

Veterans Memorial Post 347
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Newsletter – January 2026

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Auxiliary: Maureen Caswell
S.A.L: Danny Roe
Riders: Linda Haynes
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Editor: Rob Burgess

Volunteer of the Month - January: Susan Duncan

Commander - Dave Musser

Happy New Year. **Welcome to 2026.** I trust that everyone had an enjoyable holiday season and is anticipating a successful beginning to the new year at American Legion Post 347. Let us work together to make 2026 outstanding.

We are excited to kick off January with one of our most popular events: **Friday, January 10th All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast – Only \$8.** Join us for a delicious breakfast, great fellowship, and a chance to catch up with friends and fellow members. As always, your support helps us continue serving our veterans, post, and community.

Check our website and Facebook page for updates, announcements, upcoming events, meetings, and volunteer opportunities. Your involvement is what keeps Post 347 moving forward and successful.

Starting January 2026, entry to the Post requires a 2026 card for all events and meetings, including Queen of Hearts. The front office is open Monday to Friday, 9 am – 4 pm and can renew Legionnaire membership on the spot.

If you visited any restaurants in the area within the past year you noticed a significant increase in prices. Due to these rising costs, we must make a nominal increase in our prices too. All draft beer and well drinks will be \$3 except seasonal draft beer, which will be \$4. Some top-shelf liquor prices will also rise slightly.

We are working on changing the hall displays so keep an eye on the progress to see its transformation. Also, Our National Commander will be paying us a visit at the end of January.

If you are cleaning your closet for the new year, remember there is a clothing drop box at the entrance to the parking lot. Please place all items in a secured bag so nothing spills out. These donations benefit both veterans and the community.

Remember, your Post runs on volunteers. It does not matter which American Legion Family you belong to; you are eligible to volunteer anywhere in the post and/or driving range, anytime. The only exception is you must be a Legionnaire to join the Honor Guard.

Please stay safe and join me in wishing a “Happy Birthday” to those celebrating during the month of January. Thank you for your continued dedication and support. I look forward to seeing you at the post! ***Aim High and Keep Up the Mach***

1st Vice - Tina Burgess

It is hard to believe 2025 has ended and with that, our 2026 renewal season. Currently, Post 347 is at 84.1 percent of our goal, only 1,030 more membership renewals to go! As you know, our goal is to hit 100 percent for membership as soon as possible, having missed that goal last year. If you haven't renewed yet, please do so by visiting our front office Monday-Friday, 9 am to 4 pm. If you know of someone who has not renewed their membership, please encourage them to do so.

So far this renewal season, we have gained 188 traditional new Legion Members. Allow me to explain the significance of this number. Post 347 is in District 6, which is comprised of 26 American Legion Posts. Our new member total is more than the total membership levels of 13 of those District 6 Posts. We have some extraordinary new members joining us, including: a Father and Son joining together! Dad was a Navy E-6 Submarine Electrical Maintenance Repairman during Vietnam and his Son was an Air Force E-4 Security Forces Journeyman during the Gulf War; an Army E-9 who was a Transportation Senior Sergeant who supervised the Operation and Movement for personnel and cargo by air, rail, or motor transport; he also graduated from the U.S. Army's Sergeants Major Academy Course; an Army O-6 who served nearly 29 years as a Medical Surgical Nurse; and a Navy E-6 who served as a Submarine Nuclear Propulsion Plant Operator and Supervisor and was awarded the Enlisted Submarine Silver Dolphins Breast Insignia. Please help me make all new members feel welcome. Encourage them to attend Post meetings and functions and encourage them to become involved through volunteering.

Speaking of volunteering, join me in congratulating Susan Duncan as January's Volunteer of the Month. Susan is an Auxiliary member who can be seen at the Post nearly every day of the week. She is the Unit's newly appointed Sergeant-at-Arms and their National Security Chairman. Recently, Susan ensured the success of Operation Homefront, which required gathering donated Christmas gifts/toys from five Dollar Tree stores and delivering the toys to three local schools. This year, Susan delivered nearly 5,000 toys! Susan organizes the setup of a hospitality table before every Monthly Auxiliary Membership Meeting. Recently, Susan helped cook and serve an appreciation dinner to 60 Toys for Tots volunteers. Finally, Susan volunteers at our monthly All You Can Eat Breakfasts by clearing tables and putting out new place settings. Susan is also quick to pull a shift in the kitchen on SAL nights when needed. Thank you, Susan, for all you do for us! Your generous nature is appreciated by all of us and your dedication does not go unnoticed. This award is well deserved!

