

The Legion Link

November 2010

Vol. 18 Issue 4



STEERING FORWARD FOR VETERANS



Web Site: www.floridalegion.org

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My Fellow Legionnaires:

Well, November is upon us and the pumpkins are everywhere. Smells of cinnamon and cider are all over, yum.

What a great visit to the 16th District. I give many thanks to Charlie Wing and his staff for showing this Commander a wonderful time. Our visit to the All Children's Hospital was truly a once in a lifetime experience. Our motorcycle escort of



Jim and Cyd made us feel truly important. Thanks to all of you who prepared food and were there to welcome us.

It was nice to see many of our friends from the 15th District at the picnic at Port Tampa Post #138. I want to give a special thank you to District Commander Jim Zipler and the Post Commander for good food and entertainment. Sunday I was off to Indianapolis, for the National Fall meeting with the National Commander, Jimmie Foster. There were two days of instructional meetings. P.S. - It wasn't as cold as I thought it would be.

On October 12th, I had the opportunity to help interview 20 students to be considered for the Naval Academy. What knowledgeable young people! Boy, did I feel old.

Be Safe as you celebrate Halloween. Don't let the goblins get you. As always if I can be of any assistance don't hesitate to call me.

Remember to start working hard on all of your programs and please, please, please remember to do the paperwork needed for your functions. Reporting is KEY.



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CALLING ALL HISTORIANS -

There will be a Historian's Workshop at the Fall Conference in November. Check the agenda for the exact time and place (probably Thursday afternoon). I will go over each of the "elements" used to judge the history books (some things aren't too clear in the "Officer's Guide"). At the Workshop I will have a hand out further explaining each element. The rules are in The Officer's Guide (pp. 160-168. Be careful that you are following the correct section - scrapbook or narrative). I will have copies of this section at the Workshop as well so don't worry about finding a copy. I will be leaving for Indianapolis on 10 October for the national judging of the books from other Departments. I will probably pick up some more tips for us. If you will not be able to attend Fall Conference the hand out will be on the website.

All Historians are invited to attend the Workshop. Even if you are going to enter your Post's book in the "Open" category there will be information of interest.

If any of you would like me to go over your books from last year please let me know in advance (so I know how much time I'll need).

There were no critique sheets with the books last June because there was no way two judges could judge all of the books and write something up in the one day allotted. I have asked the Area Commanders to give me a name from each Area to be a judge. I have chosen a Senior Judge to oversee the judging. There still will be no critique sheets (National doesn't provide them either).

Finally, the Historian's Association has been resurrected. All past and present Post, District and Department Historians are invited to join. The dues are \$2.00 a year. I will bring the membership cards to the Workshop for anyone interested. I hope to see you there.



Legislative Report **Stanley Gold, Chairman** **786-423-2458**

On September 22nd I was in Washington D.C. when our National Commander, Jimmie Foster, gave the Legion Legislative goals to the Joint House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. After the National Commander spoke, we visited all our Florida members of Congress. I did get to see 11 members in person, plus visit our two senatorial officers and left them our Legislative Point papers.

On October 14th the House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman, Bob Filner, announced that the House voted to approve HR3219, the Veterans Benefit Act, 2010. This was approved by the Senate earlier. Now this will go to the President for signing.

This Bill will enhance employment opportunities for Veterans and helps homeless veterans. This bill increases the maximum loan guarantee amount under the Veterans mortgage Life Insurance program. Also, it secures compensation, pension, and other benefits. It also protects service members and families, strengthens education benefits, housing needs of disabled veterans and invests in research of Gulf War veterans.

On September 23rd nearly all the 100 Legion Delegates went home. However the National Commander, National Adjutant, Tim McCathy and I, along with three legion staff, attended a special hearing of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs which focused on Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange.

There they spoke on the decision making process for presumptive disabilities, especially in the recent applications, the process that established three new disabilities related to Agent Orange including ischemic heart disease. Is that process working? How can it be improved?

It is clear that there are real substantial costs associated with the new presumptions, cost which will continue for many years to come. Among the witnesses was former secretary of Veteran Affairs Anthony Principi. I'm sure you will read more about this from our National office.

