

AMERICAN LEGION POST 373 NEWSLETTER



**P.O. Box 2212
ORANGE PARK, FLORIDA 32067-2212
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**Commander
Robert "Bob" Brewster**

**Chartered 1996
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COMMANDER'S CORNER

A BELATED MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OF OUR MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES!

In our last report, our membership stood at 60% renewed for 2019. At this moment we now stand at 85% plus, and that is pretty good. We still need to get the 15% renewed for our 100% goal. In the last 11 years, we have exceeded our membership goal every year except one thanks to all the members who have supported this Post. If you have not renewed, please do so as soon as possible. If you have a problem renewing, please do not hesitate to contact me at (904) 272-1619.

Now for some really good news. Over the years, a very large percentage of our members have gotten renewal notices after they had paid their dues. This was caused by a very antiquated way of processing membership at Post level, Department level, and at National. We will now enter membership electronically directly to National. In the past, membership came to the Post, and after 3 to 4 days or a week, it was mailed to the Department of Florida. There it would be processed and forwarded to National headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana. After they processed it, it would go across town to the membership facility. Then they would notify another company across town to discontinue membership reminders to members who had paid. This whole

Post 373 Newsletter – January/February 2019 - Page 2

COMMANDER'S CORNER (continued)

process could take 1 to 2 months before being completed. Starting in January, our membership will come directly to the Post. Within 2 to 3 days we will electronically enter this information directly to National headquarters. Within a day or 2, it will be totally entered and no reminders will go out for that year. The new program will keep our members from accusing us of double billing and whatever else. No one at our Post can be any happier about this huge change than I am. I am very happy that National has finally come up with a system that will eliminate reminder notices to members who have already paid their dues. This will be a very Happy New Year!

**For God and Country,
Bob Brewster, Commander**

1st VICE COMMANDER

Our Post is growing and you can help ensure that growth continues. Renew your membership, sign up a new member, and volunteer. Volunteer to assist in activities that promote Post 373 name. Recently Commander Brewster and I presented a talk on the American flag to the Boy Scouts at Fleming Island Methodist Church. Also Commander Brewster and I were at Eagle Landing to work a fund raiser for our Post home. To learn how Vets in Clay County are being helped, attend a meeting of the Clay County Veterans Council. At any rate, start the new year off right, volunteer to help occasionally, our Post would greatly benefit.

**For God and Country,
John Roberson, 1st Vice Commander**

SERGEANT AT ARMS

Remember when you wore the uniform, you rendered a salute and you never spoke. Section 9 of Title 4 United States Code, the Pledge of Allegiance was not changed at all and only one option to salute or not are Active Duty members who are in uniform and not veterans. So when we say the Pledge of Allegiance, we always uncover and place our Legion cap (or if no cap) right hand over your heart and say the Pledge.

**For God and Country,
Matt Ruxton, Sgt. at Arms**

Post 373 Newsletter – January/February 2019 - Page 3

AUXILIARY NEWS

Hope you all had a wonderful and blessed Christmas! Looking forward to a fantastic New Year in Florida's mighty 5th District!

Membership: You can mail your 2019 renewal dues to American Legion Auxiliary Unit 373, P.O. Box 2212, Orange Park, FL 32067. Remember, since National and Florida Departments have raised their dues, our Unit 373 dues are now \$30.00 per year for senior members and still \$5.00 per year for junior members. Thank you members who have already sent in your 2019 dues renewals. We are at 81% towards our 100% goal, so keep the renewals coming! We must send in our 2019 renewals no later than January 2019.

Again, the primary purpose of the Auxiliary's existence is to continue to help active duty, veterans, young and old, and their families in time of need and assisting our Legionnaires. Our success is membership.

Thank all of you members who had donated baby items for the Final Salute (assisting homeless women veterans & their families) baby shower that was held on Saturday, December 8th from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Unit 283-Ft. Caroline. Our Unit 373 has received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Department of Florida's President Michele DeGennaro.

A special Thank You goes out to our Vice President Ramona Horn and her family. They provided complete Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners to a paralyzed man and his family over the holidays. She also participated in the Toys For Tots charity at N.A.S.

Also, a big Thank You to our Auxiliary members and Legionnaires who help us set up and take down all the tables and chairs before and after our monthly meetings at the Lions Club and furnishing the food and drinks for our social time after the meetings. Great team work!!

