

AMERICAN LEGION POST 373 NEWSLETTER



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Commander
Robert "Bob" Brewster

Chartered 1996
Volume 5 Issue 1
January/February 2015

COMMANDER'S CORNER

First, let me wish all of you a belated Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! If all of you had the same kind of great holidays as I did, we all are truly blessed. Our Post has accomplished so much in the last 6 years that it even amazes me, as to all the good we do for all vets, our members, and those in need in the community. Elsewhere in this newsletter, I will give you a capsule of all our good work in 2014.

Membership: Our membership stands at 316 members renewed for 2014-2015. We still need about 40 members to renew, and then we will have our all-time high for the 6th straight year. I hope we can keep this streak going, for we are now the 2nd largest Post in membership in Clay County. My old Post 250-Middleburg, with a 6,000 sf building on 4-1/2 acres, is the largest with about 900 members. We are the largest American Legion Post in the 5th District in membership for a Post without a permanent home. Traveling around the District, our Post has the 2nd largest attendance of all 19 Posts for monthly meetings. Only Post 137, with about 1,700 members, has a larger attendance at meetings than we do.

We are asked by National and State one question every year and that is, %your Post disappeared today, would the community miss you?+ And we can answer . YES, WE WOULD BE MISSED! You will see why later in this issue.

Starting with the end of June 2015, all my energy will be spent here at Post 373. I have not been asked to fill any Department chairs this year. And most likely, if asked in the near future, I will say no thank you.

During the remaining 6 months as Department of Florida's 3rd Vice Commander, I will be traveling quite a bit helping Posts all over the state that have a lot more problems than we do. But one of my chief projects during this time frame will be updating our current Constitutional By-Laws and also creating a set of House Rules for when we have our own Post home. I will also be working with some of our members to make sure we retain, renew, and recruit

COMMANDER'S CORNER (continued)

members into our Post. As you know, there is strength in numbers. So I am asking all of you to help us out by getting your friends to renew, rejoin, or join our great Post.

Currently we are raffling off a brand new 1911 A1 semi-automatic weapon in 45 caliber - \$5.00 donation per ticket, or 5 tickets for \$20.00 donation. For those of you who do not come to our meetings and would like to participate in this raffle, contact me by phone, letter, or email, and I will see that you will get your tickets immediately. Phone: (904) 272-1619; email: brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net. 100% of all monies taken in go directly into our building fund, just like the first raffle we did. One Post member paid for the weapon out of his own pocket for the first raffle, and a second member has done the same for this second raffle. This means every penny taken in goes directly into our building fund with no strings attached. We all owe these 2 anonymous members a big thank you for their generosity to our Post.

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

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership stands at 316 paid cards. We reached 343 last year. Our goal set by Department is 350 this year. The January 3rd goal is 90%, and we are currently at 91%. So please, look at your membership card. If it has 2015 on it, thank you. If not, please send your check for \$35.00 in as soon as possible. If you have a medical, financial, or any other reason that you cannot renew at this time, please write me a note, or call me. Let's see if we can work this out. It is not as important about the monies as it is to the growth of membership we have in our Post. The American Legion National has set a goal of 3 million Legion members by the year 2019, which is our 100th anniversary. We are the oldest and largest vet organization in the world. We wrote the original GI Bill by ourselves. We are the only vet organization to have a fully staffed office in the Capitol and also in the Pentagon. A few months ago when the VA mess first surfaced, we were the only ones who demanded a change in leadership at the VA. None of the other vet organizations joined us in this fight. Because of our size and strength, we got the change in leadership. Our State Commander and his staff, including me, have visited every VA clinic and hospital in the state of Florida. We then submit reports as to our findings that is first sent on to our Department office, and then on to our National office. All this information is presented to Congress. That is why your membership is so important to our Post, to our Department, and the National organization.

