



**AMERICAN
LEGION**

Published exclusively for the members of
THE AMERICAN LEGION MATTHEW BLOUNT POST 555

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THE TRIPLE NICKEL



September 18, 1981 – March 10, 2023

For those of you not familiar with the namesake of Post 555, it is Commander Blount's son, Matthew Blount. Every year since his passing, members of the Blount family remember Matt by visiting his grave located in Section 8 at the Alabama National Cemetery in Montevallo. On September 18, 2023, Barry Blount, Terrie Blount (Matt's mother), and Melinda Blount (Matt's widow) met at the cemetery to honor Matt and be together as a family on what would have been Matt's 42nd birthday. Barry placed a single red rose on Matt's headstone as a symbol of love for his son who is sorely missed by everyone. Continue to rest in peace, Matt.

Another annual event in honor of Matt is an Annual Matthew Blount Memorial Ride which is normally scheduled in September around his birthday. With the approval of Commander Blount, Riders Director Doug McDaniel scheduled the ride for this year on Saturday, October 21, 2023 with registration starting at 10:00 a.m. at the Heart of Dixie Harley Davidson in Pelham; KSU (kicks stands up) at 11:00 a.m. Friends and family are welcome, and you do not have to ride a motorcycle to join; ALL are welcome!!

Single riders' registration is \$20, and 2-up riders' registration is \$30. Refer to the flyer at the end of the newsletter for more details if needed.

Whenever there are events at the Alabama National Cemetery such as Veterans Day (flags are placed), Memorial Day (flags are placed), and Wreaths Across America (wreaths are laid), Post 555 members report to Section 8 to assist with the placing of flags or wreaths as other family members do in that section. It is a wonderful way to honor our Fallen Heroes and to remember what they did for this great country. The end result of these events is a beautiful sight with the flags in front of the headstones at the exact same distance from the headstone, and the fresh, green balsam Christmas wreaths leaning on each headstone for Christmas. They are all placed with love and honor for the names on the graves. We ask each family member and Volunteer to take a few minutes to read the name, rank, period of service, etc. on each headstone as they place a flag or a wreath. This cemetery is a hallowed ground and a wonderful place to see after these events take place. Join us!!!



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

HENRY WILEY CARTER ATTENDS THE “FINAL FORMATION” July 10, 1931 - April 2, 2023



Since Henry W. Carter was one of our Honorary Lifetime Members as a Korean War Veteran, I mailed his 2024 membership card recently and thanked him again for his service to our great country. I received an e-mail today from Henry's son, Dr. John R. Carter, telling me that Henry had passed away on April 2, 2023 after a prolonged illness. I was surprised and of course saddened to have lost another of our Post 555 members and let Dr. Carter know that I will notify him of the next "Post Everlasting Ceremony" that will be scheduled to honor his father and several other Post 555 members who passed. I would like to share some information that Dr. Carter provided to me from Henry's obituary.

Henry Wiley Carter, 91, of Pelham, Alabama entered eternal rest on April 2, 2023. Henry was born in Pike County, Alabama to John Henry Carter and Loretta Spivey Carter. Goshen, Alabama was his childhood home which now clarifies the meaning of the beginning of his e-mail address which was "goshenman". He eventually moved to Tuscaloosa to attend the University of Alabama (I have to give Henry a big **ROLL TIDE**). He entered the U.S. Army during the Korean conflict, eventually receiving an honorable discharge. Thereafter, he completed his studies at the University of Alabama and began employment with State Farm Insurance Company in Homewood, Alabama. It was there that he met Josephine Patricia Reina. They were married in February 1956, and remained married until his death in April. Henry especially loved family life. He was a wonderful husband, dad, grandfather, and great grandfather, and I am proud to say a cherished member of The American Legion Matthew Blount Post 555 in

Pelham, Alabama. He will be missed by all. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

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

CHAPLAIN'S UPLIFT

*Be Encouraged My Fellow Vets,
Chaplain Joe*

ROVEO LUNCHEON LOCATION CHANGED “AGAIN” (keeping things interesting and fun)

We had such a great time at Margarita Grill in Pelham on September 12th, we voted to return for the next ROVEO Luncheon on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 11:30 a.m. Here is a photo of the great group who met in September, so let's keep the numbers growing!!!



