Monthly Newsletter

AMERICAN LEGION POST 57

August 2025



Post Info

American Legion Post 57

Address:

2602 SW Main Blvd Lake City FL 32025

Phone:

(386) 752-7776

Hours:

Mon to Sun 11:00am to 10:00pm

Kitchen Hours:

- Lunch -

Monday Thru Friday 11:00am to 1:00pm

- Dinner -

Saturday Thru Thursday 4:00pm to 8:00pm Fridays 5:30pm to 7:30pm

Kitchen Phone: (386) 752-7260

Email & Website:

americanlegion57@comcast.net www.americanlegion57.org



Post Officers

-Commander-

Bill Huggins

-1st Vice Commander-

Kelly Valliere

-2nd Vice Commander-

Terry Libbert

-3rd Vice Commander-

Harrison Ambrose

-4th Vice Commander-

Matthew Knight

-Finance Officer-

Andrew Framer

-Adjutant-

Jason Massey

-Chaplain-

William Bell

-Historian-

Thomas Wilcutts

-Sergeant at Arms-

Matthew Fetzer

-Executive Committeeman-

George Wehrli

-Executive Committeeman-

Tony Nolan

-Executive Committeeman-

Ken Burkes

-Executive Committeeman-

Robert Preston

-Judge Advocate-

Dave Mangrum

-Service Officer-

Lisa Brown



Commanders Corner

COMMANDER'S CORNER, July 2025

Welcome to August, we are off and running strong.

We are working diligently to improve member/guests experience here at the post.

At our last General Meeting, membership voted to upgrade the sound system in the Bingo Hall for use not only with Bingo but also for other Legion functions as well. You also approved building new office space inside the Auxiliary (Family) room, 8x10 for the membership officer so she can have space to welcome new members without being interrupted with other Post business.

Members make a huge difference, we had a member donate a brand new 75 inch television to replace the one behind the bar and also an 86 inch which will be installed on the stage making football season all the more exciting.

In June, all the incoming/outgoing Riders Officers resigned their position placing us in a position to elect an all new board of officers who want to support the post and be part of the post family. We have an interim board in place and they will have their election on August 22, 2025.

Favorable changes are taking place as indicated on Saturday, August 26th, as the Riders held their roadkill to a nearly full house of participants who had a blast.

As our Department Commander states "One team, One Dream" together we can't help but be successful, let that be our mantra as well.

Membership is still an important issue, we are ahead of last year's pace but we want to see all of you for the early bird dinner to be scheduled.

September 23 is the American Legion Post 57's 105th birthday so on Saturday, September 20 we will have the Post 105th birthday bash and dinner. Dinner will be prime rib, baked potato, salad and dessert, Late for Class will provide the entertainment, details to follow so watch your email and keep up on our Facebook page. Dinner will be by RSVP to allow accurate preparation for the meat and taters.

We were recently approached and asked if we would do a fundraiser to help a local resident who has stage 4 cancer that has spread by doing a motorcycle run. While this person isn't a Veteran, we support our Veterans, Youth and Community and have agreed to render aid by assisting in the endeavor. This will be a Legion Family event to allow our community to see us working for one of their own.

October 4th we are opening our post for the event. Riders will meet at Harvey's for registration for an escorted (by CCSO) country ride. The ride will depart Harveys at 11:00 and end at the post for the afterparty. There will be lunch served from Fenced in BBQ, entertainment by the band, The Palmetto Kickers, 50/50 drawing, raffles, auctions and classic cars for your

enjoyment. The blood mobile will be onsite taking donations Always a great time for an even greater cause.

Commanders Corner (Cont.)

Bingo every Sunday, Monday and Thursday, afternoon at 3:00 and evening at 6:45pm Queen of Hearts drawing every Saturday at 6:00 in the lounge.

The kitchen is now open Saturday thru Thursday from 4-8 pm with Friday dinner still being the family dinner from 5:30-7:30 PM.

The kitchen is now open Monday thru Friday from 11:00 til 1:00 pm with the menu being available not only to members but also to the public for dine in in the hall or get to go for a great and quick lunch.

Queen of Hearts drawing every Saturday at 6:00 pm

Every Wednesday, Draft beer \$1.75

Texas Hold-em every Monday and Friday at 7:00 pm in the family meeting room.

