senate Project 1475 Collins*

Florida American Legion Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Girls State are a unique summer-time leadership/government program that does

not emphasize classroom lectures and textbook learning. Instead, it focuses on participation and

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personal experience in a model state, complete with governing bodies and elected public officials. It is designed to mirror the structure and operation of its respective state government.

Upon arrival at both Boys State and Girls State, the young men and women are assigned to one of two political parties. Those parties are called the "Nationalists" and the "Federalists". Such a political organization results in involvement at the precinct level, the city and county, judicial circuit, senatorial or legislative district as well as at the state level.

Boys State and Girls State allows the participants to form and operate their government without strict control and excessive supervision by adult volunteer staff.

Functional activities start with a caucus or other method of nominating candidates for city offices

and conclude with the election and inauguration of the Governor of the mythical state organization. Every citizen, 530 rising seniors from all over the state of Florida, becomes an integral part of Boys State, and 300 rising seniors from all over the state of Florida, become an integral part of Girls State, assuming responsibilities and performing duties either as an elected or appointed official, or otherwise fulfilling an assignment entailing the duties of responsible citizenship.

### Eligibility:

- Males (Boy State) & Females (Girls State) who have successfully completed their junior year of high school and have at least one semester of high school remaining.
- An un-weighted 3.2 Grade Point Average or above

### Scholarships: (Both Programs)

- TCC/FSU Scholarship — A four-year scholarship

for 5 delegates: first two years at Tallahassee Community College and the remaining two years at Florida State University.

- Samsung Corporation
  - \$1,000 to one delegate
  - A chance for 1 of 10 \$20,000 scholarships
- Other scholarships based on donations.

### Other opportunities:

- Earn 3 hours of College and High School credit through the dual enrollment program between Tallahassee Community College and your local School Board.
- Use of the State Capitol by the Boys State Legislature, Cabinet and Supreme Court.
- Learn the basic law and procedures of the State of Florida for elections.
- Learn how to write a Bill.

## Spring Updates: Celebrating Children and Youth Month and Membership Goals

### Bruce Carl, Membership Chair

[membership@legionmail.org](mailto:membership@legionmail.org)



Spring has sprung, and we are into Children and Youth Month! All but one of the Area Balls has been completed, and the DCCs will soon begin. I am looking forward to giving out the 100% pins and coins over the next couple of months when I visit your districts. You still have until May 7th to reach 100% and receive your coins and pins.

We have finished the Race to the Top competition for this year, and now we wait to hear from National if we have any winners. Best of luck to all districts that qualified!

We must now concentrate on completing the remainder of our renewals, recruiting new members, and contacting the DMS members. Please continue to use the texting method for the DMS400ADs. It has proven to be a valuable tool to increase our membership, bringing in hundreds of members who would otherwise still be in the DMS400.

Now that we have added all these members, it is important to retain them so they renew next year. Engage them and make them feel welcome. Find out what their interests are and any new ideas they might have.

The last batch of renewal notices will go out the week of May 3—9. The cut-off date is April 9th. If any members renew after that date, they will still receive a renewal notice. Also, keep in mind that the

cut-off date to receive your new membership cards at the Convention will also be in April. Anyone who joins, transfers, or renews after that date will not have a card for next year when you pick up your cards at the Convention.

This year is not over yet, so let's finish strong and reach that 100% goal! As of this writing, we are sitting in 11th place nationally at 88.88%. We missed our 90% goal by 1,260 members. Our 95% goal is April 2nd for Department and April 9th for National, and we need 6,406 more members to get there! We still need 11,384 more members to reach 100%, so let's finish the year strong!

Keep up the great work—it is sincerely appreciated. If you need help, please do not hesitate to contact me! We got this, Team Florida!



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## The American Legion's 65th Washington Conference Recap

Michael Sherman, National Security Chair

[security@legionmail.org](mailto:security@legionmail.org)



The American Legion's annual Washington Conference took place on February 24th and 25th at the Washington Hilton in our nation's capital, Washington, DC. Prior to the conference, I was honored to take part in

the annual Sons of the American Legion bus trip to various monuments and Arlington National Cemetery. You can read my recap of that bus trip in this month's issue of the SAL's Detachment newsletter, The Source.

On Monday, the 24th, the National Security Commission held its annual winter meeting as part of the Washington Conference. We heard from several speakers regarding topics of interest to the American Legion dealing with national security issues. Our first speaker was Lt. General David Deptula (retired), who is currently the Dean of the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies. Lt. Gen. Deptula discussed the threats and fundamental principles affecting our armed forces, as well as the

current state of the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force, and the Institute's recommended priorities for the incoming Secretary of Defense. The bottom line of his presentation was that "the Department of the Air Force is too small, too old, and not ready to meet the needs of the national defense strategy" and "on its current vector, and without a significant increase in funding, the situation will only get worse."

Our second speaker was Mr. Keith Webster, President of the Defense and Aerospace Council and Defense Industrial Base Expert for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Webster discussed the current state of the defense industrial base and what he perceived to be needed to address the current state of national security affairs to best support our military in the current arenas.