L/R: Robert Sanders, Chic Cecchini, Rita Cecchini, Nancy Waller, Javier Jerez (owner of Margarita Grill and Post 555 member), Chris Curry (guest of Nancy Waller and previous Shelby County Sheriff), Eldon Woodie, Joe Dunn, and Karryl Anderson

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



Sons of The American Legion Squadron 555

During the recent Alabama Yellowhammer Legion College (AYLC) at Department HQ in Montgomery, I again provided the SAL portion of the instruction. One of the pieces of information that I discussed which often surprises people is the fact that, unlike some members of The Legion Family, such as the Auxiliary, SAL is not a separately-chartered organization at the National or State levels. Instead, the Sons is a program of The American Legion created by National and Department resolutions. While, at the local level, individual squadrons are chartered, and they are still a program of their parent Post. Under this framework, Squadron 555 is a program of Matthew Blount Post 555 – not an entirely separate organization. All that is to say that the work of the squadron is a direct reflection on the Post, and vice versa.

The stated mission of SAL is to strengthen The Four Pillars through campaigns that *“place an emphasis on preserving American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our nation’s children, caring for Veterans and their families, and teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship.”* Squadron 555’s activities benefit Veterans, military families, and children nationwide, as well as those in our local community. As a program of Post 555, the squadron’s successes in these various campaigns are YOUR successes! The squadron’s achievements are YOUR achievements! Likewise, the great work accomplished by Post 555 shines a light on all of the Post’s programs, including SAL.

As the SAL preamble states, members are “proud possessors of a priceless heritage.” We’re proud to be descendants of American Veterans. We’re proud to be a part of the Triple Nickel Family. We’re proud of what our active membership accomplishes. We’re grateful for the support that the Post provides for the squadron... and don’t forget that we’re here to support you right back!

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone to “help us help you” by strengthening *your* SAL Squadron 555. If you are a Post member who is eligible for dual-membership, we would love to have you join the squadron. If you have sons, stepsons, or grandsons, they are eligible and we would love to have them join. When you’re talking to Veterans about joining the Post, don’t forget to mention the opportunity to get their children involved alongside them through SAL.

Squadron 555 is working on a number of exciting new projects that we hope to see come to fruition in the coming months. These include Triple Nickel Family get-togethers and activities, youth education programs, community service projects, and more. To learn more about these activities, you can come to our monthly meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at the Pelham Senior Center.

Lastly, don't forget that over the course of the next two Post 555 meetings, Squadron 555 will be accepting donations to help support our work. Each donation will also get you an entry into a drawing for a Declaration of Independence wall hanging donated by SAL member David Koonce. This beautiful poster-sized acrylic print will make a great addition to your home or office while supporting a great cause!

*For God and Country,
Donald Walker
Squadron 555 Commander*

Our Baseball Director, Kyle Phillips, was sponsored by Post 555 and chosen to do a tandem jump with the U.S. Army Golden Knights on Thursday, September 21, 2023 at Maxwell Air Force Base. I sent a Post-wide e-mail out in hopes that we might get some folks to join us to watch him, but only Barry Blount, Alan Phillips, myself, and Chic Cecchini attended. You really missed a great event for Kyle!

I submitted an article to the Shelby County Reporter, so I will shorten this article in hopes that the Reporter uses the article and photos. Be sure to watch for the article in the next Shelby County Reporter!

