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Newsletter – September 2025

Commander: Dave Musser  
Auxiliary: Maureen Caswell  
S.A.L: Danny Roe  
Riders: Linda Haynes  
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## Volunteer of the Month – September: Larry Pekoe

### Commander – Dave Musser

It is my pleasure to announce Post 347 Color Guard placed First Place in the Advancing/Retiring of Colors Competition, First Place in the Military Class Competition and American Legion National Color Guard Champion making them the National Commander Color Guard for 2025-2026. They will represent the National Commander in Louisville, KY next August and defend their titles. An awesome job for Post 347's first time ever competing. Congratulations on a job well done!!!!

While at the National Convention I attended as the Department of Florida Credentials & Rules committeeman. However, it is unacceptable for the Largest Membership Post in the world to not be afforded the distinction of having a delegate attend this year's convention. Our members deserve representation at all conferences and conventions. This is a travesty that must be corrected for future Commanders of our Post.

**Call to Action:** It has come to light; a lot of our snowbird members will not be coming back this year. Some have passed on to Post Everlasting while others are too ill to return. We need your help in reaching out and conducting buddy checks to ensure the well-being of our legionnaires. We also need to conduct buddy checks on our local widowed members or surviving spouses. This will help us to update legion records and provide assistance to those in need. If interested, please contact me, or the First Vice Commander.

Our appeal for volunteers persists. We continue to struggle with staffing the kitchen during the summer. If this condition does not improve, we will be faced with hiring workers and raising prices accordingly. A decision will have to be made in the very near future to avoid a shortfall as our northern members start returning. Please consider helping us resolve this persistent problem.

Please stay safe and join me in wishing a "Happy Birthday" to those celebrating during the month of September.

**Aim High and Keep Up The Mach**

### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice – Tina Burgess

Welcome Fall, my favorite time of year!

I am very pleased to share with you that we reached our first membership goal! As of August 28th, our renewal rate is 50.5 percent (3,233 members renewed out of 6,396). I would like to thank all the members who took advantage of our Early Bird special. Remember that you can still save \$5 if you renew before November 11<sup>th</sup>. It is best to come into the office. Within five minutes, you will be leaving with your new card.

Post 347 was honored to host U.S. Senator Ashley Moody this past week. For many of our Veterans in attendance, receiving the Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin from Senator Moody was a moving experience. This was Senator Moody's first pinning ceremony and we are fortunate she chose Veterans Memorial Post 347 for this honor. I would like to thank everyone who helped make this event a tremendous success.

Please join me in congratulating Larry Pekoe who is our September Volunteer of the Month. Larry is a member of SAL Squadron 347 and ALR Chapter 347 Riders. As Ride Captain for our Legion Riders, Larry is constantly looking for ways to represent and keep Post 347 front and center in the hearts and minds of our local community. Larry is a quiet, confident leader. He provides our fallen brothers and sisters with their fullest measure of honor and respect and dutifully leads our Riders' escorts for funeral services to the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell. Larry also ensures our Post is well represented with a contingent of Riders for every Honor Flight Mission. Larry is also Team Leader in the Kitchen preparing

food for Sunday Bar BINGO. In the words of his nominator "If there was a template for what a worthy "Volunteer of the Month" should be, it would be a profile of Larry Pekoe. Our Post, SAL Squadron, Riders Chapter and Veterans are better off because of his contributions." Congratulations Larry!

Please mark your calendars for the reveal of Our Gold Star Tribute Wall. On September 28<sup>th</sup>, we will honor two of our own on Gold Star Mother's Day. More details to follow.

Now to my favorite part of every newsletter! Please help me welcome 28 new members to our Post. We have some amazing comrades joining our family, to include a corporal who was an Army Aircraft mechanic during the Korean War; a Marine Corps Private and Vietnam Veteran who is the recipient of the Purple Heart; an Air Force E-7 C-130 Airlift Aircraft Maintenance Technician whose service began during Vietnam and ended during DESERT SHIELD/STORM; a Navy E-6 who spent 15 years as an F-14 and F-18 Systems Organizational Career Maintenance Technician; a Marine O-5 who earned the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal; an Air Force O-4 who was a Test Pilot and a C-5 and C-130 Pilot; man Army Helicopter Mechanic who earned the Bronze Star and Air Medal in Vietnam; an Army Lt who served as a Medical Surgical Nurse, a Firefighter/Paramedic, and a Reverend; and an Army O-4 Operating Room Nurse.