That afternoon, National Security Commission Chair James Grenier (VA) hosted a town hall-style sit-down with Mr. Tim Dill, who was performing the duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Chairman Grenier and Mr. Dill discussed various quality-of-life issues affecting

our military and their families, and they examined different initiatives aimed at improving conditions for our servicemembers.

In last month's article, I discussed some of the legislative priorities of the American Legion, and on Tuesday, February 25th, I had the opportunity to act on them. Accompanied by the National American Legion Auxiliary National Security Chair, Michele Degennaro, I met with the legislative staff for Representative Anna Paulina Luna (FL-13, who briefly stopped in to greet us and assured us that she would follow up on the issues discussed in our meeting) and Kathy Castor (FL-14). We had very productive meetings discussing several of this year's priorities and how they affected veterans and servicemembers here in Florida; both offices shared their commitment to continuing to take care of our military and veterans.

If you haven't already, please consider signing up for the American Legion's Grassroots Action Center. This platform is the easiest way to make your voice heard in Congress. Please visit <https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home> to sign up.

## National Competition - Next Stop Michigan

Doug Hockenberry, Oratorical Chair

[oratorical@legionmail.org](mailto:oratorical@legionmail.org)



I trust everyone is doing well.

Let me start by extending my sincere thanks and appreciation to all the Post, District, and Area Oratorical Chairs for your support these past eight months with the Oratorical Program. A special note of thanks goes to Bekki Boorman for doing a first-class job coordinating everything with this program. I simply could not have done it without all of you working as a team. THANK YOU!

This year, we had five high school students compete, including one sophomore, one junior, and three seniors, who appeared on March 15, 2025, at the Department Headquarters for the Oratorical Competition. I am here to tell you—and any one of the judges, along with the 100+ Legion Family members and guests in attendance—that all five of these high schoolers came to win. Their confidence, stage presence, and knowledge of the Constitution were simply AMAZING. Our judges certainly had the challenging task of choosing a winner. I mentioned we had five students compete this year, and of those five, we have two eligible to return next year, and I hope they do.



So, without further ado, our 2025 Department of Florida Oratorical Constitutional Speech Contest winner is William Kiker. William is a senior at

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Fort Walton Beach High School who represented the Western Area and was sponsored by AL Post 296 of Destin, Florida. William will represent the Department of Florida at the National Competition in Michigan from May 16 to 18, 2025. Let's all

wish him success.

In closing, once again, I want to thank everyone involved at the Post, District, and Area levels for your support with this year's Oratorical Program.

As always, if you have any questions, please give me a call at 727-514-3742, send a text, or send an email to [oratorical@legionmail.org](mailto:oratorical@legionmail.org). "Hang Tough."

## Revitalization and Re-engagement

Judith Richards, Post Development Chair

[revitalization@legionmail.org](mailto:revitalization@legionmail.org)



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.

Write a letter to your members, letting them know what is happening at the post. Describe the activities and events in which the post is involved at the local, community, state, and national levels. Let the members know that you are thinking of them and that the post welcomes any time they can offer—whether it's to assist or simply to visit. 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 and again!

If you have questions, please reach out. We can brainstorm on a call for your posts, districts, and areas.

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

I look forward to working with you.

## National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day and POW/MIA Awareness

Denny Luke, POW/MIA Chair

[powmia@legionmail.org](mailto:powmia@legionmail.org)



April 9th is National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, not to be confused with the third Friday of September, which is National POW/MIA Recognition Day. The National Former Prisoner of War

Recognition Day honors all who have been held captive by enemy combatants. The day is connected to the Imperial Japanese Army's Bataan Death March, which began on 9 April 1942. The march resulted in the death of over 20,000 American and Filipino POWs.

In 1984, a movement led by former POWs began seeking a day recognizing former prisoners of war

on April 9th each year. In 1988, Congress approved legislation designating April 9th to commemorate the date on which a tragic number of captives were taken prisoner on Bataan. President Ronald Reagan proclaimed National Former Prisoners of War Recognition Day on April 1, 1988, through Presidential Proclamation 5788, setting the observance for April 9, 1988. Since then, through legislation and presidential proclamations, the observance carries on.

The National POW/MIA Memorial located in Jacksonville, FL, is completely dependent on donations, merchandise sales, and brick sales for income. Please consider including the memorial in your future fundraising activities. This is a worthy project and will be a shining star in Florida's ongoing support of veterans when completed.

The Department of Florida has a POW/MIA Facebook page. Search for "FL Legion POW MIA" or visit <https://www.facebook.com/falpowmia/>. I encourage everyone to like and follow it.

Here is a one-stop link to informational POW/MIA websites and pages: [qr.link/GvHRAu](https://www.legionlink.org/GvHRAu).

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) (<https://www.dpaa.mil/>), as of 3 March 2025, has identified the following number of MIA personnel for FY 2025:

- WWII: 25
- Korean War: 10
- Cold War: 0
- Vietnam War: 1

POW/MIA continued on page 16 >>



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<< POW/MIA continued from page 15

During February 2025, a press release was issued for the following 14 personnel previously accounted for.

## Feb. 28, 2025

Airman from WWII (Murray, J.)  
Soldier from WWII (Ulrich, E.)

## Feb. 27, 2025

Soldier from Korean War (Barbiere, G.)  
Soldier from WWII (Smalley, C.)  
Soldier from WWII (Burgess, K.)

