



September/October 2024

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

# The Thomas Times

## Let's Fall into Halloween

Post Directory	2
Commander's Corner	3
SAL	4
Unit 117 Juniors	5
Legion Riders	6
Chaplain's Corner	7
Post Meetings	8
Merchandise & Services	9
U.S. Veterans Holidays & Events	10
September/October Flyers	11-13



**Let your soul wear a mask of love and kindness this Halloween"**



**Check Facebook and bulletin boards for more details.**

## Post 117 Directory

### American Legion Officers

Commander.....Terry Struven  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander.....Bruce Thurber  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander.....Ray Wright  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander.....Jimmy Donavon  
 Adjutant.....Dana Jackson  
 Finance Officer.....Bobby Dye  
 Chaplain.....Donna Walkowiak  
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Leo Belanger  
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Bob Garry  
 Historian.....Dana Jackson  
 Judge Advocate.....Stanley Wood  
 Service Officer.....Kevin McGarry  
 Executive Committee.....Chuck Body  
 Executive Committee.....Jim Fournier  
 Immediate Past Commander.....Bill Davidson

### Auxiliary Officers

President.....Kim Oaks  
 Parliamentarian.....MaryAnn Spellman  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President.....Brenda Miskow  
 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Commander.....Greg Singler  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Squadron Commander..Bruce Walkowiak  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Squadron Commander .Keith Prine  
 Adjutant.....Andy Campbell  
 Finance Officer.....Don Bilger  
 Chaplain.....Mike Miskow  
 Sergeant-at-Arms.....Eric Spellman  
 Asst, Sergeant-at-Arms.....Terry Cox  
 Historian.....Alvin 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:  
 Ed Milnor Sr. Dawn Hanner  
 Leo Belanger Bruce Walkowiak  
 Donna Walkowiak Rowena Milnor  
 Andy Campbell John Pettinicchio Jr.

### Ways & Means Committee

Chairman: Jimmy Donavon

Members:  
 Greg Singler Robert Smith  
 Dana Jackson Stan Wood  
 Kim Oaks Bill Davidson  
 Brenda Miskow Ray Wright  
 Bruce Walkowiak

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 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](https://www.floridalegion.org/resources/department-merchandise)**



## Commander's Corner

*Terry Struven  
Commander,  
American Legion  
Post 117*

commander@all17.com

With the summer coming to an end, we are working towards making September and October two exciting months at our Post 117. One thing is for sure we are growing our membership daily and our new members are bringing with them some great ideas for activities and programs for our Post. I appreciate hearing from long time members and new members who truly understand our Legion Mission. We are here to help all Veterans and their families and work with our local community to improve the lives of all residents whenever possible.

In July and August, it was again a 117 family/group effort to keep things moving forward at our wonderful Post. All new 2024/2025 Volunteer Officers are in place and working hard daily for the good of the Post and its members. July 4th was a great Food Contest again this year with winners in 3 categories - Best Homemade main dish, Appetizer, and Dessert. Next Food contest will be New Years Eve so plan on entering your favorite dish. Every day is busy at our Post, some more than others but we are always striving to come up with new ideas or bring back old ones that make folks happy. Our 2nd Vice Ray has added lunches Monday thru Friday from 11 am to 2 pm and the participation has been wonderful. He is also again making some delicious Chef salads that were so popular in the past and exciting daily specials.

A new program has just been approved by our Executive Committee to work with our legion members to create a therapeutic/healing/hands on gardening experience on the property with the working title of - Soldiers in Service-P.T.S.D. Healing Gardens. With the tragic number of 22 Veteran suicides a day it is our very real obligation to try to reach out to our brothers and sisters in need in any way that works towards "Be the One" that makes a difference. Ask how you can help as this program grows.

We celebrated our 2nd US military branch birthday with honoring the 234th Birthday of the US Coast Guard with a proper tribute and cake. The NFL season started with preseason games on August 8th. Everyone seems ready to follow their favorite teams here at our Post 117. For our members and their guests, we have delicious Wings and food from our kitchen, some great entertainment 3 times a week, Ace of Spades game, Show Me The Money game, Corn Hole Tournaments, Free Food giveaways and so much more happening every month.