In closing, I want to also congratulate our Award-Winning Color Guard. These members dedicated hours over the past year perfecting their ceremonial performance that showcased precision, discipline, and respect. We are so proud of you!

## Auxiliary President – Maureen Caswell

Greetings,

I hope that you enjoyed the summer and/or at the very least managed to stay cool! It was a super-hot one for the entire Eastern seaboard. Fall is fast approaching, and with that comes our very busy fall schedule.

I want to remind everyone that our first event is The Auxiliary's Annual Oktoberfest Dinner Dance that is planned for Sunday, September 28<sup>th</sup> in the Post Hall. Doors open at 5pm, dinner will be served at 6 pm. Dinner is being prepared by our own member team, of course, following Ruth's recipes. For those of you that have not attended, the food is always FABULOUS!

Our menu is: Bratwurst, Jaegersnitzle, German Potato Salad, Red Cabbage, Spaetzle, Cucumber Salad, Applesauce, Rye/Pumpernickel Bread and Butter. Music will be provided by Jonelle & The G Man. Tickets are on sale now at the Post Lounge, during Tuesday night Queen

## S.A.L. Commander – Danny Roe

I just had the honor of attending our National Convention in Tampa. What a great experience that was. Seeing 54 Detachments, (50 states plus 4 countries or territories) meeting in one room was amazing. Congratulations to the new National Commander for the Sons of The American Legion, Bill Clancy from New York.

As we enter September, we will again push for early renewal of your membership. Emails have been sent out and membership is coming in. Renewing early helps our Squadron to stay on track with donating to our various charities and supporting Community events. As you have probably heard, there will be no early bird dinner this year. So, you will not see the early bird stamp on your card, but rest assured you are an early bird if you renew before Veterans Day, and we appreciate your support of our programs. I am pleased to inform you that due to your donations and support we can keep our dues low when many are raising their dues. Thank You for your understanding. Per Doug White, our renewal numbers are already 273 for 24.4%. That is a fantastic start.

I encourage our membership to come and participate in what your Squadron does for our veterans and the

## Chaplain – Lisa Johnson

As summer fades in to fall, our northern friends will be returning to the greatest place on earth. Welcome them back with Godly hearts. Reminding everyone to notify the front desk if someone is ill or injured and the chaplain will follow up and pray for them. I can't do that if I don't know so I am asking for your help. Thanks for your continued support to help one another. God bless.

of Hearts and during membership renewal hours, Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12-3pm in the Post Lobby. Tickets are \$25/person.

Please come out and join us if you can. As a reminder, our Auxiliary General Meetings will resume our normal monthly schedule beginning on Wednesday, September 3, 2025 in the Post Hall. Social hour begins at 5pm. The general session will begin promptly at 6pm.

## Upcoming Events

October – Holiday Food Box Kick off

November – Veterans Day Lunch, Poppy Distribution, Veteran Goody Bags, Thanksgiving Food Box Assembly

December – Christmas Food Box Assembly, Angel Tree Gifts

We will be looking for volunteers to help out with these events. If you are interested in volunteering, please attend one of our General Membership Meetings. They are held on the first Wednesday of the month beginning at 6pm.

community. Meetings are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM with pizza at 5:30. I hope to see you there. Our first District 6 meeting will be on Saturday Sept 6<sup>th</sup> at post 63 in Winter Garden starting at 10:00 AM. I would love to see the room full of people. Please come and support your District.

Mark your calendar for our Halloween Dance coming up on Nov 1<sup>st</sup> with Bill D Williams performing and a great Chicken Cordon Bleu dinner. Bud Bowyer and the Son's kitchen staff always do a great job with dinner. Help us sell it out this year. Ticket sales will start on Tuesday September 30<sup>th</sup> in the lobby at Queen of Hearts and the office after. Price will be \$25 per person.

Our Family Golf Tournament for Children and Youth Charities date has been set for Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>. We are still working to confirm the location. Be sure to save the date. Sign-ups will start after the first of the year.

You can always contact me with your comments or concerns at [dannyroe@prodigy.net](mailto:dannyroe@prodigy.net). I look forward to hearing from you.