Friday	August 1st	Sea Cadet Friday Dinner and back to school dance
Friday	August 1st	Karaoke
Saturday	August 2nd	Paddle Auction
Sunday	August 3rd	Junior meeting 3-5 pm
Tuesday	August 5th	SAL/Marine Corp League meeting 6:30
Friday	August 8th	Auxiliary Dinner with Dave & Dicky playing
Saturday	August 9th	SAL Roadkill 3-5 PM
Tuesday	August 12th	Legion/Auxiliary E-board meeting 6:30
Friday	August 15th	Rider's Dinner
Saturday	August 16th	Paddle Auction 5-7 pm
Sunday	August 17th	Juniors meeting 3-5 pm
Tuesday	August 19th	Legion/Auxiliary General meeting
Wednesday	August 20th	Ice Cream Social at the Domiciliary 1-2 pm
Friday	August 22nd	SAL Dinner
Saturday	August 23rd	Sea Cadet Drill 8:00 am til 3:30 pm
Saturday	August 23rd	Riders Roadkill 6-8 pm
Tuesday	August 26th	Riders meeting/election
Friday	August 29th	Legion Dinner
Saturday	August 30th	Paddle Auction 5-7 pm

Volunteer Spotlight

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH IS **DAVID DEMARS**

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU AND ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS DO!



Membership





August Membership Newsletter

Happy almost Fall!!!

Let's welcome our new members who joined in July!!!

Phillip Smith USA

Anthony Tekaucic USA

Harry Shoemaker USA

Nathan Shearer USA

James Moeller USN

Eric Word USA

Joshua Johnson USA

Danny Word Transfer from USA FL 153

Doug Libby USA Transfer from MI 557

Ronald Atzrott USMCTransfer from NY 808



Scan to go to www.legion.org

Our membership drive started on July 1st, and our post is well on its way to setting records again this year! Unofficially, we are at 48.51% of our goal! 418 members have already been renewed! Help us reach 90% or better retention and renew today at Legion.org or just come by the office you are always welcome!!!

New Members: 22

Paid up for Life (PUFL): 68

Transfers from Post 400 and 400 AD (Cyber Posts): 2

Transfers: 6

Online Renewals: 43 3 year Renewals: 3

Our Goal this year is 857. We are currently at 418 members. Last year we were AT 38%!WITH 305 members renewing in July! Well done Post 57!!! I thank you for your early renewals and you have kept me busy that's for sure! Our members are what makes this post great, and I can't wait to see what our membership does to put Lake City on the map this year!!!

I forgot to mention in your renewal letters that if you have that Early Bird stamp on your membership card, that little red stamp entitles you to the Early Bird dinner in October. More information will be coming later this month.

Membership (Cont.)

One thing I hear a lot from our members is "I never got a key fob."

If you were voted into the Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, or as a Legionnaire you are entitled to a key fob! You can either stop by my office, and get your fob immediately, or you can request one in the lounge, and I will process it within two days. If you leave me a phone number I will text you and let you know that it's ready for pick up in the lounge. If you come to the general assembly meeting, I am available to give you your key fob that evening.

I have been out and about in the community, and I hear from women veterans that they didn't know they were eligible for the American Legion. They tell me that they were told their active duty service didn't count because they weren't Boots On The Ground. This is wholly untrue. Women Veterans have always been welcome in the American Legion and Women Veterans are most welcome in our Post! With the passage of the Legion Act ((Let Everyone Get Involved In Opportunities for National Service Act) in 2019 The American Legion opened its enrollment to approximately 6 million veterans previously unqualified for membership due to not serving in a recognized "War Era". If you served one day on active duty and were discharged with an Honorable discharge you are eligible, this includes National Guard members who went to bootcamp or served on active duty under USC Title 10. General or Uncharacterized discharges are also welcome provided they were under honorable conditions.

It is my absolute honor to serve you and if there is anything I can do to help, please don't hesitate to call! Most of you have my card and if you find a Veteran out there that needs help, needs resources, or just an ear, you send them to us!!! We don't have all the answers, but we are doing everything in our power to find them. The resources available in our little community are vast compared to a lot of counties in Florida.

American Legion Post 57 105th Birthday Bash September 20, 2025

Dinner 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM



Entertainment: Vintage Trio Band

Prime Rib Dinner \$20.00 donation

Please Rsvp on our website, at the post, on FB, text or call (904) 563-0618 or scan the QR Code >



Kitchen Volunteers Needed

All Shifts

Benefits include: Tips and half price kitchen

Interested?

Contact Sharon Huggins (386) 984-9568



Kitchen Hours:

- Lunch -

Monday Thru Friday

11:00am to 1:00pm

- Dinner -

Saturday Thru Thursday

4:00pm to 8:00pm

Fridays

5:30pm to 7:30pm

Kitchen Phone:

(386) 752-7260

Now you can order online on our website or scan the QR code on the menu!