For September, we will celebrate the 3rd US military branch birthday with the US Air Force on September 18 at 430pm. On September 11th our Post 117 family will be doing our annual deliveries of a delicious lunch meal to our local First Responders. Always remember and appreciate all that they do for all of us. Check upcoming info on ceremonies Sept 11 at 1pm and on Sep 21th POW/MIA Recognition Day remembering those that were in captivity & now laid to rest and those that are still missing. Sep 30th is last day to pay for 2025 membership dues for Early Bird Dinner.

In October, Cake celebration for those members with birthdays Oct 5th at 6pm, SAL will be hosting 2nd Annual Tom Wood Memorial Run & Fundraiser for Special Olympics-Oct 12th, 4th military branch birthday—249th Navy Birthday-Oct 13th, Early Bird Dinner on Oct 19th along with D12 Picnic at Post 81. The Auxiliary will have the Witches Hat Party on Oct 25th at 5pm, Kids Halloween Party Oct 26 from 1-3pm along with Adult Costume Party at 6:30pm.

Be sure to check our Facebook page and our calendar and bulletin board to see all of the activities and programs your Post 117 offers.

For God and Country. Always stay true to our American Legion  
Commander Terry



Greg Singler  
Commander  
Squadron 117

gregsingler@yahoo.com



## Squadron 117, Sons of the American Legion

Hello Everyone, from the desk of your new commander Gregory J. Singler:

Reminder to all the Sons of the American Legion members, it is time to renew your membership for 2025. Early bird gets the worm, Cutoff for early membership renewal is September 30th . All members who are paid up by September 30th will have the opportunity to receive a free early bird dinner. The dinner will be held Saturday, October 19th 2024.

The Sons held their meeting on July 10th, The following were discussed:

- \*Received a \$100 check from Amy (Willies girlfriend)

- \*Andy will be working with Dana on a 2025 scrapbook

- \*We need hours and miles turned in Quarterly. Please give Andy those numbers and what they were for once per quarter. TRACKING SHEETS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

- \*Millie and Andy are coordinating the 9/11 luncheon. Volunteers are greatly appreciated. See Andy if you would like to help out.

- \*The 2nd Annual Tom Wood Memorial Run & Fundraiser event will be held on October 12th

- \*Santa John is back in Melbourne. His phone number is available upon request.

- \*Next fishing trip for veterans will be May 31, 2025. Signup sheet will be available soon. Special Olympics Event will be February 1st . Our goal is to raise \$50,000 for Special Olympics this year.

Thank you,  
Gregory J. Singler  
Sons of the American Legion Squadron Commander



*MaryAnn Spellman*  
Chairman

*Maryannspellman9@gmail.com*



## Unit 117 Juniors

Greetings,

I hope everyone had a great summer and everyone had a great 1st day of school. I can't wait to see and hear about all that our 117 Family Future Leaders are learning and accomplishing this year.

We are off to a great start this year. 4 Jr's attended Workshop in August and learned so much about our Auxiliary Programs and what we do to our Veterans and the Community.

Our Jr's and Young SAL are welcome to attend the Early Bird Dinner this year on October 19th. Ray will be providing Chicken Tenders and Fries. Dues must be paid by September 30th to get the early bird stamp. Please let me know if any Jr's or Young SAL members will be attending so I can get a head count to Commander Terry and Ray.

The annual Kids Halloween Party will be held on Saturday, October 26th from 1-3pm. We are all looking forward to seeing the great costumes again this year. This event is for 117 members ONLY. We will be looking for candy donations to fill the kid's bags. There will be a sign-up sheet posted in the canteen the 1st week of October as well as the candy donation box in the hall.

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 \$11.00 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](mailto:maryannspellman9@gmail.com). If you are not part of the Family Future Leaders FB, send me a friend request so I can add you. 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 Riders,

As you may have heard, I have taken over as the new Riders Director. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the incoming officers for their willingness to volunteer and step up for the team. Your commitment is vital to our continued success!

I also want to take a moment to recognize the outgoing officers for their hard work and dedication, particularly Jeff Cox. Your contributions have made a lasting impact, and we truly appreciate everything you have done for us.

A special thanks goes out to Shannon Cox for organizing the dinner on Friday, August 2nd. It was a wonderful dinner!