## Feb. 26, 2025

USS West Virginia Sailor from WWII (Lyon, A.)  
Soldier from WWII (Kidd, M.)  
Soldier from WWII (Dunning, F.)  
Soldier from WWII (Leslie, B.)  
Airman from WWII (McCollum, R.)

## Feb. 25, 2025

Pilot from WWII (Johnstone, F.)

## Feb. 24, 2025

Pilot from WWII (Skjeie, D.)  
Pilot from WWII (McKee, R.)  
Soldier from Korean War (Ross, W.)

Pilot from WWII (Tennynson, H.)

Soldier from WWII (Loyd, J.)  
Soldier from Korean War (Edwards, W.)  
Airman from WWII (Eby, W.)

## Feb. 14, 2025

Sailor from WWII (Reimer, J.)  
Soldier from WWII (Schopp, E.)

## Feb. 11, 2025

Soldier from Korean War (Grace, L.)

## Feb. 4, 2025

Soldier from Korean War (Mestas, O.)

## Award Nominations for Legion Year 2024-2025: Submission Reminder

Kathryn Hockenberry, Public Relations Chair  
[pr@legionmail.org](mailto:pr@legionmail.org)

Commanders, if you haven't started yet, it's not too late to submit award nominations for Legion Year 2024-2025. The suspense date for all awards, including Public Relations, is 7 May 2025. Let's not let all the hard work of your volunteers go unrecognized and unappreciated—it only takes a few minutes to write a narrative.

All the requested information can be found on the Department website ([floridalegion.org](http://floridalegion.org)). Once there, go to the "Resources" tab, select the "Consolidated Post Report (CPR)" tab, and then scroll down to "Other EOY Reporting" and select "EOY Awards." You will find all the information you need to complete the available awards. To ensure that each nominee is considered equally with all others, please include all the required information with your submission.

I can't stress enough how important the letter from you, the Commander, is in the review process for selecting the best candidate to receive this annual award. Remember, the deadline is 7 May 2025. Also, please note that your Post CPR must have been submitted to the Department (both the National CPR and Department Addendum) for your awards to be accepted.

## Resolution Submissions and Internal Affairs Committee Procedures

Clarence Hill, Resolutions Chair  
[resolutions@legionmail.org](mailto:resolutions@legionmail.org)



The deadline is this month for submitting resolutions to be considered at this year's Department Convention. All resolutions must be received by the Department in time to be compiled, reproduced, and distributed to all Posts 40 days prior to the convention. The Department should have them this month.

In particular, those members who will represent their Posts at the Internal Affairs Committee meeting should read and review the resolutions prior to the meeting, and the Post should decide what position they want taken on the resolution so that their representative knows how to vote.

I haven't seen the agenda yet, but the Internal Affairs Committee is usually scheduled to meet on Thursday afternoon around 2 PM. The meeting will receive reports from the Constitution and By-Laws, Credentials, Disaster Preparedness, POW-MIA, Resolutions, Time & Place, and Special Rules. When

it comes to the Resolutions portion, only the **RESOLVED** clauses will be read, so it is important that the entire resolution be reviewed prior to the meeting. Each Post can have one delegate at this meeting to speak about and vote on all matters to be decided. All **voting members must have the appropriate black ribbon** received with the registration package. **Attendees without the ribbon cannot speak or vote.** The results of the vote taken at this meeting are only a recommendation to the General Assembly when the Internal Affairs Committee report is presented. At the General

Resolutions continued on page 17 >>



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<< Resolutions continued from page 16

Assembly, again, only the **RESOLVED** clauses will be read, and I will make a motion based on the Committee's decision. **Every delegate to the**

**Convention** has a vote on the final disposition of the resolution.

I have thus far reviewed three (3) resolutions,

and those should be back to the Department this month. Resolutions that do not meet the 40-day deadline will not be considered until the Fall Conference.

## Make a Difference: Honor Students with School Medals

Eric Loyd, School Medals Chair

[schoolmedals@legionmail.org](mailto:schoolmedals@legionmail.org)

The end of the school year is quickly approaching, and it's the perfect time to make a lasting impact on our youth. **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!** Encourage your post to award School Medals to students who have excelled

this year. If medals aren't feasible due to budget constraints, awarding certificates can also be meaningful. Recognizing these students could truly make all the difference in their lives.

I had the pleasure of attending the 8th District Meeting on Saturday, March 8, at the beautiful Post

24. During the meeting, I was delighted to learn that they are awarding school medals. **THEY ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**

If I can assist you or your post in any way, please let me know.

## Legionnaire Scouter in the Spotlight – Angie Walker

Chris Ragusa, Scouting Chair

[scouting@legionmail.org](mailto:scouting@legionmail.org)



This month, I'll spotlight a Legionnaire whose service to the Legion and the Scouting movement is truly worthy of mention.

District 1 Legionnaire Scouter

Angie Walker is dedicated to the missions of both the American Legion and Scouting America (the new name for the Boy Scouts of America). A retired U.S. Navy Captain (full bird Colonel for those Legionnaires without joint service experience), Angie was commissioned through the University of Florida's NROTC program in 1992 and served over 25 years as a Surface Warfare Officer and Meteorology and Oceanography (METOC) officer. A pioneer, Angie was the first female aboard the USS STUMP (DD-978) following the repeal of the Combat Exclusion Law.

