

# Monthly Newsletter

AMERICAN LEGION POST 57

January 2025



## Post Info

American Legion  
Post 57

**Address:**

2602 SW Main Blvd  
Lake City FL 32025

**Phone:**

(386) 752-7776

**Hours:**

Mon to Sun  
1:00pm to 10:00pm

**Kitchen Hours:**

Sunday, Monday, and Thursday  
4:00pm to 8:15pm  
Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday  
5:00pm to 8:00pm

**Email:**

americanlegion57@comcast.net

**Post 57 Website:**

[www.americanlegion57.org](http://www.americanlegion57.org)



## Post Officers

**-Commander-**

Bill Huggins

**-1st Vice Commander-**

Kelly Valliere

**-2nd Vice Commander-**

Terry Libbert

**-3rd Vice Commander-**

Thomas Wilcutts

**-4th Vice Commander-**

Laura Taylor

**-Finance Officer-**

Dave Holmes

**-Adjutant-**

Jason Massey

**-Chaplain-**

William Bell

**-Historian-**

Vacant

**-Sergeant at Arms-**

James Taylor

**-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

Your Executive Board and I wish everyone a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2025.

As we look back and see where we were and where we are headed, let us remember that in December we held our first annual member Christmas Dinner for our members. The concept for the dinner is that we realize we have a lot of Legion family members who lack support systems, and like Thanksgiving, Christmas alone can be very lonely. The dinner was put together and thanks to many volunteers, too numerous to name came off without a hitch. We had over 125 members come out to enjoy the meal and fellowship along with the many volunteers.

2024 also saw the makeover of our kitchen, electronic signage to bring us into the 21st century and improve member communications and awareness, amid expanded evening kitchen hours to improve the experience for our members. Members have commented on how much more welcoming the post seems as opposed to past times. Member participation in the social quarters is showing continued growth and enthusiasm.

Thank you to all who came out also on New Year's eve to enjoy the prime rib dinner and entertainment by Late for Class to close out 2024.

As we look forward to 2025 we have a bright outlook for the future of your post. As your Commander, I often ask for your input and try to respond to the things you want to see done in your post.

**January 1-31 your American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary are teaming up for a coat drive to benefit the homeless children in the Columbia County School System and Veterans residing at the Domiciliary. Coats/sweaters/sweatshirts of any size can be used so it's a great time to clean out you closets.**

Volunteers are needed Saturday, Jan 4, 2025 beginning at 9:00 am. To take down the Christmas decorations. Please come and help where you can.

Introducing a new game in the lounge beginning January 18th from 5pm til 7pm, come out and join the fun. (Kitchen will be open with full menu).

Make plans, January 13th, 2025 the Post has the honor of welcoming our National Commander, Mr. James Lacoursiere, to our post for dinner as he visits the 3rd District. Everyone is invited out to the post around 5:00 pm to meet him as we'll be serving dinner for him (details to follow).



## Commanders Corner (Cont.)

### JANUARY CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

Every Sunday, Monday and Thursday Bingo, afternoon at 3:00 pm and evening 6:45 pm with kitchen available

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays kitchen open from 5-8 for our members

Texas-Holdem every Monday and Friday at 7:00 pm

|          |        |                                                |
|----------|--------|------------------------------------------------|
| Friday   | Jan 3  | Sea Cadet Dinner                               |
| Saturday | Jan 4  | 9:00 am Christmas take down                    |
| Tuesday  | Jan 7  | SAL meeting                                    |
| Friday   | Jan 10 | Rider's dinner                                 |
| Saturday | Jan 11 | SAL Roadkill                                   |
| Monday   | Jan 13 | National Commander visit/dinner                |
| Tuesday  | Jan 14 | Legion/Auxiliary Board meeting                 |
| Friday   | Jan 17 | Auxiliary Dinner                               |
| Saturday | Jan 18 | Auxiliary 100th birthday luncheon 11- 2pm      |
| Saturday | Jan 18 | Introducing our all new Quarter Paddle Auction |
| Tuesday  | Jan 21 | Legion/Auxiliary General meetings              |
| Friday   | Jan 24 | SAL dinner                                     |
| Saturday | Jan 25 | Riders Roadkill                                |
| Saturday | Jan 25 | Auxiliary Americanism                          |
| Tuesday  | Jan 28 | Rider's meeting                                |
| Friday   | Jan 31 | Legion dinner                                  |

Happy New Year to all and thank you once again for your continued support.

For God and Country

Bill



## Volunteer Spotlight

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH IS

**--Elaine Dufour--**

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU AND ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS DO!