Looking ahead, I'm pleased to announce that Bike Night will continue on the last Thursday of each month through September. Mark your calendars and join us for some great rides and camaraderie!

Additionally, on September 11, we will honor our local heroes by delivering meals to our police, fire departments, and EMTs, just as we've done in previous years. It's our way of showing appreciation for their hard work and dedication to our community.

Thank you all for your continued support and enthusiasm. Let's make this upcoming year one of our best yet!

Ride safe,  
Robert Smith  
Riders Director



**#capturetheplaque**





*Donna Walkowiak  
Chaplain*

*Chaplain@all17.com*

## Chaplain's Corner

September 11th is a time to remember the lives impacted by the attacks on our country. People lost friends and neighbors; families were torn apart. This isn't something that we just get over. The horror we watched, the fear we felt impacted us all. We must remember the brave that ran into the horror that was September 11th. They put themselves in harms' way to rescue what were to them, strangers. Many of these first responders are today dealing with illness caused by their exposure to the toxic chemicals that were in the air. We are blessed to have a core of people we call first responders. They are the ones who step up to the plate to serve our community and our country everyday. Taking the oath of up to and including their lives. On September 11th we are reminded to honor them, pray for their safety and respect the sacrifice they and their families make.

September also holds POW/MIA day as well as Gold Star Family Day. This is a somber month of remembrances. Make time to reflect and count our many blessings as we remember those we lost.

I want to thank everyone that came together in prayer when it was requested. We have two members now in rehab that started out in ICU, sedated. Please add to your prayers those that are ill, or injured that don't want me to put them in Chaplains Corner for whatever reason they have to keep it to themselves. We can still pray for the health and healing of all our members.

God Bless,  
Donna Walkowiak  
Chaplain



# BE THE ONE

## 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.



## 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

## Visit the Post 117 Facebook Pages

American Legion Post 117  
 American Legion SAL Squadron 117  
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 117  
 Legion Riders FL Chapter 117

## Membership

**Renew your 2025 Membership by 1 year renewal or 3-year membership.**

# **U.S Veterans Holiday's and Important Events**

## **September**

**Month of September—National Suicide Prevention Month**  
**Month of September—National Service Dog Month**  
**First Monday of September—Labor Day**  
**September 2nd—V-J Day (Victory over Japan)**  
**September 11th—Patriot Day**  
**September 17-23rd—Constitution Week (Citizenship Day)**  
**September 15-October 15th—Hispanic Heritage Month**  
**September 18th—Air Force (USAF) Birthday**  
**September 18th—Air National Guard Birthday**  
**Third Friday in September—National POW/MIA Recognition Day**  
**Last Sunday in September—Gold Star Mother's Day**  
**September 29th—VFW Day**

## **October**

**Month of October—Breast Cancer Awareness Month**  
**Second Monday in October—Columbus Day (Indigenous Peoples Day)**  
**October 13th—U.S. Navy (USN) Birthday**  
**October 27th—Navy Day**  
**October 31st—Halloween**

American Legion Post 117 Family

# 9/11

**We Will Never Forget**

Delivering food to all of our Fire Police and ER Personnel on 9/11

**Wednesday, September 11**

**Menu:**  
Pulled Pork  
Beans  
Coke Slaw  
Pasta and Potato Salads  
Rolls  
Dessert

American Legion Post 117  
189 Veterans Drive  
Palm Bay  
Serving Lunch 11pm to 2pm  
\$10 for public  
Free for First Responders

Ceremony At 1 pm at Post 117

For More Information  
Visit our Facebook page




## Hispanic Heritage Month

Sep 15 - Oct 15th

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

**All American Legion Members & their Families Food Pantry**

Everyone can use a break from grocery prices!

A Community sharing food, veggies, fruit and more  
First Come First Serve  
We do not know quantity, so please be patient.

**2nd & 4th  
Saturday of the  
Month**

September 14th from 10am - 12pm  
September 28th from 10am - 12pm


Please be prepared to show membership card.  
Bring a shopping bag.



Helping Veterans & Families one day at a time!

