

The Legion Link

May 2010

Vol. 17 Issue 10



THE POWER OF COMMITMENT



Web Site: www.floridalegion.org

E-mail: mail@floridalegion.org



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Dept. Commander's

Homecoming



Phil Hearlson
Department Commander
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The Department of Florida has their dancing shoes on, which means, Area Balls and Homecomings. Orlando Memorial Post 19 hosted The Eastern Area Ball on March 19th. Eastern Area Commander Earl Friedeborn and members of the Eastern Area did a fantastic job. Thank you, Commander Friedeborn, for allowing my granddaughter, Hayley Daughtry, to assist with the ball for a school project.



Mary Kelly-Perkins, Dept. President, and I enjoyed the celebration of our "son's" special day. Detachment Commander, Mike Dooley's, homecoming was held at Post 25-Lake Placid on April 3rd. Mike had let us know that he wanted a motorcycle and being the good "Legion Family Parents" that we are we gave him a motorcycle.



HAPPY
Mother's
DAY

The Northern Area Ball was a special evening for me as I am a Past Northern Area Commander. For those who ordered the lobster it was a challenging evening, the food was delicious. Thank you, Commander Jim Corner, for a great evening.

We gave up our dancing shoes for bowling shoes when the 6th District held their bowling tournament to raise money for transportation for Boys and Girls State. Peggy and I had not bowled in years, we had a great time and the next day we had sore muscles. It was all worth it. We had a team representing the Department of Florida. Thanks to all who participated.



March 24th-27th, I had the opportunity to enjoy the tropical breezes of 14th and 10th Districts. From Miami to Key West I enjoyed visiting Posts, meeting new friends and visiting with old friends. Thank you, 14th District Commander Angela Glover and 10th District Commander, Larrjo Walden, for your hospitality.

It is that time of year again; it is time to fill out your CPR and CPR addendums. If you committed to work the programs, then be committed to completing these reports and mailing them to Department.

Al Porter
Department Vice Commander
albertporter@bellsouth.net

As May begins, our District Constitutional Conferences will be in full swing, also most Posts will be having their first and second nominations for new officers. Please take the nominations of your post officers very seriously. These are the people who will serve you for the coming year. Choose nominees who have the best interest of the Post and our veterans at heart. April has been very busy attending Post functions, Area Balls and other Post events. The Golden Eagle Dinner for the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts was a moving experience to see all of the young boys from Cub Scouts to Eagle Scouts taking part in the special event. It brought back some memories of my own experiences as a Cub and Boy Scout.

Traveling around to the different posts and seeing how much pride our volunteers put into all the activities that go on in their post home is a real dedication to our veterans. Each and every project, no matter how small is important to our members.

It is a pleasure to work with all of our volunteers not forgetting our Department Staff who continue to support our Posts and members.

Americanism
Dianne Thibodeau
DianneThib@bellsouth.net

The following article is from the National web page (<http://www.legion.org/divisions>). A lot of good information about all our Divisions and Programs can be found there as well as on our own web site (<http://floridalegion.org>).

The Americanism Division represents one of the four pillars of The American Legion. It is guided by a full commission that meets three times a year. Under the direction of this commission, a wide variety of programs are built on community service, citizenship, patriotic values and mentoring young people.

Programs and specific areas of work include American Legion Baseball, the National High School Oratorical Contest, Junior Shooting Sports, Boys State and Boys Nation, support for Boy Scouts of America, U.S. Flag education and protection, support for Junior ROTC, voter awareness, naturalization and citizenship of immigrants, along with a number of scholarship programs

Two permanent committees of the Americanism Commission are the National Committee on Education, which offers a number of educational opportunities, including scholarships and teaching materials, and the Counter-Subversive Activities Committee, which exists to monitor the activities of groups within the United States that potentially represent threats to our form of government.

Also found under the Americanism umbrella is the organization's chaplaincy program. For God & Country

Ron Musselwhite
Department Chairman
Ron_seis@comcast.net

The Department Oratorical Finals was a big success this year. The finals were on March 6 at Department Headquarters. The winner of the Department Oratorical is Caroline Schechinger, a sophomore at Bishop Kenny High School in Jacksonville. Caroline will receive a \$2,500.00 Scholarship from Department, plus a \$1,500.00 Scholarship for competing at the National contest.