Post Service Officer

Hello Post 57,

August is Hot, the dog days of Summer are here! Stay Cool!

Thank you to all who donate to the Service officer's fund! You are the reason why we can continue to help local Veterans.

Post 57 has helped 6 Veterans this month!

This month Nursing Home to Hospice, new law!

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today it has temporarily expanded burial benefits for certain Veterans, per the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act.

The new law specifies eligible Veterans are those who are discharged from VA-provided medical or nursing care to receive VA-provided hospice care at their home and who pass away between July 1, 2025, and Oct. 1, 2026.

Previously, Veterans who died at home under VA hospice care after discharge from VA-provided medical or nursing care were not always eligible for a full VA burial allowance. The Dole Act addresses that gap.

"VA is working hard to fully implement the many provisions of the Dole Act," said VA Secretary Doug Collins. "We're excited to offer this expanded benefit, which better supports Veterans who choose to spend their final days at home, surrounded by their loved ones."

Families and caregivers of Veterans receiving hospice care at home following discharge from VA-provided medical or nursing care are encouraged to contact their local VA for information about eligibility and how to apply for burial benefits. Visit VA burial benefits or call 800-827-1000 for more information and see here for details on the legislative language authorizing this change.

Lisa G Brown Post Veteran Service Officer Post 57, Lake City Florida



Riders

The Riders had an emergency meeting on June 28, to nominate a new board. The nominees are as follows.

Riders Director:

JD Warren

Art Palecek

Asst. Riders Director:

Dakota Linder

Adjutant:

Samanthia Reid

Finance Officer:

Elaine Lagasse

Road Captain/Safety Officer

Tim Wood

Sergeant at Arms:

Bob Charles

John Dennis

Chaplain:

Maryann Dennis

A vote will be held on August 26th at 6:30 PM

To decide the incoming Riders board.

26 riders participated in five different rides for a total of 2911 miles \$180 personal donations to two different charity causes.

This month has started off well with two riders clocking 853 miles and 18.25 hours since our meeting on July 22.

We have several upcoming events:

August 2nd is VetFest in Trenton

August 23rd we are planning to go to Gainesville Harley Davidson for their customer appreciation event.

August 23rd is Riders Roadkill Bingo from 6 to 8 PM

September 20 is the POW/MIA 7 Bridges ride in Jacksonville.

September 20 is also Post 57's Birthday Bash at 530 pm Riders

October 4 the American Legion is hosting a charity ride for Ricky Crawford, a local resident, who has stage four cancer, and the Riders will be participating in that event also, in numerous ways. The Riders also agreed to donate \$500 to the Ricky Crawford fundraising effort.

Riders (Cont.)

The American Legion will also be hosting a toy run on November 15.

On July 26, the Riders held Roadkill Bingo in the lounge, with a full house playing, and the American legion family raised \$764 to go towards American Legion Riders programs.

We are super excited about this next year, and we are planning to do what Riders do....RIDE!!!

Thank you to the American Legion Family for your support while we rebuild!

For God and Country, Kelly Valliere Interim Riders Director



Sunday, Monday, Thursday

Day Shift: 2:30pm to 6:00pm

Night Shift: 6:30pm to 10:00pm

Benefits include: Tips and half price kitchen

Interested?

Contact David Demars (386) 288-9530



Auxiliary News

We had an exciting July and August is filling up fast.

The Auxiliary and American Legion went shopping for Christmas in July. We dropped off toys (\$2,000 worth) at the Christian Service Center. They were so appreciative of our donation.

We took the ladies from the Domiciliary out to lunch at Chilis. Being that the Domiciliary ladies are Veterans we also had two Veterans Kelly Valiere and Samantha Reid from Post 57, join us for lunch.

Beginning July 25th four of the Auxiliary members, to include me, Colleen, Krista, and Mallory. The workshop was very formative and we all gained a lot of knowledge.

We started the Bingo cake sale which will be on the first and third Sunday of each month. Thank you to everyone who signed up to donate cakes. All cakes must be bought. It's suggested you get two small cakes as most people do not want a large cake. Sunday, August 3rd, Caitlin Hanechak will be providing the cake(s). Sunday, August 17th, Maryann Dennis will provide the cake(s).