## National POW/MIA Recognition Day

#ourpromise



American Legion Post 117  
189 Veterans Dr SE  
Palm Bay, FL 32909  
September 21, 2024  
Time 12:00

Contact: Dana Jackson, Adjutant  
719-459-6334  
www.al117.com

## FUNDRAISER

TO BENEFIT THE PALM BAY POLICE FOUNDATION  
& PALM BAY SWAT TEAM

SUPPORT THE PALM BAY SWAT TEAM.  
DONATIONS WILL SUPPORT PALM BAY SWAT'S ATTENDANCE AT THE 2024 SWAT ROUND-UP.

500 EVENT TICKETS INCLUDE ENTRY AND MEAL.  
EVENT AND RAFFLE TICKETS MAY BE PURCHASED BY CONTACTING:

LT. GRAVES  
305-446-8940  
Sgt. MONTES  
305-102-9247  
OR FROM ANY MEMBER OF PALM BAY SWAT

**PALM BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
S.W.A.T.  
FIREARM RAFFLE  
TICKETS: 1 FOR \$10, OR 3 FOR \$25

SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2024, 2:00 PM  
AMERICAN LEGION POST 117  
189 VETERANS DR.  
PALM BAY, FL 32909

SEPTEMBER 27TH - NOVEMBER 10TH

**FROGBONES**  
Palm Bay Shooting Range

**KELTEC**

FN 503  
"OR FIREARM OF EQUIVALENT VALUE"

KELTEC R50 DEFENDER

CARAYSAF FEAR 110

# Happy Birthday

Best wishes for you

September Birthdays  
September 28th @6:00




Catch Sunday Football  
at  
American Legion Post 117  
Starting September 8th



## PURSES WITH A PURPOSE

to benefit Serene Harbor a local emergency shelter for domestic violence survivors.

ALA UNIT 117 IS COLLECTING GENTLY USED PURSES AND FILLING THEM WITH HYGIENE ITEMS.

PLEASE HAVE YOUR DONATIONS AT THE POST NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 6TH  
Shampoo / Conditioner  
Body Wash / Deodorant  
Tampons / Pads  
Toothbrush / Toothpaste  
Hair Brush / Hair Ties  
Tissues / Lip Balms

NOW thru  
OCTOBER  
6, 2024

We will be presenting these filled purses to Serene Harbor at our October 17th General Membership Meeting @ 7:00



How about a **FREE**  
Chicken Parmesan Dinner

2025 Dues can now be paid

**Be an Early Bird  
and Chef Ray  
will treat you**

Cutoff 30 Sept Dinner 19 Oct



# EARLYBIRD

DINNER

SATURDAY OCT 19

Hall doors open at 330pm

DINNER 4 pm – 7 pm

SHOW YOUR 2025 CARD FOR ENTRY

★ **MUST PAY FOR YOUR** ★  
★ **2025 DUES NLT SEP 30** ★

RAY'S CHICKEN PARM DINNER

VINCE PERFORMING FROM

4pm- 8 pm

PRIZE GIVEAWAYS, 50/50 ,  
AND MORE SURPRISES

PRE HALLOWEEN

Witches Party



Friday October 25th  
5pm

JOJO WILL BE SERVING  
Witches Brew

Come Dressed in your Witches Best





**Adventure – Friendship - Leadership**  
**Girls Ages 11 to 17**

**Scouting America Troop 117 Meeting Location(s)**

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

-or-

Bearswell Park - 1230 Hall Road - Malabar FL 32950

We meet on Sundays at 5:00pm-6:30pm (except weekends when we camp)

Yes, you want to join, but not sure what to do next? Call to let us know you are coming to take part in a no obligation Troop 117 visit or use the form in the QR

Code below! Come have FUN meeting new friends, learning outdoor adventure skills, and leadership opportunities! No dues, no fees, no commitment!

New Member Coordinator - Tina Vajanyi (321) 704-2121 - Tvbusybee@gmail.com  
 Scoutmaster - John P. Vajanyi Jr (321) 704-2120 - Troop117Sm@gmail.com

**Join Us Today!**



QR Code for more information

**Renew your membership today &  
 bring along an eligible  
 member for the Legion, S.A.L,  
 Auxiliary or Riders!**

**Reasons to Join:**

- ⇒ **Love of Community**
- ⇒ **Receive Benefits**
- ⇒ **Gain a Family**
- ⇒ **Voice to be heard**
- ⇒ **Raise money for Veterans &  
 their families through  
 different programs**

**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