



The American Legion

Bruckenthal - Cann Post 385 Newsletter



Serving Weston, Pembroke Pines, Miramar, Davie, Southwest Ranches & Sunrise

Winter 2011

Organized June 16, 2005 Website: www.alpost385fl.com

Volume 6 Number 1

From your Commander

Well, here went another year. Our Post keeps on growing.

We have met all the quotas required by the Legion. Our commitment to the local JROTC Programs continue at full blast and we are slowly getting involved in the Wounded Warrior Programs.

Last week our Chaplain Bob Nagle, Vice Commander James Tewes, Adjutant Joe Motes and yours truly went to the Nininger Veterans Nursing Home and donated in behalf of the Post, 90 T-Shirts, 90 pairs of socks an amount of personal health items and last but not least a Karaoke player that was the number one item in their Wish List.

I urge all the members to visit the home. You will feel good going there.

Remember, you might be there in the future!!!!

Wishing all our members a Happy and Healthy New Year.

For God and Country
Al Darby Commander

From the Adjutant's Desk

My Fellow Post 385 Legionnaires,

The past 6 months have been very active, by all the photos in this issue you will see, we participated with the City of Pembroke Pines in the 9/11 and Veterans Day ceremonies, the Wreaths Across America ceremony, Christmas Eve with our Veterans at the Nininger Nursing home and hosted our 1st Annual 5K Run "Saluting Veterans". We also participated in several Poppies at Wal-Mart and Publix to raise money to support our Veterans and Youth Programs. This coming year we will be sending our 2nd student from West Broward High to Boys State in Tallahassee and we will have another student to represent us in the Oratorical Contest. Everglades and West Broward High JROTC Battalions will each have two teams participating in the American Legion Shooting Sports program.

Thanks to Yolanda Santos, our Publicity Officer, we now have a FaceBook page, and we have been interviewed by our local newspaper on 3 occasion.

In Membership, we ended the year 2011 with a 101.5% which earned us some needed cash award prices.

This membership percentage will increase some as the Legion year ends June 30th, 2012 and there are some members that have not rewed.

The 5K Run was a great success due to the hard work put in by Chaplain Bob Nagle. We are the only Legion Post in Florida to host a 5K Run. We hope it will continue to grow, if you know any business that would like to be a sponsor or donate, remember, we are a non-profit 501(c)19. Thanks.

For God and Country,
Joseph Motes, Adjutant



Javier Farinas, Manager of our Wal-mart was presented a plaque for their support of our Post, much of our expenses to support our Veterans and Children and Youths were earned from donations received at Wal-Mart.

Special Thanks to Chaplain Bob Nagle for the printing of this newsletter.

OUR MEETINGS FOR THE 2012:

FEBRUARY 7, 2012
MARCH 6, 2012
APRIL 3, 2011
MAY 1, 2012

**Our Post meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm
at the YWCA Pembroke Falls Aquatic Center**

Please check our website for the map or call me for information on each months meeting.

954-441-8735 or 954-559-3202.

REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN POST 385 MEMBERS

Our Post 385 Commander would kindly request that all Post members make arrangements for relatives or friends to notify our Post upon your passing so that we can properly honor your military service and membership in the American Legion.



For God and Country

Now Open
Show your veteran pride
Get your 385 gear
Visit us at:
www.alpost385fl.com

AMERICAN LEGION POST 385

Ink & Toner and cell phone Recycling Program

Save your ink and toner cartridges from printers, faxes and copiers From home, office and businesses.

We are also asking for old USA Flags.

Bring them to the meetings or call Joe Motes at 954-559-3202 to arrange a pickup and We'll recycle them for CASH to help Post 385.

They must be original name brands such as HP, Dell, Xerox, Lexmark, Brother, IBM Canon, Ricoh, Sharp, Pitney Bowes, etc.

Remember Cell Phones Too
(Sorry, NO previously refilled or remanufactured)



The McDonald Team BUY, SELL OR RENT

We are proud to support the
American Legion and the men and women
of the United States Armed Forces



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The DMV connects with Veterans

Florida implemented the "Florida Vets Connect" initiative in July, a program designed to better recognize Florida's veterans and provide them with information about the benefits they may be entitled to collect. So far, nearly 30,000 Florida veterans have been contacted.

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles allows veterans to identify their veteran status when applying for or renewing a license or ID card. The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs then uses that contact information to make sure the vets know about the benefits to which they're entitled. Since the DHSMV is using existing computer systems, the new program doesn't cost the taxpayers any additional money.

According to the state, more than 1.6 million veterans live in Florida, but as of July, the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs only had accurate contact information for approximately 700,000. Nationwide, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Magazine reported more than \$22 billion in veterans' pension funds go unclaimed annually.

If you are a veteran but you're not registered with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, be sure to let the DHSMV know so that your name can be added to the database.