As January unfolds, Rob and I are sending you our warmest wishes for a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year. We appreciate your trust and look forward to another year of serving you.

Post Service Officers: JB & Maria Alexander
VA Burial Benefits



Over 1,700 veterans pass away daily. Veterans, service members, spouses, and dependents may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery, as well as other benefits, **if they meet one of these requirements:**

- The person qualifying for burial benefits is a Veteran who **didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, or**
- The person qualifying for burial benefits is a service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty for training, **or**
- The person qualifying for burial benefits is the **spouse or surviving spouse of a Veteran** (even if they remarried after the Veteran's death), **or**
- The person qualifying for burial benefits is the **minor child of a Veteran** (even if the Veteran died first) or, in some cases, the unmarried adult dependent child of a Veteran.

What kind of burial benefits can I get? If you're eligible, you may receive these benefits:

- VA burial allowance for burial and funeral costs
- VA plot or interment allowance for the cost of the gravesite or burial
- VA transportation reimbursement for moving the Veteran's remains to the final resting place
- We provide burial benefits for all legal burial types, including cremation and burial at sea.
- An allowance for the cost of transporting a Veteran's remains for burial in a national cemetery may also be provided if certain criteria is met.

You can go to <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance/> for additional and more detailed information about military burial benefits or stop in a visit with a Post Service Officer.

NEW HOURS!! Post Service Officers (PSOs) are typically available at the American Legion Post on **Tuesdays, 1400 – 1800 hours** in the lobby of the American Legion, or you can leave your contact information with the office and we will contact you. Dennis Storey, DAV, VSO is typically available at the Post on Mondays from **0900 – 1100 hours in the lounge.**

Auxiliary President - Maureen Caswell

It's hard to believe that 2025 is almost over! I want to take this opportunity to thank the entire American Legion Family for supporting all of the Auxiliary's Holiday Programs.

As a family, we were able to very generously supply significant food staples along with holiday meals to 100 families. Each family received enough food to last throughout the entire school holiday! I'd also like to thank all of you that donated food items, money and of course, your time! Well done and thank you!

Our Angel Tree program generously provided gifts to more than 150 children/seniors and several families in need.

We also hosted 60 local Toys for Tots Volunteers (typically Marines) and their spouses or significant other with an appreciation dinner as a "thank you".

! We will be busy over the next several weeks planning and finalizing our participation in the following Auxiliary Programs:

- Girls State
- Scholarships - fine tuning our plans under our Americanism, Education and Past President Parley (Nursing) programs
- Female Veteran Luncheon – host lunch/ceremony
- May Poppy Drive
- Memorial Day

There's lots to talk about and, lots to do! Come on out and join us at our next Auxiliary General Meeting on **Wednesday, January 7, 2026 in the Post Hall at 6pm.**

Hope to see you there and wishing all of you a very happy, healthy New Year!

Notice

Post 347 is in the process of looking for a **NEW** Kitchen Manager as we look toward Harriett's Retirement. If you have the skill, experience and desire we would love to talk with you. Please see Commander Dave Musser or 1st Vice Tina Burgess

S.A.L. Commander - Danny Roe

Happy New Year! I am excited to see what this new year will bring. I am very proud of our accomplishments in 2025 and look forward to an even better year in 2026.

If you have not renewed your membership yet, your 2025 card has expired, and you will not be allowed entry into Post 347 as a member. It is not too late to renew, just **Mail to PO Box 1534, Lady Lake, FL, 32158**. Just drop it off or mail it in and we will get your card to you as soon as we can. Per Doug White, our renewal numbers are **848 for 75.7%**. I sure would love to be 100% by the end of January.

I encourage our membership to come and participate in what your Squadron does for our veterans and the community. **Meetings are the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM with pizza at 5:30**. I hope to see you there. I am pleased to report that at our December meeting we presented **Rob Smith** from the Summerfield Walmart our **“You Make It Happen”** award for the endless support Walmart gives to our projects.

