



**AMERICAN  
LEGION**

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**THE AMERICAN LEGION MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555**

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**THE TRIPLE NICKEL**

## **A FOND FAREWELL TO OUR “SECOND-TO- LAST” POST 555 WWII VETERAN**



### **Robert Ellsworth Genry, Uncle of Chic and Rita Cecchini**

Robert Ellsworth Genry, age 97, passed away on February 7, 2024. He was born in Lacey, Alabama on March 3, 1926 and attended the Maylene School.

A career military man, he served in the United States Navy from May 1944 through May 1946. In April 1949, he joined the United States Army where he served until his retirement in September 1969. He served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, and rose to the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 2 (CW2).

He was preceded in death by his wife of 69 years, Margaret Harand Genry; parents, John Henry and Alice Annie Brantley Genry; sister, Vera Genry England (Rudolph); and three brothers, Heyward Genry (Frances), Perry Genry (Betty), and Travis Genry. He is also survived by his brother Don Genry (Shirley) and many nephews, nieces, and extended family.

Robert Ellsworth Genry, the uncle of Chic and Rita Cecchini, was laid to rest at the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo, Alabama on March 4, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. We gathered at Committal Shelter #1 to honor Mr. Genry. He was surrounded by many family members, including Chic and Rita Cecchini, and Chic's fellow Veterans of The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555. The American Legion Patriot Guard Riders were present as was Roy Brook with his new American flag. Uncle "Ell" (as he was lovingly called) received military honors as were fitting for someone who served faithfully for so many years. He had his American flag folded and presented to his brother Don Genry, he had a 21-gun salute, several people spoke on his behalf, and the ceremony ended with Taps being played by Mr. James Quakenbush, a member of Bugles Across America.

All in all, it was a fitting tribute to Uncle "Ell" and his friends and family members. He will be remembered for years to come as he is interred in Section Six, Site 717 as one of our Fallen Heroes. Those of you who know Chic and Rita Cecchini might want to stop by and pay your respects to CW2 Robert Ellsworth Genry the next time you visit the Alabama National Cemetery to perhaps place flags for Memorial Day or Veterans Day, or to place wreaths prior to the annual Wreaths Across America Campaign.





The family of Robert Ellsworth Genry will be joining us for a Post Everlasting Ceremony scheduled for August 1, 2024 when we celebrate all of the recently passed members of The Legion and The Sons.

*For God and Country,  
Nancy J. Waller  
Adjutant*

## CHAPLAIN'S UPLIFT

The two breeds of dogs that the police and military use are the German Shepherd and the Belgian Malinois. The latter breed will absolutely run himself into the ground because he so active, taking in everything he is being trained to do, while wanting nothing more than to please his trainer.

The Malinois reminds me of my son's Golden-Doodle "Buddy." He looks more Golden Retriever than anything AND, he has only three speeds—'On', 'On'-er, and 'On'-est! By that I mean that he seldom stops wanting to play in the house or in the yard all day long! He is huge for being only five months old, and he does not realize how strong he is.

Recently, he came running straight at me while I was sitting in a recliner and jumped right onto my chest. We both flew backwards as the recliner tumbled over onto its back, and because I was laughing so hard, Buddy thought it was time to play. He started rooting all over me like a hog. I could not get up because I was on my back, and my legs were up in the air, while Buddy was on top of me having the time of his life!

Here's my point: I had every right to bring the hammer down hard on him, but he would have had no idea what he did wrong. To try to change his personality too strictly and in an instant would be to break his spirit. I chose instead, at **that** moment, to give Buddy **compassion**, but trust me; Obedience School started soon thereafter.

This reminds me of one of the most **precious** character traits of the Lord Jesus. Matthew 12:20 says that Jesus will not “Break a bruised reed” or “Snuff out a flickering flame.” In context, that verse is saying that the Lord came to earth to give mercy, forgiveness, and compassion to the Weakest of the Weak, and that He would NEVER turn away anyone who saw themselves as being so deeply in need of Him and seeking eternal relief.

Psalms 130:3 is an **awesome verse**. It says, “If You, O Lord, should count iniquities, who could stand?” Not one of us! The next verse says, “But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be **deeply respected**.” For those who are true followers of Jesus, know that He **Loves** Christians!

If you are not yet a follower of Jesus, know that the Creator, who became the Savior, **Loves** you and offers you Divine forgiveness and mercy, even though you have lived in rebellion against Him. It is because He **Loves** you! See John 3:16, the most well-known verse in the Bible.

*For God and Country,  
Chaplain Joe*

## **MEMORIAL WEEKEND JUNIOR SHOOTERS’ FUNDRAISER**

It’s time for another Junior Shooters’ Fundraiser to offer you some GREAT meat for your Memorial Day events. They are offering butts, briskets, and chicken breasts again as always. ***They will be ready for me to pick-up on Sat., 25 May 24, and I will have your orders at the Pelham Senior Center at 1:00 p.m.*** Please bring exact cash or checks payable to “Matthew Blount Post 555”. I will be announcing this and have sign-in sheets at the April and May General Membership Meetings, but if you do not attend our monthly meetings, feel free to send me an e-mail ([wallernj@gmail.com](mailto:wallernj@gmail.com)) or call (251-554-6986) to place your order.

***The deadline for placing your order is Mon., 20 May 24 so be sure to get in touch with me before then.***

The 25<sup>th</sup> is also the day for flag placement at the Alabama National Cemetery prior to the Memorial Day Ceremony, but I am sure we will be finished in plenty of time for me to pick-up the meat and be at the Pelham Senior Center on time. Should not be an issue at all.



# ROVEO LUNCHEON # 15!!!

Our last “ROVEO” Luncheon took place on April 9, 2024 at “Wok On In” which is a small Chinese restaurant with some pretty excellent food. We had a good-sized group again (refer to the photo below) and would like to have more members start coming. Unfortunately, we forgot to decide on a location for the May 7, 2024 luncheon, so I will poll the “regulars” at the next General Membership Meeting to get a feel for the majority. If anyone reading the newsletter has a suggestion, let me know!!!



**Left to Right: Sparkie Waller, Eldon Woodie, Mark May, Joe Dunn, Frank Chacon, Chic Cecchini, Rita Cecchini, and Karryl Anderson. Guess who is behind the camera—Nancy Waller.**

We are working on the next location for **Tues., May 7, 2024, 11:30 a.m.**, so keep your eyes on an e-mail from me indicating the restaurant. Please join the “regulars” for good conversations and camaraderie!!! The more, the merrier.

*For God and Country,  
Nancy J. Waller  
Adjutant*



## **Sons of The American Legion Squadron 555**

**Legion Family Hosts Event to Connect Veterans and  
Community with Valuable Resources**

Sons of the American Legion (SAL) Squadron 555 and the “Triple Nickel” Legion Family came together on March 9, 2024 to host a Veterans Resource Fair Open House, offering a wide array of support services and resources for Veterans, their families, and the Pelham community.

Originally conceived by Squadron 555 members as a way to connect Veterans with important resources (while also completing a challenge issued by SAL National Commander Hall), the event grew to showcase the commitment of The American Legion Family to serve and support our nation's Veterans and youth.

The Veterans Resource Fair featured nearly two dozen exhibitors, including representatives from numerous VA programs and all branches of the Legion Family: The American Legion, Sons of the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, and American Legion Riders.

Members of the Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery (SCALNC) and the Blue Star Salute Foundation (BSSF) shared information about how their initiatives honor those who have served. Birmingham's Lakeshore Foundation connected with Veterans who may be eligible for free membership to their facilities, while Service Dogs of Alabama shared information about their program as well. A representative of Sorenson's Caption Call demonstrated their no-cost telephone captioning service for those with hearing loss.

Although serving Veterans is a major part of The American Legion Family, that is not their exclusive focus. Members of the Post 555 Boys State and Oratorical Contest programs were available to share information about youth leadership development and scholarship opportunities available through their programs.

Scout Troop 404 had troop leaders and scouts on hand throughout the day to talk about the work they do, including a recent joint project between the scout troop and the SAL Squadron to provide a flag deposit box into which community members can place worn American Flags to be retired. Just outside the building, an American Flag flies proudly on a flag pole dedicated to Matthew Blount Post 555, erected as Troop 404 Eagle Scout Connor McDonald's Eagle Project. Also just outside the doors of the Open House were several outdoor displays, including the Birmingham VA Health System's brand new HPACT Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) (which offers services to Veterans who cannot make it to a traditional facility) and the LifeSouth Bloodmobile.

The blood drive, which collected eight life-saving donations during a time of emergency blood need, also marked Squadron 555's successful completion of the Four Pillar Squadron Challenge issued to all squadrons by SAL National Commander JR Hall. Having already completed three pillars of the national “Four Pillars” challenge – *Children & Youth through Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) support*, *VA&R through Operation Comfort Warriors (OCW) support*, and *Americanism through Alabama Boys State support* – *hosting the blood drive supported the final National Security pillar.*

Blood donations were not the only way that the event helped the community, either. A donation barrel to support Grace Klein Community's “March for Hunger” initiative collected a large amount of non-perishable foods to help those in need.

