



# The Post Messenger

THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 318  
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Visit us @[www.americanlegion318fl.org](http://www.americanlegion318fl.org)

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### Commander's Message



Dear Legion Family,

We just returned from the annual American Legion State Convention. The delegates that went from Post 318's organizations had the pleasure of seeing first hand the results of our many yearly programs. Post 318 is well recognized throughout the state as an innovative and successful Post. We are the 16<sup>th</sup> largest Post in Florida and continue to grow each year. This just doesn't come naturally. It comes from all of the many years of hard work by our members and their dedication to our purpose.

With 2011-2012 year coming to close we are now on our way to a brand new year. Let's continue to make our Post the best in the State. Let's continue to support our Veterans and fight for their benefits and aid those in need. Let's continue to support the many children and youth programs that have been and will always be dear to our hearts. If we stand together, we will succeed.

We have had a lot of activities around the Post for our members. Please check your calendars and try attending some of them. Our 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration is next so hope to see you there.

As you are aware we sent out the letters asking for donations for the new Post Building. A big thank you goes out to those who have generously donated. I want you to know that we will continue to raise the necessary funds we need to start the construction process. We are getting close to making it happen. Please help if you can to make our dream a reality.

This month I would like to make Gene Sereg as our "Member of the Month". Gene is our Service Officer and Sergeant of Arms for the Post. Gene has helped a lot of our members when they needed help and has given us useful information on programs that will benefit veterans. Gene, thank you for your dedication.

Commander  
Daryl Bowie

### 2012-2013 Officers

The following Officers have been appointed to the Legion Executive Board by the Commander:

**David Width—Adjutant**

**Bob Booth—Judge Advocate**

**Ron Zimmerman—Service Officer**

The following Officers have been elected to the Legion Auxiliary Executive Board:

**Sally Booth**

**Ann Marie McNally**

**Phylliss Young**

## Legion Auxiliary



Hello Everyone,

It is hard to believe a year of service has come to a close and a new chapter is beginning. I feel honored to have been elected President of the Auxiliary for the 2012 -2013 year and want to thank everyone for their confidence in me to handle this position. We have a strong slate of officers, and a great base of members who are committed to making this coming year a positive and productive one.

Our 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament was a huge success due to an overwhelming response by golfers and the many volunteers that graciously came forward to make this event happen. This year was our biggest turnout ever and will allow us to accomplish great things for our veterans and the many programs we support. A special thank you goes out to our event Chairman, Brenda Saffioti, for all of her hard work and dedication and to all the volunteers that made this event so successful.

There were several of us that attended Convention this year and I think we all learned a great deal. I brought back a wealth of information and it was a great learning experience about the function and process on the State level. I would encourage anyone to attend if you have not done so before.

Thank you Robin for your service this past year and we all wish you the best with your new position of Leadership Chairman for District 12.

Our next meeting is on June 18th, and I look forward to seeing everyone there. This will be our last meeting until September as we voted not to convene in July and August.

We are planning a Luau in August, be looking for upcoming information at the Post.

Debbie Johnston, Auxiliary President

### Legion Riders

Hello to all;

My name is Jerry Heider and I am the newly elected Director of the American Legion Riders of Post 318.

So what about the Riders? Many of you know or may have heard that changes are in the wind. For many years we wore a back patch titled "Legion Riders USA which has now been cited as a trademark infringement by the American Legion. As a result we will now be wearing the National approved emblem. Effective at the adjournment of our June 1st meeting "Legion Riders USA" no longer exists. Unfortunately, approximately 20 of our current members have taken issue with that directive and have resigned from our Chapter. We wish them well. Those of us that remain are anxious, excited and determined to carry forth the ideals and principles of the American Legion Riders, a program of the American Legion. We are now part of a family of riders more than 100,000 strong representing the USA, Canada, France and Puerto Rico! The energy, camaraderie, and resources from such an opportunity are truly tremendous. We will continue our goals of serving veterans, their families and the community as we move forward. If any of you reading this article are aware of worthwhile community programs please feel free to contact me or any of the Riders. You can reach me at 724-263-6513 or email at thekyfifleman@yahoo.com.

Do Good! Have Fun! Ride Hard!  
Jerry Heider, Rider Director

## Chaplain

Need prayers for the following:

Frank Cafiso, Fred Scheeley and Verne "Butch" Schmitt.

### Thought for the Month

*"Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God"*

If you know any member that is sick, in the hospital/rehab or in distress, please call Garin Salisbury, Chaplain @ 772-240-8179 or email gsali81@att.net

## Service Officer

### Service Connected Disability: "Don't give up the fight"

It is not unusual for the Veterans' Benefits Administration (VBA) to deny a claim for a Service Connected Disability (SCD), or to rate the disability at a percentage lower than you feel is fair. It is your right to challenge their decision through the appeals process. This can take time and a lot of patience and there are procedures that have to be followed exactly as Federal Law stipulates. This article is meant to explain some of that process.

### What is an appeal and why would I appeal?

An appeal is a request for the Board of Veterans' Appeals to review a Regional VA office decision on your claim. You appeal because you are not satisfied with their decision. The two most common reasons are the VA denied your claim for service connection or you believe your disability is more severe than they rated it. Throughout the appeal process, there are deadlines that have to be met for each step. Be sure you keep track of these deadlines and submit the information or forms the VA requires **on time!**

### Appeal Process:

The first step in the appeal process is the "Notice of Disagreement" (NOD). This is a statement you provide in writing telling the VA that you disagree with their decision. This notice is sent to the Regional office that processed your claim. After you send your NOD you may request that your file be reviewed by a Decision Review Officer (DRO). DRO's offer a second review of your entire file and can also hold a personal hearing on your claim.

After the Regional office receives your NOD, they will create a "State of Case" (SOC) which is a detailed explanation of the evidence, laws and regulations they used in deciding your claim. The SOC will be mailed to you along with a VA Form 9, Substantive Appeal Form. The VA Form 9 is the last step in the appeal process. This form must be filled out and sent back to the Regional office. In completing the Form 9, you should state the benefit you want, any mistakes you find with the SOC, and if you want a personal hearing.

I strongly recommend that the individual veteran not undertake this process on their own. When filing a claim get the help of an **accredited** Service Officer such as your County Veterans Service Office. A pamphlet describing the entire appeals process is available on-line from the Board of Veterans' Appeals web site, [www.bva.va.gov/docs/Pamphlets/010202A.pdf](http://www.bva.va.gov/docs/Pamphlets/010202A.pdf)

Ron Zimmerman, Service Officer