Press Release:

'Florida Vets Connect' Connects Nearly 30,000 Florida Veterans with Benefits

11/10/2010

CONTACT: Kevin Cate, (850) 413-2842

TALLAHASSEE – Florida CFO Alex Sink today announced that the 'Florida Vets Connect' initiative, designed to better recognize Florida's veterans and provide them with information about the benefits they may be entitled to through their brave service to our country, has already contacted nearly 30,000 Florida veterans.

"The success of this initiative is a testament to the commitment of our state to honor our veterans with the benefits that they've earned," said CFO Sink. "Every day of the year, but especially on the eve of Veterans Day, it's important to recognize the sacrifice of our veterans and their families."

This joint initiative with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) and the Florida Department of Highway and Safety Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) allows veterans to voluntarily identify their veteran status when applying for or renewing a license or ID card. Their contact information is then used by Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs to ensure Florida's veterans are provided information about the benefits to which they may be entitled.

At no cost to taxpayers, 'Florida Vets Connect' utilizes driver license offices as an intake point to gather information on veterans not currently in the state system. The DHSMV collects, stores, and makes this information available to the

collects, stores, and makes this information available to the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The program began during the regular DHSMV system update in July.

"I commend CFO Sink and her team for the idea and for facilitating implementation of Florida Vets Connect," said DHSMV Executive Director Julie L. Jones. "The initiative uses the Department's existing resources to help more veterans gain access to benefits they have earned through their military service, and DHSMV is proud to partner with FDVA."

"We also acknowledge the superb efforts of the late LeRoy Collins Jr. in implementing this worthwhile initiative," said FDVA Interim Executive Director Bob Milligan.



Peter Moore, Charter Post member vacationed in Honolulu along with a visit to Pearl Harbor.



Post members were present at the Pembroke Pines 9/11 Memorial ceremonies on May 30th, 2011.



Post members Bob Nagle and Joe Motes attended Wreaths Across America and laid 7 wreaths on past post members laid to rest at South Florida VA National Cemetery in Lake Worth.



Post members attended the Applebee's Veterans Day by greeting customers for about an hour, interview is available on Facebook. Afterward we enjoyed a nice free meal.



Members of Post 385 had a get together at Applebees in Southwest Ranches as a fund raiser sponsored by Applebee's.



City of Pembroke Pines 9/11 Ceremonies and YMCA Thank You for the Veterans and members of Post 385 with volunteer student servers from West Broward High School.



West Broward High Boys State student Robert Kaupp visited our Post during our September meeting to talk to our members about his experiences in Tallahassee.

Joe Motes, Al Darby, James Tewes and Bob Nagle presented gifts to the Veterans at the Alexander Nininger Nursing home on Christmas Eve.



PRIMERICA

Robert 'Bob' Nagle
Representative (ID: WYLW6)

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Joe Motes presented Certificate of Appreciation to the Pembroke Pines CAP for their help in our 5K Run.

Chaplain's Corner by Bob Nagle

What is a Veteran?

A "Veteran" – whether active duty,
discharged, retired, or reserve
is someone who,
at one point in his life,
wrote a blank check made payable to
"The United States of America"
for an amount
"up to, and including his life."

America's Forgotten Prisoners of War

Ahmed Altaie and Bowe Bergdahl are rare U.S. soldiers captured by the enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Ahmed Altaie and Bowe Bergdahl—one born 1965 in Baghdad, the other two decades later in Hailey, Idaho—wouldn't seem to have much in common. But this weekend, as Americans celebrate the new year and our independence, Altaie and Bergdahl share a unique, practically unknown bond: They are the only two known U.S. soldiers currently held captive as prisoners of war.

Over the past decade, the U.S. has deployed more than two million troops abroad, with hundreds of thousands in war zones at any one time. Yet in a sign of how much warfare has changed since the time of Washington, Grant or even Westmoreland, prisoners of war in Afghanistan and Iraq have been few in number and low in profile. Today there is one in each theater, an unusual symmetry that seems to magnify the solitude and difficulty of their plights.

Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl has been a captive of the Taliban since June 30, 2009. He was a 23-year-old private at the time, about a half-year into his first deployment. The circumstances of his capture remain murky, but one way or another he fell into enemy hands in rural Paktika province, a mountainous region along Afghanistan's border with Pakistan.

His Taliban captors immediately began treating him as a trophy, posting videos online in which he pleads for his release, praises the military prowess of the Afghan insurgency, criticizes the U.S. war effort, and equates his captivity to the detention of Afghans by U.S. and coalition forces.

One such video appeared on Christmas Day 2009. The latest was this April, in which Sgt. Bergdahl pleaded: "Every day I want to go home. The pain in my heart to see my family again doesn't get any smaller. Release me, please. I am begging you. Bring me home." Said a U.S. military spokesman last year: "The continuing use of Bergdahl as a means of propaganda is a deplorable act and only fuels our efforts to find him and bring him home."



Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl with one of his Taliban captors.

