



## Commander's Corner, Thanksgiving 2020 Edition

With Veterans' Day behind us, upon us now is a season of Thankfulness, a season of Giving. This has been a year with new trials for our members, our post, our community and our nation. As November draws to a close with many of us missing out on our normal holiday traditions, it seems like a good time to double down and count our many blessings. For my part, as I wrap up my fifth month as the Post Commander, I find that I have many things for which to be Thankful. I am thankful for:

**This opportunity to serve** - Over the last six years, this post and its members have provided me with many smiles, laughs, and stories. I have served alongside some of the finest patriots I have ever known, and I have learned lessons from leaders of many types. Each of my predecessors had unique backgrounds and strengths and watching them let me get ready for the day-to-day stewardship of our great post.

**My executive committee** – I am not retired. I am actually quite the opposite of retired. Much of the time you see my little red truck parked in front of the post, I am inside doing my day job as an Information Systems Architect and a Walton County small business owner. I could not function in any leadership role without the constant support of an amazing team working to ensure we don't miss any crucial deadlines and keeping me out of trouble with the many agencies that regulate our business life here at the post.

**The Legion Family** – The Auxiliary, S.A.L. and the Riders at Post 233 are integral to our work and our success as an organization. Recently, as the Legion has had to turn our attention to fiscal and planning matters in the time of COVID, our Auxiliary has stepped up their efforts in the community. Both the Riders and the Auxiliary provided meal help for Thanksgiving to local families and the Riders provided additional help to four local veteran families. Members of the Legion and the Auxiliary worked with our local partners to put up and take down the crosses in front of the post for Veterans' Day, sometimes turning around a new cross in less than 24 hours when I needed to request one. We are a mighty team and I look forward to the work we will do, together, over the seasons ahead.

**Our paid staff** – The money we spend on our facility and our many programs comes from our BINGO, Kitchen, Bar, and Rental operations. We depend on our staff to provide the kind of prompt, friendly, service that keeps our patrons coming back to spend their entertainment dollars with us. Our retail operations are varied. We are part casino, part restaurant, part lounge, part event center. Especially during this "interesting" time, our employees have maintained a calm and friendly demeanor, helping to make our patrons feel more comfortable.

**Our youth program leadership** – We are proud of our support of the Scouts, Naval Cadets, and Civil Air Patrol but we are even more proud of the work the adult leaders of these organizations are doing to foster a new generation of leaders.

I could keep going... there are so many people and groups for which I am thankful every single day I spend in this office. Our members near and far, our many volunteers, our Color Guard who honor our flag and our fallen at every turn, the support from our city government, our local law enforcement with whom we share a long and fruitful partnership, the churches, charities, and help agencies with whom we share a mission and a drive to help those in need in our community... the list goes on.

I will end this installment with one final thought. I am infinitely thankful for my wife and family without whom I would not be able to spend the kind of time required by this job. My daughter often picks up orders for the post, saving me time and letting me focus on matters at hand. My wife volunteers around the post for countless events, uses her incredible shopping powers to help reduce our costs, and fills in shifts for some of our paid employees, turning every dollar she earns in tips back into the post to support our programs.

With so much to be angry or upset about this year, it is a relief of the spirit to focus for a bit on all the good things in my life. Give it a go!

Thom Williams, Commander  
American Legion Post 233  
Loganville, GA