**Be sure to check our website: [Florida-Legion.org](http://Florida-Legion.org) for the latest news and information.**

## Post Service Officers: JB & Maria Alexander

Schedule your FREE CANCER SCREENING TEST On September 17th & 18th, 9:00 am until 4:00 pm, the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital out of Tampa, FL will be ON SITE at American Legion Post 347 to screen veterans for multiple types of cancer. This test is FREE for all veterans.

The Galleri® test screens for 50 different types of cancer for a unique "fingerprint" from DNA fragments shed from cancer cells. The test is a multi-cancer early detection test, a blood test that screens many of the deadliest cancers before they become.

symptomatic.

If you are interested in getting this FREE test, (valued at \$649.00) go to <https://app.10to8.com/book/villages> to schedule your date and time for this test.

All participants will be given a \$20 gift card. There are no fasting requirements for this test. A photo ID is required at the time of appointment. Two vials of blood will be taken. Appointments are limited so register now to secure your date/time. If you have any questions, please contact J.B. or Maria Alexander, our Post Service Officers.

Post Service Officers (PSOs) are typically available at the American Legion Post on Tuesdays, 1530 – 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.

*The mission of the Post Service Officers (PSO) is to be a local resource for all veterans and their dependents, providing information or referral to local services. This includes (but not limited to) disability claims, homelessness, education, hospitalization and medical care*

## Rider's Director – Linda Haynes

Welcome to September, the month we celebrate Labor Day, V-J Day (Sept 2), Patriotic Day (Sept 11), Constitution Day (Sept 17), the Air Force Birthday (Sept 18), the Air National Guard Birthday (Sept 18), POW/MIA Recognition Day and Gold Star Mother's and Family Day. September also ushers in autumn with the fall equinox. The Riders are looking forward to that fall weather as they ride representing our Post and Chapter in their orange shirts.

The Legacy Ride is complete, and our Riders rode approximately 17,790 miles this past week. It was extremely hot, and they were tired but rode to raise money for the American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation (VCF). While the final dollar amount is \$855,785 plus for this worthwhile cause. Please take the time to congratulate them on a job well done.

While some of our Riders were off raising money on the Legacy Run, others continued to participate in breakfast rides, escorts, and ceremonies. Unfortunately, this month we will ride the last ride for Barry McFarland, escorting him to his final resting place in Florida National Cemetery. Barry was a Charter Member and instrumental in the start-up of Chapter 347 Riders. Sadly, we also lost Carmen Diquollo in August. Both Riders will be greatly missed, and we will pray for their families.

Other items of interest include our highly anticipated Christmas Raffle; tickets will be available in October. We continue to work in the kitchen on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, Breakfast Rides will soon turn to lunch rides (watch your email for updates) and lastly, we have Rider Challenge Coins for \$10 you can pick them up from one of the Chapter's officers or at the Front Desk.

Observances: Labor Day (1<sup>st</sup>); Patriots Day (11<sup>th</sup>); Constitution/Citizen Day (17<sup>th</sup>); and Gold Star Mother's Day (28<sup>th</sup>)

## Post Everlasting/ Departed Members

Harold P Krauss, Barry McFarlan, Jim Runnels, Carmen DiQuollo, Ellison 'Vic' Vickery, Robert Moynihan, Dexter A Mayworm, Jefferson D. Clay, Raymond Goetschkes, Patrick J Stack, Henry R Trevant, Charles Barnes, Mark Christian

## Sick Call

Jan Akins, Kathy Allen, Peggy Hearlson, Ron Monet, Ky Rauzi and Mary Seidel.



