



AMERICAN LEGION CHARLES F. THOMAS IV POST 117
189 VETERANS DRIVE • PALM BAY, FLORIDA 32909 (321)729-8089

The Thomas Times

May the coming year be filled with joy, laughter, and success

2025

HAPPY NEW YEAR

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Check Facebook and bulletin boards for more details.

Post 117 Directory

American Legion Officers

Commander Terry Struven
 1st Vice Commander.....Bruce Thurber
 2nd Vice Commander.....Ray Wright
 3rd Vice Commander.....Jimmy Donavon
 Adjutant.....Dana Jackson
 Finance OfficerBobby Dye
 ChaplainDonna Walkowiak
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Leo Belanger
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Bob Garry
 HistorianDana Jackson
 Judge Advocate.....Stanley Wood
 Service Officer.....Kevin McGarry
 Executive CommitteeChuck Body
 Executive Committee.....Jim Fournier
 Immediate Past Commander.....Bill Davidson

Auxiliary Officers

President Kim Oaks
 Parliamentarian.....MaryAnn Spellman
 1st Vice President.....Brenda Miskow
 2nd Vice President.....Vacant
 Treasurer Pat Luckey
 Secretary Rachael Nash
 Sergeant-at-Arms Lisa Meeks
 Asst. Sergeant-at-Arms.....Averi Krogh
 Chaplain.....Barbara Simons
 Historian.....Karen Humann
 Executive Committee.....Lorraine-Carrier Ryan
 Executive Committee.....Barbara Ward
 Executive Committee.....Rhonda Suelter
 Membership.....Brenda Miskow

Sons of the American Legion Officers

Squadron CommanderGreg Singler
 1st Vice Squadron Commander ..Bruce Walkowiak
 2nd Vice Squadron Commander .Keith Prine
 AdjutantAndy Campbell
 Finance OfficerDon Bilger
 ChaplainMike Miskow
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Eric Spellman
 Asst, Sergeant-at-ArmsTerry Cox
 HistorianAlvin Hill
 SAL Advisor.....Bruce Thurber

Legion Riders Officers

Director..... Robert Smith
 Assistant Director..... Stan Wood
 Secretary Sheila Cline
 Treasurer Bobby Dye
 Chaplain..... Brian Yancey
 Sergeant-at-Arms David Bolduc
 Historian..... Dana Jackson
 Road Captain..... Spencer Reinking
 Membership..... Vacant
 Merchandise Vacant

Honor Guard

Commander: Chris Livingston
 Members: Dawn Hanner
 Ed Milnor Sr. Bruce Walkowiak
 Leo Belanger Rowena Milnor
 Donna Walkowiak John Pettinicchio Jr.
 Andy Campbell

Ways & Means Committee

Chairman: Jimmy Donavon
 Members: Robert Smith
 Greg Singler Stan Wood
 Dana Jackson Bill Davidson
 Kim Oaks Ray Wright
 Brenda Miskow Bruce Walkowiak
 House Committee Chair: Leo Belanger

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*The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the American Legion, Post 117 or its affiliates.
 Editor: Dana Jackson <email: historian@all17.com*

2024-2025 Officers:
Basic Training—<https://legion.org/alei>

Department Merchandise
<https://www.floridalegion.org/resources/department-merchandise>



Commander's Corner

*Terry Struven
Commander,
American Legion
Post 117*

commander@all17.com

Well here we are saying Goodbye to 2024 and it seems like only yesterday that we were starting an exciting year at Post 117. In November we celebrated The Marines Birthday, Veterans Day on our float in the Palm Bay Parade, the ribbon cutting for our Veterans Healing Garden, Thanksgiving, Nov. birthdays Celebration and so much more. We are here to serve our Veterans, their families and our Community and that mission never changes. Each month brings new ways to reach out and make a difference.

In December were once again none stop with the Holiday parade, Veteran Food pantry giveaways, Angel tree for needy children, Kids Christmas party, Bartenders/employees Christmas party, Wreathes across America, Dec. birthdays Celebration, and more.

In January and February we will be carrying on with our numerous regular programs and coming up with some new ways to serve our Community. In January we will cohost a benefit for ALS in the form of an exciting Casino Night. There will also be a benefit in January for one of our own long time members who needs our support. We are here to serve and make a difference and we strive to do better every day.

