



BE THE ONE

IN THIS EDITION

Department Officers

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Commander | 5 Finance Officer |
| 2 1st Vice Commander | 5 Historian |
| 3 2nd Vice Commander | 6 Sgt-at-Arms |
| 4 NEC | |

Areas & Districts

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 7 Central Area | 8 Northern Area |
|----------------|-----------------|

Membership

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| 14 Membership | 23 Membership Reports |
|---------------|-----------------------|

Programs / Committees

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8 American Legion Riders | 13 JROTC/JSSP |
| 9 Americanism | 14 Law & Order |
| 9 Blood Donor | 15 POW/MIA |
| 10 Boys State | 17 PROJECT: VetRelief |
| 11 Civil Air Patrol | 18 Public Relations |
| 11 Disaster Preparedness | 18 Resolutions |
| 12 Immigration | 19 Scouting |

Other

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 Upcoming Events | 25 Boys State Dinner |
| 19 Nat'l Convention Update | 26 Chair Interest Form |
| 21 Post 99 | 27 Convention Banquet |
| 20 Post 331 | 29 Kick-Off Party |
| 22 Endorsements on File | 30 Convention Guide |
| 22 DCC Meeting Schedule | 31 Convention Book Ads |
| 24 Nat'l Volunteer Form | 32 Convention Exhibitors |

Submit Articles at

floridalegion.org/submit or legionlink@floridalegion.org

Questions? legionlink@floridalegion.org

Keep it Real

A Message from the Department Commander

Chris Hamrick, Commander

commander@floridalegion.org



Fellow Legionnaires,

Happy May! With so much activity happening across our Posts, Districts, and the Department as a whole, let me begin by saying how proud I am of each

and every one of you. We've just wrapped up an incredibly busy month of April, and the momentum has been intense!

This article will be a bit shorter than usual because I know we're all laser-focused on meeting our goals. One of the key goals we're **pushing for is 100% completion of CPRs and Addendums**. The first CPR deadline is coming up fast—**May 7th!** I've already notified all District Commanders to make sure their Posts are completing this very important

task. For many Posts, this may mean sitting down in person and filling out hard copies manually. If that's what it takes, then so be it.

District Commanders working closely with their 2 Vice Commanders should make this entirely achievable. I believe in you. And as a personal incentive, I'm offering a **cash reward to the first District Commander who reaches 100% CPR and Addendum completion** by Convention in June. (I mentioned this during our Membership Zoom meeting on April 15th, which all District Commanders or their representatives should have attended.)

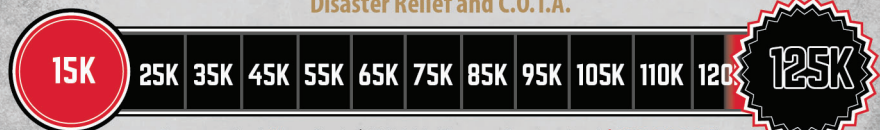
So let's get to work, if we haven't already. Thank you in advance for pushing this over the finish line.

We should also be thinking about awards and submission deadlines. Nothing would make me prouder than presenting as many awards as possible at Convention. Too many awards go unclaimed

Commander continued on page 2 >>

COMMANDER'S CHARITIES

Disaster Relief and C.O.T.A.



Commander's New Goal: \$125,000 (Current funds raised \$122,719.24)



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<< Commander continued from page 1

simply because no one submits for them. Take a look at the awards manual and nominate your people. Contrary to what some may believe, **awards are not "reserved for larger Posts"** with more money or members. Be proud of your Post. Be proud of what your members accomplish. Recognize them!

Members from even the smallest Posts—or the Posts themselves—can absolutely receive top honors. I encourage you to write up and submit those nominations!

As for Membership, I'll leave the bulk of that to our Membership Chairman, but I do want to highlight a couple of important points. First, **retention and renewals are critical**, and our current numbers don't reflect who we truly are. There's no one-size-fits-all answer because retention is the **responsibility of every individual Post**. Each Post has its own unique demographic and internal dynamics.

There are many reasons why members may choose

not to renew. I'm asking each Post to take an honest, thorough look at why that might be. 90% renewal is always the goal, and if we're falling short, then we need to address the issues that are standing in the way.

Elections at our Posts and Districts (DCCs) are underway, bringing lots of leadership changes. Unless there are special circumstances or you're a "snowbird" Post, **no Post installations should occur until after July 1st**. It is both the privilege and the duty of incoming District Officers to install incoming Post Officers—that's how it has always been and how it should remain.

In closing, let me say again—**THANK YOU** for all of your dedication and hard work this year. We still have some loose ends to tie up, but I have full confidence in you. Let's put the pedal to the metal and finish strong, because we are **FLORIDA STRONG!** I love every one of you.

Keep it Real

Unity Ride Reflections and Convention Anticipation

Jessica Moore, 1st Vice Commander

1stvice@legionmail.org



I was blessed to be part of this year's Unity Ride once again. Our Florida American Legion Riders couldn't have taken on this week-long journey without the incredible support from

our Legion Posts! A huge and

heartfelt thank you to every Post that opened its doors, served meals, and created a place of rest for our Riders along the way. This mission is only possible because of you.

We do this to support our veterans and our Legion family. Personally, I also ride because I believe in

the words: One Team, One Dream. I've been using this hashtag for a few years now and will continue to use it in the year ahead. It's a privilege to ride alongside so many dedicated individuals. What makes it even more meaningful is that we—the Legion, The Sons, and the Auxiliary—all came together as a united team and one family.

On another note, I can't believe we're already approaching the Department Convention! I'm looking forward to seeing everyone and feeling the energy of the American Legion as we elect and install new officers and continue discussions on our programs and mission. Once again,

#OneTeamOneDream

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 2025

1-31	Military Caregiver Month
1-31	Military Appreciation Month
1	Be The One Day
1	Loyalty Day
1	Law Day
1	May Day
1	National Day of Prayer
1	Children & Youth Fund Apps Due ✨
1	Silver Star Service Banner Day
2	Post 378: Grand Opening
3	Membership Renewal Mail Dates ★
3	DCC: District 15
3	Chapter 316: ALR Monthly Meeting
3	DCC: District 14
3	DCC: District 17
3	DCC: District 9
4	Firefighters Memorial Day
4	Flags Half Mast (Sunrise to Sunset)
4	DCC: District 5
4	Veteran Wellness Fair
4	Pocketbook Bingo
5	Cinco de Mayo
6	Nurses Day
6	Teacher Appreciation Day
7	Dept Membership Goal 100% ✨
7	CPR & Addendums Due ✨ ★
7	Special Olympics Report Due ✨
7	End of Year Award Nominations Due ✨
7	Membership Awards ✨ ★
7	Chapter 136: ALR Monthly Meeting
8	V-E Day (1945)
9	Military Spouse Appreciation Day

UPCOMING EVENTS CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 >>



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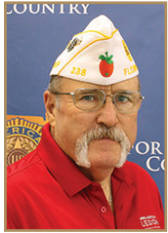
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Honoring History: The Story Behind Post 413's Name

Bob Matheson, 2nd Vice Commander

2ndvice@legionmail.org



On Wednesday, District 8 Commander Charlie Magnus and I had the opportunity to attend the Installation of Officers for both the Legion and the Sons at Stephen H. Dorr, Jr., Post 413 in Arcadia.

Now, many of you may say there is only one Post in Arcadia—but you would be mistaken. Post 413 is a strong and dedicated group. It is one of the few Posts located within a Florida Correctional Institution. Both Commander Magnus and I were truly impressed by the professionalism and positive spirit of the Legion and Sons members.

While we were there, I became curious about the origin of the Post's name. Below is the history behind it.

The Legacy of Stephen H. Dorr, Jr. and Dorr Field

Dorr Field is a former military airfield located 12 miles east of Arcadia, Florida. The airfield was one of thirty-two Air Service training camps established in 1917 following the United States' entry into World War I.

Dorr Field was named in honor of Flying Cadet Stephen H. Dorr, Jr., who tragically died in a midair collision on August 17, 1917. He had enlisted earlier that summer and was sent to Toronto, Ontario, Canada for training with the British Royal Flying Corps.

World War I

In 1917, following the U.S. entry into WWI, the Army planned a series of pilot training camps. A site near Arcadia was selected, and construction of Dorr Field began on March 15, 1918. The site spanned over 700 acres and included 14 hangars, a hospital, six barracks (each housing 175 men),

and numerous support buildings. While officers were quartered in wooden buildings, enlisted men bivouacked in tents.

Dorr Field provided primary flight training, with an eight-week curriculum teaching basic flight skills. At its peak, the field supported 300 student pilots. In July 1918, three additional training squadrons were added, and more JN-4 aircraft were delivered by rail.

However, the sudden end of WWI in November 1918 led to the shutdown of training operations in November 1919. A small caretaker unit was left to maintain the now-dormant facility.

World War II

During the interwar years, the land was leased to local farmers. By the late 1930s, only remnants of the once-bustling base remained. With the onset of WWII and increased demand for trained pilots, Dorr Field was reactivated on October 4, 1941. It became a satellite airfield supporting Carlstrom Field and operated under the Embry-Riddle Corporation as a primary training site for Royal Air Force cadets.

Civil Use

After the war, Dorr Field was sold to DeSoto County for one dollar and redeveloped into a state prison. Today, while a few WWII-era structures remain in use by the prison, most of the field's original infrastructure is gone. The site is not open to the general public.

I hope you found this history of Post 413 enlightening. Most importantly, if you ever have the chance to attend an Installation at this Post—do it. The Color Guard delivered an outstanding presentation of the colors, and the Legionnaires and Sons conducted an exceptional meeting and ceremony. It was truly an honor and a privilege to attend.