**September 2025**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>Sep 1</b> Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night <b>The Tone Rangers</b> 5 – 8	<b>2</b> Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Jonnell &amp; the Gman</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>3</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm Bar Bingo 2 -4pm <b>Aux Mtg</b>	<b>4</b> Public Bingo Doors open 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	<b>5</b> Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Tim Hargis</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>6</b> Lounge opens at Noon Attendance Drawing 6:30 pm
<b>7</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm Riders Bingo 2 -4pm <b>NFL Sunday</b>	<b>8</b> Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night <b>The Tone Rangers</b> 5 – 8	<b>9</b> Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Action Jackson</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>10</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm Bar Bingo 2 -4pm <b>Legion Mtg 5:30</b>	<b>11</b> Public Bingo Doors open 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	<b>12</b> Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Del Phi's</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>13</b> Lounge opens at Noon Attendance Drawing 6:30 pm
<b>14</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm SAL Bingo 2 -4pm <b>NFL Sunday</b>	<b>15</b> Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night <b>The Tone Rangers</b> 5 – 8	<b>16</b> Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Petrina</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>17</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm Bar Bingo 2 -4pm <b>SAL Mtg 6:00</b> Submariner Mtg 12pm	<b>18</b> Public Bingo Doors open 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	<b>19</b> Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Bill D Williams</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>20</b> Lounge opens at Noon Attendance Drawing 6:30 pm
<b>21</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm Riders Bingo 2 -4pm <b>NFL Sunday</b>	<b>22</b> Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night <b>The Tone Rangers</b> 5 – 8	<b>23</b> Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Bill D Williams</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>24</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm Bar Bingo 2 -4pm <b>AL Riders Mtg</b> <b>6:00</b>	<b>25</b> Public Bingo Doors open 8 am SAL Italian Night Team Trivia – 6:30pm	<b>26</b> Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Del Phi's</b> 5:30 – 8:30	<b>27</b> Lounge opens at Noon Attendance Drawing 6:30 pm
<b>28</b> Kitchen 12-2 pm SAL Bingo 2 -4pm <b>NFL Sunday</b>	<b>29</b> Line Dance Class – 3pm SAL Burger Night <b>The Tone Rangers</b> 5 – 8	<b>30</b> Queen of Hearts – 7pm Kitchen 5 – 6:45 pm <b>Tight Genes</b> 5:30 – 8:30				

<b>Sep 2:</b> Fish fry \$11, Shrimp fry \$9 Chicken Tend, \$8	<b>Sep 9:</b> Chicken Cordon Bleu, \$11.00	<b>Sep 16:</b> Stuffed Shells & Meatballs \$11.00	<b>Sep 23:</b> 347 Salad \$11.00	<b>Sep 30:</b> Chicken Pot Pie \$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							
<b>Sep 4:</b> Spaghetti & Meatballs <b>Sep 11:</b> Lasagna <b>Sep 18:</b> Stuffed Shells <b>Sep 25:</b> Chicken 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	
<b>Commander</b>	Dave Musser	<b>President</b>	Maureen Caswell	<b>Commander</b>	Danny Roe	<b>Director</b>	Linda Haynes
<b>1st Vice</b>	Tina Burgess	<b>1st Vice</b>	Patricia Morrow	<b>1st Vice</b>	Doug White	<b>Asst. Director</b>	Tom Hill
<b>2nd Vice</b>	John Gorsuch	<b>2nd Vice</b>	Barbara Kyle	<b>2nd Vice</b>	Bud Bowyer	<b>Adjutant</b>	Richard Lees
<b>3rd Vice</b>	Dan Martin	<b>Treasurer</b>	Kathy Allen	<b>Finance</b>	Bill Grieco	<b>Finance</b>	Jim Dollins
<b>Chaplain</b>	Lisa Johnson	<b>Secretary</b>	Lois Bass	<b>Chaplain</b>	Ben Kisielica	<b>Sgt at Arms</b>	Robert Stepnowski
<b>Historian</b>	Bobby Wince	<b>Historian</b>	Lois Bass	<b>Historian</b>	Keven Kinney	<b>Chaplain</b>	Robert Stanziola
<b>Adjutant</b>	Rob Burgess	<b>Sgt at Arms</b>	Pat Skeel	<b>Sgt at Arms</b>	Tony Watkins	<b>Ride Captain</b>	Larry Pekoe
<b>Finance</b>	Bob Irvine	<b>Chaplain</b>	Maureen Merlette	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Dave Callies		
<b>Service Officer</b>	JB & Maria Alexander	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Sue Carlson	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Bob Girou		
<b>Sgt at Arms</b>	Jim Dollins	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Denise Hallisey	<b>Judge Advocate</b>	Vic Prezioso		
<b>Judge Advocate</b>	Heath Davenport	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Jo Richmond	<b>Adjutant</b>	Bob O'Neal		
<b>M.A.L.</b>	Mike Haynes	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Deb Stanley				
<b>M.A.L.</b>	George Ries	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Jo Linda Spear				
<b>M.A.L.</b>	Tony Gibson	<b>M.A.L.</b>	Joan Yackel				
<b>M.A.L.</b>	Jim Stasse	<b>I.P.P.</b>	Ruth Sovern				
<b>Past Commander</b>	Joan Suelter						