In February, we will have a Super Bowl party and Valentine's Day party.

Come by and pick up a calendar and talk to us about what you can do to help. If you are curious about joining there is a very good chance you are eligible and I would love to help welcome you to our caring family.

Congratulations to all of our Volunteers of the Month. We thank you for volunteering to making Post 117 a better place.

Always remember to honor our American Legion ideals and may God Bless you, your family and God Bless the United States of America.

Commander Terry Struven



Greg Singler
Commander
Squadron 117

gregsingler@yahoo.com



Squadron 117, Sons of the American Legion

Hello everyone! Where has this year gone?? We have had a lot going on this year! Once again, our American Legion family has gone above and beyond these last couple of months! I hope everyone has had a great holiday season.

We were on a record setting goal to collect even more donations for Special Olympics so we can get our Diamond award this year at convention. The Special Olympics event will take place on February 1st. The fish fry turnout has been declining and we are looking at maybe doing something different for a change. We will see how it goes the next few months.

As we move forward in January and February, we will be concentrating on the Veterans fishing trip and collecting money to make that happen again this year at the end of May. Our goal is to raise at least \$7000 by then. We will be doing different raffles to accomplish this goal.

Membership is moving along, and we are over 70% already of our goal which is where we needed to be at by the end of November.

Also a special shout out to all of the SAL members that have been helping park cars on Tuesday nights!

Make sure to watch the TV's in the post and the bulletin board for upcoming events!

I can be reached at gregsingler@yahoo.com.

Thanks, God Bless and Happy Holidays,
Greg Singler
SAL Squadron Commander



Kim Oaks, President
oaksk@bellsouth.net



Auxiliary Unit 117

HAPPY NEW YEAR AND WELCOME 2025!

The Auxiliary has been very busy this year #buildingthehouse. Here's a recap of what we've been up to so far this year.

We have planted memorial trees, received the Poppy Day Proclamation for City of Palm Bay Mayor. We participated as a family at the Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard annual Reunion at Wickham Park.

Hosting Guest speakers at General Membership Meetings such as Brevard County Supervisor of Elections, Tim Bobanic "How To Be Voter Ready" and Serene Harbor "Domestic Violence Abuse Awareness."

Providing and delivering school supplies to six elementary schools in Palm Bay. Delivering meals to First Responders and presenting hand made lap robes to Veterans at assisted living centers.

Continuing our Auxiliary education by attending National Conventions, Department Conventions and Fall Conference. Attending District Meetings, Auxiliary Basic Concepts Schools, School of Instruction and The ALA Academy online. There is ALWAYS something new to learn.

We've volunteered with National Veterans Homeless Support helping at 5K runs. Preparing, packing and delivering more than 400 meals to our homeless and in need Veterans across the county. Donating gift cards for the Veterans in the Warm Full Safe Program and attending fundraising dinners.

There are over 362 hours clocked and more than \$130,000.00 of coupons clipped and shipped to our troops deployed over seas.

Community Service projects such as the Thanksgiving meal baskets, the Christmas meal baskets and the Purses with a Purpose for Serene Harbor.

Countless hours working in the Post kitchen and the honor of having our National Historian, Dara Oliver as a guest Volunteer for our September Sunday.

There is so much more to share but most importantly, I want to say Thank You to all who have stepped up to volunteer, working together for the betterment of the Unit and the Post home and for #buildingthehouse. I am so very grateful for each one of you and am so very proud to be working alongside such an amazing group of women!

Yours in Service,
Kim Oaks



MaryAnn Spellman
Chairman

Maryannspellman9@gmail.com



Unit 117 Juniors

Happy New Year,

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and New year; Our Future Leaders had a great year and did some amazing this and will continue to strive this year.

I would like to start by congratulating our Jr Volunteer of the Month for October was Michael Stephen Krogh Jr, and for November Travis Hamrick. These 2 Young SAL members went above and beyond and volunteered their time to support what we do as a Post Family.

Our annual Harvest fest took place on November 30 th . I want to thank everyone who came out and showed their support to our Future Leaders. They were able to raise funds for their events, to donate to special projects and to be able to attend conventions. They also picked 2 angels off the angel tree and shopped for the children in need to make sure they had gifts on Christmas morning.

Our Future leaders did another amazing job decorating the angel tree this year. With the support of our members, we were able to put smiles on 44 kids' faces for Christmas.

I would like to thank everyone for all the help with all the Jr's Holiday events, the children's Christmas Party was once again a great success. We had 57 kids attend and receive a gift from Santa, a great time was had by all. Thank you, 117 Riders, and PBFd for getting Santa to our post safely.

Our Future Leaders will be hosting a Softball Fundraiser on Saturday January 11th at 11am, the game will take place at Liberty Park. Sign up sheet is in the canteen, \$10 donation to sign up. This is going to be a fun event for everyone. We will head back to 117 for awards and our future leaders will be serving hot dogs.

Jr and Young SAL upcoming meeting will be Sunday January 19th at 12pm, and Sunday February 23rd at 12pm. Hope to see everyone there.

If you have a child/grandchild and would like them to be a part of our junior's, girls and boys are both welcome to join up to age 17. Please speak with Auxiliary 1st Vice / membership Brenda Miskow to enroll any girls, or SAL Squad 1st Vice Bruce Walkowiak for the boys. The membership dues are \$8.00 for the girls ALA Junior's and \$11.00 for the boys young SAL Members.

We intend on getting all the Jr's involved in as many Post 117 family events and programs as possible.

Please make sure I have your contact information, phone, and email so I can make sure you are getting all updates. Send to maryannspellman9@gmail.com We do not want anyone to miss out on the amazing things our Future Leaders will be doing this year.

For God & Country.

Warm Regards MaryAnn Spellman Jr Chairman



Robert Smith, Director,
Chapter 117
smittypj@gmail.com



Chapter 117, American Legion Riders

Dear Members and Friends,

As we step into the New Year, we would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to all who participated in our November and December events. Your support and dedication truly make a difference!

November Highlights: We honored our beloved member, Johnny, during his last ride on November 9th. Thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate his life and legacy. On November 11th, our members escorted the Honor Guard to local assisted living facilities, providing a meaningful tribute on Veterans Day.

December Tribute: On December 13th, we paid our respects to Mike Dowdy by escorting his remains to Cape Canaveral National Cemetery. We appreciate all riders who joined us in this solemn duty.

Special Recognition: A special shout-out to Dana Jackson for her incredible contributions to our chapter and the post. Dana organized the purchasing and wrapping of several dozen Christmas gifts for the children of our service members for the Tim Morris's Toys for Patrick Space Force Kids, bringing joy to many during the holiday season. Thank you Barbara Ward and Shiela Benard from Auxiliary for helping to wrap.

Upcoming Events:

- January 4th: Join us for a ride and event benefiting Marc DeLong, who is battling ALS. Let's come together to show our support.
- January 23rd: Our monthly steak shoot will be held at the post at 7 PM. Come out for great food and camaraderie!
- January 25th: We will host a benefit event and ride for Nancy Richert to assist with her medical bills following open heart surgery. Your participation will make a significant impact.
- January 30th: Bike nights return! Join us on the third Thursday of every month starting this January.
- February 1st: Help us raise funds for the Special Olympics through a benefit ride. Details to follow, but mark your calendars!

Let's continue the momentum and spirit of camaraderie as we embark on this new year together. Your involvement is what makes our chapter thrive!

Ride safe,
Smitty
American Legion Riders Chapter 117



*Donna Walkowiak
Chaplain*

Chaplain@all17.com

Chaplain's Corner

Here we are facing another year. It's a time to look forward with hope. To plan and pray for good times, good friends, and good health with the Lords blessing. It is also a time to reflect on the year passed. To remember warmly those we have lost and keep their loved ones in our prayers. To count the blessings we received and give thanks for them. We want to continue to pray for our members of our Legion Family that are ill or recovering, in hospitals, rehabs or at home. We pray they will be well and among our number soon. Let us pray for our nation as we enter a new administration; that change will be positive. Pray for peace for all peoples, for our military deployed around the globe that the Lord will keep them safe so they can come home to their families.

I need to give thanks to our members that presented wreaths for the branches of our military at our Wreaths across America ceremony and for the Honor Guard that escorted them. I thank everyone that attended. I also want to express my appreciation to everyone that prayed for and visited members that I posted on the Chaplains Board and in Chaplains Corner. This Post has helped so many and poured out its support for the community and family. Lets make it another great year of giving.

Upcoming in February will be our Four Chaplains Ceremony on February 2nd.

Currently in Rehab: Kathy Mc Manus, John (Santa) Pettinicchio, Bruce Thurber is at home recuperating.

Passed; Michael Dowdy, Ellen Davidson

Donna Walkowiak
Chaplain



BE THE ONE

Click on the Be The One to go to the website to learn more!

Post Meetings ••• Post Meetings ••• Post Meetings ••• Post Meetings

- Legion EC Meeting, 2nd Thursday, 5:30pm
- Legion Meeting, 3rd Wednesday, 7:00 pm
- SAL Meeting, 2nd Wednesday, 6:30 pm
- Auxiliary EC Meeting, 2nd Monday, 6:00 pm
- Auxiliary Meeting, 3rd Thursday, 7:00 pm
- Legion Riders Meeting, 1st Thursday, 6:30 pm
- Legion Riders EC Meeting, 3rd Monday, 6:00 pm
- Ways & Means Committee, Last Monday, 6:00 pm



Hall/Pavilion Rental

Our Post Hall or Pavilion are available to rent for special functions, weddings, anniversary & birthday parties, etc.

Please contact the Canteen Manager at (321) 729-8089 (canteen@all17.com) for facility information, rental availability, and price

Did you Know if you purchase Florida Legion 50/50 Raffle, some proceeds benefit Post 117? Take a picture of QR code & it takes you to site to buy tickets.



fllegion.fanthen.io

MERCHANDISE SALES

Legion Items For Sale

Legion T-Shirt	\$20
Legion Polo with pocket	\$35
Legion License Plate.....	\$5

Riders Items For Sale

(For special orders contact Riders Merchandise Person)

All Men's Shirts	\$20
All Ladies Shirts	\$20
All 3x/4x shirts are special order.....	TBD
Small Riders Patch	\$10
Medium Riders Patch	\$20
Large Riders Patch	\$50

SAL Items For Sale

US Flag (3x5)	\$25
POW/MIA Flag	\$30
SAL T-Shirts (Red or Blue)	\$10

AUX Items For Sale

Auxiliary Ladies V-Neck T-Shirts	\$15
Black Half Staff Ribbon	\$15

See the bartender to purchase merchandise!

Visit the Post 117 Facebook Pages & Website

[American Legion Post 117](#)

[American Legion SAL Squadron 117](#)

[American Legion Auxiliary Unit 117](#)

[Legion Riders FL Chapter 117](#)

www.all17.com

**Thank You
Members & Staff!**

2024 Volunteer's of the Month



August 2024—Agnes Garry



September 2024—
Kristina Walton

September 2024—
Junior: Serenity Jackson



October 2024—Jesse Suelter



October 2024—Junior:
Michael Steven Krogh Jr.

November 2024—
Junior: Travis Hamrick



We thank all
of you for
volunteering.
November 2024:
Agnes Garry



U.S Veterans Holiday's and Important Events

January

January 1st—New Year's Day

January 9th—Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

January 16th—National Religious Freedom Day

January 20th—Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 27th—International Holocaust Remembrance Day

February

February 1st—National Freedom Day

February 7th—National Wear Red Day

February 12th—Lincoln's Birthday

February 14th—Valentine's Day

February 17th—President's Day

February 19th—Coast Guard Reserve Birthday

District 12 Important Dates for 2024-25
Updated as of 8/5/24


DATE	ACTIVITY	CITY	Post
8/17/24	SAL Meeting	Melbourne	394
8/31/24	Dinner @1700	St John	359
9/7/24	AL Meeting	Palm Bay	117
10/19/24	District Picnic	Melbourne	81
11/30/24	SAL Meeting	Port St Lucie	318
12/14/24	AL Meeting	Melbourne	81
1/18/24	Dinner @1700	Palm bay	117
2/8/25	SAL Meeting	Cocoa	22
2/8/25	Eastern Area Ball @1500	Palm Bay	117
2/15/25	AL Meeting	Cocoa	22
3/15/25	District Picnic	Palm Bay	117
4/26/25	Home Coming After AL DCC	Palm Bay	117
5/3/25	SAL DCC	Palm Bay	394
4/27/25	AL DCC @1100	Palm bay	117

A Western Casino Night
January 4, 2025
4:00-9:00

GAME TABLES
ROULETTE PRIZES BLACK JACK

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
CRAPS POKER

FOOD CASH BAR




Benefit for Mark Delong and ALS Association

American Legion Post 117
189 Veterans Dr. SE Palm Bay

(Casino Party USA)
Contact: Mary Ann DomBek;
321-704-0179

Ride to help a Navy Veteran diagnosed with ALS.

Stops at Yehaw Junction & Camp Holly
January 4th
KSU 11:30 @ American Legion Post 117
Riders \$15 Passengers \$5



Mark Delong was diagnosed with ALS this year and it's progressing rapidly. He was always one to be there when others were in need. Let's be there for him. A portion of the proceeds will go to the ALS Association

Stay around after the ride for the Casino night benefit from 4-9

Hosted by AL 117 Family Future Leaders
American Legion Post 117 Family

SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

Wear your favorite Team Jersey After Party at 117

Sign Up Sheet in the Canteen \$10 Registration

11 January 2025 11am

Liberty Park
895 Carlyle Ave
Palm Bay, FL 32908

Proceeds go to Children & Youth Program

American Legion Post 117
189 Veterans Dr SE
Palm Bay, FL 32909
PRESENTS

FOOD PANTRY
FOR ALL AMERICAN LEGION MEMBERS, VETERANS & THEIR FAMILIES



JAN 11 & 25TH | 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

2ND & 4TH SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
A COMMUNITY SHARING VEGGIES, FRUIT & MORE
FIRST COME FIRST SERVE
PLEASE PROVIDE ID UPON REQUEST
BRING A BAG
POC: COMMANDER TERRY STRUVEN, 321-729-8089

Join us for a
Legion Family Benefit
for Nancy Richert

Includes Music by Doc Holiday, Raffles, food and lots more fun!

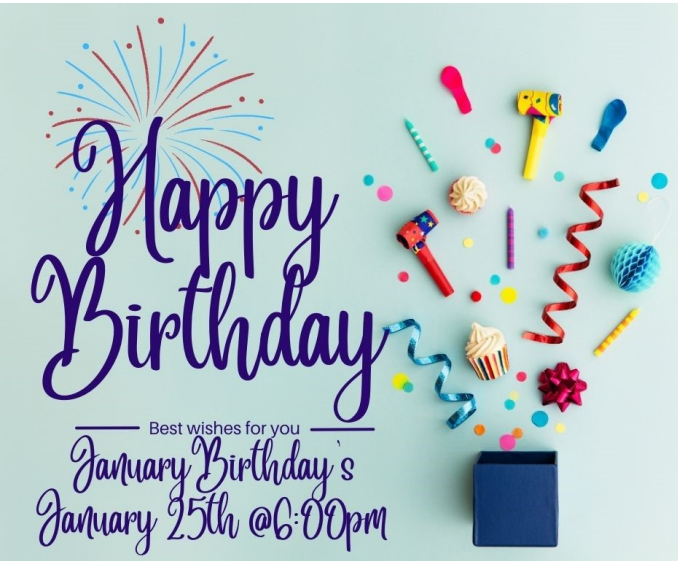



25th January 12:00-4:00 PM
DONT MISS THIS AWESOME EVENT!

All proceeds benefit Nancy Richert
American Legion Post 117

Happy Birthday

Best wishes for you
January Birthday's
January 25th @6:00pm





**Upcoming Months:
(Dates are tentative and subject to change)**

- Volunteer Appreciation Day Picnic—Mar 1st**
- District 12 Picnic at Post 117—Mar 15th**
- Richard Phillips Down Biker Fund 8th Birthday Bash—Mar 22nd**
- Project Vet Relief Fundraiser—Mar 29th**
- Department Children & Youth Picnic—Apr 5th**
- In-State Unity Ride Post 117 Visit—Apr 9th**
- Junior Spring Fling & Easter Party—Apr 19th**
- Easter Brunch—Apr 20th**
- AL DCC Post 117—Apr 27th**