**United in purpose,
Collette "Collie" Brewster, President**

BLOOD DONATIONS

Our community needs our help. If you can, please donate blood at any One Blood Big Red Bus that may be in your neighborhood, or at: Orange Park Donor Center, 2153 Kingsley Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073. Let them know that you are donating blood in behalf of American Legion Post 373-Orange Park.

Post 373 Newsletter – January/February 2019 - Page 4

BLOOD DONATIONS (continued)

Please let me know the date when you donate so we can recognize you for it and add it to our end of year reports. Matt Ruxton . (904) 272-4179 (If no answer, leave a message).

**For God and Country,
Matt Ruxton, Blood Donor Chairman**

POST 373 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Our year has not been completed, but I want to give all of the members a report on the various Legion programs that we are involved in. This year we sent 3 high school students to the Florida Highway Patrol/American Legion Cadet Program. We also sent 2 boys to Boys State. We presented school medals to 7 elementary schools and to 1 middle school. Our Auxiliary gathered miscellaneous baby items for the 5th District Final Salute (homeless female veterans and their families). We placed approximately 100 flags on veterans graves for Memorial Day. Our Post members attend all District meetings for the Auxiliary, Legion, S.A.L., and Riders. Some of our members teach at the District Training Seminars. We also teach at the Fall Conference and at the Department Convention. Our members visit those vets in hospitals, rehab, and hospice facilities. We provide transportation for vets who need it to their doctors, shopping, and wherever they need to go. Our officers attend the Clay County Veterans meetings, and some of them are officers in this program. Our members have served in official capacity at the National Cemetery for vet services and the MIA ceremonies. We visit and evaluate veterans who need financial help, some we help with our Post funds, and if our Post can't handle it, we forward this information to The Department of Florida and then on to National headquarters. The American Legion firmly believes that no veteran and their family should go without want. Sometimes we get taken advantage of, but we cannot let a vet and their family fall through the cracks. At least now you know some of the work that your Post is doing. The Legion was started 100 years ago at the end of World War I for the purpose of assisting veterans who might need help.

**For God and Country,
Bob Brewster, Commander**

Post 373 Newsletter – January/February 2019 - Page 5

IMPORTANT MEETING DATES TO REMEMBER

Post/Unit 373 meetings are held the **4th Tuesday** of each month (**except December**) at the Orange Park Lions Club, 423 McIntosh Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073.

Our **January** meeting is scheduled for **January 22, 2019** at **7:00 PM**

Our **February** meeting is scheduled for **February 26, 2019** at **7:00 PM**

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The **January** District meeting is scheduled for **January 13, 2019** and will be held at **Post 401**, 37405 Henry Smith Rd., Hilliard, FL 32046 at **2:00 PM**

The **February** District meeting is scheduled for **February 10, 2019** and will be held at **Post 250**, 3939 County Road 218, Middleburg, FL 32068 at **2:00 PM**

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Please e-mail your articles for Post 373's March/April newsletter to either Bob Brewster at mr.bobbrewster@gmail.com or Barb Jonte at bjonte49@att.net by **February 26, 2019**.

American Legion Post 373 Legion Officers 2018-2019

Commander	Bob Brewster	904-272-1619
1 st Vice Commander	John Roberson	904-688-1387
2 nd Vice Commander	Elmer Wine	904-705-4095
3 rd Vice Commander	Godson Obiagwu	904-343-5770
Financial Officer	Charlie Leister	904-272-8410
Adjutant	Bob Brewster	904-272-1619
V.S.O.	Ed Silva	904-477-2761
V.S.O.	Jeff Pennala	904-297-8914
Chaplain	Joe Wright	904-269-7676
Historian	Johnny Odom	904-215-2901
Sergeant at Arms	Matt Ruxton	904-272-4179
Sergeant at Arms	Steve Valliere	904-625-5930
Executive Committee	Wanda Ruxton	904-272-4179
Executive Committee	Don Jacques	904-945-1905
Executive Committee	Bill Walsh	904-657-8177

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 373 Officers 2018-2019

President	Collette Brewster	904-272-1619
Vice President	Ramona Horn	904-318-0313
Secretary-Treasurer	Barbara Jonte	904-213-1073
Sgt. at Arms	Joyce Forsythe	904-272-5204
Chaplain	Shirley Wright	904-269-7676
Historian	Ramonita Silva	904-276-2378
Executive Committee	Glenna Roberson	904-688-1387
Executive Committee	Kathie Thomson	904-284-6950
Executive Committee	Tammie Holland	904-728-0091

*****If you are receiving this newsletter by snail mail and have an e-mail address, please provide your e-mail address to Bob Brewster at mr.bobbrewster@gmail.com*****