Last month I wrote about Congressman Alcee Hastings Bill, H.R. 4541, the Veterans Pension Protective Act. Three more Florida members signed on. They were Adam Putman, Bill Young and Ted Deutch.

On September 29th the House of Representatives passed the Veterans Benefit and Economic Welfare Improvement Act, HR6132. Included in this legislation is Bill HR4541 that protects veterans from losing their pension because they received payments to cover expenses incurred after an accident, theft, loss or casualty loss. Now we must wait to after the election for the Senate to pass this and other Veterans' Bills.

On September 11th as local Legislative Representative for the National Postal Supervisors was invited to meet with the President in Coral Gables along with six other members of Congress.

Don't forget to remind your family and friends to vote. Our future is depending on it.

Art Schwabe
Membership Chairman
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Greetings Legion Family - Moral Is High!!!

Happy Thanksgiving! Yes I know I'm early! But if I don't do it now, I'll be late! As we start November, it's time to reflect on the past four months. National Headquarters sent out renewal notices in July and October. Figure about 47 cents per member times 115,000 for the first mailing then 47 cents times 28,000 for the second mailing equals about \$68,000. Just in postage. That's just for Florida. Think about the savings if members had paid their dues after the first mailing. It would be about \$13,200 for just Florida!!

Thank You to the Posts ahead of the 65% goal and not waiting for the renewal notices to come out. Many Posts have membership teams in place to help with the goals set by their Posts. Many Posts have accepted the challenge to make their goal by Dec. 31. To them, I say THANK YOU! for the effort and willingness to attain a goal by Aiming High! Effort, with results, creates pride in what their Post is doing. Doing what is right for the right reason. Caring about its veterans, community and Children and Youth. But the Posts that waited for the renewals to be sent out in most cases have not attained the 65% goal yet. Isn't membership the duty of every member? Without membership there are no leaders, no programs and no income to pay bills and no volunteers. Some members state, "my dues are not due till Dec 31st that's when I'll pay them." They may be right but are they helping the Post achieve its goals? Do they care about the goals of the post? Where is the pride that they don't just belong to the American Legion but support the American Legion in its programs by paying their dues?

So where do we go from here? How do we get members who haven't renewed? We ask them for their help in renewing their membership to attain the Post goals. We have to give them reasons to renew. I suggest you set up a list of all non paying members for all officers of your Post. They can ask non paying members to pay. Explain to them the importance of paying the membership. Change your key entry door on Dec. 1, to find out which members haven't paid their dues yet. Have members with 2011 card get their new door key cards early so they don't have to ring the buzzer to get into the Post and showing that they paid early to support the Post in its effort too achieve it's goal of 100% in membership.

Come up with your own ideas! Think out side of the box. It's time to try new ideas. Heaven knows the old ones aren't working. Let members know why you are trying something new. If it doesn't work try something else. I would rather try to do something rather to do nothing. I would rather succeed than do nothing, Thank You to all the Posts for your Efforts. I know how difficult the membership job is at the Post level. Everyone working together to attain Post goals" TEAM WORK!!!! Posts that have achieve 100%are 116-145-181-182-314-328-372-388-187-219-347 and 9. Are you next??

I hope everyone had a successful Open House - Making a difference for Veterans! Again Happy Thanksgiving!

December 1, 2010 - 80% Goal

District/Area Membership Report as of Oct. 26, 2010

District/ Area	Commander	Goal	Rec'd	% Goal
4	Jay Conti	3,983	2,914	73.16
17	James Baker	4,256	3,062	71.94
6	William Walsh	9,445	6,670	70.62
9	George Rafajko	4,513	3,153	69.86
16	Charlie Wing	12,208	8,456	69.27
2	Ralph Camp	1,373	947	68.97
15	James Zipler	5,508	3,704	67.25
1	Lawrence Carpen-	6,197	4,133	66.69
14	Angela Glover	3,170	2,110	66.56
12	Wayne Smith	8,471	5,602	66.13
11	Paul Bosco	4,447	2,930	65.89
7	Nancy Thomas	4,221	2,727	64.61
3	Ira Westbrook	1,660	1,064	64.10
8	Gregory Putman	8,621	5,514	63.96
13	Steven Slachta	8,895	5,488	61.70
5	Jerry Brandt	7,894	4,625	58.59
Eastern	Carl Schneider	17,916	12,272	68.50
Central	George Paradise	21,937	14,887	67.86
Southern	John Farrington	12,130	8,193	67.54
Western	Stephen Shuga	7,570	5,080	67.11
Northern	James Troupe	17,793	11,665	65.56
SW	John Ebling	17,516	11,002	62.81
Dept			63,099	
Post 400		17,306	10,856	62.73
Post 208		1,682	1,205	71.64
Totals		115,000	75,160	65.36