The Auxiliary has the dinner August 8th. Judy and her daughter, Tee, will be cooking Philly Cheese Steak sandwiches and French fries, with Peach Cobbler for dessert, all for \$10. There will be a band in the Lounge, Dave and Vicki. Please come out for a fun night with raffles and I'll be bartending.

The Auxiliary Board meeting is Tuesday, August 12th and the General meeting for all members is Tuesday, August 19th. Both meetings begin promptly at 6:30.

We will be stuffing our Boggy Creek Bears at 11AM in the lounge. Please consider volunteering and helping if you can. Sharon will provide a light lunch. Please bring a dessert or snack to share. Please RSVP by calling Donna at 954-629-6413. Weggie needs volunteers to help sew, if you can sew and are willing to help call Weggie at (386) 697-4845. We also need crocheters who would be willing to crochet afghans to donate to Boggy Creek for the children. The afghans should be 35-40 inches wide and 40-50 inches long. Call Donna at (954) 629-6413 if you need yarn. The afghans are for the children attending the camp so keep that in mind when crocheting the afghans. The children will be taking the bears and afghans home with them when they leave.

August 9th School of Instruction will be held at Steinhatchee, Unit 291. Registration begins at 0900 and starts at 10AM. Please try to attend as this is informative and the information they will provide will give you a good understanding of what the Auxiliary is about and you will learn how you can help. If you want to carpool call Judy at (386) 288-3122, they will be meeting at the Legion at 7:45.

Auxiliary News (Cont.)

August 20th – Wednesday, we are having an ice cream social at the Domiciliary at 1PM. Please join us to serve and assist the veterans.

September 13th – Don't forget indoor yard sale in the Bingo Hall, from 8AM to 1PM. We will be setting up Friday, September 12th. Accepting small items the Tuesday before. We need volunteers, please clean your closets and garages. Maryann Dennis can be called if you have questions regarding what will be accepted. You can reach Maryann at (352) 843-2353.

September 30th is the Early Bird cut-off. Pay your dues before then and you can attend the Early Bird Dinner being held October 18th 2025. Ms. Weggie dropped off the pop tops collected in the Bingo Hall. They support the Ronald McDonald House Charities of North Central FL. Please save your pull tabs and drop them in one of the four containers in the Meeting Room and Bingo Hall.

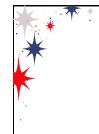
Bingo – If you can, please consider volunteering at least one day a month – daytime or evening Bingo. Hours are 2-6 and 6:30 to 9:30PM Call Donna (954) 629-6413 or David at (386) 288-9530.

We are always looking for new ideas of ways to serve our veterans and community. Please bring them to the meeting or you can call me (954) 629-6413.

For Spirit of Service, Not Self,

Donna Sessa

President, Unit 57, Lake City







Indoor Yard Sale

Unit 57

Household Items, Toys, Tools, linens and so much more.



For more information Call Or Text Saturday, September 13 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM Maryann Dennis at 352-843-2353



County Service Officer

Columbia County Veteran Services Newsletter

August 2025 Edition
"Still Serving Those Who Served"



Scan to go to Columbia County Veteran Services

This year marks **50 years since the United States withdrew from Vietnam** on **April 30, 1975** — the day Saigon fell and the last U.S. helicopters lifted off embassy rooftops. Half a century later, the impact of that war is still being felt. The headlines may have faded, but for many veterans and their families, the fight continued long after the boots came home.

That's why this month, we're proud to share a hard-fought victory for one of our Vietnam-era families.

After nearly three decades of appeals and denials, the VA has finally granted service connection for the cause of death for Army Veteran Jack E. Luker, who served our country from 1953 to 1973. Mr. Luker passed away in 1995 from renal cancer with widespread liver metastases. His widow never stopped fighting to prove his death was linked to his military service.

Thanks to a new medical opinion, the VA acknowledged that Jack's **exposure to Agent Orange and JP-4 jet fuel** during his time in service "at least as likely as not" contributed to the development of his fatal cancer. The evidence was clear. The ruling is just.

As a result, his widow has been awarded **Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) at \$1,612.75 per month**, tax-free, for life. She's also now eligible for **Chapter 35 Dependents**' **Educational Assistance (DEA)**.

This decision honors not only Mr. Luker's service, but the thousands of Vietnam veterans who were exposed to toxins and have been quietly living with the consequences ever since. Fifty years after the last troops left Vietnam, this case reminds us that **some wars don't end when the shooting stops**—**they end when the VA finally gets it right.**

County Service Officer (Cont.)



Are You Missing Out on Benefits You've Earned?