In 1996, 26-year-old Angie was serving in the Arabian Gulf when she received and answered a letter addressed to "Any Servicemember." It was from Joseph Sills, Jr., who explained that he was the Historian of TAL Post 150 in Kingston, NY, and

a Korean War Air Force veteran. As part of a "thank you" and membership drive, he included applications to join his Legion Post. Angie wrote back thanking him for the letter and included a sticker, brochure, and photo of her ship along with the completed application. That started a relationship, and they became steadfast pen pals. In October 2024, Angie traveled to New York to meet Joe in person for the first time and escorted him on his Honor Flight to Washington, DC. He is 92 years old and had not flown on an airplane for over 40 years. TAL Post 150 sponsored Angie's escort fees and travel. Bravo Zulu, Post 150 Kingston!



Angie Walker

relationships with Post Commanders, Scouting unit leaders, and the Gulf Coast Council of Scouting America. She also works to establish new chartering opportunities for our Posts.

Since retiring from the Navy in 2018, Angie has served as District 1 Scouting Chair and sits on the Department of Florida Scouting Committee. She has been instrumental in developing working



Within Scouting America, Angie has served in many positions since 2015, but currently serves as a Unit Commissioner, Pensacola Bay District Committee Chairman, and an

Executive Board Member. She was recently awarded the Scouting America District Award of Merit. Both her daughter and son are Eagle Scouts and remain active as adult leaders. Her husband, Rick Walker (TAL Post 340

Pensacola),

is also a Legionnaire Scouter and, coincidentally, shared a tent with me as an International Service Team

member at the 2019 World Scout Jamboree at Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia. Her daughter, Sydney, was featured in the Legion Link November 2021 issue as a member of the



Scouting continued on page 18 >>



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<< Scouting continued from page 17

Inaugural Class of Female Eagle Scouts. Way to "Walk Your Walk," Angie!

## Outstanding Post Scouting Program

**Nominations – Due May 7, 2025:** Three Department of Florida posts will receive the "Outstanding Post Scouting Program" recognition

at the Department of Florida Convention later this year. This award focuses on and recognizes the engagement of the Post toward the Scouting Program—those Posts chartering, sponsoring, and otherwise supporting Scouting units in their communities—rather than the success of the individual Scouting unit. The reporting period is from May 1, 2024, to April 30, 2025. Details of

the award nomination are posted on the Resource page of the Scouting Program portal: <https://www.floridalegion.org/programs-services/scouting/resources/>. Give your Post a shout-out—complete and submit an application. Per the application guidance, please limit your application to two pages, including photos.

## Join American Legion Post 321 for Our Special Olympics Fundraiser and Family Fun Day!

George DeAngelo, Special Olympics Chair

[specialolympics@legionmail.org](mailto:specialolympics@legionmail.org)



Come out and join American Legion Post 321 in Cooper City for a fun-filled day featuring delicious food, exciting raffles, games, vendors, silent auctions, and raffle baskets!

Be part of our annual Special Olympics Fundraiser and Community Family Day on **April 26, from 11 am to 6 pm**, located at:

Post 321

9081 SW 51 St., Cooper City, FL 33328

Enjoy live music from **APACHE DRAGON** and plenty of family-friendly activities. Bring your lawn

chairs and relax!

Your support helps Special Olympics provide year-round training and competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

**Questions?** Call George De Angelo at 954-434-0965 or 954-801-5543.

## Florida Legislature Support Needed for Convention Transportation Funds

Clarence Hill, 2025 National Con Corp President

[pnchill@legionmail.org](mailto:pnchill@legionmail.org)



As the Florida Legislature is in session, you must contact your state representatives to lobby for transportation money from this year's budget for this convention. Legislative Chairman Stu Scott will

provide information on how to lobby. We need to push hard to secure this funding. The one-page information sheet developed for last year's session will be posted on the website for your use. As noted, the transportation contract for our Tampa

convention will cost \$236,000. We need your help in swaying the Florida Legislature to assist us with this convention cost. The number of tourists brought to the state plays a part, and National estimates that 8,000–10,000 members will attend. Local fundraisers would also be most welcome.

The chairpersons will be contacting volunteers soon to put their teams together. I have forwarded to them the volunteer forms submitted thus far and will continue to provide them as I receive them. Many of you volunteered for multiple committees, so you may hear from more than one chairperson. I will meet with the chairpersons at the Department Convention

in June to finalize plans.

This is an immense project that Florida has taken on, and the importance of your support and volunteering will be critical to its success. We'll probably need between 50 and 100 volunteers. Deadlines will start moving faster as we get closer. Hosting a National Convention is not an easy task—it costs a lot of money, and every member of all the other Departments is a critic. However, this is a great opportunity to showcase Florida. If you can help or have ideas, please share them. If you can volunteer in any capacity, we need you. The volunteer form is available on [floridalegion.org](http://floridalegion.org).



Sign up for  
TEXT ALERTS.