Back inside, a series of videos played throughout the day in the Legion Theater, giving visitors more information about the purpose, mission, history, and accomplishments of the Legion Family. With the Legion, Sons, Auxiliary, and Riders all represented at the event, it was truly a “Legion Family” event. The Department of Alabama's NEC Rico Hall and Alternate NEC Ron Bradstreet also stopped in to check out the event, during which the Triple Nickel family expanded through new membership.

*“The event came together nicely,”* said Squadron 555 Commander Donald Walker. *“Credit for the idea of expanding our blood drive event into a larger resource fair goes to Bill and Ron,”* referring to Squadron Vice Commander Bill Blank and Adjutant Ron Koonce, who also serves as the SAL Detachment of Alabama’s Americanism Chairman. *“We had an awesome team of Squadron and Post members who came together to organize, promote, and staff the event; we had great exhibitors, and I was happy to see visitors get the help they needed and get connected with these resources.”*

Area Veterans and their families are invited to learn more and join the Triple Nickel family at [www.ALPOST555.com](http://www.ALPOST555.com).



**Members of Scout Troop 404 were there to show their support to Matthew Blount Post 555 and to see if anyone was interested in joining their organization.**



**Adjutant Nancy Waller talks with two vendors from “Caption Call” and “Service Dogs of Alabama”. They have both been at our General Membership Meetings to share information about their respective organizations. Great supporters of Veterans!!**



**The Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery is also an avid supporter of The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555, so we were happy to have them with us at this event. Chairman Pam Nichols and Fundraising Committee Chair Nancy Barefield were there.**



**Squadron 555 Commander, Donald Walker, donating blood in the LifeSouth Bloodmobile who helped us with the Veterans Resource Fair. Thanks, Don!!!**





**Post 555 Adjutant, Nancy Waller, followed the lead from Don Walker and donated blood.**



**John Pinion with the Birmingham VA and Post 555 Commander Barry Blount.**

*For God and Country,  
Donald L. Walker  
SAL Commander*

## **NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY**

This event was a bigger success than we could have imagined! When Eldon Woodie and I were talking about setting-up chairs in Committal Shelter #3, we never thought that we would need 50 chairs that SCALNC Chairman Pam Nichols asked us to put out, but we were both very pleasantly surprised that the chairs were filled, the four wrought item benches up front were filled, and there were almost as many people standing as were seated!! Pam Nichols estimated at least 100 attendees. WBRC Fox 6 and CBS news were there to cover the event live, so you may have seen it on TV that evening (Fri., March 29, 2024).

This event had one of the largest Flag Lines presented by The American Legion Patriot Guard Riders, there was a flyover by the Patriot Flyers, ROTC members from UAB did the presentation of the Colors, Madison Smith from the University of Montevallo sand the National Anthem, Zach Nichols (son of Pam and John Nichols) was the emcee and did a great job, and a fitting ending to the ceremony was the playing of Taps by Buglers Across America representative, James Quakenbush.

Post 555 members who worked the event were Chic Cecchini, Tom Long, Ray Pata, Nancy Waller, and Eldon Woodie. Other Post 555 members who were present for the event were Kenneth Paschal, Conrad Stempel, Bonnie Woodie, Bill Blank, and James Darden.

Check out some of the photos below that were taken by our favorite photographer, Chic Cecchini. His attention to detail with his photos is phenomenal, so I think you will enjoy them. See all of the photos on our SmugMug account ([alpost555.smugmug.com](http://alpost555.smugmug.com)).



**Post 555 member, Judge Advocate Tom Long, was in-charge of the Patriot Guard Riders' Flag Line. Great representation from them for this event.**



**Flyover by the Patriot Flyers was a wonderful start to this event “welcoming home” our Vietnam War Veterans.**



**A wonderful attendance for this annual event honoring our Vietnam War Veterans;  
WELCOME HOME TO ALL!!!**



**Members of the UAB ROTC did the presentation of the Colors.**



**James Quakenbush, member of "Bugles Across America", plays Taps ending the ceremony.**

For God and Country,  
Nancy J. Waller  
Adjutant

**2nd ANNUAL CHARITY RIDE**  
BLUE STAR SALUTE FOUNDATION, INC.  
Joel Adkins Veterans Assistance Fund  
501(C)3 not-for-profit Charitable Foundation

**Starting at Heart of Dixie Harley Davidson,  
including TAPS at Alabama National Cemetery,  
and ending at Rio's Bar & Grill.**