# County Service Officer

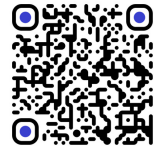


## County Veteran Service Officer

### Ronnie Beasley's January 2025 Newsletter

**Address:** 1486 SW McFarlane Ave, Lake City, Florida 32025

**Phone:** 386-758-3350



## Welcome to 2025, Veterans and Community Members!

Happy New Year! January is the perfect time to set goals and focus on your well-being.

As your County Veteran Service Officer, I'm here to assist you with navigating VA benefits, addressing claims, and connecting you with the resources you need for a successful year.

## January Highlights

### 1. VA COLA Increase:

Veterans receiving VA disability benefits will see a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) increase starting this month. This adjustment helps your benefits keep pace with inflation. If you have questions about how this change affects your payments, reach out to me for assistance.

### 2. Service Connection Claims Review:

Start the year by ensuring all your service-connected conditions are accurately documented and rated. If you've experienced new symptoms or worsening conditions, I'm here to help you update your claim and secure the benefits you deserve.

### 3. Secondary Condition Claims:

If you have conditions linked to a service-connected disability, you may be eligible for additional benefits. Let's work together to identify and file claims for these secondary conditions.

## What I Can Do for You

- **Claims Assistance:** Support for filing new claims, appeals, and secondary conditions.
- **VA Benefits Navigation:** Guidance on maximizing your VA benefits and accessing local resources.
- **Community Support:** Connect with local organizations and veteran groups to build your network.

## January Tips for Success

1. **Organize Your Documents:** Ensure your VA paperwork is current and accessible for claims or reviews.
2. **Engage With Resources:** Take advantage of programs designed to assist veterans in areas like healthcare, education, and housing.
3. **Plan for the Year:** Set goals for personal and professional growth, and let me help you access the tools to achieve them.

## Contact Me:

**Phone:** 386-758-3350

**Address:** 1486 SW McFarlane Ave, Lake City, FL 32025

Let's make 2025 a year of opportunity and success for our veteran community. I'm honored to serve and support you every step of the way.

Sincerely,

**Ronnie Beasley**

# Membership



Happy New Year Members!

What a great couple of month's we've had! Thanksgiving and Christmas at the post were fantastic! Thank you to all who came out and participated! We were so happy to see so many of you come out and shared in the camaraderie!

## Membership Details for November/December

67 New members

67 Paid Up for Life

478 renewals

614 total Members Paid up for 2025

As of December 19th we were at 76.85% of January 8 goal of 80%

As of December 27th, the following numbers are unofficial as we have not received our weekly membership report from the Department of Florida due to the Holidays.

New Members 68

629 paid up for 2025

15 renewals/transfers in process

Which would put us at the unofficial percentage of 80.60% of our January 8 goal of 80%

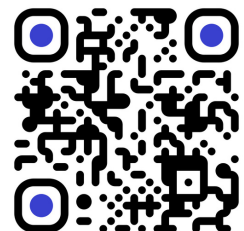
Remember, if you have not paid your 2025 dues, as of January 1st, 2025, your membership is no longer valid. You will not be able to attend meetings, social events or visit the lounge, without payment. Some of you will say "Well, I don't have time to volunteer, or come by the post regularly, so why should I continue to pay dues?" The answer is very simple, your membership is very important, as your voice will be heard in Tallahassee and in Congress when The American Legion advocates for Veterans programs and Bills in the House and Senate of both the Federal and State governments. The American legion advocates for all veteran programs. With our Vietnam Vets being of age, and most of our WWII vets already gone, Veteran Programs are going to be impacted if we lose our numbers. The American Legion Department of Florida, has numerous newsletters, to keep you apprised of happenings in our state and federal governments. Please take a moment to subscribe to the newsletters at <https://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/legion-link/subscribe/>

<https://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/march-on-tallahassee/subscribe/>

Use the following link to keep abreast of all the things we are doing at the National level

<https://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/news/national/>

Your membership is valued on many levels, the numbers we are able to take to Tallahassee and Washington DC allow our advocates to fight back and ensure our benefits remain safe. It allows us to introduce new legislation to benefit all Veterans now to include our National Guard brethren.



Scan to go to  
[www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)

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## Membership Cont.

Did you know that only \$16.00 of your \$50.00 stays at the post? The remaining \$34.00 goes to the Department of Florida and to National Headquarters to implement advertising and make other resources available to our Veterans. What do we do with that \$16.00? We support Veterans and their families in Columbia County! We support Columbia County School District, Robert H. Jenkins Veterans Domicile in Lake City (FDVA), Kids Feeding Kids, Renewed, LAD Soup Kitchen and Homeless Shelter, Sheriff's Boys Ranch, Toys For Tots, and assisting Veterans in Need right here in Columbia County! There are many other projects we could be involved in but we need help to find all the Veterans in Columbia County and make the resources of our post available to them. As with all volunteer organizations, finding volunteers can sometimes be difficult. If you have ideas, or available time we would be so grateful to you to help us reach our Community impact goals.