The first runner up is Eric Winningham, a sophomore, at Winter Park High School, in Maitland. Eric will receive a \$1,500.00 Scholarship from Department. Third place is Garrett Bruno, a senior at The Benjamin School, in Tequesta. Garrett will receive a \$1,000.00 Scholarship from Department. The two \$500.00 Scholarship winners are Shonda Richardson, a senior at LeHigh senior H.S. and Tasneem Amina, a senior at Lakewood High School in St. Petersburg.

Caroline competed at the National contest in Indianapolis, on April 10th. She lost out in the quarter finals. She gained a lot of experience this year. She will be back next year to defend her title. See all of you at the Department Convention. For God and Country



Art Schwabe
Resolution Chairman

Just a reminder - all resolutions must be sent to Department Headquarters by May 15th, 2010 in order to be considered at Department Convention. From the Legion website go to the Main Menu, click on Legion Link and Resources, click, then look for Resolution regarding information on how to write a resolution. Please send the completed form to Department. Thank You

100% +1 Goal

May 19, 2010

District/Area Membership Report as of April. 28, 2010

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rec'd	% Goal
4	Gerald	4,044	3,981	98.44
16	George Paradise	12,147	11,903	97.99
3	James Troupe	1,655	1,609	97.22
17	Arthur Schwabe	4,368	4,165	95.35
6	William Walsh	9,570	9,086	94.94
2	George Segrest	1,376	1,305	94.84
8	Gregory Putman	9,042	8,482	93.81
7	Keith Holz	4,440	4,161	93.72
12	Carl Schneider	8,772	8,213	93.63
14	Angela Glover	2,314	2,165	93.56
15	Larry Faulkner	5,794	5,381	92.87
13	Frank Ward	9,365	8,681	92.70
1	Stephen Shuga	6,473	5,988	92.51
5	Gregory Lovejoy	8,154	7,517	92.19
9	Joseph Motes	4,818	4,411	91.55
11	Paul Bosco	4,757	4,287	90.12
10	Larrio Walden	1,095	949	86.67
Central	Kathryn Ferrin	22,381	21,445	95.82
Northern	James Corner	18,221	17,272	94.79
Eastern	Earl Friedeborn	18,342	17,299	94.31
SW	Richard Francis	18,407	17,163	93.24
Western	Martha Harris	7,849	7,293	92.92
Southern	David Knapp	12,984	11,812	90.97
Dept			92,284	
Post 400		22,248	16,878	75.86
Post 208		1,942	1,647	84.81
Totals		132,000	110,809	83.95

Robert Brewster, Membership
brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net

Well, we are now down to less than 2 months in the 2009-2010 calendar year. I strongly urge each and every Post Commander, Adjutant, First Vice, Third Vice, and any other member on or off the Post membership team to immediately contact all of last year's members who have not renewed this year to get them to renew. What good does it do to sign up new members this year and let last year's members disappear. All of us like to have a personal contact with our Post, whether we have a Post home or not.

I have mentioned in many of my speeches this year across this great state that the American Legion membership has been steadily dropping in the last 8-10 years. This phenomenon is happening in all the major veteran organizations. Each and every one of us must do our part to stop this. We scream and holler and complain when something happens to our benefits, but the way to stop this problem is to increase membership which will give our National Commander a much stronger voice in Tallahassee and in D.C. If you come across a member who has been a member for years, and he or she is down on their luck, or their health is declining, get the Post to pay for their membership this year. Have a fund raiser for that purpose. No one needs to know who they are except those who are personally involved. Have we forgotten the American Legion motto "Veterans Helping Veterans."

Again, I would like to clear up an issue that small Posts and small Districts have an advantage in reaching their membership goals. Then why do we have large Posts, medium size Posts, and small Posts doing so well? The more members you have, the more help you have, and the more you can do. I have been a Commander at a large Post, and now I am the Commander at a very small Post which is growing rapidly. I forgot to mention that the large Post also grew rapidly when I was their Commander.