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

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Our dues are \$35.00 per year. We keep \$14.00 of your dues for our Post. Any member is allowed to check our books, which can be done at any Post meeting or by pre-arranged appointment. Below is a list of normal expenditures per year:

1. \$585.50 . Hall Rental for regular meetings per year
2. \$267.50 . Hall Rental for 5th District Meeting
3. \$1,800.00 . Costs to print semi-monthly newsletter per year
4. \$884.00 - Postage per year or more
5. \$62.00 - Post Office Box per year
6. \$62.00 . Annual State of Florida Inc. fee
7. \$9.00 . New checks fee
8. \$45.00 . Sam's Club annual renewal
9. \$900.00 . Printer ink cartridges per year
10. \$500.00 - Monies to needy families in Post Area
11. \$200.00 . Department Commander's Charity of Choice
12. Not including many other charges to our Post from Department & National. I will be pleased to furnish this information if you request it. We have helped 14 vet families stay in their homes by getting money to pay their rent and utilities from Department and National.
We have helped 35 Clay County school kids get their community service hours in.
 - a. Oratorical Contests
 - b. School Medals
 - c. ROTC
 - d. Halloween Safety School Coloring Books

As you can see, our Post spends a little more money each year going out than what we take in. We do this with the help of our generous members who cover these additional expenses out of their own pockets. Not one dime goes into anyone's pocket. VETS HELPING VETS!

I want to thank the members who donate their time, their blood, and monies (not listed above) and for refreshments at our meetings, help setting up and taking down at our meeting hall each month, for donating clothes and food to the homeless, school supplies for local schools, toiletry items, candy, and misc. to our troops overseas, and for our stand downs in the local area.

AS YOU CAN SEE, OUR POST WOULD BE MISSED IF WE WERE NOT IN EXISTENCE IN ORANGE PARK, FLORIDA! Please help us by getting your membership updated and getting new members to join the Legion, Auxiliary, SAL, and Riders. We have a complete family now.

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

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 27, 2015** at **7:00 PM**

Our **February** meeting is scheduled for **February 24, 2015** at **7:00 PM**

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Sunday, **January 11, 2015** at **2:00 PM**, **5th District Legion & Auxiliary** meetings, will be held at **Post 250**, 3939 County Road 218, Middleburg, FL 32068.

Sunday, **February 8, 2015** at **2:00 PM**, **5th District Legion & Auxiliary** meetings, will be held at **Post 233**, 560 N Wilderness Trail, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082.

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Please e-mail your articles for Post 373's March/April newsletter to either Bob Brewster at brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net or Barb Jonte at bjonte49@att.net by **February 22, 2015**.

American Legion Post 373 Legion Officers 2014-2015

Commander	Bob Brewster	904-272-1619
1 st Vice Commander	Al Jonte	904-213-1073
2 nd Vice Commander	Gary Bronken	904-272-3428
3 rd Vice Commander	Elmer Wine	904-705-4095
Finance Officer	Charlie Leister	904-272-8410
Adjutant	Frank W. Gianino	904-276-5921
Sgt. at Arms	Matt Ruxton	904-272-4179
Sgt. at Arms	Paul Horn	904-505-8266
Historian	Bob Mix	904-298-2217
Chaplain	Joe Wright	904-269-7676
Executive Committee	Susan Gianino	904-276-5921
Executive Committee	Eric Lown	904-728-0901
Executive Committee	Bob Forsythe	904-272-5204

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 373 Officers 2014-2015

President	Ramona Horn	904-318-0313
Vice President	Collette Brewster	904-272-1619
Secretary-Treasurer	Barbara Jonte	904-213-1073
Sgt. at Arms	Elsie Fifer	904-272-2008
Chaplain	Shirley Wright	904-269-7676
Historian	Ramonita Silva	904-276-2378
Executive Committee	Joyce Forsythe	904-272-5204
Executive Committee	Faye Mix	904-298-2217
Executive Committee	Glenna Roberson	904-688-1387
Executive Committee	Bobbi Sanders	904-655-3312

*****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 brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net.*****