You might be rated for a few things — but are you leaving money or care on the table? Here are some examples of conditions you could claim secondary to your current ratings:

- If you're service-connected for **knees**, **hips**, **or back**, you may also qualify for **radiculopathy**, **ankle instability**, or **plantar fasciitis**.
- If you have PTSD, depression, or anxiety, you might be entitled to benefits for sleep apnea, IBS, or sexual dysfunction.
- If you're rated for tinnitus, you might also claim hearing loss or even headaches as related effects.

Not sure? Bring me your award letter, and we'll look through it together. You earned these benefits — I'll help you get every one of them.

Let's Talk One-on-One

A lot of veterans come in and say the same thing:

"I don't want to be a burden."

Let me say this loud and clear — **you are not a burden.** You are a veteran. You wore the uniform, and you've already paid the price.

Whether you're just getting started or you've been denied before, I'm here to help. No pressure, no politics — just a fellow veteran helping you fight your fight.

Final Thought

Jack Luker's case shows us something important: **it's never too late to be heard.** Whether it's been 5 years or 50, if you've got a claim — bring it in. Laws change. Science advances. And sometimes, it just takes the right person to speak up one more time.

Let me be that person.

Respectfully,

Ronnie Beasley

Veteran Service Officer Columbia County, FL

(386) 758-3350

rbeasley@columbiacountyfla.com



Sea Cadets

Sea Cadets are young men and women aged 10 to 18. We are supported by the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard, and our Cadets train on naval bases and other military installations. Sea Cadets gain unique and valuable experiences that incorporate hands on learning and teamwork. We meet at the American Legion in Lake City twice a month for drill. The cadets have many opportunities to go to training over the summer and winter. If you are interested and would like more information you can contact Niki Patterson 303-725-3889.



Scan to go to www.seacadets.org

You can also click the link to get more information <u>America's Sea Cadets - The US Navy's youth development program.</u>

We do not meet in the summer for drills. A lot of cadets attend summer trainings. We will start our monthly drills back up in August.



The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 57 Juniors meet on the 1st and 3rd Sunday from 3:00pm to 5:30pm. For more information contact Kay Peterson at alaux57@gmail.com.









Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Red Shirt Friday Sea Cadet Friday Night Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm Back to School Dance 6:00pm- 9:00pm Karaoke 6:30pm- 9:30pm Texas Hold'em 7:00pm	2 Paddle Auction 5:00pm-7:00pm Queen of Hearts 6:00pm
3 Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm Auxiliary Junior Meeting 3:00pm	4 Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm Texas Hold'em 7:00pm U.S. Coast Guard	5 SAL Squadron 57 Meeting 6:30pm-7:30pm Marine Corps League Meeting 6:30pm-7:30pm	6 \$1.75 Draft 11:00am	7 Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm Purple Heart Day	8 Red Shirt Friday Auxiliary Friday Night Dinner w/ Dave & Vicky 5:30pm-7:30pm Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM	9 SAL Roadkill Bingo 3:00pm- 5:00pm Auxiliary School of Instruction (Steinhatchee) Queen of Hearts 6:00pm
10 Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm	11 Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm Texas Hold'em 7:00pm	12 Legion & Auxiliary Executive Meeting 6:30pm	\$1.75 Draft 11:00am Auxiliary Bingo (Domiciliary) 6:00pm-7:00pm	14 Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm	15 Red Shirt Friday Riders Friday Night Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM	16 Paddle Auction 5:00pm-7:00pm Queen of Hearts 6:00pm
Legacy Run Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm Auxiliary Junior Meeting 3:00pm	18 Legacy Run Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm Texas Hold'em 7:00pm	19 Legacy Run Legion & Auxiliary General Membership Meeting 6:30pm-7:30pm	20 Legacy Run \$1.75 Draft 11:00 am Ice Cream Social (Domiciliary) 1:00pm-2:00pm Humane Society 5:30pm-8:30pm	21 Legacy Run Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm	22 National Convention Red Shirt Friday SAL Friday Night Dinner 5:30pm- 7:30pm Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM	National Convention Sea Cadet Drill 8:00am-3:30pm Queen of Hearts 6:00pm Riders Roadkill Bingo 6:00pm- 8:00pm
24 National Convention Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm	25 National Convention Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm Texas Hold'em 7:00pm	26 National Convention Riders Meeting & Election 6:30pm-7:30pm	27 National Convention \$1.75 Draft 11:00 am	28 National Convention Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm	29 Red Shirt Friday Legion Friday Night Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM	30 Paddle Auction 5:00pm-7:00pm Queen of Hearts 6:00pm
31 Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm						