

# Monthly Newsletter

AMERICAN LEGION POST 57

◆  
May 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 -**

Tuesday Thru Saturday  
11:00am to 1:00pm

**- Dinner -**

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

**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-**

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

WOW, what a month it was for April.

April saw our Riders and the Legion Family host not one, but two large ride-ins, first on April 5th the hosted the Woody Williams Gold Star Family ride in, then on Tuesday April 8th saw them hosting the in state Unity Ride. Dinner for both rides was provided by the Riders who also saw meal prep for the Post on Saturday the 5th. Job well done.

April 8th saw YOUR American Legion Family come together to host our First Responder's luncheon, we were expecting approximately 150 First Responders and wound up serving nearly 250 who were most appreciative of the recognition.

Friday, April 18th saw the post hosting Columbia County High School JROTC annual ball in all it's glory.

Saturday the 19th, the eve of Easter, Sharon and her crew did a fish fry serving 86 meals with entertainment provided by the Vintage Trio Band, a grand time was had by everyone.

To cap off the month the entire American Legion Family came together to host our first annual American Legion Family day.

This event was supported by the Florida Highway Patrol, Troop B, Columbia County Sheriff's Department, Columbia County Fire Department, Werner Trucking, Fishing for Heroes, Columbia County High School JROTC, Liberty Division US Naval Sea Cadets.

There were two bands, one inside and one outside, many craft vendors and more.

For this being our first annual event of this nature, we were pleasantly surprised to have over 350 attend the event.

Plans for May include a Memorial Day observance for May 26th beginning at 11:00 am to be followed by a Post Everlasting memorializing members of our American Legion Family that we've lost over the past year.

Elections for your American Legion and Auxiliary Unity 57 will be held on Tuesday, May 20th at the General meetings. **Current nominations are as follows:**

**Commander:** Bill Huggins

**First Vice:** Kelly Valliere

**Second Vice:** Terry Libbert

**Third Vice:** Harrison Ambrose

**Fourth Vice:** Matthew Knight

**Finance Officer:** Andrew Framer

**Chaplain:** William (Bill) Bell

**Historian:** Thomas Wilcutts

**Sgt at Arms:** Matthew Fetzer/ Albert Johns

**Exec. Committee:** (Top 4 in vote count are elected)

Ken Burkes

Robert Preston

Tony Nolan

Laura Taylor

George Wehrli

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## Commanders Corner (Cont.)

Nominations for the Legion Board can be made from the floor on the night of the election and all seats may be contested.

The nominating Committee are  
David Mangrum  
Lisa Brown  
Jason Massey  
John (JP) Paul

MEMBERSHIP: We are so close to hitting our 100% membership goal, please, if you haven't renewed, please contact Kelly ASAP and help us hit our number.

### **MAY CALENDAR AT A GLANCE:**

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 open every Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday to have food available for our members and guests from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm.

Queen of Hearts drawing every Saturday at 6:00 pm

The Post now opens at 11:00 am daily with lunch served Tuesday thru Saturday from 11:00 TIL 1:00 PM

Every Wednesday, Draft beer \$1.75

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

|          |          |                                                                                         |
|----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Friday   | May 2nd  | American Legion Friday Dinner with Karaoke                                              |
| Saturday | May 3rd  | CVMA Poker Run Registration 9:00 am                                                     |
| Tuesday  | May 6th  | Marine Corp League meeting/SAL Meeting/Election 6:30 pm                                 |
| Friday   | May 9th  | Sea Cadet Friday Dinner                                                                 |
| Saturday | May 10th | Sea Cadet Awards Ceremony 7am-3pm                                                       |
| Tuesday  | May 13th | Legion/Auxiliary Board Meeting 6:30 pm                                                  |
| Friday   | May 16th | SAL Friday Night Dinner                                                                 |
| Tuesday  | May 20th | Legion/Auxiliary General Meeting and Elections                                          |
| Friday   | May 23rd | Rider's Friday Night Dinner                                                             |
| Monday   | May 26th | American Legion Family Memorial Day Observance/Post Everlasting and Cookout 11am to 3pm |
| Tuesday  | May 27th | Rider's meeting and election                                                            |
| Friday   | May 30th | Auxiliary Friday Dinner                                                                 |
| Saturday | May 31st | District Meeting 9:00 am                                                                |

# Honor Guard

Great things have been happening with our Honor Guard team. First, I'd like to offer thanks for your patience, words of condolence, cards, and prayer while I cared for my mother and her eventual passing in February.

Since the turn of the new year Honor Guard has served the following veterans and their loved ones with military honors:

31 JAN POFC Wayne Williams, US NAVY  
8. FEB. PFC David Peterson, US ARMY  
22 MAR SPC Louis Gallaway, US ARMY  
16 APR. SPC Stanford Deese, US ARMY

We are very happy and grateful to welcome three new members to our team. Elaine Lagrasse is a new Auxiliary member. Elaine's father was a US Airman. Kelly Luker, a US Army veteran and longtime State officer comes to us from the Deese funeral. Darrell Martin, a US Air Force veteran, just moved to the Lake City area. Darrell's father was deeply involved in the Legion so he sought out our post, joined, and upon seeing our advertisement in the lobby asked if he could help. This brings our membership to 11.

I was honored to help our Sea Cadet division with Presentation of the Colors for our post's annual Family Day. The cadets learned a complicated protocol on Saturday 12 April. After helping with Farm Share in the wee hours of the morning, they reported to the post at 10 a.m. and had a short review. They did an excellent job with precise movements and sound marching. I received many positive comments from post members as well as guests and even members of our live band on how wonderful it was to see such dedicated young people honoring our flag and our military branches.

As always, if Honor Guard can serve you in any way, please let us know.

Thank you for your support.  
Commander JD

## Honor Guard Volunteers Needed

**Interested?**

**EMAIL: [honorguardpost57@gmail.com](mailto:honorguardpost57@gmail.com)**

**TEXT: (386) 984-5756 \*\***

**VOICE PHONE THROUGH RELAY: (386)  
361-4298 \*\***

**\*\* The commander is deaf and uses text and email for main communications. Voice calls are relayed by an interpreter. Thank you for understanding.**



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## Sons of the American Legion

Hello Squadron 57 Members

April has been another busy month for us at Post 57 with Roadkill Bingo, Friday Night Dinner, and the Family Day.

I would like to thank Rick, Jim, Liam, and Bailey-Jo for helping out with Roadkill Bingo and Jim, Leland, Liam and Vanessa for helping with Friday Night Dinner. All your efforts made our events a huge success.

I would also like to thank Donna Sessa and the Post for a successful 1 st Family Day. It was a blast, and we got to meet some interesting people.

### **Upcoming Events:**

Tuesday May 6th @ 6:30 pm Squadron 57 Meeting

Saturday May 10th @ 3:00 to 5:00 pm Roadkill Bingo

Friday May 16th @ 5:30 to 7:30 pm Friday Night Dinner

Saturday May 31st @ 11:00 am DCC Meeting at Post 57

If you know any members that wish to be nominated for positions, please come to the May Meeting!

**Squadron 57 Commander: Brian Wolfe**



## 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 David Demars (386) 288-9530**

## Membership



May Is Military Appreciation Month!

I would like to thank each of you for your service to your Country. No matter what we did, where we were stationed, or what our rank was in the military, we all had a specific job to do, and regardless how small a cog you think you were in the wheel, you sacrificed years of your life to do something that was bigger yourself. Being a part of the American Legion is the same, no matter how much time you give, or how you support, every little bit helps.

Many of you have heard my elevator speech about how important it is to be a member. What we do on Capitol Hill, and in our State Capitol building is driven by numbers. You are the force that keeps our benefits and rights as veterans from being taken away from us. You are the cog that drives the legislature to pay attention to our brethren who suffer from physical, mental and emotional trauma. So thank you for what you continue to do for our Veteran Community.

Let's welcome our new members as of April 15th General assembly meeting:

**New Members:**

Robert W. Clute USA

Donald Martin II USAF

Timothy Foster USA

Harley Beightol JR USN

James Brown USAF(AD)

Henry Mack JR USA

Tami Palrok USN

Darrell Martin USAF

Brantley Crawford USMC

Robert "Bobby" Clute USA

Gregory Beckman USAF

Winston Bell USA

Dale Dotson USN Domicile

Cheyenne Brown USAF(AD)

James Fowler USAF

Jimmy Disbrow USN

Kelly Luker USA

Andrew Framer USA

As of Thursday, April 24th these are our standings for Post 57:

New Members: 120

Renewals 594

Retention percentage is 75%

Cyber Post 400/400AD Transfers 6 (there are discrepancies here waiting on American Legion National Headquarters to rectify)

Transfers in from other posts: 54 total for the year 7/1/2025 to 4/29/2025

Total Paid Members 788 We are currently at 98.62% percent of our goal of 799. We are so close to being 100%!! We are so grateful to all of you who are bringing your friends, neighbors and family into our post.

Unofficially we are over 100% with 795 members paid and 8 new members in process.



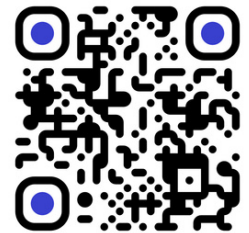
## Membership (Cont.)

We had a very successful Recruiting Event with the American Legion Legion Family Day on April 26th. We gained 5 new prospective Legionnaires, 6 Prospective Sons of the American Legion, and 3 prospective Auxiliary members.

Once again thank you to all our members and community partners for helping The American Legion find our Veterans to get them the services, resources and help they need!

In closing, I would like to thank all of you for your help, encouragement and support. This year has been full of challenges and opportunities to grow as a person and as a member of your Executive Board. I have learned so much about the running of this post, and let me tell you with well over 1000 total members it is a lot of work!

Last year I ran on: "Taking care of the members of our Post" and our entire Executive Board has worked hard to help me in obtaining resources in our community. Lisa Brown, your Post Veteran Service Officer and I have worked together as a team to ensure that we could help everyone who came to us. I am so grateful, thankful and blessed for the opportunity General Membership has given me to be your First Vice Commander in the 2024/2025 year. I have enjoyed getting to know so many of you. I have listened to your advice, your ideas and your concerns. It has been my great privilege to serve you and our community. I hope you will continue to allow me to serve you again in 2025/2026. Once again thank you all for your support, your kindness and your patience as I continue as a member of the Post 57 Family.



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



**Monday, May 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Memorial Day Observance, Post Everlasting & Cookout 11:00am-3:00pm**

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## Post Service Officer

Hello Post 57,

In the month of April, we helped 2 Veterans, both were given gift cards for food and gas.

Thanks to everyone that donates to the VSO fund!

May is Military Appreciation Month. Did you know that as a Veteran you can go to Disney, for free, as well as many other parks here in Florida.

Military.COM has a complete list of all discounts and free "stuff" that are available to Veterans. There is also govx.com, that has discount for Veterans year round.

So glad to be back and helping assist Veterans.

Lisa G. Brown

# Kitchen Volunteers Needed

**All Shifts**

**Benefits include:** Tips and half price kitchen



**Interested?**

**Contact Sharon Huggins (386) 984-9568**



## Volunteer Spotlight

**VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH IS**

**Donna Sessa**

**THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU AND ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS DO!**







## 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. You can also scan the QR code or go to [www.seacadets.org](http://www.seacadets.org) to get more information



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

Upcoming events for Sea Cadets are listed below:

May 9th, 2025 – Sea Cadet dinner- Stroganoff, Salad, Dessert

May 10th, 2025 – Unit Drill – Last drill of before summer break. Drill will be at the American Legion.

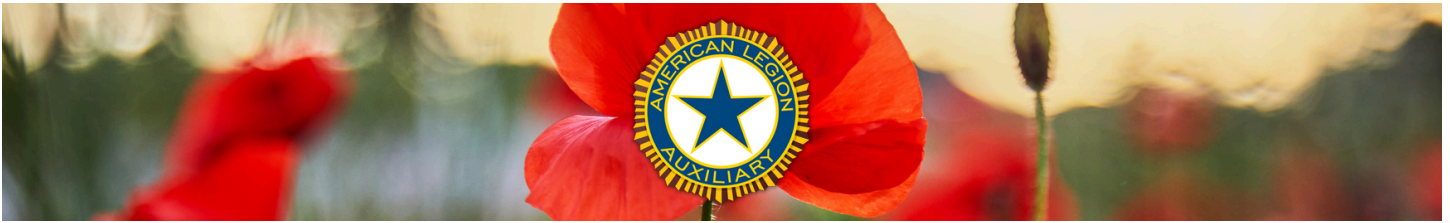


## American LEGION AUXILIARY

### Junior Activities Program

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](mailto:alaux57@gmail.com).





## Auxiliary News

What an exciting day we had for our first Family Day. I got to see people I had not seen in some time and met so many new people. I'm not sure who was having more fun in the dunk tank, the kids or the adults. I saw so many cute young faces painted up for our volunteer face painter. The local fire department came out as well as the state troopers from our local troop. I hope this is the start of a new tradition for our Post.

Our Education chairman, Sharon Manning is planning to provide coffee and donuts to the teachers at Columbia High School and Lake City Middle School for Teacher Appreciation Day on May 6th. She has been providing snacks all year long to Columbia County elementary schools.

May is election month for all the entities of the Post. Elections will take place on Tuesday, May 20th at the regular general membership meeting commencing at 6:30 PM in the Auxiliary meeting room. The nominating committee has set their slate of officers but you can still get on the ballot by having someone nominate you from the floor that night. We need new faces, new ideas, what can you bring to the table? Just remember that anyone coming to that meeting **must show their membership card** at the door to enter.

The post will be having a flag ceremony, a post everlasting, and a cook out for Memorial Day, Monday, May 26th.

The next Auxiliary dinner will be Friday, May 30th . Dinner will be served from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM or until the food runs out. Niki and Karen will be serving Chicken Scampi over pasta, roasted broccoli, and dessert. Dinner will be donation of \$10. If you can't join us in the lounge for dinner, come by and do take out.

District Constitutional Conference will be held at Post 57 on Saturday, May 31st . Registration will begin at 10 AM and meetings at 11 AM. Lunch will be served after the meetings. Everyone is welcome to attend. This is where the District President is chosen as well as delegate to National Convention.

Department of Florida convention will be taking place June 12-15 in Orlando. And National Convention will be in Tampa this year, August 22-28. It's going to be a busy summer.

For God and Country,  
Lisa Dye  
President



## Columbia County Veteran Services Newsletter

**May 2025 Edition**

**Columbia County Veteran Services Office**

**Message from Your Veteran Service Officer, Ronnie Beasley**



Scan to go to  
Columbia County  
Veteran Services

We're stepping into May with purpose and momentum. Over **250 veterans** have been directly supported through our office this year. From compensation increases to appeals and medical evidence gathering, we're making every effort count.

Whether it's your **first time filing** or you're pursuing a **re-evaluation**, I'm here to help. You served—now let us serve you.

### WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH

#### ☀️ Get Your Benefits in Order Before Summer

Beat the heat and the summer backlog. Let's review your rating, check eligibility for new benefits, and make sure everything is up to date.

#### Digital Form Submissions Made Easy

We're simplifying submissions for:

- **VA Form 21-526EZ** (New/Initial Claims)
- **VA Form 21-2680** (Aid & Attendance)
- **VA Form 20-0995** (Supplemental Claims)
- **VA Form 21-4138** (Personal Statements)

Need help? We'll walk you through the entire process.

#### Caregiver Program & Aid and Attendance

If you or someone you care for has **ALS, Parkinson's, or requires daily assistance**, you may qualify for **monthly caregiver stipends** or **Aid & Attendance** benefits. These programs are underused—**let's fix that.**



## County Service Officer (Cont.)

### SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

- **One local veteran increased from 60% to 100% P&T**—unlocking CHAMPVA for dependents.
- **Another received over \$12,000** in retroactive pay after a successful **sleep apnea appeal**.
- Claims tied to **Parkinsonian tremors, kidney disease, and hearing loss** are winning with strong STRs and updated evidence.
- **Denied before? File a supplemental claim with new and relevant evidence—we're flipping denials weekly.**

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Veterans Tennis Clinic

**1st & 2nd Tuesday of Every Month – 1:00 PM**

#### Youngs Park Tennis Courts

Sponsored by USTA Florida, the local VA Hospital, and LCCC Tennis Association. **All skill levels welcome!**

### REMINDERS

- **Rating changed?** Let's file for an increase.
- **Providing care full-time?** You may qualify for VA caregiver support.
- **Claiming from overseas (like Bahrain)?** Yes—we've got you covered.

### CLOSING THOUGHTS

Every call, every claim, every veteran—we're here because you earned these benefits. Whether you need help starting fresh or finishing strong, **your County Veteran Service Office is ready.**

Respectfully,

**Ronnie Beasley**

**County Veteran Service Officer**

1486 SW McFarlane Ave, Lake City, FL

(386) 758-3350 | (386) 243-8364

[rbeasley@columbiacountyfla.com](mailto:rbeasley@columbiacountyfla.com)



# May



| Sunday                                                                                                                | Monday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Tuesday                                                                                 | Wednesday                                                                               | Thursday                        | Friday                                                                                                                                  | Saturday                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                         |                                                                                         | <b>1</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm  | <b>2</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>3</b><br>CVMA Poker Run 9:00am-10:30am<br><b>Quarter Paddle Auction 5:00pm-7:00pm</b><br>Queen of Hearts 6:00pm                                                                                                       |
| <b>4</b><br><b>Auxiliary Junior Meeting 3:00pm</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm                                              | <b>5</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>6</b><br><b>SAL Squadron 57 Meeting 6:30pm</b><br>Marine Corps League Meeting 6:30pm | <b>7</b><br><b>\$1.75 Draft 11:00am</b>                                                 | <b>8</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm  | <b>9</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>Sea Cadet Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                                           | <b>10</b><br>Sea Cadet Awards 7:45am-3:00pm<br><b>SAL Roadkill Bingo 3:00pm-5:00pm</b><br>Queen of Hearts 6:00pm                                                                                                         |
| <b>11</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br> | <b>12</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>13</b><br>Legion & Auxiliary Executive Meeting 6:30pm                                | <b>14</b><br><b>\$1.75 Draft 11:00am</b><br>Auxiliary Bingo (Domiciliary) 6:00pm-7:00pm | <b>15</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm | <b>16</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>SAL Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM                                               | <b>17</b><br>Quarter Paddle Auction 5:00pm-7:00pm<br>Queen of Hearts 6:00pm                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>18</b><br><b>Auxiliary Junior Meeting 3:00pm</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm                                             | <b>19</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>20</b><br>Legion & Auxiliary General Membership Meeting & Elections 6:30pm-7:30pm    | <b>21</b><br><b>\$1.75 Draft 1:00 PM</b><br>Pool - Sharp Shooters 7:00pm                | <b>22</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm | <b>23</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>Riders Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM<br>Bradley Graduation Party 8:00pm-10:00pm | <b>24</b><br><b>Sha Hall Rental 4:00pm-9:00pm</b><br>Queen of Hearts 6:00pm<br>Riders Roadkill Bingo 6:00pm-8:00pm                                                                                                       |
| <b>25</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm                                                                                       | <b>26</b><br><b>Memorial Day</b><br>Memorial Day Observance, Post Everlasting & Cookout 11:00am-3:00pm<br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00pm<br> | <b>27</b><br>Riders Meeting 6:30pm-7:30pm                                               | <b>28</b><br><b>\$1.75 Draft 1:00 PM</b><br>Auxiliary Bingo (Domiciliary) 6:00pm-7:00pm | <b>29</b><br>Bingo 3pm & 6:45pm | <b>30</b><br><b>Red Shirt Friday</b><br>Auxiliary Dinner 5:30pm-7:30pm<br>Texas Hold'em 7:00 PM                                         | <b>31</b><br><b>District Constitutional Conference 9:00am</b><br>Quarter Paddle Auction 5:00pm-7:00pm<br>Queen of Hearts 6:00pm<br> |