We have a lot to be thankful for in America, Remember, all Service Men and Women during the holidays. As we remembered serving during holiday's as well. It's a lonely time away from home. Keep our TROOPS in your prayers.

For God and Country



Jim Ramos
Department of Florida
Children & Youth Chairman
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Hi, I have some suggestions for the month of November.....

In November there is a lot going on so PLAN now to get out and Vote. The elections are on Nov 2nd. Please think about giving out the "Get Out the Vote 2010" brochure (stock # 20-006) from Department HQ; its free.

Note: November 6, 2010 is the Department of Florida Membership Day so please have something going on with membership on this Saturday an open house is a very good idea invite the community.

For Veterans Day on November 11th plan something for our veterans (members and non-members) too. Show your support for our troops. And don't forget our Heroes to Hometowns Recruiting week. No cost is involved other than a commitment to assist the transition of a wounded warrior and his/her family back into your community when needed. So plan something around those days for your membership.

American Education week is also in November. A good brochures for this is stock # 23-006. In this brochure there are suggestions for Post and Unit participation; brochure 23-015 to help organize and connect to veterans with schools; brochure 23-016 for a list of materials for veterans to use in the classroom. Work with the schools in your local area.

National Family Week (brochure stock # 24-009) is the same week as Thanksgiving. Have your Post emphasize the importance of family togetherness during the week of Thanksgiving. Please again plan something for our children & youth. Include Family Support Network brochure stock # 24-010 and Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) brochure stock # 24-008. These programs are all year round.

Also, help support or come out and play in "The First Annual American Legion Department of Florida Children & Youth Golf Tournament" Nov 18, 2010 in Sanctuary Ridge Golf Course at 2601 Diamond Players Club Blvd, Clermont, Florida, 34711. For more information you can go to www.flordalegion.org. November 19-21 is the Department Fall Conference. Please come out and be informed. At the Fall Conference I will have a meeting with an update of the C & Y program for all Area, District and Post chairmen. I will have a Packet for the District Chairmen with new programs.

Next is Family Week which includes Thanksgiving Day. Plan a Dinner or just help out a family in needed. Also, look out in the community for those who are in need.

Start a plan for December it comes quick. December 7th is Pearl Harbor Day. President Franklin Roosevelt said "Yesterday, December 7, was a date that will live in infamy." Remember the WWII Veterans and honor them at your Post. Plan for Christmas events like a parade or be in one. Also, think about having a Christmas party or dinner for your members as well as a New Years Eve party.

Something new, and at the sometime old, is The American Legion Children's Home. It was founded in 1928 establishing an orphanage for children of veterans who could not care for their young. The facility now houses 62 children, ages 11-18 years. We ask your help that you would please consider giving to our last American Legion Children's Home. I will have a DVD presentation at the Children & Youth meeting.

New baseballs are for sale. They have the Legion and Children & Youth Logos on it. They are \$10.00 each.

I will have more plans and suggestions for you and your Post next month. Thank you for your support with Children and Youth programs.

My program push for this year is, once again, for the Child Welfare Foundation. If you or your Post, Auxiliary, Squadron and ALR can give just \$25.00 it will help our Children and Youth Program. We are doing well but we can do just a little more. I also have Children and Youth Pins for sale just \$5.00 each. I will be going out to see you at your District meetings. Again, thank you and please keep working Children & Youth programs. If you or your Post needs help, or if you have any questions, just e-mail me.