MAY 2025 - CONTINUED

10	DCC: District 6
10	DCC: District 11
10	DCC: District 7
11	Mother's Day
11	Chapter 8: ALR Meeting
13	Children of Fallen Patriots Day
14	Chapter 10: ALR Meeting
15	Legion Link Articles Due *
15	Peace Officers Memorial Day
15	Flags Half Mast (Sunrise to Sunset)
17	Armed Forces Day
17	National Poppy Day
17	DCC: District 2
17	DCC: District 16
17	Chapter 138: ALR Bikes by the Bay
17	DCC: District 1
18	DCC: District 13
18	DCC: District 8
18-30	Post 243: Fallen Memorial Event
20	Emancipation Day
22	Maritime Day
25	Missing Children's Day
26	Memorial Day
26	Flags Half Mast (Sunrise to Noon)
26	Department Headquarters Closed *
31	Dept Membership Goal 100%+1 *
31	Baseball Reg/Ins/Fees/Bckgrnd Due *
31	DCC: District 3
31	Post 8: Blessing of the Post
31	Chapter 10: ALR Bike Night

****For more events and updates visit our website at www.floridalegion.org ****

★ Commander attendance anticipated.

✱ Department of Florida event.

★ National event.

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



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2025 Spring Meetings

Jim Ramos, NEC

nec@legionmail.org



As you read this, I'm attending the American Legion 2025 Spring Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana.

You're encouraged to follow along with the National

Executive Committee (NEC) Meeting schedule at www.legion.org/NEC. Meetings will take place **May 7-8, 2025**, and there's plenty of important business ahead.

What's Happening May 5-8, 2025?

The following Committee and Commission meetings are scheduled. Each session will run one hour or longer:

- Convention Commission — Preparing for Department and National conventions.
- Americanism Council — Supporting Boys & Girls State and Nation, with C&Y updates.
- Internal Affairs Commission — Ensuring operations run smoothly.
- Media and Communications Commission — Helping us communicate effectively.
- ALR Advisory Committee — Promoting unity among Legion Riders.
- American Legion Baseball Committee — Focused on training and teamwork.
- Citizenship & Naturalization Subcommittee — Sharing resources and support.

- Committee on Children & Youth — Reviewing youth-based programs.
- Committee on Youth Education — Engaging with youth and education.
- Endowment Fund — Supporting veterans and their children.
- Finance Commission — Managing our resources.
- FODPAL — Posts around the world.
- Marketing Commission — Growing our outreach.
- Resolution Subcommittee (NEC) — Reviewing pending resolutions.
- Youth Cadet Law Enforcement — Introducing youth to careers in law enforcement.
- Be the One Training — Addressing youth suicide with facts and proactive tools.
- National Commander's Dinner — Meet & greet event.
- NEC General Meetings — May 7 (full day) and May 8 (half day).

For more information, visit:

www.floridalegion.org or www.legion.org

If you have questions, reach out to me directly at NEC@legionmail.org or 352-226-4370. Please leave a message — I don't have everyone's number!

However, for most issues, please try working through your Post or District Leadership first. We are **One Team Florida**.

Let's Represent Florida in Tampa!

At this Spring NEC meeting, we'll be discussing strategies with the National Commander and Vice Commander on how to reach 100%+ membership goals and prepare for the 2025 National Convention in Tampa, Florida.

Be the One: Taking Action on Veteran Suicide

The No. 1 issue facing the veteran community today is suicide. The American Legion's Be the One initiative is working to:

- Reduce stigma around mental health
- Empower action when someone is at risk
- Save lives, one veteran at a time

Whether you're a veteran, or a friend or family member of one, you can **Be the One**.

Resources are available at:

floridalegion.org/resources

legion.org/programs/resources/publications

Thank you for all you do. I'm proud to represent Florida. Let's lead the way.



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It's Budget and Audit Time: Ensuring Your Post's Financial Health

Shirley Douglas, Finance Officer

finance@legionmail.org



All American Legion Posts have two critical financial responsibilities that, if overlooked, can create major challenges later:

1. The Annual Post Budget, ideally completed in the fourth quarter of the Post's fiscal year.
2. The Annual Post Audit, which should be completed during the first quarter of the new fiscal year.

The Annual Post Budget

The purpose of a nonprofit budget is to provide your Post with a roadmap that allows Post officers to plan ahead, make sound financial decisions, and adjust as necessary throughout the year. This planning helps ensure the Post remains on solid financial ground.

Through the budgeting process, the Budget Committee can establish clear revenue goals and expense controls, making sure that the Post's programs and objectives stay achievable. In short: budgeting maximizes every dollar to promote long-term success and stability.

Nonprofits often rely on various types of revenue, so it's important that the budget gives equal attention to both income and expenditures. Your Post's expected revenue and expenses should be aligned with the Chart of Accounts, making it easy for the committee to compare line items with your Profit and Loss Statement. This helps determine the proposed budget amounts for each category with clarity and consistency.

The Annual Post Audit

The Annual Audit is just as important. It helps ensure that accounting procedures and internal controls are being followed — protecting the Post's financial interests at every level.

Check your Post's Constitution and By-Laws for the proper audit process. The Auditing Committee Chair should have knowledge of accounting practices, and your Post Finance Officer should act as an advisor and consultant to the committee, since they manage the financial records.

For medium to large Posts, it's strongly recommended to hire a Qualified Public Accountant (QPA) with experience in nonprofit or fraternal organizations. This adds another level of accuracy and accountability to the audit process.

Together, the Annual Budget and Audit give your Post a clear view of its financial past and a guide to move confidently into the next fiscal year. These responsibilities are more than routine — they're essential tools in maintaining your Post's stability and reputation.

For God and Country

Busy Days Ahead: May & June Events for The American Legion Family

Elbert Ziegler, Historian

historian@legionmail.org



As we look ahead to the summer months, May and June are shaping up to be both busy and meaningful for The American Legion Family. Mark your calendars and take part in these exciting opportunities

to connect, contribute, and carry on our shared mission of service.

May 3, 2025 – Training Session with Larry Roberts

Join us on Saturday, May 3rd at 10:00 a.m. for a valuable training session led by Larry Roberts.

This session will be held at American Legion Post 11, 2124 American Legion Dr, Arcadia, FL 34266.

All members and interested individuals are welcome to attend. Let's continue to "Be The One" to change someone's life through education and outreach. The session will also be video recorded and shared to help others learn and grow from this opportunity.

May 26, 2025 – Memorial Day

Let us all take time to honor the brave men and women who gave their lives in service to our nation. Whether you're participating in ceremonies, volunteering at your Post, or simply taking a quiet moment of reflection, Memorial Day is a sacred time of remembrance. (Potentially religious/patriotic)

May 14, 2025 – Program Book Ad Deadline

Support The American Legion Department of Florida while gaining visibility for your business or Post!

Ads for the 2024–2025 Department Convention Program Book are due by May 14th. This is a great opportunity to promote your services to over 1,000 attendees and to demonstrate your commitment to The American Legion Family. Let your message be seen in this commemorative keepsake.

June 12–15, 2025 – 106th Department Convention

Historian continued on page 6 >>



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<< Historian continued from page 5

We invite all Legionnaires to attend the 106th Annual Department Convention, held at the Hilton Orlando, Lake Buena Vista.

This is more than just a gathering—it's where we celebrate accomplishments, elect new leadership, and recognize outstanding Posts and individuals. Don't miss your chance to be part of the energy and camaraderie that drive our mission forward.

Historians—make sure your books are ready! I'm

racing to complete mine on time.

Looking Ahead – Save the Date American Legion National Convention August 22–28, 2025 | Tampa Bay, FL

We're calling on volunteers to help host the 2025 National Convention. To make this event a success, we need to form the following five committees:

- Badges and Packets
- Distinguished Guests

- Memorial Service
- Information and Registration
- Special Events

We're looking for Legionnaires to serve as committee chairs, with members of the Auxiliary, Detachment, and Riders serving as vice chairs. Interested in volunteering? Please fill out the volunteer form here:

www.floridalegion.org/news-events/national-conference/volunteer-form

Respecting Hallowed Ground

Troy Horsley, Sergeant-at-Arms

sgtatarms@legionmail.org



In every American Legion Post across the nation, meetings aren't just routine gatherings—they are moments of unity, remembrance, service, and purpose. The space where Legionnaires come together is more than just four walls; it is hallowed ground. It represents the sacrifices of our brothers and sisters in arms, the values we swore to uphold, and the mission we continue every day.

Maintaining that sense of sacred respect during a meeting is not simply tradition—it is a duty.

1. Honor the Rituals

The opening and closing ceremonies, the salute to the colors, and the recitation of the Preamble are not just formalities. They are sacred acts. These rituals center us in our mission and remind us of who we are and why we serve. Observing them with respect and precision sets the tone for every meeting and honors the veterans who came before us.

2. Respect Every Voice

Within the walls of the Post, rank and status are set aside. Whether a veteran served in World War II, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, or stateside, every voice matters. Upholding hallowed ground means listening with the same level of respect you would offer on the battlefield or in formation. Civility, even in disagreement, is a cornerstone of our shared honor.

3. Guard Against Distractions

Just as we would not take a phone call during a moment of silence, we should avoid distractions that diminish the gravity of a meeting. Side conversations, casual interruptions, or dismissive attitudes weaken the integrity of the space. A Legion meeting is not casual time—it's mission time.

4. Lead with Service, Not Ego

Leadership in the American Legion is about service, not control. Post officers and committee chairs serve as stewards of tradition and unity. Maintaining hallowed ground means putting the good of the Post, the needs of our veterans, and the mission above personal opinion or politics. (Potentially political)

5. Remember the Fallen, Always

There is always an empty chair—literally or

symbolically—for those who cannot be with us. From the POW/MIA table to the final prayer, honoring our fallen reinforces the sacred nature of our gathering. Every meeting is an opportunity to remember that we carry their legacy forward. (Potentially religious)

6. End with Purpose

Closing a meeting with dignity—whether through a benediction, a salute, or the playing of "Taps"—gives the moment its due respect. It reminds all present that even the most routine business is part of a greater, noble cause. (Potentially religious)

Conclusion

To walk into an American Legion meeting is to walk onto hallowed ground. By honoring that space with discipline, respect, and unity, we uphold not just tradition—but the very values we defended in uniform. In doing so, we ensure that every meeting is more than minutes and motions—it's a continuation of our lifelong service.