At this time I wish to thank all the Posts, Districts, and Areas which I have visited during this past year. I felt like I was being treated as a member, not just a visitor. This is true about all, with the exception of one. I wish all of you much success in the rest of this year and in the coming years. We are members together in the largest, oldest, and best veteran organization in the world. Again, if I can be of any help whatsoever, contact me for I will continue to work right down to the end of the Convention. For God and Country



Legislative Report
Stanley Gold, Chairman
786-423-2458



On April 15th, as Department Legislative Chairman, I was invited to see the President of the United States of America while he was in Miami. At this affair I was able to thank Congressman Kendrick Meek not only for all of his support for veterans but also for securing a meeting room at the Capitol for Department to hold our Congressional lunches at no cost to the Department for the past four years.

On April 21st I was able to attend the Florida Legislation 2010 Military Appreciation Day in Tallahassee. At this event Major General Douglas Burnett, Adjutant General of the Florida National Guard, was honored.

The American Legion confident health plan won't harm VA, DoD

Among the concerns raised about the recently passed health care reform law was its impact on military retirees and veterans. Reassuringly, numerous sources have indicated and continue to indicate that VA and DoD health care will not be affected by the health-care reform bill that became law.

Currently, veterans who receive health care can be split into three groups: those who use VA services; those who are eligible for some VA care, but also have private coverage; and those who are uninsured and not eligible to receive all necessary care from VA. Sources have promised the Legion that all three groups won't be adversely affected by health-care reform.

Chiefly, the Legion has been given verbal and written assurances that veterans and dependents who use VA or DoD health programs would see no changes in their care. VA care and TRICARE programs meet the individual responsibility requirements of the bill and therefore exempt service members, military retirees and their dependents from any penalty.

Veterans who fall into the second group - those who are eligible for some VA health care but also have private coverage - are like all Americans in that they can keep their current employer-based plans. But, starting in 2014, these individuals may have the option to buy a plan through state-run insurance exchanges. Veterans who currently pay for individual insurance could keep their plans or buy into a plan offered in the exchange. American veterans, like all Americans, might be eligible for subsidized coverage in the exchange based on their income level.

The third group - uninsured veterans - would be eligible for Medicaid, which will be expanded to include all Americans who fall under the government-defined poverty level. Those with an income higher than the poverty level but without access to employer-provided coverage can obtain a health plan through one of the state-operated exchanges.

VA Secretary Eric Shinseki and Defense Secretary Robert Gates both gave assurances that VA and military health services wouldn't be affected by health-care reform. "Fears that veterans' health care and TRICARE will be undermined by the health reform legislation are unfounded," Shinseki said on the day of the vote in the House of Representatives. "I am confident that the legislation being voted on will provide the protections afforded our nation's veterans and the health care they have earned through their service."

"As Secretary of Defense, the health and well-being of America's men and women in uniform is my highest priority," Gates also said on the day the vote took place. "Our troops and their families can be reassured that the health-care reform legislation being passed by the Congress will not negatively impact the TRICARE medical insurance program, as it already meets the bill's quality and minimum benefit standards."

Additionally, all veterans who receive care at VA facilities for service-connected disabilities will see no change in those services, sources say. Health insurance reform will not take away existing coverage or limit eligibility under any VA or DoD program.

Said The American Legion National Commander Clarence E. Hill, responding to passage of the bill: "I have been assured personally by the President, Secretary of Defense, VA secretary, Speaker of the House, majority leaders, and numerous other senators and representatives - as has National Commander David Rehbein before me - that nothing in the national health care reform legislation will change current DoD and VA health-care eligibility or practices."