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**FLCON** TO **41372**



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April 2025

# PROJECT: VETRELIEF

## FLORIDA LEGION RIDERS HIT THE ROAD

PROJECT: VetRelief is dedicated to ending veteran suicide, and the Florida American Legion Riders are hitting the road all April to support this critical cause. Riders will be raising funds and awareness throughout the month, including the In-State Unity Ride, spanning the entire state of Florida.

### WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

» **Join the Ride** – There's still time to register for one of the routes or as a Virtual Rider. No matter how you participate, you'll make memories for a lifetime while riding for a purpose!

» **Fundraise & Earn Prizes** – The more you raise, the more incredible prizes you unlock! Check out all the AMAZING rewards waiting for you!

» **Donate** – Every dollar helps in the fight to end veteran suicide. Your contribution directly supports our combined mission.

» **Visit a Post** – Show your support by welcoming the Riders as they roll into their next stop. Your presence makes a difference!

For all the details and more visit:

<https://give.floridalegion.org/2025UnityRide>

## COOL PRIZES

### UTILITY PEN

RAISE  
\$50

### PARACORD BRACELET

\*PLUS UTILITY PEN

RAISE  
\$100

### T-SHIRT

\*PLUS UTILITY PEN & BRACELET

RAISE  
\$250

### CHALLENGE COIN

\*PLUS UTILITY PEN, BRACELET, & SHIRT

RAISE  
\$500

### HARLEY DAVIDSON SUNGLASSES

\*PLUS UTILITY PEN, BRACELET, SHIRT, & COIN

RAISE  
\$750

### TACTICAL BACKPACK

\*PLUS UTILITY PEN, BRACELET, SHIRT, COIN & SUNGLASSES

RAISE  
\$1,000

### STANDARD ROOM NIGHT AT 2026 SUMMIT

\*PLUS UTILITY PEN, BRACELET, SHIRT, COIN, SUNGLASSES & BACKPACK

RAISE  
\$1,500

## ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT July '24 - June '25

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

114  
Veterans Received  
Financial Support

\$134,004  
Provided as  
Emergency Assistance

SUICIDE PREVENTION

14  
Suicide Prevention  
Strategic Partners

\$138,500  
Given towards  
Veteran Suicide Prevention



### Upcoming Workshop

FRI - June 13th @ 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Are you passionate about supporting veterans and eager to learn more about PROJECT VetRelief? Don't miss a special workshop during the Department Convention in June! This session is the perfect opportunity to dive into the program, discover ways to get involved, and make a real impact in the veteran community.

Stay tuned for more details—your commitment can make a difference!

[www.ProjectVetRelief.org](http://www.ProjectVetRelief.org) | 1912A Lee Rd, Orlando | 407.295.2631

facebook  
@ProjectVetRelief





## American Legion Child Well-Being Foundation Contributions Update

Dennis Boland, Child Well Being Fdn. President  
[pdcboland@legionmail.org](mailto:pdcboland@legionmail.org)



Since its founding in 1954, the American Legion Child Well-Being Foundation, Inc. (CWF) has awarded more than \$20 million in grants to improve the lives of children.

The foundation's mission is to contribute to the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual welfare of children and youth by awarding grants that support beneficial research, studies, surveys, projects, programs, and other initiatives.

CWF has provided funds to help educate the public about topics such as Huntington's disease, juvenile

diabetes, shaken baby syndrome, autism, meningitis, Marfan syndrome, and court-appointed advocates.

The American Legion covers the foundation's overhead costs, so 100 percent of CWF contributions go directly to helping children.

At the regular Board of Directors meeting this past October 2024, we awarded 13 children's organizations \$852,593 for 2025.

The contributions year runs from June 1, 2024, through May 31, 2025.

### Leading Contributions by Departments since June 1, 2024:

#### American Legion — Legionnaires

- \$18,941.13 — 1st place Massachusetts
- \$15,593.00 — 2nd place Florida
- \$15,432.96 — 3rd place Pennsylvania

#### American Legion Department Totals

- \$46,014.58 — 1st place Pennsylvania
- \$31,409.38 — 2nd place Florida
- \$28,445.94 — 3rd place Massachusetts

Contributions may be sent to:

American Legion Child Well-Being Foundation  
P.O. Box 1055  
Indianapolis, IN 46206

## Plant City American Legion Post 26 Supports the Strawberry Festival

### Lance Maiden, Post 15

American Legion Post 15 in Dade City proudly announces the formation of its new Honor Guard, dedicated to honoring veterans at local parades, ceremonies, and funerals across Pasco County.

Thanks to community support, our all-volunteer team has obtained uniforms and a musical bugle, and they're eager to serve.

### Honor Guard Team:

- Commander Matthew Endering Sr., Captain
- Lance Maiden, Lieutenant
- PJ William, Sergeant
- Curtis Matthews, Sergeant
- Oren Adams, Sergeant
- Kay Davis, Sergeant



## Utilizing Sponsors to Fund Post Programs

### Randy Holeyfield, District 15 Boys State Chair

Securing sponsors throughout the year can significantly reduce your post's financial burdens and ensure stability. Sponsors help support your post's programs, scholarships, and community outreach efforts. Companies and professionals are often eager to donate funds specifically for impactful programs such as Boys State, School Awards, JROTC, and Project Vet Relief, rather than general post expenses like equipment purchases.

Engaging sponsors allows your post to expand its offerings without relying heavily on internal funds. Additionally, post members and their families can contribute through targeted fundraising activities. These initiatives can cover expenses such as transportation, helping send youth to Boys State or Girls State, especially for posts located far from Tallahassee. Local agencies, like law enforcement, may also provide logistical support.

Once sponsors are onboard, nurture these

relationships by keeping them informed about how their contributions are used. This builds ongoing support and may lead to additional funding opportunities.

Always encourage post members to share their ideas and suggestions—fresh perspectives can lead to even greater fundraising success.



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## Sons of The American Legion Florida at the 2025 Washington Conference

William D. Kelly, SAL NEC

[nec@floridason.org](mailto:nec@floridason.org)



The Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Florida attended the American Legion Washington Conference from February 22–26, 2025, in Washington, D.C. On Sunday, our Florida delegation participated in the

annual SAL National Legislative Commission bus trip, memorializing our fallen heroes at the WWII, Vietnam, and Korean War memorials, and attending the Changing of the Guard at Arlington National Cemetery.

Monday featured the American Legion National Legislative Commission meeting at the Cannon House Office Building, where the Legion's 2025 legislative priorities were presented. In the afternoon, the Commander's Call included remarks from American Legion Family leaders and Veterans Affairs Secretary Doug Collins, whose speech strongly resonated with attendees.

Tuesday involved meetings with Congressional offices to advocate for veteran legislation. Our delegation met with staff from Representative Aaron Bean's (FL-4) and Representative Kat Cammack's (FL-3) offices, as well as with Senator Rick Scott's Legislative Assistant Sarah Salas. Discussions highlighted VA

issues, national security, parity for Reserves and National Guard, and protection of the U.S. flag.

Now is your opportunity to support veteran legislation through The American Legion Grassroots Action Center. Visit [www.legion.org/legislative](http://www.legion.org/legislative) and sign up to receive notifications to easily contact your representatives.

Special thanks to Department Commander Hamrick, Adjutant Comer, Legislative Chairman Scott, and the entire Florida Legislative Team for including the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Florida Legislative Commission.



AMERICAN  
LEGION

Department  
of Florida

March 15, 2025

## 2025 STATE ORATORICAL WINNERS

**2nd Place - \$1,500**

**Kristian Wydysh**

Southwestern Area, Post 90

**\$500 Winner**

**Ava Radovic**

Central Area Post 5

**1st Place - \$2,500**

**William Kiker**

Western Area, Post 296  
Represents Florida at National

**3rd Place - \$1,000**

**Jacob Antonio Mathew**

Eastern Area, Post 331

**\$500 Winner**

**Johndale Carty**

Southern Area, Post 321

*Congratulations to all of our Contestants!*

**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 Doug Hockenberry for his dedication and support for the Oratorical Program.

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



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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."*

### Angelo "Skip" G. Felicita, Jr.



With deep sorrow, we share the passing of Past Southwestern Area Commander Angelo "Skip" G. Felicita, Jr. of North Port, Florida. Skip passed away on March 6, 2025, at the age of 72. He is survived by his wife,

Rhonda Felicita, his son, Angelo Felicita III, and his daughters, Stacey Stanley and Lauren Strickland.

Details regarding services are not yet available.

Updates on arrangements will be shared via email and on the Department's website.

Skip was a U.S. Marine veteran who served during the Vietnam War Era and was a dedicated member of Rotonda West Post 113. Throughout his 26 years of continuous membership with The American Legion, he held numerous leadership positions, including Post Commander from 2017 to 2018, Post 1st Vice Commander from 2023 to 2024, Post Adjutant since 2020, 8th District Commander from 2019 to 2022,

and Southwestern Area Commander from 2022 to 2023.

If you wish to extend your condolences, you may do so through his wife, Rhonda Felicita, at 6931 Willow Creek Cir. Apt. 105, North Port, FL 34287.

Please keep Skip's family and friends in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

## 2025 LEGIONNAIRE'S GUIDE TO TAMPA BAY

Deadline is **May 31<sup>ST</sup>!**

Advertise your Tampa area business to more than 8,000 Legion Family members.

VISIT  
[floridalegion.org/guide](http://floridalegion.org/guide)



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## MEMBERSHIP TARGET REPORT

March 27, 2025 (95%)

District 4	Doug Hockenberry	101.78%
District 5	Miguel Garcia	97.35%
District 14	Faustino Benitez	95.17%
District 17	Bryant Thorpe	94.48%
District 13	Keith Berres	93.92%
District 7	Kalvin Thompson	93.17%
District 2	Doyle Combs, Jr.	91.37%
District 12	Daniel Martin	91.15%
District 1	Jason Skobel	90.93%
District 6	Joan Suelter	90.52%
District 9	Jim Tewes	89.36%
District 8	Charlie Magnus	89.11%
District 16	Michael Harley	88.74%
District 11	Toni Sutherland	88.13%
District 3	Stuart Scott	87.81%
District 15	Andrew Davis	86.33%
Northern	Jim Bowers	96.48%
Southwestern	John Rauh	91.74%
Western	Shelby Windham	90.99%
Eastern	Bruce Thurber	90.80%
Southern	Teddy Pomerantz	90.28%
Central	Rick Orzechowski	88.69%
Post 400		82.60%
Post 208		69.44%



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Emergency Assistance Plus (EA+®)  
Helps You Handle Travel  
Emergencies.



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★ ★ ★ FREQUENT WINNERS ★ ★ ★























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# National Convention Volunteer Interest Form

August 22-28, 2025 in Tampa Bay, FL

Return to Department or email to [resolutions@legionmail.org](mailto:resolutions@legionmail.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

When is the best time to contact you? ☐ Anytime ☐ Morning ☐ Afternoon ☐ Evening

What is the best way to contact you? ☐ Email ☐ Phone ☐ Either Method

---

## VOLUNTEERING

How would you like to volunteer? (Select all that apply)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badges and Packets Committee   | <input type="checkbox"/> Information/Registration Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> National Commander's Driver |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguished Guests Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events Committee           | <input type="checkbox"/> National Adjutant's Driver  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial Service Committee     | <input type="checkbox"/> Tampa Liaison                      | <input type="checkbox"/> General Tasks               |

Are you interested in serving as Chair for any of the committees you selected? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Are you a member of any of the following? (Select all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The American Legion         | <input type="checkbox"/> American Legion Auxiliary  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sons of The American Legion | <input type="checkbox"/> The American Legion Riders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not a member                |   |

Do you have any special skills or experience that would be beneficial? (Please explain)

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Are you able to attend the 2025 National Convention? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

*\*Lodging and travel expenses will be the responsibility of the volunteer. Parking will be provided.*





DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S



# HILLBILLY HOEDOWN

COME DRESSED AS A HILLBILLY!  
JEANS - OVERALLS - STRAW HATS

SATURDAY APRIL 26, 2025  
STARTING AT 12:00PM



ENTERTAINMENT BY

DJ DOC HOLIDAY  
THE LAST CALL BAND

RAFFLES DURING THE DAY  
MAIN AUCTION 4PM  
DINNER INCLUDED

## TICKETS:

\$30/PERSON \$50/COUPLE

CONTACT COMMANDER HAMRICK FOR TICKETS

(321) 313 - 3469

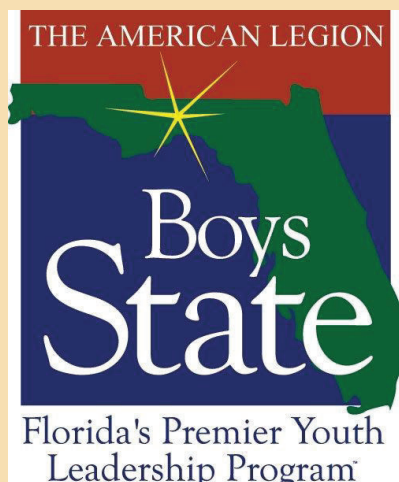
SGTHAMRICK@HOTMAIL.COM

AMERICAN LEGION POST 117

189 VETERANS DRIVE PALM BAY, FL

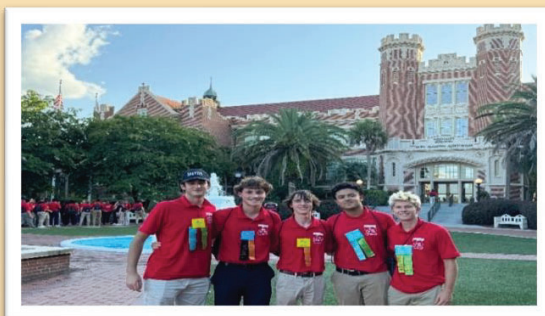
PROCEEDS BENEFIT  
COMMANDER'S CHARITIES





# FALBS DINNER

**Proceeds support Boys State delegates,  
Scholarships and program enhancements.**



**When:** May 10, 2025    **Time:** 5pm    **What:** Dinner & Auctions (Business Casual)

**Price:** Single \$35 or Couples \$65 (Link below for tickets)

**<https://live.givebutter.com/c/p45aJi>**

**Where:** The American Legion  
Department of Florida Headquarters  
1912 A Lee Rd, Orlando, FL 32810

**Hotels available for \$134 per night at link below●**

**<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1736959982917&key=GRP&guestreslink2=true&app=resvlink>**





# NORTHERN AREA BALL

*Party*

APRIL 19TH

1 TO 4 PM

*No Theme*

*Wear What You Like*

*But Remember, People Are Watching*

Fun, Food, Games, Raffles and Friendship

\$30 Single - \$50 Couple

Post 120

461 Walker St. - Holly Hill FL

PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO BOYS STATE  
SCHOLARSHIPS AND VETERANS NEEDS

**Mail Checks to:** Commander Joe Kiley, Post 120, 461 Walker St.; Holly Hill, FL 32117  
Credit card payment call 407 484 6020



**Special Olympics**  
Florida



## American Legion Presents Special Olympics event

Bbq: hamburgers,  
hotdogs, sausage  
& peppers.

Indoors  
& outdoors

Lots of silent  
auction baskets.  
Lots of different  
kinds of Vendors.

Live music by  
Apache Dragon  
from 1-4

10am-6pm

**SATURDAY, APRIL  
26TH**

10am-6pm

9081 sw 51st street  
Cooper city 33328





DO YOU  
HAVE WHAT  
IT TAKES?

MAKE  
AN

IMPACT

BECOME A  
DEPARTMENT  
CHAIR!

2025

2026

YEARS IN LEGION



Department  
of Florida

DISTRICT

POST

AREA

NAME

POSITION INTERESTED IN

EXPLAIN YOUR QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIR

LEGION SCHOOLS ATTENDED: ☐ ALEI ☐ Florida Legion College ☐ National Legion College ☐ Sgt-at-Arms ☐ Chaplain  
☐ National LEAD Classes ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

POSITIONS HELD	YEARS AT POST LEVEL	YEARS AT DISTRICT LEVEL	YEARS AT AREA LEVEL	YEARS AT DEPT LEVEL
Commander				
Vice Commander				
Adjutant				
Sgt-at-Arms				
Historian				
Chaplain				
Membership				
Americanism				
Baseball				
Blood Donor				
Boy Scouts				

POSITIONS HELD	YEARS AT POST LEVEL	YEARS AT DISTRICT LEVEL	YEARS AT AREA LEVEL	YEARS AT DEPT LEVEL
Boys State				
Children & Youth				
JROTC				
Shooting Sports				
Law & Order				
Oratorical				
POW/MIA				
School Medals				
Women Veterans Advocate				
Youth Law Cadet				
Other				

PLEASE RETURN TO: The American Legion, Dept of Florida, Attention: Jessica Moore, P.O. Box 547859, Orlando, FL 32854



# CONVENTION T-SHIRT ORDER FORM 2025



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 (If Delivery): \_\_\_\_\_

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	XS		S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$
Ladies V-neck	XS		S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$

## TOTAL

Shirts are **\$18\* each.**

If tax-exempt, provide an exemption form if not already on file.

**\*Extended sizes:** 2XL +\$2.00 ea, 3XL + \$3.00 ea, 4XL +\$4.00 ea

☐ Check here  
if tax exempt.

Subtotal \$

Tax (6.5%) \$

Shipping \$

Grand Total \$

## PAYMENT

Please return form and payment to Department Headquarters: **Email** ([emblemsales@floridalegion.org](mailto: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: \_\_\_\_\_

P.O. BOX 547859  
ORLANDO, FL 32854-7859

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

TOLL FREE (800) 393-3378  
FAX (407) 299-0901



## R.E.D. FRIDAY T-SHIRT 2025 ORDER FORM



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 (If Delivery): \_\_\_\_\_

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	XS		S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$
Ladies V-neck	XS		S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$

### TOTAL

Shirts are **\$20\* each.**

If tax-exempt, provide an exemption form if not already on file.

**\*Extended sizes:** 2XL +\$2.00 ea, 3XL +\$3.00 ea, 4XL +\$4.00 ea

☐ Check here  
if tax exempt.

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

### PAYMENT

Please return form and payment to Department Headquarters: **Email** ([emblemsales@floridalegion.org](mailto: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: \_\_\_\_\_

P.O. BOX 547859  
ORLANDO, FL 32854-7859

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

TOLL FREE (800) 393-3378  
FAX (407) 299-0901



# COMMANDER SHIRT ORDER FORM

## 2025-2026



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Post: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### DELIVERY METHOD

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

*\*An additional shipping 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	XS		S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$
Ladies	XS		S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X		\$

### TOTAL

Shirts are **\$38 each\*** with two lines of personalization\*\* included. See next page for options.  
If tax-exempt, provide an exemption form if not already on file.

**\*Extended sizes:** 2XL +\$2.00 ea., 3XL +\$5.00 ea., 4XL +6.00 ea.

**\*\*Up to 20 characters per line, including spaces and special characters.**

Subtotal \$

Tax (6.5%) \$

Shipping \$

Grand Total \$

### PAYMENT

Please return form and payment to Department Headquarters: **Email** ([emblemsales@floridalegion.org](mailto: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

## 2025-2026

**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: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ 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: \_\_\_\_\_



# DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHIRT ORDER FORM 2025-2026



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Squadron: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## DELIVERY METHOD

☐ Pick Up at Legion HQ Orlando ☐ Pick Up at Dept Convention ☐ Delivery\*

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

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

Shipping Address (If Delivery): \_\_\_\_\_

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
Men's	XS		S		M		L		XL		2X		3X		4X	

## TOTAL

Shirts are **\$38 each\*** with two lines of personalization\*\* included. See next page for options.  
If tax-exempt, provide an exemption form if not already on file.

**\*Extended sizes:** 2XL +\$2.00 ea., 3XL +\$5.00 ea., 4XL +6.00 ea.

**\*\*Up to 20 characters per line, including spaces and special characters.**

☐ Check here  
if tax exempt.

Subtotal \$

Tax (6.5%) \$

Shipping \$

Grand Total \$

## PAYMENT

Please return form and payment to Department Headquarters: **Email** ([emblemsales@floridalegion.org](mailto: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: \_\_\_\_\_



## DETACHMENT COMMANDER SHIRT ORDER FORM 2025-2026

**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: Squadron # Title)

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Style: \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ 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: \_\_\_\_\_