We are here for all veterans, not just our members. We have been able to provide temporary housing, food assistance, financial assistance in emergencies, and provide other state and federal resources to veterans in need. This is why your continued membership is important, to help all veterans succeed and find support. If you are not able to donate time or money, please consider simply renewing your membership so we can continue to ensure our Columbia County Veterans are being served!

Thank you to all of you who have already renewed your membership. It has been my great pleasure to serve the members of our post in any way that I can, thank you for allowing me to be your Membership Chair. I have had the pleasure of meeting so many of you, or talking to you on the phone. If you ever need to reach out to me, please email me at [Post57membership@gmail.com](mailto:Post57membership@gmail.com) leave a contact number and I will get back to you within 12-24 hours.

In closing, you can always come by the Post to pay your dues. My office hours are from 10 am til approx 4pm Monday through Saturday. Easy online payment can be made at <https://legion.org> click the red RENEW button, all you need is your member number and last name. No log in, no password to remember, quick easy payment of dues. There is also a three year option. If you don't have your member number you can email me at [post57membership@gmail.com](mailto:post57membership@gmail.com) and I will send you your number. Please include your full name and phone number on your email.

For God and Country,

Kelly Valliere  
First Vice Commander  
Membership Chair

## Chaplain

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season with family and friends. The start of a new year brings a chance for a new beginning. Let one of your resolutions be reaching out to a long-lost friend or a friend that you had a falling out with. Try making a new friend, as we have been getting new members, let us make them feel like part of the post family. Reach out to a member to offer a helping hand. Some have been ill or lost a loved one, let us keep them in our thoughts and prayers. These simple resolutions can have a great impact and are much easier than losing weight or saving money.

Proverbs 19:9 A man's heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.

Don't be afraid to try something new, step out of your comfort zone and chase a dream. If it is God's will, He will make a way for things to happen. I wanted to try something new and give my time to make a difference, I believe God gave me post 57 as a stepping stone (I have stepped out of my comfort zone).

I hope this year brings joy, prosperity, new friendships, and restored friendships.

Chaplain  
William Bell



## Auxiliary News

Happy New Year everyone. I hope the holidays went well. I definitely enjoyed being with my family.

I was so overjoyed at the December meeting when we voted in 19 new members (4 of which were transfers from other units). We are really growing. I hope these new members can find a place in our unit that suits them. There are so many opportunities to volunteer your time thru our programs.

It's time to take down all the beautiful Christmas decorations at the Post. We will be doing that on Saturday, January 4th at 9 AM. Please come help. It's also a great way to get to know your fellow members.

Our Unit's 100th Anniversary party is coming up on January 18th. This event will showcase some of the people and activities that we have done over the past 100 years for our military, veterans, and our community. The event will begin at 11 AM with a social hour, then we will serve lunch, and then a presentation. The dress for this event will be business casual (no shorts, jeans, etc.). Although there are a few members that have expressed that they will be dressing in 1920's attire – that will be fun. I hope to see all of you there.

Our next Auxiliary dinner will be Friday, January 17 th from 5:30 to 7:30. The menu will be Beef and Noodles, salad, roll and dessert for a \$10 donation. Please come out and support the Auxiliary.

We will be having our annual Americanism Awards ceremony on Saturday, January 25th at 7 PM. Our local students will be given awards for their essays that they wrote. Last year we had a National winner in the Special Needs group. Who knows, we just might have another. Please come out and cheer these kids on for all the work they put in to their essays.

Unit 57 will be hosting another School of Instruction on Saturday, February 8th in the bingo hall. Registration will begin at 9 AM with class beginning at 10 AM. Lunch will be served. This class will focus on our annual reports. If you are a chairman of a program please make sure you are in attendance. If you think you want to chair a program next year, I would advise you to come be a part of this class. All our annual reports are due to District chairmen by April 1st.

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2025, please do so as soon as possible. Dues are still \$45.00 and can be paid at the post, online, or mailed to 2602 SW Main Blvd., Lake City FL 32025. Beginning January 1st the Lounge will be checking membership cards before games can be played or drinks ordered. Also, if you are a bingo volunteer or you call back from the floor, your dues must be up to date.

My hope for you for 2025 is health, happiness, and prosperity.