**Registration @ 9:00 AM  
KSU @ 10:00 AM**

**Donations also  
accepted at the link below**

**\$20.00 Rider - \$5.00 Passenger  
50/50 & Prize Drawings at Rio's**

**ALL PROCEEDS GO TO SUPPORT THE  
Joel Adkins Veterans Assistance Fund  
Providing Assistance to Veterans & Their Families**

**Online Registration available at the QR Code  
or at this link [www.bluestarsalute.org/charity-ride](http://www.bluestarsalute.org/charity-ride)**

**Questions forward to:  
tlongbluestarsalute@gmail.com or (205)451-8880**

**[www.bluestarsalute.org](http://www.bluestarsalute.org)**

At the request of Tom Long, Post 555 Judge Advocate as well as the President of the Blue Star Salute Foundation, Inc., he invites everyone to participate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Charity Ride. All details on this flyer, but if you have any questions, refer to Tom Long's e-mail on the flyer.

## ***APRIL BIRTHDAY WISHES***

Blank, Bill H., 04/08  
Gilliam, Cheryl, 04/10  
Gofourth, Ronald W., 04/12  
Geter, Charles, 04/14  
Kiser, Charles "Chuck" F., 04/15  
Johnston, Clarence J., 04/16

Lucas, Jacqueline M., 04/19  
Vandiver, Joshua M., 04/12  
Murrell, Stan D., 04/23  
DiFante, Gretchen, 04/28  
Bishop, David "Spud" W., 04/29  
Smith, Glennis D., 04/29



*If your birthday is in April and your name is not on this list, it is because it is not listed in your profile in MyLegion.org. Please send me your birthday so you can be included in future Happy Birthday wishes!!*

## **NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

We meet the first Thursday of the month, so please join us on Thurs., May 2, 2024 with our fellowship meal (hosted by Texas Roadhouse) at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting starting promptly at 7:00 p.m. at the Pelham Senior Center at 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124. At this meeting, we will be voting on the slate of officers that was chosen during the April 4, 2024 General Membership Meeting. There were no nominations accepted from the floor, so we will be voting in the following members in their respective positions: Bill Blank for Commander; Harry B. "Skip" Mize IV for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, Dorian Ross for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander, and Frank Lakotich for 3-Year Trustee. Please join us to congratulate each of these officers and show them your support for the next year.

## **"GO FUND ME" FOR CARLEY SEABROOKE**

The "Go Fund Me" account that Carley's father set-up was a huge success. His goal was met and I am proud to say that several members of Post 555 were a part of that success, so thank you to all of you who donated!!!

## **POST LEADERSHIP FOR 2023-2024** **(the Post Leadership for 2024-2025 will be "official" after the Installation of Officers at the General Membership Meeting on June 6, 2024, so this list will be updated at that time)**

***Post Commander***  
*Barry Blount*

***First Vice Commander***  
*Bill Blank*

***Second Vice Commander***  
*Dorian Ross*

***Adjutant***  
*Nancy Waller*

***Judge Advocate***  
*Tom Long*

***Finance Officer***  
*Ron Koonce*

***Chaplain***  
*Joe Dunn*

***Sons of The American Legion***  
*Donald Walker, Commander*  
*Ron Koonce, Advisor/Adjutant*

***American Legion Rider's Director***  
*Doug McDaniel*

***Flag Team Coordinator***  
*Bill Blank*

***Boy Scout Troop 404 Coordinator***  
*David Coram*

***Jr. Shooters***  
*Sam Richardson, Director*  
*Darrell Lawley, Coach*

**Sergeant-at-Arms**

Anita Bennett

**Service Officer**

Curtis Orse

**Historian**

Shauna Hadley

**Public Relations Officer**

Nancy Waller

**Post Trustees**

Chris Combs (1 Yr.)

Tom McDaniel (2 Yr.)

Vashone Smith (3 Yr.)

**Baseball Director**

Kyle Phillips

**School Awards Program**

Barry Blount, Chairman

Frank Lakotich, Co-Chairman

**Awards Program**

Barry Blount, Chairman

Nancy Waller, Co-Chairman

**Webmaster**

Ron Koonce

## ***The Triple Nickel***

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Items for publication are accepted upon Executive Committee approval and available space. Submit articles prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month for publication the following month if approved. We reserve the right to edit any submissions for the purpose of publication.

Letters to the Editor must include name, address, and telephone number. Names will be withheld upon request.

Send e-mail to: [editor@alpost555.com](mailto:editor@alpost555.com)

Photos by Chic Cecchini, Post 555

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