

# Florida VFW 'Active' in Community

## Pre-K students recite pledge at VFW event

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For one of Florida's District commanders, reaching out to the nation's youth and teaching honor and patriotism is of utmost importance.

On Nov. 11 last year, Jose Rosa, then-Post 3282 commander, included pre-kindergarten students at Spruce Creek Elementary School in the Post's annual Veterans Day event.

"At the start of our event, the children [were] marching, waving flags and singing 'Yankee Doodle Dandy' to the center of the event," said Rosa, now Florida's District 19 commander. "They stood at attention and recited the Pledge of Allegiance, to the amazement of the crowd."

Rosa said the children feel "special, proud and involved" with the local veteran community.

"The school was very proud that their pre-K class had made this event special and made it to the local newspapers," Rosa said. "The school made it a big deal with all the students. The teacher told me that this is a very positive experience for the kids and helps advance their community outreach."

In 2016, while commander of the Post in Port Orange, Fla., Rosa said, he had approached Spruce Creek Elementary about including some students in a Veterans Day ceremony. He was referred to pre-kindergarten teacher Jennifer Ness.

"This Pre-K class has been performing at every Veterans Day event since 2016," Rosa said. "They always steal the show, and are the main attraction, and have boosted our attendance."

Rosa said he reaches out to all local schools to get involved in the community and makes sure students know to "thank a vet when you see a vet." He also attends JROTC and ROTC events and reminds those students that VFW is "active" in helping veterans all the time.

The District 19 commander said it's important for VFW to have a presence in schools to let the community know the organization is there and willing to be involved in "all community

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