ROSTER CHANGES

Post # Title-Name

268 Adjutant- Robert Jones
 273 Commander/Post Rev. Chairman- Dan Koker
 278 Adjutant- John Levensgood
 251 post email address
 266 post email/web page
 284 post email address
 304 post email/phone #
 390 Post home address
 394 Commander- Peter Campbell
 394 Adjutant- Michael DeBerry
 393 Commander- Kennerth Foldy

 393 Adjutant- Sherry Shelton
 SAL Advisory-15th District- Larry Faulkner
 SAL Advisory 16th District-John Bell
 PDC Bill Seeman email
 PDC Ray Weaver
 Blood Donor Chairman- Tom Murphy

New Info

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 carolkdoty@embarqmail.com
 mail@ampost266.net www.ampost266.net
 alegion284@embarqmail.com
 post304commander@att.net 945.921.7532
 PBC Fire Rescue #30 9610 Stribling Way, Wellington, FL 33414
 435 Flat River Rd, Palm Bay, 32908
 781 CAMPBELL St. S.E, Palm Bay, 32909
 91 Devoe St, Jacksonville, 32220 (h) 904.781.8521, (w) 904.398.2330
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 362 72nd Ave. St. Pete Bch, 33706, 727.360.1423, jbttopgun@tampabay.rr.com
 bseemann@verizon.net
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 thchmurphy@comcast.net

Dennis R. Boland
NECA

As most of you know I just returned from our National Headquarters in Indianapolis. I had the honor as Chairman of the National Commission on Children and Youth and President of The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation to hold meetings and to make my official report to our National Executive Committee this past Thursday.

At the Children & Youth meeting I informed the Commission that the "Make Halloween A Safe and Fun Night" continues to be our most popular publication with 256,317 brochures distributed to Post. In total during the 2009/2010 year the Commission distributed over 987,000 brochures and certificates to assist post serving the children of their communities.

During the 2009-2010 program year, the Temporary Financial Assistance program approved cash grants totaling over \$468,063. These funds were used to help maintain the basic (shelter, utilities, food, and clothing) and medical needs of 1,242 children of veterans.

For the 2009/2010 Children & Youth program year --- including contributions to the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation --- Post, Squadrons, Units and Departments of The American Legion and affiliated organizations reported over \$17.4 million in expenditures and contributions.

On Sunday, September 9, 2010 The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Board of Directors reviewed over 100 grant applications. As President I am honored to say that we gave out \$666,670 to 21 children organizations giving a total of over \$11 million in grants since our inception. The grantees are:

American Academy of Pediatrics of Elk Grove Village, IL

Child Find of American, Inc of Highland, NY

Cornelia de Lange Syndrome Foundation of Avon, CT

Georgia State University Research Foundation, Inc of Atlanta, GA

Make-A-Wish Foundation of America of Phoenix, AZ

National Autism Association of Nixa, MO

National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) of Seattle, WA

National Meningitis Association, Inc. of Atlanta, GA

Our Military Kids of McLean, VA

The American Legion Post 225 of Fultondale, AL

The Young Marines of Washington DC

American Legion Children's Home of Ponca City, OK

Children's Organ Transplant Association of Bloomington, IN

Father Flanagan's Boys Home of Boys Town, NE

Kansa Braille Transcription Institute, Inc of Wichita, KS

Mercy Flight Southeast, Inc of Leesburg, FL

National Braille Press of Boston, MA

National Marfan Foundation of Port Washington, NY

National Organization for Youth Safety of Gainesville, VA

Songs of Love Foundation of Forest Hills, NY

The National Children's Cancer Society of St. Louis, MO



"Airborne All the Way"