For God and Country,

Lisa Dye – President – Unit 57



# Callers and Volunteers Needed

**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 Lisa Dye (386) 466-2851**

**or**

**Elaine Dufour (386) 438-0096**

## January Canteen Specials

- Monday - [Margaritas](#) - (All Day) Well \$2.00
- Tuesday - [Buckets](#) - (All Day) \$12.00
- Wednesday - [Wine](#) - (All Day) \$2.00
- Thursday - [Well Drinks](#) - (All Day) \$2.00
- Friday - [Fireball](#) - (All Day) \$4.00
- Saturday - [Crown Caramel & Blackberry](#) - (All Day) \$4.00
- Sunday - [Screwdrivers](#) - (All Day) Well \$2.00





Hello 57,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

December was a very busy month for everyone at Post 57. We only helped one Veteran with gift cards.

January being the start of a New Year, this month's information is on how to check to see if you have a bill and how to pay your bill for the VA.

Review your bills and current balances

Please sign in to review your VA copay balances

Sign in with your existing Login.gov, ID.me, DS Logon, or My HealtheVet account. If you don't have any of these accounts, you can create a free Login.gov or ID.me account now. When you sign in or create an account, you'll be able to:

Review your balances for each of your medical facilities

Download your copay statements

Find the right repayment option for you

Sign in or create an account

Make a payment now

Pay your full balance or request help by the due date on your billing statement to avoid late charges, interest, or collection actions.

You'll need your account number to pay. You can find your account number in our online copay tool or on your billing statement.

**Option 1: Pay online**

Pay directly from your bank account or by debit or credit card on the secure Pay.gov website.

Pay your copay bill at Pay.gov

**Option 2: Pay by phone**

Call us at 888-827-4817 (TTY: 711). Be sure to have your account number ready.

**Option 3: Pay by mail**

Send your payment stub, along with a check or money order made payable to "VA," to this address. Include your account number on the check or money order.

Department of Veterans Affairs

PO Box 3978

Portland, OR 97208-3978

**Option 4: Pay in person**

Go to the VA health facility that sent the bill. Ask for the agent cashier's office.

Bring your payment stub, along with a check or money order made payable to "VA." Include your account number on the check or money order.

Thanks for everyone's support!

Lisa G. Brown

Post Veterans Service Officer

Post 57



# JANUARY



| Sunday                                                                                                                | Monday                                                                                                         | Tuesday                                                                                                                   | Wednesday                                                                                                           | Thursday                        | Friday                                                                                                       | Saturday                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                           | <b>1</b><br>New Year's Day<br><br> | <b>2</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm  | <b>3</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>Legion Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Karaoke 6:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm | <b>4</b><br>Take Down Christmas Decorations 9:00am<br>Queen or Hearts 6:00pm                                                                            |
| <b>5</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm                                                                                        | <b>6</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                                                         | <b>7</b><br>Marine Corps League Meeting 6:30pm<br><b>SAL Squadron 57 Meeting 6:30pm</b>                                   | <b>8</b><br><b>\$1.75 Draft 1:00pm</b><br>Auxiliary Bingo (Domiciliary) 6:00pm                                      | <b>9</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm  | <b>10</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>Riders Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                  | <b>11</b><br>SAL Roadkill Bingo 3:00pm<br>Queen or Hearts 6:00pm<br> |
| <b>12</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br> | <b>13</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br><b>National Commander Visit &amp; Dinner 5:00pm</b><br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm | <b>14</b><br><b>Legion &amp; Auxiliary Executive Meeting 6:30pm</b>                                                       | <b>15</b><br><b>\$1.75 Draft 1:00 PM</b><br>Honor Guard Meeting 3:00pm                                              | <b>16</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm | <b>17</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>Auxiliary Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM              | <b>18</b><br><b>Quarter Paddle Auction</b><br>Auxiliary 100th Anniversary Luncheon 11:00am-2:00pm<br>Queen or Hearts 6:00pm                             |
| <b>19</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm                                                                                       | <b>20</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                                                        | <b>21</b><br>General Membership Meeting 6:30pm                                                                            | <b>22</b><br><b>\$1.75 Draft 1:00 PM</b><br>Auxiliary Bingo (Domiciliary) 6:00pm                                    | <b>23</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm | <b>24</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>SAL Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM                    | <b>25</b><br>Auxiliary Americanism Ceremony 7:00pm<br>Queen or Hearts 6:00pm<br>Riders Roadkill Bingo 6:00pm                                            |
| <b>26</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm                                                                                       | <b>27</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                                                        | <b>28</b><br>Riders Meeting 6:30pm<br> | <b>29</b><br>\$1.75 Draft 1:00 PM                                                                                   | <b>30</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm | <b>31</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>Legion Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM                 |                                                                    |