ROSTER CHANGES

Post #	Title-Name	New Info
221	Adjutant- Lenora Ellison	331 Evergreen Ave, Niceville, 32578, 850.729.7044, ellison7044@cox.net
186	Adjutant- Daniel Cox	8126 River Point Drive, Spring Hill, 34607, 352.200.6766, dancox@mail.com
248	Commander- Rolando Morgado, Jr.	3915 Fountaineblue Dr. Tampa, 33634
248	Adjutant- Eddie Diaz	301 N. Bradford, Tampa, 33609, 813.263.5432, 813-435-2366
249		info@post248.com
90	Mailing Address	4720 SW 15 th Ave Ste 122, Cape Coral, 33904
CVSO-	Hillsborough	Frank Storm, 10119 Windhorst Rd. Tampa, 33619, 813.975.2181, 813.975.2187, stromf@hissboroughcounty.org



Stephen Shuga - Boy Scout Program – shugaste@knology.net
Robert “Bob” Scott – Boy Scout Program - wvcaller@msn.com

As you have probably heard by now, Steve Shuga, the Department of Florida Boy Scout Chairman, and 1st District Commander was in a serious car accident on Sunday March 21, 2010. He had a hip injury, both legs broken, and a broken nose. The latest report that I have heard is that he will undergo at least six months of rehabilitation.

Let's us remember Steve and his family during these difficult times. It is important that we as Legionnaires support the Shuga family during these difficult times with our prayers.

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Robert "Bob" Scott, the Assistant Department Boy Scout Chairman. I have served as a Post Finance Officer, 1st Vice Commander, and Commander for American Legion Post 77 in Inverness, FL. At present I am serving on the E-board for Post 155, and I am also the editor of the Post 155 newsletter "The Scuttlebutt". I have served as Sgt at Arms for the 4th District and at present I am one of the Vice Commanders. I am also the 4th District Boy Scout Chairman. For the past year I have served as the Committee Chairman for Boy Scout Troop 370 in Homosassa, Florida.

On March 22nd, I received a phone call from Department Commander Phil Hearlson asking if I would step up and fill the remainder of Comrade Shuga term as Department Boy Scout Chairman.

I am looking forward to meeting and working with you to achieve our programs and goals together.

If you have a specific problem or problems and need assistance, please feel free to contact me. My mailing address is 6272 East Waverly Street, Inverness, Florida 34452. My home phone is 352-860-2090 and my cell phone is 352-422-1891. You may contact me by email. My email address is wvcaller@msn.com

If you are chartering a Boy Scout Troop, please take an active interest in your troop. Let's make the 100th Anniversary of Boy Scouts a year to remember.

Please let's remember the Shuga family in our prayers and pray for his speedy recovery.

May you have a nice day today and better day tomorrow. For God and Country - Yours in Scouting



Department Convention Proposed Agenda

The Caribe Royale June 24- 27, 2010

AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Thursday, June 24, 2010

8:00am—5:00pm	Headquarters Office
8:00am – 5:00pm	Registration
8:00am—3:00pm	Service Officer School
9:00am—5:00pm	History Book Display/Judging & “Patriotism through Art” Contest
1:00pm—2:00pm	Internal Affairs Commission
2:00pm—3:00pm	Children & Youth Commission
2:00pm—3:00pm	District/Post Commanders
	Public Relations Course
2:30pm—3:30pm	Time and Place
3:00pm—4:00pm	Americanism Commission
3:00pm—4:00pm	Historians Association Meeting
3:00pm—4:30pm	Finance Committee Meeting
5:00pm—6:00pm	Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, June 25, 2010

8:00am—5:00pm	Headquarters Office
8:00am – 5:00pm	Registration
8:00am—3:00pm	Service Officer School
8:00am—3:00pm	First General Session
9:00am—5:00pm	History Book Display/Judging & “Patriotism through Art” Contest
12:00pm—1:30pm	Past Department Commanders’ Luncheon
1:00pm—6:00pm	Legion Institute
2:30pm -- 3:30pm	Division of Alcohol, Beverages & Tobacco

Caucuses

2:30pm – 3:30pm	Eastern Area
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Western Area
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Northern Area
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Southwestern Area
2:30pm - 3:30pm	Southern Area
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Central Area
3:45pm – 4:45pm	Legion Riders
3:45pm – 4:45pm	100% + 1 awards
4:30pm—5:30pm	Past Commanders Club
4:30pm—5:30pm	FALPA
4:00pm – 5:30pm	20/4 Bivouac
6:30pm – 10:00pm	Commander/President’s Banquet