A Boys State Thank You

I write to thank those who sponsored me to attend Boys State. Not only did I learn the infrastructure and policies of government, but I also took home with me a new sense of patriotism and pride for our country, which most people refer to as Americanism. This conference truly expressed the values and practices we as Americans hold so dearly and brought upon a new sense of National pride to our great country. I made new friends, which of whom I look forward to talk with years from now. It is interesting to see the bonds made between people in just one weeks time. Especially the bonds I made with my city friends. I came in on Sunday, nervous and doubtful on how I was going to do. But, as Sunday dragged on, I meet new friends within my city and I knew I would be fine. I ran for city council during city elections and lost, but that didn't phase me. I networked with my peers and tried again in county elections and lost the county judge position. I knew there was a place for me within Legislature and when elections came I gained the support of my city. I won a seat in the Senate and the Calendar Committee organizing bills for debate. I learned that one or even two defeats should never hold you back, but rather give you an initiative to try harder with Boys State. I developed stronger character and class. I learned about government, parliamentary procedures, Americanism and many other topics that are essential to young Americans. I would like to express my extreme gratitude to The American Legion, especially Post 347 who sponsored me and allowed me to attend this honorable experience. I will never forget and it is something I will hold with me the rest of my life. Thank you again for such a life changing experience.



Ride Safe
Mike "Smiley" Amig
American Legion Riders Chairman
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A. Legion Rider's meeting will be held Saturday November 20th at 2:30pm. during the Fall Conference. For details click on the Fall Conference link on the Department web site.

One of the American Legion Riders goals is to promote motorcycle safety. Each Chapter's Safety Officer is encouraged to provide training and/ or reminders during each meeting. There are plenty of websites with motorcycle safety information (ie Motorcycle Safety Foundation, ABATE, etc). Here are a few General Guidelines for Riding a Motorcycle Safely:

Be visible:

- Remember that motorists often have trouble seeing motorcycles and reacting in time.
- Make sure your headlight works and is on day and night.
- Use reflective strips or decals on your clothing and on your motorcycle.
- Be aware of the blind spots cars and trucks have.
- Flash your brake light when you are slowing down and before stopping.
- If a motorist doesn't see you, don't be afraid to use your horn.

Dress for safety:

- Wear a quality helmet and eye protection.
- Wear bright clothing and a light-colored helmet.
- Wear leather or other thick, protective clothing.
- Choose long sleeves and pants, over-the-ankle boots, and gloves.
- Remember – the only thing between you and the road is your protective gear.

Remember: Give yourself space. People driving cars often just don't see motorcycles. Even when drivers do see you, chances are they've never been on a motorcycle and can't properly judge your speed.



Spotlight ALR Chapter support

More than 160 Riders from 4 states joined St. Cloud, FL Legion Riders Chapter 80 and Greenville, NC Legion Riders Chapter 39 for the 2nd Annual Mother's Day Run 2010 May 7-10, 2010 to support Give2TheTroops. Riders from FL, NC, SC and VA spent months raising funds for this worthy cause that supports our troops deployed around the world. Each Chapter brought with them, what turned out to be an impressive amount of donations, \$15,686. It was enough to cover one-quarter of the shipping costs that are incurred by the not-for-profit, all-volunteer organization. The run culminated in Greenville, NC where each chapter presented their proceeds to Barbara Whitehead, Director of the NC branch of GTTT. Not only did the Riders "ride" to the occasion to support our troops, we helped spread the word along I-95 about the many great efforts of what the Legion and Riders are doing! For more information on the Mother's Day Run please go to <http://www.alrchapter80.com/> and for more information on Give2TheTroops, please go to <http://www.give2thetroops.com>. All FL ALR Riders are welcomed to join us again this year.

Chapters please send me your Charity of choice to be included in future articles.

Remember Riders are Legionnaires, Aux and SAL first and if there is a problem in the POST it is not always a Rider problem.

The new ALR Chapter List is on the Department website. If data is missing from your chapter please let me know and I will get it updated.

If anyone has questions please e-mail or call me. We need to keep the lines of communication OPEN.....Ride Safe

ROSTER CHANGES

New Info

Post # Title-Name

3 post email/website

35 Commander- Gene Weeks

35 Adjutant- Donna Barton

37 Adjutant- Aaron Ray

51- mailing/billing address

52 Adjutant- Jim Smith

111 Post email address

111 Adjutant- Bob Lavine

133 Commander- George Popadak

165 Commander- Will Miller

165 Adjutant- Horace Johnson

210 Adjutant- William Bailey

224 Adjutant- William Nagy

230 post email

238 Adjutant- Thomas Reed

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