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The Power of Volunteers

Rick Orzechowski, Central Area Commander
central@legionmail.org



Unveiling the Impact of Volunteerism

Volunteers are the backbone of many communities and organizations, providing invaluable support and services without the expectation of

monetary compensation. Their dedication and selflessness can be seen across numerous sectors, including education, healthcare, environmental efforts, and social services.

This article explores the significance of volunteers, their motivations, and the profound impact they have on society—and on our Posts.

The Role of Volunteers

Volunteers play a crucial role in addressing societal needs and enhancing the quality of life for countless individuals. They help fill the gaps in services that government programs or paid staff often cannot cover.

Whether tutoring students, assisting in disaster relief, or supporting local Posts, volunteers contribute their time, skills, and energy to make a difference.

Volunteers in Social Services

In the social services sector, volunteers deliver food to the homeless, provide counseling to those in crisis, and support victims of domestic violence. They work alongside nonprofit organizations to meet the immediate needs of vulnerable populations while advocating for long-term solutions to social issues.

Motivations of Volunteers

Understanding why people volunteer is key to appreciating their value. Volunteers are motivated by a range of factors, including personal growth, social connections, and a desire to give back to their communities.

Personal Growth

Volunteering offers opportunities for personal development—from acquiring new skills and experiences to building confidence. It challenges individuals to grow in ways that might not be possible in their regular professional or personal lives.

Social Connections

Volunteering fosters meaningful social interactions. Volunteers often form lasting relationships with like-minded individuals, creating a sense of community and belonging. These connections can lead to lifelong friendships and future collaborative efforts.

Giving Back

For many, volunteering is a way to give back to the communities that have supported them. Some volunteers may have once benefited from similar services and now wish to offer the same support to others. This cycle of generosity strengthens community ties and encourages ongoing service.

The Impact of Volunteerism

The impact of volunteerism extends beyond immediate benefits to individuals and organizations. It has powerful, far-reaching effects on the overall health and success of our communities—and our Posts.

Social Cohesion

Volunteers help bridge gaps between social groups, promoting understanding, inclusivity, and cooperation. Their efforts help reduce social isolation, creating more unified and resilient communities—and allowing your Post to grow and prosper.

Economic Development

Volunteerism supports Post growth by providing services that would otherwise require financial resources. Volunteers help Posts and nonprofit organizations save costs, allocate resources more efficiently, and even boost members' employability by providing valuable skill-building opportunities.

Civic Engagement

Volunteering strengthens civic life and reinforces Legion values. Volunteers often participate in advocacy, awareness campaigns, and leadership roles that influence policies and drive social change. Their involvement strengthens the fabric of society and helps sustain the mission of The American Legion.

Conclusion

Volunteers are integral to the functioning and success of our Posts and the well-being of the larger community. Their contributions, driven by diverse motivations, have a profound impact across multiple sectors.

Recognizing and supporting volunteers is essential to harnessing their full potential and ensuring a better future for all. Always treat your volunteers with kindness—and never turn down those who are willing to help, because once discouraged, they may not volunteer again.

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7



Why It's Important for Every Post to Complete the CPR

Jim Bowers, Northern Area Commander

northern@legionmail.org



Understanding the Value of the Consolidated Post Report

Filling out the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) is crucial for every American Legion Post. It's more than just paperwork—it's how we document and showcase the positive impact we have on our communities and across the nation. The data collected through the CPR serves several important purposes:

1. Report to Congress

The American Legion is required by its Federal Charter to provide an annual report to Congress. CPR data demonstrates how our organization

fulfills its mission of supporting veterans and strengthening communities, reinforcing the importance of our work at the highest levels of government. (Political connection: Federal reporting to Congress)

2. Advocate for Veterans

When the National Commander testifies before Congress, the CPR provides quantifiable evidence of the Legion's contributions. These real-world numbers strengthen our advocacy efforts, helping to protect and expand veterans' rights and benefits.

3. Highlight Community Impact

The CPR captures key activities like volunteer hours, fundraising efforts, youth programs, and ceremonial honors. This data reflects the collective work of Posts across the nation and

underscores our value to society.

4. Encourage Participation

Sharing CPR results with members can inspire greater involvement. It shows how individual efforts contribute to the Legion's broader mission and helps Posts set new goals for future activities.

Conclusion

By submitting the CPR, Posts not only meet a reporting requirement—they strengthen the voice of the American Legion, demonstrate our impact, and honor the service of all who came before us. It's one more way to ensure our work is recognized, our communities are supported, and our mission continues to thrive.

End of Year Summary: Wrapping Up a Rewarding Term

Jim Wineland, American Legion Riders Chair

alr@legionmail.org



As we wrap up our leadership term and look ahead to the Department Convention, I want to reflect on what a fantastic and rewarding journey this has been.

Beverly and I would not be where we are today without the cooperation, support, and hard work of so many individuals. Bringing together every idea, activity, and event was truly a group effort, and we are grateful for each and every one of you.

I'll share the final figures at the Department Convention, as we are still finalizing some results.

Summit Update

Regarding the Summit, we are actively collaborating with incoming leadership to review

our current position and explore all available options before committing to any changes in program content or location.

Your feedback from our recent survey is essential to making the right adjustments. Once again, your out-of-pocket cost remains our number one consideration.

Thank You

Thank you all for your dedication and commitment over the past year. It has been an honor to serve alongside you. **For the Cause, Not the Applause.**

Ideas and Suggestions Welcome

If you have any ideas or suggestions for future events or improvements, please share them! Your input is always valued.

2025–2026 Key Dates

- Department Convention: June 12–15, 2025

- National Convention: August 22–28, 2025
- POW/MIA Ceremony, Jacksonville: September 20, 2025
- "Merry-Go-Round": October 2025
- Fall Conference: November 21–23, 2025
- Summit, Meet & Greet: TBD
- Summit Classes: TBD
- Round Robin: April 2026
- Children & Youth Picnic: April 5, 2026
- State Unity Ride: April 20–24, 2026 (subject to change)
- Rally: April 25, 2026 (subject to change)

Thank you again for all that you do. We are proud to be part of such an outstanding leadership team.

For the Cause, Not the Applause.



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Finishing the Task

Wayne Mulligan, Americanism Chair

americanism@legionmail.org



Reflecting on a Year of Dedication and Preparing for What's Next

We are winding down yet another year filled with participation, volunteering, time traveled, and money spent.

The competitions are done, the contests are completed, and the planning, time, and effort have all come together. There is a strong sense of satisfaction knowing that a group of Legionnaires came together and worked as one.

The physical work may be winding down, and now, we can relax, reflect, and review what we were able to accomplish for the betterment of our group, our Post, and our community.

But Wait—There's One More Step

Oops...there's still one last phase to complete! Yes—it's time to dot the i's and cross the t's.

Sometimes, the final paperwork gets set aside. Sometimes, it feels like the hardest or most tedious part of the work. But it is essential to properly finish out the year.

This final phase comes together when all our information is annotated on the Consolidated Post

Report (CPR), the End-of-Year Submission, and the Addendum is completed.

Why It Matters

When this step is finished, all of our hard work can be used to analyze and improve. It gives us the foundation to plan even better programs and activities for the next year—building on everything we've accomplished.

Looking Ahead

I look forward to seeing all of you at the Department Convention.

Department Chairs: Bring your ideas! Let's come together, reflect on our success, and start planning for an even stronger year ahead.

Setting Up Blood Drives

Jamie Grinis, Blood Donor Chair

blooddonor@legionmail.org



Supporting Our Communities, One Pint at a Time

By now, we have all received our packets for the end-of-year reports. We are getting closer to reaching last year's level of blood donations—but we still need just a little more to meet our goal.

We only need one pint from each Post to hit the target!

You might ask, "How can we get a pint a day?" It's simple:

Call OneBlood or a local blood bank and schedule a donation.

Donate at your local blood center—just make sure

to mention your Post number when you give your pint.

Set up a blood drive at your Post or at a location that supports this important program.

A Year of Challenges and Opportunities

This year has been a whirlwind of activity at our Posts. We still have Posts recovering from last year's hurricane season here in Florida. As we continue to rebuild, the Blood Donor Program offers a way for Posts to keep moving forward with programs that reach out to our fellow man.

It's also a valuable way for Posts looking to maintain good standing to support an active, meaningful program.

Blood Drives Build More Than Donations

Many Posts have hosted blood drives throughout the year—and these events have turned into great recruiting tools for the American Legion Family.

You never know who might be eligible for membership until you ask your donors! Sometimes a simple question can bring a new member into our family.

Let's Reach Our Goal Together

As a Legion Family, we can collectively reach our goal—just one more pint than last year!

Let's get busy collecting that vital elixir of life today.

And don't forget—after every donation drive, report your activities through the Department website to ensure your Post's efforts are recognized.

For God and Country



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Boys State Update

Sonny Decker, Boys State Chair

boystate@legionmail.org

A Message from Department Boys State Chair Sonny Decker

It has been a great honor to serve as your Department Boys State Chair. I want to sincerely thank Darcy Bockman-Wright for assisting me and for all of her contributions to the Boys State program. She is making a tremendous difference, and the future of the program looks very bright thanks to her efforts.

This month, we are excited to host the Boys State Alumni Dinner on May 10th. I hope to see many of you there supporting this amazing program. We are working to raise money for program enhancements, delegate sponsorships, and scholarships.

If you don't secure your tickets ahead of time, we will have a few spots available at the door. If you can't join us in person, please consider supporting us with a donation through our website: <https://givebutter.com/p45ajj>. Any donation, large or small, is greatly appreciated and goes directly to Boys State.

