

# *AMERICAN LEGION POST 373*

## *NEWSLETTER*



**P.O. Box 2212  
ORANGE PARK, FLORIDA 32067-2212  
Web address: [alpost373orangepark.com](http://alpost373orangepark.com)**

**Commander  
Robert "Bob" Brewster**

**Chartered 1996  
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### **COMMANDER'S CORNER**

We are 2 months into our membership drive for 2016 membership year. We have 157 members who have already paid their 2016 dues which puts us 7 cards ahead of last year at the same time. However, with Department of Florida has raised our quota of members approximate 8%. We are only at 42% this year compared to last year at 50%. When we took over this Post 7-1/2 years ago, we had 67 members, of which 8 to 12 members would come to our monthly meeting. We now have 380 members, and we are continuing to grow. We now have a minimum of 30 members attending, with a maximum of 50+. It shows that our Post is growing in the right direction. Our last few meetings have been exceptional, with the majority of those attending speaking up and offering some very good suggestions. I want each and every one of you to know that as long as I am around, every member has an equal voice. Post members run our Post, not the Commander or Executive Board. At our meetings, we usually have a guest speaker come in talking about every day issues that affect all of us.

Over the years, several of our members have brought in friends, relatives, etc., and after attending one or two meetings, they joined our Post. Our dues have stayed the same since 2009. We operate solely on the portion of the dues that our Post gets to keep. To be clear, of our \$35.00 dues, we keep \$14.00. The other \$21.00 goes on to state and national. As of January 1, 2016, we will be sending \$29.00 to state and national. That is why our dues will be \$45.00 per year starting on January 1, 2016. Through our Post fund raisers, we are slowly raising cash to secure our own building. But this takes time. We have a good deal with the Lions Club to rent the hall on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month. During our first years, we rented a room at the Rodeway Inn, which was nowhere as nice as where we meet now - well lit parking, handicap accessible building, with a nice kitchen, and very nice restrooms. During those first 4-5 years, a few of our individual members and I paid for the meeting room out of our own pockets. We also had collections to help needy vet families. Now with our increased membership, it is very seldom that we have to reach into our own pockets to pay for our bills.

**COMMANDER'S CORNER** (continued)

Believe it or not, sending out our Post newsletter every other month costs us a little over \$250.00 per mailing. Yes, we send approximately half of these letters out by email, otherwise our cost would be doubled. However, we must continue the newsletter due to the fact a majority of our members do not attend our meetings and would not have a clue as to what we are doing. For instance, last year with our Legion, Auxiliary, and SAL all reaching the 100% membership goal and by participating in over a dozen Legion programs and providing financial assistance to veteran families in this area, we won the National Commander's Post Excellence Award. Our Post officers meet with the County Commissioners, County Manager, County VSO, and others, and also meet with Congressman Ted Yoho and his staff, and now we are meeting the Orange Park Mayor and his staff. We talk on veterans issues and how we can work together. The reason for this column is to let you know just where your yearly dues are being used. No one is getting a dime for themselves. It's all about **WETS HELPING VETS,** their families, and the local community.

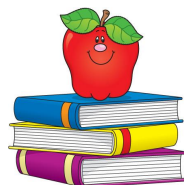
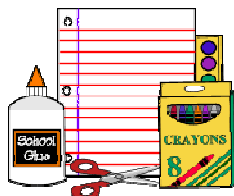
**For God and Country,  
Bob Brewster, Commander**

**AUXILIARY NEWS**

**SCHOOL SUPPLIES:** We are continuing to collect school supplies and other items throughout the year for W. E. Cherry Elementary School. Below is a current list of items needed:

Wide Rule Note Book Paper  
Wood Pencils  
Stickers  
Hand Sanitizer  
Bags of Wrapped Candy

Wide Rule Composition Books  
Dry Erase Markers  
Quart or Sandwich Size Ziploc Bags  
Glue Sticks  
Paper Towels and Boxes of Tissues



Please continue to bring your school supplies to our monthly meetings. Thank you for your generosity and for making a difference in our community.

**MEMBERSHIP:** It's time to renew your membership for the upcoming year. Dues are \$25.00 for senior members and \$5.00 for junior members. Please plan on paying your dues at our next monthly meeting, which will be held at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, September 22nd, at the

**AUXILIARY NEWS** (continued)

Orange Park Lions Club, 423 McIntosh Avenue, Orange Park, FL 32073. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please mail your renewal check to American Legion Auxiliary Unit 373, P. O. Box 2212, Orange Park, FL 32067-2212. Thank you to the members who have already renewed. We met our first goal of 25% by Labor Day with 27.78%. Way to go Ladies!!!

**TOYS FOR TOTS:** This year we will be collecting new, unwrapped toys to donate to the Marine Corps Toys For Tots program. Please bring your toys to the September, October and November meetings.



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

**THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT OUR POST 373**

1. We are in full compliance with all IRS rulings, Department policies, and National rules and regulations.
2. A question that is asked of every Legion Post . would the community miss you if this Post was no longer in operation? Answer . Yes, we would be. Why . because we do help veterans in the local area, and that help keeps them from using the city and county's resources.
3. Our Post officers have taken on the leadership role for the Clay County Veterans Council. This council is made up of all veteran organizations in Clay County, and we keep in touch with our city and county officials about veterans' issues.
4. We also are involved with the Vets-4-Vets Program which is made up of all veteran organizations from just south of Gainesville, FL to south of Savannah, GA. This area is all encompassed of the VA territory. Purpose of this group is to gather as much information about the VA problems to be forced fed to our states and national congressional representatives.
5. We also are meeting with Congressman Yoho and other politicians for the purpose of representing all of our veterans.
6. On September 19, 2015, we will be at a Stand Down right behind I-Hop on Blanding Blvd. to offer our services to the vets, some of whom are homeless, but most just need some help. Please come by and visit us from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM that day. This area will be well marked with plenty of parking. We will be passing out clothing, food supplies, and a whole lot of other things to those veterans in need. We are a small part of this, and this church group has been doing this program for a dozen years. Expecting 500 to 600 people.

**IMPORTANT MEETING DATES TO REMEMBER**

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

Our **September** meeting is scheduled for **September 22, 2015** at **7:00 PM**

Our **October** meeting is scheduled for **October 27, 2015** at **7:00 PM**

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Sunday, **September 13, 2015** at **2:00 PM**, **5th District Legion & Auxiliary** meetings, will be held at **Post 88**, 3662 Spring Park Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32207.

Sunday, **October 11, 2015** at **2:00 PM**, **5th District Legion & Auxiliary** meetings, will be held at **Post 283**, 9459 Fort Caroline Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32225-4354.

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Please e-mail your articles for Post 373's Nov/Dec newsletter to either Bob Brewster at [brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net](mailto:brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net) or Barb Jonte at [bjonte49@att.net](mailto:bjonte49@att.net) by **October 28, 2015**.

**American Legion Post 373 Legion Officers 2015-2016**

Commander	Bob Brewster	904-272-1619
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander	Al Jonte	904-213-1073
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander	Elmer Wine	904-705-4095
3 <sup>rd</sup> 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
Historian	Joanie Haff	904-444-0760
Chaplain	Joe Wright	904-269-7676
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 2015-2016**

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](mailto:brewsterrobert@bellsouth.net).\*\*\***