In December, we visited Fisher House in Gainesville and presented a check for \$7000 on **December 4th**. It was a great time, and we are looking forward to going back in March to cook for them. We also had a donation from a special member for another \$2000 earmarked for Fisher House and thanks to George Haman for delivering the check to them.

Rider’s Director - Linda Haynes

HAPPY NEW YEAR!! Here we are at the beginning of a brand-new opportunity January 2026! This is the time when we reflect on the past and look forward to the future. January is the month of fresh starts and resolutions. The Riders are looking forward to a positive productive year; a year in which we will continue to collaborate with all the American Legion Families to support and donate to veteran causes. We will continue to ride the roads of Florida proudly with our orange shirts and vests letting everyone who sees us know that we are Chapter 347 American Legion Riders.

. We had an awesome **Wreaths Across America** celebration on December 13th at Lady Lake Cemetery. Special thanks to the Post 347 family and everyone that attended to honor the lives of our veterans who have passed away, those now serving, and to teach and show the meaning of patriotism to our children.

Be sure to get your tickets for our Valentines party on Feb 14th. Tickets go on sale mid-January in the lobby and office. The cost is \$25 per person, Ham Dinner with Suzie Costa performing. Watch website and video screens for details. Proceeds go to Special Olympics.

Our Family Golf Tournament for Children and Youth Charities date is **Saturday, May 16th**. Location is same as last year, Broad Stripes in Stonecrest. Signups will start Tuesday Feb 3rd in the lobby and office after that. Scoring will be two flights this year giving a better chance to win.

You can always contact me with your comments or concerns at dannyroe@prodigy.net. I look forward to hearing from you.

We had a **Dine to Donate** sponsored by **Culvers on CR466A, on Dec 10**. Culvers will be donating 10% of the proceeds to our Children and Youth Programs. We collected \$250 in donations that night and we are still waiting on the check from Culvers. They are always very generous, please support them as they support us. The numbers are in for our Dine to Donate on November 3rd at the Culvers store on CR466. We collected **\$236 in donations** and a check from Culvers for **\$393.45** for a total of **\$629.45** for our Children and Youth charities. Thanks for everyone’s support. *Be sure to check our website: Florida-Legion.org for the latest news and information*

Please remember that if you have not renewed your membership as of 1 January 26 you are no longer in good standing, contact the membership team. Other items of interest include: the ALR Summit Feb 18-21 in Daytona Beach, our annual Poker Run on February 28 (please plan to volunteer, this is an all-hands-on deck endeavor), you will also begin hearing about the Unity and Legacy Rides which will be later in the year. Wednesday lunch rides will continue look for notices on Facebook and in your email, lastly kitchen duty continues the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays your assistance is very much appreciated.

Riders are looking forward to participating in the National Commanders escort at the end of the month.

Observances: New Year’s Day (1st) Martin Luther King Jr Day (19th) International Holocaust Remembrance Day (27th)

Post Everlasting and Sick Call



James Levitt, E Michael Stockman, James Broom, Donald Glynn, Richard Unsworth, John Witt, Timothy Tyrcha, Robert Barber, Gary Slone, Robert Colby, Fernand Thomassy, John Gizzy, Richard Rapka, James Scott, John Callahan; Thomas Hegel; Barbara Rosinski, Shirley Russell, Linda Ciaca;
Sick Call: Mary Seidel, Jan Akins, Ron Monet, Ky Rauzi, Jim Arnold, Nayana Flipsey, Cecilia Handley, Sherry Silcox, Josephine Olson

Please go to our website: florida-legion.org for the names of the sick and deceased members.