Looking ahead, next month the 81st Session of Florida American Legion Boys State will meet in Tallahassee. The city counselors and instructors are gearing up for another life-changing week for our delegates.

A Message from 4th District 1st Vice Commander Darcy Bockman-Wright

This time of year, Boys State season always gets crazy!

Between the orientations, the FALBS Alumni Dinner on May 10th at Department Headquarters, and the

upcoming 81st Session in Tallahassee from June 15–21 at Florida State University, it's easy to feel like you're sprinting to keep up.

This year, Sonny and I have visited most of the districts to teach, promote, and engage Posts and membership about Boys State. Our travels have sparked tremendous excitement about what many call the most amazing program the American Legion has to offer.

Through these efforts, we've seen:

- **New Legionnaires** stepping up to participate
- **Better engagement** with youth in communities and schools
- **Stronger communication** between Posts and their Boys State Chairs

In promoting Boys State, please know that Sonny and I are here to help—whether it's with recruiting, sponsorships, interviews, or orientation support.

It's important to recognize that in the last five years, our program has evolved—embracing new technology, societal changes, and updated regulations. Even if you have served as a Post or District Boys State Chair before, please be aware of these updates as you promote the program today.

We are proud to announce that we have exceeded our goal of 500 delegates!

We are currently sitting at 510 delegates—an increase of 48 over last year.

Thank you to all the Posts, individuals, and

supporters who have provided scholarships and donations. Your generosity is changing lives.

Looking to the Future

It is critical that we continue to spread the word about Boys State and encourage our delegates to share their experiences when they return home. Their enthusiasm is key to the continued success and growth of the program.

If you have any ideas on how we can improve any part of the Boys State process, please reach out to Sonny or me. Together, we can strengthen the program and expand our impact across the Department of Florida.

District Chairs: If you would like special training for your Post Boys State Chairs, Sonny and I are ready to assist! We will also offer:

- A **Boys State class** at the Fall Conference
- Possible **Zoom meetings** for Q&A and additional support

Remember: if we fail to communicate and identify where help is needed, the ones who suffer are the delegates who might otherwise be left behind.

A Special Thank You

Finally, I want to personally thank Bekki Boarman and Sonny Decker for their amazing support and teamwork. These two rock stars are truly out of my league, and I continue to learn and grow thanks to them both.



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10



Why America Needs CAP Cadets

Rico Thomas, Civil Air Patrol Chair

civilairpatrol@legionmail.org



Building the Leaders Our Future Demands

America's enduring needs are rooted in developing responsible citizenship grounded in:

- **Commitment** to a personal code of honor
- **Leadership skills** for a diverse, democratic society
- **Motivation and knowledge** for careers in aviation and aerospace

Meeting America's Workforce Needs for the 2020s

Today's workforce urgently needs:

- Pilots
- Cyber defenders
- STEM professionals
- Young adults who meet military health and character requirements

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Cadet Program plays a vital role in preparing the next generation to meet these challenges head-on.

Today's Cadets: Tomorrow's Aerospace Leaders

To help America meet its evolving needs, the Civil Air Patrol offers a youth-scaled, Air Force-themed extracurricular program.

Cadet life is fun, engaging, and deeply meaningful. We provide a safe, positive environment where cadets develop leadership skills while exploring aviation, aerospace, and STEM careers.

Core Content Area

- **Leadership**
Academic study, service learning, and Air Force traditions
- **Fitness**
Physical coaching, high adventure activities, and participation in the Presidential Youth Fitness Program

• Aerospace

Academics, flying, career exploration (including cyber and STEM pathways)

• Character

Core Values development, moral reasoning, and mentoring

Legion Cadet Awards

Supporting your local CAP cadets is an impactful way to encourage future leaders.

If you plan to recognize cadets at award ceremonies, awards can be purchased through Emblem Sales.

Please remember to order early to ensure delivery in time for ceremonies.

Questions or Support

If you have any questions or concerns about supporting CAP cadets or their awards, please feel free to reach out to me.

Together, we can help shape the leaders and innovators America needs for the future.

Disaster Relief: What Is It?

Jamie Grinis, Disaster Preparedness Chair

disaster@legionmail.org



Supporting Our Legion Family in Times of Need

Disaster Relief efforts were established during Hurricane Ian, when Posts across the state mobilized to send supplies to our Legion Family members in the affected areas. We even received supplies from neighboring states in a tremendous show of support.

We quickly learned that for efficiency and effectiveness, the movement of supplies must be coordinated through a central distribution site located within the disaster vicinity.

How the System Works

The Department has appointed key Committee Members around the state who are immediately activated after an emergency passes. Their role is to conduct reconnaissance and determine what supplies are needed most.

Once assessed, a central location is established for

the delivery and controlled distribution of donated supplies.

It is very important not to freelance your delivery of collected items.

Instead, contact your District Disaster Relief or Emergency Preparedness Chair for proper directions on where and how to deliver your donations.

Delivering supplies to an established collection site helps eliminate confusion, ensures that the right supplies get to the right locations, and prevents

Disaster Preparedness continued on page 12 >>



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11



<< Disaster Preparedness continued from page 11

duplication—which could otherwise leave some Posts stranded without needed supplies.

How You Can Prepare

Disaster Relief efforts are not just a reaction—they are built all year long through preparation:

- When you shop and see BOGOs (Buy One, Get One Free), purchase the extra item and place it in a box.

- Label the box with its contents and store it safely. If a disaster strikes, you'll be ready to help either your family or the Legion Family.
- If Mother Nature is kind and your supplies aren't needed for disaster relief that year, donate your BOGOs to your Post for Thanksgiving or Christmas holiday efforts.

Also, while shopping at your local hardware or box store, consider picking up small hand tools or tarps—items that are in high demand immediately

after emergencies.

About Disaster Relief Funds

All Disaster Relief Funds received go directly to assist Legion Family members in need.

We are proud to say that we have received support from Departments across the nation, and in times of need, we are prepared to reciprocate by helping other Departments should disaster strike elsewhere.

For God and Country

Immigration Information: A Year in Review

Gene Smith, Immigration Chair

immigration@legionmail.org

In just a few weeks, the 2024–2025 year will officially become history. I want to sincerely thank Department Commander Hamrick for giving me the opportunity to serve as the Department's Immigration Committee Chair.

Unfortunately, this year has been disappointing. Many of the foreign-born U.S. veterans who require our help to naturalize as American citizens became even more obscure as the year progressed and Federal elections took center stage. The nation's focus shifted almost entirely to the ongoing crisis at the Texas border, leaving little—if any—attention for the cause of veterans who honorably served but have not completed naturalization.

The Challenges We Face

Throughout the year, I monitored the agendas of our major Veterans Service Organizations—*The American Legion*, *Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)*, and *Disabled American Veterans (DAV)*. Unfortunately, there was very little emphasis on encouraging government action to support foreign-born U.S. veterans seeking citizenship.

It is believed there are thousands of such veterans, either residing here in the United States or waiting

in border towns, hoping for a special exception from the government to complete the naturalization process.

Earlier this year, I read about a major VSO commander pledging to make this a priority during their term. However, I have yet to see any meaningful follow-up or action.

With the recent focus on rounding up illegal immigrants, the hopes of these veterans have once again taken a back seat. When reviewing the priority lists presented to the Joint Congressional Veterans Affairs Committees, not one mentioned the citizenship challenges faced by foreign-born U.S. veterans.

An Unfair System for Those Who Served

In my view, our system has failed these veterans. Most of these individuals entered the U.S. legally, voluntarily joined the Armed Forces, served honorably, and for various reasons, never completed the citizenship process.

I struggle to understand how so many service members could leave the military without proper guidance from personnel offices about contacting the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to finalize their status.

When I retired from the U.S. Army, I had a checklist that had to be signed off by various offices before I could officially retire. Why wasn't this same diligence extended to non-citizen veterans?

An Ongoing Case

The case I have asked for your help with is still pending in court.

For his protection, I will not use his name.

This Marine has lived in the United States since the early 1990s. He married, raised children, is gainfully employed, pays taxes, and is active in his community. He served seven years in the U.S. Marine Corps—four years active duty and three years in the Reserves.

Believing his military service made him a citizen, he proudly registered to vote after a clerk mistakenly issued him a voter registration card. Unfortunately, voting triggered a legal nightmare.

When directed by the Florida Department of Motor Vehicles Licensing Agency to visit USCIS to finalize his citizenship, the USCIS agent accused him of "immoral character" for voting in a national election and informed him he was subject to deportation.

Immigration continued on page 13 >>



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12



<<Immigration continued from page 12

His life has since unraveled:

- His wife passed away under the stress.
- He lost his driver's license.
- He faces the ongoing threat of deportation—despite nowhere specific to be deported to.

Attorney Elisabeth Ricci of Rambana & Ricci, P.L.L.C., in Tallahassee, is representing him. Out of four briefs filed on his behalf, three have been dismissed, and one remains pending.

This case raises serious questions:

What proof of citizenship was used to issue his voter registration card?

What responsibility does the issuing Clerk share in his situation?

As a country, we pride ourselves on justice, defined order, and due process for all individuals within our borders, including lawful and unlawful residents alike.

Looking to the Future

Finally, I want to thank all the Florida Legionnaires who have read my articles and supported my efforts

this year. It has been a privilege to serve as your Department Immigration Chair.

The USCIS is a large, complicated agency, and—like every Federal department—it has room for improvement.

When today's global posturing and economic shifts settle, I believe the United States will remain a beacon of opportunity—a place where immigrants seek education, family reunification, safety, and the chance to build a better life.

I hope to see you all during the new Legion year. Wishing you and your families all the best—always.

JROTC National Color Guard Competition and JSSP State Champions

Loretta Young, JROTC/JSSP Chair

jrotc@legionmail.org



Celebrating Our Youth and Encouraging Participation

The JROTC National Headquarters is currently reaching out to Departments across the country to

encourage Posts to support their local JROTC units in registering for the National Convention Color Guard Competition.

