

The American Legion Post 135 Family Newsletter

Commander Don Harris Sr.

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Welcome 2026-2027 Post Officers!

Congratulations to our newly elected officers of the Hardee R. Mills American Legion Post 135 in Naples, Florida, for stepping forward to lead our community during this upcoming term. We deeply appreciate everyone who stepped up to run for office, demonstrating a shared devotion to our mission of supporting veterans, their families, and community.

We also want to send a massive thank you to our outgoing officers for their hard work and dedicated service over the past term.

Let's have a great year ahead!!

Quote for the Month
**"In the field we
fought for a
mission-but in our
hearts we fought for
each other"**



UPCOMING EVENTS

August 12th Legion Meetings

August 18th Ship, Captain, Crew & Tacos with
Ashley & Viktor

August 19th Auxiliary Meetings

September 9th Early Bird Dinner &
Entertainment

September 26th Annual Special Olympics
Benefit Dinner & Dance

ADVERTISE HERE!!!!

Large Rectangle (One Month) \$75

Medium Square (One Month) \$50

Small Rectangle (One Month) \$25

(Sizes shown on this page)

Call Krista 239-774-4707



Serves Veterans, Their Families, and
Friends

The Veterans Crisis Line serves
Veterans, service members, National
Guard and Reserve members, and
those who support them.

Hall Rental

Call TODAY to set up your event!!

**Birthdays, Reunions, Weddings,
& MORE....**

Members: Rent For FREE, WOW!!!

The American Legion Post 135

Hardee R. Mills

2296 Tamiami Trail E

Naples, FL 34112

239-774-4707

Commander's Column

It is a true honor to serve as Commander of Hardee R. Mills American Legion Post 135. Our Post is a strong organization built by exceptional people. I view the Legion, Sons, Auxiliary, and 40 and 8 as one Post 135 family. Every initiative I pursue will consider the needs of each organization because we are stronger together than we are apart.

My current priority is membership. Our goal is to reach 50% Early Bird renewals by September 1, 2026. To thank members of all our family organizations who renew early and help us meet this goal, we will host a dinner on September 9, 2026. We aim to be first and best in the 13th District, and with your support, we can reach—and exceed—our goal.

You may have noticed several operational changes since I took command. John Madsen now serves as Facilities Manager, Krista Cilfone has been promoted to Hospitality Manager, and Gary Vaniscak has been promoted to Food Services Manager. They report directly to me and will oversee daily operations. Please continue to support them in their new roles.

I have shared a proposal with all Family directors to make our building smoke-free. I understand that members—smokers and nonsmokers alike—may have differing views. Neither the Executive Board nor I can make this change alone; it requires an amendment to our Constitution and By-Laws. The proposed amendment must be submitted in writing and read at a regular Post meeting.

Members may vote on it at the following regular meeting, provided that all members receive written notice at least five days in advance. Adoption requires a two-thirds vote of the members present. On a less controversial note, I am pursuing two additional initiatives. First, I propose replacing our small, easily overlooked sign with an illuminated marquee reader board. Because our daily lunches, weekend dinners, bingo games, and special events are open to the public, we need a sign that is easy to read from the street, day or night. John Madsen, Bob Palasak (1st Vice), and I evaluated several proposals and selected Signarama of Naples as the best value for our needs. The new sign should increase attendance and create more opportunities to recruit members for every organization in the Post 135 family. I will present the proposal to the Executive Board for approval. The Legion will fund most of the project, and I will ask the other family organizations to contribute. Second, I propose installing Dam Easy Flood Barriers at all five building entrances. Hurricane Irma nearly forced our Post to close permanently, and Hurricane Ian caused almost \$25,000 in damage and repairs. John, Bob, and I identified this solution, which costs less than half of the damage caused by Ian and would help protect the building from flooding. I will also submit this proposal to the Executive Board and ask the other family organizations to contribute.

Thank you for reading this update. I want you to know that I am working hard to make our Post the best in Florida for every member of the Post 135 family. A suggestion box is located near the main entrance, and only I review its contents. Please use it to share positive feedback, concerns, or ideas for improving our operations. I will consider and address every submission.

For God and Country,
Always Forward,
Don

Auxiliary

Greetings to all and congratulations to the newly installed officers for the American Legion Post 135 Families. I think it's safe to say that we are off to a great start for a fabulous year ahead!

The Auxiliary has begun working on our mission of supporting our Veterans and community. You may have noticed the boxes around the Post for Back-to-School Supplies. All donations are for Shadowlawn and Avalon schools. Thank you to all for helping us have a successful fundraiser.

We have started planning our Annual Benefit Dinner for September 26th. Lasagna dinner with Jeff Bradford entertaining. We will have baskets for raffle and 50/50 with all proceeds going to Special Olympics of Collier County.

As president of the Auxiliary, I would like to see all the families work together to make all events and projects a success. Please know I am always open to any suggestions or concerns you may have. For God and Country
Catherine Taylor, President

ADJUTANTS BACK CORNER

Hey Members, It's that time of the year! The 2027 Membership cards are here. We are doing an "Early Bird" special. If you renew your membership by August 31st, you can join us for a free dinner on September 9th. We sent a flyer to all the email addresses on file. If you didn't receive the email, please call us or come by and give us a good email address. We would love to "break bread" with you in September.

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday 12-3 p.m. You can also see the bartender any day from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Thank you
Eileen Stack
"Remember, we got you!"

40 & 8

The Forty & Eight was created in 1920 to serve as an honor society, to build elite camaraderie among Legion leaders, and to support charitable causes. The name comes from the railroad box cars that could carry 40 men or 8 horses to the front during WWI.

Our unit, Voitures Locale No. 795 is dedicated to supporting nurses and children. We award scholarships to local nursing students and run the Popsicle Fund. The Popsicle Fund supplies NCH North Pediatrics unit. Whenever supplies run low, we purchase ice cream, candy, juices, soda, cookies, etc., and restock the supplies at the hospital. We also purchase games and toys for the children as needed, but particularly around Christmas.

The next monthly Prom (member meeting) is on Monday, September 14, at 2 PM. With special guest, Terry Lee. Terry is the 40 & 8 Soux Chef de Chemin de Fer (National Vice Commander). Please make every effort to be there in uniform. (Please note attendance at the proms is limited to active 40 & 8 members)

Chef de Gare, Gary Asztalos

Sons of the American Legion

Who's Who

Commander Tony Roupp
1st Vice Billy Roach
2nd Vice Jim Harris
Adjutant Gary Vaniscak
Finance Officer Kevin Sieg
Sargent at Arms Viktor Larrabee
Historian Terry Myers
Judge Advocate Larry Young
Chaplain John Madsen