Kyle was joined by two other tandem jumpers who flew in the Golden Knights plane to 12,500 feet where Kyle and his jumper exited the airplane and started the descent. Kyle stated that the free-fall was almost a full minute, then the time "under the canopy" was between 5 and 7 minutes. He could not stop saying how great this experience was and how very grateful he was for Post 555 giving him this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I think the expressions on his face in these photos speak for themselves.





*For God and Country,
Nancy J. Waller
Post 555 Adjutant*

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Pelham Police National Night Out – Scheduled for Tuesday, October 3, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Pelham Park adjacent to the Pelham Parks and Recreation Center. Volunteers needed to help with set-up, meeting and greeting, and having fun.

Barber Vintage Festival – Scheduled for Friday through Sunday, October 6-8, 2023 at Barber Motorsports. This is the event that highlights motorcycles, and they will be EVERYWHERE!!! I want to thank the Volunteers who are going to be “Tram Safety Volunteers” for one or more days. After the event, I will be listing their names in the next newsletter to publicly thank them. If someone else wants to be a Volunteer, I need to know your name and shift preference(s) prior to October 4, 2023 so I can let my event POC know to prepare credentials for you for me to pick-up October 5, 2023 to bring to the meeting that night. The shifts are 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and 12:00 – 5:30 p.m. all three days and there is room to add Volunteers to either of these shifts. My cell is 251-554-6986 if needed. Thanks!!

Birmingham Veterans Day Awards Banquet – Scheduled for Friday, November 10, 2023 at the Sheraton Downtown Birmingham with the reception starting at 5:00 p.m. and the dinner at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are available until October 16, 2023 so if you are interested in attending, tickets can be requested online at www.nationalveteransday.org/awards-dinner; scroll down and click on the “Email for Ticket Information”. As of right now, Post 555 filled a table of eight and two more are being seated with other members of The American Legion, so there is plenty of room for anyone interesting in attending. The registration fee is \$50/person, and the attire is formal. The keynote speaker is our new American Legion National Commander, Mr. Daniel J. Seehafer! How cool is that??? Hope to see you there!!!

Thanksgiving Dinner/Meeting – Date still TBD due to checking availability for the location. The Post is funding the dinner and more information to follow when the details are ironed out.

2023 Wreaths Across America Campaign – Our donations REALLY need to pick-up if we are going to show everyone how dedicated our Post 555 members are to this campaign to ensure that every single headstone and name on the Columbarium at the Alabama National Cemetery have a beautiful balsam wreath placed in front of them. Due to needing as many as 11,000 wreaths this year, we needed to increase the cost to \$17/wreath, so budget accordingly. Donations will be GLADLY accepted during the October 5, 2023 General Membership Meeting or via USPS to 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124. Checks need to be made payable to “Matthew Blount Post 555” and put “Wreaths Across America” or “WAA” on the memo line to be sure your donation goes into the WAA account. We need everyone’s help to continue to strive for our goal of \$7,800!!! I will have donation forms at the October 5th meeting, and one is at the end of this newsletter.

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

ADJUTANT'S AREA

As of the writing of this newsletter, we met the Department's goal of 121 members (55%) for September, so **THANKS TO ALL WHO RENEWED FOR THE 2023-2024 MEMBERSHIP YEAR!!!** We need to continue receiving renewals to continue meeting or exceeding these goals, so keep the renewals coming in either via mail or online.

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

OCTOBER BIRTHDAY WISHES

Chacon, Frank, 10/02
Ott, Jonathan W., 10/02
Austin, Earl L., 10/03
Waller, Nathan C., 10/03
McGavin, Stephen P., 10/04
Smith, Henry M., 10/04
Grissett, Melvin M., 10/05
Hallford, Thomas "Tom" J., 10/06
Woodie, Eldon, 10/07
Sanders, Robert L., 10/09

Phillips, Alan, 10/10
May, Mark, 10/11
Johnson, Aubrey J., 10/13
Stewart, Patrick E., 10/16
Clopton, John A. III, 10/20
Crocker, Billy, 10/21
Dormuth, James M., 10/21
Waller, Phillip "Sparkie" S., 10/24
Cambron, Coy D., 10/29



If your birthday is in October and your name is not on this list, it is because it is not listed in MyLegion.org or you did not reply to an e-mail I sent out ages ago asking for updates, so please send it to me so I can wish you a Happy Birthday next year!!!