This exciting competition will be held at the Tampa Convention Center on Friday, August 22, at 4:00 PM in the East Hall, Third Floor.

Encourage Participation Now

This is the perfect time for Districts and Posts to follow up with the schools you support—especially those who participated in State Drill Meets happening throughout Florida.

- The Army State Drill Meet/Color Guard was held on Saturday, April 11th at George Jenkins High School in Lakeland.

- Additional Air Force and Navy JROTC State Meets are also underway.

If your Post sponsors a JROTC program, please reach out to encourage them to compete in the American Legion National Convention Competition. There are three competition categories:

- Advancing & Retiring of Colors
- Military Class — Open Eligibility
- Military Class

Important Note:

Applications must be received—along with a W-9 form—no later than July 25th.

Although this may seem like plenty of time, remember that most schools will close for the summer around the end of May, so action must be taken quickly.

All competition information can be found on the National website, or by contacting the National office at: ConventionDivision@Legion.org

Congratulations to Our JSSP State Champions!

While the final results for the Junior Shooting Sports Program (JSSP) Postal Competition have not yet been posted, National has announced the State Winners:

- Florida Precision State Team Winner: Sarasota Military Academy
- Florida Precision Individual Winner: Irizarry Jagreilz
- Florida Sporter State Team Winner: Mariner AJROTC
- Florida Sporter Individual Winner: Tyler Dennard

Congratulations to all of our outstanding competitors!

We look forward to meeting and recognizing these champions at the upcoming Department Convention in Orlando.

By the next edition of The Link, we should know which of these talented individuals and teams will advance to the JSSP National Championship in July

JROTC/JSSP continued on page 14 >>



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13



<< JROTC/JSSP continued from page 13

at Hillsdale, Michigan.

Post Support and Reporting

Thank you to all the Posts supporting our youth teams—your support paves the way for their

future successes, both in competition and career paths.

We encourage all Posts to complete a Post ROTC/JROTC/JSSP Report so we can fully document and celebrate the incredible work happening through our

programs and schools.

Wishing everyone a successful end to the year and continued success in supporting our youth programs!

U.S. Border Patrol: Protecting Our Nation's Front Lines

Daryl Bass, Law & Order Chair

laworder@legionmail.org



Honoring Their Service and Sacrifice

The United States Border Patrol and Customs, part of the Department of Homeland Security, is the largest law enforcement agency in the

world, employing over 21,000 personnel across the country.

According to Wikipedia, the overall mission of the Border Patrol is:

Preventing terrorists and terrorist weapons of mass destruction from entering the United States.

Undaunted by scorching desert heat and freezing Northern winters, Border Patrol agents work tirelessly

as vigilant protectors of our nation's borders.

The Mission Remains the Same

While the Border Patrol has changed significantly since its inception in 1924, its primary mission remains unchanged:

- Detecting and preventing illegal entry of individuals into the United States.
- Maintaining border security while facilitating the legal flow of immigration and goods.
- Preventing illegal trafficking of people and contraband, in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies.

The Border Patrol is specifically responsible for patrolling:

- Nearly 6,000 miles of the Mexican and Canadian international land borders.
- Over 2,000 miles of coastal waters surrounding

the Florida Peninsula and the island of Puerto Rico.

Agents work around the clock, covering all types of terrain and weather conditions, with unwavering dedication.

A Call for Support

Given the massive challenges we have seen at the border this past year, it's fitting to recognize the Border Patrol for their tireless efforts.

We should support these officers more than ever and honor their service and sacrifice.

The next time you see a uniformed Border Patrol officer—or any law enforcement officer—take a moment to thank them for their dedication and the crucial role they play in keeping our communities and our nation safe.

Finishing Strong and Reaping Your Rewards

Bruce Carl, Membership Chair

membership@legionmail.org



Let's Bring It Home, Team Florida!

Hello, Team Florida!

We are getting closer to Convention and the end of our

year, but we are not finished yet.

Please remember: do not hold any memberships that you receive!

There are two important reasons for this:

1. **It's against the Constitution and By-Laws**—memberships must be turned in within two weeks of receipt.

2. **Members could lose their continuous years** if transfers or renewals are delayed—and we all know how important those continuous years are to our members!

Race to the Top Success

Thanks to the extension of the Race to the Top deadline, we had both the 4th and 14th Districts

Membership continued on page 15 >>



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14



<< Membership continued from page 14

qualify by exceeding 103%.

Congratulations to both Districts, and good luck in winning your respective categories! We should know the National winners shortly.

Several more Districts came very close—and I want to thank and commend all of you for your incredible efforts.

Where We Stand Now

Currently, Florida is ranked 9th nationally with 92.16% membership.

We still need about 8,101 more members to reach our 100% goal.

Please continue reaching out to unrenewed members.

We have many throughout the Department who haven't renewed yet.

If we can encourage them to stay with us, we'll boost our numbers—and move closer to our goal!

Renewal and Retention Matters

Our current renewal rate is 86.27%, which is lower than where we should be.

Reminder: Your Post must have at least a 90% retention rate to qualify for the National Retention Award.

If members aren't renewing, ask yourselves:

- Are we providing what they want?
- Is there too much drama at the Post?
- Are there cliques that shun new or returning members?
- Is leadership overbearing instead of welcoming?

These are tough but necessary questions we must ask if we want to retain and grow our membership.

Deadlines You Need to Know

May 7th – Critical Membership Deadline!

- Last day to reach 100% and earn coins and pins.
- Last day to turn in Recruiter Award Forms (Bronze, Silver, Gold Brigade).
- Minimum 90% retention rate needed for the National Retention Award.
- District Commanders: Last day to qualify for the 100% District Commander Pin, the District Commander Achievement Award, and the District

Honor Ribbon.

May 31st – Department Awards Deadline

- Last day to qualify for:
- 100% +1 Plaque
- Post Highest Percentage Category Award
- 100% +1 & Highest Percentage District/Area Commander Awards

Moving Toward the Finish Line

All the Area Balls have been completed, and now the DCCs (District Constitutional Conferences) are underway.

I'll be attending most of them—except for three or four due to scheduling conflicts.

At the DCCs, I'll be talking about membership—but most importantly, I'll be handing out the 100% coins and pins you've earned.

Let's finish the year strong and achieve that 100% goal!

Let's fill those front-row seats at the National Convention with Team Florida!

Thank you for everything you've done and continue to do.

Let's bring it home, Team Florida!

POW/MIA Memorial Museum and Missing Personnel Updates

Denny Luke, POW/MIA Chair

powmia@legionmail.org



Honoring the Past, Building the Future

This month, I want to highlight the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum, located at the former Naval Air Station (NAS)

Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Florida.

While the base was active, a memorial was created at the Chapel of the High-Speed Pass to honor the 16 Naval Aviators who were POW, KIA, or MIA from the Vietnam War and Desert Storm. This memorial was originally dedicated on September 11, 1973.

After the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decommissioning of NAS Cecil Field on September 30, 1999, the memorial and chapel fell into disrepair. In 2016, the National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum Project was established as a 501(c)(3) non-profit

organization.

In June 2017, the Jacksonville City Council approved the lease of 26 acres, including the chapel and monument, to the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial & Museum, Inc. Then-Mayor Lenny Curry signed the ordinance in August 2017.

The memorial is still formally recognized as the Cecil Field POW/MIA Memorial. However, on May 25,

POW/MIA continued on page 16 >>



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15



<< POW/MIA continued from page 15

2023, H.R. 3670 — National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum Act was introduced in the 118th Congress by U.S. Representative Aaron Bean (Florida, District 4).

We ask for your help:

Please contact your representative and urge them to support H.R. 3670.

You can sign the petition here: <https://powmiamemorial.org/national-designation-of-the-pow-mia-memorial-and-museum/>

Recent Milestones and Support

On January 18, 2020, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new memorial. The American Legion Riders showed their strong support by far outnumbering all other groups in attendance.

You can read more in the Florida Times-Union article here: <https://www.jacksonville.com/story/news/local/2020/01/18/ground-broken-for-national-powmia-memorial--museum-in-jacksonville/112219114/>

Since then, the Department of Florida American Legion Riders has sponsored the annual Seven Bridges POW/MIA Remembrance Ride and Ceremony, held on the third Saturday of September.

During the fourth annual Ride and Ceremony, over 325 Legion Family members attended, contributing to a \$8,240.00 donation for 2024, bringing the total donated to \$15,478.00 since 2021.

The Memorial depends entirely on donations, merchandise sales, and brick sales for its funding. Please consider including the Memorial in your future fundraising activities.

This project will be a shining example of Florida's ongoing commitment to supporting our veterans.

Achievements and Progress to Date

- Secured a 25-year lease from the City of Jacksonville for the site.

- City renamed the roadway leading to the site as POW-MIA Memorial Parkway.
- Completed renovation and re-dedication of the former base chapel (current office and early museum displays).
- Procured three out of four planned display aircraft, with two restorations completed.
- Completed and dedicated a Gold Star Families Memorial featuring a bench, flagpole, personalized pavers, and landscaping.
- Established a temporary museum in the chapel's wing, managed by a volunteer curator.
- 85% funded Phase 1 through regional and local resources, with Phase 1 completion and Phase 2 beginning in Summer 2025.
- Installed over 500 memorial pavers in the Memorial Brick Plaza and the Gold Star Families Memorial.

The Memorial Brick section will be formally dedicated once Phase 1 site work is completed, with more bricks added as the project grows.

Stay Connected with POW/MIA Updates

- Department of Florida POW/MIA Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/falpovmia/>
- National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum Website: <https://powmiamemorial.org/>
- Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA): <https://www.dpaa.mil/>

Current Missing Personnel (as of April 2, 2025)

According to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA):

- World War II: 45
- Korean War: 22
- Cold War: 0
- Vietnam War: 1

March 2025 Personnel Accounted For

- March 5, 2025**
Tanker Accounted for from WWII (Loterbaugh, J.)
- March 6, 2025**
Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Gresens, R.)

Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Harrington, J.)

March 7, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Driver, B.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (O'Donovan, J.)

March 11, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Bauer, L.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Benthien, C.)
Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Curley, G.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Bucey, W.)

March 12, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Thornton, I.)
USS W.V. Sailor Accounted For from WWII (Luker, R.)
Airman Accounted For from WWII (Chitwood, R.)

March 17, 2025

Airman Accounted For from WWII (Clendenning, L.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (O'Donovan, J.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Drewes, N.)
Airman Accounted For from WWII (Cherubini, R.)

March 19, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Pruitt, B.)

March 20, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Rowland, R.)
Airman Accounted For from WWII (Pagliuso, J.)

March 21, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Gibson, C.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Pearson, P.)

March 24, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Corruth, J.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Amao, C.)
Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Manring, G.)

March 25, 2025

Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Bowser, R.)
Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Grissom, D.)

March 26, 2025

Airman Accounted For from WWII (Hodak, G.)
Soldier Accounted For from Korean War (Hott, W.)
Sailor Accounted For from WWII (Mandeberg, E.)
Sailor Accounted For from WWII (Mullaney, J.)

March 27, 2025

Airman Accounted For from WWII (Gibbs, C.)

March 28, 2025

Marine Accounted For from WWII (Ruark, J.)
Soldier Accounted For from WWII (Walker, J.)
Airman Accounted For from WWII (Penny, B.)
USS W.V. Sailor Accounted For from WWII (Frye, N.)



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16

May 2025

PROJECT: VETRELIEF

WE SALUTE THE FLORIDA LEGION RIDERS

Throughout the month of April, the Florida American Legion Riders (ALR) hit the road with a powerful mission: *to help end veteran suicide*. They hosted rides, dinners, and a variety of fundraising events, all while competing for the coveted District Trophy. Major highlights included the In-State Unity Ride and the State Rally, with 100% of proceeds benefiting the Suicide Prevention Initiative (SPI).

Last year, the Riders raised over \$250,000 in net proceeds—and they set their sights even higher this year. While **final numbers are still being calculated**, early indicators show that they've already exceeded that total, making this year's effort *another record-breaker*.

Many Riders created personal fundraising pages to collect donations, earning cool prizes along the way. These rewards were ordered this month and will be distributed at the upcoming Department Convention in June.

In-State Unity Ride participants not only volunteer their time, but also cover their own lodging, fuel, and some meal costs. They even pay a registration fee—and many go above and beyond by making additional donations to the cause. Many of these Riders plan and save all year long just to be part of this incredible effort. **We are deeply grateful for all their generosity and are humbled by their selflessness.**

We also extend heartfelt thanks to our Board Vice-President, **Jim Wineland**, who serves as the ALR Department Chairman, ALR Adjutant **Beverly Wooten**, and Road Captains: **Jason Skobel**, **Joe Marcheggiani**, and **Stan Brown**. Their leadership and tireless work are vital to making this initiative such a success.

Several SPI Strategic Partners met up with the Riders during one of their stops along the route and also joined

them in Clearwater to show their appreciation and support. During these visits, our partners shared powerful stories about the difference they're making in the veteran community—and how their organizations are actively helping to reduce the veteran suicide rate through meaningful, measurable efforts.

The Florida Legion Riders remain our largest contributors to the Suicide Prevention Initiative. Because of their commitment, we're able to fund our Strategic Partners and provide critical support to veterans during their darkest hours. With continued collaboration between the Riders, our Partners, and the entire PROJECT: VetRelief Team, we move one step closer to ending veteran suicide—**together**.



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT July '24 - June '25

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

121
Veterans Received
Financial Support

\$144,008
Provided as
Emergency Assistance

SUICIDE PREVENTION

14
Suicide Prevention
Strategic Partners

\$138,500
Given towards
Veteran Suicide Prevention



Award Nominations: There's Still Time!

Kathryn Hockenberry, Public Relations Chair
pr@legionmail.org

Recognize Those Who Make a Difference

It's not too late to submit award nominations for this Legion Year, 2024–2025. You still have one week left!

The suspense date for all awards, including Public Relations, is Wednesday, May 7, 2025.

Let's not allow the hard work of your volunteers to go unrecognized and unappreciated.

Award nominations can be written by anyone—it

only takes a few minutes to write a meaningful narrative that highlights a deserving individual's contributions.

Important Submission Reminders

To ensure your nominee is considered equally with all others, please include all required information with your submission.

I cannot stress enough:

A letter from the Post Commander greatly strengthens the nomination and plays a critical role in the review and selection process.

Please make sure to attach it with your nomination

packet!

CPR Submission Requirement

Reminder: Your Post's Consolidated Post Report (CPR) must have been submitted to the Department—including both the National CPR and Department Addendum—for your award nominations to be accepted.

Don't Wait—Submit Today!

Let's make sure we recognize and honor the outstanding efforts of our Legion Family members who go above and beyond for our mission. Thank you for taking the time to celebrate their service!

Rules on Resolutions

Clarence Hill, Resolutions Chair
resolutions@legionmail.org



Important Information for Department Convention Delegates

All resolutions must be submitted to the Department Adjutant at least forty (40) days prior to the Department

Convention.

For this year, all resolutions are due by May 4, 2025.

The Internal Affairs Committee is scheduled to meet on Thursday afternoon, June 12, at 1:00 PM in the International Ballroom.

Internal Affairs will receive reports from the following Convention Committees:

- Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws
- Credentials

- Resolutions
- Time & Place

When it comes to the Resolutions portion, only the RESOLVED clauses of each resolution will be read aloud prior to a motion being made and a vote being taken.

It is extremely important that delegates thoroughly review the entire resolution before attending the meeting.

Voting Information

Each Post is entitled to one voting delegate at this meeting to vote on all matters under consideration.

Voting Requirements:

Voting members must have the appropriate black ribbon, which was received by the delegation chairman with the convention registration package.

Voting members are asked to sit in the center section of the meeting room.

Attendees without the black ribbon do not have voice or vote and should not sit in the center section.

How the Voting Process Works

The results of any vote taken during the Internal Affairs Committee meeting become a recommendation to the General Assembly. When the Internal Affairs Committee report is presented to the General Assembly, every delegate to the Convention will have the opportunity to vote on the final disposition of these resolutions.

Please ensure you are familiar with these procedures so you can fully participate and represent your Post effectively.

We look forward to your engagement at the Convention!





Submit Your Outstanding Post Scouting Program Applications by May 7th!

Chris Ragusa, Scouting Chair

scouting@legionmail.org



Recognizing Excellence in Supporting Scouting

Reminder: Your Outstanding Post Scouting Program application must be received by May 7, 2025, for consideration!

Help us recognize excellence in supporting the Scouting movement by nominating your Post. To submit your application:

- Complete the application form.
- Provide a one-to-two-page narrative describing how your Post contributes to Scouting. (Please—one to two pages only! We're looking for quality, not quantity.)

Focus your narrative on the opportunities your Post, Squadron, and Unit have provided to the Scouting America units you charter, sponsor, or ideally, both!

The application form can be found on the Department's Scouting Program Resource Page: <https://www.floridalegion.org/programs-services/scouting/resources/>

Completed applications must be:

- Mailed to:
Department HQs, Attn: Scouting Program
OR
- Emailed to: programs@floridalegion.org

American Legion-Chartered Cub Scout Fun!

Two Cub Scout Packs chartered to American Legion District 15 Posts enjoyed a fun-filled camping weekend at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, from March 7–9, 2025.

Cub Scout Pack 9, chartered to American Legion Post 147 in Odessa, and
Cub Scout Pack 1381, chartered to American Legion Post 138 in Port Tampa City, spent two exciting days and nights together at Lewis Lake Scout Camp on MacDill AFB.

The Scouts enjoyed:

- Building campfires, cooking and eating together, and team activities.
- Learning about Air Force firefighters and marine patrol craft operations.
- Wearing firefighting gear, climbing aboard big tankers, and handling real fire hoses.
- Exploring patrol boats used for 24/7 security around Tampa Bay.

Lunch was served at the base beach, where the Scouts had a blast:

- Splashing in the surf
- Playing soccer and frisbee on the sand
- Enjoying the least crowded beach on the bay!

It was a memorable weekend of adventure, camaraderie, and learning, all thanks to the strong support from their American Legion chartering organizations.



Tampa 2025 National Convention Update

Clarence Hill, 2025 National Con Corp President

pnchill@legionmail.org



I hope many of you were able to contact your state representatives to help lobby for transportation funding from this year's state budget for the National Convention in Tampa.

As the Legislature is still in session while I write this, I do not yet know the status of our request. The House budget included \$125,000 for the transportation request, but the Senate budget did not.

This means the funding would have to be negotiated between the two chambers.

In the meantime, Post, Auxiliary, SAL, and Riders donations and fundraisers would also be most welcome to help support our efforts.

Volunteer Teams Coming Together

The Chairpersons for the Convention will soon begin contacting volunteers to start assembling their

National Convention continued on page 20 >>



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TRAINING ★ MENTORSHIP ★ CONTINUITY

www.floridalegion.org
legionlink@floridalegion.org

19



<< National Convention continued from page 19

teams.

I have already forwarded the volunteer forms submitted so far to the appropriate Chairpersons and will continue to do so as new forms come in.

Since many of you volunteered for multiple committees, you may hear from more than one Chairperson.

We appreciate your flexibility and enthusiasm!

I will be meeting with the Chairpersons at the Department Convention in June to finalize plans, and they will meet again with National leadership just prior to the Convention.

We Need Your Help!

I cannot stress enough: This is an immense project that Florida has taken on, and your support, donations, and volunteer time are critical to its success.

We estimate needing between 50 and 100 volunteers.

As we get closer to August, deadlines will move faster, and we will need everyone's help to meet them.

Hosting a National Convention is not an easy task—it requires significant funding, organization, and a strong team effort.

