

AMERICAN LEGION POST 373 NEWSLETTER



**P.O. Box 2212
ORANGE PARK, FLORIDA 32067-2212
Web address: www.alpost373orangepark.com
Facebook: American Legion Post 373 Orange Park, FL**

**Commander
Robert "Bob" Brewster**

**Chartered 1996
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COMMANDER'S CORNER

FIRST . I want to apologize for the tardiness of this newsletter.

Membership . We still have some members who have not renewed for 2017. I want to address this to all of our members. VETERANS NEED ALL OF US IN THE AMERICAN LEGION TODAY - from our Post to our District, Area, Department, and National. We are the voice of the veteran. We are the conscience of the nation that honors military service and patriotic values. Without us our veterans in need will have no one to turn to. In Washington, D.C. and Tallahassee, Florida, size matters. Without all of you members, we are smaller and less able to stand strong to advance the resolutions to improve our veterans care. The only thing our leaders in D.C. and Tallahassee understand is numbers.

I am sure that you are all aware that our V.A. medical care is not as good as it should be. The American Legion is leading the fight to correct this problem. When we pigeon hole members of Congress in their offices with 2.2 million plus members, they tend to listen to us. Let's face it, with 2.3, 2.4, etc., they will listen harder and actually do something. I firmly believe, with the new leadership in D.C., that maybe our active veterans and past active veterans will get the help, care, and equipment they will need. SO NOW MAYBE YOU CAN REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS!

At last month's Post meeting, we started the process of nominating officers for 2017-2018 calendar year. We need your input. I am sure there are some very qualified members who could be a big asset in improving our Post. We will be re-opening and accepting nominations at the March meeting, April meeting, and finally at the May meeting we will close nominations and vote.

COMMANDER'S CORNER (continued)

We encourage all members to attend our meetings for the following reason:

You will see and hear what we are actually doing, and we would like to have your comments or ideas. Our Post is unique because we have no actual physical home. We meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month on 7:00 PM, except December, at the Lions Club, 423 McIntosh Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073. Our meetings are smoke free and alcohol free.

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

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Five of our Post members hold office in the Clay County Veterans Council. This Council is made up of all vet organizations in Clay County. We meet once a month. Currently I am the President of this council. Right now I am putting together a list of all the services our vet organizations do in behalf of the veterans and their families. I will be reading this report to the County Commissioners at their meeting in the very near future. I want to impress upon them the importance of our vet organizations and the money we save Clay County by our actions in our Post such as, finding money to keep veterans in their homes and helping them with paperwork and counseling with their VA problems.

For example, without our Post Service Officers and the work they do, this would all fall on the county to provide. I am guessing they would need 8 to 12 more veteran service officers in Green Cove Springs.

When I deliver this message, it will be delivered off a printed page with facts and figures. I will also make this paper available to members of our Post and to all other vet organizations in Clay County.

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

AUXILIARY NEWS

Ladies, we will begin the process of nominating officers for the 2017-2018 year at the March 28th meeting. If you are interested in holding a position please come to the meeting which begins at 7:00 PM. Even if you are not interested in holding a position, we look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

**For God and Country,
Ramona Horn, President**

Three veterans bills up for House vote this week

Contact your representative today

On March 8, the House Veterans Affairs Committee sent three bills to the full House which The American Legion supports. They will be voted on later this week. Please take a moment to send the prepared e-mail to your legislators to seek their support for these bills.

H.R. 1181, the *Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act*, introduced by Chairman Phil Roe, M.D., would prohibit the Department of Veterans Affairs from considering any beneficiary who is assisted by a fiduciary as "mentally defective" without a magistrate or judicial authority ruling that the beneficiary is a danger to themselves or others.

The American Legion has always been a stalwart defender of 2nd Amendment rights and believes it is wrong for veterans and beneficiaries who need help managing their financial affairs to lose their 2nd rights without due process. Veterans deserve the best mental healthcare available, but the threat of losing their 2nd Amendment rights is a disincentive to those who would benefit from treatment.

H.R. 1259, the *VA Accountability First Act of 2017*, introduced by Chairman Roe, would provide the VA Secretary increased flexibility to remove, demote, or suspend any VA employee, including Senior Executive Service employees, for performance or misconduct.

H.R. 1367, introduced by Rep. Wenstrup, would improve the authority of the VA Secretary to hire and retain physicians and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes. It would establish a recruiting database to make high-quality potential employees aware of positions at VA and create opportunities for career training and advancement for current VA employees through fellowship positions and a promotional track for technical experts.

The American Legion also supports efforts to provide the VA secretary the authority to better manage all employees, and hold them accountable when they fail to perform their duties in a manner befitting of a federal servant. Just as essential are continued efforts to address the recruitment and retention challenges at VA. We are pleased to see both of these bills move together because VA can't fire its way to excellence, but must also be given the tools to hire and retain a workforce worthy of this nation's veterans.

All Legionnaires, concerned citizens, veterans and their families are asked to contact their representatives and urge them to support this legislation.

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 March meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2017 at 7:00 PM

Our April meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2017 at 7:00 PM

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Sunday, March 12, 2017 at 2:00 PM, 5th District Legion & Auxiliary meetings, will be held at Post 194, 1029 West Pearl Street, St. Augustine, FL 32084.

Sunday, April 9, 2017 at 2:00 PM, 5th District Legion & Auxiliary meetings, will be held at Post 54, 626 S. Third Street, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034.

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Please e-mail your articles for Post 373's May/June newsletter to either Bob Brewster at brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net or Barb Jonte at bjonte49@att.net by April 26, 2017.

American Legion Post 373 Legion Officers 2016-2017

Commander	Bob Brewster	904-272-1619
1 st Vice Commander	Al Jonte	904-213-1073
2 nd Vice Commander	Elmer Wine	904-705-4095
3 rd Vice Commander	Godson Obiagwu	904-343-5770
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	John Odom	
Historian	Joney Haff	904-444-0760
Chaplain	Joe Wright	904-269-7676
Service Officer	Edgardo L. Silva	904-477-2761
Executive Committee	Wanda Ruxton	904-272-4179
Executive Committee	Bob Forsythe	904-272-5204
Executive Committee	John Roberson	904-688-1387

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 373 Officers 2016-2017

President	Ramona Horn	904-318-0313
Vice President	Collette Brewster	904-272-1619
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	Elsie Fifer	904-272-2008
Executive Committee	Glenna Roberson	904-688-1387
Executive Committee	Sarah Davis	904-272-9046

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.