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

NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

We meet the first Thursday of the month, so our next meeting is scheduled for **October 5, 2023** 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. This month we have a guest speaker who will share some new information about Veterans' Benefits.



Matthew Blount Post 555



Annual Matthew Blount Memorial Ride

For Wreaths Across America

All proceeds from the ride will go to Wreaths Across America to provide wreaths for Fallen Heroes in our National Cemetery.

Saturday, October 21st, 2023

Starts: Heart of Dixie Harley Davidson

Registration Starts – 10:00 a.m. KSU – 11:00 a.m.

Ends: Beef O'Brady's

Friends and family are welcome!!

Single Riders \$20; 2up Riders \$30; ALL riders are welcome!!!



50/50 Drawing and Door Prizes

***15th Annual Wreaths Across America Campaign
Alabama National Cemetery
Montevallo, Alabama
Saturday, December 16, 2023, 11:00 a.m.***



PLEASE NOTE: The cost to sponsor each wreath is \$17.00 due to the expectation of needing 11,000 wreaths in 2023. All wreath sponsors and family members of those interred at the Alabama National Cemetery are invited and strongly encouraged to attend and participate in the wreath-laying ceremony.

To sponsor wreaths, please complete the information below and mail it Matthew Blount Post 555, 50 Racquet Club Parkway, Pelham, AL 35124. Make your checks or money orders payable to "Matthew Blount Post 555" and put "Wreaths Across America (WAA)" on the memo line. The deadline for donations is **November 2, 2023**, so please act on this request as soon as you are financially able. Each sponsorship is tax deductible. For more information and/or questions, please contact **Nancy Waller, Adjutant and Post 555 WAA Chairperson @ 251-554-6986.** Thank you in advance for your show of support to our Fallen Heroes and their family members during the 2023 Christmas Season.

Donor requests for names provided below ("In Honor Of" and "In Memory Of") will be included on the virtual "Honor/Memory" display board for 2023 at <https://scalnc.org/waa-at-ainc>. We will ensure that these names are sent to the appropriate person prior to the deadline of November 30, 2023.

The Support Committee for the Alabama National Cemetery (SCALNC) is the host of the ceremony, and all inquiries regarding the ceremony, volunteering, and wreath placement be directed to the SCALNC website SCALNC.org or e-mail to supportcommitteealnc@gmail.com.

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15TH ANNUAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DONATION FORM

PRINT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL / ORGANIZATION: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ **SPONSORSHIP AMOUNT: \$** _____

IN HONOR OF (LIVING): _____

IN MEMORY OF (DECEASED): _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____



**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
Squadron 555**

***Door Prize
Fundraiser***

***Your donation of \$1 or more is all it takes for an opportunity to win this
wall hanging of***

The Declaration of Independence

***Proceeds to Support
Children's Welfare Foundation
Boys State
Wreaths Across America***

Tickets \$1 each or 6 for \$5

***Tickets available at Post 555 October & November
meetings.***

***Drawing at Post 555 November Thanksgiving
Dinner/Meeting***

POST LEADERSHIP FOR 2023-2024

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

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.)

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

American Legion Riders Director
Doug McDaniel

Flag Team Coordinator
Bill Blank

Boy Scout Troop 404 Coordinator
David Coram

Jr. Shooters
Sam Richardson, Director
Darrell Lawley, Coach

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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commander@alpost555.com

Items for publication are accepted upon Executive Committee approval and available space. Submit articles prior to the 10th 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

Photos by Chic Cecchini, Post 555

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