January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
New Lounge Hours: Mon – Sat 12 – 9 pm; Sun 12 – 5 pm				1 Post Closed for New Years Day	2 Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm Tim Hargis 5:30 – 8:30 pm	3 12pm Lounge opens Attend Draw 6:30 pm
4 Kitchen 12-2 pm Riders Bingo 2 -4pm Lounge Closes @ 5pm	5 Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night Tone Rangers 5 – 8 pm	6 Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm Frank Ardino 5:30 – 8:30	7 Kitchen 12-2 pm Bar Bingo 2 -4pm Aux Mtg 6:00 pm	8 Public Bingo 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	9 Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm Tone Rangers 5:30 – 8:30 pm	10 12pm Lounge opens AYCE Breakfast 7-11am Attend Draw 6:30 pm
11 Kitchen 12-2 pm SAL Bingo 2 -4pm Lounge Closes @ 5pm	12 Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night Tone Rangers 5 – 8 pm	13 Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm Scooter the DJ 5:30 – 8:30	14 Kitchen 12-2 pm Bar Bingo 2 -4pm Legion Mtg 5:30 pm	15 Public Bingo 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	16 Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm Jonnell & Gman 5:30 – 8:30 pm	17 12pm Lounge opens Attend Draw 6:30 pm
18 Kitchen 12-2 pm Riders Bingo 2 -4pm Lounge Closes @ 5pm	19 Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night Tone Rangers 5 – 8 pm	20 Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm Tight Genes 5:30 – 8:30	21 Kitchen Closed - 1/2/26 Bar Bingo 2 -4pm Submariner Mtg 12pm SAL Mtg 6:00 pm	22 Public Bingo 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	23 Kitchen Closed - 1/2/26 Billy Buchanan 5:30 – 8:30 pm	24 12pm Lounge opens Attend Draw 6:30 pm
25 Kitchen 12-2 pm SAL Bingo 2 -4pm Lounge Closes @ 5pm	26 Line Dance Class – 3pm Tone Rangers 5 – 8 pm	27 Queen of Hearts – 7pm Bill D Williams 5:30 – 8:30	28 Kitchen Closed - 1/2/26 Bar Bingo 2 -4pm ALR Mtg 5:30 pm	29 Public Bingo 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	30 Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm Kat & the Kidd 5:30 – 8:30 pm	31 12pm Lounge opens Attend Draw 6:30 pm

Tuesday Menu

Jan 6: Salisbury Steak \$11.00	Jan 13: Stuffed Shells & Meatballs \$11.00	Jan 20: Chicken Cordon Bleu \$11.00	Jan 27: Chicken Fried Steak \$11.00
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Hot dogs, Fries, Nachos and Onion Rings available except Thursdays. Meals & Pricing subject to change at any time.

SAL Thursday Italian Night Menu

Jan 8: Spaghetti & Meatballs **Jan 15:** Lasagna **Jan 22:** Stuffed Shells **Jan 29:** Chichen Parm w/ spaghetti
(with salad, Roll, & dessert – \$11:00) Pizza Slices – \$2.50 Whole Pies: \$12 – \$15

American Legion Officers	Auxiliary Officers	S.A.L. Officers	Legion Riders Officers
Commander Dave Musser	President Maureen Caswell	Commander Danny Roe	Director Linda Haynes
1st Vice Tina Burgess	1st Vice Patricia Morrow	1st Vice Doug White	Asst. Director Tom Hill
2nd Vice John Gorsuch	2nd Vice Barbara Kyle	2nd Vice Bud Bowyer	Adjutant Richard Lees
3rd Vice Dan Martin	Treasurer Kathy Allen	Finance Bill Grieco	Finance Jim Dollins
Chaplain Lisa Johnson	Secretary Lois Bass	Chaplain Ben Kisielica	Sgt at Arms Robert Stepnowski
Historian Bobby Wince	Historian Lois Bass	Historian Keven Kinney	Chaplain Robert Stanziola
Adjutant Rob Burgess	Sgt at Arms Pat Skeel	Sgt at Arms Tony Watkins	Ride Captain Larry Pekoe
Finance Bob Irvine	Chaplain Maureen Merlette	M.A.L. Dave Callies	
Service Officer JB & Maria Alexander	M.A.L. Sue Carlson	M.A.L. Bob Girou	
Sgt at Arms Jim Dollins	M.A.L. Denise Hallisey	Judge Advocate Vic Prezioso	
Judge Advocate Heath Davenport	M.A.L. Jo Richmond	Adjutant Bob O'Neal	
M.A.L. Mike Haynes	M.A.L. Deb Stanley		
M.A.L. George Ries	M.A.L. Jo Linda Spear		
M.A.L. Tony Gibson	M.A.L. Joan Yackel		
M.A.L. Jim Stasse	I.P.P. Ruth Sovern		
Past Commander Joan Suelter			