In the case of Staff Sgt. Ahmed Altaie, there have been no internet propaganda videos—and, indeed, no proof of life for more than four years.

Staff Sgt. Altaie was captured on Oct. 23, 2006, in the Karada neighborhood of Baghdad. A 41-year-old Iraqi-American serving as an interpreter in the U.S. Army, he had married a Baghdadi woman in early 2006. When he arrived for a visit to her family's home that October day, as he had many times before—in civilian clothes, on a motorcycle, and not authorized by the U.S. military to be there—he was grabbed, thrown in a car, and driven off.

In the weeks that followed, a Shiite militia claimed to be holding him alive. The group circulated a cellphone video of him (without audio) and discussed a ransom with his Iraqi relatives, but all communication stopped by early 2007. Lacking the kind of new information that periodically appears regarding Sgt. Bergdahl, Staff Sgt. Altaie's case is almost completely out of view.



SSG Ahmed Altaie

Among those trying to change that is James Van Thach, a retired U.S. Army captain and Iraq war veteran who since 2009 has administered a Facebook group calling for Staff Sgt. Altaie's release.

Though Capt. Thach never met Staff Sgt. Altaie, he says he was drawn to his story as a quintessentially American immigrant tale. Having arrived in the U.S. in 1987, Staff Sgt. Altaie enlisted in the military even before becoming an American citizen in 2006.

"I wanted to provide a platform for this man, a naturalized U.S. citizen, a volunteer in his 40s to join the U.S. Army Reserves when he did not have to," says Capt. Thach, himself the American-born son of a woman who left South Vietnam for New York City in 1973. Today the Facebook group has more than 5,500 members.

Meantime, in Hailey, Idaho—where Sgt. Bergdahl is universally known as "Bowe"—yellow ribbons and stickers with his picture adorn cars, lamp posts and store fronts. Zaney's, the coffeeshop where he worked for two years, is the town's hub for seeking news and sharing sympathies.

It was at Zaney's on May 28 that Idaho radio host Kevin Miller began a "Freedom Walk" to highlight Bowe's case. "We have this soldier coming into his third year in captivity and we don't hear anything about it unless there's a new video," he told me. "I can't believe this hasn't been a bigger story."

Eight days and 142 miles after setting out, Mr. Miller arrived, limping, and held a rally at the state Capitol in Boise, where the grand Corinthian columns are wrapped in giant yellow ribbons and will remain so as long as Bowe is captive.

Here's hoping that he and Staff Sgt. Altaie get to lead a parade in person—to celebrate a New Year's Day.



Above are photos of our First Annual 5K Run "Saluting Veterans" which was held on Veterans Day weekend. We had 187 runners along with help from Everglades and West Broward JROTC battalions and the Pines CAP. A BIG THANKS to Bob Nagle for all his hard work in organizing this project which turned out to be profitable.

**Nathan Bruckenthal - Adam Cann Memorial
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Service Officer's Report

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today that all of its 152 medical centers are now actively represented on Facebook, the world's largest social networking site.

"This event marks an important milestone in the overall effort to transform how VA communicates with Veterans and provide them the health care and benefits they have earned," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "Veterans and their families told us from the beginning that they want to engage and they want relevant information delivered at the local level. By leveraging Facebook, the Department continues to expand access to VA, and embrace transparency and two-way conversation."

VA currently has over 345,000 combined Facebook subscribers (or, "fans"). The Department's main Facebook page has over 154,000 fans and its medical centers have a combined subscribership of over 69,000. The Department plans to continue expanding its Facebook presence while also focusing on bringing Twitter to every VA medical center as well.

2011 - 2012 Post 385 Officers

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Pembroke Pines Veterans Park on Pines Blvd, just some of our bricks from members of Post 385. The center brick is the Post brick.

Post 385 Taps

Leonard Saver	01/06/06
Stewart Fraser	09/01/06
Frank Fong	03/24/07 charter member
John B. Franz	09/05/07
Jack Finkelstein	09/07/07
Joseph Buchler	10/07/07
Helen Franz	10/24/07
Myron Pavlik	11/18/07
Juan R. Zayas	12/29/07
Morris Weinstein	04/03/08
John A. Sexton	04/09/08
Andrew Hudson	07/07/08
Raymond G. Chote	2008
Eugene V. Palermo	10/11/08
Alvin Harold Chanin	03/15/09
Anthony J. Radzville	02/03/09
Fred Green	03/24/09
William Engel	01/31/10
Barrett Balsam	04/01/10
Felix Giuffre	04/10/10
Frank Dingfelder	06/24/10 Post Vice Cmdr.
Robert J. Dolin	06/26/10
Luis A. Soto	07/21/10
Vincent W. Shevlin	10/12/10
William Spiekerman	03/20/11
Rene "Al" Kirouac	04/08/11
Guy F. Walters	05/03/11
Edward J. Bleyer	09/06/11
Cooper Camp	09/18/11