Remember, every visitor from other Departments will be watching—and this is our chance to showcase Florida at its very best!

If you can help in any way—whether by donating, volunteering, or providing ideas—please let us know.

The Volunteer Form can be found at: www.floridalegion.org or on page 24.

Thank you all for your continued support!

Together, we will make the 2025 Tampa National Convention a proud success for Florida!

Riders Roll for PROJECT: VetRelief

Post 331, Darrell E. Gray

Florida's Legion Riders Go the Distance for Veterans in Need

The American Legion Riders, the motorcycle division of The American Legion Family, recently roared across the state of Florida on a six-day journey with a mission: to raise awareness and funds for PROJECT: VetRelief.

Covering the state with **three separate routes—North, South, and East—**the Riders traveled from the Panhandle to the Florida Keys, stopping at Legion Posts along the way to rally support and build momentum for this vital cause.

Eastern Route Highlights

The Eastern Route, made up of approximately 60 Riders, visited 30 Legion Posts.

The journey began on Sunday, April 6, 2025, near Jacksonville, Florida, and concluded on Friday, April 11, in Clearwater, after covering more than 800 miles.

On Wednesday morning, April 9, the Riders made a stop at The Doris "Dorie" Miller Memorial Post 331 in Orlando for a meet and greet and a much-needed road break.

During the visit, Post 331 American Legion Riders Committee Chairman Marvin Sims and Post Commander Larry Colleton presented a \$500 donation to Eastern Route Leader Jason Skobel, who also serves as the Vice Chairman of the Department of Florida American Legion Riders.

Why PROJECT: VetRelief Matters

PROJECT: VetRelief supports veterans facing financial crises and health burdens, helping them gain access to the benefits they've earned through service.

It also fosters a strong community of veterans helping veterans, working to combat isolation and directly support suicide prevention efforts.

This annual ride is more than a fundraiser—it's a symbol of unity, compassion, and action across the

Legion Family.

Thank you to every Rider, Post, and supporter who helped make this ride a success and who continues to stand behind our mission of caring for those who served.



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20



Brooksville Post Office to Be Renamed in Honor of Local Hero

Post 99, Steve Tyler

Ceremony to Honor Specialist Justin Dean Coleman on May 12

On Monday, May 12, Andrew Jackson American Legion Post 99 in Brooksville will host a very special ceremony to honor one of Hernando County's fallen heroes.

At 11:00 a.m., the Downtown Brooksville Post Office, located at 207 East Fort Dade Avenue, will officially be renamed the

"Specialist Justin Dean Coleman Memorial Post Office."

The Post Office stands directly across from Post 99 at 208 East Fort Dade Avenue. The event will begin with a short ceremony in the Post's meeting hall, followed by the renaming ceremony at the Post Office and a reception afterward back in the hall.

The 10th Mountain Division, in which Specialist Coleman served, will send an Honor Guard to participate in this meaningful tribute.

Remembering Specialist Justin Dean Coleman

Army Specialist Justin Dean Coleman was a proud Hernando County native and graduate of Nature Coast Technical High School, where he was active in several clubs, choir, and the marching band.

Justin enlisted in the U.S. Army in June 2007. After completing Basic Training and Infantry School (11B) at Fort Benning, he was assigned to Fort Drum, New York, with the 10th Mountain Division, continuing a long-standing family tradition of military service dating back to the Civil War.

He deployed to Afghanistan in January 2009. Known for his compassion, Justin sometimes got into trouble with his supervisors for giving candy to Afghan children during missions.

On July 24, 2009, while conducting security checks in the remote province of Nuristan, Justin's unit came under fire from enemy forces using small arms and RPGs. Justin was killed in action during the firefight. He was only 21 years old.

In a blog he kept during deployment, Justin wrote that he was not afraid of dying, but that he was afraid of being forgotten.

A Father's Promise, A Nation's Honor

Justin's father, Dean Coleman—himself a U.S. Army veteran and 30-year Postal Service employee—described July 24, 2009, as the worst day of his life.

He vowed that his son would not be forgotten and began lobbying for the name change.

Thanks to his persistence and the support of the community, U.S. Representative Gus Bilirakis introduced HR 1823 in 2024 to rename the Post Office in Justin's honor.

The bill was co-sponsored by every member of Florida's congressional delegation, passed both the House and Senate, and is now becoming a reality.

Join Us in Remembrance

Please join us at Post 99 on Monday, May 12, at 11:00 a.m., as we honor and remember Specialist Justin Dean Coleman—a soldier, a son, and a hero who gave everything in service to his country.

Let us stand together to ensure his name—and his sacrifice—are never forgotten.

2025-2026 Endorsements On File (As of April 25, 2025)

- Jessica Moore, Department Commander
- Bob Matheson, 1st Vice Commander
- Bruce Carl, 2nd Vice Commander
- Barry Roberts, Chaplain
- Edward Lewis, Historian
- Troy Horsley, Stg-at-Arms
- Rick Orzechowski, Central Area Commander
- Joan Suelter, Eastern Area Commander
- Doug Hockenberry, Northern Area Commander
- Stuart Scott, Northern Area Commander
- George "Geo" Bograkas, Southern Area Commander
- Keith Berres, Southwestern Area Commander
- Eric E. Loyd, Southwestern Area Commander
- Doyle F. Combs, Jr., Western Area Commander
- Shelby Windham, Western Area Commander
- Robert "Oz" Osmon, District 1 Commander
- Roxana "Roxann" Dressel, District 2 Commander
- Enrique "Rick" Cabrera, District 3 Commander
- Darcy Bockman-Wright, District 4 Commander
- Miguel Garcia, District 5 Commander
- David M. Musser, District 6 Commander
- Kalvin Thompson, District 7 Commander
- Charlie Magnus, District 8 Commander
- James F. Tewes, District 9 Commander
- Stanley R. Brown, Jr., District 11 Commander
- Daniel Martin, District 12 Commander
- Laurene Allen-Flower, District 13 Commander
- Andrew Davis, District 15 Commander
- Randy Holeyfield, District 15 Commander
- Joseph Humet, District 15 Commander
- Michael G. Halrey, District 16 Commander
- Jim Bowers, District 17 Commander

For endorsement letters and updates, visit our website at <https://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/departement-convention/endorsement-letters/>



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21



2025 District Constitutional Conferences (DCC Meetings)

Date	District	Location	Time
May 17	1	Post 235 Fort Walton Beach	Registration: 11:00 am CST Start: 12:00 pm CST
May 17	2	Post 100 Marianna	Registration: 8:00 am CST Start: 9:00 am CST
May 31	3	Post 57 Lake City	Registration: 10:00 am Start: 11:00 am
April 27	4	Post 284 Bellevue	Registration: 12:00 pm Start: 1:00 pm
May 4	5	Post 137 Jacksonville	Registration: 8:30 am Start: 9:30 am
May 10	6	Post 80 Saint Cloud	Registration: 9:30 am Start: 10:00 am
May 10	7	Post 8 Winter Haven	Registration: 12:00 pm Start: 1:00 pm
May 18	8	Post 113 Rotunda West	Registration: 1:00 on Start: 2:00 pm
May 3	9	Post 321 Cooper City	Registration: 12:00 pm Start: 1:00 pm
May 10	11	Post 268 Riviera Beach	Registration: 9:00 am Start: 10:00 am
May 27	12	Post 117 Palm Bay	Registration: 12:00 pm Start: 1:00 pm
May 18	13	Post 103 Punta Gorda	Registration: 10:00 am Start: 11:00 am
May 3	14	Post 31 South Miami	Registration: 8:00 am Start: 9:00 am
May 3	15	Post 111 Tampa	Registration: 8:30 am Start: 9:30 am
May 17	16	Post 273 Madeira Beach	Registration: 9:00 am Start: 10:00 am
May 3	17	Deland Chisholm Center Deland	Registration: 10:00 am Start: 11:00 am

All dates are tentative and subject to change without notice.

If you are an authorized Post representative, and need to make a change, please email events@floridalegion.org.



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MEMBERSHIP TARGET REPORT

April 24, 2025 (95%)

District 14	Angela Glover	104.47%
District 4	Doug Hockenberry	103.98%
District 5	Miguel Garcia	100.60%
District 17	Bryant Thorpe	97.51%
District 13	Keith Berres	96.19%
District 7	Kalvin Thompson	95.42%
District 12	Daniel Martin	94.48%
District 1	Jason Skobel	93.63%
District 3	Stuart Scott	93.20%
District 2	Doyle Combs Jr.	93.01%
District 6	Joan Suelter	92.85%
District 8	Charlie Magnus	92.12%
District 16	Michael Harley	91.79%
District 9	Jim Tewes	91.77%
District 15	Andrew Davis	89.93%
District 11	Toni Sutherland	89.87%
Northern	Jim Bowers	99.73%
Southwestern	John Rauh	94.34%
Southern	Teddy Pomerantz	94.12%
Eastern	Bruce Thurber	93.58%
Western	Shelby Windham	93.54%
Central	Rick Orzechowski	91.78%
Post 400		83.36%
Post 208		78.79%



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Emergency Assistance Plus® (EA+®) is not insurance, it is a membership plan. This is only an outline of the plan's features. Hospitalization (admitted as an inpatient) is a requirement to be eligible for some services. All services must be arranged and provided by EA+. Please read the EA+ Member Guide carefully to understand all the services available to you, as well as any rules and regulations. Visit www.TheLIT.com/Emergency-Assistance-Plus to view a sample of the EA+ Plan details.

★ ★ ★ FREQUENT WINNERS ★ ★ ★



50/50 VETERANS RAFFLE

AMERICAN LEGION Department of Florida



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SUPPORT

The American Legion official license plate.