Saturday, June 26, 2010

8:00am—5:00pm	Headquarters Office
8:00am—9:30am	Registration
8:00am	Second and Final General Session
4:00pm—5:00pm	Commander Class
4:00pm—5:00pm	Adjutant Class
4:00pm—5:00pm	Division/Alcohol, Beverages & Tobacco
4:00pm – 5:00pm	FALPA
6:00pm	Installation of Officers
7:00pm—8:30pm	Reception

Sunday, June 27, 2010

8:00am – 10:00am	Headquarters Office
8:00am – 8:30am	Joint Religious Service <i>Presented by Auxiliary</i>
9:00am—11:00am	Department Executive Committee Meeting

To be upset over what you don't have is to waste what you do have

Richard Mondro
Department Employment Chairman
dickmondro@comcast.net

VET JOBS Update April 14, 2010: Milicruit in cooperation with the VA will be hosting a fully interactive three dimensional career fair for the veteran community on 29 APR 2010. Unlike traditional career fairs that require travel, and are limited to one location for one day, the Milicruit event is accessible 24/7 for an entire 30 days from anywhere an attendee has computer access. Vets will have the opportunity to, visit up to 75 employers in their virtual booths, view videos, presentations, view and apply for jobs, chat with employer reps, and even video interview. Employers already signed on to participate include, Verizon, GE, Ryder, Target, 3M, Booz Allen, NavAir, Navy Cyberforces, Comerica, Capital One, Wellpoint, Medco, Stryker, TCF Bank, Navy Exchange, Waste Management, CACI and several more. This event will assist in helping with the growing unemployment rate amongst our veterans and will prove even more beneficial to those who may be disabled or who have been injured while serving given it requires no travel at all to participate. Registration and attendance at no charge is available at <http://www.veteranscareerfair.com>

The Air Force has begun advertising hundreds of job vacancies online for its annual summer employment program. Qualified individuals can apply online at USAJOBS.gov for various positions, including office automation and computer clerks, laborers, lifeguards and recreation aides. To find a position, job hunters can enter the job title, such as "lifeguard," into the key word search at www.USAJOBS.gov. Students can also search by clicking on the word "Student" at the bottom of the USAJOBS website. For more information, visit the Air Force Personnel Center Personnel Services Website <http://gum.afpc.randolph.af.mil> and type in keyword "summer employment," or visit your local civilian personnel department.

Labor Department statistics show unemployment for male Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans has tripled since the recession began, rising from 5% in MAR 07 to 15% last month. More than 250,000 of these veterans were unemployed last month. An additional 400,000 have left the workforce to attend college or raise children, or because they have stopped trying to find a job, Labor Department economist Jim Walker says. The overall national unemployment rate is 9.7%. Recruitment and re-enlistment numbers for the Army, lagging during years before the recession, are now topping 100%, according to Army figures. [Source: www.milicruit.com Kevin O'Brien Notice 31 Mar & NAUS Weekly Update 9 Apr 2010]



District Constitutional Conferences

<u>District</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Registration</u>	<u>Start Time</u>
1 st	June 12 th	193	Pensacola	9:00a CST	9:30a CST
2 nd	June 12 th	100	Marianna		1:00p CST
3 rd	June 5 th	57	Lake City	9:00a	10:00a
4 th	May 29 th	149	Newberry	9:00a	10:00a
5 th	June 6 th	283	Arlington	10:00a	11:00a
6 th	May 15 th	53	Sanford	1:00p	1:45p
7 th	May 16 th	4	Lakeland	2:00p	3:00p
8 th	June 5 th	159	Venice	12:00p	1:00p
9 th	June 6 th	180	Ft. Lauderdale	8:00a	9:00a
10 th	June 12 th	29	Miami	9:30a	10:00a
11 th	May 23 rd	268	Riviera Beach	9:00a	10:00a
12 th	May 15 th	39	Vero Beach	9:00a	10:00a
13 th	June 5 th	103	Punta Gorda	8:00a	9:00a
14 th	May 8 th	43	Homestead	10:00a	11:00a
15 th	May 22 nd	111	Tampa	9:00a	10:00a
16 th	May 16 th	7	Clearwater	10:00a	11:00a
17 th	June 6 th	6	Deland	12:00p	1:00p