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23



National Convention Volunteer Interest Form

August 22-28, 2025 in Tampa Bay, FL

Return to Department or email to 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

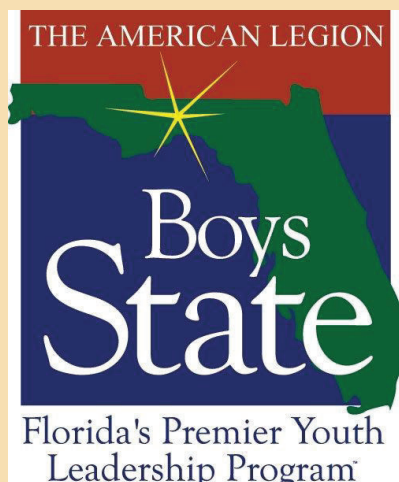
Are you a member of any of the following? (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <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)

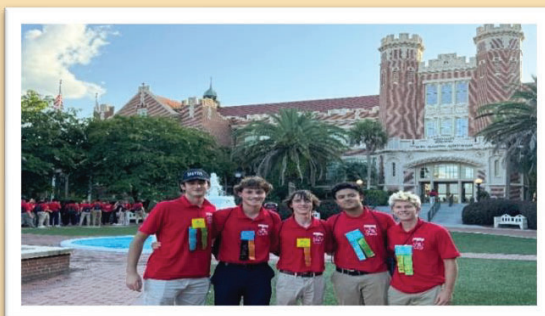
Are you able to attend the 2025 National Convention? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

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



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>



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

STAY GROOVY

COMMANDER'S ★ PRESIDENT'S BANQUET

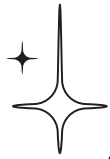


HILTON ORLANDO LAKE BUENA VISTA ★ INTERNATIONAL SOUTH BALLROOM

FRIDAY ★ JUNE 13, 2025 ★ 7:30PM - 9:30PM

\$65 TICKETS

Cocktail hour starts at 6:30PM. Dinner is 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM. Dress-up is optional.
Visit floridalegion.org/banquet for additional information and online tickets.



AMERICAN
LEGION

Department
of Florida



COMMANDER'S ★ PRESIDENT'S BANQUET

STAY GROOVY



DINNER MENU



STARTER

Spinach and arugula salad



MAIN COURSE

Garlic herb roasted chicken breast served with, creamy orzo pasta with peas, carrots, and cremini mushrooms, and broccolini with tomatoes



DESSERT

Chocolate mousse cake with whipped cream and raspberry sauce



GET TICKETS ONLINE: www.floridalegion.org/banquet

Join us, June 13, 2025, 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM, Department Convention at Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista.

Yes, I would like to attend the Commander's & President's Banquet!

Name: _____ Phone: _____

of Tickets: _____ x \$65 each = Total Due \$ 0.00

Payment Type: ☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

☐ Yes, I authorize my card to be charged for the total amount above.

Credit Card #: _____

Expiration: _____ Security Code: _____ Signature: _____

All tickets must be purchased in advance, quantities are limited. Tickets will be available for pickup during Convention located in the Headquarters Office.

Please mail to: The American Legion, Dept of Florida, Attention: Events, P.O. Box 547859; Orlando, FL 32854



CHEERS

BEERS



106TH ANNUAL DEPARTMENT CONVENTION, HILTON ORLANDO LAKE BUENA VISTA



DJ MJ JUNCTION88
PRODUCTIONS

06.12.2025
06:30 PM

POOL SIDE PARTY

FREE ADMISSION. FREE BEER AND REFRESHMENT, WHILE
SUPPLIES LAST. CASH BAR AVAILABLE. EVENT ENDS AT 8:30 PM.

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★ BEFORE YOU GO

More information at www.floridalegion.org

W Register ahead

Post Delegate/Alternate Registration
Register for Service Officer School
Food Handler's Class

W Special events

Legion Family Kick-Off Party
Commander's & President's Banquet

W Know before you go

DCC Meeting Schedule
Rules of Procedure
Voting Guidelines
Endorsements
Convention Deadlines
Post Paperwork
Accommodations
Parking

W Give support

Florida Spring Raffle
Vendor Exhibition
Sponsorships
Convention Book Advertising

W Show your Legion pride

Convention T-Shirts
R.E.D. Friday T-Shirts
2025-2026 Department Commanders' Polo
2025-2026 Detachment Commander's Polo

★ WHEN YOU'RE THERE

More information at www.floridalegion.org

01 Day 1: Thursday

On Arrival

Parking
Mobility Scooter Rentals
Accessibility Needs
Property Maps
Emblem Sales
Exhibitors
Nearby Attractions
Dining

Classes

Service Officer School Part I*
Membership Basic Training
Post Operations Training
Women Veterans Outreach Training
Food Handler's Course*
Membership Advanced Training
Fundraising Class
Buddy Check Training

Meetings & Business

Finance Committee Meeting
Internal Affairs
Executive Committee Meeting
Legion Riders District Chair Meeting

Special Events

Legion Family Kick-Off Party

02 Day 2: Friday

Classes

Service Officer School Part II*
PROJECT: VetRelief Class
Post Chaplain's Training
Post Sgt-at-Arms, Color & Honor Guard Training
Post Adjutant's Training
Post Judge Advocate Training
Post Historian/Social Media Class

Meetings & Business

Legion General Session Part I
Area Caucuses
20/4 Echelon 30 Meeting

Special Events

Cocktail Hour*
Commander's and President's Banquet*

03 Day 3: Saturday

Classes

Post Finance Officer Training
Legislative Training
Homeless Veterans Training
Post Commander's Training
Veterans Benefits

Meetings & Business

Legion General Session Part II
Electronic Voting*
Election Results
Legion Riders General Session

Special Events

Installation of Officers

04 Day 4: Sunday

Special Events

Religious Service

Meetings & Business

Executive Committee Meeting

Heading Home

Check-out
Drive Safely
Submit Feedback

Headquarters

Post Registration
Agendas
Membership & Program Materials
Florida Spring Raffle Tickets
Drop off Post History Books (Thurs)
General Inquiries

Emblem Sales

Shopping
Emblem Sales Orders Pickup
Banquet Tickets Pickup

*Check our website at floridalegion.org for deadlines, pre-registration requirements, tickets, and additional information.

All information is subject to change.



407.295.2631

mail@floridalegion.org

PO Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32810

www.floridalegion.org





Department
of Florida

**PROGRAM ADVERTISING
LEGION FAMILY**

*** Deadline May 14, 2025 ***

106th Annual Department Convention, June 12-15, 2025

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Member, Post, Unit, or Squadron

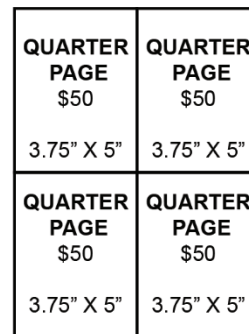
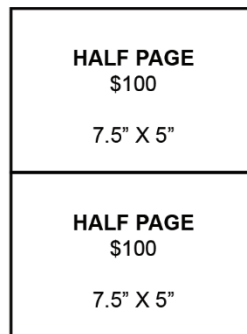
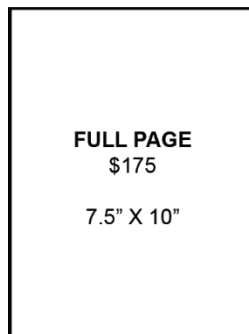
Contact Person

Title

Email

Phone

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



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

Program advertisements must be submitted no later than May 14, 2025 to be included in the program. Please submit your advertisement artwork via email in one of the following image file types: .ai, .eps, .psd, .pdf, .tif, .jpeg, .jpg, .png. All artwork must be digital: no scanned or printed artwork will be accepted. All advertisements are printed in grayscale. All imagery must be legally licensed. For an additional \$25 Custom Design Fee, we will design your advertisement for you. You'll be contacted for details at the email provided. Please email artwork to: events@floridalegion.org.

PAYMENT METHOD

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

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Total to Charge: \$ _____

Credit Card # _____

Cardholder Name _____

Expiration Date _____

Security Code _____

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

Signature _____

Date _____

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

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

www.floridalegion.org

TOLL FREE 800-393-3378
FAX 407-295-2631

106th Annual Department Convention, June 12-15, 2025

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

VENDOR INFORMATION

Name of Business or Organization

Contact Person

Job Title

Email

Phone

EXHIBITOR PACKAGES☐ General's \$800☐ Colonel's \$550☐ Lieutenant's \$300

Door Prize / Raffle Item and Approximate Value

Each exhibitor will receive a 6' skirted table and 2 chairs (additional chairs upon request). Electrical outlets are not guaranteed. Premium internet access can be contracted with the hotel directly.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES☐ Service Officer School \$600 ☐ Kick-Off Party \$1,000 ☐ Commander's and Presidents Banquet \$800

Your banner will be prominently displayed as a sponsor, fee includes the cost of the banner. Inquire for additional information and opportunities.

PROGRAM ADVERTISEMENT UPGRADE – Increase product/brand awareness! A great marketing tool.

Advertisements are included in your sponsorship; however, you can upgrade your advertisement for an additional fee.

☐ Full Page (7.5" x 10") \$200
Included in Generals☐ Half Page (7.5" x 5") \$100
Included in Colonel's



Department
of Florida

VENDOR APPLICATION
*** Deadline May 14, 2025 ***

Program advertisements must be submitted no later than May 14, 2025 to be included in the program.

Please submit your advertisement artwork via email in one of the following image file types: .ai, .eps, .psd, .pdf, .tif, .jpeg, .jpg, .png. All artwork must be digital: no scanned or printed artwork will be accepted. All advertisements are printed in grayscale. All imagery must be legally licensed.

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CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

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

Credit Card #

Cardholder Name

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Security Code

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

Signature

Date

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

DEADLINE REMINDER: *To include your advertisement in the convention book, you must submit your finished artwork by May 14, 2025. Discounts/credits will not be provided if the deadline is missed, or the application is received after the deadline. Vendor registration will be cut-off once space is full or just before Convention. Vendor placement is assigned and will be based on level of sponsorship.*

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

www.floridalegion.org

TOLL FREE 800-393-3378
FAX 407-295-2631