National American Legion Hospital Rep. (David Miller) getting his 10,000 hour special award. He has been volunteering since 1990 at Bay Pines VA Hospital. Pictured with him are Associate Director Bay Pines VA Kris Brown, American Legion NEC Robert Proctor, Past Department President Ruth Proctor and Deputy Tim McCarty



ATTENTION ALL POSTS

The End of Year Reports were mailed to each post mid April. Please make sure each of you turn National's Consolidated Post Report and Department's Addendum. This information is how we tell Congress, and everyone else, how much Florida American Legion accomplishes. Florida achieves so much for our veterans and their families. Let's brag! Deadline May 17th

CONGRATULATIONS to the first 35 Posts who have turned in their National and Department reports. They are: 6, 10, 18, 21, 24, 33, 44, 52, 63, 82, 108, 119, 173, 187, 194, 200, 238, 244, 245, 265, 266, 272, 291, 293, 299, 309, 311, 317, 330, 333, 339, 344, 366, 381, and 383.

CONGRATULATIONS to District 8, with 25% of their posts turned and District 6 with 22.22% of their posts turned in.



Military Families Meet Up

Our goal is to offer a place to connect for families *with loved ones who are currently deployed overseas or will be deployed in the near future*. The purpose of the Meet-up group is to provide fellowship among families who are facing the challenges of deployment and to share news about our military men and women.

Meetings will focus on the unique challenges and pressures of military life, including such topics as self-care, separation, isolation, anxiety and overall emotional well-being.

When: 2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month from May 13, 2010 through October 28, 2010

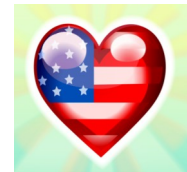
Time: 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Who: Parents, spouses, fiancés, siblings, significant others, and other family members age 18 and above. ****

Where: 1912A Lee Road, Orlando, FL. 32810

**** Due to the sensitivity of topics and/or discussions that may be presented during these sessions, we request that children under the age of 18 not be present.

We



our Armed Forces!





The American Legion



DEPARTMENT COMMANDER PHIL HEARLSON HOMECOMING!

1940's THEME

Where:

American Legion Post #155
6585 W. Gulf To Lake HWY
Crystal River, FL 34429
POST NUMBER: 352-795-6526

FRIDAY:

Friday Night Pre-Homecoming AUCE Fish Fry
Dinner (Dinner 5-7PM)
& Lounge Party.
_____ \$10 per person
(includes 2 free drinks)

SATURDAY:

HOMECOMING

_____ \$17.50 per person (Limited Seating)
Dinner: Pork Loin, Scalloped Potatoes, Glazed Carrots, Dinner Roll, Salad and Desert. Appetizer: Shrimp cocktail.
Entertainment:
Social hour 4:30-5:30, 5:30
Appetizer, 5:45 salad, 6pm Dinner.

DRESS: Simi-Formal

SUNDAY:

Going away Breakfast (8:30-11am)
Breakfast & FREE Bloody Mary's
_____ \$6 per person

Hotel is less than 5 minutes from the Post at a very reasonable rate of \$58.50 per night CALL 352-795-2111 and mention The American Legion.

Hotel:

Day's INN HWY 19
2380 N.W. US 19
Crystal River, FL 34428
ROOMS (\$58.50 per night)

All Rooms are either One King Bed or 2 Double Beds and come equipped with a Microwave, MINI Fridge, Coffee and FREE Wireless Internet and the Hotel has a very nice Pool!

Call Hotel directly for Reservations at [352-795-2111](tel:352-795-2111) **PRESS "0"** for Hotel Operator and mention The American Legion for the discounted rate. If calling the toll free number the rates will be in the \$80 range.

Homecoming Program

_____ \$40 Full Page _____ \$25 Half Page
_____ \$20 QTR Page _____ \$10 Boosters

Event Coordinator

Please contact 4th District Vice Commander Jay Conti Sr. (H) 352-344-4122. (C) 352-287-1400 or mail payment (s) with attached form to
(Sorry NO Credit Cards):

Jay Conti Sr.
6064 East Joyce Lane
Inverness, FL 34452
Make Check (s) payable to:
American Legion Post #155
Email: Jconti3547@aol.com